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**18TH ANNUAL AWARDS.** The Lee's Association Dragon & Lion Dance Team (top left photo) kicked off festivities at The Asian Reporter Foundation's 18th Annual Scholarship & Awards Banquet. In addition to performances, the evening featured the 2016 Most Honored Elder awards, recognition of area Exemplary Community Volunteers, and the issuing of Asian Reporter Foundation scholarships (bottom right photo). Pictured at right are members of the Filipino American Friendship Club of Oregon performing the "Tinikling," which is also known as the "stick dance."



AR Photo/Jin Huang

## The AR Foundation's annual celebration of community

*The Asian Reporter*  
By Kate Hubbard

The Asian Reporter Foundation celebrated with the community it supports, and who supports it, at the foundation's 18th annual scholarship and awards banquet. More than 350 people dressed up for an evening of food, dancing, cultural entertainment, and a silent auction at the TAO Event Center in northeast Portland.

Attendees mingled, networked, and circled the auction tables, bidding on everything from vacation getaways to local food and swag. Dancers warmed up in a corner while friends grouped and re-grouped in the photo booths.

Zeke Smith, master of ceremonies for the evening, opened the festivities and welcomed the Lee's Association Dragon & Lion Dance Team, which gave a captivating performance as people made their way from the auction tables to their seats. *Asian Reporter* publisher Jaime Lim thanked everyone for their attendance and support. Following the invocation, dancers from Ballet Philippines performed, courtesy of the Portland Ballet Company.

As befitting such a fun community celebration, dinner included a huge amount of delicious food served family style: lumpia, yakisoba noodles, Kalua pig, Korean chicken, Korean ribs, stir-fried veggies, macaroni salad, and rice, catered by Bamboo Grove Hawaiian Grille.

While diners sipped local wines and filled their plates,

the first awards were given to this year's Most Honored Elders. For 2016, they included Vicki Nakashima and Marisa Newnam, two incredible women who have been involved in the Asian community for decades.

The next awards were given to this year's scholars. The 2016 Asian Reporter Foundation Scholars included Amy Vo, Emily Duong, Hoa Nguyen, Tuyen Ta, Cecilia Wong, and Rosemarie Wong, who each received \$2,000 awards for college. Following the Asian Reporter Foundation awards were the Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Oregon (PACCO) scholars — Agnes Cabanilla, Kristina Enriquez, Maria Schaljo, and Sarena Tucker — who were each awarded \$500 scholarships.

The 2016 Most Honored Elders showed dignity and grace and this year's students showed the bright possibilities of the upcoming generation.

Tuyen Ta shared some of the excitement of her fellow scholars, and the thrill of receiving the e-mail notification of their awards: "I was so surprised by the e-mail; I'd received so many rejections."

Emily Duong laughingly agreed: "It was three o'clock ... and I thought I wasn't going to get it. Then I got it!"

All those classes for Ta's biochemistry and Duong's nursing studies will be expensive — it's part of the foundation's purpose to help these motivated students achieve their dreams.

The Filipino American Friendship Club of Oregon was up next with the mesmerizing and catchy "Tinikling" dance. Also referred to as the "stick dance," the performance features 10-foot-long bamboo poles clacking together as well as on the floor beneath — while the dancers graciously touch their toes between the quickly moving bamboo.

A few lucky audience members were welcomed onstage to try the dance — with great results. The crowd cheered them on as they hopped in and out in time to the rhythm.

The final awards were given for Exemplary Community Volunteer Effort. The organizations that have contributed to the community for a combined 70+ years included the Filipino-American Association of Vancouver, Washington; the Salem Multicultural Institute & World Beat Festival; and the Vietnamese Community of Oregon. Each group has a unique history of why they formed and what they've accomplished within and for the community.

A surprise giveaway near the end of the gala event went to 100 random attendees; the lucky recipients received Year of the Monkey scratch-it tickets compliments of the Oregon Lottery. After the final auction tables closed, people claimed then took home their treasures. Music, dancing, and more mingling closed out the night. As always, it was a great way to celebrate and honor the AAPI community on a beautiful spring evening in Portland.

*The Asian Reporter Foundation extends many thanks to our banquet sponsors. Without them, this annual event would not be possible.*



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