

WHY WE CELEBRATE

FILIPINO AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH

In 1983, the late Fred Cordova (of the Filipino American National Historical Society) wrote a book called *Filipinos: Forgotten Asian Americans*, a pictorial essay documenting the history of Filipinos in America from 1763 to 1963. **He used the word “forgotten” to highlight that Filipino Americans were invisible in American history books during that time.**

Though **Filipino Americans were the first Asian Americans to arrive in the U.S.** in 1587 (33 years before the Pilgrims landed on Plymouth Rock in 1620), little was written about the history of the Philippines or of Filipino Americans in the U.S. Although the U.S. has a long history with the Philippines (including the Philippine-American War, American colonization from 1899-1946, and much of World War II being fought in the Philippines), American history books have typically glossed over any mention of the country or its people.

While Filipino Americans are the second largest Asian American ethnic group (comprising about **1 out of every 5 Asian Americans**), we are often excluded in many Asian American or pan-Asian initiatives.

Perhaps this is why Filipino Americans advocated for October to be recognized as Filipino American History Month. Celebrated every year since 1988, Filipino American History Month has since been recognized by President Obama and Congress. It commemorates the many ways that Filipino Americans have contributed significantly to American history — from serving in World War II to strengthening the American labor movement. As one of the largest immigrant groups in the country, we want our history to be recognized and our stories to be told.

(adapted from “Why We Celebrate Filipino American History Month” by Kevin Nadal, Ph.D. Originally published on Huffington Post.)



Questions? Contact ivelevateaapi@ivc.edu or (949) 451-5802
Or visit us in the CAANAPI (B 353):
M-Th 9am-6:50pm
F 9am-1:50pm



NAME TO KNOW:

LARRY ITLIONG

Larry Dulay Itliong was born in the Pangasinan province of the Philippines on October 25th, 1913. As a young teen, he immigrated to the US in search of work. Itliong soon joined laborers working everywhere from Washington to California to Alaska, organizing unions and labor strikes as he went. He was one of the **manongs**, Filipino bachelors in laborer jobs who followed the harvest.

Despite lacking a formal secondary education, Itliong spoke multiple languages and taught himself about law by attending trials. In 1965, he led a thousand Filipino farm workers to strike against unfair labor practices in Delano, CA. His leadership in Filipino farm worker movement paved the way for others to follow. Alongside Cesar Chavez, Larry Itliong founded the **United Farm Workers Union**. Together, they built an unprecedented coalition between Filipino and Mexican laborers and connected their strike to the concurrent **Civil Rights Movement**.

Though Chavez gained fame as the “face of the strike,” Itliong embodied its soul. In 2015, Gov. Jerry Brown designated October 25th – Larry Itliong’s birthday – as Larry Itliong Day. Today we remember his strength, leadership, and bravery in the face of injustice.



L-R: Larry Itliong speaking, two of the Delano manongs on strike



Questions? Contact ivelevateaapi@ivc.edu or (949) 451-5802
Or visit us in the CAANAPI (B 353):
M-Th 9am-6:50pm
F 9am-1:50pm

