

## Filam physician couple are Madonna University's 2017 Commencement speakers and recipients of honorary doctorate degrees



Michigan's Filam power couple, Drs. Jose and Stella Evangelista, became the first Filipinos, first Asian and first couple to address Madonna University graduates and to be conferred honorary doctorates by the University. The Evangelistas spoke on MU's 70th Commencement ceremonies on Saturday, May 13, 2017 in Hall C, at Suburban Collection Showplace, Novi, Michigan.

Stella Salgado Evangelista, M.D., gave the keynote address at the 10:30 a.m. graduation exercise for some 400 doctoral, master's, and undergraduate nursing and health graduates. Jose Limjoco Evangelista, M.D., spoke at the 2:00 p.m. ceremony to approximately 700 undergraduate students in the school of business, colleges of arts and humanities, education, and natural and social sciences.

In a press release issued by MU President Michael A. Grandillo, Ph.D., he stated, "We are honored the Evangelistas will speak to our graduates this year, and we are pleased to bestow on them honorary doctorates. Medical trailblazers, philanthropists and entrepreneurs, these accomplished doctors have achieved and led in a variety of endeavors, and they are staunch supporters of Catholic higher education," he continued. "The Madonna community is honored that they agreed to take part in this exciting day of celebrating student success."

### About the Evangelistas:

For Filipinos in Michigan and the Fil-Am medical circle all over the U.S., the honor and recognition bestowed by Madonna University to the physician couple made sense. The couple worked in St. Mary Hospital of Livonia where Dr. Jose became past Chief of Staff and Dr. Stella was Chief of Pediatrics for ten years. They opened their practice, raised their children up and contributed immensely to the growth of Livonia and southeast Michigan by the jobs they provided through their successful businesses. Drs. Jose and Stella built their fortune on real estate acquisitions, development and construction, later diversifying into health care services and rose to become one of the most prominent and influential



couples in their community.

In 1990, they became to first Filipino and first couple ever to be inducted into the International Institute Hall of Fame for their exemplary contributions to ethnic diversity. They have received various awards and recognition among them: the LINKAPIL Presidential Award by former Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, Asian American Hall of Fame Award in Medicine and Government Service and were named one of twenty outstanding Filipino-Americans in the United States by the Fil-am Image Magazine in Washington D.C.

Both Drs. Jose and Stella Evangelista became presidents of the Association of Philippine Physicians in America and in 1987, founded and led the UST Medical Alumni Association in America. To create an endowment fund that would support USTMAAA's projects in perpetuity, the USTMAAA Foundation was established. Subsequently, it raised and donated \$1.5 million towards the construction of the Thomasian Alumni Center, USTMAAA's Quadricentennial legacy to UST.

Drs. Jose and Stella Evangelista have been pillars of both the USTMAAA and the USTMAAAF, sparing no personal expense in nurturing two world class organizations through which Medical Thomasians can give back to their Alma Mater. In recognition of their invaluable contributions, Drs. Jose and Stella were conferred the TOTAL award (the Outstanding Thomasian Alumni Award for Medicine and Health) and the THOMAS awards in 2011 and 2012, the highest award presented to any alumni by the University. Stella received the Quadricentennial award for Exemplary service to UST and Jose was named one of the 400 Outstanding Thomasians in celebration of its 400th anniversary.

Drs. Drs. Jose and Stella Evangelista were named "Parents of the Year" by Chicago's Gintong Pamana Awards Foundation in 2011 for their parenting skills, having brought up six successful children: four medical doctors, one CPA/lawyer and one business graduate. They are also doting grandparents of four grandkids.

### Honorary Doctorate Degrees

At Madonna University's graduation ceremonies, an honorary doctor of humane letters degree was conferred upon Dr. Stella Salgado Evangelista whereas an honorary doctor of international relations degree was conferred upon Dr. Jose Evangelista.

Dr. Stella Salgado Evangelista graduated Magna Cum Laude in 1963 from the Cebu Institute of Technology and received a Doctorate of Medicine from the University of Santo Tomas in 1968. She became chief of Pediatrics at St. Mary Hospital, was elected first woman president of the Association of Philippine Physicians in America, first Asian to be appointed to the Michigan State Board of Medicine (serving two terms from 1986 to 1993) and served as executive director and later president of the University of Santo Tomas Alumni Foundation. She was a former member of the Michigan State Board of Pharmacy and a member of the Congressional Asian American Pacific Caucus.

As Honorary Consul General of the Philippines for the past thirteen years, Dr. Jose Limjoco Evangelista has been the highest ranking Philippine official in the state of Michigan. He was past president of the Association of Philippine Physicians in America. He is president and CEO of Royal Management Company and has served since 1986 as CEO of the J.S. Evangelista Development, LLC, construction and development company based in West Bloomfield, Michigan. He served on the Board of the National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation of the United States Department of Education.

About Madonna University: Liberal arts education, career preparation and service-learning have been the hallmarks of a Madonna University education for 80 years. Madonna University is Michigan's most affordable, independent, Catholic, liberal arts university, offering more than 100 undergraduate and 35 graduate programs in the colleges of arts and humanities, natural and social sciences, education, and nursing and health, as well as the School of Business.