**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## A NATION CELEBRATES THE TRIUMPH OF INCLUSION: NATIONAL COUNCIL ON DISABILITY AFFAIRS HONORS EXTRAORDINARY FILIPINOS AT THE 2026 BRAP CONFERMENT CEREMONY

**QUEZON CITY** — Radiating a profound spirit of dignity, artistic brilliance, and national solidarity, the Grand Ballroom of the Sequoia Hotel transformed into a sanctuary of human triumph as the National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA) hosted its Biennial Recognition Award Program (BRAP) Conferment Ceremony on July 22, 2026. Bringing together devoted advocates, visionary leaders, and communities from every corner of the archipelago, the landmark gathering stood as a vibrant testament to the resilience, boundless talents, and indomitable spirit of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in the Philippines.

Headlined by NCDA Executive Director III **Glenda D. Relova**, the event underscored the council's unwavering dedication to advancing the rights, welfare, and full societal integration of PWDs nationwide. Delivering an inspiring message of resolute government partnership, Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Undersecretary **Fatima Aliah Q. Dimaporo** joined Executive Director Relova in reaffirming the administration's steadfast commitment to robust, disability-inclusive policies and grassroots community mobilization.

Expertly guided by Master of Ceremonies **Angela Lagunzad-Castro**—with seamless sign language interpretation provided by **Febe Sevilla** and **Renato Soriano**—the celebration commenced with a deeply moving theatrical invocation. Directed by PETA Founder, Magsaysay Outstanding ASEAN Awardee, and UNESCO Artist for Peace **Cecilia Guidote-Alvarez**, the Earthsavers DREAMS National I.T.I. Center set an uplifting, transformative tone for the afternoon.

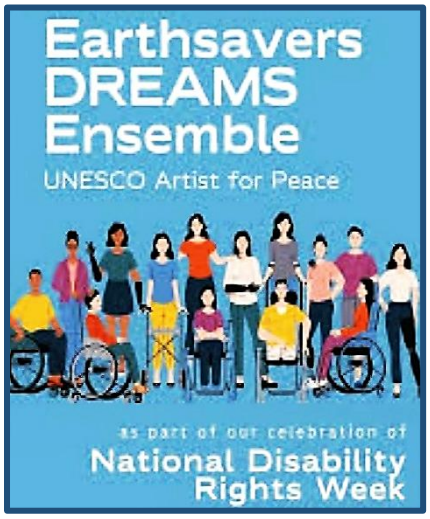


**Cecilia Guidote-Alvarez**

The powerful opening performance challenged prejudices through evocative renditions of “Don’t Laugh At Me” and “God Loves the Outcast,” alongside a specially composed prayer hymn for PWDs and vulnerable groups entitled “Let There Be Peace.” The stage came alive as blind vocalists Maricor Book and Earl Klowie Pada shared a touching choreography with deaf interpreter Edna Sanchez, Veneranda Mateo, and dancers gracefully navigating crutches and wheelchairs. This was expertly brought to life through the artistic direction of Gigi Velarde-David and Anthony Cruz, alongside indigenous performers Kiel Tuan and Edmarie Inda.

Amplifying the call for global harmony and environmental stewardship, the Earthsavers DREAMS Ensemble delivered an extraordinary performance demonstrating how the arts serve as a vital public conscience. Joined by renowned Brazilian cellist **Diego Carneiro**—in liaison with the Rotary and Gusi Peace Prize Foundation—the ensemble issued a powerful artistic appeal for peace, global ceasefire, and decarbonization to protect both humanity and Mother Earth.









Brazilian Cellist-**Diego Carneiro**

Following an inspiring overview and Audio-Visual Presentation of the awards, the NCDA Governing Board proudly conferred honors upon the nation's most inspiring finalists and winners across diverse categories:

- **Entrepreneur with Disability:** Naprey Almario, James Bryan B. Camacho, and Darlito S. Palermo
- **Woman with Disability:** Jennifer S. Anacio, Amie M. Dava, and Rhea B. Peñaflor
- **Athlete with Disability:** Agustina M. Bantilloc, Kim Daniel M. Barrion, and Andrea Estrella
- **Youth with Disability:** Julian Job C. Castro, Psyche Desiree Een E. Castillo, and Ymari Kristia C. Pascua
- **Disability-Inclusive Local Government Unit (City Category):** Batangas City (Batangas), Carmona City (Cavite), and Quezon City (NCR)
- **Disability-Inclusive Local Government Unit (Municipality Category):** Asingan (Pangasinan), Mauban (Quezon), and Sablayan (Occidental Mindoro)
- **Disability-Inclusive Local Government Unit (Province Category):** Camarines Norte, Pangasinan, and Zamboanga del Sur

A special Partners' Recognition segment offered deep gratitude to indispensable institutional allies—including the DTI, DepEd, DSWD, DILG, DICT, and PIA—for their steadfast, multi-sectoral collaboration in driving disability inclusion forward.

In his inspiring closing remarks, NCDA Deputy Executive Director III and 2026 BRAP Chair **Dandy C. Victa** reiterated the council's firm resolve. He called upon national agencies, local government units, and civil society to continually synergize their efforts, marching forward hand-in-hand to forge a truly accessible, barrier-free Philippines for all.