



2 PCOO execs among NDCP's E-MNSA pioneer graduates

By Azer Parrocha – August 8, 2021

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MANILA – Presidential Communications Operations Office (PCOO) Undersecretary Kristian Ablan and Assistant Secretary Omar Romero are among the first batch to complete the Executive Master in National Security Administration (E-MNSA) Program of the National Defense College of the Philippines (NDCP).

In a press statement, the NDCP said it has produced 42 graduates who completed the pioneer class of –E-MNSA this school year.

The 42 graduates, composed of officials and leaders from national government agencies, local government units, international development organizations, academe, and the private sector, graduated in a simple ceremony at the Lapu-Lapu Grandstand in Camp Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo on Aug. 5.

The E-MNSA class was initiated by Antique Rep. and Deputy Speaker Loren Legarda and Office of the President (OP) Undersecretary and designated Deputy Cabinet Secretary Dr. Gloria Jumamil Mercado, with the support of Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana.

The graduates completed 13 months of study, which adopted blended learning involving a combination of online classes and a few in-person activities such as the national security development study (NSDS) and pre-commission field training exercise (FTX).

Ablan expressed gratitude for the opportunity to be part of the NDCP's pioneer E-MNSA class.

"I am honored to be part of the pioneer class of the executive MNSA. I've learned a lot about national security not only from the NDCP's corps of professors but from my colleagues as well. I will be able to practice what I learned from the course in my role as government communicator at the PCOO," Ablan said in a statement on Sunday.

NDCP Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean Dr. Jose Carandang VI formally presented the graduates, while NDCP President Dr. Archimedes Viaje conferred the degree of E-MNSA.

Bureau of Customs lawyer Marlonfritz Broto emerged as the class valedictorian with a final grade of 1.02.

He was also awarded a gold medal for best thesis with Dr. Adoracion Navarro of the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS).

Environment Assistant Secretary Joan Lagunda was awarded the Leadership Award along with Senior Vice President Christopher Camba of the Aboitiz Equity Ventures.

Other E-MNSA pioneer graduates are Presidential Anti-Corruption Commission Director-General, Sec. Greco Belgica, Climate Change Commission Chair Sec. Emmanuel De Guzman, Department of Agrarian Reform Undersecretary Luis Pañgulayan, and Department of Finance Undersecretary Bayani Agabin, and Office of Civil Defense Director Tecson Lim.

Office of the President (OP) Assistant Secretary Erwin Enad, Davao Occidental Governor Claude Bautista, Cotabato Vice-Governor Emmylou Taliño-Mendoza, Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA) Minority Leader Laisa Masuhud Alamia, World Bank executive Lesley Cordero, Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) Dean Sanjay Claudio, House of Representatives Executive Director Violeta Veloso, and Office of Senator Bong Go Chief of Staff Angelo Villar also graduated under the same class.

After ceremonies, 18 of the graduates were commissioned to the armed forces reserves as lieutenant colonels and commanders; nine to the Philippine Navy, six to the Philippine Army, and three to the Philippine Air Force.

Defense Undersecretary Arnel Duco represented Lorenzana in the donning of ranks.

The E-MNSA program is the only graduate-level program that offers a master's degree covering the broad spectrum of formulation, implementation, and evaluation of policies in national security administration.

Established in 1963, the NDCP is the government's highest center for education, training, and research on defense and national security.

Last week, Duterte signed Executive Order (EO) 145 granting a Career Executive Service Officer (CESO) rank to graduates of NDCP's E-MNSA program, provided that they are already occupying Career Executive Service (CES) positions.

EO 145 provides that graduates of NDCP's MNSA program who occupy positions in the career service that are at least division level with Salary Grade 24 will be entitled to a salary equivalent to Salary Grade 25.