SECNAV Names Future Arleigh Burke-Class Destroyer Telesforo Trinidad



WASHINGTON – Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro announced May 19 that a future Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer will be named USS Telesforo Trinidad (DDG 139), honoring Fireman 2nd Class Telesforo De La Cruz Trinidad, the only Filipino in the U.S. Navy to be awarded the Medal of Honor.

“My first time learning about Petty Officer Trinidad’s story was as a midshipman at the Naval Academy and since being sworn in as secretary, I have wanted to honor his heroic actions by naming a ship after him,” said Del Toro. “This ship and her future crew will be a critical piece in strengthening our maritime superiority while also emphasizing the rich culture and history of our naval heritage.”

Trinidad was born Nov. 25, 1890, in Aklan Province, Panay, Philippine Islands. On Jan. 21, 1915, Petty Officer Trinidad was serving aboard USS San Diego when the captain decided to conduct a four-hour full-speed and endurance trial to determine if the ship could still maintain its officially rated flank speed. Following the trial, an obstructed tube in one of the ship's boilers gave way, creating a chain reaction. Trinidad re-entered the closed space to the No. 2 boiler to save Fireman 2nd Class R. W. Daly. As he was carrying Daly through the No. 4 fireroom, an explosion of No. 3 boiler hit Trinidad, which burned him in the face. After seeing Daly to safety and despite his injuries, Trinidad then assisted in rescuing another injured shipmate from the No. 3 fireroom. For his bravery, the U.S. Navy awarded him the Medal of Honor.

"I am pleased to honor Trinidad's life and legacy today – especially during Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month," said Del Toro. "Having a ship named after such a significant figure highlights our diverse culture and that our people will always be our strategic advantage against any adversary. I hope the naming of this ship is a beacon for not only Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders but for all our Sailors, Marines and civilians who serve across the Department of the Navy. The service and sacrifice of these men and women have made our military and our nation stronger and better."