

Press Release

# Walden Bello, Center Law named Amnesty Philippines ignite awardees

mercredi 31 mai 2023, par [Amnesty International Philippines](#) (Date de rédaction antérieure : 28 mai 2023).

**On its 62nd anniversary, Amnesty International Philippines announced its Ignite Awards for Human Rights [1] Season 3 winners following the theme “Protect the Protest”, Amnesty’s newest campaign on right to protest launched globally in 2022 [2]. Walden Bello and Center for International Law (Center Law) were named Most Distinguished Human Rights Defenders for individual and organization for the impact of their human rights work in demanding for justice and accountability from the government. The Outstanding Young Human Rights Defender Award was awarded to Franchesca Paula Garcia for her advocacy on violence against women, safe spaces, and equal rights for the LGBTQIA+ community, while Art that Matters for Music went to Calix and BLKD of the Sandata rap group for their work on the collaborative album, Kolateral.**



---

*Ignite Awardees this year stand in the tradition of past winners who have shown exceptional human rights work and courage to champion human rights, often in the face of great difficulty.*

Butch Olano, Section Director

---

“Ignite Awardees this year stand in the tradition of past winners such as Senator Leila de Lima in Season 1 and the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ) in Season 2 among others – individuals and organizations who have shown exceptional human rights work and courage to champion human rights, often in the face of great difficulty. This year’s theme, Protect the Protest, is not only reflected on the write up in their CVs but is very much embedded in the minds of the people and communities whose testimonies speak volumes about the impact that our Ignite Season 3 winners have contributed in their lives,” Butch Olano, Amnesty International Philippines Section Director said.

The new panel of Board of Judges also joined Ignite Awards for Seasons 3 and 4. Amnesty International Philippines received the support of a strong set of Board of Judges from the academe, human rights, peace and transitional justice advocacy, gender and LGBTQIA+ community, and the press.

“We are very grateful to have received the support of five prominent human rights defenders in the Ignite Awards Board of Judges panel. Two of them, D<sup>r</sup>. Rolando Tolentino and D<sup>r</sup>. Jasmin Galace, are esteemed educators advancing socio-political discourse and analyses through their work in their respective educational institutions and human rights advocacies. We have one of the best photojournalists in the country, Ezra Acayan, who has been awarded for his work on the “war on drugs” and the COVID-19 pandemic through his photographs. Joe Wong, Executive Director of the Asia Pacific Transgender Network (APTAN) brings in the Southeast Asian human rights perspective into the judging process. And Amnesty International’s Regional Office representative, Jerry Bernas, whose expertise in movement-building and governance completes the panel for two awarding seasons. The added-value of their contribution in recognizing the human rights impact of the work that the Ignite Awards finalists and awardees accomplished is immeasurable, cementing for the third time the credibility of the first ever award-giving body for human rights defenders in the Philippines since Ignite Awards was launched in 2017,” Olano continued.

The Ignite Awards nomination process started in May 2022, and the shortlist of nominees based on eligibility requirements was finalized in January this year. The three-month rigorous due diligence work followed with the aim of getting the most relevant information and testimonies from the communities and institutions that the final nominees work with, in compliance with the criteria for judging - impact of human rights work (40%), coverage (40%), credibility (20%). This season’s Protect the Protest theme also puts the judging in perspective, focusing on human rights defenders who have led the push back against repressive policies and practices in the government, making sure that the people-powered movement is strengthened more, secured and safe from attacks from human rights violators.

---

*We are honored to award these four human rights defenders but the recognition for the vibrant activism in the Philippines goes out to all individuals and communities who continue to side with the truth, and persevere that somehow, in the end, we will win the fight for human rights for all !*

Butch Olano

---

“On this third round, we have proven indeed that ordinary people do extra-ordinary human rights work in order to ensure that individuals and communities continue to have the freedom to demand for what is right, just, and lawful from the government. If only we could list down all the names of the unsung heroes of protest or give trophies to the rest of the human rights defenders who have tirelessly and courageously faced and fought against injustices brought about by state and non-state forces including big businesses and corporations, we would. But the winners this season symbolize that protest is ripe and will continue to carry human rights activism along many administrations to come as long as the power remain with the people. We are honored to award these four human rights defenders but the recognition for the vibrant activism in the Philippines goes out to all

individuals and communities who continue to side with the truth, and persevere that somehow, in the end, we will win the fight for human rights for all !” Concluded Olano.

May 28, 2023

## **Amnesty International Philippines**

---

---

### **P.-S.**

- Amnesty International. May 28, 2023 :  
[https://www.amnesty.org.ph/2023/05/walden-bello-center-law-named-amnesty-philippines-ignite-awardees/?fbclid=IwAR24nMA-G3EpavdYsh5\\_8v\\_pKh4Dhvl45BMpOrxKgrKGf\\_AxZ4pHuzuAJE4](https://www.amnesty.org.ph/2023/05/walden-bello-center-law-named-amnesty-philippines-ignite-awardees/?fbclid=IwAR24nMA-G3EpavdYsh5_8v_pKh4Dhvl45BMpOrxKgrKGf_AxZ4pHuzuAJE4)
- 

### **Notes**

[1] <https://www.amnesty.org.ph/ignite-awards/>

[2] <https://www.amnesty.org.ph/campaigns/protect-the-protest/>