



Soroptimist is a global volunteer organization that provides women and girls with access to the education and training they need to achieve economic empowerment.

SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL OF THE AMERICAS, INC.®

# Candidates for 2025-2027 SIA Board of Directors Electoral Area 7

- Virginia “Gigie” V. Penalosa, SI/Mandaluyong

## RESUME FOR SIA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Name: Virginia “Gigie” V. Penalosa**  
**Member, SI Mandaluyong – Philippines Region**

### **SOROPTIMIST EXPERIENCE**

**Club President of SI Mandaluyong, 2009-2011**

#### **SIA Philippines Region**

- Region Pillar Chair for Program 2012-2014
- District Director-Elect 2012-2014
- Chairperson, Dream It, Be It Region Survey 2014
- Panel Speaker for Women’s Opportunity Award ( LYDA now) 2014  
SIA Convention, Vancouver, Canada
- Workshop Facilitator for the Introduction of Dream It, Be It 2014  
SIA Convention, Vancouver, Canada
- District Director, Metro Manila Southeast District 2015
- Chairperson, Soroptimist Orientation and Leadership Training 2018-2020
- Region Governor-Elect 2020-2022
- Region Governor 2022-2024
- Immediate Past Governor 2024-2026
- Sampaguita Society Member (continuing contributor)

#### **SIA FEDERATION**

- Member, Board of Directors 2015-2017
- Federation Secretary/Treasurer 2016-2017
- Member, Electoral Area Task Force 2020-2021
- Laurel Society Member (Inner Circle level) 2010 to present

#### **SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL**

- SI International Director (appointed by SIA) 2018
- Member, SI committees on Finance and Leadership 2018
- SIA Delegate/Participant, UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), New York 2014-2018
- Panel Speaker, SI/SIA Parallel Event at UN CSW March 2015

#### **EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND:**

- Graduate, BS Business Administration Siena College, 1968
- Business Management Program Asian Institute of Management, 1976
- Bachelor of Laws (2 years/undergraduate) Far Eastern University , 1969-70
- Certification Programs in Marketing Management, Human Resource Management, Family Corporation Management Ateneo de Manila University

#### **BUSINESS/PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:**

- President, VCP Trading International Corp. 1990 to present
- Exec. Vice Pres. & Treasurer, Westco Electrical & Equipment Corp. 1990 to present
- Vice-President & Treasurer 2005 to present  
PAMAV Training & Technology Center, Inc.

#### **OFFICES/BOARD SERVICE MEMBERSHIPS IN OTHER ORGANIZATIONS**

(during the past 10 years) – I focus on Soroptimist.

None

**VIRGINIA V. PENALOSA**  
**CANDIDATE'S RESPONSES**

**1. From your Soroptimist and personal activities, share examples of how you have specifically supported the Soroptimist mission both in service and financially.**

Since joining Soroptimist 16 years ago, I have been a steadfast Soroptimist, being appointed and elected in different positions at region and international levels. In these capacities, I fully embraced the various positions entrusted to me by performing my work and responsibilities with diligence and dedication and committing my time, talent and resources to ensure that I effectively delivered and fulfilled the work expected of me.

I have always advocated for educating women. Even before I became a Soroptimist, I have helped some women financially to go to school from high school to college and continue to do this on a personal level. Being a Region Program Chair was impactful for me as it reinforced my belief that education is the best way to transform women and girls. I fully propagated for our clubs' full participation in the Live Your Dream Award (Women's Opportunity Awards before) and provided various presentations to make members fully appreciate and support this initiative. My tenure as director both at SIA and SI and my participation as delegate to the UN CSW were valuable experiences that made me understand the wider extent of Soroptimist as an organization championing women's causes and welfare.

I support our Region's programs for women by being a continuing contributor to our local Sampaguita Society. It is a donor program that supports our Region's various local programs and projects and provides the cash awards for our LYDA winners at the local level. I have been a member of SIA's Laurel Society since 2010 and through regular giving, I reached the Inner Circle level this year. I continue making my monthly contributions as my little share in reaching more women and girls globally to be educated.

**2. As a member of the SIA Board of Directors you will represent the organization as a whole and not your respective electoral area when it comes to making decisions on the board. This is referred to as being a "representative of" versus a "representative for". There may be times when decisions need to be made that are in the best interest of the Soroptimist organization but may not be a popular decision within a Board Director's electoral area. Share how your decision-making process will ensure that you are making decisions that are in the best interest of the Soroptimist organization.**

As a Board member, it is important that my thinking, decisions, and actions will be anchored on an awareness and understanding of the needs of the organization and its multi-cultural membership. This will require me to discern and decide matters based on a macro perspective. While the SIA Board is composed of a diverse group of women, we must act as a collegial body, creating and defining policies and procedures that are over-all responsive, adaptable, and beneficial to our regions and clubs. Diversity, inclusivity, and engagement will be important considerations for me as a Board member.

**3. What is there specifically in your background, training, education, experience, and interests which qualify you to serve as a member of the SIA Board of Directors?**

Given the nature of my business, my links and partnerships in different countries for 34 years make me comfortable working with diverse nationalities and culture. In my 16 years as a Soroptimist, I had the opportunity to work from local ground to international levels, giving me the ability to understand and think of our organization's process and structure on a much wider scale. My educational background, trainings, and experiences in management, finance, and corporate governance as a business owner honed me to think critically at this broader level. As a proactive and people-oriented person, I enjoy working in an atmosphere of diversity as I see it as an educational and enriching experience. Inclusivity, diversity, respect, and engagement are values I always uphold in dealing with people and various situations at work, business, and in Soroptimist.

**How will you leverage your skills and experiences to help SIA achieve our 2021-2031 Big Goal of Investing in the dreams of half a million women and girls through access to education?**

My Governor's biennial thrust in 2022-2024 is "Access to Education", or A.T.E. A.T.E. was unanimously approved in 2023 as an identifying project of our region, making it a continuing and permanent project. It is a scholarship program providing financial and mentoring support to disadvantaged women and girls to complete a college education or a technical-vocational certification program. In Filipino, A.T.E. means an older or big sister, and we have successfully conveyed the idea of our Soroptimist members as being the big sisters who will help our women and girls to have access to education. As an identifying project of the Philippines Region, we will continue to pursue its goal of providing more women and girls with educational opportunities. The different initiatives of this project align with our Big Goal of investing in the dreams of half a million women and girls through education. Our beneficiaries in the A.T.E. program will undoubtedly add to achieving the 2021-2031 Big Goal.

**5. Why do you want to serve on SIA's Board of Directors?**

I am privileged to be nominated for the position of Federation Director. It is a realization that being a member of a volunteer organization like Soroptimist means continuing service at all levels. It will be my honor and a privilege to serve our organization on a higher level of governance across diverse regions in the SIA Board. To be considered for this position will be an opportunity to provide my time, talent, and resources towards our important work of ensuring the global sustainability of our organization and its ability to continue our time-honored mission of improving the lives of women and girls through enabling programs that will provide them a better life and a better future.