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SEC. EMMANUEL F. PIÑOL

Emmanuel F. Piñol is a successful print and broadcast journalist, politician, “hands-on” agriculturist and, starting July 2016, Philippine President Rodrigo R. Duterte’s appointed Secretary of Agriculture.

Secretary Piñol was born on December 16, 1953 in M’lang, Cotabato to a family of farmers whose grandparents migrated to Mindanao in Southern Philippines from Iloilo in the country’s central region shortly after World War II.

Educated in public schools, he was a consistent class valedictorian both in the elementary grades and high school, and went to seven colleges and universities, including a brief stay in a Catholic seminary, before he finally dropped out to pursue a career in print and broadcast journalism.

He started his career in the media in the 1970s as news writer and reporter. He was senior copy editor and sports columnist for the popular English newspaper *Tempo* when he joined former President Fidel Ramos’ presidential campaign in 1991.

He was elected Mayor of his hometown M’lang, as a late substitute to his aling father, in 1995 and three years later, he became Governor of North Cotabato.

Among his accomplishments as Governor and Mayor were:

1. “Simplified Governance,” a system that identified the basic needs of the communities in the town of M’lang, through W-L-R-L-P or Water, Lights, Roads, Livelihood and Peace.
2. The concept of Corporate Governance for Local Government Units to generate revenues for LGUs dependent on the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) while at the same time providing employment for local residents.
3. The implementation of the bottom-up agricultural planning program using the priority crops approach in North Cotabato and focusing on four major crops: rubber, oil palm, banana and coconut. This approach rapidly transformed North Cotabato from one of the poorest provinces in the country in 1998 to one of the Top 30 Provinces with Lowest Poverty Incidence in 2007.
4. The establishment of the Monitoring and Advisory Group for the implementation of the World Bank funded Mindanao Rural Development Program (MAG MRDP)

which greatly contributed to the effective monitoring and success in the implementation of the program.

As Secretary of Agriculture, he has defined the thrusts of the present administration (based on his book "Feeding the Millions" published in early 2016) which are to: (1) produce sufficient and affordable food for all Filipinos; and (2) address rural poverty through modernized and efficient production, processing and trading of both the country's food staples and high value crops.

He has also launched a vigorous campaign against smuggling of agricultural commodities, corruption in government and environmental degradation which he believes gravely impede the productivity and sustainability of Philippine agriculture.

Secretary Piñol holds a Master's Degree in Rural Economic Development from the University of Southern Mindanao. He is now pursuing a doctorate degree.

Secretary Piñol is married to Emily G. Asentista. They have three children, Dr. Maria Krista, Josa Bernadette and Bernhart Immanuel.