

## Telesforo de la Cruze Trinidad (Courage, Character)

Telesforo de la Cruze Trinidad exemplified the Courage and Character aspects of the Seven Cs. He courageously took action to save others during a deadly incident aboard his ship, so courageous was his act that he was awarded a Medal of Honor in peacetime.

Following the Navy's defeat of the Spanish at Manila Bay on May 1, 1898, the U.S. took possession of the Philippine Islands, along with additional territory in the Pacific. As a result, the U.S. military received an influx of Asian American and Pacific Islander enlistments. Telesforo de la Cruze Trinidad enlisted in the Navy after the Spanish-American War and Spain's cession of the Philippines, where he was born.

On January 21, 1915, Fireman 2nd Class Trinidad was aboard USS *San Diego* (Armored Cruiser No. 6) while it conducted an endurance speed trial in the Gulf of California. A chain reaction of boiler explosions killed five Sailors and injured seven. Trinidad escaped the first explosion but when he realized that shipmate Fireman 2nd Class R. W. Daly had not, he fought his way back into the blazing fireroom and carried out the injured Daly. After just passing No. 3 boiler, it also exploded, burning Trinidad's face. Nevertheless, Trinidad got Daly to safety and then, despite his burns, he went back into the burning No. 3 fireroom and rescued another injured shipmate.

For his deeds, Trinidad received the Medal of Honor. Telesforo Trinidad is the only Filipino in U.S. naval history to be awarded this highest of military honors.

*Courage is defined as the "the moral and mental strength to do what is right, even with criticism or adversity." How did Trinidad's actions reflect "the moral and mental strength to do what is right, even with criticism or adversity?"*

*Character is defined as the "moral excellence" and "the mental and moral qualities of an individual." What mental or moral qualities might have contributed to Trinidad's choice to risk himself to save others?*