

Filipino

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Ties

Inside:

- *Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino*
- *Anti-trafficking*
- *Outstanding Seafarers Awards*
- *CFO websites*
- *Philippine Info System on Trafficking*

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Presidential Awards conferred on 31 individuals and organizations overseas

They represent the best and the finest among overseas Filipinos. For their exemplary commitment and service to their country, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo honored 31 distinguished Filipino and foreign individuals and organizations overseas who have exemplified Filipino excellence. The Awarding Ceremony was held on December 10, 2008 at the Rizal Hall of Malacañan Palace.

Institutionalized in 1991 through Executive Order No. 498, the Presidential Awards for Filipino Individuals and Organizations Overseas is a biennial search for overseas-based individuals and organization who have dedicated their work in the service, advancement and improvement of lives of Filipinos, particularly the marginalized sector, in the Philippines and abroad. It is also given to Filipinos who have excelled in their field or profession. Since its inception, the awards have so far been conferred on 283 Filipinos and foreign individuals and private organizations overseas.

continued on page 18

First RP Nursing Competitiveness Conference a success

More than 200 leaders of the nursing profession have bound themselves to a covenant to be the top global provider of excellent patient care a scant two decades from now. The compact was sealed at the end of the First Philippine Nursing Competitiveness Conference on September 26, 2008 at the Pan Pacific Hotel Manila.

The conference was spearheaded by the Presidential Task Force NCLEX headed by the Commission on Filipinos Overseas in partnership with the Institute of Health Policy and Development Studies – National Institutes of Health, UP Manila, and the Department of Health. The TF-NCLEX, having carried out its primary goal of convincing US authorities to establish an NCLEX testing site in the Philippines, acted on the challenge of shaping and influencing

the policy environment necessary for Filipino nurses to enhance and maintain their global competitiveness, hence the conference.



Future nurses: Keeping the competitiveness of the nursing profession will greatly benefit these nursing students.

Themed “Global Competitiveness in Nursing for National Development,” the conference mapped out interventions by which the TF-NCLEX can assist in upgrading the competitiveness of Philippine nursing services. This was also in accordance with the vision set by the Board of Nursing of the Philippines which says that “by 2030, Philippine nursing shall be a top provider of world class,

excellent caring, significantly contributing to the well-being of Filipinos and peoples of the world.”

The conference had four plenary sessions which tackled: challenges and opportunities in training regulation and employment of Filipino nurses;

continued on page 16

Celebrating the 2008 Month of Overseas Filipinos

The Inter-Agency Committee on the celebration of the Month of Overseas Filipinos was convened in the last quarter of 2008 to prepare for activities to be held in December as a tribute to our *kababayans* abroad. Chaired by the Philippine Migrants' Rights Watch and co-chaired by the Commission on Filipinos Overseas, the IAC, together with other member-agencies, came up with activities that started in the latter part of November.

By virtue of Administrative Order No. 202 signed by President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo on October

10, 2007, the IAC shall prepare an inter-agency program to commemorate the events to promote the welfare of Filipino migrants, recognize their role in nation-building and national development, strengthen their ties with the Philippines, and raise public awareness on various issues affecting them.

The series of activities kicked off with the annual search for the Model OFW Family of the Year Award by the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration. The award honors the sacrifices and contributions to the economy of Filipino migrants, and aims to provide

continued on page 14



Philippine Pavilion wins gold at Expo Zaragoza '08

The Philippine Pavilion won the grand prize for excellence, quality and innovation in the recently-concluded Expo 2008 in Zaragoza, Spain. Filipinas bested other pavilions from 104 countries and several companies and NGOs that participated in this year's Expo. The Philippine pavilion, named 'Filipinas, Archipelago el Mundo Acuatico', was recognized for the quality of its internal and external design and functionality as well as its relevance to the exposition theme: Water and Sustainable Development.

The pavilion, designed by Architect Lor Calma, featured nearly a thousand transparent spheres or 'water bubbles' suspended from the ceiling at different heights. Some of the bubbles have objects in them such as bone china, embroidery on *piña* and *jusi*, etching on acetate and photographs that celebrate the over 150 projects in the management of water and water-based resources in the Philippines.

Ten video documentaries provide a glimpse into extraordinary stories of the Filipino's experiences in water resource custodianship. One was about the symbiotic relationship between the communities in



Donsol, Sorsogon and the whale sharks that visit the plankton-rich waters regularly.

Visitors to the Philippine Pavilion found themselves enclosed in a deep blue space with illumination that appeared to come from the multiple objects inside the spheres suspended in mid-air.

On the opening day, more than 4,000 visitors visited the Philippine Pavilion. The number represented a fourth of the total number of visitors to the Expo on that day. The pavilion elicited positive response from visitors, with some commenting that the cutting-edge design sensibility is at par with those from the developed world.

The Philippines also clinched the gold in the Nature's Wisdom Award at the Expo 2005 in Aichi, Nagoya, Japan. The previous pavilion used coconut as the core of its theme 'Usbong: Seeds of Life' in relation to the exposition.



Proudly Filipino. The award-winning Philippine Pavilion from various angles. Photo credits -Soledad Garcia Sales, Expo Zaragoza 2008 Official Site, Dezeen, Paulo Brandao, midori1279, Wow Filipinas

Source: Philippine Daily Inquirer (PDI)

Filipino novelists top Singapore bestseller list

Filipinos never cease to amaze. They amaze with their talent. They amaze with their style.

As proof of their exceptional ability, three Pinay authors have done the country proud by making it to the bestseller list of the Kinokuniya Bookstore in Singapore: Noelle Chua at number 2, Maya Calica at number 3, and Tara Sering at number 5.

These three savvy, cosmopolitan and bestselling Filipina novelists were likewise handpicked by

International Publisher Marshall Cavendish to launch the first "Asian Chic" Lit books. Asian Chic is about Asian women set within the panorama of Asian locales and takes a lingering look at their distinctly Asian lives. It is absolutely thrilling that this new literary genre is spearheaded by Filipinas.

The chick lit hits that were recently launched under the Asian Chic banner are "Undercover Tai Tai" by Maya Calica, "Amazing Grace" by Tara FT Sering, and "Mrs Mismatch" by Noelle Chua.



Proudly Filipinas. Bestselling Singapore-based authors (from left to right) are Maya Calica, Tara FT Sering and Noelle Chua.

Source: PDI

Filipina-American is US Air Force fighter pilot

This pretty Filipina-American is a brave fighter pilot of the U-S Air Force. Monessa Catancun does not just fly any aircraft, but the state-of-the-art F-16 Fighting Falcon or most commonly known as the “Viper.”

According to Monessa, whenever she streaks in the cockpit of the F-16, she carries the Philippine flag and the pride of the country.

Monessa says this kind of plane is a complicated aircraft meant to be handled by highly qualified pilots. It has played vital roles in most of America's wars, the most recent being in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

But before Monessa joined the elite US Air Force, this humble Pinay, like almost everybody else, earned her way to success.

The twenty-six-year-old Monessa is the youngest daughter of Ramona and Teody Catuncan of Mesquite, Texas. She graduated in 2000 as a valedictorian in a class of 693 in Mesquite High School. She was accepted to the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) in Colorado Springs, that same year.

At USAFA, Monessa served as a Squadron Commander, a Division-1 tennis player, a Glider Instructor Pilot, and a member of the Glider Acrobatic Team, among other essential positions. In 2004, Monessa graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Astronautical Engineering from the USAFA.

Like all of her colleagues, Monessa went through an Undergraduate Pilot Training (UPT) before becoming a fighter pilot. However, she did not only pass her UPT – she excelled in it.

She started her pilot career flying a T-6 Texan at the Moody Air Force Base in Valdosta, Georgia. Monessa finished the course as one of the top student-pilots in her class. She was chosen to fly either a fighter or a bomber aircraft. After her course at Moody Air Force, she went to Laughlin Air Force Base in Del Rio, Texas and Sheppard Air Force Base in Wichita Falls to fly the T-38.

From flying T-38, she had an option of choosing from different aircrafts like the F-15E Strike Eagle, F-15C Eagle, F-16 Fighting Falcon, B-1B Lancer, A-10 Warthog, B-52 Stratofortress, F/A-22 Raptor, and T-6 or T-38. After her T-38 course, Monessa requested to fly an F-16 Falcon, and she got what she wanted.

Capt. Monessa is now assigned to the 34th Fighter Squadron at Hill Air Force Base in Salt Lake City, Utah. She and her squadron recently came back from Iraq where they served and supported troops on the ground through a variety of close air support missions. The US Air Force is an elite organization and, to a pilot, an F-16 fighter plane is a prized possession.

Monessa, through her perseverance and hard work, has earned not only the honor to fly the F-16, but also the pride and honor of defending the United States and making the Filipinos proud.



Proudly Filipina. 26-year old Fil-Am Captain Monessa Catancun (above) of the US Air Force. Below is a file photo of the F-16 fighter plane that she currently flies.



Two Fil-Ams are new judges in LA County Superior Court

Two Filipino-Americans are among 17 appointed by California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger to judgeships in the Los Angeles County Superior Court.

Alexander Kim, deputy director of the Office of the Governor, identified the two as Bernie C. LaForteza, 47, and Ricardo R. Ocampo, 43. Both are Republicans.

LaForteza, of Newhall, has served as a deputy district attorney with the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office since 2005. He has been a JAG Officer in the U.S. Army Reserves since 1997. Previously, LaForteza was a deputy public defender for the Los Angeles County Public Defender's Office from 1995 to 2004. From 1993 to 1994, he was the program manager for the University of California, Los Angeles Alumni Association and, from 1992 to 1993, LaForteza was an attorney at Daza, Eto, Hwu & LaForteza. He earned a Juris Doctorate degree from the University of California, Hastings College of the Law and a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of California, Los Angeles. He fills the vacancy created by the death of Judge David Mintz.

Ocampo, 43, of Rancho Palos Verdes, has been the deputy district attorney with the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office since 1995. From 1993 to 1995, he was a research attorney for the Los Angeles County Superior Court. Ocampo earned a Juris Doctorate degree from the Southwestern University School of Law and a Bachelor of Science degree from the San Francisco State University. He fills the vacancy created by the resignation of Judge Elena J. Duarte.

Source: PDI

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Ten LINKAPIL scholars graduate from Don Bosco

Among the ten scholars, four are recipients of special awards

Ten of the scholars supported by overseas donors under the Commission on Filipinos Overseas' Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino's Adopt-a-Scholar project graduated on 25 October 2008, at the Don Bosco Youth Center in Tondo. Of the ten, four were recipients of special awards. Winnerson Ingreso received the First Technical Award, Ricky Tana the Conduct Award, Francis Yuri Egera the Second Technical Award and John Edward dela Cruz the First Technical Award and Conduct Award. The six other graduates were Arnel Baldisimo, Ericson Encarnacion, Fernando Alvarez, Ronaldo Bolito, Rona Carissa Catacutan and Roela Ian Sosing.

The scholars were supported by the Centre for Philippine Concerns – Australia (CPCA), Ms. Andrea Balaag Niblett, Deutsch-Philippinischer Kulturkreis, e.V. (DPKEV), and the Progressive Alliance of Filipinos and Americans, Inc. (PAFAI).

The scholars expressed thanks for the support given them and the opportunities now accessible to them after graduation. Rona Carissa Catacutan, a scholar of the PAFAI and a graduate of the Seafarers Rating Course, came from a destitute family in Cavite and did not have the means to complete a college or practical

education. She said her benefactors have opened opportunities for her and now, she is applying for work at different companies.

John Edward dela Cruz was left to his grandmother's care at age ten when his parents separated. He never saw his parents thereafter and his grandmother did not have the means to support his higher education. With the help of DPKEV which paid for his tuition, he finished Welding Technology with two special awards. He is now applying for a job.

Winnerson Ingreso, a scholar of the CPCA who graduated from Industrial Electronics with the First Technical Award, is the youngest of six siblings. His family came to Manila from Mindoro and his parents are both jobless. Now that he has graduated from a vocational-technical course, he is searching for a job to help his family.

Fr. Ferdinand Camilo, Rector, and Fr. Jerry Santos, Father Catechist, both of the Don Bosco Youth Center, thanked the CFO and the benefactors for the support extended to the students. Fr. Jerry said that the remaining scholars who are taking up the Seafarers Rating Course are about to join an on-the-job-training program.

With honors



Ingreso

De la Cruz

Egera

Tana

Encarnacion



Bolito

Catacutan

Baldisimo

Sosing

Alvarez

Philippine School Doha wins two top prizes in 2008 *Buwan ng Wika* Literary Contest



Melissa U. Mota, 4th year high school student and Ethern Jewel Lein P. Bisenio, Grade 2 pupil, both of the Philippine School Doha in Qatar were judged top prize essayist (High School level) and poet (Elementary), respectively, in the *Buwan ng Wika* international literary competition held last August 2008 with the theme "*Wika Mo, Wikang Filipino, Wika ng Mundo, Mahalaga!*"

Also winning top prizes were Leonora Anne Q. Valencia, Grade 6 pupil of the International Philippine School in Riyadh, for Essay Writing – Elementary level, and Roxanne Joy A. Omilda, 4th year high school student of the Far Eastern Private School in Sharjah, UAE, for Poetry Writing – High School level.

Mota's *Makulay ang Wika* bested 44 entries from 13 schools in five countries. Her essay described the Filipino language as multicolored like the rainbow. April Jillian B. Banaag (*Wikang Pambansa, Mahalaga Ka Ba?*) of Philippine Sunrise International School in Jeddah, KSA bagged 2nd prize; Sharifa Ranya M. Yasin (*Wikang Mahalaga*) of the Riyadh International School in Riyadh, KSA, 3rd prize; and Doha Mae Laurisse M. Manalo (*Gaano ka ba Ka-Pilipino?*) of the Future Generation Philippine International School, consolation prize.

For the Essay Writing – Elementary level, Valencia's (*Wika Mo, Wikang Filipino, Wika ng Mundo, Mahalaga*) bagged 1st prize; Nazeera Y. Julkipli (*Wikang Filipino, Wika Mo: Dapat Mong Ipagmalaki Saan Mang Sulok ng Mundo*) of the Al-Taj International School in Riyadh, KSA won 2nd prize, Incrist Angela P. Zafe (*Pulitika ng Wikang Lokal, Pambansa at Internasyunal*) of the Philippine School Bahrain in Manama, Bahrain won 3rd prize, and Aimee G. Cortez (*Wika Mo, Wikang Filipino, Wika ng Mundo, Mahalaga*) of the Elite International School in Riyadh, KSA, consolation prize.

For the Poetry Writing – High School level, Omilda's collection of poems (*Idyoma Natin: Sariling Atin, Ang Wika Mo, Igalang Mo!, Hiyas ng Ating Lahi*) won 1st prize; Ian Russel A. Escala (*Katotohanan, Wikang Filipino: Taas Noong Ipagmalaki, Tingnan at Pakinggan, Sigaw ng mga Noypi*) of the Philippine School Doha in Doha, Qatar got the 2nd prize, Anaruth A. dela Cruz (*Gamit Kong Wika, Anong Salita?, Wikang Banyaga*) of the Philippine School Doha in Doha, Qatar won 3rd prize, and Maria Joy Norilei B. Condaya (*Wika Ko: Pahahalagahan Ko, Wika Ko: Ipagmamalaki Ko!, Mga Mukha ng Inang Wika*) of the Far Eastern Private School in Sharjah, UAE, consolation prize.

Lastly, for the Poetry Writing – Elementary level, Bisenio's collection of poems (*Wika'y Pagyamanin Pagkakaisa'y Kayanin, Wikang Kay Halaga, Wika: Pambansang Sandigan, Pandaigdigian*) bagged 1st prize, John Lemuel T. Barroga (*Ako at*

continued on page 14

Stateside Bayanihan

The spirit of bayanihan is very much alive abroad as the US-based Feed the Hungry, Inc. built 52 classrooms in the Philippines in 2008

All talk is nothing. The perennial problem of classroom shortages in the Philippines has been an unending bone of complaints from many sectors. There is, however, a certain group of Filipinos overseas that decided to stop complaining and to start helping the country with concrete actions to resolve the situation.

The Feed the Hungry, Inc. (FtH), a group of Filipinos-based in Washington D.C. in the United States of America, started donating classrooms to public schools since 2001. At present, a total of 52 classrooms were built benefiting students in 23 municipalities and six (6) cities in 19 provinces. Approximately Php10,105,163.70 were donated by the FtH for the construction of the classrooms.

The classrooms are standard DepED 7 meters x 7 meters rooms complete with connection-ready electrical installations. The FtH has also recently started upgrading the classrooms by providing toilet facilities with tiled floors, wash basins, flushing mechanisms and plumbing.

The beneficiary schools include Timalayan Elementary School (Main Campus), Sawang

Elementary School, Tayak Elementary School, Lola Titang's Preparatory School (PREPI), Naic National High School, Florentino Joya Elementary School, Rosario Elementary School, Kids Place Student Center, Del Carmen National High School-Annex (San Isidro NHS) and San Juan Elementary School.

Also included are Sayon Elementary School, Alupay Elementary School, Hilltop Elementary School, Batia Elementary School, Bactul I Elementary School, Pitong Bukawe National High School, Day Care Center in Brgy. Bontod, Cabatuan Elementary School, Tipas Elementary School, Matawe Elementary School, Kinalansan Elementary School, Sinamar Norte Integrated School, Binunga Elementary School, Barangay Magurang Elementary School, Celestino B. Redito Elementary School, Dr. Lorenzo P. Ziga Memorial High School, Pag-Asa National High School-Arimbay, Catanduanes National High School (Calatagan High School Annex), Buhatan National High School, San Mariano High School-UEG Campus and Aurelia Carolino Learning Center.



The projects support the government and private sector campaign to maintain a high literacy rate among Filipinos by providing the appropriate infrastructure for effective learning.

All over the Philippines, many elementary schools in far-flung rural areas maintain three to six - room facilities, which include the principals' office, library, and home economics rooms. In many public schools, a single classroom is shared by two-classes of different grade levels, or large numbers of students exceeding forty per class. The shortage of classrooms has resulted in classes being held under tree shades or poor learning conditions.

Individual donors for the classrooms include: Ms. Roxanne Andrea Mendoza, Progressive Alliance of Filipinos and Americans, Inc., Feed the Hungry, Inc., Mr. and Mrs. Wilfredo Buhain, Mr. and Mrs. Pablito Alarcon, Fil-Am Association of Manassas & the Washington Metro Area, Mr. and Mrs. Martin Gaw, Mr. Lucito Cataquiz, and Ms. Merlita Comia-Villar.

Also included as donors are Mr. and Mrs. Nilo Villarin, Arthur Lindner Memorial Foundation, Ambassador and Mrs. Albert del Rosario, Ms. Gloria Caoile, Mr. Carl Abella, Mr. Ernie Cordero, Mr. and Mrs. Manuel Suguitan and family, Mr. and Mrs. John Eda and staff of North Star Food to Go & Catering of Fort Washington, Mr. and Mrs. Rene Ruivivar, Hawaii International Relief Organization, Lamco International Trading Co., Mr. Jonathan and Mrs. Terry Gaw & American Express, Mr. Alex and Ms. Jean Miravite, Mr. Alex, Jr. and Mrs. Gail Miravite, and the Philippine Association of Metropolitan Washington, DC Engineers.

The classroom projects are being undertaken through the *Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino* program of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas in partnership with the Classroom *Galing sa Mamamayang Pilipino* Abroad of the Department of Labor and Employment and other private contractors.



Classroom builders (clockwise from right): CFO Exec. Dir. Gonzales; Ms. Gonzales with barangay officials where the school is located; the interior of the renovated classroom; and ribbon cutting for each renovated room.

2008 Presidential awards

2008 Presidential awardees transfer their knowledge and skills

They came, they saw, and they lectured

Four talented award-winning Filipino professionals and social welfare advocates overseas, namely Carlos Esguerra, Amy Besa, Eleanor Ho, and the Filipino Korean Spouses Association conducted transfer of skills and knowledge activities through lectures, workshops and consultations last December.

Coming from different professional backgrounds and countries, the four who are among the recipients of the **2008 Presidential Awards for Filipino Individuals and Organizations Overseas**, served as resource speakers on their respective areas of expertise in select government agencies, schools and NGOs.

A landscape photographer based in New York, Carlos Esguerra lectured on basic photography for the staff of National Commission for Culture and the Arts, and film and journalism students of the College of Mass Communication in UP Diliman on December 11 and 12. His presentation combined a traditional classroom-type discussion on the basics of photography, and a showcase of his award-winning photos taken in different parts of the world. Participants learned helpful tips in capturing ordinary scenes and moments extraordinarily, and at the same time enjoyed his breathtaking landscape photographs, mostly applied with Japanese Zen principle.

On December 11, restaurateur and owner of the famed Cendrillon restaurant in New York, Amy Besa thru the UP Diliman - College of Home Economics' *Learning from the Masters* lecture series, shared with the hotel and restaurant management students and faculty, some of the secret ingredients in her success in the food industry business. She revealed that love for the country, and being hands-on and innovative are some of the main factors in successfully



The activities provided a venue for the Presidential awardees to impart their knowledge, expertise and skills to students and professionals in various fields in the Philippines

establishing a business, especially in a foreign land. She also delighted the audience with her presentation of some of Cendrillon's appetizing recipes, mostly prepared by her husband, chef Romeo Dorotan, and research findings on their award-winning book *Memories of Philippine Kitchens*.

Taiwan-based journalist and civic leader Eleanor Ho, and Ms. Fe Kim, president of the Filipino Korean Spouses Association held consultation meetings and cliniquing sessions with the officers and counselors of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas and its partner NGOs (St. Mary Euphrasia Foundation-Center for Overseas Workers and the People's Reform Initiative for Social Mobilization Inc.) on their respective organization's programs and services, settlement concerns in Taiwan and South Korea, and issues and problems on inter-cultural marriage on December 12 and 13, respectively.

The Commission on Filipinos Overseas coordinated and organized all the activities, which provided a venue for the Presidential awardees to impart their knowledge, expertise and skills to students and professionals in various fields in the Philippines.

Note: Two of the awardees have their websites. Mr. Esguerra's site is www.carloesguerra.com; while Ms. Besa's site is www.cendrillon.com.

Their profiles and those of the other awardees may be viewed at www.cfo.gov.ph/presidentialawards.htm



Presidential awardees-speakers (clockwise from bottom left): Carlos Esguerra, Mr. and Mrs. Kim, Eleanor Ho and Amy Besa-Dorotan.

2008 Presidential awards

Our Journey

(A speech delivered by BBC World News anchor Rico Hizon on behalf of his fellow awardees at the Presidential Award for Individuals and Organizations Overseas at Malacañan Palace, December 10, 2008.)

Her excellency President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, Labor Secretary Marianito Roque, members of the diplomatic corps, fellow awardees, their special guests, ladies and gentlemen.

It is a great honor to be here in Malacañang to receive the Presidential Awards for Filipino Individuals and Organizations Overseas. But it is a greater privilege to speak in behalf of the 30 other awardees – each of whom has served this country while building a new life elsewhere in the world.

How I wish they could all come up on stage and tell you their stories themselves!

Tobias Enverga Junior, would tell you about his journey from Lucena to Toronto, where he spearheaded the donation of over half a million dollars worth of medical supplies back to his hometown in the Philippines.

KaBayani Alex Asuncion would tell you about the Filipinos in Riyadh whom he has been keeping well-informed of their rights and other important issues.

Community leader Angeles Carandang has stories on how she and her group have been improving lives in Chicago – not just for Filipinos but for all its residents.

Sister Mary Aida Casambre would tell you of her encounters in counseling and sheltering Filipino migrants in Hong Kong.

Journalist Libertito Pelayo, who has been keeping tabs on Filipinos in New York through his Filipino Reporter, would regale you of tales from the Big Apple.

None of us here today could have imagined that we would end up in Malacañan to be honored by the President and the people we had to leave behind when we began our journeys.

As businesswoman Pat Berberabe from New York said after being told of the award, “Sa tanda kong ito, hindi pa ako nakakarating sa Malacañan!”

Such, it seems, is the nature of true service. It is often realized belatedly and never allowed to dwell in the minds for too long.

I did a little research and what I found out made me feel more honored to be a part of this group.

Esper Derpo worked for 20 years in Nigeria to strengthen not only the Filipino community in Lagos but to aid kababayans in the poorest provinces in the Philippines.



Rico Hizon

Lilian Overs' foundation in Toronto has been conducting medical missions, donating supplies and building classrooms in Toledo, Cebu.

Economics lecturer Adelina Philipsen has been raising funds from The Hague to help improve lives in Manila including donating a basketball court to the Philippine School for the Deaf.

For 17 years, Dr. Teresita Ramos' Advanced Filipino Abroad Program has instructed students and teachers in Hawaii on Philippine language and literature.

Laurence Ligier has been providing a safe haven for abused children in Panay and Negros – giving much-needed medical attention and educational opportunities for the past 11 years.

Apart from being the first Filipino Human Rights Commissioner in New Jersey, Santiago Muzones Junior has also been actively supporting activities that raise funds for his hometown in Iloilo.

Enumerating their individual inspiration stories, it would have been so easy for them, to rest on their laurels, cash in on their wealth, and live out the rest of their days in luxury.

But deep down, we know we want something more – not for ourselves this time, but for others whom we know need a little push every now and then, the same way others gave us a little push here and there when we were just finding our footing in the strange lands we found ourselves in.

Today, Joseph Magdalena owns the largest Filipino supermarket in Riyadh.

Dr. Antonio Noblejas has a successful medical practice in New Zealand and was awarded the Queen's Service Merit.

Nilo Villarín is a successful engineer in Washington and a respected member of his community.

Amy Besa and Romeo Dorotan's New York restaurant Cendrillon is flourishing, and one of the Big Apple's finest.

Carlos Esguerra's photographs are being recognized all over the world.

Eleanor Ho, Lamberto Garcia, the Association of Philippine Physicians of America, the Filipino Women's Association United Kingdom, the Stitching Kapatiran, the Filipino Korean Spouses Association, the Philippine Community Council of New South Wales, the Philippine Nurses Association of America, the United Filipino Council of Hawaii, the Catholic Medical Mission Board, the Children's Chance New York, and the Heetens Helpgood Center Philippines – all have persevered and contributed not just to fellow Filipinos but to the international community in general.

But no matter how far we have roamed, our thoughts and prayers are always with the Philippines.

I guess that's why this award means so much more than all the others that we have received in the past. There is something so special about receiving recognition from your own kababayan that makes all the hard work worth it.

But one has to marvel at the collective achievements of the people in this room today! From journeys that began with tearful farewells at the airport and came full circle with all out support to raise the quality of life of Filipinos anywhere in the world, this is truly a showcase of Filipino ingenuity and patriotism at its finest.

Just like our Pambansang Kamao, Manny Pacquiao, we are all world champions – the kind that keeps defying the odds; the kind that keeps fighting when others would throw in the towel; the kind that leaves

continued on page 17

“I guess that's why this award means so much more than all the others that we have received in the past. There is something so special about receiving recognition from your own kababayan that makes all the hard work worth it.”

Mailbox

'Committed to serve'

Warm greetings from Kuwait!

It is indeed true that when you ask, you shall be given. But of course, it depends on the person you ask or approach. True to your calling, you have shown an example to those other government officials who are merely giving lip service to the Filipinos overseas.

Thank you very much for this financial help for Efren Melegrito which a US-based organization has given through your agency. This will go along way in easing the financial burden of Efren who is now undergoing chemotherapy and is tremendously weakened by it. Please know that he has four children who are all attending universities in the Philippines.

Freda Editha O. Contrares
Kuwait

'Not your typical PDOS'

I should have sent you an e-mail right after me and my family attended the pre-departure orientation seminar last April 21. Honestly, I thought it was one of those money-making requirements on Filipinos departing for abroad. But I was wrong. At the very least, I found the orientation very informative. Departing immigrants really need the kind of orientation seminar like that. Thank you very much! I really appreciate it. And the people in your office-the guards at the reception area, those guys at the counter, and of course you, and I believe everybody in your office-you are all very helpful, polite, and accommodating. Your office is simply not like the other government offices that I know. Keep it up!

Artemio I. Sumague Jr.
Address not indicated

'Working hard'

We received good news from your associates that the illegal recruiter we complained to you last March, has already been apprehended and is in the custody of the NBI or DFA.

We just want to thank you and all your associates who worked on this matter. Believe na kami sa inyo. You are really working not only in words, but in deeds. MORE POWER TO YOU.

Hopefully, those who lost their money here will be able to get it back as they really earned it the hard way.

Ruby Lou L. Ten Brinke
Western Australia

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FILIPINO TIES

Editorial Board

Comics scriptwriting winners



Winners all (from left) : Ilustre, Marquez, Lingat, Veniles, Galias and Agsalda.

The Commission on Filipinos Overseas – Task Force Against Human Trafficking (CFO-TFAHT) spearheaded the conduct of the Comics Scriptwriting Contest on Migration. The contest was open to all Filipinos residing in the Philippines or overseas.

CFO-TFAHT received a total of 33 script entries with stories revolving on the following subject areas: trafficking, intermarriage, overseas Filipino workers and irregular migrants, and other issues relevant to Philippine migration.

After deliberation by the panel of judges which was composed of representatives from the National Commission on Culture and the Arts, Basis Center for Women and CFO-TFAHT, the following entries were chosen as winners:

Title	Writer
1. Hawaii on my Mind	Cherry Joy Veniles
2. Quo Vadis, Illegal Recruiter?	Crisostomo Ilustre
3. Bukang Liwayway	Maria Regina Galias
4. Ilaw sa Dilim	Ian Vergel Agsalda
5. Ina	Stuart Lingat, Jr.
6. Dukha	Noreen Marquez

The writers of the winning entries were awarded in a ceremony held on 16 January 2009 at the Commission on Filipinos Overseas building.



Anti-trafficking

Harmonizing and analyzing data through the Philippine Information System on Trafficking

The software system is a first in the country and contains the most comprehensive data bank on trafficking and related cases



Trafficking in persons is a global issue, but because of the clandestine nature of the crime, there is a lack of systematic data banking of trafficking incidents. This means that a reliable data on the trafficking of human beings that would allow comparative analyses, monitoring and countermeasures is scarce. Because of the need to introduce a comprehensive database program, the Commission on Filipinos Overseas as head of the Presidential Task Force Against Human Trafficking, is currently consolidating database information from government agencies and nongovernment organizations.

The Philippine Information System on Trafficking or PHILIST is a comprehensive databank and information system on trafficking and other related cases that will make use of the Standard Reporting Format (SRF), currently implemented by the National Police Commission (NAPOLCOM). It will include other data from the Department of Foreign Affairs, Department of Justice, Department of Social Welfare and Development, Bureau of Immigration, Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, National Bureau of Investigation and nongovernment organizations involved in anti-trafficking.

The system will make available on a regular and continuing basis reliable statistics on trafficking and other related cases which are useful for referral and coordination, minimizing duplication of reports and statistics, as well as ensuring effective monitoring of trafficking cases.

Adoption of the NAPOLCOM SRF

The first phase of the project involves the adoption of the NAPOLCOM information system arising from the Standard Reporting Format

approved by the Department of Interior and Local Government.

The second phase involves the design and programming of a comprehensive database system that is capable of systematically storing, organizing and processing data obtained from the NAPOLCOM, DFA, DOJ, DSWD, POEA, BI, NBI and NGOs. As with all database, the design process will involve data definition, data refinement, and establishing relationships between the fields or attributes of the database. The programming phase, on the other hand, will involve making decisions about what the program should accomplish, coding, testing and debugging.

Data coming from these sources shall be regularly uploaded to the system and shall undergo a process of data refinement and editing to conform to the general format for data capture. It will also treat other existing laws relevant to trafficking, such as the Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act (R.A. No. 8042), Special Protection of Children Against Child Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination (R.A. No. 7160), Violence Against Women Act (R.A. 9262), Philippine Passport Act (R.A. No. 8239), and the Mail-Order Bride Law (R.A. No. 6985).

Features of the database

The comprehensive data base program will have mechanisms to check the validity or duplicity of the data submitted per agency, as well as from other agencies. For example, the first batch of 100 cases to be submitted by NAPOLCOM will be counterchecked with the next 100 cases they will submit, which will further be cross-referred from those culled from other agencies. Examples of information that will be cross-referred are names

of complainants, birthdates, names of offenders, nature of acts committed and venue of trafficking incident.

The Trafficking Watchlist will include the names of offenders, recruiters and their agents, owners of clubs, bars and other establishments, as well as other individuals facilitating the commission of trafficking acts, who are involved in several trafficking acts, habitual delinquent, recidivist, etc. Said information will be transmitted to relevant law enforcement authorities including police stations, immigration officials in airports and port areas, courts, etc. to alert them and facilitate arrest, to prevent future trafficking. Rules and mechanics in creating a Watchlist are determined by the Task Force to ensure due process and to respect human rights.

Monitoring can be done by counterchecking the status of every case in the database, with the proceedings of the case in courts, Office of the Prosecutor, NBI, PNP, Philippine Embassies and

continued on page 13

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

RECOMMENDED

**Windows XP
Pentium 4 or higher processor
256 MB RAM or higher
at least 1 GB of free hard disk space**

MINIMUM

**Windows 98
Pentium III
128 MB RAM
at least 1 GB of free hard disk space**

Anti-trafficking

The CFO's Task Force Against Human Trafficking (TFHT), in line with its mandate to conduct a comprehensive community education and information campaign program against human trafficking, has organized the Advocacy Training for Youth on Anti-Trafficking of Women and Children for Labor and Sexual Exploitation in Baguio City from 29-30 August 2008, and Legazpi City from 11-12 November 2008. The activities are a follow-up to the previous trainings conducted in the cities of Cebu in November 2007, and Davao in March 2008 to cover the Visayas and Mindanao regions, respectively.

The advocacy training is envisioned to create awareness among Filipino youth about issues and concerns on trafficking in persons, foster youth participation in eliminating trafficking activities, and organize anti-trafficking advocates in the provinces in Northern and Central Luzon, and the Bicol region. The TFHT targeted the youth as participants because it is very important to involve them in the advocacy, given that children and young workers are the more vulnerable sectors who may be victimized by traffickers.

In the Northern and Central Luzon phase, the TFHT has partnered with the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG). The training involved 50 youth leaders representing the *Sangguniang Kabataan* from Abra, Benguet, Ifugao, Ilocos Sur, La Union, Mountain Province, Nueva Vizcaya, Quirino, Tarlac, and Zambales. Student leaders from Benguet State University, Pines City National High School, St. Louis University, University of Cordilleras, and University of the Philippines-Baguio also took part.

In the Bicol region, TFHT has partnered with the Department of Social Welfare and Development-Field Office V. The 40 participants represented the *Sangguniang Kabataan* and student leaders from the provinces of Albay, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Catanduanes, Masbate and Sorsogon. The student leaders were from Aquinas University, Ateneo de Naga University, Bicol University, Divine Word College of Legaspi, University of Northeastern Philippines, and University of Santa Isabel. Active members of the Pag-Asa Youth Association of the Philippines also participated to represent the out-of-school youth sector.



Tackling the issue of trafficking means involving the youth in the campaign, considering that they are the more vulnerable sector who may be victimized by traffickers

The topics discussed in the training were Republic Act 9208 or the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003; United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child; Gender Sensitivity Issues and Roles; Guide, Techniques and Strategies to Interviewing Trafficking Victims and Witnesses; Programs and Services of CFO and partner agencies on Anti-Trafficking; and Basic Concept on Advocacy Work. There were workshops on Children's Situationer, hands-on training on Philippine Information System on Trafficking, and Advocacy Planning.

The common issues raised by the participants were on sexual harassment, abortion, prostitution, juvenile crime, lack of education opportunities, drug abuse, domestic violence, pornography, and gambling which can be attributed to poverty, over population, peer pressures and lack of parental guidance.

During the workshop on advocacy planning, participants were grouped and tasked to

prepare a year-long action plan they are expected to implement in their communities. The objective of the activity is to promote the participation of the youth in the advocacy work. The Pines City National High School in Baguio City was named the Best Workplan for its focus on different anti-trafficking activities such as echoing of the advocacy training for youth, producing a documentary about human trafficking, organizing fund raising events for other anti-trafficking activities, and quarterly discussion on specific topics such as child labor, sexual exploitation and drug abuse. In the training held in the Bicol region, the group from Camarines Sur was recognized for their proposed projects including campaign program for students and youth organizations to become anti-trafficking advocates.

The last phase of the advocacy training for youth in Metro Manila and Region IV is scheduled in March 2009.

The advocacy training is envisioned to create awareness among Filipino youth about issues and concerns on trafficking in persons, foster youth participation in eliminating trafficking activities, and organize anti-trafficking advocates in the provinces



HUMAN TRAFFICKING ?

Ano Ito?



Ang paghihikayat ng mga tao...



Ang pagbi-biyaha o paglilipat ng mga tao...



Ang pagtanggap o pagkanlong ng mga tao...



Ang paggawa, paglilimbag, paglalabas o pamamahagi ng mga pekeng dokumento para sa mga tao...



Ang pagpapa-anunsiyo, paglalathala o pamamahagi ng materyales o kagamitan na nagtataguyod ng trafficking ng tao...



Ang pagpapa-kasal, tunay man ito o hindi...

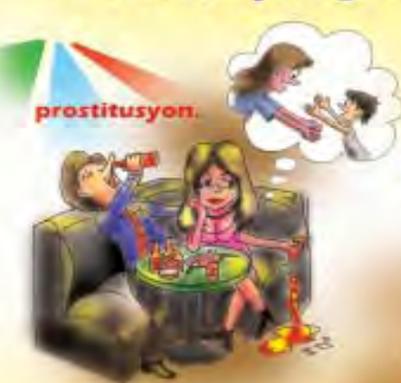


Ang pag-anlok sa isang dayuhan ng isang Pinay na papakasalan, kapalit ang pera o ari-arian...



Ang pagkukpok o pag-ampon ng mga bata...

sa paraang pananakot, pagdukot, paglinlang, paggamit ng dahas o kapangyarihan, at pagsamantala sa kahinaan ng isang tao, upang isadlak sila sa alinman sa mga sumusunod... sapilitang paggawa.



prostitusyon.



pornograpiya.



pagbebenta o pagtanggap ng anumang bahagi ng katawan ng tao.



sa armadong pakikibaka sa Pilipinas o sa ibayong dagat.

Office of the President of the Philippines - Commission on Filipinos Overseas
Task Force Against Human Trafficking

Address : 6th Floor, Citigold Center, 1345 Pres. Quirino Ave. corner South Superhighway, Manila 1007
 Tel. No. : (+632) 561-8321 loc. 401; Tel/Fax No.: 561-8291

E-mail : trafficking@cfo.gov.ph
 Website : www.cfo-antitrafficking.org.ph

Program special

CFO initiated websites

Several websites have been developed by the CFO to advance the cause of Philippine nurses, protect migrant workers, espouse the use of Philippine languages overseas and promote Philippine schools overseas. These are all hosted and maintained by the CFO. These websites are:



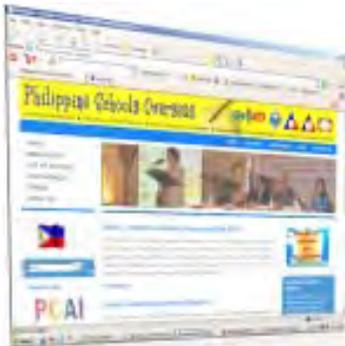
<http://www.learnfilipino.ph/>

The LearnFilipino.ph website is an internet-based guide to learning the Filipino language. Lessons are situated within recognizable Philippine conditions. Lessons include vocabulary words, sample idioms, useful phrases, common expressions, and simple conversations. Audio sounds are added as guide for correct pronunciation. Grammar notes are likewise provided to aid in conjugation and tenses. There are also culture features that serve as endnotes about the different Filipino customs and traditions. To assess the students' proficiency, sets of questions are placed at the end of each session.

A Registration fee of US\$20.00 per module is required, and may be remitted to CFO through online payment.

<http://www.cfo-antitrafficking.org.ph/>

Created by an Executive Order and operating under the supervision of the CFO, the Task Force Against Human Trafficking maintains a website where daily news on trafficking and illegal recruitment are posted. It also contains advisories and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on what trafficking is all about. Relevant laws and publications, including statistics are also readily available for download.



<http://www.cfo-psy.org.ph/>

The website links all 43 Philippine schools located in nine countries. The site serves as a forum between the schools and relevant Philippine government agencies. It also contains the latest news affecting these schools, materials and data from its conferences as well as download section where manuals, forms and permits can be readily accessed.

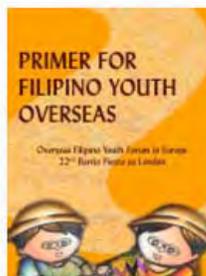
<http://www.tfnclx.org.ph/>

Developed in 2006, the Presidential Task Force on NCLEX website primarily serves as the electronic lobbying arm to reach out to the key stakeholders and the nursing population for the establishment of an NCLEX testing site in the Philippines. After its successful bid, the website now serves as a newsroom for activities and updates regarding nursing events and the NCLEX. The site contains a download section where NCLEX materials, as well as directory of the US Board of Nursing may be downloaded. The site is regularly updated and maintained by the CFO.



Other websites currently being developed and which will be launched this 2009 include the LINKAPIL website, Exchange Visitor's Program, the Bayanihan sa Canada homepage and the Presidential awards site.

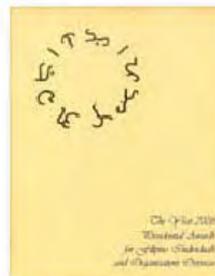
CFO Publications...
continued from page 17



PRIMER FOR FILIPINO YOUTH OVERSEAS

The primer contains information regarding Philippine laws and regulations affecting overseas youth as well as various government programs and services for them. It also includes information about the Philippine educational system, available scholarships and training grants, and opportunities in the Philippines for overseas Filipino youth.

Hard copy only, available upon request



THE YEAR 2008 PRESIDENTIAL AWARDS FOR FILIPINO INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS OVERSEAS

Published biennially for the Presidential Awards, the souvenir book contains detailed information on the contributions and accomplishments of individual and organizations who are recipients of the Awards. It also contains a directory of past and present awardees.

AOS and CFO honor outstanding seafarers

Across the seven seas, Filipino seafarers are simply the best

The Outstanding Seafarers of the Year Award (OSYA) is an annual search for the country's hardworking Filipino seafarers whose professional competence and excellence exemplify the best Filipino traits and values. First conferred in 1998 by the Apostleship of the Sea, the award gives honor and recognize Filipino seafarers for their valuable and commendable contribution to the maritime industry and the Philippine nation.

The Commission on Filipinos Overseas' membership in the OSYA Committee commenced in 2003 and was assigned to write the OSYA Primer, evaluation and nomination forms, and awards rules. For its active role and untiring effort to make OSYA a success each year, the CFO was unanimously selected as OSYA chair for five consecutive years.

For year 2008, the OSYA selection committee received and evaluated eight nominations vying for the four OSYA Awards.

OSYA for Maritime Manpower. Capt. Victor Del Prado received the OSYA for Maritime Manpower for his extensive shipboard experience which granted him senior management level positions in academic, employment and professional sectors of the Philippine maritime industry. He is the current President of Klaveness Maritime Agency (KMA) which has trained and employed Filipino seafarers for more than 60 years. Capt. Del Prado is also a member of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) - Maritime Training Inspectorate that inspects and accredits schools offering maritime courses and that determines compliance with the standards and requirements of CHED.

OSYA for Maritime Industry. Mr. Carlos Franco who hails from Leyte and is employed as an Electrician at the Philippine Transmarine, Inc. was awarded the OSYA for Maritime Industry. With Mr. Franco's education and experience in electrical engineering, he was motivated to embark into studies and researches on Seaborn Rocket Launching System, Electric Propulsion in Modern Ship, Practice of Electrical Engineering in Marine Ship and Electrical Maintenance in Merchant Marine Ship. His studies were published in the Philippines and Norway.

OSYA for Community Service. Second Officer Arnulfo Gomez of Kidapawan City is an active member of various organizations which uplift the lives of the underprivileged, bagged the OSYA for Community Service. Mr. Gomez is part of the Jail Visitation Ministry in his Catholic congregation that conducts health services and spiritual counseling for the inmates of Cotabato Provincial Jail. He also initiated a feeding program for the indigent children of Kidapawan City in cooperation with the Divine Mercy Apostolate Group. Mr. Gomez actively volunteers for NAMFREL for the promotion of fair and honest elections in Kidapawan City.

OSYA for Valor. Jose Mari Garbo and Rey Padin, seafarers who boarded the MV Princess of the Stars as passengers, were given the OSYA for Valor for saving the lives of other passengers



Outstanding mariners (clockwise from bottom): the crew of the M/V Ioannis K, Franco, del Prado, and Gomez.

and managing the situation while gusty winds slowed down the engines and sank the ship.

Together with Garbo and Padin, the crew of M/V Ioannis K composed of 15 Filipinos and five Greek officers, rescued 14 Filipinos in the high seas between Malaysia and the Philippines, after a Mindanao-bound ferry capsized near Sabah due to bad weather. The crew also provided medical help and food to traumatized survivors until they were turned over to local officials of Cagayan de Oro City.

The OSYA was handed out during the 13th National Seafarers' Day Celebration, which is the culminating activity of the National Maritime Week, on 28 September 2008 at the Quirino Grandstand, Rizal Park, Manila. DOTC Usec. Elena Bautista, OWWA Administrator Carmelita Dimzon and Mayor Alfredo Lim presented the awards.

The PHILIST System (from page 9)

Consulates, or other entities. Statistical reports of cases can be generated from data (*number of cases pending, number of cases dismissed, etc.*) for submission to the DOJ or Office of the Prosecutors and NAPOLCOM (in relation to those arising from police stations) for follow-up. New developments on the status of the case from DOJ, NAPOLCOM and other agencies are submitted to the Task Force for updating of database. The Task Force will have to determine

the submission period of every agency for the timely generation of statistical reports.

Levels of security

Only authorized personnel are allowed to work on the trafficking database in compliance with the confidentiality rule of RA 9208. The Task Force determines the functions of each personnel (encoding, editing, monitoring, generation of

statistical reports, etc.) A security control features will be created to secure the database from information thieves.

The database also allows quick search of information available, including those in the disaggregated data. The levels of security will determine who can have access to quick search.

Programs and services

Month of Overseas Filipinos, (from page 1)

proper recognition to the overseas Filipino workers and their families, their close-knit relations despite the distance, and their entrepreneurial spirit.

It was followed by the *Cineforum* series aimed at screening films and documentaries on migration and related issues. It seeks to assist prospective migrants make informed decisions regarding settlement abroad, and generate community involvement in migration concerns. This was held in universities and colleges in Metro Manila, Cebu, Batangas and Legaspi until December 11, 2008 (please see related story on page 20).

For the month of December, posters and tarpaulins celebrating this special month were posted along the streets of Roxas Boulevard and EDSA, and premises of member agencies.

OFWs are also given special treatment upon arrival at the airport by the OWWA through special lanes, priority processing and give-aways. Their families may also be recipients of the *Pamaskong Handog* and the OFW Family Days through the regional offices.

On December 10, 2008, the President conferred the 2008 Presidential Awards on 31 individuals and organizations based in 31 countries. This is a biennial awards system instituted in 1991 to recognize outstanding Filipino individuals and organizations overseas for assisting in national development efforts, for advancing the cause of Filipino communities abroad, and for excelling in their fields of expertise or profession.

Back-to-back forums were also sponsored by the Center for Migrant Advocacy. Last December 12, 2008, a public forum on OWWA was held at the Bay view Hotel to discuss the results of an online survey regarding the programs and services of OWWA. On December 18, a public forum on the Philippine compliance with the UN Migrants Convention took place at the UP Asian Center, UP Diliman, Quezon City.

As a culmination, the International Migrants' Day was held on December 18 through a post-Global Forum on Migration and Development. This provided a venue for those who were not able to participate or attend the GFMD, listen to reports of both the government and civil society sectors, and participate in future programs of action as a result of GFMD. It was held at the auditorium of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts in Intramuros, Manila.

Various publications were also launched such as the *Migrant Voices Part 2* by the PMRW, *2008 World Migration Report* by the International Organization for Migration, and *Philippine Statistical Almanac on Migration and Development* by the Institute for Migration and Development Issues.

Senator Nishihara, Filipinos in Hawaii donate books to public schools

On November 9, 2008, the Commission on Filipinos Overseas received a 8,351 shipment of used books from Hawaii State Senator Clarence Nishihara, Filipino Community Center, Inc. (FilCom Center), the Congress of Visayan Organizations (COVO) and the Hawaii International Relief Organization (HIRO).



Sen. Nishihara

The book donation was coursed through the *Lingkod sa Kapwa Filipino* program (LINKAPIL) of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas. The books were donated to 113 schools identified by the Department of Education as most in need of books in the provinces of Quezon, Northern Samar, Western Samar, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Romblon, Sorsogon and Albay.

The 10,994-kilogram shipment includes volumes of encyclopedias, dictionaries, thesaurus, and instructional books for teachers, textbooks on English, Mathematics, Science, Values Education, and United States History for primary, secondary and tertiary students.

Mr. Germiniano "Toy" Arre, Jr. of the FilCom Center also donated PhP244, 432.00 to cover the expenses for the shipment of books to the beneficiaries.

Globe partners with CFO for overseas Filipinos



Globe communications and the Commission on Filipino Overseas recently tied up for programs, projects, and services geared towards helping the OFW communities. Through the partnership, Globe and CFO will work together on local and overseas projects to promote the well-being and interest of overseas Filipinos. The partnership enables overseas Filipinos to have easier access to Globe's myriad products and services for overseas Filipinos when they visit the CFO offices in Manila and Cebu, more information about relevant services through CFO publications, and more prizes and entertainment in CFO events. Globe will also participate in CFO's pre-departure orientation seminars for US, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand bound emigrants. Present during the partnership signing are (seated, from left) Globe OFC Local Segment Business Head Fernando L. Busuego and CFO Executive Director Jennifer O. Gonzales together with Globe and CFO representatives.

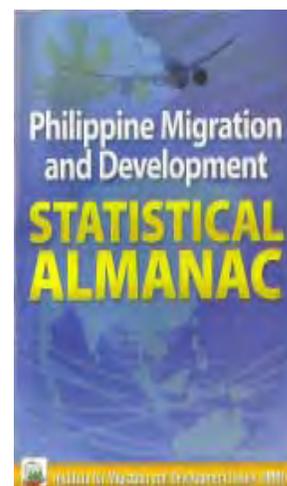
Philippine School Doha, (from page 4)

ang *Wikang Filipino, Pilipino Saan Man Sa Mundo, Anak ng Bagong Bayani*) of the Millennium International School in Riyadh, KSA, 2nd prize, Prescilla Mae D. Acidera (*Wikang Filipino, Dangal ng Lahi Mo; Panawagan sa mga Kabataan Wikang Filipino Pahalagahan; Wikang Filipino, Ipagmalaki Saan Man sa Mundo!*) of the Philippine school Doha in Doha, Qatar, 3rd prize, and Galvin Ray O. Dizon (*Filipino, Hindi Banyaga! Wikang Filipino, Tagumpay Mo!; Wika Mo, Wikang Filipino, Wika ng Mundo, Mahalaga!*) of the Philippine School Doha in Doha, Qatar, consolation prize.

The contest sponsored by the Inter-Agency Committee on Philippine Schools Overseas (PSOs) gathered 73 and 63 entries in the poetry and essay competitions, respectively. Fifteen Philippine schools from 5 countries participated in the competition. The formal awarding will be held during the 8th Conference of PSOs in Davao City, Philippines on 04 - 07 May 2009.

IMDI and CFO launch Philippine Migration and Development Statistical Almanac

A first in the country, the 339-page almanac covers over 600 tables, 239 countries of destinations and 79 Philippine provinces



The Commission on Filipinos Overseas participated in the launching of the first-ever Philippine Migration and Development Statistical Almanac on 12 January 2009, at the Thomas Aquinas Research Center of the University of Santo Tomas. The event was also attended by representatives from the government, civil society organizations, and the academe.

The Almanac was developed by the Institute for Migration and Development Initiative (IMDI) headed by Mr. Jeremiah Opiniano, in collaboration with the CFO, Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and UST Social Research Center. It is a result of three years of compiling and harmonizing statistics from various government sources on Filipinos' international migration.

Through the Almanac, the publishers hope that the general public can begin to link international migration and Philippine national development issues empirically, combining anecdotal evidence with the voluminous data compiled. The Almanac is also web-based; its contents can be downloaded from www.almanac.ofw.philanthropy.org/.

United States, The

Year	Population	Area (sq. km)	Population Density (per sq. km)
2007	304,350,000	9,833,517	30.9
2006	302,829,000	9,833,517	30.8
2005	301,308,000	9,833,517	30.7
2004	299,787,000	9,833,517	30.6
2003	298,266,000	9,833,517	30.5
2002	296,745,000	9,833,517	30.4
2001	295,224,000	9,833,517	30.3
2000	293,703,000	9,833,517	30.2
1999	292,182,000	9,833,517	30.1
1998	290,661,000	9,833,517	30.0
1997	289,140,000	9,833,517	29.9
1996	287,619,000	9,833,517	29.8
1995	286,098,000	9,833,517	29.7
1994	284,577,000	9,833,517	29.6
1993	283,056,000	9,833,517	29.5
1992	281,535,000	9,833,517	29.4
1991	280,014,000	9,833,517	29.3
1990	278,493,000	9,833,517	29.2
1989	276,972,000	9,833,517	29.1
1988	275,451,000	9,833,517	29.0
1987	273,930,000	9,833,517	28.9
1986	272,409,000	9,833,517	28.8
1985	270,888,000	9,833,517	28.7
1984	269,367,000	9,833,517	28.6
1983	267,846,000	9,833,517	28.5
1982	266,325,000	9,833,517	28.4
1981	264,804,000	9,833,517	28.3
1980	263,283,000	9,833,517	28.2
1979	261,762,000	9,833,517	28.1
1978	260,241,000	9,833,517	28.0
1977	258,720,000	9,833,517	27.9
1976	257,199,000	9,833,517	27.8
1975	255,678,000	9,833,517	27.7
1974	254,157,000	9,833,517	27.6
1973	252,636,000	9,833,517	27.5
1972	251,115,000	9,833,517	27.4
1971	249,594,000	9,833,517	27.3
1970	248,073,000	9,833,517	27.2
1969	246,552,000	9,833,517	27.1
1968	245,031,000	9,833,517	27.0
1967	243,510,000	9,833,517	26.9
1966	241,989,000	9,833,517	26.8
1965	240,468,000	9,833,517	26.7
1964	238,947,000	9,833,517	26.6
1963	237,426,000	9,833,517	26.5
1962	235,905,000	9,833,517	26.4
1961	234,384,000	9,833,517	26.3
1960	232,863,000	9,833,517	26.2
1959	231,342,000	9,833,517	26.1
1958	229,821,000	9,833,517	26.0
1957	228,300,000	9,833,517	25.9
1956	226,779,000	9,833,517	25.8
1955	225,258,000	9,833,517	25.7
1954	223,737,000	9,833,517	25.6
1953	222,216,000	9,833,517	25.5
1952	220,695,000	9,833,517	25.4
1951	219,174,000	9,833,517	25.3
1950	217,653,000	9,833,517	25.2
1949	216,132,000	9,833,517	25.1
1948	214,611,000	9,833,517	25.0
1947	213,090,000	9,833,517	24.9
1946	211,569,000	9,833,517	24.8
1945	210,048,000	9,833,517	24.7
1944	208,527,000	9,833,517	24.6
1943	207,006,000	9,833,517	24.5
1942	205,485,000	9,833,517	24.4
1941	203,964,000	9,833,517	24.3
1940	202,443,000	9,833,517	24.2
1939	200,922,000	9,833,517	24.1
1938	199,401,000	9,833,517	24.0
1937	197,880,000	9,833,517	23.9
1936	196,359,000	9,833,517	23.8
1935	194,838,000	9,833,517	23.7
1934	193,317,000	9,833,517	23.6
1933	191,796,000	9,833,517	23.5
1932	190,275,000	9,833,517	23.4
1931	188,754,000	9,833,517	23.3
1930	187,233,000	9,833,517	23.2
1929	185,712,000	9,833,517	23.1
1928	184,191,000	9,833,517	23.0
1927	182,670,000	9,833,517	22.9
1926	181,149,000	9,833,517	22.8
1925	179,628,000	9,833,517	22.7
1924	178,107,000	9,833,517	22.6
1923	176,586,000	9,833,517	22.5
1922	175,065,000	9,833,517	22.4
1921	173,544,000	9,833,517	22.3
1920	172,023,000	9,833,517	22.2
1919	170,502,000	9,833,517	22.1
1918	168,981,000	9,833,517	22.0
1917	167,460,000	9,833,517	21.9
1916	165,939,000	9,833,517	21.8
1915	164,418,000	9,833,517	21.7
1914	162,897,000	9,833,517	21.6
1913	161,376,000	9,833,517	21.5
1912	159,855,000	9,833,517	21.4
1911	158,334,000	9,833,517	21.3
1910	156,813,000	9,833,517	21.2
1909	155,292,000	9,833,517	21.1
1908	153,771,000	9,833,517	21.0
1907	152,250,000	9,833,517	20.9
1906	150,729,000	9,833,517	20.8
1905	149,208,000	9,833,517	20.7
1904	147,687,000	9,833,517	20.6
1903	146,166,000	9,833,517	20.5
1902	144,645,000	9,833,517	20.4
1901	143,124,000	9,833,517	20.3
1900	141,603,000	9,833,517	20.2
1899	140,082,000	9,833,517	20.1
1898	138,561,000	9,833,517	20.0
1897	137,040,000	9,833,517	19.9
1896	135,519,000	9,833,517	19.8
1895	133,998,000	9,833,517	19.7
1894	132,477,000	9,833,517	19.6
1893	130,956,000	9,833,517	19.5
1892	129,435,000	9,833,517	19.4
1891	127,914,000	9,833,517	19.3
1890	126,393,000	9,833,517	19.2
1889	124,872,000	9,833,517	19.1
1888	123,351,000	9,833,517	19.0
1887	121,830,000	9,833,517	18.9
1886	120,309,000	9,833,517	18.8
1885	118,788,000	9,833,517	18.7
1884	117,267,000	9,833,517	18.6
1883	115,746,000	9,833,517	18.5
1882	114,225,000	9,833,517	18.4
1881	112,704,000	9,833,517	18.3
1880	111,183,000	9,833,517	18.2
1879	109,662,000	9,833,517	18.1
1878	108,141,000	9,833,517	18.0
1877	106,620,000	9,833,517	17.9
1876	105,099,000	9,833,517	17.8
1875	103,578,000	9,833,517	17.7
1874	102,057,000	9,833,517	17.6
1873	100,536,000	9,833,517	17.5
1872	99,015,000	9,833,517	17.4
1871	97,494,000	9,833,517	17.3
1870	95,973,000	9,833,517	17.2
1869	94,452,000	9,833,517	17.1
1868	92,931,000	9,833,517	17.0
1867	91,410,000	9,833,517	16.9
1866	89,889,000	9,833,517	16.8
1865	88,368,000	9,833,517	16.7
1864	86,847,000	9,833,517	16.6
1863	85,326,000	9,833,517	16.5
1862	83,805,000	9,833,517	16.4
1861	82,284,000	9,833,517	16.3
1860	80,763,000	9,833,517	16.2
1859	79,242,000	9,833,517	16.1
1858	77,721,000	9,833,517	16.0
1857	76,200,000	9,833,517	15.9
1856	74,679,000	9,833,517	15.8
1855	73,158,000	9,833,517	15.7
1854	71,637,000	9,833,517	15.6
1853	70,116,000	9,833,517	15.5
1852	68,595,000	9,833,517	15.4
1851	67,074,000	9,833,517	15.3
1850	65,553,000	9,833,517	15.2
1849	64,032,000	9,833,517	15.1
1848	62,511,000	9,833,517	15.0
1847	60,990,000	9,833,517	14.9
1846	59,469,000	9,833,517	14.8
1845	57,948,000	9,833,517	14.7
1844	56,427,000	9,833,517	14.6
1843	54,906,000	9,833,517	14.5
1842	53,385,000	9,833,517	14.4
1841	51,864,000	9,833,517	14.3
1840	50,343,000	9,833,517	14.2
1839	48,822,000	9,833,517	14.1
1838	47,301,000	9,833,517	14.0
1837	45,780,000	9,833,517	13.9
1836	44,259,000	9,833,517	13.8
1835	42,738,000	9,833,517	13.7
1834	41,217,000	9,833,517	13.6
1833	39,696,000	9,833,517	13.5
1832	38,175,000	9,833,517	13.4
1831	36,654,000	9,833,517	13.3
1830	35,133,000	9,833,517	13.2
1829	33,612,000	9,833,517	13.1
1828	32,091,000	9,833,517	13.0
1827	30,570,000	9,833,517	12.9
1826	29,049,000	9,833,517	12.8
1825	27,528,000	9,833,517	12.7
1824	26,007,000	9,833,517	12.6
1823	24,486,000	9,833,517	12.5
1822	22,965,000	9,833,517	12.4
1821	21,444,000	9,833,517	12.3
1820	19,923,000	9,833,517	12.2
1819	18,402,000	9,833,517	12.1
1818	16,881,000	9,833,517	12.0
1817	15,360,000	9,833,517	11.9
1816	13,839,000	9,833,517	11.8
1815	12,318,000	9,833,517	11.7
1814	10,797,000	9,833,517	11.6
1813	9,276,000	9,833,517	11.5
1812	7,755,000	9,833,517	11.4
1811	6,234,000	9,833	

Program special

Nursing competitiveness, (from page 1)

managing nurse migration toward sustainable health resources for health policy; credentialing issues for Filipino nurses; and promoting nurse competitiveness through skills and technology transfer. After each session, workshops were conducted to discuss further the participants' insights on the issues and formulate initiatives to make the nursing sector globally competitive.

Considering the exodus of Filipino nurses to developed countries such as US, United Kingdom and Saudi Arabia, Secretary Ang applauded those who stayed behind despite the low pay. He said that their demonstration of humility and concern for the country's health needs is a supreme sacrifice... the Filipino values at their best." He also called on the stakeholders to address the deterioration of the quality of the nursing education, as well as the growing unemployment of new graduates.

The conference was also attended by officials of the US National Council of State Boards of Nursing — Drs. Casey Marks and Anne Wendt.



Resource speakers who shared their expertise include Commissioner Ruth Padilla and Dr. Carmencita Abaquin of the Professional Regulatory Commission; Dr. Leah Samaco-Paquiz of the Philippine Nurses Association; Drs. Kenneth



Nursing and NCLEX speakers (clockwise from bottom): Dr. Ang of the CFO and Dr. Marks from the US NCSBN; Dr. Wendt also from the NCSBN, and the conference logo



Nursing facts and figures

- In 2008, there are a total of **483,332** registered nurses in the country.
- There were **240** categories of courses or degree of second-coursers who took the nursing licensure exam in 2004-2005.
- In 2006, **8,376 (58.5%)** out of **14,312** first-time Philippine-educated candidates who took the NCLEX-RN exam passed.
- On the other hand, out of 11,103 CGFNS exam takers in 2005, **4,685** or **42.2%** passed.
- There are a total of **436** recorded nursing schools in the country in academic year 2008-2009.
- Only **13%** of the total number of schools produced quality graduates.
- Out of the total 436 nursing schools, only **54** are accredited as of May 31, 2008 by the Federation of Accrediting Agencies of the Philippines.
- It is estimated that nurses employed in the private sector consist of about **50%** of total nurses employed in the country.
- The entry salaries of nurses are **P 5,522-8,200** for private hospitals, **P 9,939-12,546** for specialty hospitals, and **P 9,939-15,841** for public hospitals.

Ronquillo and Anthony Calibo of the Department of Health; Ms. Rosario May Mayor of the Philippine Nurses Association of America; Dr. Federico Macaranas of the Asian Institute of Management Policy Center; Atty. Rodrigo Quimbo of the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools Information Office; Atty. Louie Andrew Calvario of the Intellectual Property Office; Dr. Fely Marilyn Lorenzo of the National Institutes of Health; Dr. Carmelita Divinagracia of the Association of Deans of Philippine Colleges of Nursing; Gen. Edgar Aglipay of the Philippine Retirement Authority; and Dr. Josefina Tuazon of the University of the Philippines College of Nursing.

The issues and initiatives discussed during the conference included: 1.) regulation and employment

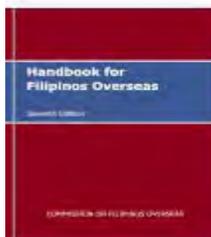
of Filipino nurses which include issues and initiatives on nurses' unemployment, exploitative employment, and low salary grade; 2.) nurse migration management and ethical recruitment which includes issues and initiatives on the Human Resources for Health Master Plan, Nursing Information System, ethical recruitment framework and "brain circulation" in nursing; 3.) qualification issues of Filipino nurses which includes issues and initiatives on performance of Philippine educated nurses in foreign licensure examinations and the nurse licensure examination; and 4.) competency development and technology transfer which include issues and initiatives on nursing education and reintegration program for "nurse returnees".

The conference generated a Philippine nursing competitiveness work plan, which is expected to benefit some 480,000 Filipino registered nurses, including those working abroad. It also paved way for the multi-sector appeal to implement Salary Grade 15 for public sector nurses.

On October 10, 2008, a post-conference workshop was held at the CFO to translate the strategies generated during the conference into a work plan. The work plan will be integrated into and be aligned with the initiatives that are currently undertaken by the government, schools, and nursing groups to address the issues and problems in Philippine nursing competitiveness.

CFO Publications 101

Listings of current CFO publication and information materials available online



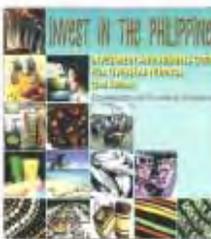
HANDBOOK FOR FILIPINOS OVERSEAS (7th ed)
CFO published this handbook to provide Filipinos overseas with a wide range of information on policies, programs, and activities of the Philippine government affecting Filipinos abroad and returning Filipinos.

It also provides information on a number of programs through which Filipinos overseas can actively participate in the realization of the Philippine development agenda.



LINKAPIL OPERATIONS MANUAL

The Lingkod sa Kapwa Filipino [Link for Philippine Development] or LINKAPIL Operations Manual addresses the information needs of Filipinos and other donors overseas concerning the transfer of various forms of assistance to the Philippines. It provides direction to donors, as well as beneficiaries in the Philippines, on the procedures and requirements in the processing of material donations from abroad.



INVEST IN THE PHILIPPINES (2nd ed)

The Commission on Filipinos Overseas has prepared this compendium as an initial step to provide accurate information about investing and doing business in the Philippines, particularly to those reacquiring their Filipino citizenship.

This compendium has initially put together information to help assess prospects for investing and doing business, particularly in small to medium scale enterprises.



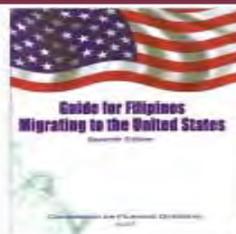
GUIDE TO LEARNING FILIPINO

This publication is a teaching and learning material intended for organizations and groups overseas interested to teach the Filipino language to children of overseas Filipinos and other individuals who would like to learn basic or conversational Filipino. The lessons are culture-based and intended to pave the way toward better understanding of the Philippines and its people.



MANUAL OF POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

This publication provides policy guidelines and specific rules and regulations for the establishment, accreditation, operation, and management of elementary and secondary schools in accordance with existing laws, the Memorandum of Agreement of 24 February 1995 establishing the Inter-Agency Committee on Philippine Schools Abroad, and [Executive Order No. 252](#) dated 5 May 2000 establishing the Inter-Agency Committee on Philippine Schools Overseas.



GUIDE FOR FILIPINOS MIGRATING TO THE US

This guide provides information to Filipinos migrating to the United States to inform them about travel regulations and requirements, create awareness about policies governing immigration and permanent residency, and knowledge of primary settlement concerns in the country.

available for emigrants only



HANDBOOK FOR FILIPINOS MIGRATING TO JAPAN

This guide provides information to Filipinos migrating to Japan to inform them about travel regulations and requirements, create awareness about policies governing immigration and permanent residency, and knowledge of primary settlement concerns in the country.

available for emigrants only



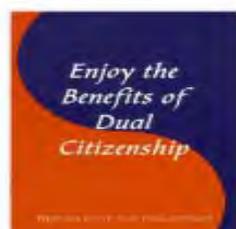
RA 9208: ANTI TRAFFICKING ACT OF 2003

This publication details the various means and modes of trafficking under RA 9208, and its penalties; government programs for trafficking victims; and facts, figures and routes related to trafficking. It was published in cooperation with the USAID/Solidarity Center/TUCP Anti-Trafficking Project.



GINTONG PATNUBAY

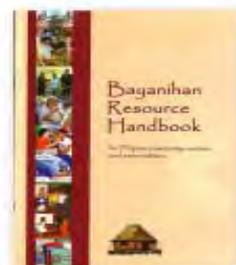
A project of the CFO using comics magazine as means of relating real-life stories and experiences of Filipinos overseas. Three comics have been published so far and a fourth one is due for release in March 2009.



ENJOY THE BENEFITS OF DUAL CITIZENSHIP

The CFO presents this primer on the Citizenship Retention and Re-acquisition Act of 2003 to recognize and restore rights of Filipinos overseas and the opportunities to retain or re-acquire their Filipino citizenship. It presents answers to the frequently asked questions about the new citizenship law.

available for emigrants only



BAYANIHAN RESOURCE HANDBOOK

This publication is intended to serve as a reference/guide for Filipino community centers and associations abroad administering programs and services for overseas Filipinos, and/or channelling development assistance to the Philippines.

See CFO publications, page 12

Presidential Awards, (from page 1)

The Presidential Awards has different categories. The *Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino* Award is conferred on Filipino associations or individuals for their significant contributions to Philippine national development efforts. The 2008 *LINKAPIL* awardees include the Association of Philippine Physicians in America, Tobias Enverga, Filipino Women's Association in the United Kingdom and Stichting Kapatiran.

The *Kaanib ng Bayan* is conferred on foreign individuals or organizations for their exceptional or significant contribution to Philippine reconstruction, progress and development, or have significantly benefited a sector or community in the Philippines, or advanced the cause of overseas Filipino communities. The 2008 *Kaanib* awardees are the Catholic Medical Mission Board,

Children's Chance CT, Heetens Helpgood Center Philippines and Laurence Ligier.

The *Banaag* Award is given to Filipino and foreign individuals or associations for their contributions which have significantly benefited a sector or community in the Philippines, or advanced the cause of Filipino communities abroad. The 2008 *Banaag* awardees include Alexander Asuncion, Patricia Berberabe, Angeles Carandang, Sr. Mary Aida Casambre, Esperanza Derpo, Filipino Korean Spouses Association, Lamberto Garcia, Eleanor Ho, Joseph Magdalena, Santiago Muzones, Jr., Dr. Antonio Noblejas, Lilian Overs, Philippine Community Council of New South Wales, Philippine Nurses Association of America, Adelina Philipsen and United Filipino Council of Hawaii.

The *Pamana ng Pilipino* Award, is conferred on Filipinos overseas

who have consistently pursued their work or profession with excellence and distinction. The 2008 *Pamana ng Pilipino* awardees include Amelita Besa and Romeo Dorotan, Bayani De Leon, Carlos Esguerra, Rico Hizon, Libertito Pelayo, Dr. Teresita Ramos and Engr. Nilo Villarin.

This year's awardees who came from Australia, Canada, France, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, United Kingdom, and United States of America, were selected from a total of 122 nominations from 29 countries through 39 Philippine embassies and consulates.



LINKAPIL Awardee. Mr. Tobias Enverga, Jr. of Canada receives the LINKAPIL Award from President Arroyo. Witnessing the awarding are Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita and CFO Executive Director Jennifer Gonzales.



Outstanding Overseas Filipinos. The awardees with the President. The 31 awardees who came from Australia, Canada, France, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, United Kingdom, and United States of America, were selected from a total of 122 nominations from 29 countries through 39 Philippine embassies and consulates.

OWWA recognizes model overseas families

'Parangal para sa matatag na pamilya.'

The Model OFW Family of the Year Award (MOFYA) is an annual search spearheaded by the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) to honor the sacrifices and contributions to the economy of Filipino immigrants abroad. It aims to give recognition to outstanding Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) and their families who continuously serve as an example to their own community. The MOFYA crusades best practices for OFWs and their families.

This year's theme, "Parangal sa Matatag na Pamilya", highlights the importance of family values with emphasis on the family's wholesome image, civic/community involvement, achievements in education and profession and success in managing family finances.

The 2008 MOFYA received 186 nominations from all over the Philippines. Seventeen land-based OFW families and another sixteen (16) sea-based OFW families were hailed as regional MOFYA winners and made the cut for the 2008 national MOFYA ceremonies. All 33 national finalists met in Manila for the coveted 2008 national MOFYA titles.

The national MOFYA title for the land-based category was conferred on Dr. Ibrahim Bahjin, a Paramount Sultan of Sulu and North Borneo, for his active role in advancing peace and development in Mindanao through his efforts of

uniting the different royal families of Sulu.

He is the founder and first president of the Islamic Institute for Professionals in Mecca and the Bangsa Sug Expatriates Conference in Jeddah. An internist and cardiologist by profession, Dr. Bahjin together with his family, two of whom are licensed medical practitioners, has organized free medical missions and blood drives in various remote barangays of Sulu, Basilan and Tawi-Tawi where basic healthcare is scarce. At present, Dr. Bahjin is the president of the Academy of Muslim Physicians, board member of Family Physicians and board trustee of the Zamboanga Medical Society.

Captain Victor Del Prado who represented the National Capital Region was awarded the national MOFYA for the sea-based category. After serving for 14 years as ship captain, Del Prado became the president and general manager of Klaveness Maritime Agency, Inc., which sponsors trainings, programs and overseas missions for outstanding marine cadets and has employed Filipino seafarers for more than 60 years. With his extensive shipboard experience and knowledge, Del Prado has served as president of the Master's and Mates Association of the Philippines and member of the Maritime Training Inspectorate. He was a recipient of the 2008 Outstanding Seafarer of the Year Award for Maritime Manpower. His family made numerous donations and projects for various civic organizations while his



The 2008 MOFYA awardees

children are active in outreach and volunteer programs.

Together with the Bahjin and the Del Prado families, the families of Capt. Norberto Bajenting Jr. and Engr. Samuel Micompal were also recognized. Capt. Bajenting, a maritime officer, bagged the Outstanding Achievement in Entrepreneurship for putting up a transportation services company which he converted into a cooperative that provides jobs to his kababayans in Region 11. The Micompal Family from the CARAGA region, on the other hand, was conferred the Outstanding Achievement in Community Projects. They spearheaded the growing of alternative herbal medicines in their town and were previously recognized with Countryside Excellence Service Award by Governor Ace Barbers for managing a P2.3 million water system which serves as a source of potable water in their community.

The national winners received cash prizes and gift certificates from Globe Telecom, Inc, Western Union, and Banco de Oro Banking Corporation. Vice President Noli 'Kabayan' de Castro, DOLE Secretary Marianito Romo, and OWWA Administrator Carmelita Dimzon graced the awarding ceremonies at the SM Mall of Asia, Pasay City on 14 November 2008.

Our Journey (from page 7)

but never fails to come home; the kind that is proud to say, "It is an honor to be a Filipino!"

Being a BBC World News anchor, I often get recognized and congratulated on the work I do. Sadly, that is not the case with many of my fellow awardees, and the countless other Filipinos who are doing their share to make the country proud.

After reading your stories, I share with you every word of congratulations that come my way. Fellow awardees, this is our collective journey. And today is our collective victory.

This is Rico Hizon, proud to be a Filipino, reporting live from Malacañang.



New anti-trafficking calendar.

The Task Force Against Human Trafficking recently published a desk calendar to enhance the public's awareness on the issue of human trafficking. The calendar features the forms and modes of trafficking in persons. The lay-out and design was made by Mr. Troy D. Agcanas of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas.

The Cineforum

Entertainment with an educational twist

The Commission on Filipinos Overseas – Task Force Against Human Trafficking, in partnership with the Scalabrini Center for People on the Move and the Bank of the Philippine Islands, recently concluded a series of film screening on migration and its attendant issues as part of the CFO's education and information campaign against human trafficking and in celebration of the 2008 Month of Overseas Filipinos and the International Migrants Day.

Dubbed as *The Cineforum*, the film screening had its run from November 15 to December 11, 2008, and covered areas such as the University of Nueva Caceres, Naga City in Bicol Region, the University of San Carlos and Cebu Normal University, Cebu City in Visayas, the Batangas State University, Batangas City in Southern Luzon, Polytechnic University of the Philippines and Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila, and the Scalabrini Center, Quezon City in the National Capital Region. More than a thousand participants from selected universities and colleges, faculty members, school officials, former overseas



Cineforum at the PUP-Sta.Mesa campus where a large number of students participated.

Filipino workers, officers and volunteers of non-government organizations attended the event.

Through the *Cineforum*, CFO seeks to assist prospective migrants make informed decisions regarding settlement abroad, as well as generate community involvement in migration concerns. It also aims to raise public awareness on various issues concerning migration, intermarriages, existing government policies, and programs directed against illegal recruitment, documentation fraud, and human trafficking, among others.

Among the films shown during the Cineforum were *Bayani Ba ang Nanay Ko* by Overseas Pinoy-TV which tells about the innocence, dreams, and acceptance of children left behind by parents working abroad, *Balikbayan (Homebound)* by US-based directors Larilyn Sanchez and Riza Manalo, a short film on the practical realities of mixing consumerism with traditions in a developing nation, *Ingat sa Biyahe* by the Visayan Forum Foundation, Inc., a documentary on the works and programs of a non-government organization involved in the fight against trafficking, *Bayani* by the Bank of the Philippine Islands, a tribute to overseas Filipino workers, and *Traffic* by MTV Exit, a short documentary on trafficking in Southeast Asia.

A panel of reactors/discussants composed of school officials, faculty and student organizations as well as representatives from the Department of Foreign Affairs, Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, Australian Embassy, National Labor Relations Commission, Philippine Information Agency, Scalabrini Center for People on the Move and the Episcopal Commission on Migrant and Itinerant People provided reactions to the films after the screening.



Panelists from the academe, the government and private organizations served as resource speakers during the Cineforum.

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Thank you.