

# Filipino

An official publication of the  
Commission on Filipinos Overseas  
distributed worldwide

# Ties

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With the devastation brought by Typhoons Ondoy and Pepeng

## DONATIONS FROM FILIPINOS OVERSEAS POUR IN

When Motherland calls for help, Filipinos abroad, whether on land or aboard ships, readily heed its call.

Some 800 families in Botolan, Zambales were the latest beneficiaries of the relief drive of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas for victims of the two successive storms "Ondoy" and "Pepeng".

Since the relief drive started on 06 October 2009, more than 3,869 families have received relief packs each containing 2 kilos of rice, 1 big can of assorted biscuits, 6 liters of distilled water, a box of vitamins, canned goods, noodles, coffee, and sugar in the cities of Marikina and Muntinlupa and in the provinces of Laguna, Rizal, including Talim Island in Laguna de Bay, Zambales and Pangasinan.

To date, the drive has received about P1.629 million in cash donations from overseas Filipinos and organizations.

The donors include the U.S. based Feed the Hungry, Inc., overseas-based Philippine schools, Filipino residents in Canada and Hawaii, and religious organizations abroad.

The areas where the relief effort were undertaken were identified beforehand by the donors. The drive was spearheaded by the Commission to provide an avenue for Filipino immigrants who want to do their part and help. A transparent system of accounting of the cash donations, as well as regular reporting to the donors, were established by CFO to ensure transparency of its operations.



*A family's delight.* A recipient family in one of the resettlement areas in the town of Botolan, Zambales inspects their share of relief aid coursed through the CFO by overseas Filipinos.



## Transforming Schools: Lessons in Excellence

Seventy-four representatives from 36 Philippine schools in Greece, Hong Kong, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Libya, Oman, Tripoli, and the United Arab Emirates met in Davao City on 04-06 May 2009 to attend the 8th Conference of Philippine Schools Overseas at the Royal Mandaya Hotel.

The annual conference, led by the Inter-Agency Committee on Philippine Schools Overseas, is a yearly activity to promote and strengthen Philippine curriculum-based education overseas to ensure continuing education for Filipino expatriate

students and to help strengthen family ties.

The three-day conference, with its theme, "Transforming Schools: Lessons in Excellence," was formally opened by the members of the IACPSO represented by Deputy Executive Director Minda Cabilao Valencia of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO), Director Albert Q. Valenciano of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), and Assistant Secretary Teresita G. Inciong of the Department of Education (DepEd) as the keynote speaker.

In her speech, Asec. Inciong said that she envisioned all Philippine schools overseas to become models of excellence and challenged the participants to continuously strive for world-class standards. She stressed that achieving excellence is a collaborative effort among the school managers, teachers, students and the community, combined with the school's strategic planning for progress.

The conference featured lectures, Excellent Schools Defined, Managing Effective Schools: The School-Based

*continued on page 27*

## Filipina is U.S. Music Awards Best Female Artist

Acoustic singer **Apryle Dalmacio** is shining in America's music industry. She is not only talented but also a big winner after recently bagging two major awards at the 2009 Inland Empire Music Awards.

She took home the Best Country and Female Artist Award at the 5th Annual Inland Empire Music Awards at the Riverside Municipal Auditorium in Riverside.

According to music critics, "It is her powerful, dynamic, and expressive voice that has successfully brought her this far."

Apryle is currently working on her debut album "On The Other Side" with Indepth Music.

Apryle is a self taught singer/songwriter who has been on stage all her life dreaming that some day her music will inspire and captivate listeners and viewers across the world.

She has had the opportunity to be a guest, and have her music aired on radio stations such as KUCR 88.3fm with DJ Tina Bold, IE Coffee Radio KCAA 1050am with Ralph Torres, and Inland Empire's talk radio KTIE 590am with Coffee General Cliff Young, Cut N Dry Talent Radio with Chris Kalt and has starred in her own radio show as a DJ for Cal State San Bernardino's Coyote Radio.

She has performed at the opening celebration of the "Musical Instruments Fall Folk Fest" sponsored by Best Buy at Riverside Plaza, the "Acoustic Rock Fest" sponsored by America's Automobile Company Fritts Ford, and has performed for charity events including The American Cancer Society's Relay For Life!

In 2007, she came home as a third place winner from a "Battle of the Bands" held in one of L.A.'s most famous venues, BB Kings Blues Club, at Universal City Walk. In 2008, she performed with several awarding female artists from Southern California in the Female Acoustic Showcase and

competed as one of the top 7 finalists for the Upland Lemon Festival Idol.

Apryle has been performing and singing all her life. At age eight, Apryle received her very first guitar handed down from her mother who also played in her youth.

"She has been singing since she was born," Apryle's mother says. "Apryle was the loudest baby. You could hear her across the hallway. The surprised nurse asked me if that was my baby crying and I replied 'yes'. But she was not crying, she was singing."

It was not until Apryle's thirteenth birthday when playing the guitar became a passion. Wrapped up in a ribbon was a beautiful vintage acoustic Aspen awaiting her arrival from school. Since then, Apryle has been writing songs and expressing her inner-self through music.

From elementary school through college, this young musician has been involved in choir and has developed a great amount of intelligence in music. She has passionately been involved in various music groups throughout her life: The multi-award-winning JVHS Chamber Singers which Apryle co-student directed, Sweet Adeline, the CSUSB Vocal Jazz Show Choir, and world touring CSUSB Chamber Singers. At seventeen, she was one out of 2,000 students chosen to sing in the Southern California Vocal Association Honor Choir and received a music scholarship for her senior year of high school.

Now in her early twenties, Apryle continues to share her talents as she and her music progress.



Apryle Dalmacio

## Apl promotes RP via music



apl.de.ap

apl.de.ap, the Fil-Am member of the internationally famous hip hop group Black Eyed Peas, has always been proud of his Pinoy roots. In BEP albums, the 34-year-old apl (Allan Pineda Lindo) contributes songs that reflect the culture he grew up with as a child in Sapang Bato, Angeles, Pampanga.

"Elephunk," BEP's third release (2003) and first commercially successful album, contained "The Apl Song"—whose recollection of living in hard times starts off with the first stanza of Asin's "Balita."

Two years later, "Monkey Business" yielded the upbeat "Bebot," Apl's first attempt to write and rap with all-Tagalog lyrics.

The group's current album, "The E.N.D.," which is riding high on two chart-topping singles ("Boom Boom Pow," "I Gotta Feeling"), has a deluxe edition containing another apl tune, "Mare."

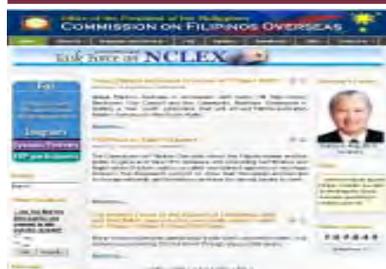
Recently, apl hooked up with Department of Tourism Secretary Joseph Durano to discuss how music could help enhance DOT's promotional campaigns.

The result is "Take Me to the Philippines," a music video that apl wrote, recorded and produced—and which the DOT is launching on MTV.

Members of the media, including the Philippine Daily Inquirer, caught a sneak preview of the video at the Ascott Raffles Place in Singapore. Apl is in Singapore with BEP for the "F1 Rocks" music festival which also features ZZ Top, No Doubt and Simple Minds, among others.

Apl has also set up Jeepney Music, his own talent management outfit, which not only currently handles DJs in the US, but is also on the lookout for local acts.

Source: *Philippine Daily Inquirer*



### The CFO website sports a new look

The new website features a more streamlined and refreshing look that includes all the information for its clients and the public. Log on to [www.cfo.gov.ph](http://www.cfo.gov.ph) to experience the CFO website's visual transformation.

### Pinoy-American priest cook tops Celebrity Chef

Father Leo Patalinghug's "fusion fajitas" beat Bobby Flay's "red curry-marinated skirt steak fajitas" on September 9 on the Food Network's "Throwdown! With Bobby Flay."

Flay is a celebrity chef in the United States having three television programs "Iron Chef America: The Series," "Grill It with Bobby Flay," and "Throwdown! with Bobby Flay." He is also a contributor for "CBS News: Early Show."

Flay challenged Father Leo on his Throwdown program on the Food Network with the cooking priest preparing his signature dish for a crowd of parishioners at Mount St. Mary's University in Maryland.

The cooking priest commented, "My fusion fajitas are smokin'. I guarantee this will make you say, 'Thank you, God.'"

Divine providence was on Flay's mind as he was driving to challenge the priest. "We're going up against Father Leo," he said. "As a former altar boy, I'm not so sure this is a good idea."

During the challenge, Father Patalinghug shared some insights into his culinary skills. "Do you know who taught me how to cut?" he asked Flay. "Mother Teresa. When I was a seminarian, I'd go

to the soup kitchens, and Mother Teresa said, 'Okay, Brother, your job is to cut vegetables.'"

Both competitors recognized the skills of the other. Flay said of the priest's dish, "It's a fajita with impact." Father Patalinghug said of Flay's fajita, "This is absolutely delicious."

The priest's parishioners liked how his fajita was sweeter, but they also liked Flay's spicy concoction.

The contest's judges said of the priest's fajita, "I'm liking the sauce" and "Somebody knew what they were doing when they were searing the meat." Of Flay's they commented, "There's a smoky aftertaste" and "The peppers are more pronounced. Father Patalinghug pulled out his rosary during the judging. "Do you want one?" he asked Flay. "What number are you on?" Flay replied.

"I lost count," the priest admitted. But then the suspense was over: The fusion fajitas won! The crowd erupted in ecstatic cheers when Father Patalinghug's fajita prevailed; the priest-cook was beaming. "There was lots of praying during the judging, but he didn't need it," Flay said after the results were in. Father Patalinghug said of the win,



Fr. Leo Patalinghug

"What an honor," then added that the food's purpose was achieved: "We brought families together."

More information on Father Patalinghug's reflection about the experience can be downloaded in <http://gracebeforemeals.com/soul>.

Source: Good News Pilipinas

### Double Booked

The number of countries allowing dual citizenship is on the rise.



For some of the nearly 200 million people living outside their birth countries, passport lines might be getting easier to manage. That's because the number of countries allowing dual citizenship is on the rise, jumping 75 percent over the past 10 years. Today, the number of nations allowing their citizens to hold two passports stands at 56, including Australia, India, the Philippines, and Russia. And that means the number of people pledging allegiance to more than one country is at an all-time high as well. The phenomenon has grown so rapidly that researchers are only now beginning to examine its consequences. "We know a lot about the legal stuff, but the stats don't exist," explains Rainer Bauböck, editor of the journal *Migration and Citizenship*.

Countries most often loosen their restrictions on dual citizenship to reestablish political and economic ties among those who have emigrated, according to Tanja Brondsted Sejersen, author of a recent study in *International Migration Review*. Italy's 1992 dual-citizenship law, for example, allows anyone with Italian grandparents to apply for an Italian passport—an attempt to forge business and cultural ties with the millions of ethnic Italians living abroad. "There are tangible financial benefits [to having Italian citizenship] for U.S.-Italian dual citizens," says James De

Santis, executive director of the National Italian American Foundation. "They can own property, attend school, or open a bank account [in Italy]." In 2006, more than 35,000 people became Italian citizens without losing their old passports, about three times the 2003 figure. Countries that depend on remittances, such as El Salvador, Sierra Leone, and Uganda, are also increasingly adopting dual citizenship as a way to keep bonds with expats strong—and the money flowing home.

Other countries, such as Sweden, are changing their passport rules to integrate a growing number of immigrants. When Sweden legalized dual citizenship in 2001, the number of people acquiring Swedish passports increased more than 40 percent during the next five years. This kind of integration has obvious economic benefits for new migrants, such as eligibility for jobs. Francesca Mazzolari of the University of California, Irvine, found that immigrants from Latin America who obtained U.S. citizenship but also retained their passports from home earn 2.5 percent more in the U.S. job market than non-naturalized foreigners. Doubling your passports may also mean increasing your chance of success.

Source: [www.pinoy-abroad.net](http://www.pinoy-abroad.net)

# EVP Participants

## ...conduct nationwide skills transfer and

From January to July 2009, 71 Exchange Visitor Program participants conducted skills and technology transfer activities for 2,130 participants. Sixty-three schools in 32 cities across the Philippines hosted the activities. The trainers were mostly teachers, specializing in Science, Mathematics, English and Special Education who studied in the U.S. to obtain further training in their fields of specialization. Aside from teachers, a small percentage of the EVP participants were also experts in Medicine, Engineering, Research, Business, Political Science and Information Technology.

After the skills and technology transfer activities, the modules and training reports of the trainers were endorsed to the Commission on Filipinos Overseas for archiving in the EVP Library, a specialized resource center which will be launched in October 2009. At present, the library has a collection of 446 terminal reports, 259 modules, 40 project proposals, 13 photocopied books, four books and 31 other research references.

The skills and transfer technology activities are part of the alternative arrangement for EVP participants who are seeking to waive the two-year home-country residency requirement of the EVP. The alternative arrangement allows qualified EVP participants to pursue gainful employment in the USA as they accomplish the objective of the

program, which is to enhance the skills pool in the Philippines.

Most of the training focuses on ways and techniques to make classrooms interactions more effective. Also, a good number of trainers have introduced U.S. advanced technologies and equipment to the Philippines. The equipment are donated later to the schools as teaching aids.

For the first two months of 2009, the participants who conducted training were Emilda Calacal, Maricel Talosig, Dominga Chao-Ayan, Maria Soledad Ledesma, Ofelia Hutalla, Jovy Luna Llanora, Alex Allan Tagaban, Lailani Estella, Erwin Peralta, Mira Saquido, Estrella Lorenzo, Nenita Dagoyo, Mildred Costo, Maria Lynda Hernando, Elizabeth Lapa, Rowena Edrolin, Ruby Agbuya, Raquel Alayon, Leonila Tacderan, Evelyn Pedida, Rosefe Dawates, Darwin Villangca, Annale Carlos, Alan Deiparine, Cresencia Aparante, Rolando Borje, Arlene Alba, Maria Theresa Ballon, Rosemarie Romero, Marichou Beltran, Gerardo Ciar, Agnes Taguines, Maria Rica Rhea Solock, Arthur Ballos, Merlyn Tabaque, Dan August Erfe and Helen Magay.

March and April trainers were Kathryn del Rosario, Genevieve Bandas, Ruben Abella, Dolores Evalour Go, May Camacho, Rosita Gamboa, Arturo Tanjuakio, Caridad Bundoc, Rosanni Palma, Rosandrei Ladignon, Rosita Pascual, Rebecca Bufi, Rowena Bilgera, Beatriz Babatid, Asuncion Tauyan, Rebecca Langomes, Roxan Banzon, Cyra Grace

Dalazan, Conrada Guia, Maria Mercedes Polanes and Dolorita Mallari.

Salita Benes, Herminio Lagat, Aileen Samson, Rodolfo Corpuz Jr., Ma. Rowena Suva, Florabel Nonaym Rodolfo Erfelo, Rossbert Chua, Joseph Sidney Mangalindan and Roldulfo Amor conducted training in May, June and July 2009.

### About the Exchange Visitor Program (EVP)

Exchange Visitor Program (EVP) refers to the international exchange program administered by the United States to implement the Mutual Education and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961 (as amended, Public Law 87-256, 22 USC 2451, et seq., 1988). The purpose of the Act is to increase mutual understanding between the people of the U.S. and the people of other countries by means of educational and cultural exchanges. Educational and cultural exchanges assist in furthering the U.S.' foreign policy objectives.

The establishment and development of the EVP may extend as far back as January 1948, when the United States Congress passed the Information and Education Exchange Act, also known as the Smith-Mundt Act. The law was intended "to increase mutual understanding between the people of the US and the people of other countries" through: 1. An information service to disseminate information abroad about the U.S., its people, and its policies; and 2. An educational exchange service to cooperate with other nations in the interchange of persons, knowledge and skills; the rendering of technical and other services; and the interchange of developments in the field of education, arts, and sciences.

In 1956, the Philippine Government created an EVP Committee, through Administrative Order No. 191, to coordinate its participation in the Program and properly channel the services of returned participants to the benefit of various government projects.

On 04 May 1994, then Secretary of Foreign Affairs Roberto Romulo issued DFA Office Order No. 406-94 transferring the coordination of the Philippine participation in the Program from the Office of American Affairs of the DFA to the Commission on Filipinos Overseas. In an effort to institutionalize the necessary mechanism for the effective implementation of EVP, CFO conducted a series of consultation meetings with various government agencies with the end-view of instituting relevant changes in the structures and mechanisms for the EVP implementation. An interim EVP Committee was consequently formed out of these efforts.

## ...remit P8.3 million in scholarships

Exchange Visitor Program (EVP) scholarship funds set a record increase from January to July 2009, collecting P8.3 million compared to P4.5 million in the first seven months of the previous year. The scholarship fund used for the Enhancement Training Sponsorship Program (ETSP), goes to qualified professionals who seek to pursue graduate and postgraduate studies in the fields included in the Skills List for the Philippines. The Skills List is a directory of skills that are in short supply in the Philippines and, therefore, very much needed.

At present, there are 89 active scholars and 94 who are due to enroll in October 2009. The scholars come from across the country: 35 are under the Specialized Education program, 27 in

Mathematics, 19 in Science, one in English and seven in other courses. Each scholar receives a maximum of US\$1,500.00 to cover tuition fees, books, transportation and miscellaneous expenses.

The Commission on Filipinos Overseas, the Secretariat of the EVP Committee of the Philippines, is designated as fund manager of the grants under the ETSP. The ETSP is the second component of the alternative arrangement offered to EVP participants who are applying for No Objection Statement to waive the two-year home-country residency requirement of the EVP. The ETSP is one of the efforts of the government to enhance the skills pool of the Philippines while allowing professionals to find better income overseas to support their families.

# The Exchange Visitor Program: the course it has taken

The Philippines has been actively participating in the Exchange Visitors Program (EVP) administered by the United States government to facilitate educational and cultural immersion among foreign nationals. In this way, Filipinos gain much needed technology and skills, and mutual trust and understanding among themselves and their American counterparts.

Since 1994, the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) has served as the Secretariat of the EVP Committee of the Philippines. The CFO registers EVP participants and conducts Pre-Departure Orientation Seminars (PDOS) and post-arrival services.

As of today, the CFO has registered and monitored approximately 5,292 EVP participants from 190 fields of training. A large number of the participants come from the field of medicine, where they learn the newest innovations in medical science. These programs have introduced participants to various breakthroughs such as about non-invasive surgeries for the heart and colon that saved numerous lives.

The second largest group comes from the Hotel and Restaurant Management (HRM) sector. The demand for creative minds and high-spirits

from the youth from different U.S. organizations has given HRM students an opportunity to participate in this program, which caused increased participation in this sector by 900% in 2007. Participants learn their skills in various settings, such as hotels, resorts, theme parks and even fast-food chains. Several participants have risen as hotel managers, restaurant managers, culinary experts and restaurant owners in Metro Manila.

The third major group of participants hails from the education sector. With a rising enrollment since 2001, teachers learned new techniques and strategies for shaping the minds of our future generation. Teachers in this program are deployed in several districts in the U.S. exposing them to harsh and difficult places of teaching, such as juvenile detention centers, where they learn the much needed skills that may be assimilated in our education system. Due to the limited number of working visas given to teachers and low teacher's compensation, several U.S. sponsors opted to take this step for them to sustain their schools.

Nevertheless, teachers who participated in this program learned valuable techniques such as the differentiated method of teaching and the use of various media for classroom instruction.

The EVP also takes in participants in the fields of agriculture, business, creative writing, music and religion. From the precise fields of science to the objective fields of law and the arts, the EVP has encompassed several fields to wholly develop our society as well as our knowledge about the world we live in.

As a prestigious program, the EVP is living up to its expectations. With the number of participants increasing through the years, this program aims to provide our country with new insights and fresh ideas that may be implemented once introduced to our society. The program also serves as a gateway for mutual understanding among Filipinos and the Americans by introducing them to Philippine culture, and, in the process, integrating our values and customs in their everyday lives.



## CFO attends Regional Policy Dialogue in Italy

CFO Deputy Executive Director Minda Cabilao-Valencia attended a two-day policy dialogue on remittances and development in Rome, Italy where she served as one of the discussants. The dialogue was organized by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) – Manila and Rome Offices. With the theme, "Inter-Regional Policy Dialogue on Remittances and Development, Harnessing the Development Potentials of Remittances: The Italy-Philippines Link", the event was held at the Centro Congressi Frentani, Rome, Italy from 19-20 May 2009.

The dialogue's objectives include sharing of knowledge and expertise, discussion of issues and exploration of joint and parallel action programs towards harnessing the development potentials of remittances. DED Valencia served as a lead discussant on the fourth session of the second day. The presentations were on the potentials and challenges of development-oriented remittance corridors. Some of the issues she raised were on the directions for remittances which should be the next phase of the country's involvement with overseas migration. She was particularly interested in how many overseas Filipinos own businesses in the Philippines, and

the number of current and former overseas Filipinos who are members of cooperatives. She also inquired on particular investment opportunities offered by a leading Philippine cooperative and recommended that it is best to direct donations of Filipinos in Italy to the CFO or other accredited institutions to avoid scams or groups that perpetuate misuse of donations. Some of the issues she raised were on alternative directions for remittances.

The conference was participated in by 60 individuals from Filipino diaspora groups and migrant communities, government representatives from the Philippines and Italy, civil society organizations, industry groups and development organizations.



(Top) Ms. Minda Cabilao Valencia with the participants and (below) with the organizers and all of the participants to the forum



## PSO update

### Two PSOs receive certificate of recognition



The New Kuwait Philippine International School (TNKPIS) in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, State of Kuwait, and the Philippine International School – Qatar (PISQ) in Ain Khalid, Qatar were granted Certificates of Recognition by the Philippine Department of Education (DepEd) on 14 May 2009 and 10 July 2009, respectively. The TNKPIS and the PISQ are the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> PSOs to be granted recognition by the Department of Education.

TNKPIS was established in SY 1999-2000 and has an enrollment size of about 600. It is headed by Dr. Jesusa Cristina V. Puno, school principal. The PISQ was established in March 2000 and has 984 students. It is headed by Ms. Luisa K. Mendoza, school principal.

The Certificate of Recognition is a permanent authority given by DepEd to an educational institution overseas to operate or implement educational programs in accordance with the standards or criteria established under the Philippine educational system. The certificate

empowers the school to issue promotion certificates and diplomas to its graduates, entitles graduates of the school's permitted programs to all benefits and privileges enjoyed by alumni of similar programs in all schools recognized by the education department.

The DepEd also issued Government Permits to the Pearl of the Orient International School and the Gems International School, both in Jeddah, KSA. The department also renewed the Provisional Government Permits of the Shanghai International Learning Center in Shanghai, China, and the Philippine International School in Assir in Khamis Mushayt, Abha, KSA.

Twelve out of 44 schools have been granted Certificates of Recognition by the DepEd, 23 were issued Government Permit, seven Provisional Government Permits and two are in various stages of application for permit to operate the pre-elementary, elementary and secondary education programs.

### PSOs in UAE hold 6<sup>th</sup> FISAA season

The 6<sup>th</sup> season of the Filipino Inter-School Athletic Association (FISAA) opened on 23 January 2009 in Al Shaab Club, Sharjah, UAE. It was sponsored by the United International Private School (UIPS) in Dubai and participated in by the PISCO Private School in Abu Dhabi; Far Eastern Private School (FEPS) in Sharjah; The New Filipino Private School (NFPS) in Sharjah; and The Philippine School (TPS) in Dubai. The annual sports fest aims to promote camaraderie and unity among Filipino youth in Philippine schools across the emirates.

Consul General Benito Valeriano of the Philippine Consulate in Dubai and then Executive Director of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas, Jennifer O. Gonzales, attended the opening ceremony of the week-long sports competition. It was formally opened with the parade of athletes

from five participating Philippine schools together with their muses and escorts, school administrators, faculty, school staff and students.

Awards given during the opening ceremony included Ms. FISAA 2009, Mahra Almuhairi of UIPS; Mr. FISAA 2009, Patrick Roxas of NFPS; and Little Ms. FISAA 2009, Setabeth Hesmat of FEPS. The UIPS Dragons also won the cheer dance competition on the same day.

The awarding ceremony was held on 31 January 2009.



FISAA contributed photos

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Philippine Schools Overseas annual literary contest begins

The 2<sup>nd</sup> annual literary contest for Filipino students of Philippine schools overseas was launched on 01 August 2009 by the Inter-Agency Committee on Philippine Schools Overseas.

The annual competition, held annually in August in time for the celebration of the *Buwan ng Wikang Pambansa* (Month of National Language), aims to

hone the literary writing skills of students and promote the use of the Filipino language. It also seeks to inspire the Filipino community to celebrate Filipino traditions through the arts.

This year's theme, "*Wikang Filipino: Mula Baler Hanggang Buong Pilipinas*", relates the literary competition to the commemoration of the historic surrender of the Spanish soldiers in Baler, leading to the eventual declaration of Philippine independence. Incidentally, 2009 has been declared as the Year of Baler.

The contest has two categories: Nursery Rhyme Contest and One-Act Play. The Nursery Rhyme

category seeks to develop original instructional aids for pre-schoolers and primary education level students. The winning rhymes will be recommended for use in Philippine schools overseas. The winning entries will also be illustrated into reading and coloring books for young pupils.

The One-Act Play is open for high school students who could write a comedy, drama, farce, romance or a combination of these genres. The winning entries are expected to be staged by host schools on special occasions as part of the students' extracurricular activities.

## Classrooms from Filipinos Overseas

*Quality Education for all*

Why is education important? It is because it can be a person's key to success. It is no wonder why several overseas donors choose to support the education of less-privileged Filipinos by funding the construction of public school classrooms.

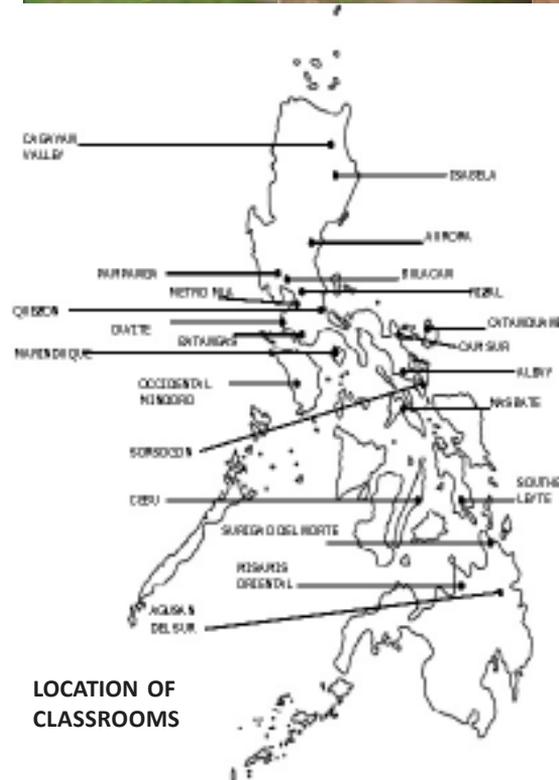
In July 2009, the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) and the Feed the Hungry, Inc. (FtH) turned over the Little Red School House, a two-classroom building donated by Mr. and Mrs. Ric and Lyta Sese in memory of their son Eric Carandang Sese to the Humayingan Elementary School in Lian, Batangas. A two-classroom building was also donated by Mr. and Mrs. Jonathan and Terry Ly-Gaw and by American Express to the Balatbat Elementary School in Lobo, Batangas on 18 April 2009. Another three-classroom building was donated by the Kona Visayan Club to the Cantao-an Elementary School in Naga, Cebu on 10 June 2009.

Last 22 August 2009, a ground-breaking ceremony for the construction of a two-classroom SPED building at the Indang Central Elementary School in Poblacion I, Indang, Cavite also took place.

The 9 new classrooms bring to a total of 67 classrooms the donations of overseas Filipinos, particularly the FtH, coursed through the Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino Program of the CFO, since 2003. The beneficiary provinces include Cavite, Cagayan Valley, Quezon Province, Misamis Oriental, Surigao del Norte, Pampanga, Agusan del Sur, Batangas, Occidental Mindoro, Bulacan, Masbate, Southern Leyte, Rizal, Camarines Sur, Taguig City, Aurora, Isabela, Marinduque, Albay, Catanduanes, Sorsogon, and Cebu. The 67 classrooms cost PhP14,971,253.20.

### AT A GLANCE

- 67 classrooms built
- 38 schools assisted
- 22 provinces covered
- P 14.97 million worth



**LOCATION OF CLASSROOMS**



## Mailbox

### 'A great help'

Greetings. We attended the seminar last March 25, 2009. Thank you very much for the very informative and educational seminars for the immigrants going to Canada. It's really a great help for each and everyone of us.

I would like to request for a copy of everything you showed and explained to us in our seminar, so it will be a guide for us in migrating to Canada. Thank you very much again. Hope to hear from you also every now and then even though we're in another country. You can drop by in our place someday. We will not forget you and the Philippines.

The Matienzo Family

### 'Indispensable PDOS'

I'm Aaron Salazar, an attendee in the NZ/AU seminar.

That was a very comprehensive lecture. It's really a must for overseas Filipinos. I was specially warmhearted knowing that Filipinos abroad indeed pay back what is due to our country. And thank you for assuring us that their assistance reaches the poorest of the poor. I'll extend my view, if I may. In CFO's website, it is suggested (though not mandated) that PDOS be taken at least 2 days prior to departure. As with loads of formal information being relayed to the attendees, especially regarding do's and don'ts, I think it is much practical to have the seminar at least week before. It's because, most of us that attended have already prepared some, if not most, of what to bring, etc. And with your due guidance, it has been realized that we should take necessary precautions especially since it's our first time. Thus, if PDOS has been taken long before the departure date, at least, all precautions have been noted during preparation on what to bring. Well, just a suggestion.

May I request for the materials/guidelines that you presented. Again, thank and more power.

Mabuhay po kayo!

Aaron Salazar

### 'An engaging seminar'

My name is Doris Angeles. I'm one of the attendees of PDOS (bound to Australia) last Friday, June 26. The seminar was such a great help for first time migrant like me. You have delivered the seminar very well. It was a lengthy seminar but with your modulated beautiful voice, incorporating some jokes in between, I never realized that I have seated there for 3 hours. Congratulations for the job well done! Of course, thank you for imparting your knowledge to us.

I have one request. Can you send me the list of Australian slang words. I want to familiarize myself with those words while waiting for my initial entry.

Many thanks.

Doris

### 'Reunion'

This is Ricky Ong, The one you help to bring the ashes of my father. I'm here already in U.S. with my father, I just want to thank you for being nice to me. Maybe, someday we can see again. Thanks a lot.

Ricky Ong

### 'Lubos na nagpapasalamat'

Maraming maraming salamat po sa inyo. Opo, nakatulong po kayo ng lubos. Mahusay nyo pong naipaliwanag sa akin ang aking mga katanungan. Kumusta na lang po sa inyong mga kasamahan sa CFO, sana'y marami pa kayong mga emigrants na matulungan sa inyong mga seminar. Sana po ay lagi kayong naririyang sa aming mga katanungan. Ingat po kayo palagi and God bless.

Name withheld upon request

### 'A meaningful discussion''

Thank you so much for the meaningful discussion you shared with us. Now, I understand why immigrants are required to attend the session. I hope you can email the materials you used during the orientation.

Andrew and Jane Go

### New CFOEA Officers



Elected during the CFOEA General Elections were the following (from left to right): Manolo V. Tibe as President, Jeremias R. De Guzman as Vice-President, Janet B. Ramos as Secretary General, Ian Vergel B. Aagsalda as Finance Officer and Eumarmo M. Tolosa as Auditor General (not in photo).

A new set of officers of the Commission on Filipino Overseas Employees Association (CFOEA) was inducted on 21 August 2009 by CFO Executive Director Jose Maria J. Palabrica during the Commission's tree planting activities in La Mesa Watershed, Quezon City. The CFOEA officers were elected on 30 July 2009 and will serve for a term of two years.

The CFOEA is the only recognized employees' labor organization of the CFO and is registered with the Civil Service Commission and the Department of Labor and Employment – Bureau of Labor Relations with Registration Certificate No. 1446 issued on 14 March 2005.



FILIPINO TIES  
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# CFO co-sponsors Stakeholders' Forum on Overseas Absentee Voting

*Overseas Filipinos are not mere dollar-earners, but citizens who can shape the future of the country and the government*

Last 20 March 2009, the Commission on Filipinos Overseas co-sponsored a stakeholders' forum with the Center for Migrant Advocacy and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, a non-government organization, at the Bayview Park Hotel in Manila, in cooperation with the Commission on Elections and the Department of Foreign Affairs. The forum sought to gather all stakeholders on overseas absentee voting in preparation for the Presidential elections in 2010. A target of 1 million OAV registrants has been laid down, and efforts must be made to encourage more overseas Filipinos to register and vote. About 60 individuals from the government, non-government, civil society and religious sectors who advocate migrant rights and welfare attended the half day affair. The target of 1 million registered voters must be achieved between March and the last day of registration, on 31 August 2009.

Mr. Mirko Herberg of the FES, in his opening remarks, addressed the group on the role of FES in this endeavor, which is helping facilitate an exercise of national interest – the citizens' right to vote. He said that the forum reflects the way the Filipino society regards overseas Filipinos. They are seen not only as mere dollar-earners, but as citizens who can shape the future of the country and the government.

Ms. Ellene Sana of the CMA emceed the program and gave a brief history of overseas absentee voting since the 1990s when advocacy groups started pushing for the legislation of the absentee voting bill until its passage in 2003 and its implementation in the last two national elections. She discussed the status of the absentee registration and voting in the past elections in 2004 and 2007. She mentioned the problems and issues that arose relative to overseas absentee voting, and discussed some of the steps to address those issues, such as lobbying Congress to repeal certain provisions

that hinder overseas Filipinos from registering and voting.

Updates on the number of registrants and status of registration per Post were provided by the Comelec representative Atty. Jane Valesa and the Overseas Absentee Voting Secretariat of the DFA through Ambassador Nestor Padalhin. Director Adolfo Ibañez of the Comelec also attended the event but had to leave early for another commitment. The activities being undertaken by these agencies regarding registration were discussed, such as updates on the equipment being used in the Posts and lobby efforts to amend certain provisions in the absentee voting law. Ms. Teresita Alarcon, Executive Director of the Feed the Hungry, Inc., a humanitarian organization based in Washington DC, gave a response in behalf of immigrants, particularly in the United States.

After the presentations, an open forum enabled the audience to air their queries, and to provide suggestions on how best to solve problems attendant to overseas absentee voting. The most discussed topic was improving accessibility to certain sectors of overseas Filipinos, such as seafarers and workers in the Middle East who live and work miles away from the Embassies and polling places and who encounter difficulties registering. Many seafarers have the option of internet voting as the solution to be able to vote because most are at sea during election time.

Another issue discussed is the provision on residency requirement for permanent residents and immigrants versus those of dual citizens. While Comelec and other agencies are pushing for the repeal of the residency section in Republic Act 9189, Congress is unable to amend the law. It was likewise brought up that many overseas absentee voters and local residents have lost interest in Philippine elections, because of massive cheating every election period. These and other issues were referred to the Comelec and DFA representatives. Respective agencies then gave

their commitment to the program and promised to do their part to increase the numbers of overseas absentee voters. It was agreed that a roadmap will be drafted at the end of the program to determine the roles and targets of each agency.

Globe Telecom, while not a major partner in this endeavor, provided free raffle prizes to three individuals and cell phone loads to all the participants. The company has been actively providing affordable and user-friendly telecommunication services to overseas Filipinos and their families in the Philippines.

For the latest updates on OAVS, kindly log on to [www.oavs.dfa.gov.ph](http://www.oavs.dfa.gov.ph)



Poster perfect. The CFO designed posters and leaflets to heighten awareness on absentee voting.



Forum speakers (from L to R), Ms. Tess Alarcon of the FTH, representing the immigrants from the U.S., Atty. Glinis Tamondong of the COMELEC, Ambassador Nestor Padalhin of the DFA and Atty. Jane Valesa of the COMELEC.

# Anti-trafficking

## LOOKING AFTER OUR OWN:

### Advocacy Training for Youth on Anti-Trafficking of Women and Children for Labor and Sexual Exploitation

The Commission on Filipinos Overseas – Task Force Against Human Trafficking (CFO-TFHT) has organized its Advocacy Training for Youth on Anti-Trafficking of Women and Children for Labor and Sexual Exploitation in Tagaytay City last 14-16 May 2009. The training is the fifth phase of its advocacy workshop and a timely follow up to the fourth phase conducted in Legaspi City last 12-13 November 2008 covering the provinces of Albay, Camarines Sur, Camarines Norte, Catanduanes, Masbate and Sorsogon.

Some 51 youth leaders from the National Capital Region, and from the provinces of Batangas and Cavite, participated in the training. Most of the participants were youth leaders representing the *Sangguniang Kabataan* from the cities of Makati, Quezon, Las Piñas, Taguig, Valenzuela, Caloocan and Navotas. The municipality of Pateros and the province of Cavite also sent *Sangguniang Kabataan* leaders. Student leaders from Polytechnic University of the Philippines, Adventist University of the Philippines, Batangas State University, Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila, Philippine Womens University, Adamson University and Technological University of the Philippines also took part. The non-government organizations sector was also represented through UPLIFT Philippines.

The topics discussed were Republic Act 9208, the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003, and other laws relevant to children and youth such as

Gender Sensitivity, Issues and Roles; United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child; Guide, Techniques and Strategies to Interviewing Trafficking Victims and Witnesses; Basic Concept on Advocacy Work; and Programs and Services of CFO-TFHT on anti-trafficking. Workshops were conducted on Children's Situationer, interviewing trafficking victims, advocacy planning and the Philippine Information System on Trafficking.

The participants raised their concerns on child labor, prostitution, juvenile delinquency, lack of education opportunities, gang membership, smoking, gambling, drug addiction, alcoholism, domestic violence, and pornography as the issues that affect the youth in their community. Poverty, over population, peer pressures and lack of parental guidance were identified as the causes of these problems. The interventions/solutions suggested included organizing activities to promote family bonding, scholarships, and information campaign on family planning, responsible parenting, anti-



*Youth power. Leaders from the Sangguniang Kabataan and student heads in Metro Manila join together for a common cause in the fight against human trafficking.*

drug addiction, and anti-human trafficking.

The participants were divided into groups and instructed to make a year-long action plan on anti-trafficking to be implemented in their respective schools or communities. The purpose of this activity is to organize anti-trafficking advocates in different schools and communities. The group composed of Batangas State University, Adventist University of the Philippines and SK Cavite, and the other group composed of the cities of Quezon, Caloocan, Valenzuela and Navotas, won the Best Work Plan. Their projects include; a.) conduct of Awareness Week for College Students to educate them about human trafficking; b.) conduct of Children's Awareness Month for elementary and high school students to inform them of their rights and guard them against exploitation; c.) distribution of short films about human trafficking to the communities; d.) provision of livelihood assistance to poor families, and e.) conduct of fund raising programs for trafficking victims.

The last phase, the national advocacy training for youth, is scheduled in January 2010.

## CFO conducts PHILIST training in Camp Bagong Diwa

The Task Force Against Human Trafficking of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas conducted training on the use and management of the Philippine Information Systems on Trafficking (PHILIST) at the Philippine National Police National Capital Region Office (PNP – NCRPO) in Camp Bagong Diwa, Bicutan, Taguig City on 21 April 2009.

A total of 46 women police officers from the five police districts in Metro Manila and the regional headquarters participated in the training. Mr. Manolo Tibe of the CFO Task Force coordinated the activity with the Regional Plans and Training Division of the NCRPO headed by Police Superintendent Roland V. Bulalacao. Atty. Golda Myra Roma and Mr. Troy Agcanas led the PHILIST training proper for the women officers.

A discussion on the basic use and management of the PHILIST was held in the morning while the hands-on computer session was held in the afternoon at Netopia SM Bicutan Branch, Parañaque City.

Top brass of the NCRPO led by Regional Director Roberto Rosales attended the activity. Deputy Executive Director Minda Cabilao Valencia, Director Regina Galias of the Migrant Integration and Education Division, and Ms. Lucille Ronda, Officer-in-Charge of the Administrative and Finance Division were also present.

The PHILIST is a database program designed and created by CFO to compile, generate, monitor and keep track of all reported incidents of trafficking in persons. The PHILIST intends to provide consolidated information regarding trafficking cases collected by various government agencies, law enforcement authorities, private sector, and international and non-government organizations.

*Top: Women police officers during the hands-on training on PHILIST in Netopia. Bottom: Closing ceremony of the PHILIST training.*



# Comics Power

The fight against traffickers just got an added boost

The Commission on Filipinos Overseas – Task Force Against Human Trafficking (CFO-TFAHT) has published a new edition of the “*Gintong Patnubay*” Comics.

The “*Gintong Patnubay*” Comics is a regular publication of the CFO that carries stories on the lives of Filipinos overseas. From a usual three-story comics, the current edition consists of six stories touching wider migration issues such as illegal recruitment, trafficking, intermarriage, overseas Filipino workers and irregular migrants.

The stories were culled from the winning entries in the Comics Scriptwriting Contest on Migration conducted by the CFO-TFAHT last year. From a total of 33 entries, the panel of judges composed of representatives from the National Commission on Culture and the Arts, Batis Center for Women and CFO-TFAHT selected the following stories:

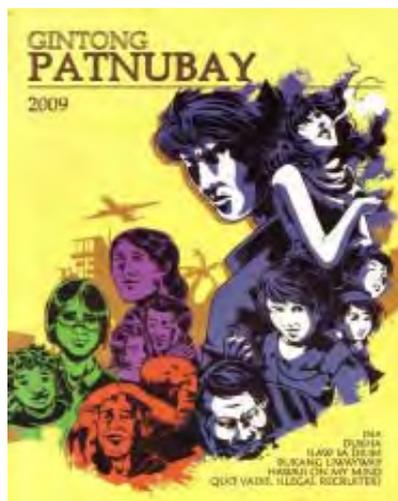
“*Ina*” is a tale of a mother planning to work abroad who, after waking up from a bad dream that reflected the tragic events that might happen to her and her family, realized that she must not be hasty in pursuing her plans and decided to first arm herself with the proper information on overseas work and to go through the legal process. The story was written by Mr. Stuart D. Lingat Jr., a freelance comics script writer from Caloocan City.

“*Bukang Liwayway*” is a tale of a young urban lass named Antonette, who aspired to succeed in life to help her family. Her overwhelming desire to see the world pushed her to take her chances and accept a job abroad only to be forced into prostitution. Her future almost ended up tragically had it not been for the help of concerned individuals and her

courage to survive against all odds. This story was written by Ms. Maria Regina Angela G. Galias, the Director of CFO’s Migrant Integration Education Division. Ms. Galias is a Master’s Degree holder in Public Management from the University of the Philippines, and has been working as a public servant for nine years.

“*Quo Vadis, Illegal Recruiter?*” is the story of Max, an illegal recruiter who, together with his mistress, has facilitated the trafficking of Filipino women in other countries for prostitution. Fleeing the local authorities because of numerous trafficking charges, Max and his mistress went to Malaysia in hope of getting a Schengen Visa to enter a European country and start a new life together. Things, however, did not turn out as they planned which led them to try a route used by human smugglers that cost them their lives. The story was written by Mr. Crisostomo Ilustre, a network operations consultant from Vigan, Ilocos Sur. Mr. Ilustre also writes fictional stories for *Bannawag Magazine*.

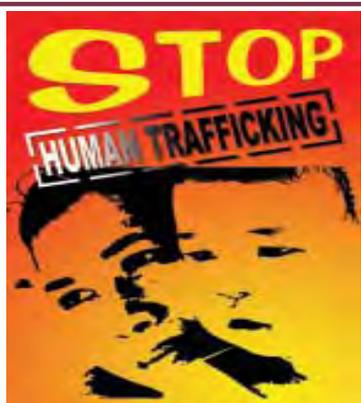
“*Ilaw sa Dilim*” is a story of a young lady from the barrio who was brought to Manila by a relative and sold to a trafficking syndicate who forced her into prostitution and later used her as a drug mule to Malaysia. In Malaysia, the young lady was fortunate to seek the help of a fellow Filipino who brought her to a shelter ran by a Christian Ministry. She was repatriated back to the Philippines and pressed trafficking charges against the trafficking syndicate while strengthening her resolve to start a new life and have a better future. The story was written by Mr. Ian Vergel Agsalda, an Emigrant Service Officer of the CFO. Mr. Agsalda is a double major degree holder in Political Science, and Consular and Diplomatic Affairs. He was chosen as one of the Top 100 *iamNinoy* Young



Leaders of the Country by the *Ninoy and Cory Aquino Center for Leadership*.

“*Hawaii on My Mind*” is the tragic tale of Geraldine Hopkins and her family. Geraldine is a Filipina who is married to Michael, an American. Because of behavioral and cultural differences that were aggravated by financial difficulties, Michael murdered Geraldine and their son before killing himself. This story was written by Ms. Cherry Joy Veniles, a Senior Emigrant Service Officer of the CFO. Ms. Veniles is a single mother and loosely based her story on the life of her former high school teacher.

“*Dukha*” is the story of Juan, a farmer who was victimized by an illegal recruiter but with the support of his family and with the help of concerned individuals, he was able to recover from the upsetting experience and eventually found work overseas. The story was written by Ms. Noreen B. Marquez, a 4<sup>th</sup> year high school student from Guinobatan, Albay. Ms. Marquez is the editor-in-chief of their school paper and an officer of their school’s supreme student government.



### Reintegration Service

Pursuant to its mandate to provide adequate legal, psycho-social and other forms of assistance to trafficked persons, the Commission on Filipinos Overseas – Task Force Against Human Trafficking (CFO-TFAHT) implemented a Reintegration Program for Trafficked Victims.

The program addresses the issue of unemployment and lack of viable livelihood for returning trafficked victims by providing scholarships and alternative small-scale livelihood opportunities to ensure a source of income for

their respective families and encourage their cooperation in the prosecution of trafficking cases.

As of September 2009, CFO-TFAHT has provided the needed start-up capital for the individual livelihood projects of five victim-beneficiaries. Two beneficiaries from Valenzuela City and Quezon City opened mini-grocery stores while another beneficiary also from Valenzuela City opened an eatery. The remaining two beneficiaries from Novaliches, Quezon City and San Jose Del Monte City set up cell phone loading stations.

# THE FORGOTTEN SOLDIERS

A chronicle of the Filipino World War II veteran's 63-year quest for recognition and equity

As young men barely entering manhood and who are at the prime of their life, they prowled hills and mountains armed with rifles. They dodged enemy bullets and bayonets and survived skirmishes. They fought valiantly for God, for country and the Allied colors led by Uncle Sam.

Little did they realize that they have to fight a different kind of war in an entirely different battlefield. This time around, the struggle was for their recognition and veterans benefits. Their battle spanned more than six-decades, long after the last bullet had been fired in the Pacific arena of the Second World War.

For over half a century, Filipino veterans and their families have been clamoring for the redemption of the promise made by the United States of America through President Franklin D. Roosevelt, to the Filipino fighting men and women who rallied to the defense of America during the Second World War. The pledge was for Filipino soldiers who served and fought with American forces to receive similar benefits and enjoy the same rights and privileges as their counterparts from the U.S.A.

Side by side, along with the American soldiers from the mainland, the Filipinos fought and offered the ultimate sacrifice in the name and under the flag of America. In 1946, after the Philippines gained its independence, the U.S. Congress passed the Rescission Act, a portion of which states that the service of the Filipino veterans "shall not be deemed to be or have been service in the military or naval forces of the United States or any component thereof or any law of the United States conferring rights, privileges or benefits." For the last 50 years, the Philippine government and the various Filipino and Filipino-American veterans rights advocates, have made representations with the U.S. Congress for the amendment of the Rescission Act and the passage of the Filipino Veterans Equity Act.

Apart from a few remedial measures such as the naturalization of some veterans as U.S. citizens and healthcare benefits, no stand-alone Filipino Veterans Equity Act, which seeks the repeal of the restrictive provisions of the Rescission Act, has ever passed the U.S. Congress. The Act



*Relegated to the dustbins of history. The sorry plight of WWII veterans remains unattended. Photo credit: Frontliners Media Group*

constitutes the biggest barrier to full enjoyment of veterans' rights under the U.S. law.

Beginning in 1993, numerous bills titled Filipino Veterans Fairness Act were introduced in every Congress to return the benefits taken away from these veterans, only to die at the committee level of each Congress.

The veterans, however, found the end of their quest in an unlikely place: the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 or popularly known as the stimulus package, signed into law on 17 February 2009, that included provisions to pay benefits to the 15,000 surviving veterans.

### *The Veterans*

An estimated 400,000 Filipino soldiers composed of the old and new Philippine Scouts, the Commonwealth Philippine Army and the guerillas fought under the American flag during the Second World War. There were other 116,000 foreign troops from 66 countries who fought under the American Command during this war.

Although there are no official statistics, the figure 200,000 has often been cited as a rough estimate of the total World War II Filipino veteran

population that survived the War. Of that number, 12,000 belonged to the Old Philippine Scouts, and 120,000 were members of the Commonwealth Army. The remainder, or around 70,000, were members of authorized guerilla groups and the New Philippine Scouts.<sup>4</sup>

### *Definition and categories*

The Filipino veterans were defined under U.S. law as former soldiers, born in the Philippines and, unlike the members of the Filipino Infantry Regiment, were residing in the Philippines when they enlisted in military service. To be considered veterans of World War II, they were required to serve in active duty and honorably discharged at any time between 1 September 1939 and 31 December 1946.

There are four general categories of Filipino veterans, namely:

- 1) Veterans of the Old Philippine Scouts, which was established in 1901 by the U.S. colonial government as an auxiliary force, long before any formal plan for Philippine independence. They were part of the U.S. Army throughout their existence;
- 2) Veterans of the Philippine Commonwealth Army, which was established by the Philippine Commonwealth Government to assume responsibility for national defense after independence scheduled for 1946 under the Philippine Independence Act of 1934. These individuals were ordered to be of service on or after 26 July 1941. Their service terminated on 30 June 1946;
- 3) Veterans of recognized anti-Japanese guerrilla units in the Philippines active during the period 20 April 1942 to 30 June 1946; and
- 4) Veterans of the New Philippine Scouts, which were recruited by the U.S. Army on or after 06 October 1945. Standing outside these categories is a small number of Filipinos who were directly induced into the U.S. Armed Forces.

### *The Rescission Act of 1946*

Public Law 79-301, the First Supplemental Surplus Appropriation Rescission Act, authorized a \$200 million appropriation to the



**"The passage and approval of this legislation does not release the United States from its moral obligation to provide for the heroic Philippine veterans who sacrificed so much for the common cause during the war." – President Harry S. Truman's statement right after reluctantly signing the Rescission law in 1946**

# Program special

Commonwealth Army of the Philippines, with the provision that service in the Commonwealth Army of the Philippines should not be deemed to be or to have been service in the military or naval forces of the United States. Public Law 79-391, the Second Supplemental Surplus Appropriation Rescission Act enacted in 1946, further provided that service in the New Philippine Scouts was not deemed U.S. military service.<sup>5</sup>

The Act states that the service of Filipinos "shall not be deemed to be or to have been service in the military or national forces of the United States or any component thereof or any law of the United States conferring rights, privileges or benefits." The US government offered to give \$200 million to the Philippines if all claims for veterans benefits were dropped. The Philippines rejected the offer.

Ironically, President Truman said after signing the Rescission Act that Filipinos "fought with gallantry and courage under the most difficult conditions during the recent conflict" and "I consider it a moral obligation of the United States to look after the welfare of the Filipino Army veterans," promising the matter would be deliberated by the two governments.

## Void veterans status

The passage of these Rescission Acts effectively eliminated the U.S. veteran status of veterans who served under the Philippine Commonwealth Army and of the anti-Japanese guerilla units. The vast majority of Filipino World War II veterans were members of these two military units. The rider to the Rescission Law summarily denied the Filipino veterans the same benefits enjoyed by the

American soldiers under the GI Bill of Rights, except benefits under: 1) National Service Life Insurance that were entered into on or before February 18, 1946 in the case of Commonwealth Army veterans and organized guerillas, and May 27, 1946, in the case of New Philippine Scouts; and 2) laws administered by the Veterans Administration providing for payment of pensions for service-connected disability or death at the rate of one Philippine peso for each dollar authorized to be paid to an American soldier (readjusted at the rate of \$.50 to \$1.00 effective December 1966).

## Basis for the Claims

The petition for the repeal of the restrictive provisions of the Rescission Law and the Filipino veterans claim that they are entitled to the same rights and privileges which the U.S. laws give the members of its armed forces who fought in the same war are based on the following:

- The provision ignored the military order of President Roosevelt stating that the armed forces of the Philippine Commonwealth were called and ordered into the active service of the United States Army Forces in the Far East and therefore entitled to the rights, privileges and benefits accorded to their American counterparts.

- The provision ignored the fact that at the time of the induction of the Philippine armed forces into the military service of the United States, the Philippines was a territory of the United States, and the Filipinos were American nationals who owed allegiance to the United States of America. The Philippine Armed Forces from the moment of their induction either into the United States Army or the United States Navy, were in the federal service of the United States.

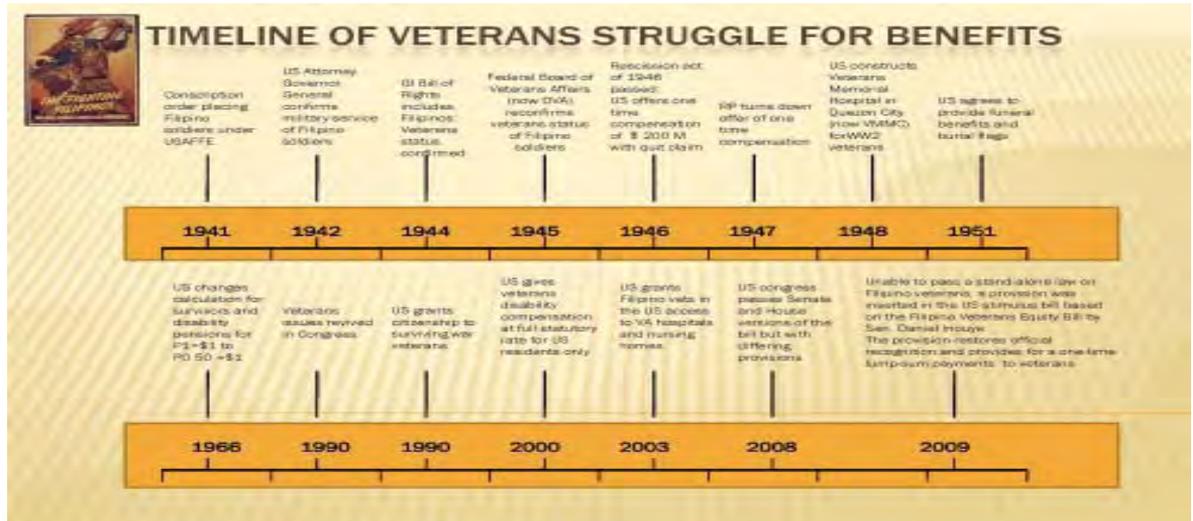
- President Truman, taking cognizance of the failure of the U.S. Congress to fulfill the U.S. government's commitment to the Filipino war veterans, reluctantly signed the Rescission Law in 1946 and released an official statement from the White House saying that:

"Philippine Army veterans are nationals of the United States and will continue in that status until July 4, 1946. They fought, as American nationals, under the American Flag, and under the direction of our military leaders. They fought with gallantry and courage under most difficult conditions during the recent conflict. Their officers were commissioned by us. Their official organization, the Army of the Philippine Commonwealth, was taken into the armed forces of the United States by Executive Order of the President of the United States on July 26, 1941. That order has never been revoked."

- The 1946 legislation constitutes a denial of equal protection in violation of the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The U.S. Congress seemingly implied that while the Filipinos were fit enough to be called into service and fight under the American flag, they did not deserve to enjoy the same veterans' benefits as the American soldiers with whom they fought, shared the same battlefield, with equal risk to life and limb, under one American command.

The principal basis for entitlement to veterans benefits is active military service and honorable discharge in the U.S. military or navy, as cited

*continued on page 26*



## Programs and services

### 'Men of Honor'

*Filipino seafarers' discipline, brilliance, service and quality-oriented goals have made them examples, unparalleled by any other color or race*



The Outstanding Seafarers of the Year Award (OSYA) Selection Committee, chaired by the Commission on Filipinos Overseas for the past six years has, once again, recognized the country's outstanding and dedicated Filipino seafarers whose professionalism and competence have exemplified the best of Filipino values. The award seeks to honor the valuable contribution of Filipino seafarers to the development of the maritime industry and the Philippine nation.

For the year 2009, the OSYA Selection Committee chose four awardees from among the nine evaluated nominations vying for the four OSYA Awards.

An inter-agency committee, composed of the Apostleship of the Sea, the Department of Foreign Affairs, Maritime Industry Authority, Overseas Worker's Welfare Administration, Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, Philippine Ports Authority, Professional Regulation Commission, and the Seamen's Wives Association of the Philippines, Inc., has been organized to prepare for the month-long celebration.

**Maritime Manpower.** Capt. Victor Alviola was conferred the OSYA for Maritime Manpower for his commendable efforts in the promotion of seafarer's rights. He is the founding President of the *Bukluran ng Marinong Pinoy, Inc.* which supported a petition for the enactment of measures that shall install convenient and secure voter registration and voting processes for seafarers under the Overseas Absentee Voting Act. He also led a campaign for the Maritime Party to a congressional seat in 2007 recent elections. He



*The winners with Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim (4th from left) and Exec. Director Jose Maria Palabrica (2nd from right) who was the guest of honor and speaker.*

aimed to represent and involve the Philippine maritime industry and manpower in national policy-making and to further advance their cause. He also wrote and co-authored four books that are being read as credible sources of important maritime information.

**Maritime Industry.** Capt. Abelardo Pacheco was awarded the OSYA for Maritime Industry. He was in command of the ship, *Stolt Strength*, when they were hijacked by Somali pirates from November 2008 to April 2009. He showed utmost leadership and management qualities to his fellow seafarers as he maintained his policy of "Master in Command" during the whole ordeal. With his professional competence and distinguished performance, the entire crew survived the five months of captivity despite the hardships. To share his experience during the hostage taking, Capt. Pacheco wrote the '162 Days at the Claw of Somali Pirates and Four Days in Oblivion'. His essay points out the measures that the Philippine government could take during hostage taking in the high seas.

**Community Service.** Mr. Santiago Adriano, an oil rigger, bagged the OSYA for Community Service. Despite his success, he has not forgotten his humble beginnings. He constantly contributed to the development of his hometown - Echague, Isabela. He and his wife, a school teacher, put up their own basic computer-based education school, the Interactive Children Learning School (ICLS), to educate globally competitive students. Believing in the value of the hard-earned money of OFWs, Mr. Adriano, through ICLS, gives 50% discount on tuition fee to the children of OFWs.

Mr. Adriano is also the Assistant Manager of the Birds Eye Security and Investigation Corporation where he hires former drug addicts and criminals for rehabilitation and reintegration to the mainstream society. A number of lives have been rehabilitated.

**Valor.** The master and seven Filipino crew members of *M/V Tarpon* were given the OSYA for valor. They have proven that life at sea does not recognize color and race. Their unselfish act of bravery and courage had saved the life of a Japanese seaman who fell overboard of a vessel in the Sea of Japan.

The OSYA was handed out during the 14<sup>th</sup> National Seafarers' Day Celebration, the culminating activity of the National Maritime Week, on 9 October 2009 at the Luneta Seafarers' Center. CFO Executive Director Jose Maria Palabrica was the keynote speaker and presented the awards together with Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim to the winners.

### Trees for Life

In response to the call to save Metro Manila from losing its potable water, the CFO adopted 100 seedlings for its tree-planting activity in the La Mesa Watershed. Each employee planted two trees, an investment of hope and greener future for the generations to come. The activity was attended by CFO employees including the division heads, the Deputy Executive Director and Executive Director.

*Mr. Manolo Tibe, CFO Employees Association President, assists Mr. Jose Maria Palabrica, CFO Executive Director, while planting seeds for the future generations*



## Program special

The CFO welcomes its new leaders at the helm...

### ...an interview with Minda and Joey

The Commission on Filipinos Overseas welcomes the new leaders at the helm of its management. Mr. Jose Maria Palabrica and Ms. Minda Cabilao-Valencia took their oath on 16 June 2009, as the newly-appointed CFO Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director (DED), respectively.

Prior to their new responsibilities, Mr. Palabrica worked at the Build-Operate-and-Transfer Center of the Department of Trade and Industry, Coordinating Council for Private Sector Participation-Office of the President, and Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council of the National Economic Development Authority. Ms. Valencia was affiliated with the International Labour Organization, UP-Diliman, Ateneo de Manila, Mariano Marcos State University and the Foreign Service Institute, before working at the CFO as Director of the Migrant Integration and Education Division and Project Management Division before assuming the post as DED.

Outside the office, outdoor-enthusiast Joey loves wild bird watching, pistol shooting and recreational fishing, while feisty Minda enjoys gardening, cooking and playing lawn tennis. Despite the differences in their personal interests, they have something in common: both graduated from the University of the Philippines, happily married with children, and hardworking and dedicated public servants. Get to know them intimately as they talk about their professional and personal lives...

**How do you find working with the men and women of CFO?**

**Joey:** I find it very challenging because of the dedication of agency employees.

**Minda:** Challenging and fulfilling. Challenging in terms of finding more novel ways to further motivate them to give their best to public service; and fulfilling everytime I hear positive feedback from our clientele and other stakeholders.

**Do you find your new job exciting or stressful?**

**Joey:** Both.

**Minda:** Exciting and interesting.

**What is your vision for the CFO in the next five years?**

**Joey:** To make CFO a household name or to put it another way, CFO should have name-recall.

**Minda:** That CFO will continue to be a government agency that exemplifies the best of an effective and meaningful public service.

**Are you a Mama's boy or Daddy's girl?**

**Joey:** I believe I feel closer to my late mother because I was raised in a traditional household where fathers are supposed to provide financial security while mothers take care of raising well adjusted children.

**Minda:** I am close to both my parents.

**What is your favorite food in the world?**

**Joey:** I do not have a favorite food but I am inclined towards vegetables and grilled foodstuffs.

**Minda:** Filipino especially Ilocano food! It has always been my comfort food.

**If people were to look your name in the dictionary, what would it be?**

**Joey:** Look it up under the letter J, specifically *joey*.

**Minda:** *M - Minda*. In Japanese, *Mi* means beautiful. If you go further, *Min* means people, others. There's a lot of meaning in the *M* here which can mean a mother who is magnetic, magnanimous and engaged in meaningful work for others.



(clockwise) Sec. Ang with the new ED and DED right after administering the oath, other photos show the various faces of the new management.

**How do you usually spend your weekends?**

**Joey:** At home with my wife and kid.

**Minda:** With my husband and daughter.

**If you were not working as a public servant today, in what profession do you see yourself?**

**Joey:** A non-fiction novelist.

**Minda:** As an international civil servant engaged in development work or an astronaut so I can try something new and literally out-of-this world!

**On a scale of 1 to 10 how happy are you?**

**Joey:** I would say 6 because a 10 denotes nirvana.

**Minda:** 7. There are still so many things to strive for, to live for... lots of opportunities for finding happiness.

**Is there something you wish you could do over again?**

**Joey:** Be more serious in my undergraduate studies.

**Minda:** No. I am happy and content with the way things have turned out in my life.

**Are you a Twilight or Transformers fan?**

**Joey:** I have no idea because I haven't seen these movies.

**Minda:** Both!

**If one day you became an emigrant, where would you choose to live?**

**Joey:** I would choose to emigrate to Thailand so I would not have a hard time adjusting because Thais look like us.

**Minda:** I'll never leave the Philippines! Not in a million years. This is home to me. There is so much to enjoy here - my family, friends, colleagues, public service and everything uniquely Filipino.

**What is your best CFO moment so far?**

**Joey:** I can't think of one right now maybe because I have been in CFO for a little more than two months.

**Minda:** Exactly two weeks upon joining the CFO in March 2001, I learned that I was pregnant, contrary to findings that it was medically impossible for me to bear a child.

### 'Wired' Pinoys abroad work with local governments

*"Local government units play a role in channeling to local communities the contributions of Filipinos abroad to the development of the Philippines"*

Filipinos abroad donate bridges, roads and other public infrastructure to their town; concretize their solidarity when disasters strike; and invest what they can in community-based initiatives. Today migrant giving is greatly aided by e-technology, which allows migrant associations to work with government officials back home.

This is one of the highlights from the research on cooperation for development between migrants and national and local institutions in the Philippines. The study is part of the Migrants' Associations and Philippine Institutions for Development (MAPID) Project of the Scalabrini Migration Center (SMC)-Philippines. MAPID focuses on Filipino migrants' associations in Italy and Spain on the one hand, and Philippine government institutions on the other. The project is supported by a EUR580, 230.14-grant under the Aeneas Programme of the European Union. The project was chosen from among the various proposals submitted by different institutions throughout the world.

MAPID was launched in 2008, and the main activity in the past year was the research conducted among Filipino migrants in Italy and Spain, and the parallel research among government agencies in the Philippines. Findings from the research are expected to guide the design of training programs for migrant leaders in Italy and Spain, and key government officials in the Philippines. The training programs will be implemented in the latter part of 2009. In 2010, a series of dissemination activities is planned to share the research and training experiences. The center is cooperating with Fondazione ISMU in Milan, Italy; the University of Valencia, Spain; and the Commission on Filipinos Overseas in carrying out the three-year initiative.

SMC director Fabio Baggio explains why MAPID focuses on local governments: "The concern regarding the migration-development nexus is rarely present at the level of local government units (LGUs) – which play a role in channeling to local

The concern regarding the migration-development nexus is rarely present at the level of local government units (LGUs) – which play a role in channeling to local communities the contributions of Filipinos abroad to the development of the Philippines.

communities the contributions of Filipinos abroad to the development of the Philippines."

*Luzon: Good governance and good quality of life for Oasnonns*

The research in the Philippines has uncovered several case studies showing how e-technology may come before or after a migrant association has partnered with an LGU to promote local development. In the case of Amus na Kita Oasnon (ANKO), it was the technology which came later.

Ateneo de Naga's Cristina Lim documents how ANKO began on May 6, 2005 when Oas, Albay parish priest Fr. Jerry Manlangit led a forum, supported by the local government, with Greg Conde and other *balikbayans*.

The ANKO members later identified problems impeding progress: poor governance, inefficient administration and the lack of direction, discipline and leadership – and then dialogued with the LGU about transparency in transactions.

They now have officials reporting regularly on the state of the town (*Ulat Bayan*); issuing a publication called *Bandillo*; and undertaking infrastructure for development such as farm to market roads, the renovation of the public market and the municipal hall, and a resolution moving the town dumpsite upland.

Today, ANKO has projects in health, education, livelihood, arts and culture. These projects invite the local government, which listens to its suggestions and implements what it can.

ANKO also makes available the know-how for quality and results-oriented leadership, and promotes transparency, accountability and decentralization of functions for a timely response to the needs and concerns of remote communities of Oas.

ANKO further ensures good governance by putting up in 2007 a website called Participatory Governance in the Internet Age (PGIA): Linking Progress with Responsible and Effective Leadership. In this World Bank-approved project, Oasnonns here and abroad can post updates, as well as comments, on their town.

The website also promotes and accepts donations for the very first project of Greg Conde, who was elected ANKO president, on memorabilia, stories, pictures and letters about the Oasnon way of life. To be built by \$100 or



ANKO website @ [www.oasnon.org](http://www.oasnon.org)

P5,000 each from 1,000 families, it is aptly named "Foundation 1000: Oas Quadricentennial Library Museum."

How is cyberspace used? For one, it was an ANKO member in America who proposed the Oas Micro-Fund against hunger and poverty where members are encouraged to donate at least \$50 each. Another member in the US over there used his own time and money to research on micro credit and to reach people and organizations doing it.

*Visayas: E-learning and E-governance in Ormoc*

The Ormoc E-Learning and Research Center began when Manuel Baylon, now a US citizen based in Phoenix, Arizona visited his home city in 2006 and saw how students, especially in public schools, knew little about information technology. Alan Feranil of the University of San Carlos-based Office of Population Studies reports that Baylon sent money for computers, printers, routers and other vital equipment, and worked with Ormoc City Mayor Eric Codilla, a friend, together with the Planning Department of the Office of the Mayor to start the project.

Sheila Rose Ortega, e-center manager, says that daily, she and the six contractual staff serve 60-70 students attracted by the free Internet and free printing of materials.

Conveniently based in the second floor of the city market, they also draw other citizens attracted by easy access to on-line transactions, data about Ormoc, updates on ordinances, and information about other services.

This kind of access is mandated by Provincial Ordinance No. 136 - An Ordinance Establishing the Ormoc City Community E-Learning and Research

## Program special

Center (CeL-RC) and for Other Purposes – which also tasks the mayor and other city officials in the Board of Trustees to supervise the center, administer its funds, and receive donations.

For sustainability, the ordinance provides that the center will continue despite changes in the city's administration or leadership.

### *Mindanao: Bansalan citizens and their government*

The most prominent linkage with the local government in Davao Region is in Bansalan, Davao del Sur. Chona Echavez of Xavier University in Cagayan de Oro, was told at the Municipal Planning and Development Office, "In June 2004 the Association of Bansaleños Worldwide (ABW) established a website to provide information such as updates and profiles to Bansaleños around the world. There has been no fund needed, except the skills in website design..."

The creator of [www.bansalan.com](http://www.bansalan.com) is Fullerton, California-based Edwin Bibera, one of the 90 members in the virtual community in the Philippines and in Asia, Europe, Australia, Canada and the United States.

Though it is not the official website of the municipality, it is now the virtual meeting place of Bansaleños around the world. Leila Rispens-Noel, ABW president, writes in a book published by SMC-Philippines entitled **Moving out, Back and Up**: "The website and the Internet are extremely important to ABW to maintain close contacts with



*Overseas networking. The municipality of Bansalan ([www.bansalan.com](http://www.bansalan.com)) website serves as the virtual community post of overseas Bansalenos.*

the members and to assure accountability for the projects."

Rispens-Noel recalls that when members began the "Give Back Campaign: Renovate ABC Gym" project in 2006, they signed a memorandum of agreement with the municipal government to provide labor and they, the construction materials.

The partnership continued in December 2007 with ABW's first grand reunion of 50 Bansaleños from abroad, their families and friends. It was fully supported by newly-elected Mayor Edwin Reyes, the councilors, and local volunteers.

"[The] Mayor presented plans for Bansalan like eco-tourism and marketing locally-based products such as organic coconut sugar," Rispens-Noel writes. "He encouraged the ABW to support the plans of the town, and the ABW agreed to help spur development."

For academic year 2008-09, the ABW supports 84 elementary school children and two high school students in six government schools. Some members, according to Dr. Echavez, help even more by buying the crafts bags made from recycled materials by the parents of scholars, selling them in Japan and earning some income in the process.

Migrant giving helps but it cannot take the place of government, Rispens-Noel also says. "The ABW expects the local government to take the lead and show commitment to realize the goals. Members ... still believe that it is the primary task of the local government to initiate any development plan."

And so, where is MAPID here?

"We hope to help strengthen the capabilities of the government to link migration with development and stress anew its accountability for transparency," replies Maruja Asis, research and publications head at SMC Philippines.

This feature story was prepared as part of the MAPID Project's objectives to share good practices with a broader audience. MAPID is being implemented by SMC from 2008-2010, in cooperation with the Commission on Filipinos Overseas, Fondazione ISMU in Milan, Italy and University of Valencia in Valencia, Spain.

The Scalabrini Migration Center may be reached at tel/fax. 7243512 and 7214296 or by email - [smc@smc.org.ph](mailto:smc@smc.org.ph).

## Equipping local government units for migration and development



*Participants from Luzon*

The second phase of the MAPID project is capacity building which involves the development of training materials and the implementation of a training program for leaders and active members of migrants' associations as agents of change vis-à-vis their host and home countries. In the Philippines, two training programs were conducted in August 2009 in Davao and Tagaytay cities. The participants were key local government officials, regional agencies of the national government and local policymakers. The training was aimed at heightening the awareness at the local level of the potentials of migration for development purposes. The week long training, with 60 participants each, involved lectures, seminars and workshops. The training program hopes to foster better understanding of the migration-development nexus, and to promote meaningful partnerships with overseas Filipinos.



*Participants from the Visayas and Mindanao*

## MULTICULTURAL FAMILIES AND FOREIGN SPOUSES STAND TO GAIN AS KOREA STRENGTHENS SUPPORT SERVICES

The Korean government has taken aggressive steps to foster a more multi-ethnic and multicultural society, a step that will be beneficial to Filipinos living there

The Korean government, with the influx of more foreigners to South Korea, for work, residence or intermarriage, has taken aggressive steps to foster a more multi-ethnic and multicultural society, a step that will be beneficial to Filipinos living in their country.

By end of 2008, South Korea's total population had reached 48.6 million, with foreigners accounting for 2%. With a declining population growth rate, the arrival of foreigners who seek residence and temporary sojourn in South Korea has become a welcome change for the country. Perhaps as an indirect consequence of the increase, reports indicate that 11% of the total marriages in Korea in 2008 were international marriages. Six years earlier, marriages involving non-Koreans represented only 5%. Growing significantly at 16%, the number of foreigners married to Koreans increased from 144,385 to 167,090 between 2008 to May 2009. Of the current figure, 89.7% or 149,853 are women and 10.3% or 17,237 are male.

Majority of these inter-marriages are between a Korean male and a foreign female, mostly from China, Japan, Vietnam, the Philippines, United States, Mongolia, Thailand, and Russia. Korean females married foreign males from Japan, China, the United States, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Philippines, and Nepal. The Philippines ranks fourth in terms of size among the origin countries.

Most foreign spouses and their families reside in the cities of Incheon (33%), Seoul (25.3%), Gwangju (9.5%) and Daejeon (9%). Children borne

out of these unions are estimated at 103,484, with about 60% below 6 years old.

According to CFO records, approximately 1,500 Filipinos left the Philippine in 2008 as spouses of Korean nationals, a steep increase from those who emigrated in 2007. The Philippine Embassy in Seoul also estimates that some 6,000 Filipinos married to Koreans are residing in South Korea as of April 2009.

With the increasing number of cross-cultural marriages, both origin and receiving countries like the Philippines and South Korea are strengthening efforts to ease the transition and integration of multicultural families into the society. There is, however, a continuing need to review and improve existing policies to protect the rights and welfare of migrants especially women in intermarriages.

### Increase of International Marriages in Korea

In its concluding statements in August 2007, the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (UN CEDAW) expressed "concern about the increased number of international marriages which may lead to foreign women being trafficked in the Republic of Korea for purposes of marriage and exploitation." The Committee also raised concern



Source: Commission on Filipinos Overseas

over the prevalence of domestic violence in such marriages.

Taking cue from the recommendations of the Committee, the Korean government has instituted new policies and programs to support foreign spouses and multicultural families in South Korea.

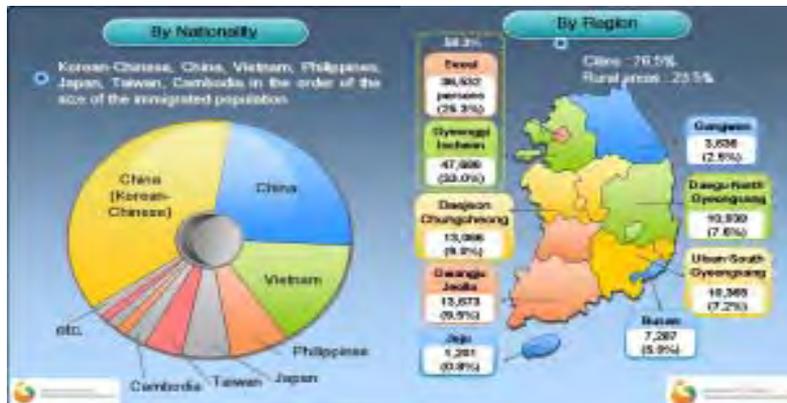
### Multicultural Family Support Law

Enacted in September 2008, the law requires the state and municipal governments in Korea to actively support multicultural families to improve their quality of life. The term "multicultural family" refers to families composed of Korean nationals and immigrant spouses, including those who were naturalized after their marriage, and their children.

To facilitate the settlement and integration of married immigrants into Korean society, the Korean Ministry for Health, Welfare and Family Affairs established over 100 Multicultural Family Support Centers in 232 cities, counties and districts in Korea, and an additional 140 centers in the pipeline. Among the programs offered to families are free livelihood training courses, Korean language classes, family counseling, interpretation services, legal counseling, pregnancy and childbirth support, child care support and migrant women's emergency call center.

### Regulation of Marriage Brokerage Agencies

One of the main reasons for the sharp increase in the number of international marriages in Korea is the proliferation of international matchmaking agencies in Korea. With misleading marriage advertisements and false claims of marriage



Source: Ministry for Health, Welfare and Family Affairs, Republic of Korea

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## Program special



CFO Exec. Director Jose Maria J. Palabrica and KOVA President Gi Bok Ko during the MOA signing

brokers, more and more people fall victim to sham marriages in Korea. To regulate these matchmaking agencies, a law was put in effect in June 2008 to strengthen the control and oversight of the Korean government with the imposition of a mandatory registration system. Apart from the prohibition of false or exaggerated advertisements, international marriage brokers are required to observe the laws of foreign countries where the foreign spouses originate. An obligatory guarantee insurance is also in place to compensate for loss.

### CFO Enters into Agreement with Korean Government

After several visits to the Philippines in the first and second quarters of 2009, the Ministry for Health, Welfare and Family Affairs of South Korea noted the Philippine government's long time initiative to aid Filipino spouses of foreign nationals by requiring them to attend a pre-departure guidance and counseling program. For this purpose, the Korean government offered to support the pre-departure programs of the CFO just as it has supported other origin countries of

foreign spouses in Korea like Vietnam, Cambodia and Mongolia.

In July 2009, the CFO entered into an agreement with the Korean Overseas Volunteers Association (KOVA), the implementing agency of the Ministry for Health, Welfare and Family Affairs, to enhance the pre-departure program for Filipino spouses of Korean nationals through the provision of financial, material and human resources to enable the conduct of a more systematic orientation for Filipino spouses about Korea. The program aims to develop among the spouses greater awareness and understanding among the couples, express sound judgment and adaptation, and thereafter reach a full level of socio-economic integration to enable them to live a more sustainable and stable family life in Korea.

Following the signing of the agreement, the Ministry for Health, Welfare and Family Affairs invited the CFO to participate in a week-long training to introduce the government's policies and support for multicultural families in South Korea that are needed to improve the programs of the CFO for Korea-bound Filipino spouses. Moreover, the Korean government, through its implementing agencies KOVA and the Korea International Cooperation Agency, has dispatched two competent Korean volunteers to serve as additional resource persons during the orientation sessions for Filipino spouses. The volunteers are expected to teach basic Korean language, culture, norms and tradition necessary for emigrants to Korea. Inter-marriage realities and family issues specific to multicultural families in South Korea were included.

### CFO and SMEF-COW participate in Training Program

The seven-day training gave the CFO opportunity to present policies and programs of the Philippine Government for Filipino spouses of foreigners. Specifically, the team highlighted the significance of the Guidance and Counseling and Cultural Orientation Programs implemented by the CFO for spouses of Korean nationals. Organizers and participants of the training sponsored by the Ministry for Health, Welfare and Family Affairs lauded these programs, and encouraged other origin countries

to conduct the same activities. Also represented during the training program were Mongolia and Vietnam.

The trainees were able to visit several institutions in Korea that provide support and direct services to foreign spouses and multicultural families. These include the Immigration Office of Seoul in Sejongro, the Multicultural Family Support Centers in Dongdaemun and Ulsan, 1366 Emergency Women's Crisis Center in Seoul and the Public Health Center in Nam-gu. The teams also toured the facilities of the co-sponsors of the training namely the Hyundai Automobile Manufacturing in Ulsan City and the Pohang Steel Company (POSCO) in Pohang.

### Immigration Office



Daycare Center at Multicultural Family Support Center in Ulsan

The immigration office in Seoul opened in 2006 and caters to Koreans and foreigners seeking extension of stay in Korea, applying for naturalization or residence visas. The branch is one of 21 offices providing similar services around South Korea, and ranks third in the world in terms of the number of applications processed. The immigration office advocates a number of programs for multicultural families to ease their adjustment. These include the Happy Start Program, the Connection Program for couples and the Social Integration and Education Program. The Happy Start Program, launched in July 2009, is a two-hour lecture for foreign spouses who recently settled in Korea. During its initial implementation, some 50 multicultural families attended the lecture. The session is conducted every fourth Thursday of the month, and covers topics from immigration procedures and naturalization to garbage recycling, basic traffic regulations and introduction of help centers for foreigners. Foreign spouses who attend these programs are no longer required to take the written examination when applying for Korean citizenship. Application forms for the programs

See next page for continuation



Participants and organizers of the Training Program for Local Agency Workers and Government Employees on How to Support Foreign Spouses with Minister for Health, Welfare and Family Affairs Jae-Hee Jeon (seated 11th from left)

# Program special

*continued from previous page*

are readily available through the immigration office website or in branches that have jurisdiction over the place of residence of the couple.

## Dongdaemun and Ulsan Multicultural Family Support Centers

These centers were established to serve as support groups for foreign spouses and their families as they adjust to their new life in Korea. The Dongdaemun Multicultural Family Support Center located in Kyung Hee University opened in 2006 and has since offered Korean language education, family counseling, vocational training, cooking classes for spouses, interpretation services, child rearing support programs among others. In 2009, more than 9,000 benefited from the services of the center. To augment its programs, the center has hired foreign spouses to attend to calls of other multicultural families requiring assistance. Filipino spouses are the third



*Free language class for foreign spouse in Ulsan Multicultural*

largest among groups provided support by the center.

Similarly, the Ulsan Multicultural Family Support Center offers language classes, family education, counseling, child-care services, job and start-up education, speech therapy, interpretation services, among others. While over 90% of their clients are female, their programs are also intended for Korean men married to foreign women. The center believes it is necessary for foreign spouses to gain understanding of Korean culture and have a head start by learning the language. On the same way, the center encourages couples to visit the center so that the Korean spouses are also able to learn about the culture of their partner to avoid further misunderstandings commonly caused by the language barrier. For spouses living in rural areas, farming technology education is also available. This includes training in rural farming skills to enable them to support their husbands with their livelihood.

## 1366 Emergency Women's Crisis Center in Seoul

Founded in November 2006, the 1366 Women's Crisis Center is an integral program for foreign

spouses providing immediate assistance to those needing protection against all forms of domestic violence. The call center operates from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. in 8 languages (English, Chinese, Vietnamese, Thai, Mongolian, Russian, Filipino and Cambodian) with women coming from said countries attending to calls. From January to September 2009, the Center received 28,000 phone calls. Other 1366 regional centers are located in Suwon, Daejeon Gwangju and Busan. Victims of domestic violence, sexual violence and prostitution are accorded immediate protection through shelter services, medical and legal support. Women in distress may reach the center by calling 1577-1366 anywhere in South Korea. Night time counseling is also available from 10:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. and also via the internet at <http://www.wm1366.or.kr>. Currently, counselors are composed of 5 Vietnamese, 3 Mongolians and 2 Filipinos.

## Nam-gu Public Health Center

The public health office in Nam-gu, Ulsan was established in 1956 to provide healthcare for the citizens of Ulsan. The health center boasts of specialized clinics for smokers, influenza, cancer and AIDS patients, senior citizens and handicapped individuals. It offers free natal services for pregnant women to address the declining birth rate in the area. The center receives support from the Ulsan government and other private corporations which enables them to extend medical help to more than 65,000 patients. While services are not free for non-citizens, permanent residents including foreign spouses receive discounted rates.

## Philippine Embassy

The CFO team also paid a courtesy call on Ambassador Luis T. Cruz at the Philippine Embassy in Seoul. Consul General Sylvia Marasigan and Mr. Isabelo Alvaran presented updates on the services extended by the Philippine Embassy and on cases of Filipinos in distress in Korea handled by the Post.

Ambassador Cruz emphasized the need for an integration program for Filipino spouses of Korean nationals to help them adjust to their new life, with the hope that they would not forget their roots as Filipinos. He noted that some Filipino spouses have become successful in their respective fields in Korea and should be emulated by those who have just arrived. He said that Filipinos are widely recognized in Korea as effective English teachers. The Korean government itself has hired 160 Filipinos as interpreters. He opined that it is necessary to focus attention on leveling the expectations of both the Korean spouse and the Filipino to avoid conflict within the marriage. In the same way that the foreign spouses receive support when settling in Korea,



*Training participants verify immigration procedures from Chief of*

the Korean marrying Filipinos should also consider living in the Philippines to familiarize themselves with the Philippine culture. He added that the Ministry for Health, Welfare and Family Affairs should strengthen its regulations on agencies facilitating marriages between Filipinos and Koreans especially since it is illegal under Philippine Republic Act 6955.

All things considered, the training program along with support programs for multicultural families only prove that the Korean government views the integration of the foreign spouses into Korean society as a viable solution to reduce breakups of families. With over 11,200 divorces in 2008 from foreign spouses, the Korean government continues to seek the participation of origin countries like the Philippines to help address the problems faced by foreign spouses in Korea.

For its part, the Philippine government believes that the success of a marriage between a Filipino and a foreigner lies in their ability to respect the uniqueness and diversity of their respective culture, and in the commitment to support each other as they build their lives together wherever they decide to settle. The Philippine government supports the activities of the Korean government and other non-government sectors in Korea by strengthening the pre-departure programs for Filipino spouses of Koreans. With these efforts, the stigma against Filipino spouses in Korea would hopefully be erased and more multicultural families will have successful marriages.



*Ms. Elsa, one of two Filipino counselors working at the 1366 Emergency Women's Crisis Center, showing the database of calls received from Filipino spouses in distress*

## Issues on overseas donations

*The intricate process involved in the entry of foreign donations to the Philippines can hamper the transfer of resources from donors to intended recipients.*

The tragedy that Typhoons Ondoy and Pepeng wrought on the country has prompted a swift response from overseas Filipinos. Fund drives were undertaken to collect money and relief goods in kind for shipment to the Philippines. Unfortunately, lingering issues regarding overseas donations broke out, prompting the government to issue an executive order granting tax free exemptions to these goods if they are consigned to the Department of Social Welfare and Development. That order applies to donations for victims of the two typhoons only. Questions were raised on future calamities since the basic issues were not addressed on a permanent basis. The CFO gives a summary of these issues in the hope that a permanent solution would be found in the immediate future.

The experiences of the CFO in the last 19 years show that overseas Filipinos are willing to extend assistance to the Philippines. However, the intricate process involved in the entry of foreign donations to the country could hamper the transfer of resources from donors to intended recipients.

**1. Complex process of sending and receiving donations.** Several government agencies are involved in the donation process: National

Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), Department of Health (DOH), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of Education (DepEd), Bureau of Food and Drugs (BFAD), Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), UNESCO National Commission of the Philippines (or UNACOM), Department of Finance (DOF), and Bureau of Customs (BOC). These agencies are involved in issuing endorsements or appropriate clearances for overseas donations.

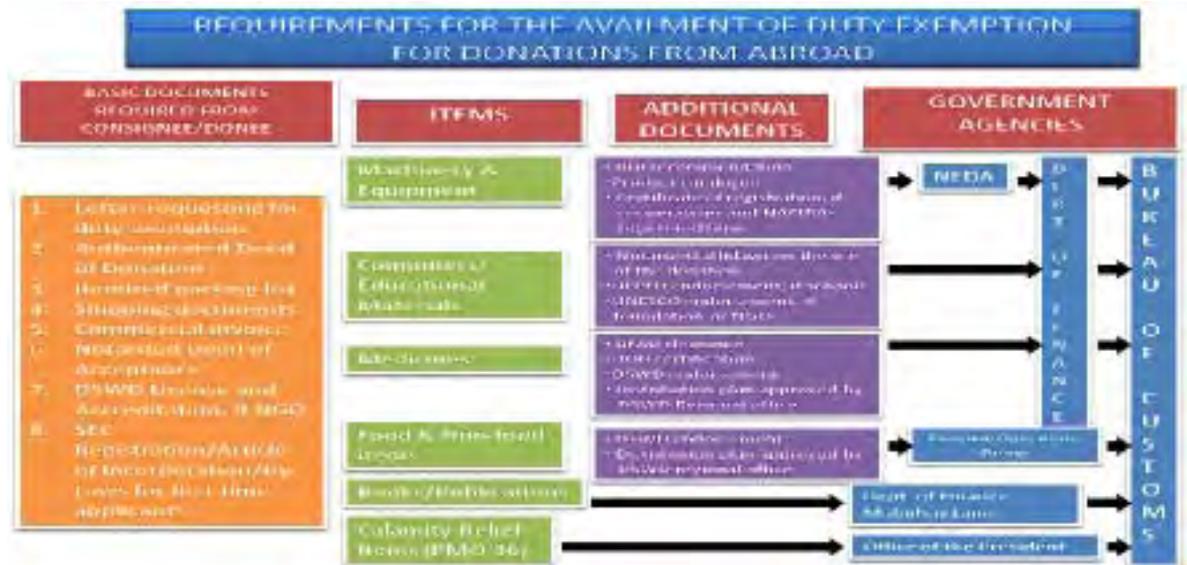
Depending on the nature of the items to be donated and the qualifications of recipients, consignees are required to secure endorsements from relevant government agencies to qualify for tax or duty-free clearances. For example, endorsements from the DepEd and the DOF are needed to donate educational or scientific equipment to private and public educational institutions, or the endorsements of the DOH and NEDA to donate medical equipment to the government and primary or secondary private hospitals in the Philippines.

**2. Lack of information.** Several reasons may explain the delay in processing the duty-free entry of foreign donations to the country. The lack of efficient coordination and available information on the procedures and requirements governing

overseas donations often lead to the accumulation of excessive storage fees and other charges on the donation. Though information materials are available to donors and recipients, there is still a need to effectively disseminate information on the donation process. The absence of a CFO representative in areas with large concentrations of potential Filipino donors makes it difficult to encourage more active participation from the overseas Filipino community. CFO relies on the support of the Philippine posts and regular collaborators of LINKPIL, who are usually Filipino community leaders.

**3. Short grace period for donations.** Consignees of foreign donations are given limited time to process the release of donations. The BOC requires that a shipment be released within 30 days from arrival, otherwise, the shipment is considered abandoned. Though a month would seem sufficient to process the release of donations, requesting for appropriate endorsements and clearances from government agencies usually takes several weeks especially, if the documents submitted are incomplete. The actual processing of documents begins only when the recipient has been notified that the shipment has arrived. Recipients also face

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## Program special



### *A Lasting Commitment to the Philippines*

There is more to FtH than what its name implies

The Feed the Hungry, Inc. (FtH) started out as a loose organization of Filipino employees working with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund who are also members of the WB/IMF Filipino Association. Established in 1993 and initially called the Feed the Hungry Orphans (FTHO), its aim was to visit the Philippines during Christmas season and distribute gifts to poor children. Spearheaded by couple Pablito and Tessie Alarcon, the FTHO initiated various fund drives and solicitations. The response was overwhelming. Aside from cash donations, various non-food items such as books, medicines and clothings were also received. Two years later, FTHO realized that it can do more than feeding the hungry orphans on Christmas day.

In 1995, the FTHO was renamed The Feed the Hungry, Inc. (FtH) to reflect it as more than an organization that feeds the less fortunate. This transformation has enabled the organization to undertake other programs such as livelihood enterprises, scholarship grants, calamity relief and small-scale infrastructure support. The organization raises funds all year round to support its charitable, educational, and livelihood projects that benefit victims of natural calamities, orphans, the elderly, including the abused, the abandoned and the hopeless.

Today, FtH activities are grounded on a five-fold program:

· **Gift Giving.** During holiday seasons until summer the following year, FtH, Inc. gives away gift packs consisting of food items, toys, toiletries and school supplies to indigent Filipinos. Gift giving has already been conducted in the provinces of Guimaras and Mt. Province, and the cities of Pasay and Paranaque, among others.

· **Feeding and Nutrition.** Malnourished children less than six years old are provided supplemental feeding for six months to improve their health. Mothers are taught proper nutrition and trained in cooking nutritious food. Local organizations in the Philippines are provided funds to feed program participants.

· **Community and Economic Development.** Grants are awarded to indigenous communities, barangays, and cooperatives to stimulate community and economic development, improve

cottage industries, and increase farming, fishing and livestock production.

· **Educational Support.** Grants are awarded to schools for the purchase of construction materials to build classrooms. Four-year tuition assistance is also provided to high school and college students. Recipients are selected on the basis of financial need, academic achievement, and leadership potential. Books, computers, microscopes, videotapes, audio visual equipment, and instructional aids and materials are shipped to the Philippines and distributed to public schools and libraries. The Classroom Construction Project is a joint effort of Feed the Hungry Philippines and local partner organizations with assistance from the Commission for Filipinos Overseas. The goal is to help improve the quality of education in beneficiary schools, towns or barangays by building classrooms using donations from private individuals and organizations abroad. Each two-classroom building is built according to specifications at the cost of approximately PHP 200,000.

· **Emergency and Calamity Relief.** Families experiencing devastation and displacement from natural disasters – typhoons, hurricanes, flooding, volcanic eruption – are provided with emergency provisions, medicine, and cash assistance.

From 1990 to 2009 (first semester), FtH has donated more than P77.45 million worth of in-kind and cash donations benefiting 1.03 million individuals in 76 provinces and the Greater Manila Area.

In 1998, the organization was a recipient of the Presidential Awards for Filipino Individuals and Organizations Overseas for its contributions to Philippine development. Recently, Ms. Lottie T. Buhain, FtH Chair and Tess R. Alarcon, FtH Executive Director were recognized by the US-based Filipina Women's Network as one of the 100 Most Influential Filipina Women in the United States for 2009.

Through its lasting partnership with the Commission on Filipinos Overseas, FtH continues to play a valuable role in assisting people in need and in nation-building.



### **FtH at a glance**

- P77.45 million worth of in-kind and cash donations from 1993 to 2008
- 1.03 million individual beneficiaries in 76 out of 82 provinces in the Philippines
- Extended calamity-assistance to victims of Typhoon Ondoy (2009), Mayon Volcano Eruption (2006), Leyte Mudslide (2004), super-typhoons in 2004, Mt. Pinatubo eruption and Luzon earthquake (1990), among others
- Provided seed capital for Livelihood and Rehabilitation Programs for severely-affected communities in Infanta, Quezon and Baler, Aurora
- Supported 24 soup kitchen / feeding programs
- For SY 2006-2007, 50 scholars supported in 24 public and private schools and universities in the Philippines. About 32 students have already graduated as FtH scholars
- Sponsored medical missions in Bicol and Southern Luzon
- Classroom projects in different parts of the country
- Housing projects in Camarines Sur and Cavite



# Filipina marriage migration to European countries, 1995-2004



Nimfa B. Ogena (University of the Philippines Population Institute),  
Minda Cabilao-Valencia and Golda Myra Rama (Commission on Filipinos Overseas)

## INTRODUCTION

From only 163 Filipino spouses and other partners of foreign nationals who emigrated to Europe in 1995, the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (2005) documented a steady but fast increase in the number by 2007. Its proportionate share increased from 4.4 to 6.8 percent over the same period but remains a minority in comparison to the increasing labor mobility of Filipinos. They social networks and demographic conditions in destination countries.

The process of Filipino marriage migration is defined as any permanent change of residence that involves crossing national boundaries and a marriage contract. Filipinos included in this category are either those emigrants who have come via their foreign national spouses with intentions to marry foreign nationals and therefore departing from the Philippines using a spouse or a partner's visa to enter the destination country.

## OBJECTIVE

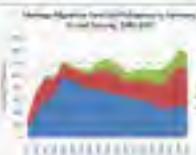
This paper has 3 broad pronged objectives: (1) compare the trend of Filipino marriage migration streams to the top three European destinations: Germany, United Kingdom (UK) and Norway; (2) describe their socio-demographic attributes such as age, education and work status of Filipino emigrants who joined their spouses or partners in these countries; and (3) compare selected characteristics of Filipinos emigrants by destination country.

## METHODS

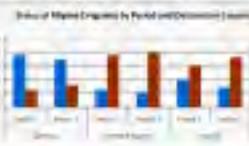
The study used administrative data collected by the CGO from Filipino applicants who apply for permission to describe the trend in marriage migration from the Philippines from 1999 to 2006. Given its migratory stream involving a group of migrants from a common origin with a specific destination, three major marriage migration streams were examined over two time periods: 1999-2006 (waves 1) and 2000-2006 (Wave 2). The administrative data of 36,620 Filipinas who emigrated to Germany (20%), UK (20%), and Norway (40%) were examined. Cross-tabulations of selected variables were estimated to describe the socio-demographic differentials. Odds ratios for Filipinas emigrating to UK and Norway in contrast to Germany for selected variables, the age included and work status, were estimated.

## RESULTS

1. Marriage-related emigration from the Philippines to the top three European destinations has been increasing over the past few decades. Germany was initially receiving the majority of the marriage migrants until 2004. UK-based than age migrants have outnumbered their Germany-based counterparts since 2005.

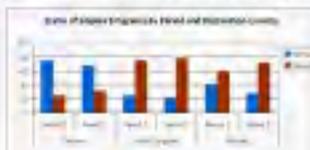


2. The majority of marriage migrants from the Philippines are women (85 percent). The mean age of Filipino marriage migrants increased by almost one year over the 50 year reference period, i.e., from 26.5 years to 30.34 years (p < 0.001).
3. Filipinas are recruited by more than 11 years, on average, in comparison with their foreign spouses. Filipinas who emigrated to UK and Norway have the highest and lowest marriage ages, respectively.
4. Filipinas who left for Germany between 1999-2004 were mostly female those who proceeded to UK and Norway emigrated as spouses. The proportion of Filipinas who emigrated as spouse increased during the five-year period in all three destination countries.



5. The proportion of Filipinas marriage migrants with at least college education increased over the reference period in general. UK received the highest proportion of college-educated Filipino marriage migrants.
6. Nearly all Filipinas marriage migrants have had their partners' birthed counterparts from the Philippines. There is increasing proportion of women who work in Germany who had been born in the United States but in their 6 years.

7. The majority of Filipinas marriage migrants are working. The proportion who work among Filipinas that emigrated to Germany increased over the five-year period.



## MULTIVARIATE RESULTS

1. Filipinas marriage migrants towards the UK and Norway also remained in Germany is more likely during the 2000-2004 period than in the entire 5-year period.
2. Among Filipinas below the age of 24, marriage migration to the UK is less likely in contrast to Germany; but this was greater in men likely to emigrate to Norway than to Germany.
3. Being a spouse rather than a partner increases the odds of Filipino marriage migrants to the UK and Norway than to Germany.
4. Having a job increases the odds of marriage migration to the UK than to Germany.
5. Compared to college education, completion of a high school or vocational education reduced the odds of marriage migrants to the UK than to Germany.
6. Not working as a productive partner reduces the odds to marriage migration to the UK but it increases the odds for marriage migration to Norway than to Germany. On the other hand, working in the Philippines reduces the odds to increase the likelihood of marriage migration of the men to the UK and Norway.
7. Having a productive partner for less than three years reduces the odds of Filipino marriage migration to the UK than to Germany, conversely knowing a productive partner for more than three years reduces the odds of marriage migration to Norway than to Germany.

## Odds on Filipino marriage migration to the UK and Norway vs. Germany (N=30,620)

Variable	Odds Ratio	Destination Country	
		United Kingdom or Norway	Norway vs Germany
Age (reference: 26-29)			
0-24	0.76 **	0.82 **	0.91 **
25-29	1.00		
30-34	1.16 **	1.16 **	1.23 **
35-39	1.24 **	1.24 **	1.32 **
40-44	1.32 **	1.32 **	1.40 **
45-49	1.40 **	1.40 **	1.48 **
50-54	1.48 **	1.48 **	1.56 **
55-59	1.56 **	1.56 **	1.64 **
60-64	1.64 **	1.64 **	1.72 **
65-69	1.72 **	1.72 **	1.80 **
70-74	1.80 **	1.80 **	1.88 **
75-79	1.88 **	1.88 **	1.96 **
80-84	1.96 **	1.96 **	2.04 **
85-89	2.04 **	2.04 **	2.12 **
90-94	2.12 **	2.12 **	2.20 **
95-99	2.20 **	2.20 **	2.28 **
Education (reference: High school/ vocational)			
0 Elementary/ no education	0.80		0.80
1 High school/ vocational	1.00		1.00
2 College education or more (ref)	1.28 **	1.28 **	1.36 **
Work (reference: not working)			
0 Spouse only	0.85 **		0.85 **
1 Productive	1.00		1.00
2 Associate/ self	1.15 **	1.15 **	1.23 **
How long have you known (ref)			
0 Less than 20 months	0.86 *		0.86 **
1 21 to 36 months	0.87 **		0.87 **
2 37 months or more (ref)	1.00		1.00

## CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Like most industrialized nations, the process and consequences of marriage migration of Filipinas to European countries lie in the center of the global politics of reproductive labor in an era when new forms of migration and mobility abound. As increasingly higher educated Filipinas are emigrating to the UK, Germany and Norway for marriage partners, the assimilation of laborable and skilled productive countries' countries is being pushed forward who would seek appropriate employment.

Since the number of emigrants meeting their spouses overseas is increasing from 1999-2004, it may be expected to intensify emigration patterns for foreign spouses to focus on Philippine culture and values. The consequences are crucial in understanding

# Photo Essay

## Step 1: Sorting and Packing



## Step 2: Transport



# Anatomy of a relief drive

## Step 3: Distribution



# Photo Essay



## Program special

Filipino veterans, (from page 13)

in 38 USC 101 (2). So that for so long as a person rendered service in the U.S. military, then he is eligible for veterans benefits. Entitlement to government benefits arising from law or contract is property interest in the nature of private property, the taking of which for public use without just compensation, is forbidden by the Takings clause of the Fifth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

### Concluding words

The Japanese high command thought the Philippines could be captured in less than two months. The battle stretched to half a year because of the valiant defense of the Filipino soldiers. Historians agree that this delay halted Japanese advance to other countries, and saved Australia from Japanese invasion. The timetable of the Japanese was disrupted because they have underestimated the fierce resistance, forcing them to increase their invasion troops to the Philippines.

In the face of strong opposition from the U.S. Congress and the reality that the Filipino veteran

Based on recent estimates of the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs (20,000) and the Philippine Government (18,155), there are an estimated 6,000 Filipino WW2 veterans living in the United States and 12,000 in the Philippines in the year 2007. At a 15% yearly mortality rate, it was estimated that there are only 15,000 living in February 2009.

population is steadily diminishing, veterans advocates proceeded with a more pragmatic "step-by-step" approach by lobbying for such additional remedial measures as the SSI Extension Law, which, although may not restore full veterans benefits, at least partially diminish the restrictive provisions of the Rescission Act.

The decision to insert the veterans provision as a rider to the Stimulus Bill (as opposed to having a stand alone bill) was a way to bypass opponents who had blocked the payments since the Veterans Bill was introduced in the US Congress in 1990. The only way to get it passed was to put it in a must-pass bill.

After six decades, the battle for the surviving veterans is over. The protracted benefits given over the decades have finally grown with the US government finally acknowledging that the Filipino veterans service was a service in the US military.

While the battle might be over, the second generation Filipinos might take up the cudgels to win their war. That is for the revocation of the 1946 Rescission Act which up to now exists in the annals of law of the United States.

Overseas donation, (from page 21)

the problem of having to pay for storage and demurrage fees for donations that are not immediately released. Storage fee is charged starting on the seventh day (including weekends) after the arrival of the shipment.

4. **Payment of value added tax (VAT).** Under Section 109 of Republic Act 8424 (the Tax Reform Act of 1997) and Section 4 of Republic Act 7716 (the VAT Law), food and non-food relief donations and medical equipment are not included among tax exempt transactions. Overseas donations consisting of food and non-food items, and medical supplies and equipment, even if accorded duty-free privileges, are subject to payment of Value Added Tax (VAT), which is currently computed at twelve percent (12 percent) of the shipment.

Since most recipients of overseas donations are organizations, foundations, institutions and communities needing assistance, the lack of financial resources deter them from accepting the donations. If they cannot afford to pay for the VAT, the shipment of donations that are already in the country could be abandoned altogether.

Several proposals have been advanced to address these problems. There is a long-standing proposal for the government to consider establishing an express lane or facility similar to the Department of Finance's Mabuhay Lane, which will process only duty-free entry and release of overseas donations. This is expected to minimize the costs involved in accepting donations and reduce incidents of abandonment and auctioning of donated goods.

Another proposal is to extend VAT exemptions to cover equipment and donations from overseas Filipinos intended to support government programs in health care, micro-enterprise development and education. Overseas donations must not be treated like other imported goods or services considering the nature and objectives of such transfers. It is important to weigh the ultimate benefits of these donations against the purported income that can be generated by VAT revenues on these donations. It should also be noted that the VAT must be paid by recipients, who often do not have the financial capability to shoulder this expense.

## POLICY STATEMENTS OF PGMA

October to December 2008

—oOo—

*"But we long for the day when going abroad for a job is a career option, not only choice, for a Filipino worker. Our economic plans are designed to allow the Philippines to break out of this cycle..."*

*"As people migrate, they draw more than one country into their lives. Their work, their family, the gains they make from migration, and their need for personal security and well-being become matters of import that across national boundaries."*

*"The Philippines stands ready to champion the cause of migrant workers."*

*"We have established what is considered one of the best-regulated expatriate worker programs in the world. On the basis of their contributions and of the nation's humanitarian responsibilities to its people wherever they are, our government works doubly hard to strengthen migrant workers' protection..."*

-President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Plenary Hall, PICC, Pasay City: 29 October 2008  
Source: RP as Champion of Migrant Workers, Volume 17, October 2008

—oOo—

*"The vision we have of a young nation must include creating high-paying jobs right here at home, not just abroad. We love and value our expatriates. We honor their service and their sacrifice. Yet, we must work for a day, a day when you will be at your peak when a job abroad is a career choice and not the only option available to a hardworking Filipino."*

*"It is now time for you, the young generation to get involved in civic life, as the SK is involved in civic life and to take responsibility for your own fortunes."*

*"I have strong faith in our youth, I have strong faith in our SK. I know you will not shrink from these challenges. I know you will not neglect your country and abandon your future."*

-President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Waterfront Cebu City Hotel, Lahug, Cebu City: 30 October 2008  
Source: The Youth and Visions of Young Nation, Volume 17, October 2008

—oOo—

# News

*Philippine schools, (from page 1)*

Management (SBM) Experience and ICT: A Reality in Education by Dir. Susana B. Estigoy, Asec. Inciong, and Mr. Elcid C. Pangilinan, respectively. Workshops and discussions followed.

During the split sessions for the elementary and secondary groups, Dr. Lolita M. Andrada, Director of the Bureau of Secondary Education of the DepEd, talked about The Refined Secondary Curriculum in its Pilot Run while Dr. Yolanda S. Quijano, Director of the Bureau of Elementary Education, discussed The Elementary Curriculum: Responding to



*The CFO also mounted an exhibit during the week-long conference to showcase its wide array of programs and services.*

Challenges of Learners. Lectures on National Competency-Based Teaching were also delivered by Dir. Beth G. Torno; Classroom, Learning Management by Asst. Dir. Angelita M. Esdicul, Inclusive Education by Dr. Frank B. Marcelo; and Context-based Science Learning by Ms. Fe M. Villalino.

On the third day, Asst. Dir. Esdicul and Mr. Jose Edison C. Tondares led the workshop on the agenda for future actions. The agenda focused on academics, teacher development, student services, school performance accreditation, school management, and community relations, among others. The accreditation of school was discussed to emphasize the quest for excellence among PSOs. This move will lift the schools from permit to

operate and recognition level, to higher standards of academic preparation, to equip students at PSOs with greater competitive edge.

The ceremonies closed with the awarding of the literary contest winners. Leonora Anne Q. Valencia of the International Philippine School in Riyadh, who won 1<sup>st</sup> prize for Essay Writing – Elementary level and John Lemuel T. Barroga of the Millennium International School in Riyadh, KSA, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize for Poetry – Elementary level, received their awards and certificates of recognition.

The schools' representative received the awards in behalf of the winners who failed to attend the ceremony.

CFO Secretary Dante A. Ang and Deputy Executive Director Minda Cabilao Valencia also launched the Philippine schools overseas website, a commitment of Secretary Ang and former CFO Executive Director Jennifer O. Gonzales during the 7<sup>th</sup> Conference of Philippine Schools Overseas in Dubai, United Arab Emirates in 2008, to link and strengthen the collaborative efforts by the 44 Philippine schools overseas spread over nine countries. The website contains activity documentations, news, notices, school profiles, and pictures.

Secretary Ang, in his closing remarks, lauded all the participants for their continuous promotion of Philippine education overseas and demonstration of commitment to excellence and quality education. He challenged the delegates to make the Philippine schools overseas comparable to the Philippines' best. He also



*(seated, l to r) Davao City Councilor Pliar Braga, Dir. Albert Valenciano of OWWA, DED Minda Cabilao Valencia of the CFO and Assec. Teresita Inciong of the DepEd with former CFO Exec. Dir. Jennifer O. Gonzales and the United International Private School delegation.*

stressed that PSO educators should not only focus on academics but also develop programs that will improve values and shape the character of the students as vital components of progress.

In behalf of the participants, Mr. Alexander S. Acosta, School Principal of the Philippine School Doha, thanked and commended the organizers for the successful conference. He accepted the challenge of Secretary Ang to make the Philippine schools overseas comparable to the Middle East and Philippines top institutions.

The conference ended with the awarding of certificates of attendance to the participants followed by the cultural presentation of the Kalumon Dancers featuring the traditional songs and dances of the ethnic groups in Davao City.

The conference was sponsored by the C & E Publishing, Inc., Anvil Publishing, Inc., FNB Educational, Inc., Neo Asia Publishing, Incorporated, RBSI International, Phoenix/ SIBS Publishing House, Inc., Vibal Publishing House, Inc., and Emilio Aguinaldo College.



*Sec. Ang and DED Cabilao-Valencia led the ribbon cutting for the official launch of the PSO website.*

## Maraming salamat po!

The CFO expresses its deepest appreciation and gratefulness to the following donors who made the calamity relief drive possible.

Feed the Hungry, Inc. • Philippine Community School in Tripoli • Parents Teachers Association-The New Filipino Private School • Kuwait Philippines International Private School • The Filipino community and the various donors from Brunei Darussalam • Marilyn Argawanon • Rowena Bilgera • Unification Church-Busan and Hanfil Busan Regions • Al-Hekma International School • Filipino Community Center in Hawaii • Mr. and Mrs. Ariel and Abigail Bungato • Sharon Bostos • World Bank Community Connection Campaign



# In Memoriam

*A grateful Commission remembers.*



When Corazon C. Aquino assumed the presidency in 1986, she had every reason to abolish any government agency she considered unnecessary. As a Marcos-era agency, the CFO was relatively young then, being created only in 1980. The evolution of the CFO is interesting, as it was perceived to be duplicating certain functions of the then Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Many suspected that it was created to snoop on Filipinos in exile who were the most vocal anti-Marcos dissidents abroad. It was a spy agency, others contend, hiding under the veil of an executive agency. And so it was expected that the new administration would abolish the CFO. Instead, President Aquino strengthened the CFO by vesting the young office additional functions.

It was during President Aquino's time that most of the programs still implemented by the CFO today were created. It was during her administration that the Presidential Awards for Filipino Individuals and Organizations Overseas was born in 1991. Held

biennially, the Presidential Awards seeks to confer recognition on distinguished Filipino individuals and organizations overseas for their exceptional achievements or humanitarian efforts, giving form and substance to Filipino excellence and the time-honored values of pakikipagkapwa, pagtutulungan, and pagkakaisa.

As a tribute to overseas Filipinos, President Aquino issued Proclamation No. 276 on 21 June 1988, institutionalizing the commemoration of the Month of Overseas Filipinos every December. Since then, CFO has conducted various activities in recognition of the outstanding achievements and immense contributions of overseas Filipinos to the Philippines and the global community.

It was also during her incumbency when the flagship program LINKAPIL or *Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino* was conceptualized in 1989. LINKAPIL was developed as a mechanism to tap the resources of overseas Filipinos to support education, health and welfare, livelihood, and small-infrastructure

projects. Assistance through the LINKAPIL Program may be monetary or in-kind, in the form of donations, grants or subsidies.

Looking back, the CFO is grateful for the Lady in Yellow for setting new directions and strengthening the functions of the Commission. When President Aquino passed away on that fateful Saturday, the CFO's flag flew at half mast immediately, its service vehicles sported yellow ribbons, and the lone tree standing in front of its building was tied with everything yellow. The CFO was fortunate enough to be located in one of the routes of the President's casket when it was transferred to the Manila Cathedral and brought to Manila Memorial Park for the funeral. As a final tribute, the CFO honored its President with a confetti when her cortege passed by the office, with its employees standing out in the alternating blistering heat and heavy rainfall.

As the CFO bade one of its dearest Presidents goodbye, it will be forever grateful to her for chartering the course of the CFO.



*Former President Corazon C. Aquino poses with the first awardees of the Presidential Awards for Filipino Individuals and Organizations Overseas in 1991. At her right is then Executive Secretary Oscar Orbos.*

## Commission on Filipinos Overseas

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### ARE YOU MOVING?

*In case you are moving or changing your address, the Commission on Filipinos Overseas would like to request you to inform us of your new address, so we can serve you better.*

*Thank you.*