

# HAWAII FILIPINO CHRONICLE

**HAWAII'S #1 FILIPINO NEWSPAPER**

◆ WEEKLY ◆ FEBRUARY 13, 2010 ◆

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*Happy Valentine's Day To All!*

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**EDITORIAL**

**Time is Now for Immigration Reform**

**D**uring his presidential campaign, Barack Obama promised to reform the nation's flawed immigration system. Well, the first year of his presidency came and went with no such reform, but he gets a pass for wrestling with the economic recession and the war on terror, as well as attempting to overhaul the nation's healthcare system.

Could 2010 be THE year for real reform? Pro-immigrant groups, disappointed with the near passage of a comprehensive immigration reform bill in 2007, remain optimistic. They say that legalizing the estimated 12 million undocumented workers could generate upwards of \$1 trillion in tax revenues that could help spur the nation's economic recovery. Anti-immigrant groups, on the other hand, say that doing so simply rewards violators of the law who illegally crossed the border or overstayed their visas. They also point to the nation's high unemployment rate and claim that undocumented immigrants grab jobs from U.S. citizens and legal residents.

An early salvo in what promises to be a very contentious issue was the introduction of H.R. 4321—also known as the Comprehensive Immigration Reform for America's Security and Prosperity Act. The bill is expected to benefit the Filipino community in the U.S. by reducing the existing visa backlogs in the family- and employment-based categories. H.R. 4321 eases the backlog by providing for the non-inclusion of immediate relatives in the annual visa cap, upgrading spouses and children of lawful permanent residents to the immediate relative category and exempting children of veterans from the annual cap.

We join pro-immigration reform advocates who have called upon the Obama administration as well as Congress to move quickly and decisively on an immigration reform package that will reunite families and reinvigorate the economy. We hope reform is approved by summer at the latest, knowing that several senators and all 435 members of the House of Representatives are up for re-election in the Fall. The closer to the elections, the more unwilling they will be to put themselves on the line and approve immigration reform.

Hence the need for reform NOW. We believe that immigration reform is good for families, good for communities and good for America. If you believe accordingly, get involved and make sure your voices are heard.

**Aloha, Uncle Frank**

**W**hen former Honolulu mayor Frank Fasi passed away recently at age 89, one could not help but feel a part of old Honolulu pass along with him. And for good reason. Many of the programs and services that we enjoy today have Fasi's fingerprints all over them—including theBus, neighborhood boards, the Fasi Civic Center, senior citizens programs, Honolulu City Lights, farmers markets, satellite city halls and many others.

Fasi was mayor for 22 years from 1968 until 1980 and from 1984 to 1994. He also ran unsuccessfully for governor five times. Despite the defeats, Fasi enjoyed staunch support from Oahu's Filipino community—particularly those born and raised in the Philippines, where they are used to and even expect a bit of flair during the political campaigning season. And flair is something that the controversial Fasi had a lot of, especially when it came to his emotional speeches and wardrobe.

Wherever Fasi went, the Filipino vote tended to follow him. He catered to Filipino voters, appealed to them and was very popular. In the 1984 mayoral race, he pledged to name more Filipinos to his administration if the Filipino vote swung his way. Filipinos cast their votes for him and in return, Fasi appointed more Filipinos as directors and deputy directors of City departments than ever before. Among the appointees was Toy Arre, the first Filipino appointed to

**FROM THE PUBLISHER**



et me the first to thank you for picking up this latest issue of the Hawaii Filipino Chronicle! Valentine's Day is right around the corner. As many of you already know, we Filipinos are hopeless romantics. Not surprisingly, Valentine's Day is quite popular in the Philippines, which has adopted American habits such as giving a bouquet of red roses or a box of chocolates, wearing red-colored shirts or dresses and sharing a romantic meal at a favorite restaurant. The Philippines, however, does have its own unique Valentine's Day customs. Ever see a McDonald's restaurant in the dark, lit only by candles on each table? Only in the Philippines—where cost-conscious couples who still want to enjoy a candle-lit dinner—can this unusual sight be seen. Whatever you've got planned, we hope you and that special someone in your life will have a memorable Valentine's Day!

Speaking of that special someone, we have recently learned that Dr. Jorge Camara will be receiving a special Hawaii Music Award late next month for his CD entitled "Live From the Operating Room." He uses music in his medical practice for its relaxing and sedative properties, which helps his patients to better cope with the physical and psychological stress of undergoing surgery. In addition to being a first-rate ophthalmologist, Dr. Camara is also a wonderful humanitarian, having served as former president of the Aloha Medical Mission and participated in many missions to the Philippines. He has used his musical skills to perform in several benefit concerts for the AMM. Congratulations to Dr. Camara! More about Dr. Camara and his award is available on page 7.

Our cover story for this issue is written by Danny de Gracia. It who delves into the highly-controversial issue of immigration reform. Danny cites globalization brought about by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) as well as draconian immigration laws enacted over the past 13 years as reasons for the large undocumented immigrant population currently residing in the U.S. He calls upon Filipinos to pay more attention to the current immigration crisis and to demand that the nation's elected leaders hit the brakes on globalization. Please read his article beginning on page 4 and see whether or not you agree with him.

On the lighter side, we continue our "One Day in the Life Of" column on page 6 with a feature story on Rudy Manzano, a Filipino postal carrier, who plies his trade in the Waipahu-Kapolei neighborhoods. Contributing writer Fiedes Doctor discovers that there's more to delivering mail than meets the eye. The job may look easy, but Manzano must deliver up to 4,000 pieces of mail within 6-7 hours and along the way deal with barking dogs and speeding motorists. If you happen to meet Manzano while retrieving your mail, remember to smile and thank him for a job well done!

This issue contains other informative articles, including "Legal Matters" (page 7), "Family Corner" (page 12) and Legal Notes (page 13), which we hope you will enjoy reading. In closing, thank you once again for supporting the Hawaii Filipino Chronicle. Until next time, Aloha and Mabuhay!

*Chona A. Montesinos-Sonido*

a cabinet position under Fasi as director of finance.

With his slogan "Fasi can get it done!" and his trademark "shaka" sign, Fasi was the tireless champion of the little guy. A story was told of a woman who saw an elderly Filipino man sitting in the pouring rain at a bus stop in Waianae back in the 1980s. She snapped a picture of the old man sitting on a rock at the bus stop in the rain. She submitted the photo to Fasi and pleaded for better facilities for elderly bus riders from West Oahu. A few months later, benches were installed at area bus stops, along with rain shelters. Such is one of many stories of Fasi helping those who could not help themselves.

For all of his accomplishments, both large and small, Fasi was truly the leader who helped shaped modern Honolulu. Mahalo, Frank for all that you've done for our city. You will be dearly missed.



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## LEGISLATIVE CONNECTION



By Senator Will Espero

## Be Counted in 2010

Timeline. Census questionnaires will be mailed or delivered to households in February and March this year. Please return your questionnaires by mail as soon as you can. People are counted where they live and sleep most of the year. Since the census is conducted in multiple places, you should not count in your household anyone who is away at college, living in a nursing home, is on active military duty, etc. Households that do not return a questionnaire by mail will be called or visited by census takers from May to July, 2010. By December 31, the Census Bureau will present the count of the population to President Obama for apportionment. By March 2011, each state will receive complete redistricting data for them to use in redrawing the lines of each legislative district to ensure that each district is roughly equal in population size.

The way we take the count is different this time. This year the Census Bureau has bid "aloha 'oe" to the long form. Only the short form will be used, which will take just minutes to complete. The short form will ask for a count of residents, name, sex, age, date of birth, race, ethnicity, and relationship – quick and easy. More detailed demographic information will no longer be taken on the April 1 short form census once in a decade. Instead it will be gathered continually throughout the decade by sending a survey to a small portion of the population on a rotating basis. This American Community Survey provides a more dynamic snapshot that enables government planners to have current data about communities every year.

Guiding major decisions. Census data tells the government where people are and

how many there are. The government used information when making important decisions that affect you. If it's important to you which school your child attends, or if you live in an area that needs more schools, then please fill out and mail in your questionnaire. The population counts are used to determine school boundaries and whether new schools need to be built. If you live in an area that needs new roads or infrastructure construction or repair, please fill out and mail in your questionnaire. The information helps the government to plan where to invest transportation funding and what priority to assign to proposed projects. If you feel your community needs more police or emergency services, needs services for youth or the elderly, could use a health care clinic, child care facility or job training center, please fill out and mail in your questionnaire.

These are just a few of the many ways that the government uses the Census' demo-

graphic snapshot of America to decide where and how your tax dollars are spent.

One person, one vote. The Census affects your voice at all levels of government. Census data is used to apportion seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and to redistrict state legislatures. Our democratic form of government requires that

districts are roughly equal in population size to ensure that everyone is equally represented in legislative bodies. Every ten years, each legislative district has to be redrawn according to the new data to create districts of relatively equal population size. After each state receives the new census data by April 2011, it then has the daunting task of deciding the boundaries of each elective district. No new elections can occur until those new lines have been drawn.

Tying the right "piece of earth" with the population data and organizing it for easy use and access is extremely difficult, complex and time consuming. A wide variety and quantity of good data is essential for drawing the lines: special mapping software; databases with census, demographic and election data, and others. Technologic advances will make this 2010 Census different from any other before. Google Earth was not around ten years ago for the 2000 Census, and can now be one of the pieces of information that district line drawers can use to help

make mapping decisions. Sheet numbers are not the only consideration. The effect of the boundary lines on the community, on minorities, political ramifications, and other factors are also taken into consideration. Districting plans must also comply with voting laws.

Our United States Constitution mandates a count of everyone residing here to allocate Congressional seats, electoral votes, and government program funding. Our first American Census was taken in 1790 and has been carried out every decade since. The ever-evolving complexity of our citizens' needs and interests means that those in government have the statistics and other information they need to identify and understand what is happening. Our censuses have grown and adapted to provide the data they need to help them plan. With our share of the \$3 trillion at stake, I encourage you to take a few minutes to fill out the quick, easy form and mail it in as soon as possible. How much Hawaii gets of that \$300 billion per year is up to each of us.

To be counted or not to be counted – that is the question than can result in millions of dollars for Hawaii. More than \$300 billion a year for ten years, \$3 trillion in all, is up for grabs – want some of it?

How that money is going to be distributed and spent will be determined by the results of the 23rd Census of the United States, coming to your household soon. The data collected in this year's census directly affects how federal and state funds are allocated to states and communities for transportation, education, public health, neighborhood improvements, and much more. The information provided by the Census affects funding decisions for child care centers and programs; schools, universities and community colleges; health care clinics and hospitals; roads, bridges, traffic lights, and highway improvements; infrastructure, and many other issues. That is why it is so important that each household in Hawaii takes the few minutes to fill out and mail in their Census questionnaire. This will help ensure that your community gets its fair share of government funding.

What is the census? It is a snapshot of the country, a count of everyone residing in the country on April 1, and is required by our federal constitution. I encourage everyone to participate in the census process. The information is completely confidential, and this privacy is protected by federal law for 72 years.

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# A Nation Divided: Immigration Reform and What It Means for Your Family

By Danny de Gracia, II

**W**ith the effects of the global financial meltdown hitting hard against the U.S. economy and the Global War On Terror entering its ninth year with no end in sight, one of the greatest challenges that faces policy makers is how to balance the demands of a fair and equitable immigration policy with the realities of border control, resource scarcity and the future of the American way of life.

It is presently estimated that some 600,000 legal immigrants enter the U.S. each year, while another 700,000 – 1.5 million illegally enter America to join 20 million other illegals already in the country. While policymakers struggle with these challenges, one thing is certain—something must be done before the system completely collapses. Filipinos need to know the truth on the immigration crisis: why it exists, who is responsible and should not shy away from demanding immediate action.

## Globalization and Poor Domestic Policy: Drivers for Crisis

Of the 600,000 legal immigrants who enter the U.S. each year, only 40,000–80,000 are Filipinos choosing to take residence primarily in California or Hawaii. Three quarters of Filipinos who come to America are sponsored or are immediate relatives of U.S. citizens, while the remaining quarter come for employment.

The majority of immigrants, both legal and illegal, come from Mexico. The deluge of persons crossing the 2,000-mile U.S.

Mexico border is the spotlight that has brought so much media and policymaker attention to the immigration issue. But why does this crisis exist? Just how did the system break?

## NAFTA

The first reason for the immigration crisis is the planetary political trend towards globalization. In 1994, the highly controversial and divisive North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) entered into effect. NAFTA, which received bipartisan opposition in the U.S. especially from labor unions,



was touted by former Vice President Al Gore and other proponents of a “new world order” of global integration as being a means to increase collective prosperity.

In reality, NAFTA only served to impoverish both the U.S. and Mexico. While much of the contemporary rage in the immigration debate has been against Mexicans, the real rage should be against the framers of the NAFTA agreement and the large banks that profited as a result of it. NAFTA stacked the cards against Mexican small business owners in agriculture by allowing U.S. taxpayer subsidized agri-megacorporations to compete directly with Mexican farmers, which drove some 2 million Mexicans out of business and off their land, while simulta-

neously driving up the cost of indigenous Mexican products such as tortillas as high as 50 percent.

An estimated 28,000 Mexican small businesses were also annihilated by “big box” U.S. companies, which set up shop in Mexico and hired cheap labor from China instead of Mexican citizens.

Rather than improving the wages of Mexicans, fallout from NAFTA caused them to crash and burn, resulting in desperation that drove many to immigrate to America, both legally and illegally, resulting in the massive influx of immigrants that now strain the system to the limit.

## “Draconian Immigration” Policy

The second leg of the pres-



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**COVER STORY**

ent day immigration crisis rests with poor domestic policy, both on the part of our government and large corporations. I recently had the opportunity to interview Marielena Hincapie, the executive director of the National Immigration Law Center (NILC) based in Los Angeles who asserted that the system is broken because of a combination of unfair domestic laws, policies and practices.

"[The] large undocumented population we have today in the U.S. is the unintended consequence of draconian immigration laws that have passed over the last 14 years resulting in many undocumented immigrants remaining in the U.S.," Hincapie says. "The economy and the country as a whole have benefited greatly from low-wage immigrant workers, many of whom are undocumented, but having second-tiered citizens is ultimately not good for the country's social fabric."

Hincapie is not alone in calling out the temptation for companies to use low-wage, undocumented workers. Last year, the Wall Street Journal reported that Federal contractors ranging from healthcare to national defense—many of whom receive lucrative stimulus funds—were potentially exploiting cheap, illegal immigrant labor. One radio broadcaster in Texas recently warned that private military contractors were even going so far as to hire and train illegal immigrants as paramilitaries for use in guarding U.S. military detention facilities and FEMA camps.

The NILC has championed for years the rights of immigrants and this year has voiced its strong support for the most current bill for reform in Congress, H.R. 4321, also known as the Comprehensive Immigration Reform for America's Security and Prosperity Act (CIR ASAP) introduced by Rep. Luis Guterrez.

"Our immigration system is fundamentally broken. Currently, families face interminable delays to be reunited with loved ones. There are complicated and irrational legal hoops that immigrants now must jump through to apply for legal status. And immigrant workers do not have adequate labor protections. This system is bad for families and worse for the economy. We need to overhaul the current immigration system and create one that better reflects both our economic needs and our societal values,"

Hincapie goes on to say.

"The only solution is to reform our immigration laws to provide the undocumented members of our community to come out of the shadows and continue contributing their best to the future of [America]. An immigration overhaul bill that addresses the need for family reunification and strengthens the rights of immigrant workers will go a long way in fixing the immigration system," Hincapie says. "CIR ASAP is a sound piece of legislation that would go far in addressing these vital concerns. It is an important first step at moving the immigration reform debate forward."

Reuben Seguritan, a New York-based immigration attorney believes that the CIR ASAP is a necessary reform that may be more successful than previous bills introduced in Congress.

"The latest report from the Department of State shows that Filipinos rank second in the number of waiting list registrants in the family-based category and first in the employment-based," Seguritan says. "Filipinos have to wait many years, even decades, before they can be reunited with their families. To ease the backlog, the bill provides for the non-inclusion of immediate relatives in the annual visa cap, upgrade spouses and children of lawful permanent residents to the immediate relative category and exempt sons and daughters of World War II veterans from the annual cap. Nurses and physical therapists will also be exempt from the numerical limitation. In both family-based and employment-based categories, unused visas will be recaptured and will be used to clear the backlog."

Seguritan says that the CIR ASAP bill is likely to provoke vigorous debate, but asserts that it must go forward nonetheless.

"For sure, the immigration restrictionists, though few, will be vocal in keeping immigration flow at a minimum, if not stopping it altogether," he says. "We must drown out their anti-immigrant voices. The Filipino American community must consolidate its stand and join other communities in relentlessly campaigning for comprehensive immigration reform."

**Why You Should Care, What We Must Do**

Gerald Celente, founder of the Trends Research Institute (TRI) and a geopolitical trends forecaster whose sharp expertise

and uncanny ability in foreseeing paradigm shifts and has been utilized by numerous news networks and corporations warns that the immigration crisis in America is reaching a boiling point.

As early as 2006, TRI warned, "The U.S. with its population [expected] to top 400 million in thirty plus years is filling up with a lot of people... people that a lot of people who get before them, don't want to let enter." Celente has told numerous national news outlets that the immigration crisis in America may lead to revulsion and a wave of sharp anti-immigration sentiment in 2010.

Others view the immigration crisis as an intentional, programmed failure brought about by financial oligarchs and the politicians their campaign donations fund. One source, speaking under condition of anonymity, accused that large banks prosper immensely as a result of the destruction caused by NAFTA and the illegal immigrant surge.

"By lowering the standard of living, wealth is transferred in a way that immensely profits the large banks," the source says. "This is an intentional strategy of bankrupting and looting the American people, using government as a vacuum cleaner for wealth. America is being destroyed by design. If America was so concerned about border integrity, why are U.S. border agents serving in Iraq when we need them here? Our Republic is collapsing."

Filipinos must realize that a nation, which can no longer enforce its borders, is no longer sovereign. The fallout from globalization and poor domestic policies is absolutely unraveling the fabric of America and dimming the prospects of a fair, just and prosperous future for our children. If we do not take ac-

tion today, we may not have a tomorrow to enjoy.

The first thing that Filipinos must do is to demand that their elected leadership hit the brakes on globalization. NAFTA needs to be either renegotiated or repealed altogether. There is nothing "free" about the form of free trade which has been implemented by our government, which often times requires taxes to be increased just to match tax increases in other countries, which pits megacorporations against small businesses and strips honest labor of their income.

"The 'new world order' of financial integration that leaders such as George H.W. Bush, Al Gore, Barack Obama, Gordon Brown, Herman van Rompuy and others have lauded is gutting and bankrupting countries all around the world. It's not a new world order that's being established—it's a world gone mad.

The second thing that Filipinos need to do is to pay attention to the issue of immigration

and not to simply trust the word of politicians who claim to be representing the public good. John Adams warned, "The only maxim of a free government ought to be trust no man living with power to endanger the public liberty.

For too long, Filipinos, like many others, have been deceived by elected officials who assured them that the immigration system was being amended to protect civil rights and ensure the success of a free market, only to discover that the system was being stacked to benefit a select few.

We stand at a precipice in which America can no longer bear the burdens of the failures and designs of those who are leading it. Are we to preserve the future blessings of life, liberty and private property for all who live in America, or shall we see America upon the ash heap of failed regimes, destroyed from within and weathered from without? The choice, fellow Filipinos, is yours.

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## ONE DAY IN THE LIFE OF....

## Postman Rudy Manzano

By Fiedes Doctor

**T**he stereotypical canine attraction to postmen is true, attests eight-year Filipino mailman Rodolfo "Rudy" Manzano who does his rounds in Waipahu and Kapolei every morning, five days a week. He has encountered a number of dogs during the course of his job—not one of them ever happy to see him.

"But the people are," he says. "That's why I love my job. Everybody is happy to see me." Manzano begins his day at 7 a.m. by warming up with a good several minutes of indoor calisthenics.

Next, he goes to a stack marked "Route 27," his jurisdiction for the past 14 months, and sorts the mail by address in designated pigeonholes.

Sorting the mail takes about an hour. Rudy then pulls them out by batches and puts them into plastic trays, arranged according to addresses. This takes him another 20 minutes. Next, he checks his gas cards, official receipts for CODs, keys and clocks out at the main office to start his route. It is 9 a.m.

First stop is at the Waipahu Depot Road, where business offices are located, including the Filipino Chronicle.

"The employees are always friendly when I come in," he says.

Then he rides up to Hikimoi Street and covers the stretch of Farrington Highway, going to

Moloalo and Mokuola streets. He moves on to Kahuailani, Paumano, Kahiki, Paiwa and Kahuamoku, making sure he is efficient and does not miss a house.

"If I miss a letter from a batch of mails for one household, I immediately go back and bring it," he says. "Letters need to be delivered that same day," he reiterates, starting to sound like the post office mantra, which we receivers are happy to hear.

Rudy ends his route in Hilihula and Nali'i streets and back to Kahuailani Street, his last stop. Hopefully, it is only 3:30 in his watch. He then returns to the office to report in and clock out.

During a typical day, the average household will get three letters or more, including magazines and other deliveries. About 3,000 to 4,000 pieces of mail are in his stack, to be delivered not a day later.

"Our route is made for 6 to 7 hours of work. We really should have all the letters in the mailbox in one day," he says.

What if, by some stroke of misfortune, Manzano fails to deliver?

"We call two hours before our shift ends to alert management. They give us 30 more minutes to finish everything," he says.

Or management sends any one of his 60 colleagues in the Waipahu and Kapolei area as reinforcement. The 50-year-old postman has received his fair share of reprimand letters for

those times that he missed the mark. But those were during his canine days. Eight years into the job, Manzano is familiar with his routine, has made friends along the way and is very confident in what he does.

Once you get the hang of it, being a postman is easy and fun, he says. Aside from dogs and speeding motorists, the main challenges of the job are learning the route and dealing with irate customers, which is a rarity.

"Some are disappointed when their boxes are not delivered on time. This happens when they are not at home or they are in the shower at the time of delivery," Manzano says. "We cannot leave a box at the front steps unless otherwise specified."

In cases like these, even though he honked his horn and waited for an acknowledgement, Manzano still offers an apology to his clients. The customer is always right, says the retired U.S. Navy enlist.

Manzano estimates that the amount of mail has dropped 25 percent from 9 years ago, thanks



Postman Rudy Manzano

to emails and networking sites such as Twitter, MySpace and Facebook, which all make connecting with friends and family faster, cheaper and more interactive. Christmas remains the busiest season of the year.

He offers several tips to prevent mail theft: Check your mailbox as soon as you can and make sure the letters you put in the trash are shredded beyond repair.

"There are people who scavenge garbage bins and steal other people's information. You have to be careful," he warns.

The former US navy enlist admits he has always wanted to be a postman, inspired by the "cool" mail carriers on bicycles

back in his province in the Philippines.

"I like being a mailman because of the exercise and I get to talk to people," he says. "When people smile at me, I am always encouraged. Business people thank me for their mails."

One time, Rudy had to forego lunch to finish his duties. "I was very hungry and this Japanese lady asked me if I wanted something to eat. She gave me lechon plus rice and a soda," he recalls. "I was very touched by her act of kindness."

The best part, he says, are kids waiting for him on their porches, calling out "I want my mail, I want my mail!"

## HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

## BBB Reminds Credit Card Holders of New Regulations

**I**f you have a credit card, you may want to circle February 22 on your calendar as the day when new consumer protections laid out in the Credit Card Accountability Responsibility and Disclosure (CARD) Act of 2009 kick in.

The CARD Act puts new rules in place that increase, encourages fair consumer payment handling and improves disclosures on the terms of an account.

"While the new CARD Act provides more consumer pro-



tections, cardholders still need to keep an eye on changes to their accounts and respond quickly if they aren't satisfied," says Dwight Kealoha, CEO of Hawaii's BBB. He urges consumers to read the

fine print of their credit card agreements and the different fees and penalties that can chisel away at one's finances.

The U.S. Census Bureau predicts that the number of credit card holders in the nation will grow to 1.81 billion by 2010. Unfortunately, almost 75 percent of cardholders admit to not reading the terms and conditions of their credit cards, according to a survey by CreditCards.com.

To learn more, please see the comprehensive breakdown of the Credit CARD Act of 2009 at [www.FDIC.gov](http://www.FDIC.gov).

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SOCIETY PAGE

# PMAH Installation 2010

The Philippine Medical Association of Hawaii Installation 2010 went on stage at the elegant Monarch Room of Royal Hawaiian Luxury Collection last January 23. The ambiance was perfect, the food was impeccable. The beautiful Hawaiian sunset drowned swiftly into the pulsating band music. Guests from various sectors came to pay tribute to the soon to be installed 2010 PMAH officers.



▲ Longtime friend Dr. Jorge and Binky Camara renew ties with Drs. Arnold Villafuerte, Nick Joaquin, Glorfin Belmonte and Dan Ablan



▲ Consul General Leoncio Cardenas, Jr. was the installing officer



▲ Outgoing President Dr. Celia Ona and Incoming President Dr. May Ablan say "Salamat" to leaving Board of Governors Drs. Belmonte, Carolina Davide and Efen Baria.



▲ Board Of Governors Dr. Elizabeth Abinsay, Dr. Gabino Baloy, Dr. Cielo Guillermo, Dr. Anthony Guerrero



▲ Dr. Chiyome Fukino, Key Note Speaker



▲ The signature act... One Singular Sensation...



▲ The Filipino Nurses of Hawaii was well represented and posed with Senator Bunda



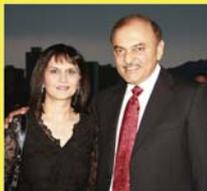
▲ Anna Davide dished out "Ang Maya" with ease and "kiring, kiring"



▲ Smigel Girls Maya and Aliya "Can Do That"



▲ Dr. May Ablan with colleagues and friends



▲ Hawaii Medical Center COO Salim Hasham and wife Tazim



▲ Quando, Quando Dr. Alvin Vales tells Dr. Cielo Guillermo "when"



▲ Drug Reps Bridget and Geareanna with Dr. Cora Hobbs and Wayne Oshiro

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#### WAIPAHU

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Ohana Health Plan  
94-450 Mokuola Street  
Feb 16, 23  
Mar 4  
5:00 PM

#### AIEA

More from your Medicare  
Pearl Country Club  
98-535 Kaonohi St.  
Feb 18  
9:00 AM

#### HONOLULU

More from your Medicare  
Bishop Museum  
1525 Bernice Street  
Feb 19  
9:00 AM

#### WAIPAHU

More from your Medicare  
Ohana Health Plan  
94-450 Mokuola Street  
Feb 20  
1:00 PM

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## HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

### Sariling Gawa 30th Annual Statewide Leadership Conference



Many hands make light work... working together is the best way to go!

**S**ariling Gawa (Our Own Work) Youth Council, Inc. will be holding its 30th anniversary and 2010 Leadership Conference from March 19-21, 2010 at Camp Erdman.

The theme of the three-day annual conference is "In My Hands"—a stimulant for high school youth across Hawaii to realize the power they have as individuals to make a difference in their families, schools and communities.

Established in 1980, the conference utilizes team building, self exploration and cultural activities to help young adults develop the leadership skills, self-confidence, ethnic pride and identity needed to face the many challenges of the future.

The conference also raises awareness and sensitivity to issues concerning Hawaii's youth in Hawaii. For 30 years,

thousands of young Filipinos and community members have experienced hands-on training and skills building, allowing young people to be empowered as leaders, mentors, organizers, administrators and role-models.

The conference is open to all public and private high school students. Applications are available online at: [www.sarilinggawa.org](http://www.sarilinggawa.org). Registration forms and a fee of \$120 must be mailed by February 21, 2010. An additional \$10 late fee will be charged if forms are received after the deadline.

## PHILIPPINE NEWS

### 6%-7% Increase in OFW Remittances Seen this Year

By Lawrence Agcaoili /  
Tuesday, Feb. 9, 2010

**M**ANILA, Philippines—Metrobank Group's First Metro Investments Corp. (FMIC) and the University of Asia and the Pacific (UA&P) see the amount of money sent home by Filipinos abroad growing between six percent and seven percent this year with the expected global economic recovery.

FMIC and UA&P in its The Market Call Capital Markets Research said the growth of overseas Filipino workers' (OFW) remittances would remain in double digit level this year with the gradual recovery from the global financial meltdown.

"And with the improvement of our host countries' economies, we see remittances growing by six percent to eight percent this year," the groups said.

The research note stated that OFW remittances would grow between four percent and six percent in the first quarter of the year.

"OFW remittance growth in US dollar terms will remain single digit in Q1, moving in a tight range of four percent to six percent, but in peso terms this will be closer to zero, thus giving little added stimulus to the economy," FMIC and UA&P added.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) sees OFW remittances growing by at least six percent this year from a record \$17.1 billion last year.

Latest data from the BSP showed that OFW remittances climbed by 5.1 percent

to \$15.78 billion as of end-November last year from \$15.019 billion as of end-November in 2008. This after it accelerated to its fastest level in 14 months after it grew by 11.3 percent to \$1.459 billion in November last year from \$1.311 billion in the same month in 2008.

Major sources of remittances included the US, Canada, Saudi Arabia, United Kingdom, Japan, Singapore, United Arab Emirates, Italy, and Germany.

"Though not as high as recorded in earlier years, US dollar remittances outperformed expectations of negative to flat growth by many foreign institutions. As expected, these remittances kept the Philippine economy buoyant while neighboring countries, except for Indonesia and Vietnam, saw their economies shrink in 2009," it added.

FMIC an UA&P added that another driving force behind this is the increase in services such as money transfers and account transfers provided by commercial banks.

The groups said the appreciation of the peso against the dollar would continue to mitigate the effects of high OFW remittances on domestic consumption spending in the country.

According to the, OFW remittances could have gone up by 5.5 percent last year or better than the projected four percent growth forecast sey by BSP officials.

"Given the strong inflow of remittances during the Christmas holidays, we think that it is still possible for remittances to post 5.5 percent growth for 2009." ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com))

PHILIPPINE NEWS

# Pangasianan Open to Having Nuclear Plant

By Eva Visperas /  
Tuesday, Feb. 9, 2010

LINGAYEN, Pangasianan, Philippines — The province is opening its doors to the establishment of a nuclear power plant on its coastline.

There are two existing power generation sites in the province: the 1,200-megawatt, coal-fired Sual power plant in Sual town; and the 345-MW San Roque Multi-purpose Dam in San Manuel town, both of which generate electricity for the Luzon grid.

The provincial board yes-

terday approved a resolution encouraging the government to acquire the nuclear power plant assets of the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO), which the South Korean government is disposing.

The resolution was titled “Expressing the sense of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan of the province of Pangasianan to invite the national government to locate under certain conditions, the Keido Nuclear Plant assets within the boundaries of the province, most specifically along the coastline areas.”

The board has created an ad-

hoc committee chaired by Pangasianan sixth district board members Alfonso Bince Jr. and Tyrone Agabas, and third district board member Romeo Dadacay.

Pangasianan fifth district Rep. Mark Cojuangco told the provincial board in a letter dated Feb. 2, 2010 that the South Korean government has started disposing of its KEDO Nuclear Power Plant (NPP) assets.

The provincial board said in the resolution that the South Korean government might let the Philippines acquire the nuclear plant assets on conces-

sionary terms.

“The province of Pangasianan expresses its willingness to host the KEDO NPP/s or any currently model NPP/s to become the premier electric power generating province on the island of Luzon,” the resolution said.

“There is a distinct possibility that the South Korean government would allow the Philippines to take possession of these assets at very concessional terms given the very close and brotherly relations between the two countries and the large local Korean population who have made the Philippines

their second home,” it added.

The board members said the Luzon power grid faces a possible shortage of 3,000 megawatts by the year 2012, which might cause widespread rotating brownouts.

The provincial board said Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have expressed interest in acquiring the KEDO assets.

The power shortage is expected to adversely affect the economy, dampening business confidence and losing jobs in the process.

Cojuangco has also filed a resolution in the House of Representatives to reopen the idle Bataan Nuclear Power Plant. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com))

# HSBC Sees RP Growth of 5.1% this Year

By Ted P. Torres /  
Wednesday, Feb. 10, 2010

MANILA, Philippines - HSBC Philippines is projecting the economy to grow by 5.1 percent this year.

It is slightly higher than an earlier forecast made by Frederick Neumann, HSBC chief economist. He reported last month that the Philippine economy would expand by 4.3 percent this year and 4.6 percent in 2011.

“In the Philippines, a national election period tends to add a one-percentage point growth to the economy due to an unusual high level of economic activity from election spending,” Roland Gerard R. Veloso Jr., HSBC Philippines senior vice

president and head of corporate banking division, explained.

Veloso said their optimism also stems from a consistent growth pattern in remittances from overseas Filipinos and the services sector, especially the business process outsourcing (BPO) industry.

Remittances expanded by 5.1 percent to \$15.8 billion in the period January to November 2009. In November alone, inflows grew by an outstanding \$1.5 billion or 11.3 percent better than the same month in 2008.

Money transfers from overseas Filipinos are forecast to reach an all-time high of \$17 billion, from \$16.4 billion in 2008.

Veloso said remittances are forecast to expand by another six to 10 percent this year owing to

double-digit growths in deployments in the Middle East.

“The BPO sector has not only grown in numbers but also in quality expanding to more complex forms of outsourcing services. Externally, the Asia Pacific region has been tagged as the ‘pied piper’ of global economic growth, HSBC said in a report.

HSBC’s emerging market index (EMI) grew to 56.1 percent in the last quarter of 2009, said to be a two-year high.

“The index confirms emerging markets as leading global economic recovery,” the report said. Curiously, the Philippines was not included in the EMI.

HSBC chief economist Stephen King said all data point to the emerging market as lead-

ing the global economy.

“Drivers of the global economy continue to shift to the East, and we are seeing emerging nations becoming increasingly dependent on each other rather than on the economies of developing countries,” King said in a report.

At the center of the emerging markets is China, which

serves as a trade center, a major exporter, and a major consumer.

Its broad-based economic gains are stimulating activity in the emerging markets, which in turn, is driving a sustained global recovery.

Another major player among the emerging market players is Indonesia which grew by 6.1 in 2008 and is expected to expand by 4.3 percent in 2009, and march forward by 5.8 percent this year. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com))

# Pacquiao to Appear in ‘60 Minutes’

By Abac Cordero /  
Tuesday, Feb. 9, 2010

MANILA, Philippines - Manny Pacquiao is being lined up for a special appearance on “60 Minutes” the long-running and award-winning television newsmagazine of CBS.

Top Rank’s main man Bob Arum, Michael Marley of The Examiner wrote yesterday, said a CBS crew will soon begin shooting clips of Pacquiao as he trains at the Wild Card Gym in Los Angeles for a March 13 fight.

It was not clear, however, if Pacquiao would appear on the 42-year-old program before or after his March 13 showdown with Ghana’s Joshua Clottey at the Cowboys Stadium in Arlington, Texas.



Manny Pacquiao

What’s important, Arum, however, said, is that Pacquiao has truly crossed all the boundaries as the greatest boxer of his era.

“It just shows that interest in Manny has transcended sports, gone beyond that,” Arum said. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com))

“Good Morning America on the ABC network is also going to do something on Manny. It is really phenomenal how the interest is widening on Pacman,” said the ageless boxing promoter and Harvard lawyer.

Last year, as Pacquiao waged and won big battles against Ricky Hatton and Miguel Cotto, the reigning pound-for-pound champion also scored a very big hit by landing on the cover of Time Magazine.

He also appeared at the Jimmy Kimmel Show in LA, and graced a few pages of Sports Illustrated. He was chosen as Fighter of the Decade by Ring Magazine and ESPN, and will soon be honored by the Boxing Writers Association of America. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com))

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## FAMILY CORNER



By Grace Fong, Ed.D. and Sylvia Yuen, Ph.D.

## Parents Are Teachers, Too!

Your child was born with the capacity to learn. However, he depends on you and other care providers to provide the positive interactions and safe, healthy, and nurturing environment that he needs to grow, thrive, and learn. Every parent and caregiver want their child to be successful in school, but many think that learning is something that takes place only in the classroom, under the guidance of a teacher. That's not true, as all of a child's early experiences influence his growth, development, and eventual readiness for school success. His ability and desire to learn develop first at home, then grow as he becomes a more active member in his school and community. There are many ways to promote learning in the home. Remember that parents are teachers, too!

Finding and creating learning opportunities for your child is as simple as expanding on what you are already doing in your everyday life. Start with daily routines and activities, including chores, and look for ways to incorporate reading, writing, math, science, and social interactions. Follow your child's interests to make learning

fun, challenging, and exciting. Adapt activities to match your child's abilities and interests—simplify it for a younger child or vary it to make it more challenging for an older child.

Here are suggestions for fun and simple learning activities that can be done at home:

- Plan the week's meals together. As you plan your menus, check to see that you have foods from the different food groups—for example, whole grains, lean meats and beans, fruits, vegetables, and low-fat or non-fat milk. Have your child help you create a grocery list and shop together for the ingredients. For a young child, point out and name the foods when you are at the supermarket. Talk about the shapes, sizes, colors and tastes of different foods. As your child gets older, have him help you figure out which product has the "best value." For example, which is a better deal: a dozen eggs for \$3.00 or 18 eggs for \$4.00.
- Discuss a story or newspaper article with your child. Talk to your young child about what it means to be a good citizen—how to be responsible and to help oth-

ers—and follow up by reading a story and talking about different community helpers (e.g., police officers, firefighters, and teachers). Encourage your older child to read the Hawaii, national, and international news. Discuss the events and help make connections with how these events affect his life.

- Help your child publish his own book. After he selects an idea for the story, guide your child in brainstorming, writing a draft (with your help if your child is young), editing, and "publishing" a final copy. Make a book by folding blank pieces of paper together and stapling them together in the middle. Encourage your child to use pictures and words to tell the story. If you have access to a computer, use a word processing program to prepare the final copy. You can even explore together how to add graphics and pictures to the book.
- Make reading a family priority. Set aside a time each day for your family to read

together or independently.

Have your child select books that are of interest and at an appropriate reading level. Show him that reading can be fun by building on his interests. Here are three examples: (a) find books on rubber-stamping, shop for stamps (or make your own) and a stamp pad, and have him create pictures, cards, or wrapping paper with his stamps; (b) look for a book on astronomy, find a star chart to go with it, and look for stars on a clear, dark night; or (c) give him a basket of assorted seeds and a gardening book, and plant a small garden together.

- Encourage the "scientist" in your child. Help him find answers to questions such as which brand of popcorn pops more, what type of fruit decays the fastest, which type of bubble gum blows the biggest bubble, or whether seeds grow faster outside in the sun or inside the house. Make up experiments to answer the ques-

tions and write down what you find out. Let a young child experiment in the bath: for example, ask him to see how much water will fit in different-sized containers, or find different bath toys and see which ones float and which ones sink.

Teach your child about budgeting. For a young child, teach the names and value of different coins while shopping. Introduce money values by giving him a few coins, talking about the cost of items he may want, and giving him a choice about spending his money now or later. For your teenager who receives an allowance, ask him how much money he will have for himself after he subtracts the cost of lunches, gas, and other expenses.

Use these activities as a starting place for ideas on how you can create more learning adventures. If you incorporate fun into home activities, your child will see that learning is fun! Your active involvement in your child's learning is essential in building a strong foundation that will help him to be successful in school and in later life.

## MAINLAND NEWS

### Obama's Initiatives to Help Struggling Small Business

President Barack Obama has proposed the expansion of two critical Small Business Administration (SBA) lending programs that would allow small businesses to refinance and to increase limits for working capital. Both proposals will help small businesses through what continues to be a difficult period in credit markets.

Specifically, the president proposes to expand SBA's existing program to temporarily support refinancing for owner-occupied commercial real estate loans. Doing so would temporarily allow for the refinancing of owner-occupied commercial real estate (CRE) loans under the SBA's 504 program, which provides guarantees on loans for the development of real estate and other fixed assets. Currently, 504 loans cannot be used for the refinancing of maturing debt. This change would respond to the difficulties many current, solvent borrowers face in refinancing existing commercial real estate loans.

Businesses with a loan maturing in the next year who are current on all loan payments will be eligible. Lenders that are refinancing mortgages for existing customers will make a loan for up to 70 percent of the current property value; and SBA will help finance the remaining 20 percent. For new lenders taking on a refinancing project, SBA will take on a greater share of financing of up to 40 percent. SBA's proposal for a temporary, zero-subsidy CRE refinancing program would be funded through additional fees for refinancing projects, not through a Congressional appropriation. This proposal will help refinance up to \$18.7 billion each year in commercial real estate that might otherwise be foreclosed and liquidated.

The president's second proposal to increase the cap on SBA Express loans from \$350,000 to \$1 million would expand the program's ability to help a broad range of small businesses through a streamlined approval process. Unlike traditional 7(a)

loans, lenders can use their own paperwork for SBA Express loans, which can be structured as revolving lines of credit. Currently, these Express loans are capped at \$350,000 and carry a 50 percent guarantee. Fees would cover virtually all of the added costs of this proposal.

"Raising the limit on SBA Express loans to \$1 million will mean more small business owners will have quicker access to this source of capital to help restock inventories and support larger revenue sales, and literally take that next step to grow their business and create new jobs," says SBA administrator Karen Mills. "Secondly, thousands of businesses find themselves caught by declining real estate values as a result of the recession. With many of them now facing mortgages coming due in the next few years, the ability to refinance into SBA's 504 loan will give them the chance to lock in long-term, stable financing, as well as protect jobs by protecting small businesses from foreclosure."



Michael A. McMann, M.D.

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LEGAL NOTES

# Don't Be A Victim of Immigration Fraud



By Reuben S. Seguritan

**O** immigration laws are complicated and many may need help in representing them in immigration proceedings or in preparing and filing their petitions or applications with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

When seeking help, they should make sure that the person or organization assisting them is either a duly licensed attorney or an accredited representative that can legally represent them before the USCIS or other immigration

agencies.

In an effort to prevent immigration fraud and other scams, the USCIS has issued a guide on how to verify if an attorney or an accredited representative is eligible to legally represent a client for immigration purposes.

In the case of an attorney, he/she must be in good standing with a U.S. state bar association and is not under any court order restricting his/her practice of law. The individual may ask the attorney proof of his/her attorney license or admission to the bar. This information may also be verified through the state bar admission office.

In the case of an accredited representative, he/she must work for an organization that has permission from the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) in

the form of an Order to provide legal advice on immigration. A list of accredited representatives is found on the website of the Department of Justice.

Because of the spate of immigration scams and frauds perpetrated against hapless victims seeking to enter and remain in the U.S., the attorneys general of several states have sued fraudulent immigration service organizations, immigration consultants and notarios that employ unscrupulous tactics to take advantage of innocent or desperate victims.

One recent case was filed in New York by Attorney General Andrew M. Cuomo who sued two immigration services organizations "for lying about their ability to provide legitimate legal services", falsely promising immigrants to help them ob-

tain immigration benefits and illegally charging exorbitant fees for services.

The organizations, the International Immigrants Foundation, Inc. (IIF), and International Professional Association, Inc. (IPA) both headed by Edward Juarez as president, were listed as not-for-profit organizations but actually generated millions of dollars in revenue bilked from their victims.

A restraining order was imposed to stop these organizations from continuing their fraudulent operations, to prevent them from destroying their records and to freeze their assets in order to seek restitution for the victims.

It was alleged that these organizations enticed immigrants through advertisements, articles, conferences, and television and radio shows to purchase mem-

bership with their organizations with a promise of special privileges including free or low-cost legal representation.

Victims of immigration fraud should not hesitate to file a complaint with the Attorney General's office in their state. The American Immigration Lawyers Association has prepared a guide on how and where to file complaints against those who are not authorized or qualified to help with immigration matters. The guide contains information to help the victims in all fifty states, the District of Columbia and several U.S. territories to take action against those who have harmed them.

REUBEN S. SEGURITAN *has been practicing law for over 30 years. For further information, you may call him at (212) 695 5281 or log on to his website at [www.seguritan.com](http://www.seguritan.com)*

MAINLAND NEWS

## RP Ambassador to US Urges Filipinos to Participate in 2010 US Census

By Paolo Romero / Tuesday, Feb. 9, 2010

**W**ASHINGTON — Philippine Ambassador to the United States Willy Gaa is urging the Filipino community to participate in the decennial national census of the United States population.

"I encourage all Filipinos to register and participate in this year's census as the growing

Filipino community has proven to be a vibrant element of the United States, evidenced by the numerous achievements and positive contributions to their respective communities by our millions of kababayans here in the US. An accurate count of the total number of Filipinos would provide accurate data of the respective concentrations of Filipinos in the different parts of the United States. It is an opportunity for us to realize the

full potential of our strength as we strive to attain empowerment and relevance as a community in local and national politics," Gaa said.

The census is a count of all persons living in the United States—citizens and non-citizens alike -- conducted every 10 years. The census data serves as a basis for determining the number of seats for each state in the US House of Representatives. It also affects the alloca-



Amb. Willy Gaa

tion of federal funding, which is partly based on the information gathered from the count.

In 2000, there was an esti-

mated 2.3 million Filipinos living in the United States.

The 2010 census questionnaire contains 10 questions about key demographic information on each US household. Data gathered from the respondents are kept confidential by the Census Bureau and will not be divulged to other government agencies and law enforcement entities, as stipulated by law.

Additional information about the census is available at the Embassy's website at [www.philippineembassy-usa.org](http://www.philippineembassy-usa.org). ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com))

GLOBAL NEWS

## DOLE Adopts System to Assist OFWs

By Mayen Jaymalin / Thursday, Feb. 11, 2010

**M**ANILA, Philippines - Amid reports of rising cases of abuses against overseas Filipino workers, the government is soon adopting a new information system to provide immediate and necessary assistance for OFWs.

Labor Secretary Marianito Roque said the government is launching the so-called Foreign Labor Operations Information System (FLOIS) to improve the operations of the 38 Philippine Overseas Labor Offices (POLOs) worldwide. "FLOIS would provide inter-

net-based information on profiles of OFWs, foreign employers and listing of foreign and local recruitment agencies," Roque said.

Roque said the system will be integrated with the DOLE's Information System Plan to enable labor officers abroad to extend assistance to needy OFWs on site. According to Roque, he already directed the DOLE's International Labor Affairs Bureau and Planning Service to hasten the implementation of the FLOIS project.

Also yesterday, Roque ordered the POLO in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia to look into reports that a number of Filipino

household service workers have been maltreated by their Arab employers. Although the Filipino workers have not been identified, Roque said, he asked Riyadh-based Labor Attache Rustico dela Fuente to determine the veracity of the report.

He also urged OFWs and their families to contact the nearest POLO or the DOLE and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) in the Philippines for assistance in all cases of abuse and exploitation that the OFWs may encounter in the hands of their employers onsite.

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## BUSINESS LIFE-PHILIPPINES

# Women Educators, Enablers, Entrepreneurs

TAGUMPAY

By Joey Concepcion /

**A**s we celebrate women's month in March, "Tagumpay" will be featuring women with stories of triumph.

It will not only be about triumph over poverty; we will feature tagumpay stories about women with different backgrounds overcoming different challenges.

There are a lot of women who are able to run a business and a household at the same time. We all know about the attention that a husband demands and that children need, most especially while growing up. It is remarkable how a woman succeeds as a mother, wife and entrepreneur all at once. I will devote the next columns to inspiring and incredible stories on women entrepreneurs.

My grandmother, Doña Victoria Araneta, started Feati University. It was a very successful school during her time. At the same time, she was also able to raise five girls. She also managed a very demanding husband, Don Salvador Araneta. Like her, there are a lot of women who succeeded in putting up and running a thriving educational institution. We have Dr. Helena

Benitez of the Philippine Women's University. Aside from founding and running a school, she was also a civil society leader, women's advocate, legislator, environmental pioneer, and diplomat, among many other roles. We also have Dr. Lourdes Montinola of Far Eastern University, Dr. Genevieve Ledesma Tan of Southville International School, Vivienne Tan of Entrepreneurs School of Asia, and the list goes on.

I have two stories of entrepreneur-enablers to share. These are the stories of Cynthia Tinsay and Joy Abaquin.

Cynthia Tinsay-Gonzalez, an enabler and an entrepreneur, has always possessed a strong passion for teaching. This is also why she chose to specialize in early childhood education.

Twenty years ago, Cynthia began by working for a school, with the dream of putting up her own school someday. Today, she serves as the directress and school administrator of Reach International School, an all-inclusive academic institution that offers an international program.

Ten years ago, Cynthia was also able to run her own preschool. However, the school started to encounter problems and they had to adjust through



cutbacks. There even came a time when Cynthia could barely pay her rent just to keep the school. That was the time she knew that she needed to do something to survive as a business entity. She realized that she needed to create something that would set her apart from the other schools out there, which were popping up like mushrooms. Thus, she started Reach.

Four years ago, Reach started as an intervention school, a school that offered alternative learning. Cynthia saw the need for alternative schools and the need for alternative learners to learn in a normal environment with an excellent and proper program. Reach is a school that recognizes a student's learning pace.

The school applies an individualized program that allows a student to progress independently.

Cynthia shares that some of their students who transfer from other schools usually have low self-esteem. They feel inadequate and incompetent just because they failed at a regular school. Some of their students also have reading, attention, behavioral and organizational problems. Reach recognizes their different learning needs, which they address through techniques and compensatory strategies. "We encourage all kinds of learners to learn in a stress-free environment, with the right program," says Cynthia.

The school also has a strong support system for special children. "They need to understand that even if they have a disability, they cannot make it an excuse," explains Cynthia. Reach creates a setup for children with disabilities, wherein they understand the need for support from people around them.

Cynthia also recognizes the difference of having a school as an entrepreneurial venture. She considers the school, first and foremost, as a vocation—a commitment to helping students. For her, putting up a school must not only be about the money, but mainly about the service.

In Go Negosyo, we are also lucky to have a remarkable mentor, Mary Joy Abaquin. She is one of our Angelpreneurs, a group of entrepreneurship-educators who are committed to sharing their time mentoring many aspiring young and small entrepreneurs all over the country.

"I have more patience for children than for adults," says Abaquin, directress of the Multiple Intelligence International School (MI). Like Cynthia, Joy has always had a special connection with kids.

With a degree in Early Child Psychology, Joy decided to put up a progressive school using her own money and some from relatives' savings. She began in 1996. The school was originally a preschool and a grade school with 30 students. Today, MI has over 700 students, with almost a hundred teaching staff and assistants.

With the tagline "Where Every Child Is Smart," MI teaches each student in a way that plays to his or her own strengths, instead of the traditional approach of regular

schools in giving a child one standard to live up to. Their different approach to teaching is anchored on a study revealing the several types of intelligence, such as linguistic, logical-mathematical, bodily kinesthetic, musical, intra-personal, interpersonal, and naturalist.

For Joy, having a school as an entrepreneurial venture all boils down to your goals. "As an educator, this is a way for me to create change and form children," she shares. For her, the bottom line is a child's welfare and not the profit.

Aside from MI's strong value and character formation program, the school also has a strong thrust when it comes to entrepreneurship. They teach the kids about being enterprising, but they also teach them about the ethics of business—that it's not only about earning money and selling products or services, but also about leadership and responsibility.

At present, the school extends its programs to different provinces through their MI Smart Start Comprehensive School Program. This program empowers daycare centers and preschools to transform their practices into MI's developmental and progressive practices. MI provides training and consultation to schools that want to undergo educational reform.

"I think education should be about enabling and allowing people to use their own strengths to create things, and we are the facilitators," shares Joy.

For Joy, education is a key to enabling people. It is the solution to a lot of problems and a lot of challenges in life. MI is a community that raises kids to be forward-thinking. It is a school that educates children in the ways of the 21st century.

Joy was also one of The Outstanding Young Men (TOYM) awardees of 2009. She was honored for her role in the education sector, particularly for pioneering the Multiple Intelligence International School here in the Philippines.

I salute our women negosyantes. They truly embody the title of our next big event on March 8 at the World Trade Center, "Babae, Tagumpay Ka ng Bayan" (Go Negosyo Women Entrepreneurship Summit II). Come witness stories that will inspire you. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com))

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## GLOBAL NEWS

# RP Gets P210-Million European Commission Grant to Boost Food Production

By Rudy A. Fernandez / Monday, Feb. 8, 2010

**L**OS BAÑOS, Laguna, Philippines — A European Commission-funded project in support of food production activities of indigenous peoples, farmers and fisherfolk in six provinces in the country has been launched.

Titled "Focused-Food Production Assistance to Vulnerable Sectors (FPAVAS)," the two-year project is supported by EC with a grant of Euro 3.09 million (about P210 million).

The project will be implemented by the Los Baños-based, government hosted Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization-Regional Center for Graduate Study and Resource in Agriculture (SEAMEO SEARCA), which is also providing a counterpart fund.

SEARCA is open of the 19 "centers of excellence" of SEAMEO, an inter-government treaty organization founded in 1965 to foster cooperation among Southeast Asian nations in the fields of education, sci-

ence and culture.

The food assistance program is being undertaken in cooperation with the French Agricultural Research Center for International Development (CIRAD) and the provincial governments of Occidental Mindoro, Oriental Mindoro, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Misamis Occidental and Misamis Oriental.

Also involved are the National Commission of Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), Department of Agriculture (DA), DA-Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice), and the Malaysia-based World Fish Center (WFC).

The project was launched last Jan. 3 at a program held at the Richmond Hotel in Pasig City.

During the launching ceremony, SEARCA signed separate memoranda of agreement (MOA) with the six provincial governments and CIRAD stating their "declaration of partnership" in the implementation of the project. Witnesses were representatives of the European Union (EU) delegation in the Philippines and the participating agencies.

Signatories to the MOA were SEARCA Director Gil C. Saguiguit Jr., Pierre Morrison of CIRAD, and Governors Josephine Ramirez-State of Occidental Mindoro, Arnan Panaligan of Oriental Mindoro, Justo Typoco Jr. of Camarines Norte, Luis Raymond Villafuerte Jr. of Camarines Sur, Loreto Leo Ocampos of Misamis Occidental and Oscar Moreno of Misamis Oriental.

Alistair MacDonald, head of the EU delegation in the Philippines, was represented in the project's launching ceremony by Rafael Boudron, EU Food Facility program manager.

The project generally aims "to help reduce poverty, improve the well-being of the farmers and ensure their access to safe food, particularly the vulnerable ones." It covers upland, lowland and coastal areas in 30 towns and three cities in the six provinces.

The local government units of the six provinces thanked the European Commission, SEARCA, and the collaborating agencies for choosing their provinces as project beneficiaries. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com))

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