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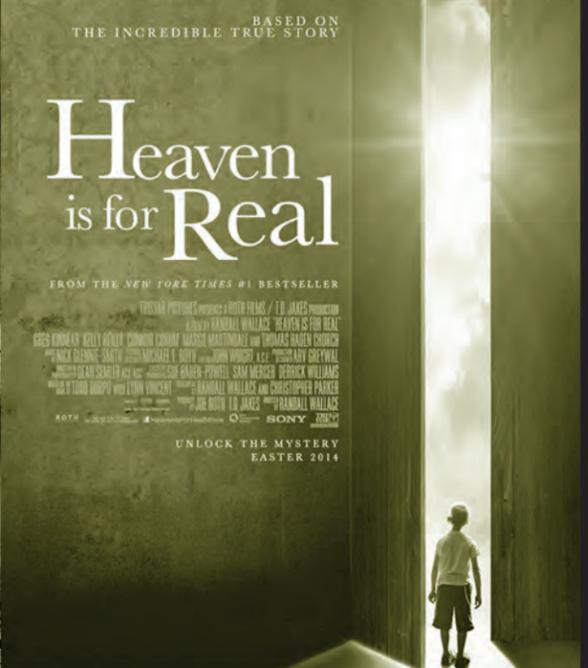
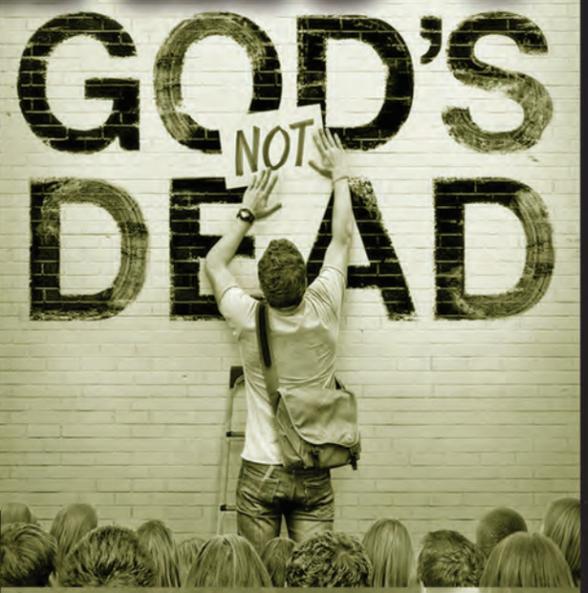
FILIPINO CHRONICLE

HAWAII'S #1 FILIPINO NEWSPAPER

◆ APRIL 5, 2014 ◆

FAITH-BASED FILMS ATTRACTING FILIPINO MOVIEGOERS

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EDITORIALS

Faith-Based Movies Gaining Popularity

A spate of Biblical-themed movies now playing at theatres has the Christian movie-going community abuzz. And just in time for Easter. The most talked-about flick is “Noah,” which has been billed as a Biblical epic. Two other films also showing are “Son of God” and “God’s Not Dead.” A fourth film—“Heaven is for Real”—is scheduled to be shown a few days before Easter.

While faith-based films are enjoying a recent revival in Hollywood, just a few decades ago, movies like “The Ten Commandments,” “Ben Hur” and “The Sound of Music” were blockbusters. But somewhere along the way, Bible-based movies fell out of favor and Hollywood became regarded as a largely God-less place. Most Bible-based movies have flown under the radar and suffered from sub-par acting, cheesy special effects and other problems experienced by low-budget films. An exception is Mel Gibson’s “The Passion of the Christ,” which raked in \$84 million during its opening weekend 10 years ago. Overall, it took in nearly \$612 million worldwide—the largest grossing independent film of all time. Its high production value and adherence to the core Biblical message resonated with the faith-driven movie-going audience.

In 2013, many Christians tuned in to the popular cable TV mini-series “The Bible.” The series spawned “Son of God,” which is now playing in theatres and closing in on \$60 million at the U.S. box office. And “Noah”—with a star-studded cast, big production budget and special effects—has generated a lot of interest and controversy among Christians over the creative license its director has taken regarding the original version told in the pages of the Bible.

It took awhile, but Hollywood has learned that America is hungry for movies with strong faith and values, and that it can produce successful movies based on the Bible, which is filled with fantastic stories where the hero overcomes insurmountable odds and where good triumphs over evil. We applaud those who have poured much effort into faith-based films and encourage people of faith to support these films if they want to see the tenets of their faith continue to be played out on the big screen. Let’s also remember that while faith-based films can serve as an encouragement, our hope this Easter should lie in the One who inspires such productions—Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Lower Interest on Student Loans Badly Needed

Today, Americans hold an all-time record \$1.3 trillion in student debt. More and more graduates are struggling to pay off those debts. Last year, one in eight student loans nationally was delinquent, compared to one in 13 in 2007. This outstanding student loan debt is not only suffocating families but also putting a strain on the economy.

Last July, Congress passed the Bipartisan Student Loan Certainty Act of 2013 to lower student loan interest rates for the 2013-2014 academic year. Undergraduates were able to borrow at a 3.9 percent interest rate for subsidized and unsubsidized loans, while graduate students were given loans at 5.4 percent, and parents were able to borrow at 6.4 percent. With a 3.9 percent interest rate, new borrowers who took out a loan stand to save about \$1,000 a year and cut about half off what they pay in interest over the life of the loan.

Unfortunately, the legislation did not cut interest rates for students who took out loans before July 1 of last year. Students

FROM THE PUBLISHER

Now that it’s early April, it can only mean one thing—taxes! As a friendly reminder for you procrastinators, Tuesday, April 15th is the deadline to file your federal taxes, and Sunday, April 20th for state tax returns. Here’s to hoping that you get a large refund!

First off, the Filipino community bid a fond farewell to Consul General Julius Torres who is retiring after an illustrious career as a foreign service officer for the Philippine government (see page 16). Dozens attended his farewell party held March 22nd at the Philippine Consulate General. We’d like to thank him for his many contributions and for the memories he shared with the Filipino community these past few years. He will most certainly be missed. Aloha, Consul General Torres, and may your golden years be truly golden indeed.

If you’re a movie buff, this issue’s cover story is sure to interest you. Associate editor Dennis Galolo explores the recent popularity of films espousing faith and Biblical themes. It’s a trend that Hollywood is finding difficult to ignore. For the month of April, there are no less than four faith-based movies that you movie buffs out there can choose from. To find out more, turn to page 4 for our cover story entitled “Faith-Based Movies Pique Hollywood’s Interest.”

We also have in this issue exclusive interviews with two very interesting people—fast-rising Fil-Am actor Marc Fajardo and successful businesswoman turned film producer Mona Lisa Yuchengco, the daughter of Philippine business mogul Alfonso Yuchengco. Mona Lisa is in town for the screening of her film “Marilou Diaz-Abaya: Filmmaker on a Voyage” in the Sixth Annual Filipino Film Festival which starts April 4th. Turn to page 9 for a closer look at her family life, accomplishments and current endeavors. As for Fajardo, the Los Angeles-born actor, who traces his roots to Cebu and Manila, landed roles in two popular TV shows. Believe it or not, he is offering free advice to anyone hoping to break into the film and TV industry in Los Angeles. Turn to page 8 if you want to know more about him.

This jam-packed issue contains other stories and columns that we hope you will take time to read. As always, we invite you to contact us at: filipinochronicle@gmail.com with any story ideas, tips or concerns regarding Hawaii’s dynamic and vibrant Filipino community. Our sincerest thanks to all of you for reading and faithfully supporting the Hawaii Filipino Chronicle—the state’s leading Filipino newspaper!

Until next time...aloha and mabuhay!

Chona A. Montesines-Sonido

who did so were locked into interest rates as high as 9 percent. These high interest student loans allow the U.S. government to make a killing. The Congressional Budget Office estimated last year that a 6.8 percent interest rate would earn the government about \$184 billion over the next 10 years.

Although the lower rates decreased student debts to some extent, federal loan rates are still high and could rise as the economy improves, if Congress fails to act again. Drastic measures are needed to reduce the current student loan debt burden and also make college more affordable going forward. For starters, Massachusetts Senator Elizabeth Warren has proposed enacting the “Buffet Rule” which closes tax loopholes for the wealthy, and uses the money to reduce student interest loan rates and allow debt-ridden students to refinance their college loans. Kudos to Sen. Warren for her progressive bill which invests in students who strive for a college education. Lowering student loan interest rates will not solve the problem alone, but it’s a good start. We hope that Warren’s and other radical proposals will continue to gain momentum on Capitol Hill.



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CANDID PERSPECTIVES

Why People Dislike Politics



By Emil Guillermo

Politics is not pretty.

One big recent example in California is the case of Leland Yee, an Asian American state senator who represents the Filipino community in San Francisco and Daly City. Arrested last week for public corruption and illegal arms trafficking, he's free on \$500,000 bond.

Or about the price for a mortgage on a small condo in Waikiki.

Closer to you in Honolulu, in the Hanabusa/Schatz race, President Obama has finally weighed in with his choice for the seat vacated by the late Sen. Daniel Inouye. Was it really a surprise that Obama picked a fellow Punahou alum? I mean Schatz was true to his school when Obama first ran.

Hanabusa, and for that matter, Inouye, were for Hillary Clinton. Should Obama's endorsement even matter now? Or does the anointing effectively end the democratic process and signal for all good Filipino Democrats to do as Obama and just check the right box?

But maybe we want to vote for the other guy? Or gal?

One might be able to glean something from these two stories to understand why people are just plained turned off.

The sordid Yee example covers most of the key negative elements of politics: Campaign money, term limits (which was supposed to be an answer), and general hypocrisy.

Yee, who has been considered a "good guy" for the community, comes off a 2012 campaign where he lost the race for San Francisco mayor, and ended up with needing to retire a \$70,000 debt.

On top of that, Yee is term-limited from his post as the first Chinese American elected to the state senate. So he needs money, and because of term limits



California Sen. Leland Yee

(which was supposed to keep people from becoming professional politicians), he needs a job. Until last week, he was running for secretary of state—the office that makes sure elections are clean.

So he needs money for the new campaign, too.

Instead of having a bake sale, Yee apparently enters into conversations with a man willing to give him money in exchange for a connection to an arms dealer from the Moro National Liberation Front, the Muslim rebels in the Philippines. The arms dealer happens to be Yee's Filipino dentist friend and community leader, Dr. Wilson Lim, who was also named in the indictment.

Oh, by the way. Yee hap-

pened to be a big anti-gun advocate in the California legislature.

Hypocrisy?

All it took to expose was a man looking to buy assault grade weapons, who just happened to be an FBI undercover agent.

Hard to catch a hypocrite in the act without doing some lying.

In that sense, Yee might use entrapment as a defense. But that may not help if Yee offered to do certain things first.

The prosecutors will also need to point out that Yee had specific policy items he was willing to trade for the money. The old "quid pro quo."

The FBI did write the rules on undercover investigations with the 1970s' ABSCAM sting (the basis of the movie "American Hustle"). So they should know what can and can't be done to make this more than an "Asian American Hustle."

Yee likely will plead not guilty on his next appearance in court. And I want to see the defense poke holes in the prosecution. But as this draws out, and

if the evidence is strongly against, this could get uglier, especially if Yee looks for a plea bargain? What could Yee offer? Other San Francisco politicians?

Now that could be nasty.

But even the nice things can seem nasty in politics.

When Obama endorses Schatz is that because Schatz is so great? Or is it simply payback for Schatz' backing of Obama at the beginning, and his continuing to push for an Obama library in Hawaii?

Meanwhile, talk about the continuing "payback" for Hanabusa who was always a Hillary backer, as was Inouye.

And guess who Inouye wanted to replace him? Hanabusa.

All this doesn't make people eager to reform politics, but to run away from it and declare their distaste for it all.

That's too bad. This is a time, we need to get more involved, not less. And with a little more honesty, and integrity.

EMIL GUILLERMO, an award-winning journalist and winner of an American Book Award, was an editorial board member of the Honolulu Advertiser.

COMMENTARY

Where Congress Falls Short and Where It Doesn't

By Lee H. Hamilton

At a public gathering the other day, someone asked me how I'd sum up my views on Congress. It was a good question, because it forced me to step back from worrying about the current politics of Capitol Hill and take a longer view.

Congress, I said, does some things fairly well. Its members for the most part want to serve their constituents and the country. They may be ambitious — it's hard to be a successful politician if you're not — but they're not motivated primarily by personal interest. Most are people of integrity who have chosen to try to advance the national interest and are willing to work within our agitated political environment.

They also strive to reflect their constituents' views. They're not always successful at this — I think members of Congress tend to under-appreciate voters' pragmatism and over-estimate their ideological purity. Still, they're politicians: their success rests on being accessible to their constituents, understanding what they want, and aligning themselves with that interest.

For all the attractive individual qualities that members of Congress display, however, their institutional performance falls short. Talented though they are, the institution they serve does not work very well. They argue endlessly, pander to contributors and powerful interests, posture both in the media and in countless public meetings, and in the end produce very little. They discuss and debate a lot of problems, but don't create effective results.

This may be because many

members of our national legislature have a constricted view of what it means to be a legislator. They're satisfied with making a political statement by giving a speech, casting a vote, or getting a bill through the chamber they serve in, rather than writing legislation that will make it through both houses of Congress, get signed by the President, and become a law. Their aim seems to be partisan and ideological, rather than a constructive effort to solve the nation's problems.

Similarly, they undermine their ability to oversee the executive branch by conducting hearings for political gain rather than to scrutinize government activities or develop effective policy directives. Many of our representatives have become so reliant on their staff for knowledge about public policy and the details of federal agencies that in off-the-cuff debate they can be un-

tethered and misinformed. Small wonder that Congress has had trouble being productive. The days appear to be over when members of Con-

gress strove to be masters of their subject matter and legislators in fact as well as in name.

(continued on page 5)



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COVER STORY

Faith-Based Movies Pique Hollywood's Interest

By Dennis Galolo

Many Christians are looking forward to Easter, which is just around the corner. For devout Filipinos, Easter means a celebration of the Lenten Season, a 40-day period of prayer and self-denial to remember the sacrifices during the Passion of Christ.

Some Filipinos traditionally observe Good Friday by chanting the *Pasyon*, a lyrical rendition of the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus. People join the chanting or singing starting at night on Thursday all the way to Friday normally at the church or the convent.

As the only Christian nation in the Far East, Holy Week in the Philippines is observed rather solemnly. Churches in the Philippines from Palm Sunday to Good Friday are packed with a highly-emotional series of religious ceremonies that are reminiscent of Christianity's most cherished traditions.

Some devotees still practice the *penitensiya*—self flagellation—to imitate Christ's suffering, while others have themselves nailed to a cross. These ceremonies are found nowhere else in the world and are so distinctively Filipino that

they are a source of wonderment for many tourists.

In addition to traditional customs like the Lenten Season, other believers have taken a more modern day approach to Easter by taking in movies with a spiritual message.

Epic Biblical Tale?

Several movies that resonate with Christian themes are now playing at theatres. One such movie that has garnered the attention of many Christians is "Noah." The movie grossed \$44 million during its weekend debut in over 3,560 theatres in North America. But despite a \$125 million production budget and the backing of a leading movie studio, the film has largely underperformed, according to a review by Faith-DrivenConsumer.com, which gave it 2 stars out of 4 rating.

Pastor Michael Palompo of

New Hope Central Oahu saw the film during its opening weekend and came away quite disappointed and gave it a lower 1 star out of 4 rating.

"If you want to see an accurate, biblical depiction of Noah's Ark, then you need to avoid this movie," he says. "Stay home and save your money on this one."

According to Palompo, Noah is depicted as a raging madman bent on killing his own family in the name of divine justice, rather than a savior of the human race and creation that the Bible says he was. Palompo doesn't mind Hollywood directors taking liberty with Biblical stories but feels it's a completely different matter when the story has been changed.

Others who have seen the film say that its departures from the Bible story should not override the fact that Hollywood has spent millions of dollars to promote a biblical tale. Dr. Ted Baehr, founder of Movieguide, a Christian family guide to movies and entertainment, says that "Noah" contains major themes of the Biblical account—Noah clearly hears from God, sin has entered and overwhelmed the world and God's saving grace is available, albeit only to Noah and his family. Baehr praised the movie for setting the stage for the Christian Gospel.

"The themes of man's depravity and God's judgment lead to the Christian message that you need a real savior who is Jesus Christ," Baehr says.

Son of God

A second film now in theatres is "Son of God," a compi-



lilation of footage from the History Channel's "The Bible" television mini-series which aired last year. The mini-series was nominated for two Prime Time Emmys and received high audience ratings.

Produced by husband and wife Mark Burnett and Roma Downey, "Son of God" includes previously unreleased scenes that were not included in the TV series.

"Son of God" brings the story of Jesus' life to audiences through compelling cinematic storytelling that is both powerful and inspirational. Told with the scope and scale of an action epic, the film features powerful performances, exotic locales, dazzling visual effects and a rich orchestral score. The film spans from Jesus' humble birth through his teachings, crucifixion and ultimate resurrection.

God's Not Dead

Despite a limited release in only 780 theatres nationwide, the low-budget, faith-based film "God's Not Dead" debuted in fifth place the weekend of March 28-30, taking many in the film industry and media by complete surprise. It is in fact smashing expectations. In its second week, the film took in another \$9 million, adding to its \$9.2 million opening.

The film centers around college freshman Josh Wheaton who must defend his Christian faith before his atheist professor of philosophy. Josh refuses to admit that "God Is Dead" and is given the entire semester to present well-researched, intellectual arguments and evidence, and also engage his professor in a head-to-head debate in front of the class.

The film promises to educate, entertain, and inspire moviegoers to explore what they really believe about God, igniting important conversations and life-changing decisions.

Heaven is For Real

Based on a best selling book, "Heaven is For Real" is slated to be shown in theatres beginning April 16th. The movie (and book) centers around a four-year-old boy named Colton Burpo, who claims to have visited heaven during a near-death experience. The son of a small town Nebraska pastor, Colton talks about looking down to see the doctor operating and his dad praying in the waiting room.

The boy recounts the vivid details of his amazing journey with childlike innocence and speaks matter-of-factly about

(continued on page 5)



Michael A. McMann, M.D.

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COVER STORY

(from page 4, FAITH-BASED...)

things that happened well before his birth—things that he couldn't possibly know.

For example, in heaven, Colton meets his miscarried sister whom no one ever had told him about and his great-grandfather who died 30 years before Colton was born. He shared impossible-to-know details about each, according to his father. Colton also describes the horse that only Jesus could ride, about how "reaaally big" God and his chair are, and how the Holy Spirit "shoots down power" from heaven to help us.

Pastor Mike Palompo is eager to see the film. He read the book and believes the boy's story.

"Colton's innocence captivates me," he says. "And his experience of heaven is amazing. New Hope Central Oahu will do a six-week series on "Heaven is For Real" as the movie comes out on Good Friday.

"Heaven Is for Real" is directed by Randall Wallace and produced by Joe Roth and T.D. Jakes. The screenplay was written by Wallace and Christopher Parker. Executive producers are Sue Baden-Powell, Sam Mercer and Derrick Williams.

Hollywood Taking Notice?

Another faith-based movie

that exceeded box office expectations is "Soul Surfer," a film based on the true story of young surfer Bethany Hamilton. Born into a family of surfers on Kauai, Hamilton began surfing at a young age.

Hamilton was attacked by a 15-foot tiger shark while surfing off Kauai's North Shore in October 2003. She was 13 at the time. The attack took her left arm, seemingly ending her career as a rising surf star just as it was beginning. She lost more than 60 percent of her blood and made it through several surgeries without infection. The young surfer courageously overcame all odds with an unbelievably positive attitude, sheer determination and unwavering faith. Miraculously, Hamilton returned to the water just one month after the attack.

The film's all-star cast includes Anna Sophia Robb, Helen Hunt, Dennis Quaid and Carrie Underwood in her first acting role. It also features cameos with Kevin Sorbo and Craig T. Nelson.

According to Box Office Mojo, Soul Surfer's worldwide gross total was \$47 million—which is not bad considering its production budget of \$18 million. A review by the Orlando Sentinel's called it the "best faith-based film ever made" and "an uplifting, entertaining and wonderfully-acted ac-



count" of Hamilton's life.

Renee Galolo of Salt Lake saw the film in theatres during its opening week in 2011.

"I wanted to see Bethany's story and how she overcame the shark attack," says Galolo, 14. "The story also took place on Kauai. I've been there, so I wanted to see it for myself."

For Galolo, the film's message was that God at times places obstacles in your life that not only gives Him the glory but ultimately changes you for the better. She gave "Soul Surfer" 3 out of 4 stars.

Waipahu resident Ruffalyn Villanueva makes it a point to watch faith-based films that come out in theatres.

"I enjoy watching movies that enlighten the soul and teach lessons on how we should live as Christians,"

says Villanueva, who was born into a traditional Roman Catholic family. "I think Christians should support these types of movies because of their moral values and spiritual principles."

She and Galolo are the type of moviegoers that Hollywood is looking to target, says Movieguide's Dr. Baehr.

"There is a great incentive to make movies that are good, true and beautiful," says Baehr. "There is an audience out there and studio heads—even ones that aren't Christian—have intentions to reach this audience."

The 2014 Annual Movieguide Report, released in February, shows that for the first time ever, nine of the top 10 grossing movies in 2013 at both domestic and international box offices had a family-oriented theme, including "Iron Man 3," "Frozen" and "Man of Steel." In fact, the study noted that movies with faith-driven, redemption-based themes in the top-25 category averaged \$87 million at the box office, while those with a non-Christ-

ian worldview averaged \$22 million.

The report concludes: "If studio executives, filmmakers, actors and stockholders want to make more money they should adopt these spiritually uplifting standards, theology and ethics."

As for Hollywood producing faith-based films, Pastor Mike Palompo concludes that not every director can pull off a Bible movie and remain faithful to the "spirit" of the story. He feels that the best movies are made by directors who are "fanboys."

"The Marvel Universe movies are fantastic because (Marvel Studios President) Kevin Feige is an authentic Marvel comic fan," he says. "Mark Burnett and Roma Downey did an incredible job with "Son of God" because they are genuine believers. Mel Gibson and Jim Caviezel gave us "The Passion of Christ" because they believed! If a director doesn't have his own personal experience of God, how can he tell the story of God?"

COMMENTARY (from page 3, WHERE CONGRESS...)

Forced to spend so much time raising money and listening to well-heeled people and groups, they also seem to have trouble seeing current affairs from the perspective of ordinary people. They fall captive to the politics of any given issue, rather than thinking about the much harder question of how you govern a country with all its residents in mind. They don't see the necessity, in a divided Congress and a divided country, of negotiation and compromise.

Congressional tradition has created a legislative process that should encourage fact-finding, searching for remedies, and finding common ground. It should not work solely by majority rule; decisions spring from consultation with many voices, balancing minority and majority views, and fair-minded process. This is not what today's members of Congress do, however. Instead, they short-circuit the committee process; fail to do their homework; dwell on talking points put together by staff and others;

give too much power to their leaders; pay too little attention to deliberation; allow insufficient opportunity to debate and vote on major policy amendments; and in general make a mess of the budget — the basic operating instructions for the government.

Process may not be everything, but good process enhances the chance of getting things right — and with each passing year, Congress forgets more and more about what good process looks like.

Plenty of forces are responsible for this state of affairs, from the outsized role of money in the political process to today's hyper-partisanship to TV-driven sound-bite debates. But in the end, it's still a source of great frustration to the American people, me included, that well-meaning, talented individuals cannot make the institution work better.

LEE HAMILTON is Director of the Center on Congress at Indiana University. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.

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HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

6th Annual Filipino Film Festival

If you want to experience the rich culture and history of the Philippines, the 6th Annual Filipino Film Festival may be just for you.

This year's festival will be held at the Doris Duke Theatre at the Honolulu Museum of Art from April 4-17, 2014. The festival's opening night reception is April 4 from 6 pm to 7:30 pm. There will be food, wine, beer and soda for attendees to purchase, along with music and live entertainment.

The lineup includes three favorites from the 2013 Hawaii International Film Festival (HIFF) Fall Festival—"Sana Dati," "Documented" and "Debosyon"—as well as three new

titles and a contemporary classic by the late Marilou Diaz-Abaya, widely considered as the "first lady" of Philippine cinema.

The 6th Annual Filipino Film Festival is sponsored by the Consuelo Foundation in conjunction with the Filipino Community Center, the Philippine Medical Association of Hawaii, the Cultural Centre of the Philippines and the Filipino Film Festival Film Festival Committee. Donations to the Typhoon Haiyan Relief Fund will be accepted throughout.

The screening schedule is as follows:

- **"Ekstra" (The Bit Player)**—April 4 at 7:30

pm, April 9 at 1 pm and April 15 at 7:30 pm

- **"Sana Dati" (If Only)**—April 6 at 1 pm, April 11 and 17 at 7:30 pm
- **"Marilou Diaz-Abaya: Filmmaker on a Voyage"**—April 6 at 4 pm and April 11 at 1 pm
- **"Bagong Buwan" (New Moon)**—April 6 at 7:30 pm and April 11 at 4 pm
- **"Transit"**—April 8 at 1 pm, April 10 and 13 at 7:30 pm
- **"Documented"**—April 8 and 16 at 7:30 pm, April 17 at 1 pm
- **"Debosyon"**—April 9 at 7:30 pm, April 10 and 16 at 1 pm



Following the April 6th showing of "Marilou Diaz-Abaya: Filmmaker on a Voyage," director Mona Lisa Yuchengco will be a special guest during a special reception in her honor. Refreshments will be served. Yuchengco is the former publisher of Filipinas magazine and a graduate of Assumption College in the Philippines. Organizers are offering a special deal for tickets to the reception (2 for \$15), which includes

showings of "Marilou Diaz-Abaya: Filmmaker on a Voyage" at 4 pm and "Bagong Bayan" at 7 pm.

Festival passes are \$65 and \$50 for museum members. Tickets for individual movies are \$10 each and \$8 for museum members. Tickets can be purchased online at: <https://honolulumuseum.org/events/films>. The Doris Duke Theater is located at the Honolulu Museum of Arts, 900 South Beretania Street.

City Council Honors Hug Me Bears Volunteers

Councilmembers Ron Menor and Breene Harimoto co-presented an honorary certificate to Hug Me Bears on the occasion of its 20th anniversary. The presentation was made at the Council's March 12, 2014 meeting at the University of Hawaii-West Oahu campus.

Every Tuesday morning, Hug Me Bears volunteers gather at Waipahu United Church of Christ to prepare not only stuffed animals, but also clothing, school supplies, food and other daily essentials for

local hospices, hospitals, care homes, schools and shelters for the homeless and victims of domestic abuse.

It all began in September 1992 when founder Rose Pamatigan sent stuffed animals to comfort the children of families who were affected by Hurricane Iniki. Her heartfelt gesture provided a sense of safety and security for the storm's littlest victims. Pamatigan saw a need to continue helping the less fortunate in Hawaii, so she formed Hug Me Bears a short two years later.

More than two decades after Iniki, Hug Me Bears is

still providing stuffed animals to needy children and families in crisis. Volunteers also prepare food baskets each month for residents at the Senior Apartments in Waipahu, Independent Living Center, Waipahu Aloha Clubhouse and Lighthouse Outreach Church. During the annual Waipahu Christmas Parade, Hug Me Bears' volunteers give away candy and stuffed animals to children along the route.

The group's impact has been felt far beyond Hawaii's borders. Hug Me Bears has also:

- Donated money for polio shots for children in Africa and to drill a well for clean water in Ethiopia;
- Purchased tents for tsunami victims in Southeast Asia.



Hug Me Bears volunteers receive an honorary certificate from the Honolulu City Council on the occasion of its 20th anniversary

- Sent blankets and stuffed animals to victims of Hurricane Katrina, boxes of warm winter clothes for an Indian reservation in Nebraska, and teddy bears to children who lost parents in the September 11, 2001 tragedy.

This year marks the 20th Anniversary for Hug Me Bears, which has a total of 14 dedicated volunteers, all of whom are retirees. The oldest member is 83 and the youngest is 65.

Councilmember Menor

says each Hug Me Bears volunteer is a shining example of how a love for others and a willingness to extending a helping hand can result in a better life for all.

"Congratulations to Hug Me Bears on its 20th Anniversary of providing comfort to families and children in crisis throughout Hawaii and the world," he says. "Our best and warmest wishes to founder Rose Pamatigan and her dedicated volunteers for good health and continued success in all of their personal endeavors."

Joseph M. Zobian, M.D.



Board-certified ophthalmologist
U.S. Peace Corps Volunteer, Philippines
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State to Begin Repairs to H-1 Freeway Airport Viaduct

The State Department of Transportation (DOT) will begin a \$15.6 million project to repair damaged sections of the H-1 Freeway Airport Viaduct beginning April 5, 2014.

Crews will replace approximately 94,000 square feet of concrete deck by removing weakened portions using high pressure water blasting and then placing fast-setting con-

crete to complete the repair. After repairs are done, a concrete sealer will be applied to prolong the life of the roadway. Expansion joint repairs and pavement striping will also be done.

DOT director Glenn Okimoto says the project will consist primarily of weekend work.

"Our team is staggering project work hours as much as

possible in an effort to limit traffic disruptions," says Okimoto.

Areas of Nimitz Highway under the airport viaduct will be temporarily closed for safety reasons while demolition on the deck above is occurring. DOT officials urge the public to beware of changing conditions and observe reduced speed limits within project construction areas.

For the latest lane closures, log onto DOT's website at: www.hidot.hawaii.gov.

IMMIGRATION GUIDE

Who Needs DACA and Obama When You Have Excellent Lawyer?



By Atty. Emmanuel Samonte Tipon

Legal writers are churning out reams of copy based on DHS press releases about DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) and how children who came to this country illegally can defer deportation. President Obama's Department of Homeland Security issued this regulation on June 12, 2012 after Congress refused to pass a law giving such benefits under the so-called Dreamers Act. Constitutionalists (of which Obama is supposed to be one having been a professor of Constitutional Law) doubt the constitution-

ality of this regulation because it constitutes law making which is a power that belongs exclusively to Congress. Some judges will always find a way to legalize this act just as they called a tax the health insurance premium imposed under Obamacare. These legal writers are reminding children granted DACA deferral that they must renew their DACA status before the 2-year period given them expires.

Who needs DACA and Obama when you can get an excellent lawyer who knows how to search for waivers and use them? There are immigration laws granting waivers to children who came illegally to the United States. We have found such laws and used them to save all eight children who came here illegally and later sought our help after they

were placed in removal proceedings. We did not invoke DACA. The children are now green card holders and on their way to obtaining citizenship.

Deferred action under DACA is a discretionary determination to defer removal action of an individual as an act of prosecutorial discretion. Deferred action does not provide an individual with lawful status. It does not give such children a green card nor confer citizenship.

Immigration Waiver Laws

We are writing a book about waivers under the immigration laws.

One such waiver law is Section 237(a)(1)(H) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA). It provides that an alien may obtain a waiver for fraud or misrepresentation in obtaining a visa if such alien

(1) is the spouse, parent, son, or daughter of a U.S. citizen or an alien lawfully admitted to the U.S. for permanent residence, and (2) was in possession of an immigrant visa or equivalent document and was otherwise admissible to the United States at the time of such admission.

Another waiver provision is INA Section 212(i). It provides that the Attorney General may waive the fraud or misrepresentation in obtaining a visa (1) in the case of an immigrant who is the spouse, son, or daughter of a United States citizen or LPR, AND (2) if the refusal of admission would result in extreme hardship to the citizen or LPR.

Still another waiver provision is INA Section 212(k). It provides that an alien who is inadmissible because (1) the alien lacks a labor certification or (2) was not in possession of a valid unexpired immigrant visa, reentry permit, border crossing identification card, or other valid entry document, and a valid unexpired passport or other suitable travel document or whose visa had been issued without complying with the laws, may be admitted in the discretion of the Attorney General if the inadmissibility

was not known to, and could not have ascertained by the exercise of reasonable diligence by the immigrant before the time of departure of the vessel or aircraft from the last port outside the U.S. and outside foreign contiguous territory, or in the case of an immigrant coming from a contiguous territory, before the time of the immigrant's application for admission.

So why don't these children who came to the United States illegally avail of these waiver provisions? "Is a puzzle, what to tell a growing son," as Yul Brynner sang in the King and I.

ATTY. TIPON has a Master of Laws degree from Yale Law School and a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of the Philippines. He is originally from Laoag City and Magsingal, Ilocos Sur. Atty. Tipon specializes in immigration law and criminal defense. He served as an immigration officer and co-authored "Immigration Law Service, 1st ed.," an 8-volume practice guide for immigration officers and lawyers. His radio program airs Thursdays at 7:30 am on KNDI 1270 AM. He can be reached via mail at: 800 Bethel St., Suite 402, Honolulu, HI 96813, by telephone at (808) 225-2645 or by e-mail: filamlaw@yahoo.com. For more on Atty. Tipon, go online to: www.MilitaryandCriminalLaw.com. This article is a general overview of the subject matter discussed and is not intended as legal advice.

HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

City to Charge New Permit Fees

The City's Department of Planning & Permitting is implementing fee increases and new processing fees for certain permits and services effective March 31, 2014.

Mayor Kirk Caldwell signed Bill 70 in law, which recovers a greater share of the costs related to the processing and administering of applications relating to zoning, engineering, building and other land use permits in the city's Land Use Ordinance (LUO).

In addition to the fee hikes, the DPP will charge new fees for many permit reviews and processing that were previously free of charge. For example, DPP will charge \$600 to review an environmental assessment and \$1,200 for an environmental impact statement.

"Many of the new fees reflect an attempt to charge a reasonable fee related to a proportion of the effort it takes to process these permit applica-

tions," says DPP Director George Atta. "Most are user fees for specific kinds of approvals that we believe will not have a broad impact and be limited to the people involved in these activities."

State agencies that apply for these permits under the

LUO, or for coastal zone management permits, will be charged the new fees. DPP estimates that the fees will generate up to \$1 million annually.

For a list of the new fees, go online to: <http://bit.ly/1f2bKup>, or visit DPP website's at www.honolulu.dpp.org.

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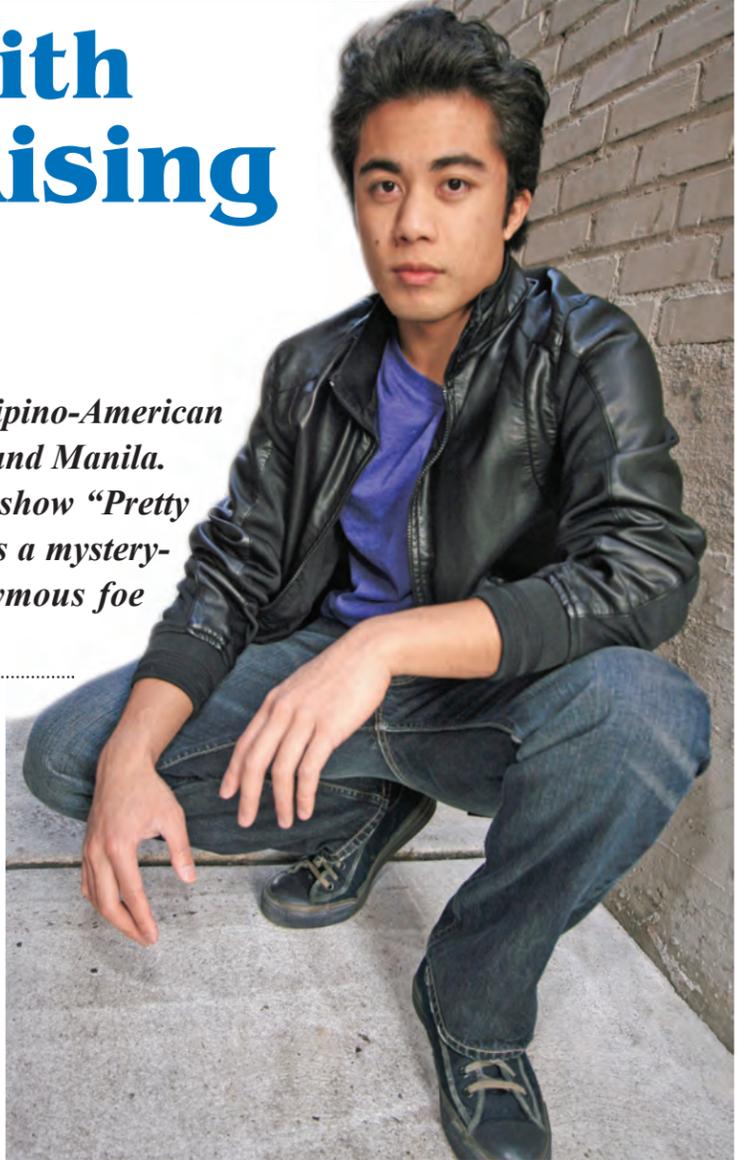
Up Close & Personal With Marc Fajardo: Fast-Rising Hollywood Actor

by Dennis Galolo



One of Hollywood's fast-rising young actors is Marc Fajardo, a Filipino-American who was born in Los Angeles but traces his family roots to Cebu and Manila.

Fajardo appeared in an all-new episode of ABC Family's hit-show "Pretty Little Liars" that aired March 11, 2014. The teen-focused show is a mystery-drama about four friends who band together against an anonymous foe threatening to reveal their darkest secrets.



Next month, Fajardo pops into the techie world of Mike Judge's new HBO comedy series "Silicon Valley." The new comedy show focuses on a group of self-proclaimed sexless geeks in the world of young techie entrepreneurs.

As a youngster, Fajardo dreamed of being a performer. After spending his childhood years entertaining his family, he attended UC Santa Cruz, where he double-majored in film and community studies. At the same time, he choreographed and competed with a hip hop dance team called Haluan, which won first place at the Bay Area's Battlefest Hip Hop Dance Competition. He also participated in the multicultural theater group called Rainbow Theater.

Having studied film and working behind the camera throughout college, he thought it was time to be in the forefront. He booked his first national commercial for Carl's Jr. as a sad Robot in 2011 and has never looked back.

In an exclusive interview with the Chronicle, Fajardo talks about his family, how he got into the businesses and even offers advice for aspiring actors and actresses. His responses have been edited for space and clarity.

Q: Congratulations on your role in "Pretty Little Liars" and "Silicon Valley." What do those two roles mean for your acting career?

A: I'm utterly thrilled at landing these roles. For me, it's a step towards elevating my acting career because it means the door is cracked just a tad bit

open to audition for bigger roles or guest star spots. Plus, I had the opportunity to work with great actors so I did a lot of observational learning on set.

Q: What kind of role best suits you?

A: I usually book the quirky type of characters but my dream role would be a character that acquires super human powers and tries to figure out how to control them—something like Spider-Man. I want an opportunity to share the physical agility and flexibility that I've developed in hip-hop, breaking, gymnastics and physical comedy.

Q: How difficult is it for young actors like yourself to break into the business?

A: It's difficult in a sense that you have to ground yourself in your craft and your business—from getting headshots, acquiring an agent or manager, enrolling in acting classes, being on the up-and-up with casting directors, knowing the players in the game, and so on. As with any endeavor, it takes a lot of time, energy and passion. Once you lay the groundwork, your confidence and opportunities increase exponentially. People start knowing your work, they ask you to be a part of their project, you get in the circuit and meet other artists on set who would love to work with you. Each encounter is a different avenue for a new adventure.

Q: When and how did your first big break happen?

A: I had a few breaks that

got me in. Each was a gradual progression. I booked a regional/internet commercial in 2010, then a national commercial for Carl's Jr. in 2011. Then I booked my first TV role in 2012, followed by six TV roles in 2013, so it's been a steady uphill succession for me. If I had to say my first "big break" was my first speaking role, then it would be from "Desperate Housewives" opposite Eva Longoria and Vanessa Williams. It was the final episode of the series so I knew lots of viewers would tune in. I auditioned for the role at the Universal Studios lot. The casting director gave me an adjustment after the first take and I went with it. The following day I got a call from my agent and I was jumping for joy like an insane monkey out of Planet of the Apes.

Q: What has been your most memorable role to date?

A: I have two. The first was the Carl's Jr. commercial where I played a sad, mouthless robot that was unable to eat his chicken sandwich. I was sent to Legacy Studios to have the robot suit created by shaping and molding my body. Legacy Studios is the special effects place where they created Iron Man's suits, Jurassic Park's T-Rex and Avatar creatures, so they definitely have film history. They had me strip down to my undies while scanning my whole body from head to toe while being rotated on a small platform. Afterward, they molded my whole body, one body part at a time, from heavy paper maché. A few days later they painted and polished it to

make it into the robot that it was. I made such a good impression to the director and head honchos of Legacy Studios that they asked me to be part of a GE commercial the following year.

My second memorable role was my experience on FOX's "Sleepy Hollow." I played an EMT who was infected by a 500-year old plague after applying CPR on one of the main characters of the story. I had a really cool death scene where I suffered violent seizures on a hospital bed while black veins crept up on my body and face, and I spew black blood out of my mouth. I looked like I came out of a Japanese horror film. It was so cool!

Q: Tell us about your family background.

A: I was born and raised in Los Angeles, although we moved around a lot due to financial difficulties. For about a year we lived in Virginia and Maryland when I was about 9 years old. But for the most part my family and I settled in Glendale, California once I hit junior high and high school. My mother is from Camotis Island, which is a part of Cebu

and my father is from Batangas, a province in Manila. They met each other working at RCBC, a commercial bank in Manila. When they moved to California, my mother started working as a nurse while my father worked as an accountant. They later started their own nursing registry called ProCare Medical Staffing.

Q: Have you ever visited the Philippines?

A: More than a handful of times. The last time was in 2007 through a week-long excursion with a program called F.A.C.E.S. (Filipino Americans in Coalition of Environmental Solidarity). It was a life-changing experience for me. Eight of us went around to different communities that were exposed to the pollution from oil companies, or families experiencing environmental hazards. We listened to families who shared such vulnerable material. Those seven days of Third World reality shook my soul and gave me a newfound respect for my life in the states. If anything, my success in Hollywood was seeded from the families that shared their sto-

(continued on page 10)

FEATURE

Mona Lisa Yuchengco — a Many Splendored Life

by Belinda A. Aquino, Ph.D.



have yet to meet someone who doesn't know Mona Lisa Yuchengco in one way or another. There are people who are like her whose names and reputations precede them. You haven't met them personally but it feels as though you've known them for a long time.

When I first met Lisa, as everyone calls her, in the mid-1990s in San Francisco, I had my own ideas about what she might be like, having heard or read about her so much—an “assumptionista,” meaning an alumna of the very-elite Assumption College in Manila for the daughters of the rich and famous; a graduate student in Business Administration at Ateneo de Manila University, an equally high-class institution for children of the elite; and later a “diplomat” holder in Professional Publishing from Stanford University, certainly one of the top private universities in the U.S. rivaling many of the Ivy League institutions on the East Coast. Certainly formidable in terms of credentials, I thought. But what is she really liked, I wondered.

Those of us who are products of public schools in the Philippines have formed certain stereotypes of the privileged and wealthy students who went to exclusive girls' or boys' schools in chauffeured cars as “stuck-up,” always talking about their next parties and so on. I remember as a “promdi” (corruption of “from the province”) student at the University of the Philippines, these pretty mestiza-type girls from Assumption, St. Scholastica, St. Theresa's, Holy Ghost (now Holy Spirit), Maryknoll, St. Paul, etc., were in an exclusive league of their own in sororities or inner circles, whereas the “promdis” were either non-sorority “barbarians,” members of the UP Student Catholic Action, mis-

guided intellectuals, or worse, left-leaning radicals of one stripe or another.

When I entered Lisa's office, the “stereotype” in my mind vanished. She was warm, polite, engaging, friendly and made me feel at ease at once. Her initial greeting was “please tell me about yourself”—a disarming speaking style not often common among the ranks of the high and mighty.

At that time Lisa was the founder, president and publisher of *Filipinas Magazine*, the most popular Filipino magazine in the U.S.” as her proud father, the venerable Ambassador Alfonso Yuchengco, one of the most prominent business tycoons in the Philippines, was fond of saying. If you've met Lisa's genial father, who is now 90, you'd think she is indeed her father's daughter.

Family Roots

Lisa is one of eight children and the fourth daughter of the Ambassador and the late Paz Sycip, a member of the equally prominent SyCip clan in Manila. Born on her mother's birthday, Lisa owes her artistic talents to her mother, a musical composer who produced a whole musical score for a *Sampaguita Pictures* during her time. Her mother also was very much involved in theater, particularly *Repertory Philippines* in addition to working at the Hilton Hotel in the Banquet Sales department. She also produced concerts that featured the songs she had composed.

Lisa also remembers her father with fondness, although “he was not the easiest man to

deal with.” But in time she learned his moods and figured how to make him laugh. He is actually a very protective father and conservative when it comes to his children. Lisa wrote once that, although it might seem like he has favorites, he is really concerned about each one of us. He can be stern and impatient but in the end he helped us achieve our dreams. The most important lesson I have learned from him is making sure you “leave a good name.”

Indeed, when Nick Joaquin, aka Quijano de Manila, interviewed Ambassador Yuchengco on his legacy for a book entitled “To Leave a Good Name,” Lisa's father's parting shot was, “One thing I firmly believe in is that a good name is forever. But money, no matter how many millions, can be lost in a day.”

At the height of his career as one of the most powerful men in the Philippine industrial world, Al Yuchengco established and managed more than 40 companies under the Yuchengco Group of Companies (YGC) in insurance, banking, real estate, construction manufacturing, multinational businesses and other enterprises.

Lisa worked for a while with one of her father's corporations, the RCBC, but decided to emigrate to the U.S. eventually with her sons Paolo and Carlo. She pursued courses in Creative Writing and Publishing at UC-Berkeley while publishing *Filipinas Magazine*. In time she would finish a professional publishing diplomate at Stanford.



Lisa, with her son Paolo and her Dad, Ambassador Alfonso Yuchengco

Achievements

Lisa has received several awards since arriving in the U.S. As a civic leader, she received the Martin Luther King Award of St. Paul's Church in San Francisco, the Trailblazer Award of the Filipino American Women's Network in Minneapolis, the Profile of Excellence Award from ABC/KGO TV in San Francisco and the New California Award in San Francisco in 1998.

She has served on the board of directors or been a member of several organizations, including the United Way in the Bay Area, American Cancer Society, Asian Pacific Fund, Asian American Arts Foundation, Filipino-American Chamber of Commerce of San Francisco and Thomasians of USA.

Lisa was also the Distinguished Florence Liu Macaulay Lecturer in Asian and Pacific Studies in the year 2000 at the Center for Philippine Studies, University of Hawaii at Manoa. She gave a lecture on her experience as the publisher of *Filipinas Magazine* and the issues involved in Philippine publishing in the United States.

All told, entrepreneurial vision, managerial competence,

professionalism, civility, philanthropy, civic duty and a work ethos all run in Lisa's bloodlines. She has indeed led a many-splendored life.

And now, she has entered into a new venture altogether—filmmaking, particularly in the genre of documentaries. Lisa granted the *Chronicle* an exclusive interview. The responses below were edited for space and clarity.

Q: Why are you in Hawaii?

A: I was invited by the Honolulu Museum of Arts to screen my film “Marilou Diaz-Abaya: Filmmaker on a Voyage,” at their Filipino Film Festival which starts on April 4. I am a frequent visitor to Hawaii. My husband, Lloyd LaCuesta, was born and grew up on Kauai and he takes advantage of every opportunity to return to his home.

Q: What was your relationship to the late Marilou Diaz Abaya? What were her major accomplishments as director and producer of movies and documentaries?

A: Marilou Diaz-Abaya was my sister-in-law. Her husband, Manolo, and my first husband, Rafael, are brothers. Marilou was one of the first fe-

(continued on page 11)



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ENTERTAINMENT (from page 8, UP CLOSE...)

ries with me through the F.A.C.E.S. program. That memory runs with me time and again.

Q: What type of child were you?

A: I was a fun-sized diva who craved attention. I splashed my face and toothless smile at my uncle's VHS camera every time he popped it out. I'd do the splits in front of my sisters' friends to be a part of her cool group. Granted I was 7 and limber, so I was Cirque du Soleil status. What was annoying about me when I was a child was that I had a high-pitched voice and squealed frequently like a baby orca just for no reason.

Q: Where did you learn your dance moves?

A: From Youtube University. Actually, everywhere. I train in house dance when I can and I used to choreograph hip-hop back in college. Also, here in L.A. there's a huge dance community so whenever I go to an open session at the gymnastics training center I frequent, there's usually a buddy of mine who teaches me some moves.

Q: Who did you look up to when you were growing up?

A: My sister who is 7 years older than me. I always thought she was part of the cool group and wanted to be accepted by she and her friends. She was and still is a great role model for me. In high school, she put me on a focused path to college, planted a seed of thought for what I wanted to do for my future and also gave me girl advice whenever I was in a committed relationship.

Q: How did you get interested in acting?

A: I never dreamt of doing this when I was young or in college. I wanted to get into directing and become a high class, modern auteur. I moved back home to LA after graduating from UC-Santa Cruz. A buddy of mine suggested that I familiarize myself on set and do some background work, so I signed up with Central Casting. A few months later, I got a call saying that I was hand-picked by the director to be one of the insurgents for the Iron Man movie. It was a 3-week shoot of me running around with a fake plastic gun looking like a Middle Eastern soldier. And during that time I grew more curious of this whole "acting thing." There was a guy on set who played one of the main bad guys opposite Robert Downey Jr. and I asked him questions. It sparked my interest and from then on, I slowly dove into acting. I was scared to death of what I was getting into and had no idea what it entailed but I knew my gut was nudging me to jump in.

Q: Who is your favorite actor and ac-

tress?

A: Peter Sellers for his versatility. Michael Shannon for his intensity and wonderful control of restrained anger. Robert Downey Jr. for his charm, versatility and insanity. Meryl Streep, period. Juliet Binoche for her strength and vulnerability. Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton for their genius all-around artistry from physical comedy, directing, choreographing and writing. These are just a few of whom I admire.

Q: Why do you think so many Filipinos excel in the performing arts?

A: My guess is that we are a strong community. We support each other and we give love when needed. My other guess is that we dream well. Our imaginations get so dang overbearing that we have to "physicalize" them through our bodies whether it's singing, dancing, or acting. But I honestly think there's some truth to be told of being part of a strong community. As a Filipino community, we function well as a collective because we support each other in every aspect in the performing arts. And I believe we are hungry for accurate representations.

Q: What advice would you give to young people who have acting aspirations?

A: Young or old, I say get into acting class, find a manager/agent, get some headshots and learn the business. And it also depends what kind of actor you want to be. If you want to be a theater actor, New York, Chicago, and Minneapolis are well known for that. If you want to get into film and TV, then Los Angeles is the place to be. I meet a handful of folks every year who are new transplants to L.A. that aspire to be working actors. They ask for advice in how to approach the business. I pour out all I know to help them gain momentum.

If anyone out there aspires to be a working actor in LA and you want some advice, don't be shy to ask. Contact me on twitter: @TheMarcFajardo.

Q: What are your future plans?

A: Right now I've been continuing the grind with auditions and training. I've also been offered a role to be a lead in a pilot from a colleague of mine whom I've worked with a few years ago. Shooting starts in late April. Also, my colleagues and I have started a business that provides actors/artists with marketing materials for their career like headshots, websites, one-sheets, business cards and audition tapings. It's called Jive Duck Studios (www.jiveduckstudios.com). We've had a steady flow of clients asking for our service, so I'm pretty excited for its growth.

PHILIPPINE NEWS

SC Upholds Forfeiture of Marcos' Arelma Assets

by Edu Punay
Wednesday, April 2, 2014

MANILA, Philippines - The Supreme Court (SC) has upheld with finality the forfeiture in favor of the Philippine government of the so-called Arelma funds of the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos deposited in the United States.

In a six-page resolution promulgated on March 12, the high court affirmed its April 2012 decision and denied the appeal filed by the heirs of the late dictator, including former first lady now Ilocos Norte Rep. Imelda Marcos and Sen.

Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr.

The assailed ruling affirmed a 2009 decision of the Sandiganbayan declaring all assets, properties and funds under the Panamanian firm Arelma Foundation as among the ill-gotten wealth of the late dictator and should be forfeited in favor of the government.

"The Sandiganbayan did not err in granting the motion for partial summary judgment, despite the fact that the Arelma account and its proceeds are held abroad," said the decision penned by Chief Justice Ma. Lourdes Sereno.

"To rule otherwise contravenes the intent of the forfeiture

law, and privileges violators who are able to hide public assets abroad, beyond the reach of the courts and their recovery by the State," the SC said.

In 2012, the SC said the Marcoses gave the same alibi in defending the ownership of the Arelma funds, saying they did not engage in any illegal activities and that their properties were lawfully acquired.

The high court said the Marcoses failed to explain how they acquired the Arelma funds, which amounted to \$3.37 million in 1983, noting that their lawful income amounted only to \$304,372.43 or merely nine percent of the funds.

"There is disparity between the amount of the Arelma funds and the income of the Marcoses as shown in the income tax returns (ITRs) filed by spouses Marcos," the SC said.

In 2009, the Sandiganbayan said the Marcoses failed to dispute that the Arelma fund was valued at \$3.37 million as of 1983.

The funds represented the assets of the former president, originally amounting to \$2 million deposited with the Merrill Lynch Securities in New York in 1972 in the name of Arelma Foundation.

The funds had grown to \$35 million when the Presi-

dential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) discovered them in 2000. As of last year, the total amount was estimated at \$40 million.

PCGG chairman Andres Bautista welcomed the SC decision, saying the government would now be able to recover the money from the US.

"The PCGG will endeavor to bring back this money to the Philippine Treasury at the soonest possible time," Bautista said.

He said the funds would be used for the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program and for the compensation of human rights victims. (www.philstar.com)

FEATURE (from page 9, MONA LISA YUCHENGO...)

male directors of her time, and in her early 20s, she won numerous awards for her second film "Brutal." When she received the Fukuoka Asian Cultures Prize in 2001, the citation read: "She conveys common people with great vitality. Her superb films are indictments that harshly examine the reality of the Philippines today, and are filled with warmth and affection for the common people, surviving on their strength."

Among her award-winning movies are "Jose Rizal," "Muro Ami," "Sa Pusod ng Dagat," "Moral," "Bagong Buwan," "Milagros" and "Karnal." She also produced documentaries like "American Junk" about the American military bases and "Silsilah" about the dialogue peacemakers in Zamboanga.

Q: What topics appeal to you most? Do you plan to do a movie or another documentary? Who would make good subjects for a documentary among today's media or pop culture personalities?

A: I like characters who are unique and have a compelling story to tell. Marilou Diaz-Abaya taught her students to always look for the significant human experience in making films. I like documentaries because it is straight story-telling. It is honest and transparent.

There are a number of personalities who I would like to

feature. Before Marilou died, I asked if she wanted to collaborate with me in a documentary on Dolphy. He was the only comedian I knew growing up who could make me laugh and his antics represented the social mores of the Filipino. Unfortunately, Dolphy died before we could contact him.

Q: What is your assessment of the current state of the movie and film industry in the Philippines?

A: I don't live in the Philippines, so I don't watch as many Filipino films as I would like to. Technically, the films are well-made but the story line can be improved. I also feel that the films need more editing to quicken the pace.

Q: Could you comment on the rise of independent filmmakers, in contrast to the earlier production of movies in the 1950s and 60s.

A: With the rise of the middle class in the Philippines, especially young workers in the call centers who are exposed to Western culture, there is a different set of expectations in what they want to see in movies. Thus, you have young and tech savvy indie filmmakers, who produce films that the more established and conservative studios do not want to take a chance with, especially with actors who are not well-known, with directors who do not have

a long list of film credits yet and with scripts that have been untested with audiences. Some of the independent films I've seen are actually very good.

Q: You also have a foundation. What causes do you support or promote?

A: I started Philippine International Aid in 1986 right after the People Power Revolution. I had just arrived in San Francisco in 1982 with my two sons and wanted to help my homeland when People Power happened. I decided to start a foundation here in the U.S. so others like me could channel their resources to help the motherland.

We provide educational assistance to disadvantaged Filipino students in the Philippines and in the San Francisco Bay area. We have about 2,400 children who are enrolled every year—preschoolers, street kids, orphans, abandoned kids, abused kids, sexually and commercially trafficked kids, indigenous kids like the Aetas, children of prisoners and farmers, deaf and hearing-impaired children and at-risk youth from Metro Manila, Cavite, Cebu, Iloilo, Iligan, Bataan, Davao and Zamboanga.

Q: Your family, especially your father, Ambassador Alfonso Yuchengco, is one of the most prominent businessmen in the Philippines. Did it ever occur

to you to undertake a career in the corporate world?

A: I actually worked for my father soon after I got married. Nobody else would hire me with that last name, as my father's businesses competed in almost every industry. I started with insurance and then banking, and stayed there for 9 years. I even went back to school while I was working to take my Masters in Business Administration as I didn't have a good business background because I took liberal arts and education in college.

Q: What's your advice to those who want to venture into film making?

A: It is not an easy venture, but if it is your dream, by all means try it! It is a very expensive venture so I suggest that you start with small projects to hone your skills. As Marilou Diaz-Abaya would say, "Young people spend too much time in front of a monitor. They are very tech savvy but they don't know how to live life." So enjoy your life because that is where you will find the emotional depth to make your movies.

DR. BELINDA A. AQUINO is currently Professor Emeritus at the University of Hawaii-Manoa where she was Professor of Political Science and Asian Studies and the longtime Director of the Center for Philippine Studies before retiring.



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PHILIPPINE NEWS

Philippines Launches 'Share the Roads' Initiative

Mayors of five major cities in the Philippines have joined forces in a show of support for the "Share the Roads Fairly" initiative—a grassroots movement aimed at making the country's roads safer, cleaner and more reliable to travel.

Participating cities included San Juan, Pasig and Marikina in Metro Manila, and Iloilo and Cebu in the Visayas. Main thoroughfares in the respective

cities were closed to motorized vehicles and ceremonial bike rides and other festive events were held in celebration of the historic event.

In Iloilo, over 2,000 cyclists took part in a 25-kilometer heritage tour around the city on March 30, 2014. Several thousand students, health enthusiasts and ordinary citizens joined in a 5-kilometer fun run/walk on lanes specially set aside for the public.

"Roads were meant for people, not for cars," says

Karen Crisostomo, president of the Firefly Brigade, one of the largest bicycling groups in the Philippines and a main supporter of the Share-the-Roads Movement. "We will closely work with local governments officials, many of whom are themselves cyclists or would-be cyclists, to spark a mind-shift that will result in more accessible road space for people to walk, bike, and for organized collective transportation system that is safe, efficient, convenient and reliable."

In February, young Filipinos who were frustrated by worsening traffic congestions and air pollution in the Philippines filed an unprecedented legal action against the government. They are demanding that the government reform the nation's transportation system and open the roads to all people who should not come second to vehicles and the pollution they create. The Philippine Supreme Court has issued an order directing the government to reply to the petition.

Phi, Germany Share Same Values on Territorial Integrity, says Minister

by Pia Lee-Brago
Wednesday, April 2, 2014

MANILA, Philippines - Espousing the principle of territorial integrity and citing the Philippines' support for a UN resolution declaring the recent Crimean referendum invalid, German State Minister Maria Bohmer said yesterday that the Philippines and Germany share the same values.

Bohmer said the sharing of values shows the good relations between the two countries are not limited to trade volume.

She said her visit to the Philippines was meant to continue the tradition started by German officials, including

former Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle and Employment Minister Ursula von der Leyen. Bohmer said her meeting with Foreign Affairs Secretary Albert del Rosario on Thursday showed how good and intense the relations between the two countries are.

She witnessed the signing of the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB) at Malacañang, which made her first visit to the country significant.

Germany supports the peace process through assistance in development projects.

She cited the Philippines for supporting a UN resolution declaring a Crimean referen-

dum, which led to Russia's annexation of Crimea, invalid as it urged the parties to immediately pursue a peaceful resolution of the situation.

"It's very important to respect the territorial integrity and not to pass over boundaries," she said.

The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said the Philippines voted in favor of the resolution based on its principles on sovereignty, territorial integrity, rule of law and peaceful settlement of disputes.

The Philippines called on all parties to respect the UN Charter and international law.

Bohmer said Europe has a clear and common position on the Crimean issue. "We share the same position and we're prepared to consider a third sanction depending on the development," she said.

"We have to observe step

by step how the matter develops but the annexation has to be answered or responded with sanctions," she added. During her meeting with Del Rosario, Bohmer stressed the importance of a peaceful resolution to the dispute in the West Philippine Sea (South China Sea), as she reiterated her country's support for a rules-based approach on the issue.

"We also have high interest on free and safe navigation. The conflict in the South China Sea has to be solved peacefully and I hope the ASEAN countries will be able to talk with China to solve the problem," she said. Asked about China's unilateral actions on the territorial dispute in the West Philippine Sea, she said: "Our basic position is to go along with the rule of law and to always exhaust the possibility of a dialogue." (www.philstar.com)

Village for Yolanda Victims Named 'Pope Francis'

MANILA, Philippines — A new settlement named after Pope Francis for survivors of Super typhoon Yolanda recently broke ground in Bantayan, Cebu.

The Pope Francis Gawad Kalinga (GK) Village in Tacad town will house typhoon victims from different parts of Northern Cebu.

A report from the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines' website noted that

only families willing to provide "sweat equity" will avail of the free housing. This entails that recipients themselves should help construct the community.

So far, the village consists of 45 houses with each unit costing P150,000, while the community will be organized through formation and livelihood programs.

The report said that Jesuit-run Xavier School and the Educational Research and Development Assistance Group are the major donors for the project. (www.philnews.com)

LEGAL AD

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Mariano, Merly & Michael, \$556.19.
Rodrigues, Michael F., \$1,106.28.
Regis, Chantel, \$756.24.
Sanchez Lydiann, \$705.68.
Liberato, Rodrigo, \$507.78.
Udani, Gene, \$986.15.
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LEGAL NOTES



By Reuben S. Seguritan

Enforcement Policies Under Review to Ease Deportations

pass a legislation halting deportations. Last year, he also indicated that he cannot ease enforcement because his priority is to push for the passage of the immigration reform bill.

With the immigration reform bill still not moving in Congress, advocates intensified their campaign to pressure the President to stop deportations.

The number of deportations under the Obama administration will reach 2 million this April, a lot more than the deportations under the Bush administration. This prompted the National Council of La Raza to call the President “deporter-in-chief”. According to Secretary Johnson, this number also includes those who were turned away at the border which were not regarded as deportation in previous administrations.

According to Angela Kelley of the Center for American Progress, around 5,000 American children end up in foster

homes because one or both their parents have been deported.

The high number of deportations likewise prompted Senator Chuck Schumer of New York, Senator Dick Durbin of Illinois and Senator Robert Menendez of New Jersey to appeal to the President to slow deportations.

While the President pledged to review enforcement policies, he stressed that he would not be able to legally stop deportations nor expand the 2012 order called the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) which granted temporary deportation reprieve to undocumented immigrants who were brought to the U.S. as children.

One of the proposed changes in policy being considered by officials of the Department of Homeland Security would be to ease up on the deportations of aliens who violated immigration laws but do not have criminal

convictions. With this change in place, enforcement would be focused on aliens who have been charged or convicted of crimes and those who pose a threat to public safety.

Another proposed change is easing up on the program called “Secure Communities.” Under this program, immigration authorities are allowed to request local jails to hold undocumented aliens until they are transferred to federal facilities. If this proposed change is approved, local detentions will be restricted.

Meanwhile, Republican Senator Jeff Sessions of Alabama sees the President’s latest move as “further demonstrating that he cannot be trusted to enforce any immigration plan from Congress.” Speaker Boehner’s spokesman Brendan Buck also pointed out that, “the President is obligated to enforce the laws we have. Failing to do so would damage – perhaps beyond repair – our ability to build the trust necessary to enact real immigration reform.”

The White House stressed that only a legislation enacted by Congress can fix the broken immigration system and efforts are continually being made to pressure the GOP-led House to pass the immigration reform bill.

Meantime, the President has executive authority to grant temporary reprieve from deportation as part of his “prosecutorial discretion.” He used his executive authority when he deferred deportation of thousands of young undocumented immigrants by issuing the DACA order.

With the continued refusal of House Republicans to act on the immigration reform bill, millions of undocumented immigrants are hopeful that the President will exercise his executive authority once again and keep them from being separated from their families.

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

PHILIPPINE NEWS

Binay: Noy Allies in 'Pork' Scam Should Also Be Charged

by Louie Bacani
Wednesday, April 2, 2014

MANILA, Philippines - Vice President Jejomar Binay said the government should pursue cases against all the officials implicated in the pork barrel scam and not only those from the opposition.

In a statement on Wednesday, Binay said those allied with the Aquino administration who had been embroiled into the controversy should be charged as well.

"If it stops with the filing of the plunder cases against three senators who are not political allies and confines itself to the (Janet) Napoles case, it will create the impression of being selective, and that political partisanship – not justice – is the sole motivation behind these charges," Binay said.

Binay is hoping that cases will also be filed against other officials mentioned in the Commission on Audit (COA) report released last year that found irregularities in the release of lawmakers' pork barrel funds to questionable non-government organizations.

He said the government should also act on the findings of the COA report the same way it did in the case involving businesswoman Janet Lim Napoles.

"The public would want no less than full accountability from its public officials. The rule of law must prevail regardless of stature or political affiliations," Binay said.

On Tuesday, the Office of the Ombudsman announced that it will file plunder and other cases against Napoles, Senators Juan Ponce Enrile, Jinggoy Estrada and Ramon

Revilla Jr and other personalities in the scam.

Binay said the decision of the Ombudsman is a test of the "fairness and trustworthiness" of the Philippines' legal system.

"In the event that the Ombudsman denies the motions for reconsideration and proceeds with the filing before the Sandiganbayan, I am confi-

dent that our courts will accord the three senators their right to a fair trial as provided for by the Constitution," Binay said.

Binay, Enrile and Estrada are all members of the United Nationalist Alliance (UNA) political party. Revilla is from the Lakas-Christian and Muslims Democrats.

In the 2010 elections,

Binay was the running mate of Estrada's father, former President and now Manila Mayor Joseph Estrada, under the banner of the United Nationalist Alliance (UNA).

The UNA was a coalition of Estrada's Pwersa ng Masang Pilipino and Binay's Partido Demokratiko Pilipino-Lakas ng Bayan. (www.philstar.com)

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DAYASADAS
By Pacita Saludes

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Kadagiti oras a panagmaymaysa adu dagiti panunot nga agdaliasat iti isip ket ukagenna dagiti napalabas a napasaran ken kasta met a sukisukenna ket lagtuenna dagiti dipay nadanon a masakbayan.

Iadawantayo ditoy dagiti tao a managpanunot ken nasariwatet ti isipna mangabel ti biag ti tao a managarapaap.

Umona: ti tao lagipenna a naparsua laeng a rumbeng nga agsaludo ti nakaparsuaanna nga inted ti DIOS. Kadagitoy a panawen ti Semana Santa ti panawen a panag sukimat ti maysa a tao ti kinasiasinona a pinarsua ti DIOS. Masapul a kada maysa adda bukodna a nakaisan-gratan ditoy rabao ti daga.

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iti mapalanguad. Adda met dagiti marigrigat ket adda met dagiti nabaknang a ti kinabaknangna laeng ti ammona a pangpamek ti aglawlawna ket saanan ng ammo a lagipen a ti panagsintir ti Langit ti panakilangenna iti aglawlawna. Dagiti nasalsalun-at ti panakilangenna kadagiti naluplupoy ken awanan gaway.

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Nangngegan daytoy iti radio ket rumbeng a maamuan met dagiti maseknan. (No asino dagiti rumbeng a mangituray wenno agpapili a mangimaton ti grupo wenno organisasion a kalikagumanna. Presidente ti grupo. Adu ngamin ti makarikna ti pannakapaay ngem masapul ngamin a maammo dagitoy). No kalikaguman ti mangidaulo (Agpresidente) ti kalikagumam a pagserbian). Umona). No adda met laeng panawen mo ken padasmon iti

gandat toy a grupo) Maikadua). Ipakitam ti anepmo ken naaramidam ti napalabas a dua a tawen a kaadda itoy a Gonglo. Maikatlo). No addaankan iti bukod a plano para iti grupo. Nagbalinka a modelo ken nakaipakitam ti aramid a nakatulong iti gunglo ket mariknam a maitandodo ti grupo a kayatmo nga ipangu-luan mabalindaka a tuladen. Maikapat). NAIPAKITAM A SIKATI Modelo ken matulad dagiti kameng ti napudno a kameng by not only be registered member but with MEMBERSHIP FEE, be a bonafide Member like everybody. Maudi unay.... Agbalinka a Mannakaawat ken pudno a mannakilangen iti sapaap. Sika ti agpatulad.

Kunada a ti pangulo mangagsakripisio, naanus ken napakumbaba. Saana managindadakkel, no diket naanos ken mangidalan. Rubeng nga ammona ti solbar

ti probelma ken mangidalan ti nasaysayaat a pannakaitungpal dagiti plano wenno gandat ti organisasion. Isu ti mangidaulo ti pannakaitungpal dagiti objective ti gunglo. Aramid ti pagkikitaan a saan laeng a ti kinaagturay.

Dagiti mangipangulo ti mangidasar ken mangidaulo ti panagballaigi ti grupo a saan laeng a ti panaglatak. Makidaw daytoy a rumbeng a mailawlawag iti kaaduan. Thank You for the trust. Thank you for your understanding. Good Luck to Everyone



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COMMUNITY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

ARAW NG KAGITINGAN (DAY OF VALOR) • WEDNESDAY • April 9, 2014 | 4:00 PM • Punchbowl National Cemetery of the Pacific • Contact 808-595-6316 to 19 ext. 106

15TH ANNIVERSARY, 2014 REUNION & AFFIRMATION OF OFFICERS OF INCAT • SUNDAY • April 27, 2014 | 6 PM • Empress Restaurant • Contact Lina Longboy @ 294-1446

50TH ANNIVERSARY, BADOC PINILI AID ASSOCIATION OF HAWAII • SATURDAY • May 3, 2014 | 8:00 AM-2:00 PM • Ke'ehi Lagoon Memorial Park, 2685 N Nimitz Hwy • Contact Trinidad Agamao @ 848-1645

ANNUAL FILIPINO FIESTA AND PARADE • SATURDAY • May 10, 2014 • Kapiolani Park | 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM • Contact FilCom Center @ 680-0451

ILOCOS SURIAN ASSOCIATION OF HAWAII "TALDIAP TI PROBINSIYA ITI ILOCOS SUR" (A GLIMPSE OF THE PROVINCE OF ILOCOS SUR) RE-AFFIRMATION OF ITS NEW OFFICERS • SATURDAY • May 17, 2014 | 6:00 PM • Hale Ikena @ Fort Shafter, Honolulu, HI • Attire: Inabel and Filipiniana • For more info. please contact: Estrella Taong 845-1681, Loida Yamamoto 679-9540 Rose Sabangan 677-9487 Davelyn Quijano 489-8782

SANTANIANS ASSOCIATION OF HAWAII-USA INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS • SATURDAY • May 24, 2014 • Ala Moana Hotel | 6:00 PM • For more info. please contact: Julius Soria @ 722-9958

MAINLAND NEWS

City of San Francisco Certifies Tagalog for Limited English Speakers

San Francisco has certified Tagalog as a third required language, in addition to Chinese and Spanish, covered under the city's Language Access Ordinance.

The certification ensures that the 10,000-plus Tagalog-speaking residents who are limited English speakers have access to the same information and programs as every other San Franciscans.

"The Filipino community in San Francisco has helped make our city successful," says San Francisco Board of Supervisors President David Chiu. "This certification is an affirmation of all our language communities' hard work and contributions."

San Francisco's Language Access Ordinance was estab-

lished in 2001 and is one of the most comprehensive local language laws in the nation. The ordinance requires city departments that interact with the public to provide translated materials, interpreters at public meetings and other services. The ordinance also ensures that the City effectively communicates with residents as part of its daily business and especially during crises, emergency and public safety situations.

Terrence Valen, organizational director of the Filipino Community, called the certification of the Tagalog language a long overdue recognition of Filipinos' presence in San Francisco.

"Filipino residents feel that being able to communicate in their native tongue opens up

the whole world to them and their families, from accessing basic services to contributing to their communities and the diversity of San Francisco," Valen says.

Over 112 different languages are spoken in the San Francisco Bay Area and 45 percent of all San Francisco residents do not speak English at home. In certifying Tagalog as a third language, the City's Office of Civic Engagement and Immigrant Affairs (OCEIA)

determined that there are more than 10,000 Tagalog speakers in San Francisco

who are limited-English proficient and meet thresholds outlined in the law.

As part of their on-going work to engage and ensure full civic participation, officials are conducting a baseline study of Tagalog speakers in San Francisco to help departments to

better understand the specific needs of the community.

OCEIA officials will implement the new requirements over the next 18 months beginning July 1, 2014, with input from the Language Access Network and other community and City partners.

Hirono Co-Introduces Bill to Expand Pell Grants

U.S. Sen. Mazie Hirono has co-introduced the Pell Grant Protection Act which helps low-income students by converting Pell Grants into an automatic spending program with a cost-of-living adjustment similar to the formula used by Social Security.

The bill also restores Year-Round Pell Grants, which will help students get their degrees faster, with no gap in eligibility. About 1 million students, in-

cluding 1,620 from Hawaii, used Year-Round Pell Grants each year before Congress eliminated them in 2011.

"In today's competitive economy, college costs are becoming more and more prohibitive," says Sen. Hirono, who has met many students from Hawaii who want to attend college but know that it's just too expensive. She says the bill could enable millions of students to access more financial aid.

"Pell Grants have changed the lives of countless low-in-

come students, and the Pell Grant Protection Act will build on these critical resources for future students by enabling them to continue taking classes in the summer or winter and ensuring that Pell Grants keep up with increases in the cost of living," Hirono says.

U.S. Rep. Ruben Hinojosa (D-Texas), the ranking Democrat on the House Subcommittee for Higher Education and Workforce Training, introduced a companion bill in the U.S. House.

PICTORIAL NEWS



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NEWS FEATURE

Hawaii Bids Aloha to Consul General Torres

Hawaii's Filipino community held a *mabuhay* and farewell party for Consul General Julius D. Torres, who is retiring from his post. The event was held on March 22, 2014 at the Philippine Consulate General of Honolulu.

In attendance were dozens of community leaders, business executives and representatives from various Filipino organizations. The event's main sponsor was La Union Circle & Associates, led by president Conrad Valdriz.

Joe and Tina Lazo and Car-

lota Ader served as emcees for the event, which was broadcasted live on KNDI radio, courtesy of owners Gerry and Nellie Malabed. Larry Ordonez welcomed the attendees, while his daughter, Miss Hawaii Filipina 2013 Erika Salazar Ordonez, danced a beautiful hula. Rossi Patton and Jenny Quezon sang the national anthems, and Rev. Fernie Nicolas gave the invocation.

Certificates of appreciation from various elected officials and Filipino organizations were presented to Consul General Torres, thanking him for his service. His wife Dr. Milali T. Torres and son Emil joined him



on stage for the presentations.

"Words are inadequate to express how much we love and thank him for what Ambassador Torres did for the state of Hawaii, particularly for the Filipino Community in the more than two years of his consular service," says community leader Joe Lazo.

Lazo says one of Torres' lasting legacies was to rename a portion of the Consulate as the Lanai Alay Sakada. On the wall of the lanai, an impressive display of *sakada* pictures and artifacts are on display, all



of which were collected and assembled by Consul General Torres. It is his hope that everyone, especially Filipino youth, will be forever grateful to the *sakadas* for paving the way for a better future for generations of Filipinos who call Hawaii their home.

"By remembering the *sakadas* and their sacrifices, Ambassador Torres shows that he cares for future generations

and that great opportunities are awaiting them," Lazo says.

Consul General Torres hails from Botolan, Zambales. A seasoned diplomat with impressive credentials, Consul General Torres was appointed to head the consulate in Honolulu in 2011. He has been assigned to posts all over the world, including Europe, the Middle East, the Pacific and Canada.



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