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FILIPINO CHRONICLE

HAWAII'S ONLY WEEKLY FILIPINO-AMERICAN NEWSPAPER

FILIPINO GROUPS GEAR UP FOR 18TH ANNUAL FILIPINO FIESTA

By JP ORIAS

Mark your calendars for the 18th annual Filipino Fiesta and Parade, scheduled for Saturday, May 8, 2010 in Waikiki. Under the helm of the Fil-Com Center, the annual Filipino Fiesta and Parade is the Filipino community's largest cultural event in Hawaii.

The day-long event begins with a festive and colorful parade at 9 am. To get a good view of the colorful floats and the marching groups, spectators are advised to arrive early and bring sunscreen and bottled water.

Following the parade is the Filipino-style Fiesta from 10 am to 5 pm at Kapiolani Park. The fiesta comes complete with a bevy of local and Philippine entertainers organized by the Filipino Jaycees and headed by Angel Lewis. There will also be a cultural village showcasing the various ethnic and cultural regions of the Philippines, food booths, a keiki village and business booth.

And for the health-conscious, the Fiesta will include a Community Health Fair sponsored by Bayanihan Clinic Without Walls in cooperation with the Philippine Medical Association of Hawaii,

the Hawaii Filipino Chronicle and Hawaii Filipino Healthcare.

A TRADITION IN HAWAII

Filipino Fiesta and Parade has earned a reputation as the flagship event for Hawaii's Filipino community. It not only introduces other ethnic groups in Hawaii to the Filipino culture, but also provides an opportunity for Filipinos, especially the younger generation, to learn more about themselves and their heritage.

Fil-Com Center president Toy Arre was quick to answer that this year's edition of the Filipino Fiesta and Parade will offer several new twists.

"This year will have a lot of new features including the first participation of the Pacific Fleet Band in a Filipino parade and the premier performance of Banda

(continued on page 4)



The Annual Filipino Fiesta and Parade is the largest cultural event of the Filipino community in Hawaii

Villar, Erap Tied at 2nd in Latest Pulse Asia Survey



Pulse Asia's 1-2-2: (L-R) Sen. Noynoy Aquino, Sen. Manny Villar, and Erap Estrada

By Dino MARAGAY

MANILA, Philippines – With just a little over two weeks before the national elections, things get a little more interesting in the presidential race with former President Joseph Estrada now joining Nationalista Party bet Sen. Manny Villar at the second spot, according to the latest survey by Pulse Asia.

Liberal Party standard-bearer Sen. Be-

nigno "Noynoy" Aquino III continues to top other contenders for the presidency with almost 4 in 10 voters supporting his bid (39 percent).

But the survey's highlight is Estrada tying Villar at second with a 20 percent voter preference. Pulse Asia said Villar suffered a decline of 5 percentage points in his rating, allowing Estrada to catch up with him.

(continued on page 4)

Filipinos 3rd Most Number of New US citizens

By Veronica UY

MANILA - Filipinos constitute the third biggest number of new US citizens in 2009 after Mexico and India, a report of the Office of Immigration Statistics of the United States Department of Homeland Security said.

In 2009, the five leading countries of birth of new US citizens were Mexico (111,630 or 15 percent of total), India (52,889 or 7.1 percent), Philippines (38,934 or 5.2 percent), China (37,130 or 5 percent), and Vietnam (31,168 or 4.2 percent).

Expectedly, the largest number of naturalized persons lived in California (179,754), New York (88,733), and Florida (82,788)—states with the

(continued on page 4)



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EDITORIAL

Healthcare Reform 2010 is Just the Beginning, Keep The Public Option Alive

By any stretch of finality, healthcare reform 2010 is far from over. In fact the mishmash compromises of the two reconciliation bills signed into law set a sketchy trail requiring much needed substantive doctoring, if only Americans can see beyond the damaging, partisan myths and agree to forge real effective change. At best, the 2010 healthcare reform could be characterized as a "pilot program" with its greatest strength being a symbolic, historical message that government must step in to fix a broken system. The big anticlimax is, what Congress and President Barack Obama pushed forward this time around, amounts to a watered-down, consumer protection bill that will not institute the essential structural changes to curb medical costs and raise doctor-patient quality.

It cannot be understated that the greatest feature of healthcare reform 2010 was left out, the public option. A universal healthcare system with a public option would have positioned the government to become a true competitor in the private healthcare sector, lowering the cost of premiums and improving quality. Instead, what the government will become with this 2010 bill, is a mere regulator, still doling out subsidized money to insurance companies which will continue to do as they please, minus features that shouldn't have been permitted in the first place -- insurance companies' denial of pre-existing conditions, cancellation of policies of sick customers, or caps on coverage for life-saving treatment. What remains is the lack of guarantees of affordable premiums. Worse off, some customers' premiums could be higher.

Clearly the Democrats' bullish hurrah of offering a "saving grace" to healthcare failed, but their undeserved self-patting on the back is nowhere near the shameful, injurious insincerity put forth by Republicans whose singular intention really was to advocate only malpractice reform in health-related torts.

Republicans' assertion of the government heading down a slippery slope toward socialism and bankruptcy is simply a lie. First, government's role in healthcare started 45 years ago with Medicare and Medicaid. These two life-saving programs, along with the nation's educational, public safety (police/firefighter/civil defense/military), and transportation systems are all primarily government-led. Should Republicans accuse the millions of employed government workers under these departments or the millions of



Americans using these rights as being conspirators of some socialist system? Second, how hypocritical that Republicans use the mounting deficit and imminent bankruptcy argument against healthcare reform when the GOP was responsible for turning a surplus under President Clinton into a massive national debt following President George W. Bush. According to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO), the Iraq and Afghanistan wars could cost as much as \$2.4 trillion through the next decade. Since 2001, the wars have cost taxpayers well over \$1 trillion. The CBO estimates healthcare reform to cost less than that at \$900 billion, with a net reduction in federal deficits of \$143 billion over the 2010-2019 period. Where was Republicans' fiscal conservatism during Bush's Iraq debacle?

The fiscal reality is this: even if Republicans had their way and healthcare reform 2010 failed, the government is already paying the nation's health care tab by half, and by 2012, that amount would be more than half, according to a Medicare study. With healthcare reform or not, the government must intervene to keep hospitals running and the entire industry from ruin. Call it socialism, call it whatever name politicians' find suitable to win an election through utter deception, the fact remains that government's role in healthcare is a matter of survival. The cost is beyond colossal for pure privatized enterprises to sustain.

Given this year's critical mid-term election, Hawaii voters must consider the leading candidates' position on healthcare reform. While it is the law of the land, it could encounter funding barriers or amendments in the implementation process. A major shift in Congress' majority to Republican or Blue Dog, Conservative Democrat, could disrupt the momentum toward real change. Call the campaigns of Colleen Hanabusa, Ed Case and Charles Djou to find out how willing they'd be to support an eventual public option, or even better a universal single-payer healthcare system. Senators Daniel Inouye, Daniel Akaka and U.S. Rep. Mazie Hirono have all supported the progressive Democrats' push for a public option in healthcare reform. ■

HELPLINE

I am writing on behalf of my housekeeper, Gina Palic, who has been trying to locate her mom, Norma Agsalda, who resides in Hawaii with her husband Dennis. Gina Palic was still young when her mother and father, Guillermo Palic, separated, raised second families and immigrated to Hawaii.

Please help me locate Norma Agsalda whom I suspect is using her current husband Dennis' surname, which my housekeeper Gina cannot recall. If you have any information, please contact me via email at:

laramanuellb@yahoo.com.

Lara Manuel

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LEGISLATIVE CONNECTION

Expanding the Ladder of Opportunity



by Senator Will ESPERO

Democrats believe in extending the ladder of opportunity because the overall well-being of society improves as more citizens are able to reach their goals. As we and our neighbors achieve our own "American dream," our well-being spills over into the community. That is why Democrats have traditionally invested in education, in job training, in strengthening families, and home ownership. Becoming better educated, acquiring valuable workplace skills, being able to buy a home of our own and shape our family lives in a positive way, all contribute to the stability and productivity of society.

Under the Bush Administration, federal financial aid was cut by \$12.5 billion, drastically reducing the amount of student aid available for our high school graduates to attend college. Funding restrictions put the maximum Pell Grant at \$4,050 for 2003-2004, up to \$4,731 for 2008-2009. With rising tuition and other higher education costs, these Bush

Administration reductions strained the ability of students to obtain the training they needed for the career goals they had.

HR 4872, the "Health Care & Education Affordability Reconciliation Act of 2010," helps restore the American dream. Known as SAFRA ("Student Aid & Fiscal Responsibility Act"), the education portion of the health care reform law enables more students to attain a university education. Investing in students is an investment in America's future.

The greater availability of financial aid also strengthens families. Parents are stressed with paying a mortgage and daily life expenses. The additional expense of putting their grown children through college makes parental responsibility even more difficult. The greater availability of college funding provides financial and personal relief to those parents who want their children to reach their potential through higher education. Those young people will also be better able to support the families they someday will have after they train for a career.

SAFRA spreads out federal education dollars in part by eliminating subsidies to private banks. It instead uses the cost-effective route of the federal Department of Educa-

tion administering the student loan program. Under the previous system, the federal government paid private banks money to give out student loans. By eliminating those bank subsidies, that money can be channeled toward more student financial aid.

HR 4872 bolsters the Pell Grant, a long-standing Democratic program that has enabled students to be able to go to college. It originated in 1965, is named after its sponsor, Senator Claiborne Pell of Rhode Island, and is known also as the Basic Educational Opportunity Grant (BEOG) program. SAFRA amends the Higher Education Act to include mandatory funding for the Pell Grant and includes an appropriation of \$13.5 billion.

The College Access Challenge Grant program will receive \$150 million for fiscal years 2010 through 2014. Funding would be extended through 2019 for programs at "minority-serving institutions" including programs that help low-income students earn degrees in science, technology, engineering or math. Alaska/Native Hawaiian institutions will receive \$15 million; \$5 million will go to Asian American and Pacific Islander Institutions, and \$5 million is appropriated to Native American non-tribal serving institutions.

Repaying student loans after graduating is another measure of relief. The Income-Based Repayment program is amended to cap student loan payment for new borrowers after July 1, 2014. Currently at 15%, loan repayment would go down to 10%. Loans previously had 25 years to be repaid. The amendment would forgive remaining balances after 20 years of repayment. This especially helps students with high loans, such as medical students.

When the health care reform bill was finally passed in the US Senate, Democrats observed with solemnity the absence of one of its strongest advocates, Senator Ted Kennedy, who had long fought for health care for all Americans. The education portion of the reforms would have been dear to him as well. As was said of the "Happy Warrior," Senator Kennedy's life was "not to champion those with wealth or power or special connections. It was to give a voice to those who were not heard; to add a rung to the ladder of opportunity; to make real the dream of our founding." ■

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JOBS FOR HAWAII / COLLEEN WILL WORK IN CONGRESS AND WITH PRESIDENT OBAMA TO CREATE MORE JOBS TO STRENGTHEN HAWAII'S ECONOMY.

I HUMBLY ASK FOR YOUR VOTE. WHEN YOU RECEIVE YOUR BALLOT IN THE MAIL, PLEASE MAIL IT IMMEDIATELY SO YOUR VOTE WILL BE COUNTED.

THANK YOU. SALAMAT PO. DIOS TI AGINGINA. DAGHANG SALAMAT.



HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

SBA Grants Available for States to Support R&D, Small Business Innovation

THE U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION is accepting grant funding requests from the governments of U.S. states and territories to support programs for innovative, technology-driven small businesses under SBA's Federal and State Technology (FAST) partnership program through May 10, 2010.

FAST provides \$2 million in funding (up to \$100,000 per applicant) for outreach and technical assistance to science and technology-driven small businesses. The program places particular emphasis on helping socially- and economically-disadvantaged firms compete in the SBA's Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs.

Eligible applicants for FAST grants include state and local economic development agencies, Small Business Development Centers, and colleges and universities. Each state, through its governor, may submit one proposal.

"The FAST program is an important catalyst for helping America's cutting-edge entrepreneurs continue to drive innovation and

create good jobs," says Karen G. Mills, SBA administrator. "The partnerships developed through these programs will play a critical role in helping high-growth potential small firms lay a stronger foundation for economic prosperity."

FAST funding applicants are encouraged to show how they will help support areas such as:

- Small business research and development assistance,
- Technology transfer from universities to small businesses,
- Technological diffusion of innovation benefiting small businesses,
- Proposal development and mentoring for small businesses applying for SBIR grants;
- Commercialization of technology developed through SBIR grants.

Companies supported by the SBIR and STTR programs often generate some of the most important breakthroughs each year in the U.S. For example, about 25 percent of R&D Magazine's Top 100 Innovations come from SBIR-funded small businesses.

A committee consisting of

small business owners, state level representatives, federal SBIR program managers and representatives of the business and academic communities will evaluate proposals. The SBA, the Department of Defense and the National Science

Foundation will jointly review the recommendations from the evaluation panel and make awards based on proposal merit. Varying levels of matching funds are required from each participating state and territory.

The SBIR program requires 11 federal agencies with more than \$100 million in R&D spending to set aside 2.5 percent of those funds for competitively-awarded SBIR grants.

In Fiscal Year 2007, these agencies provided about 5,500 SBIR federal grants and contracts for small businesses totaling \$2 billion.

STTR requires federal agencies with over \$1 billion in extramural R&D funding to set aside 0.3 percent. STTR totaled about 870 awards for \$218 million in FY 2007.

For more information about the SBIR and STTR programs, visit SBA's online at www.sba.gov/sbir. ■

PAL to Continue Restructuring Program

for nearly half of PAL's operating expenses.

Aside from a series of cost-cutting initiatives, PAL officials approached several investors but none were interested given the fact that in 2009 alone, more than 20 airlines went bankrupt.

PAL also blames the downturn of the Philippine aviation sector to Category II by the U.S. which prevents the airline from using brand new long-range aircraft or increasing flights to the U.S. and the subsequent blacklisting of Philippine carriers by the European Union, ruining the reputation of airlines like PAL with outstanding safety records.

In December 2007, the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) placed the Philippines into Category 2 due to concerns about the local Air Transportation Office's oversight of air carrier operations. Category 2 means that the FAA assessed the Philippines' civil aviation

authority as not being compliant with International Civil Aviation Organization safety standards for the oversight of Philippine air carrier operations.

"PAL did its best to adjust to the harsh operating environment. It implemented a series of cost-cutting initiatives, including a manpower rationalization program in September 2009 that affected more than 400 executives and administrative employees. In 2000, PAL restructured its organization and spun-off/sold its Maintenance and Engineering Department to Lufthansa Technik Philippines," PAL said.

PAL assures its customers that there will be no disruptions to operations during the implementation of the restructuring measures. The airline has asked for support from its stakeholders—unions, partners in the travel trade, government and the flying public—as it reorganizes into a leaner, more efficient company. ■



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CASE CONGRESS

OPINION

It's All Over But the Lying, the Faking and the Cheating

AS I WRECK THIS
CHAIR by W. ESPOSO

With just ten days of campaigning left, we can safely say that it's all over for the 2010 presidential elections except for the persistent lying and faking by desperate losers and the suspected attempt to cheat. It's all over except for the proclamation of the Liberal Party's Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III as the new president of our country.

Posting a lead of anywhere from 12% to as much as 18% over his closest rival, the Nacionalista Party's Manny Villar, there is no way of reversing Aquino's lead without provoking People Power. Sure, they can try the feared "electronic Garcé" cheating operation — especially with this Comelec (Commission on Elections) that has established a track record of producing anti-Liberal Party decisions. But that would be suicidal on their part to try it.

It has never happened in Philippine elections since 1992, when we adopted the multi party system, that the presidential candidate with a double digit lead in the

last two weeks of polling had ever lost the presidential election. Even Fidel V. Ramos, with a very narrow low single digit lead in 1992, went on to win that presidential election. In the case of Joseph Estrada in 1998, he was the dominant brand and was never threatened.

It was only Madame Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's (GMA) proclamation (your Chair Wrecker believes that was all it was, not an election) in 2004 that created doubts — especially after the Garcé Tape surfaced. Easily 60% of Filipinos believe that GMA stole the 2004 presidency. But the 2004 controversy happened because of the closeness of the presidential race and the political naïveté of the late Fernando Poe, Jr.

Like Joseph Estrada in 1998, Noynoy Aquino is every bit of what is called in marketing as the DOMINANT BRAND in this presidential election. Aquino led from the time he entered the presidential race in September and never lost that lead to anyone in the SWS (Social Weather Stations), Pulse Asia and Manila Standard polls. The closest it ever got between Aquino and Villar was a two point lead held by Aquino during the January and February polls.

However, starting with the March polls, Aquino picked up



steam again like the so-called second wind in sports competitors and has now posted expanding double digit margins in the credible polls. To exacerbate Estrada's situation, his ratings have been dropping since the March polls. From the mid-30s, Villar has dropped to the low-20s. In fact, if this downward trend continues, it is very likely that Joseph Estrada will overtake Villar in second place.

Estrada has been benefiting from the drop of Villar's ratings. Both Villar and Estrada are positioned against the mahirap (poor). Thus, it is not surprising that Villar's loss tends to become Estrada's gain. It is also not surprising that Estrada is now actively attacking Villar.

Villar's drop in ratings is an indication that the many issues that were hurled against him had gained traction. That fake psychological report which ABS-CBN at-

tributed to Villar's camp backfired and added to Villar's bad image. If that was not bad enough, a Villar ally, Guido Delgado, attempted to peddle another fake psychiatric report last Tuesday which can only backfire again on Villar. With Estrada vigorously pressing the Vista Land IPO issue against Villar — like a shark following a trail of Villar's blood — Villar is forced to be in a defensive position.

In the event that Estrada manages to dislodge Villar in second place, it is doubted if the former president can seriously threaten Aquino — not with only 10 days left of campaigning. Estrada trails Aquino even in the D and E socioeconomic classes and he does not even have the machinery of Villar.

When Local Government Secretary Ronnie Puno was interviewed on ANC regarding the irregular presscon of Andal Ampatuan, Jr. —

Ronnie mentioned the comparative political machineries of the Lakas Kampi CMD, Liberal Party and the Nacionalista Party. Per Ronnie, the administration party has a presence of around 70% in all contested areas compared to around 55% for the Liberal Party and 30% for the Nacionalista Party. Estrada's Pwersa ng Masa Party has much less than the Nacionalista Party.

It's not inconceivable that many of those who defected to Villar could still make last minute deals and abandon him if they perceive that Villar will surely lose. Those who are vying in district (congressional) and local positions are the most prone to defecting to the perceived winner of the presidential election.

To further boost the political stock of Aquino will be the tendency of the Gilbert Teodoro, Richard Gordon, Eddie Villanueva, Jambay Madrigal, Nick Perlas and JC de los Reyes followers to shift to Aquino. Most of these voters are from the classes AB and C and are not the type who will shift to the mahirap positioned candidates. Traditionally, the bulk of the undecided will gravitate to the dominant brand — Noynoy Aquino.

On an upward momentum, Aquino could well hit a 42% vote total. (www.philstar.com) ■

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IMMIGRATION GUIDE

An Open Letter to the New U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines



by Atty. Emmanuel Samonte TIPON



Ambassador Harry K. Thomas
United States Ambassador to the Philippines
Manila

Dear Sir:

"It is easier for a camel to enter the eye of a needle than for a non-white lawyer to enter the U.S. Consulate in Manila and talk with a consular officer." - Emmanuel S. Tison in *The Consular Posts Book*.

We are pregnant with hope that you will breathe the breath of life into your pledge to support "human rights" in the Philippines.

The best way to redeem your pledge is not to sing and dance in the barrios or in Wowoobe but to look at the human rights abuses

inside the U.S. Embassy in Manila. We have co-authored a book detailing some of them. We would like to personally present you with a copy.

When a person approaches the Filipino guards at the Embassy their rudeness and arrogance un-makes the day for many Filipinos. Once you give a Filipino a gun and station him at the U.S. Embassy, his demeanor is transformed from piousness to pompousness. Get rid of those guards. They cannot protect the U.S. Embassy. They will likely run away at the first sound of gun fire. Replace them with U.S. Marines.

Filipinos, many of whom came straight from the provinces, upon entering the Embassy will be shocked and awed by the market-place-like environment. More Filipino security guards will hustle them. Filipino clerks will display their authority, ridiculing their kababayans especially if their papers are not in order.

If the Filipina is married to an elderly man, she will be brought to the Fraud Prevention Unit (FPU). Emblazoned at the door of the FPU headquarters is an invisible sign: "Abandon hope, all ye who enter here." - Dante's *Inferno*. She will be grilled: "Why did you marry an old man? He is older than your father. Your mother should have married your husband. He can no longer perform. Don't tell me he can still perform. I should know. I am a man. Even if he takes a mouthful of Viagra. Better tell the truth. You married your husband so you can go to America. If you do not admit it, we will deny you a visa and have your husband de-

ported for fraud. We will have your relatives who introduced you to him deported for human trafficking. The FPU Filipinos want to impress their white masters by earning "brownie" points. They believe that browbeating helpless Filipino women is how to impress. Get rid of the Filipinos at the FPU.

A divorced U.S. citizen, formerly a Filipino, goes to the American Citizen Services to get a certificate of legal capacity to marry so the USC can marry a Filipino. She will be told: "We cannot issue you a certificate. The Philippines does not recognize divorce." Since when did Philippine law govern the legal capacity of an American citizen to marry? A divorced American citizen is free to marry anybody anywhere.

Most American consular officials have stayed too long in the Philippines and acquired the bad habit of many Filipino caciques who do not answer letters even if relevant to their work. Send them to the war zones.

To borrow your phrase, Mr. Ambassador, may we "look forward" to meeting with you in person so we can help you succeed in your mission of promoting friendship between Filipinos and Americans.

Respectfully yours,
Emmanuel Samonte Tison

A United States Citizen of Philippine ancestry ■

(Atty. Tison has a Master of Laws degree from Yale Law School and a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of the Philippines. He is based in Hawaii, specializing in immigration law and criminal defense. Tel. (808) 325-2645. E-Mail: filamlaw@yahoo.com. Website: www.ImmigrationServicesUSA.com. He is from Laoag City and Magsingal, Ilocos Sur. He served as an Immigration Officer. He

is co-author of "Immigration Law Service, 1st ed." an 8-volume practice guide for immigration officers and lawyers. Listen to the most interesting and humorous Hawaii radio program on KNDI AM 1270 every Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday at 7:00 AM. Hear Atty. Tison on the internet at www.luko.com. Click on Mr. Parbungan. This article is a general overview of the subject matter discussed and is not intended as legal advice. No warranty is made by the writer or publisher as to its completeness or correctness at the time of publication.)

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- Ayon sa batas, kinakailangang makilahok ang lahat sa Census. Protektado rin ng batas ang inyong impormasyon.
- Ang mga Census rep ay may dalang official ID at sumumpang pananatiliing confidential ang inyong impormasyon.
- Makatutulong ang pakikilahok mo sa Census para makuha ng ating komunidad ang bahagi nito sa higit \$400 billion in federal funds bawat taon.

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■ PHILIPPINE NEWS

GSIS Disburses P53.33 Billion in loans to Government Workers

by Iris GONZALES /
Thursday, April 29, 2010

MANILA, Philippines - **THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM (GSIS)** has disbursed a total of P53.33 billion in loans last year, a marked improvement from the P40.97 billion recorded in 2008.

The loans were disbursed through over-the-counter transactions and through the agency's Wireless Automated Processing System or G-W@PS kiosks.

Of the amount, GSIS has disbursed a total of P49.84 billion worth of loans through the agency's G-W@PS kiosk.

GSIS president and General Manager Winston Garcia said the loans were disbursed despite the slowdown in the agency's operations brought about by a defective database system provided by IBM Corp.

Data from the Information Technology Services Group of the GSIS showed that a little over a million loan applications were filed online last year through the G-W@PS kiosks deployed in all GSIS servicing offices and selected government agencies.

Of the total loan applications filed, the GSIS approved 878,469 for a total consideration of P49.84 billion.

The GSIS said it was able to process a huge bulk of loan applications filed through the G-W@PS kiosks because it has moved to a

new and better system, which is Oracle.

Introduced in 2006, the G-W@PS system allows GSIS to service its customers anytime and anywhere.

The G-W@PS kiosk combines modern technology to come up with a unique and secure system that can process transactions off-site in a completely paperless environment.

With G-W@PS, not only can GSIS members and pensioners file for a loan, they can also view their GSIS records as well as activate their eCard Plus.

For members, the kiosk can process loan applications like the P10,000 cash advance loan, Consolidated Salary Loan and Policy Loan. Pensioners can likewise file their pension loan using the G-W@PS kiosk.

On the other hand, pensioners can use the G-W@PS to renew their active status on their birth month without ever reporting to the GSIS office. This will ensure the continuation of their monthly pension.

The kiosk — which is like an ATM machine with a touch screen monitor — combines different technologies such as radio frequency identification, biometrics, general packet radio service, short message service, and virtual private network.

GSIS members and pensioners need to have an eCard Plus to be able to use the G-W@PS. (www.philstar.com) ■



Swine Board Bucks Government Plan to Import Pork Through FTI

by Marianne V. GO /
Thursday, April 29, 2010

MANILA, Philippines - **THE SWINE BOARD OF THE PHILIPPINES** has expressed opposition to the government's plan to import 5,000 metric tons of pork through the Food Terminal, Inc. (FTI).

"We... call on government not to proceed with the importation. We also call all presidential candidates to bare their plans to arrest a potentially volatile situation. They should bear in mind that they will inherit this problem when they take over the reins of government," the Swine Board said in a statement.

The Swine Board is composed of producers and suppliers which provide 60 percent of the pork supply in the country. They include various stakeholders in the value chain, backyard and commercial hog farmers, slaughterhouse operators, logistics providers, meat fabricators, traders, importers, and distributors.

The Swine Board stated: "We are outraged by the recent announcement to allow FTI to import 5,000 MT of pork. It appears that the Department of Agriculture unilaterally determined the necessity and immediacy of the importation without any prior consultation."

They pointed out that in a meeting of the Task Force Price and Volume Watch conducted by the DA's Bureau of Animal Industry last Friday, "we heard no inking at all of this matter. Worse, the mechanism used by the Minimum Access Volume (MAV) system was ignored. The private sector was bypassed and the government-controlled corporation-FTI entrenched into a commercial activity using its state power to avail of the duty-free importation. This effectively gives government undue advantage and renders domestic trade unfair."

The Swine Board is puzzled by the decision to import since the pork MAV was released in February, barely two months ago. Only 30 percent of the import allocation has been utilized by the private sector to date. There are still 70 percent available and sufficient elbow room remains for the private sector to address whatever supply gaps there are."

The Swine Board pointed out that the lean season is about to start, wherein hog prices traditionally start bottoming out.

"The untimely and unexpected importation of pork will most certainly disturb and distort the market. This intervention is unwise and uncalculated for," the Swine Board said. (www.philstar.com) ■

PHILIPPINE NEWS

No Wage Hike on Labor Day - Palace

by Paolo ROMERO / Wednesday, April 28, 2010

MANILA, Philippines - THERE WILL BE NO ANNOUNCEMENTS OF WAGE HIKES from President Arroyo on Labor Day but workers may expect a P200-million non-wage and livelihood assistance package.

Labor Secretary Marianillo Roque made this clear in a press briefing, which followed a meeting over lunch with Mrs. Arroyo and some 50 labor leaders at Malacañang.

(Minimum) wage determination system is not by legislative or executive (action) but through tripartite, so we leave it to the boards," Roque said.

He was referring to the Regional Tripartite Wage and Productivity Boards (RTWPB) composed of representatives from government, workers, and employers.

"It's not for the President to decide. I myself can't decide on wages," he said.

Representatives of workers' groups did not raise the matter of wage hikes with the President.

Roque said the labor leaders only asked Mrs. Arroyo to ensure the continuity of livelihood and assistance programs.

There are pending petitions for wage increases in seven RTWPBs, including Metro Manila. It usually takes weeks before such petitions

are resolved.

On May 1, Mrs. Arroyo will perform her last official Labor Day function as President by leading a job and livelihood fair at the SMX Mall of Asia. Similar livelihood fairs are scheduled across the country, with about 80,000 jobs at stake, Roque said.

He said Mrs. Arroyo has ordered the allocation of P200 million under DOLE's Workers' Income Augmentation Program.

He said worker's groups or co-operatives may seek assistance for business projects ranging from P100,000 to P3 million.

Roque said Mrs. Arroyo doesn't have much to announce on Labor Day since she has already extended numerous assistance to workers in her nine years as president.

DISAPPOINTED

The Federation of Free Workers expressed disappointment over Malacañang's pronouncement.

"We really thought that President Arroyo would be giving workers a memorable Labor Day's celebration by announcing a salary increase or at least a directive to hasten the resolution of pending wage hike petitions before she finally steps down from office," Julius Cainglet, FFW spokesman, said.

Cainglet noted that the government has been boasting of economic gains under the Arroyo administra-

tion and yet it has failed to improve the workers' condition.

"It seems that workers would just have to make do with an entertainment package on Labor Day," he added.

Employers are against salary increases, saying most companies are still recovering from the economic slump.

PROTESTS, CAMPAIGN

Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) chairman Elmer Labog said various trade unions in Metro Manila and nearby provinces would hold proclamation rallies for their candidates for the coming elections side by side with protest activities on May 1.

"We are going to hold our traditional Labor Day protest rally, which will also serve as proclamation rally for the candidates our unions will be supporting come election day," Labog said in an interview.

Labog said KMU and affiliate unions are finalizing a list of candidates to endorse during the May 1 rally at Liwasan Bonifacio.

"Workers will be endorsing candidates for president, vice president and a number of senators," he said.

The endorsement, Labog said, is expected to translate to 600,000 votes for the KMU-backed candidates.

He declined to reveal the names on the list, but hinted that the KMU would be supporting Nacionalista Party (NP) presidential bet Sen.

Manuel Villar and his running mate Sen. Loren Legarda.

"*Sympang kung saan naka liyng si Ka Satur* (Whoever is allied with Ka Satur)," Labog said, referring to NP senatorial candidate Satur Ocampo.

Aside from endorsing candidates, the militant labor group will also present a 10-point Labor Day

agenda, including a P125 across-the-board increase in the daily take-home pay of workers nationwide.

Labog noted that under the Arroyo administration, wages have not increased significantly despite the surge in prices of basic commodities.

Since June 2001, Labog said, there have only been three minimum wage increases and only four Emergency Cost of Living Allowance (ECLA) adjustments. (www.philstar.com) ■



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Pacquiao in Minority for Mosley

by Paolo ROMERO / Thursday, April 22, 2010

MANILA, Philippines - ALTHOUGH THE LAS VEGAS BETTING ODDS OPENED WITH FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR. a 400 favorite and Sugar Shane Mosley a +300 underdog, Manny Pacquiao is adamant in choosing the fighter less likely to win in what could be the eliminator to determine his next opponent.

Mayweather and Mosley face off at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas on Sunday morning (Manila time) with the survivor expected to take on Pacquiao before the year ends.

Based on the early odds, a \$400 wager on Mayweather will earn only \$100 but a \$100 bet on Mosley will bring in \$300.

What makes Mosley a threat to Mayweather is his size. And that's the advantage Mosley insists will make the difference.

"Mayweather's been fighting guys smaller than him, now he's fighting a guy who has the same speed that he has and can do the same things he can do," said Mosley, quoted by ESPN. "There's always a fighter that can be beat. I was 38-0 with 35 KO's and I got beat. That's what so great about boxing, things happen in the ring that you just can't control, they're just destined to happen and I think something's going to happen that's destined to happen - this is my time."

Mayweather isn't buying the destiny angle. Neither is he concerned about Mosley's size. Mayweather realizes that a convincing win over Mosley will set him up for a

megabuck showdown with Pacquiao. The money on the table will convince Mayweather to forget about Olympic-style drug testing and agree to what the boxing commission requires.

Graham Houston, writing in *Boxing Monthly*, said he expects Mosley to put Mayweather under pressure and crowd him to the ropes, the way Zab Judah and Ricky Hatton were able to do and "there certainly could be anxious moments for Mayweather."

Mosley's knockout over Antonio Margarito in January last year was a more impressive showing than Mayweather's win by decision over a much smaller Juan Manuel Marquez last September. Critics said Margarito wasn't his usual self after the handwraps incident in the dressing room - his bandages were lined with a hardening substance like plaster. Margarito had to be rewrapped and was presumably bothered that a suspension was imminent, entering the ring.

Mosley, 38, has been there and done that. He beat Oscar de la Hoya twice and Fernando Vargas twice. Sugar Shane has held world titles as a lightweight, welterweight and superwelterweight. If there's anyone who can break down Mayweather's vaunted air-tight defense, it's Mosley because Sugar Shane has the size to overpower the Money Man.

In a recent *Ring Magazine* poll, 17 experts picked Mayweather to win and only two agreed with Pacquiao.

"I think Mosley has a great chance to win," said Pacquiao, quoted by Joseph Santoliquito of *The Ring Magazine*. "He's a fighter. Mayweather is a boring fighter but I think, Mayweather-Mosley will be a good fight." (www.philstar.com) ■

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PHILIPPINE NEWS

First Day of Local Absentee Voting Orderly - AFP

by Alexis ROMERO /
Thursday, April 29, 2010

MANILA, Philippines - THE FIRST DAY OF ABSENTEE VOTING FOR MEMBERS OF THE MILITARY and police voting ahead of election day on May 10 went smoothly yesterday.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) reported the first day of voting proceeded without a glitch, though only half of the more than 19,000 registered soldiers cast their ballots.

Col. Ricardo Nepomuceno, spokesman for the AFP's Task Force HOPE (Honest, Orderly and Peaceful Elections), said they expect more soldiers to cast their votes in various military camps today.

"I think it (first day of absentee voting) was smooth. We did not receive any reports about problems during the voting," Nepomuceno said.

"We do not foresee any problem in the next days," he added.

Nepomuceno estimated some 1,500 soldiers voted in the first day of the absentee voting. The local absentee voting would be held from April 28 to 30, from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Among those who voted yesterday were personnel from the naval forces of the Western Mindanao Command and the Southern Luzon Command.

Troops who are scheduled to cast their votes today are Air Force personnel assigned in Villamor Air Base in Pasay City, those in the Bonifacio Naval Station in Taguig,

and soldiers based in the Army's Fort Magsaysay in Nueva Ecija.

AFP personnel stationed in Camp Aguinaldo will cast their votes on Friday. Military camps in some provinces have yet to release a schedule as of yesterday evening.

Nepomuceno said they do not expect all registered absentee voters to vote due to the demands of their work.

"We may not hit 100 percent (turnout) but I think the turnout will be high. We asked our commanders to ensure that their troops would be able to cast their votes," he said.

Since the soldiers were allowed to vote in areas where they are not registered, they were to vote only for national positions, and by the manual system.

The Commission on Elections (Comelec) has approved a total of 19,722 absentee voters from the AFP and 1,800 from the Philippine National Police (PNP).

Military data showed that there are 958 absentee voters in the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR), 100 in Ilocos region, 486 in Cagayan Valley, 1,451 in Central Luzon, 2,128 in Bulacan, 5,100 in Southern Tagalog and the entire Visayas, 1,106 in Zamboanga Peninsula, 1,475 in Northern Mindanao, 1,041 in the Davao region, and 4,457 in SOCCSKSARGEN, Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and CARAGA region.

In Bicol, the Army's 9th Infantry Division spokesman Maj. Harold Cabunoc said at least 2,000 sol-



Soldiers line up to take part in absentee voting at the 901st Brigade headquarters in Daraga, Albay

diers were able to cast their votes.

"There are also several other designated polling places around Bicol where soldiers can cast their votes in the next three days starting today. Our coordination with Comelec authorities in the region is excellent and our soldiers are given the opportunity to exercise their right to vote," Cabunoc said.

The Comelec also declared the first day of voting as generally peaceful and orderly.

Comelec Commissioner Rene Sarmiento said reports reaching the poll body showed that the three-day voting for military officers and other government employees is going smoothly.

"So far so good. We have not receive reports of any untoward incident or complaints in areas where the voting is ongoing," Sarmiento said.

He said the Comelec is yet to receive reports on the actual number who have already voted.

PNP spokesman Chief Superintendent Leonardo Espina said Comelec has approved the application of 3,000 policemen.

Espina said 1,200 policemen

would come from Metro Manila, Southern Tagalog Region, Central Visayas, Northern Mindanao, the CAR and the ARMM.

He said the remaining 1,800 policemen are from the other regions.

Chief Inspector Roland Agohob, assigned with the PNP's Directorate for Plans in Camp Crame, was the only police official who voted.

"Everybody must go out and vote, this is the process when everyone has equal rights regardless of the status in life," Agohob remarked but refused to reveal his choice of candidates.

On the other hand, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said more than 72,000 Filipino overseas

workers have already voted under the Overseas Absentee Voting (OAV) system.

The DFA's Overseas Absentee Voting Secretariat said 72,034 registered overseas workers have voted as of yesterday.

A majority of the Filipino voters were in Hong Kong, with 21,459 ballots; followed by Riyadh with 5,897 voters; and Singapore, with 4,199 ballots.

Other foreign service posts with high number of voters were the Philippine Consulate General in Jeddah with 3,345, the Philippine Overseas Labor Office in Al Khobar at 2,545 voters, the Philippine Consulate General in Los Angeles with 2,162.

In the Middle East, the embassy in Kuwait had 2,160, the embassy in Abu Dhabi (1,682), the Consulate General in New York (1,467) and the embassy in London (1,369).

The DFA said the Philippine diplomatic offices also reported that they have surpassed the number of votes they received compared to the 2004 presidential elections and the 2007 midterm elections. (www.philstar.com) ■

MAINLAND NEWS

Placement Firm Ordered to Refund \$1.8M to Filipino Teachers

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — A BUSINESS THAT BROUGHT HUNDREDS OF FILIPINO teachers to Louisiana to work in public schools has been fined and ordered to refund placement fees that a teacher union estimates will total \$1.8 million.

An administrative law judge with the Louisiana Workforce Commission said California-based Universal Placement Inc. operated without the proper Louisiana license. Les Landon, spokesman for the Louisiana Federation of Teachers, said Friday that the union estimates about 360 teachers are affected and the placement fees averaged about \$5,000 per person.

Judge Shelly Dick, who is based in Baton Rouge, also fined the company \$500 and ordered the payment of legal fees totaling \$7,500.

Dick turned down the teachers' request that she nullify their contracts with Universal Placement, saying she lacked that authority. Also, she did not order the return of all fees collected from the teachers, such as those for helping them obtain visas and other documents needed to work in the United States.

"Scrutiny of these fees is not

within the regulatory authority of this commission," Dick wrote.

In complaints to state and federal authorities, teachers have complained of fees totaling in excess of \$10,000 in some cases.

Dick noted in the ruling that Universal Placement claimed it didn't need a Louisiana license because it operated in California, placing teachers in various states.

"UPI is splitting hairs," she wrote, going on to recount evidence of the company's extensive work in Louisiana.

A telephone call to a spokeswoman for Universal Placement was not immediately returned Friday afternoon.

The Louisiana Federation of Teachers and the American Federation of Teachers also have filed complaints with the state attorney general's office and the US Department of Labor about Universal Placement and its sister operation in the Philippines, PARS.

In the federal complaint, the union says Universal Placement and its president, Lourdes "Lulu" Navarro, arranged for one-year visas, instead of more commonly used three-year visas, and charged visa renewal fees to the teachers, not the school systems. (www.asian-journal.com) ■

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LEGAL NOTES

Eligibility Requirements for E-2 Visa



by Reuben S. SEGURITAN

Foreign nationals seeking to come to the U.S. to invest in a business enterprise may obtain an E-2 visa.

The applicant must be a national of a country with a treaty of friendship, commerce or navigation with the U.S. and must demonstrate that he/she will develop and direct the investment enterprise.

The E-2 investor may be admitted for an initial period of two years and may be granted extension in increments of not more than two years. The spouse and minor

children may join as dependents. The spouse but not the children may obtain employment authorization. The children may attend school.

There is no fixed dollar amount of investment required but the applicant must be able to show that it is substantial. It must not be an investment solely for the purpose of earning a living for the investor and his/her family.

Investments as defined by the regulations must pertain to funds or assets placed at the disposal of the business with the objective of making a profit and subject to a risk of loss incident to the business operations.

The E-2 applicant must be able to show that he/she possesses and controls the capital funds invested or being invested. The source of the funds need not be outside the U.S. as long as these were received through legitimate means. It can be received through a legacy, gift, savings, or

inheritance from a U.S. source. However, while the capital funds can be inherited, an already operating business could not be inherited to be a considered a valid investment under E-2.

The substantial capital funds required must meet the proportionality test. This means that the amount of capital is substantial in relation to the cost of purchasing or creating the business. It must be of such amount to support the likelihood that the investor will successfully develop and direct the enterprise.

The funds must be irrevocably committed to the business or enterprise and subject to the risks of conducting business in the U.S. whether it would result in profit or loss, either partial or total. The debt cannot be secured by the assets of the business itself but may be secured by the personal assets of the alien investor to be considered as qualifying investments.

Since the capital funds re-

quired are substantial, there may be issues on how to meet sufficient investment requirements to qualify for an E-2 treaty investor visa.

The original owner of the funds may be a U.S. citizen or green card holder and may give or lend money to a person or corporation holding treaty nationality so that this person or entity can qualify as an E2 investor. The E-2 investor then may also be eligible to bring in E-2 employees.

Two individuals wanting to invest in the same business but individually do not have enough funds to meet the substantiality requirement may also pool together their funds in that same business with one being the principal investor while the other just a donor or

lender of the funds. Once qualified for E-2 visa, the principal E-2 investor may bring in the other as an E-2 employee.

Several investors may also pool together their funds and invest in a holding corporation for the purpose of investing and conducting business in the U.S. The holding corporation which should have treaty nationality shall act as the principal investor to be eligible for E-2 classification. Once qualified as E-2 investor, it can then petition some or all of the shareholders as E-2 employees. ■

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

MAINLAND NEWS

MoneyGram Intl Expands to 40K Agent Locations in U.S.

MONEYGRAM INTERNATIONAL, a leading global money transfer company, has expanded its global money transfer services in the U.S. under a program with Smart Communications.

The expansion allows anyone to transfer money from the U.S. to any Smart mobile phone in the Philippines through MoneyGram's 40,000 agent locations in the U.S. Moziido, a leading mobile technology provider, supplies the transaction services to link MoneyGram's services to Smart mobile phones.

MoneyGram joined forces with SMART Communications, Inc. in December 2009 and launched the pilot phase of its MoneyGram mobile money transfer services to deliver funds from a MoneyGram agent location direct to any SMART Money account.

"Our entry into mobile money transfers with SMART was well received by our consumers and we are continuing our expansion plans to link SMART Money users with MoneyGram's agent locations around the world," says Dan O'Malley, MoneyGram's executive vice president for the Americas. "Filipinos around the world continue to look for opportunities to meet their financial needs. Our



"MoneyGram and SMART Communications officials meet to sign global agreement. (From left): Anna Marie A. Cruz and Jojo Malolos of SMART, and MoneyGram's Nick Carneve and Paul Thomas."

goal is to provide these workers with the most affordable, reliable and convenient money transfer services, which includes sending funds direct to mobile accounts."

Mobile technology has expanding the possibilities for money transfer transactions and opening new markets for MoneyGram's services, which are especially helpful in developing countries like the Philippines where agent locations are difficult to establish. MoneyGram has targeted several of these countries for on-going expansion in mobile services.

Consumers generally keep their mobile phone within arms reach 24 hours a day, making it an ideal platform for convenient money transfer services.

Currently, MoneyGram is in discussions with several mobile operators to introduce mobile programs in other regions around the world. The company is continuing its global roll-out of its mobile service to more agent locations, with countries in Africa, the Caribbean and Middle East among the locations expected to launch the service next. ■



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PHILIPPINE LANGUAGE

Anak ti I-Daya Ilocos Sur Province



ILOKO

by Amado I. YORO

Diak ininggaan aginggana a diak natuntunan no ania daytoy a grupo, ken no asino tidagil dagdaulo.

"Dakami dagiti laga-I-daya, iti probinsia ti Ilocos Sur," insungbat kadakami ni Armie Teofilo, isu gayam ti Recording Secretary daytoy a grupo. "Annak ti I-Daya are people who lived or those residents in the villages/barangay or municipalities in the eastbound direction

from the national highway along the second district of Ilocos Sur," inyan ni Armie. Sakupen daytoy ti Alilem, Banayoyo, Burgos, Cervantes, Galimuyod, Gregorio del Pilar, Lididda, Nagbukel, Quirino, Salcedo, San Emilio, Sigay, Sugpon, Suyo.

"Inrugimi nga ininaw ken biuangay idi kasapana a paset ti Enero 2007," kinuna ni Teodoro [Ted] Langas, presidente, tubo iti Candon ken kameng ti Candonians of Hawaii, umuna a presidente ti Annak ti I-Daya. "Kangrunana a pangpempem ti mamagliton kadagiti kakabsat nga iday probinsiatayo, kastay la dagiti kameng iti minoridad. Adda latta nganem ti makuna a 'rikna dagiti laga daya' gapu iti ugali ti sagpat isu a napamanotni daytoy."

Naammuanmi ken ni Langas a pinadas kano met idi a buken ni

Ambassador Benjamin Domingo [tubo ti Honolulu] kabayatan a kaaddana iti Saledulo kas konsul, ngem kasla awan ti lapagay a nakageg ken nakurang ti essem dagiti masaknen kadagidi a panawen.

"Kinaitnakami ti maysa a kallianami bimmisita ti Hawaii idi Disiembre 2006 a kapangge ti selesbrasion ti sentenaria a nagkunaan daytoy nangato met a pannakabagi ti ili: "Dakayo met laengen ket ti awan ti gunlonga."

Dagiti imuna nga opisiales ti Annak ti I-Daya, da: Teodoro Langas, presidente, John Mangay-ayam, bise presidente, Estrella Taylan recording secretary, Miriam Langas, corresponding secretary, John Gulamba, Jr., tesorero; Armie Teofilo, asst treasurer. Cora Lestino, auditor.

Andrew Abad, Brendo Arre,

Lianing Galanto, Leonardo Pangayan, peace officers. Mamgbaga da Benny

Dagiti agdama nga opisial kas kada:

Teodoro [Ted] Langas, presidente; John Mangay-ayam, bise presidente, Armie Teofilo, recording secretary; Miriam Langas, corresponding secretary; Irene Gulamba, assistant corresponding secretary; John Gulamba, Jr., tesorero, Lita Cagdan, assistant treasurer, Grace Rous, auditor.

Brendo Arre, Andrew Abad, Leonardo Pangayan, Aurelio Lestino, peace officers.

Rev. Rona Mangay-ayam, Benny Arre, Edwin Wangit, mamagbaga.

Ni Atty Alex Sonson ti legal adviser ken isu pay ti namagsapata kadakuada idi Disiembre 12, 2009 ti

Oahu Veterans Center iti Foster Village, Salt Lake, kas paset ti selesbrasion ti paskua nga inangay ti gunlo.

Aganay a pitopulo ket lima dagiti kameng daytoy agtallo a lawanna a grupo dagiti I-daya. Panggep ti gunlo ti mamaginsingling, agpismaranay, ken mamaglaning ti panagkakabsatda ayaw no addadan iti sabali a daga - maiakdua a lugar a nagpaupen ken nakayanakanda. Matalagin ti kultura ken kababalin nga intugotda difoy.

Aw-awisenda dagiti kakabsat ken kalugaranda nga agindengen difoy Hawaii a tumpon itoy a gunlo ANNAN TI I-DAYA tapno ad-adda pay a mapatagaldan iti panag-inangay iti panagkaykaysa ken pangpismaranay dagiti agkakadaraan kas makipagindengen ti Hawaii. ■

MAINLAND NEWS

Washington Deputy Mayor a Filipina

by Jose KATICBAK / Saturday, April 24, 2010

WASHINGTON - VALERIE SANTOS IS A FILIPINA IN A HURRY.

She wants to make a difference as Washington's deputy mayor for planning and economic development and frets there are not enough hours in a day to get things done to bring growth and prosperity to the district.

Appointed in June 2009, she is one of the most visible and highest ranking Filipino Americans in public office.

Santos, 36, is responsible for implementing Mayor Adrian Fenty's economic development vision and managing a development pipeline worth more than \$13 billion covering public-private housing, retail,

office and parks projects throughout the district.

It's a big job and she describes it variously as exhilarating, exciting, humbling and, for some perverse reason, fun.

In an interview with The STAR, she said her father Dante Santos was the eldest of nine children, all of whom grew up in a one-bedroom apartment in Pasig with their parents.

The Santoses had a small 10 x 10 ft. shop in a local market which sold sewing, quilting and embroidery supplies, buttons and clasps and threads.

"My grandparents raised the family in a sewing notions store in a local *palengke* (market)," she said. "That's how they put their children to school."



She said her father, originally from Bulacan, emigrated to the United States in the 1960s after college in search of a better life and received his MBA at Santa Clara University in California.

Her mother Milagros was born and raised in Zambanga, the eldest of five children. She also emigrated to the US in the 1960s, first to Cincinnati and later to California.

"Among the things I learned from my parents is the value of education and hard work," Santos said.

Like many Filipinos who come to America, she said her parents worked hard to be able to send money home to help their families.

Her mother paid for the education of several of her siblings.

"She put off her life and didn't get married until she was 40 to be able to help her family," she said.

Valerie, born and raised in San Francisco, is an only child.

She is a graduate of Santa Clara University and earned her MBA at Harvard Business School and a Masters in Public Policy at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government.

After finishing college in 1994 at the age of 20 she went to the Philippines for one year to get to know the rest of her family - she has 22 first cousins on her father's side and 15 first cousins on her mother's

side - and to give back to the community.

She joined the Jesuit Volunteers Philippines (JVP) Foundation, Inc., a volunteer organization that sends fresh graduates and young professionals to under-resourced communities nationwide for one year.

Volunteers are prepared and assisted by the foundation in developing the skills necessary to address basic community needs whether as teachers, campus ministers, parish or community development workers.

Santos was sent to Ateneo de Zambanga where she taught three classes of freshmen English and one class of senior literature. She lived in a dorm and received a stipend equivalent to \$120 a month.

"I have always been passionate about public service and about using my many privileges in life, whether they be the privilege of education or the privilege of being born in the US to help people," she said.

Prior to becoming deputy mayor, Santos served as the Planning and Economic Development Office's chief operating officer. Before joining the district government she worked with real estate groups where she specialized in urban public-private development.

According to the official District of Columbia website, the Office of the Deputy Mayor is charged with bringing federal, nonprofit and private and community partners together to expand the district's economic base, attract and retain businesses, bring good-paying jobs for residents and promote the city as a competitive, welcoming place to do business.

"The scope of what I do is what gets me excited - developing affordable housing for people, looking to improve our waterfront, finding

more jobs for our work force - there is such a breath of issues and diversity across the city that we have an opportunity to touch all aspects of life while advancing the mayor's core mission of increasing tax revenue and promoting growth," she said.

Santos visits the Philippines regularly.

"It was there in 2003 and 2006 and it's definitely time to pay a visit again," she said.

Her paternal grandmother, Luminada or Lola Luming as she calls her, still lives in Pasig on Lopez Jaena street.

Santos speaks emotionally of the sacrifices her grandparents and parents went through to improve the lot of the family and says that "even when I am having the worst possible day, I know how fortunate I am compared with those who came before me."

"People tell me it's exciting to see a Filipino-American doing well because of hard work and all that. I feel honored but don't consciously try to see myself as a role model," she said.

It is unfortunate Filipinos have to go overseas to make their mark because "with so much energy and intellect in the Philippines all one needs there is a chance," she said.

Asked what her normal day was like, she replied, "I don't know if I have one. I typically work 14 hours a day and I find the work fun."

"But I do make time for friends, for other things that are important to me."

She relaxes by reading, spending time with friends and cooking for them and hanging out with her dog and her cat. She says she is a good cook but cooks Filipino food only when her parents visit her.

With White House executive chief Cristeta Comerford and Deputy Mayor Valerie Santos leading the way, Filipinas are making inroads in the capital city of the world's only superpower. (www.phistar.com) ■

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

2010 FILIPINO FIESTA'S "LAKBAY KULTURA" / SATURDAY
 May 8, 2010 • Kapiolani Park • 8 am - 5 pm
 • For more information and reservations (parade, booth and food vendors), please call the FilCom Center at 680-0451

COMMUNITY HEALTH FAIR / SATURDAY
 May 8, 2010 • Kapiolani Park • 9am-5pm
 • For further information, call JP Orias @ 387-8297

MS. UNITED PANGASINAN OF HAWAII (UPH) 2010 CORONATION, DINNER, AND DANCE / SATURDAY
 May 22, 2010 • Pacific Beach Hotel (Grand Ballroom), Waikiki Beach, Honolulu

olulu, HI • 5:30pm-MN • For further information, call Cely Villareal @ (808) 689-4911 or (808) 778-2481

LITTLE MISS PHILIPPINES HAWAII BY PHIL. CULTURAL FOUNDATION OF HAWAII / SATURDAY

May 29, 2010 • Empress Restaurant • 6:30pm-MN • Call Janice Sevilla at 959-8000, Maggie Domingo at 783-0068

MISS OAHU FILIPINA SCHOLARSHIP PAGEANT / FRIDAY
 June 4, 2010 • Hawaii Prince Hotel Maunakea Ballroom • 7 pm • Please call Danny Villaruz at 778-0233, Mario Palma at 397-8626

UNITED FILIPINO COUNCIL OF HAWAII'S 21ST ANNUAL MRS. HAWAII FILIPINA SCHOLARSHIP PAGEANT / SUNDAY

June 20, 2010 • Hawaii Prince Hotel Maunakea Ballroom • To enter please call Eddie Agas, Sr. at 783-2237, Carlota Ader at 450-9821; Cleo Bala-Casino at 218-9072

UFCF GOLF TOURNAMENT / THURSDAY
 June 24, 2010 • Kapolei Golf Course • 7 pm • Please Call Eddie Agas at 783-3327

GLOBAL NEWS

RP Sends 2nd Batch of Peacekeepers to Golan Heights

MANILA, Philippines (Xinhua) — **THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES TODAY** sent another batch of peacekeepers to Golan Heights, Syria.

During the send-off ceremony held at the headquarters of the 1st Air Division in Clark Air Base, Armed Forces Chief Gen. Defini Bangit told the 326 officers and men, led by Col. Alexis Gopico, that the military has strengthened anew its commitment to the cause of peace and international solidarity by sending its 2nd Philippine Contingent to Golan Heights-United Nations Disengagement Ob-

servers Force (UNDOF).

"Our qualities as Filipino soldiers, discipline and professionalism, make us rise above challenges. It is always hard to be apart from our families, but as soldiers we have duties to fulfill," the military chief said.

Bangit expressed confidence that the new batch peacekeepers will again bring pride and honor to the country. The batch will replace the first group of peacekeepers, composed of 333 officers and men, sent by the Philippines to Golan Heights last November.

The peacekeepers are serving under the United Nations Disengagement-



ment Observer Force. The UNDOF was established in 1974 to maintain order in Syria after the engagement of Israeli and Syrian forces.

Authorities deemed it necessary to put in observer force to maintain the disengagement of Syrian and Israeli forces and to supervise the areas of separation and limitation between the two territories. (www.philstar.com) ■

RP Labor Deployment to Middle East to Increase

by Paolo ROMERO / Thursday, April 29, 2010

MANILA, Philippines (Xinhua) — **LABOR SECRETARY MARIANITO ROQUE** said today that Philippine labor deployment to certain countries in the Middle East will continue to increase.

Roque, who made the statement in a press briefing, just arrived that day from

Qatar where he met with all the Philippine labor attaches in the Middle East to assess the country's performance in terms of employment and protection its migrant workers, and devise a strategy to ensure continue workers' protection.

"It will still remain in an increasing level," Roque said, when asked about the workers' deployment to the Middle East.

He said that based on the report of the labor attaches, there is "continuous increase in the number of Filipinos working

in Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Kuwait."

"We looked at prospects and potentials and it looks like it is still these same countries that will have the big jump as far as availability of alternative employment is concerned. The others remain in the positive Oman, Bahrain but only a small percentage of increases," Roque said.

The Philippines has over eight million overseas workers, mostly concentrated in the Middle East, Southeast Asia, North America and Europe. (www.philstar.com) ■

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