

# HAWAII FILIPINO CHRONICLE

HAWAII'S #1 FILIPINO NEWSPAPER

◆ WEEKLY ◆ NOVEMBER 7, 2009 ◆

## THE LEGACY OF FILIPINOS IN AMERICA'S MILITARY

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Photo by Eric Lachica



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**EDITORIAL**

**Filipinos' Proud History of Military Service**

**M**inority groups have fought in all of our nation's major armed conflicts, beginning with the Revolutionary War when some 5,000 African-Americans served in the Continental Army. During World War I, some 200,000 Hispanic soldiers joined the U.S. military along with 400,000 African-Americans—the majority of whom were assigned to service and supply duties. As for World War II, we all know the exploits of Japanese-Americans who served in the 442nd Regiment which was the nation's most highly decorated military unit ever. Their ranks included 21 Medal of Honor recipients.

Filipinos too can claim a place in the annals of U.S. military history. During World War II, then U.S. President Roosevelt conscripted members of the Philippine Army into the U.S. military to fight Japan. By the end of the war, over 400,000 Filipinos had fought under Gen. Douglas MacArthur, including 60,000 alone in the Bataan death march. These veterans have only recently received long overdue recognition and benefits for their military service. Thankfully, a terrible wrong has been made right and the nation's historical record set straight.

In today's military, Filipinos continue to play an integral role. A handful has climbed up the ranks to hold top leadership positions. No less important are the many who serve as field grade officers and senior non-commissioned officers to the best of their abilities. Some of them have even made the ultimate sacrifice for their country.

So after two centuries of national history, Filipinos can stand proudly alongside other minority groups as full and equal partners in defending this great nation. On Veteran's Day, let's remember our Filipino veterans, past and present and let their memories inspire us. As a minority group, identifying with our nation's history will foster greater assimilation and participation in common goals that promote good citizenship and civic involvement.

**Balancing the State's Budget Deficit**

**P**ublic school educators, students and families are continuing to cope with weekly furloughs that are expected to save about \$380 million over a two-year period. That's the good financial news. The bad news is that there's still a deficit of some \$620 million to contend with. The deficit could worsen if state revenue collections continue to fall. In fact, the Lingle administration projects a budget shortfall of nearly \$1 billion through June 2011.

Hawaii's economy and monstrous state deficit will again take center stage when the Legislature convenes in January 2010. So far, the burden of balancing the state budget has fallen on the backs of educators, labor unions and yes, even our children. This next go-around, more people will have to bite the bullet if we are to survive this fiscal crisis.

The fairest and most equitable solution is a combination of modest tax increases, more cuts to public services and programs, using federal stimulus and other special funds and even short-term solutions like dipping into the Hurricane Relief Fund or rainy day fund. Gov. Lingle has staunchly opposed any increase in the general excise tax and with 2010 being an election year, passing any tax increase will be difficult. Still, she and other legislative leaders should keep an open mind. Example also another strong push by advocates for legalized gambling or the creation of a state lottery system.

The bottom line is that it will take courageous leadership to cut the fat from the state's bloated government bureaucracy, much less solve the state's budget crisis, but it is exactly what our elected leaders are paid to do. Let's hope that in crunch time, they will have the political will and courage to do so.

**FROM THE PUBLISHER**



loha and welcome to the latest issue of the Hawaii Filipino Chronicle! Can you believe that it's already November? With Halloween behind us, we are now entering the home stretch. Thanksgiving is in a few short weeks and then the Christmas Yuletide Season—everyone's favorite time of the year!



Speaking of Thanksgiving, a big mahalo to all of you who have given generously from your hearts and pocketbooks to the typhoon victims in the Philippines. Thanks to the hard work of a few dedicated volunteers, Hawaii's Filipinos in just three short weeks have raised over \$130,000 and counting for these victims! If you want to donate but have questions, please read page 5 for more information as well as for the latest update on the relief efforts.

Our cover story for this issue is entitled "Uncommon Valor: The Legacy of Filipinos in America's Military." Written by Danny de Gracia, II, the article takes an in-depth look at the contributions Filipinos have made while serving in the U.S. military. We hope you will enjoy reading Danny's article and feel a sense of pride in the sacrifices Filipino servicemen and women—both past and present—have made in defending this great country. His article is quite timely, especially with Veteran's Day on November 11th. Originally intended to honor veterans of World War I, Veteran's Day is now set aside to thank all military personnel for serving our country in times of war and peace.

Also in this issue, Danny has also written an "Open Forum" article on the problems a devalued U.S. dollar would mean to Filipinos. He states that the fall of the dollar is exactly what the United Nations and the International Monetary Fund want, since both organizations have envisioned the creation of a central world bank and a new universal reserve currency. He urges Filipinos everywhere to demand an audit of the Federal Reserve, which has never been audited in its entire history, and to take back monetary power from the Fed. Please read more on page 3 and see whether or not you agree with his statements.

In closing, we hope that you will enjoy reading the many timely and informative articles and columns in this issue, particularly "Immigration Guide" on page 7, updates on Honolulu's fixed rail project and the Filipino Chamber of Commerce trade mission to the Philippines on page 10, "Family Corner" on page 12 and "Legal Notes" on page 13.

Until next time...*aloha and mabuhay!*

*Charla A. Montesines-Sontido*

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The Hawaii Filipino Chronicle is published weekly by The Hawaii Filipino Chronicle, Inc. It is mailed directly to subscribers and distributed at various outlets around Oahu and the neighbor islands. Editorial and advertising deadlines are three weeks prior to publication date. Subscriptions are available at \$75 per year for Oahu and the neighbor islands, continental U.S. \$80, foreign country \$90. Copyright 2006. The Hawaii Filipino Chronicle, Inc. is located at 94-356 Waipahu Depot, Waipahu, HI 96797. Telephone (808) 678-9000 Facsimile (808) 678-1629. E-mail: filipinochronicle@gmail.com. Website: www.thelifilipinochronicle.com. Opinions expressed by the columnists and contributors do not necessarily reflect those of the Hawaii Filipino Chronicle management. Reproduction of the contents in whole or in part is prohibited without written permission from the management. All rights reserved. Printed in the U.S.A.

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OPEN FORUM

# Greatest Depression? Not If Filipinos Stop It!

By Danny de Gracia, II

**T**he economic crisis has brought into the public vernacular a host of new terms and clichés: central liquidity swaps, bailouts, recovery plan, spend out of debt, stimulus package, too big to fail, and more. Reading most local newspapers and attending various Hawaii conferences on the economy, one would be led to believe that somehow, our economy will go back to normal and unemployment will fall. In February 2009, the White House projected that 15,000 new jobs would be created in Hawaii and some 3.4 million jobs would be created for the United States as a result of the lauded stimulus package which spent billions on big government projects across the nation. Much to our surprise, Hawaii has lost an estimated 17,000 jobs this year alone, and some 2.7 million jobs have been lost across the United States. The stimulus package is not working. But why?

I would encourage fellow

Hawaii Filipinos to direct their attention to the U.S. Federal Reserve. Over the last thirteen years, the Fed doubled cash currency and reserves. On the other hand, immediately after the collapse of Lehman Brothers, in the span of just 112 days, the Fed doubled the reserves yet again, accelerating the rate of bank reserve expansion by a factor of 45 to 1. The dollar, in short, is rapidly being devalued by the Fed's monetary policy.

A devalued dollar means terrible problems for Filipinos. Not only does this destroy our purchasing and investing power, but the fall of the dollar is being anxiously sought by the United Nations and the International Monetary Fund as a pretext for creating a central world bank and a new universal reserve currency based on IMF SDRs, or Special Drawing Rights. When the new reserve currency and central world bank is created, someone who has \$100,000 dollars in the bank could be no better off than someone who has \$10 in the bank as the nations of the world dump the dollar in favor



of the new currency. Forget the Great Depression; when the dollar falls, we will be in the Greatest Depression. This is completely unacceptable.

Many Filipinos came to America because they sought the freedom that earning wages in dollars would bring. But now, the Fed's policies are bringing to no effect what we have come here for. We must not allow this to happen. I encourage Filipinos to demand an audit of the Federal Reserve that we may hit the brakes on the total annihilation of our economy. There is nothing "Federal" about the Federal Reserve – it is a public-private partnership between private

banks and the U.S. Government, and at present, the Federal Reserve Act of 1913 has created a regime where even the Central Intelligence Agency has more transparency on what it does with taxpayer money than what the Fed does with the dollar. In truth, the Fed serves to provide 100% profit for the investments of its incorporated private banks and no loss whatsoever, because any losses are simply absorbed by you and me, the taxpayers – as proven by the bailouts which followed the derivatives crisis. Not once in its entire history has the Fed ever been audited, nor have its actions ever been brought to public re-

view. This is a travesty and it is the greatest threat to our freedom that we face.

Filipino freedom is tied to finances. Without control of our finances, we have no freedom, no matter who is in office, no matter what party rules, no matter what race populates the positions of leadership. Until we audit the Fed and take back monetary power from the Fed, we will be on a collision course for a future where the division between have and have not is extreme and our hard work is rewarded with tyranny and tears. Jose Rizal said, "There can be no tyranny where there are no slaves." Filipinos, arise!

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# Uncommon Valor: The Legacy of Filipinos in America's Military

By Danny de Gracia, II

**E**lmer Davis, a renowned journalist and America's Office of War Information Director during the Second World War said "This nation will remain the land of the free, so long as it is the home of the brave."

For slightly more than a century, Filipinos participated in the U.S. military and fought or participated in every major conflict since the First World War. Today, Americans of Filipino descent form an integral part of the national defense of the U.S. at home and the protection of its interests abroad.

Service in the armed forces is an opportunity for many Filipinos to rise from out of their humble beginnings. It has also paved the way for future generations of all ethnic backgrounds to live under the

banner of freedom.

## Early Beginnings and Postwar Inequity

As early as the First World War, Filipinos recruited into the U.S. military served both in the insular force of the Philippine Islands and in various assignments around the world, first as stewards, later expanding to include combat roles during the Second World War. Perhaps the greatest number of Filipinos serving in the U.S. military at any given time was during WWII, with an estimated 200,000 in the serv-

ices as well as the Philippine Scouts and Commonwealth Army.

While the previous regime of laws permitted foreigners serving a minimum of three years on active duty to receive identical benefits to American-born servicemen, passage of the Rescission Act of 1946 by the 79th U.S. Congress later revoked recognition specifically of Commonwealth and anti-occupation guerrilla forces as being deemed active members of the U.S. military, thus precluding them from being con-



ferred the same "rights, privileges, or benefits upon any person by reason of the service of such person or the service of any other person in the Armed Forces" (Title 38 USC, Section 107).

Since 1993, legislation has been introduced to grant the Philippine forces under U.S. command equal status with citizen U.S. veterans and foreigners in U.S. military service under the provisions of the Nationality Act of 1940, but as yet equality legislation has not been ratified, aside from a rider clause inserted into the 2009 stimulus bill which appropriated a one-time payout of \$9,000 to Filipino non-U.S. citizen veterans and \$15,000 to citizen veterans.

## From the Cold War to the Global War On Terrorism

While many assume that the story of Filipinos in American service ended with the conclusion of WWII, the rise of the

Filipino in the ranks of the U.S. military grew even greater in the decades that followed. On July 26, 1948, President Truman issued Executive Order 9881 which desegregated the U.S. military. Like other persons of color, Filipinos would no longer be restricted to serving only in ancillary capacities but could now pursue a wide field of roles and more importantly, advance to positions of leadership.

In 2000, Eleanor Mariano became the first Filipina to attain the rank of Rear Admiral in the U.S. Navy. Edward Soriano, the son of a corporal in the Philippine Scouts, would be promoted to the rank of Lieutenant General, placing him as the first and only person of Filipino descent to attain the second highest rank in the U.S. military.

While the numbers of Filipino-American admirals and generals are few, there are many others who have attained distinction as field grade officers



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## COVER STORY



Lance Corporal Jess Losa

re tremendous amount of sacrifice and courage that has to be shed. It makes me feel grieved in a way because my sacrifice and courage come naturally."

Losa, 20, represents the future of Filipino-American service. For

and senior non-commissioned officers in the enlisted corps of all services, and their gallantry in combat has been every bit as distinguished as any. In 2005, U.S. Army Sgt. Myla Maravillosa, a local Filipina from Wahiawa, Hawaii was killed when her convoy was ambushed in a rocket attack. She was posthumously awarded the Purple Heart, Meritorious Service Medal and Bronze Star.

Last week, Lance Corporal Jess Losa, a California-born Filipino-American stationed at Kaneohe MCBHI, returned with his fellow Marines from deployment to Iraq and spoke proudly of his service to America.

"What I like most about being a marine is simply just that, being a marine," says Losa, who joined the military for the challenges, benefits and adventure. "Not a lot of people can hold the distinction of being called a marine because of the

Hawaii Filipinos who are in their junior or senior year of high school and are considering joining the military. Losa encouraged them to rise to their passions and not to shrink from service.

"Be decisive," Losa says. "This means there has to be passion on your behalf. When I decided to join the Marines, not once did I hesitate to sign my contract, because it felt just right."

Honolulu City Councilman Charles Djou, who represents the 4th Council District and is also a Captain in the U.S. Army Reserve, had warm comments for servicemen and women like Jess Losa.

"Hawaii's Filipino community has a rich and proud tradition of military duty and honorable service to our nation," Djou says. "It has been my honor to have been both under the command of and (to

have) commanded Filipino-American troops in the Army."

With many Hawaii Filipinos deployed abroad, Djou also recognized the impact on their families left behind.

"The public often does not see or understand that mobilization to a war zone is often almost as difficult for the family members who stay home as it is for [those] who deploy. All too often we take our freedoms for granted in America, but we are still able to enjoy our liberty because of a soldier, sailor, airman, or marine," he says.

State Representative and House Minority Leader Lynn Finnegan is the granddaughter of a Philippine guerrilla who was killed in Cagayan and grandniece of a Commonwealth soldier who survived the Bataan Death March during WWII. Finnegan's military heritage also includes the distinction of a father and all of her brothers having served in America's military.

"I have tremendous respect for anyone considering U.S. military service," Finnegan says. "The service and sacrifice is huge."

Vice Speaker of the State House Michael Magaoo believes that the legacy of Filipino veterans is one that must not be forgotten but duplicated by future generations.

"It's about time that we honor the Filipino veterans but



likewise not forget our current struggles for freedom, both at home and abroad. That's why I salute them. We need to look back and honor the men who picked up a rifle or machete without any compulsion and decided to fight tyranny and oppression," he says.

When asked what he thought about whether or not young people in high school should consider military service, Rep. Magaoo said that societal and technological changes made convincing young people to pursue the life of a soldier more challenging, but that young people should look back to the example of America's veterans who chose sacrifice over self.

"Don't just join for benefits, fight for freedom and find a purpose to serve the community and the nation," Magaoo says.

Persons of Filipino descent will continue to play a major

role in America's military as the fight against terrorism continues, but perhaps the greatest battle is not the war abroad, but the struggle at home to preserve America as a land of opportunity, liberty and equality for all.

The poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote, "Humanity with all its fears, with all the hopes of future years, is hanging breathless on its fate." The world's hopes rest with America's future, but America's future, fellow Filipinos, rest with us. Let us who remain on the home front commit, therefore, to making and keeping these United States of America a nation worth defending.

**Editor's note:** DANNY DE GRACIA is the son of retired U.S. Air Force Colonel Daniel P. de Gracia. Sr. Over the last century, a person from every generation of his family to date has served on military duty since the earliest days of Filipino enlistment in America's armed services.

## HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

## Philippine Typhoon Relief Fund Drive Raises \$130,000

In three short weeks, the Philippine typhoon relief fund drive netted over \$130,000, according to officials from the Fil-Com Center.

The relief effort was organized by an ad hoc committee comprised of members from several major Filipino community organizations, in collaboration with the Fil-Com Center and the Philippine Consulate General.

The final push for the Philippine typhoon relief fund drive was held October 25, 2009 at the Fil-Com Center.

The event started with an ecumenical service celebrated by Fr. Dan MacNichols and the Rev. Alex Vergara, with the assistance of Deacon Ernest Libarios and the Philippine Consulate General choir led by Consul General Leoncio Cardenas Jr. After the service, Consul General Cardenas and



Fil-Com Center president Toy Arre thanked the community for its support.

Certificates of appreciation were then awarded to all participating organizations by Jun Colmenares, chair of the ad hoc committee. A live telethon was aired on radio station KNDI by Tony

Sagayadoro until 4 p.m. The day's fund drive was highlighted by a single donation of \$10,000 from the Nan Shin Foundation.

A final count of the total amount collected is not yet available since Fil-Com Center officials are still awaiting official bank deposit records.

The estimated amount is \$130,000—including donations from neighbor island organizations and a recent \$5,000 donation from Kyo-Ya Corporation. The amount does not include donations from Golden Coin Restaurant and Hawaiian Airlines which are expected by the first week of November.

Much of the \$130,000 has already been sent to the Philippines, including the initial donation of \$40,000. A second donation of \$60,000 was recently sent to coincide

with a trade mission sponsored by the Filipino Chamber of Commerce. The third and final round of donations will be sent as soon as all monies have been collected.

The donations will be used in relief efforts for victims in areas devastated by typhoons Ondoy and Pepeng, including the provinces of central and northern Luzon. For more information on how to donate, please call Toy Arre at 680-0451 or Jun Colmenares at 510-734-4491.

**Caritas brings relief to Urdaneta for Pepeng victims**

Earlier this month, with the help of Land Transportation Office and various donors including the people of Hawaii, Caritas brought relief efforts to the victims of typhoon Pepeng in Urdaneta, one of the worst hit areas of the Philippines.

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## LEGISLATIVE CONNECTION



By Senator Will Espero

## The Food Chain

between the private and public sectors.

The in-state market for farmers needs private sector support. Health safety standards require that foods be chilled at certain temperatures while transported to prevent bacterial growth. Young Brothers has chilled cargo service by barge, but having it by air gets food to interisland markets faster. Let's hope that one of our in-state airlines consider and can feasibly offer this service to increase the in-state market for our farmers.

Out of state promotion would help as well. We have a wealth and wide range of products – teas, coffees, herbs, lettuce, fruits, vegetables, avocados, tomatoes, cheeses, and many, many more. Our year-long summer gives us favorable growing conditions. We should try to find grocers and food processing companies both domestic and foreign who would be interested in carrying our agricultural products in their stores or including them as ingredients in their food products.

A food processing plant or two would help, too. Sam Choy may be a famous local chef, but the salad dressings that bear his name are processed in California for lack of a food processing plant in Hawaii. The Executive Branch should try to recruit food processing businesses to invest here, to produce food products using the flavorful vegetables,

fruits, and herbs grown on our island soil. Why is this important? Farmers can only sell in grocery stores what satisfies grade requirements. Vegetables and fruits that literally don't make the grade – too long, too short, not the right color, etc. -- cannot be sold retail, and that can add up to a lot of waste of perfectly edible food and loss to the farmer.

Off-grade produce still possess the same delicious flavor as grade food but don't look as pretty or uniform. On the mainland, off-grade produce get channeled into food products such as soups, salsas, sauces, stews, frozen dinners, and other yummy products we gladly buy. It would help farmers with profitability to have an avenue for selling their off-grade produce. The food processing plant, moreover, is an employer. The plant would provide jobs to residents. There is no denying that our volcanic soil gives our onions, lettuce, avocados, fruit, teas, coffee, herbs, and other food products the fabulous flavor it has. Think of the terrific salad dressings, salsas, and so on that Hawaii could sell. Being able to expand Hawaii's food product line can help strengthen our economy by offering a more diverse range of products and keep people employed.

Then there's the waste issue for those parts of food products that can't be eaten, what's called biomass. Instead of stuffing it into landfills, the throwaways can be diverted and processed by anaerobic digesters to produce biogas that

then can be used to generate electricity. Gas digesters have long been used in Europe to deal with the land scarcity issue, by extending landfill life through diverting waste away from landfills. Gas digesters (anaerobic digesters) take greenwaste and turn it in to methane gas and compost for soil improvement. There are more than 85 of these facilities throughout Europe and many others planned.

Even China has long used gas digestion, and is planning on expanding its use. China set a target of 18.5% biomass by 2010, as a source of renewable energy. The biomass includes food waste, agricultural waste, industry, municipal solid waste, sewage sludge, animal manure, and the like. Nine plants are being planned for Beijing using restaurant throw-aways, animal waste, and municipal waste. Other large-scale biowaste plants are currently under consideration in several regions in China.

Homegrown / small scale urban household biogas digesters have been in use in southern China for about a hundred years. The first biogas company opened in Shanghai in 1932. About 10% of the rural population, by 2005, was producing biogas for their cooking and lighting needs, giving these areas a degree of independence from central energy supply systems. Using biowaste to generate electricity also resolves water and soil pollution problems for that area. These advantages give motivation for further development under China's national plan. Since 2001, 4,000 middle- and large-scale biogas

plants for electricity production were built mainly at pig, chicken and cattle farms. Other industries, such as sugar or alcohol production, can use its waste to generate electricity. The distillery in Henan supplies 20,000 households with biogas.

Waianae coast and Windward residents know all too well about landfills. Extrapolating from City & County statistics and UH estimates, the amount of food and landscape waste could be around 1000 tons a day. There are also nine wastewater treatment plants on Oahu. Instead of spending money to ship our trash overseas, the City and County would do well to invest in anaerobic digestion facilities that can supply enough power to operate the wastewater treatment plants and send the excess electricity into the grid. The long-run benefits are local supplies of electricity, extended landfill life, job creation, and reduction of dependence on foreign oil.

When we use local supplies of stock for electricity generation, we can keep part of that exported \$7 billion in-state, circulating through our local businesses and keeping our economy healthy. Locally generated electricity reduces losses through transmission lines, for greater efficiency of distributing power. Wisconsin and other states have gas digester facilities. The City of Los Angeles is constructing a facility following a successful, small-scale pilot project that used food waste from airport concessionaires.

The food chain – more than just a biology lesson and better for the economy.

Hawaii's volcanoes put on a fantastic show for nature lovers, but its lava also creates a rich soil that gives locally grown food their distinctly delicious flavors. Agriculture in Hawaii suffers from memories of plantation days gone by. No longer simply sugar and pineapple, our farmers deserve a fresh start of support. There are several reasons why fostering our farms makes good sense. The biggest is it helps the economy. The more we can produce our own food, the less money we need to export outside our cash circle, which helps to keep a positive state balance sheet overall. The meals we eat will be fresher, more nutritious, and tastier when we buy and eat locally grown food. Expanding our farmer's marketplace locally and elsewhere means more jobs will be created, and diversify and strengthen our economic base.

Fostering this industry means making sure that we expend the energy to promote it, and make sure the requisite infrastructure and industrial side supply chain are in place. It will take a coordinated effort

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## HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

### RP General Visits Philippine Consulate

Gen. Victor S. Ibrado, Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, recently visited the Philippine Consulate. He was in town for the 12th Chiefs of Defense Conference, which was held October 26-29, 2009.

A member of the Philippine Military Academy Class of 1976, Ibrado replaced Gen. Alexander Yano who retired on June 13, 2009. He was among several dozen senior military officers from 22 nations who gathered for the conference.



GSAFP Gen. Victor Ibrado

This year's conference was hosted by Adm. Robert Willard, commander of U.S. Pacific Command. The purpose of the annual conference is to bring together military leaders from na-

tions in the Asia-Pacific region to discuss security challenges, improve mutual relationships and foster security cooperation. The conference theme is "Common Defense Challenges in the Asia-Pacific Region."

Nations attending this year's conference included: Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, Canada, France, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Singapore, Republic of Korea, Thailand, Tonga, Vietnam, and the U.S.

## IMMIGRATION GUIDE



By Atty. Emmanuel  
Samonte Tipon

# No More Widow Penalty If You Pray to the Messiah

sands. One of the cases we talked about involved a Filipina. (See Philippine News 05/03/09)

The various circuits of the U.S. Court of Appeals do not agree on the answer. Two circuits (6th and 9th) say "Yes," while one circuit (3rd) says "No." Fortunately, most Filipinos live within the 9th Circuit (California, Nevada, Arizona, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Hawaii, Alaska, Guam)

The circuits who said "yes" strained to get that answer. The circuit that said "no" simply used straight statutory construction. Dura lex est lex (The law is hard but that is the law)

Like many unsettled immigration issues, the answer depends on geography.

## The current law

INA § 204(a)(1)(A)(i) [8 U.S.C. § 1154 (a)(1)(A)(i)] provides: "Any citizen of the United States claiming that an alien is entitled to classification by reason of a relationship described in paragraph (1), (3), or (4) of section 203(a) or to an immediate relative status under section 201(b)(2)(A)(i) may file a petition with the Attorney General for such classification."

INA § 201(b)(2)(A)(i) [8 U.S.C. § 1151 (b)(2)(A)(i)] states: "For purposes of this subsection, the term 'immediate relatives' means the children, spouses, and parents of a citizen

of the United States, except that, in the case of parents, such citizens shall be at least 21 years of age. In the case of an alien who was the spouse of a citizen of the United States for at least 2 years at the time of the citizen's death and was not legally separated from the citizen at the time of the citizen's death, the alien (and each child of the alien) shall be considered, for purposes of this subsection, to remain an immediate relative after the date of the citizen's death but only if the spouse files a petition under section 204(a)(1)(A)(i) within 2 years after such date and only until the date the spouse remarries. . . ."

## New bill eliminates two year qualifying period

None of the few articles on eliminating the widow penalty cited the specific provision of the bill passed by Congress on October 20, 2009. It is buried in the 164 pages plus of the "Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2010". Few will even think of looking for it there because the bill is not an immigration bill.

"Sec. 568.

(c) Relief for Surviving Spouses.--

(1) In General.-- The second sentence of section 201(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1151(b)(2)(A)(i)) is amended by striking "(for at least 2 years at the time of the citizen's death)".

(2) Applicability.--

(A) In General.-- The amendment made by paragraph (1) shall apply to all applications and petitions relating to immediate relative status under section 201(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. § 1151 (b)(2)(A)(i)) pending on or after the date of the enactment of this Act."

(B) Transition Cases.--

(i) In General.-- Notwithstanding any other provision of law, an alien described in clause (ii) who seeks immediate relative status pursuant to the amendment made by paragraph (1) shall file a petition under section 204(a)(1)(A)(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. § 1154 (a)(1)(A)(i)) not later than the date that is 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(ii) Aliens Described.-- An alien is described in this clause if --

(1) the alien's United States citizen spouse died before the date of the enactment of this Act.

(II) the alien and the citizen spouse were married for less than 2 years at the time of the citizen spouse's death; and

(III) the alien has not remarried."

## What should grieving widow or widower do and not do?

An alien widow/widower of a USC whose spouse died within 2 years after their marriage must pray to President Obama to sign the bill.

Then: (1) file a petition for classification as an immediate

relative; (2) within 2 years after the enactment of the statute; (3) prove that she/he meets the qualifications specified in the statute (USC spouse died before enactment of statute, married for less than 2 years, unremarried).

What should she/he must not do? Do not remarry.

## Recommendation and caution

Qualifying surviving spouses should consult an excellent immigration lawyer to guide them in obtaining the benefits without being overcharged (not more than \$3,000). The trickiest part will be to establish that their marriage was in good faith. Scores of supporting documents and affidavits will be needed. A personal interview is likely. Immigration authorities have been fighting the widows for years. The attitude of many immigration adjudicators is: if in doubt, DENY.

(ATTY. TIPON has won all deportation cases he handled and obtained approval of all visa petitions he filed. He is from Lawog City. He has a Master of Laws degree from Yale Law School and a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of the Philippines. He served as an Immigration Officer. He specializes in immigration and criminal defense. Office at 905 Uni St. corner N. King, Suite 201, Honolulu, HI 96819. Tel. (808) 847 1601. Fax (808) 847 1624. E-Mail: flam-law@yahoo.com. Website: www. ImmigrationServicesUSA.com. This article is a general overview of the subject matter discussed and is not intended as legal advice for any specific person or situation. Neither the writer nor publisher warrant the completeness or accuracy of the information provided herein at the time of publication.)

**T**housands have heard of the marriage penalty (where you pay more taxes if you are married and file a joint return). But only a few hundred have heard of the "widow penalty" (where an alien spouse of a U.S. citizen is denied immediate relative status if the USC dies within two years after the marriage).

Friday when I Glooded "widow penalty" the first link was "widow penalty Obama". Strange, because for all his faults, he is not responsible for the "widow penalty". But since he is believed by many to be the Messiah, if you pray to him, he could eliminate the "widow penalty" with a stroke of the pen.

## Is U.S. citizen's widow still a spouse for immigration purposes?

Does the alien surviving widow/widower of a U.S. citizen who dies within two years after their marriage remain a "spouse" so as to be able to obtain immigration benefits under current law?

We discussed this issue in an article published worldwide which has been read by thou-

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**HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS**

**Honolulu Rail Project Reaches  
Two More Milestones Towards  
Construction**

The City & County of Honolulu moves closer towards its goal of breaking ground for its Honolulu Rail Transit project by awarding the first contract for construction of the 20-mile rail route.

Kiewit Pacific Company was awarded the design-build contract for construction of the first phase of the rail route – running 6.5 miles from East Kapolei to Pearl City.

Once the project is underway, the related construction is expected to create thousands of jobs and benefit the local economy. "Rail will be the state's largest economic stimulus project," said city managing director Kirk Caldwell. "No other single project in Hawaii, in the public or private sector, can create as many jobs or generate as much economic activity during this recession."

Other contracts scheduled to be awarded early next year includes the construction of the maintenance and storage



A city rendering of what an elevated rail station could look like

facility to house the trains, and another to select a manufacturer to supply the train cars.

While the majority of the rail project jobs created – about 60 percent – will be in the construction industry, the remaining new jobs will be outside that field, as workers spend their wages and companies buy supplies. This will bring new jobs into the retail, food and beverage and service industries as well, Caldwell said.

For more information on the rail project's economic benefits, check out the project's website at [www.honolulutransit.org](http://www.honolulutransit.org) or hotline at 566-2299.

**Hannemann to Join Filipino  
Chamber of Commerce in  
Trade Mission**

Mayor Mufi Hannemann will be in the Philippines from November 7-12, 2009 to join a trade mission sponsored by the Philippine Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii (FCCH).

This year's trade mission will focus on Hawaii real estate investments and international banking and finance, as well as Philippine outsourcing opportunities; the development of new markets especially in the areas of architecture, engineering, and environmental consulting; and the identification of products and services that can be exported to Hawaii.

The mayor's delegation is scheduled to visit an emergency shelter in Manila for typhoon victims. To help with relief efforts, Hawaiian Airlines will be transporting 20 balikbayan boxes with donations. The boxes will be distributed by the Consuelo Foundation, which has offices in Honolulu and Makati and has partnerships with many non-profit organizations throughout the Philippines.

Hannemann will then travel to Laoag—one of Honolulu's sister cities—to meet with Gov. Michael Marcos Keon. Hannemann will then travel to Ilocos Sur to meet Gov. DV Savellano at Port Salomague, followed by meetings in Badoc with Mayor Thomas Torralba, in Batac with Mayor Jeffrey Jubal Nalputa, in San Nicolas with Mayor Alfredo Valdez, in Pasuquin with Mayor Oscar Aguinaldo, and in Bacarra with Mayor Nicomedes Dela Cruz.

The mayor will then return to Manila to meet with U.S. Ambassador Kristie Kenny, Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim and other Philippine dignitaries, and to participate in Trade Mission meetings and a business seminar with the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry and other business groups.

On November 11, Hannemann and the trade mission delegation will visit Cebu City, another sister city, to meet with Cebu Mayor Tomas Osmena and participate in a Trade Mission Conference and Business Seminar conducted by the Cebu Chamber of Commerce and the FCCH. The next day, Hannemann will meet with Cebu Gov. Gwen Garcia and other officials, then visit local businesses and factories.

The Trade Mission will also celebrate the 100th year of Visayan immigration to Hawaii with a premiere showing of "Mabuhay With Aloha: The Hawaii Filipino Experience." The 90-minute documentary will be shown in Cebu on November 12 through a partnership with the University of San Carlos (USC) and Hawaiian Airlines. Producer-host Emme Tomimbang will screen the documentary and participate in panel discussions with Cebu professors, including Dr. Erlinda Alburto, Director of Cebuano Studies at USC.

"Our goal is to build and nurture linkages to foster trade. We hope our meetings, workshop, and the documentary will serve as bridges between our two island homes," says Rosemarie Mendoza, president of the FCCH.

## BUSINESS LIFE

## Why the Philippine Future Is Exciting

**BULL MARKET, BULL SHEET**  
By Wilson Lee Flores /  
Monday, November 2, 2009

**H**e who rejects change is the architect of decay. The only human institution which rejects progress is the cemetery. — Harold Wilson

When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves. — Victor Frankl

They must often change, who would be constant in happiness or wisdom. — Confucius

Whether in the economy, politics or movies, I am bullish that the future of the Philippines will be exciting. Why? Because of the irreversible changes brought about by globalization via the magic of our Internet access to global information, better education and through the millions of overseas Filipinos exposed to modern and egalitarian societies in foreign countries, which are starkly different from our Philippine-style feudal politics and socioeconomic system.

### Overseas Filipinos as Agents of Change

I believe that one of the reasons Asia's greatest heroes — Dr. Jose Rizal of the Philippines and Dr. Sun Yat Sen of China — were rebellious thinkers was because both of them traveled extensively overseas and saw what an ideal society should be in their respective homelands.

Rizal studied in Spain and Germany, while also later practicing medicine in Hong Kong; Dr. Sun Yat Sen was an overseas Chinese youth educated in Hawaii and Hong Kong (where he was classmates in medical school with overseas Chinese Dr. Jose Tee Han Kee, 1904 co-founder of the Philippine Chinese General Chamber of Commerce and our Chinese minority's anti-Manchu revolutionary activist leader in Manila). In the 20th century, one difference between China's two great leaders, Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping, was that Mao never traveled overseas except to backwards Soviet Russia, while reformist Deng was a working student in France (where his roommate once was China's future revered premier, Zhou Enlai).

It was overseas Chinese communities worldwide (including my paternal forebears) who passionately supported Dr. Sun Yat Sen's earth-shaking

1911 revolution, which changed the centuries-old feudal system in China, in the same way it was Jewish minorities worldwide, like Albert Einstein, who vigorously supported the 1948 struggle for Israel to be revived as the Jewish homeland. I urge the 10 or 11 million Filipinos now overseas to be a critical mass of people who can demand and help push for sweeping cultural, political, ideological, socioeconomic and other reforms in our Philippine society now shackled by excessive political corruption and an oppressively semi-feudal socioeconomic system!

By the way, ethnic Chinese in the Philippines will forever work for friendship between the Philippines and China, in the same way the Jews in America forever lobby for the USA-Israel alliance, and in the same way Filipinos in America will always work for USA-Philippine amity.

### 'Masa' To No Longer Patronize Junk Politicos?

In the May 2010 election, I believe that the majority of voters won't be easily swayed by guns, goons, gold and emotional histrionics because more voters will be young people who are Internet-savvy and exposed to global trends favoring meritocracy, transparency, accountability, genuine democracy and other international benchmarks of good governance.

In the same way, demographics and the globalization of our society have changed the way the so-called "masa" patronize the movie industry, which should be fair warning for our moviemakers in the Metro Manila Film Festival this December. Why have several star-studded local flicks by big producers in recent months bombed so miserably at the box office in contrast to the Kimi Dora surprise box office hit by indie producer actor Piolo Pascual starring the less-known but talented Eugene Domingo in her first-ever lead role?

In Philippine movies nowadays, famous stars and fiesta-like public-relations gimmicks by producers no longer guarantee that the Filipino public will blindly line up at movie houses to pay P120 or P150 or more per ticket to watch local films with ludicrous sampalan/sabunutan (slapping/hair-pulling) scenes

or lousy stories. The Filipino youth, middle-class, and so-called "masses" cannot be duped anymore by cinematic trash, because millions of people have been exposed to global standards of minimum quality and sensible stories in foreign films via the Internet, 24-hour cable TV and pirated DVDs. Film Development Council of the Philippines (FDCP) chairman Rolando "Jacky" S. Atienza also recently told me that their studies show that 70 percent of the movie-going public have at least a high school diploma.

### Study In Europe, South America & China

How do we promote more global thinking in the Philippines to change the old narrow-minded parochial thinking of the past? We should promote young people traveling and studying overseas. This advocacy has been pioneered by two "rags-to-riches" taipans, Lucio Tan and John Gokongwei Jr., who send outstanding scholars every year to study in the world's oldest continuous civilization and new global economic superpower, China. Both of them believe it is tragic that many in Philippine society do not fully understand the richness of Chinese culture, the character-building qualities of Confucian values and the fast-changing realities of modern China.

This writer recently met Peruvian Francisco "Tachi" Cazal, president of the AFS Intercultural Programs, Inc. based in New York City. One-time Harvard professor Abram Piatt Andrew Jr. started AFS in 1914 as a group of young volunteer ambulance drivers who wanted to be involved in World War I but not in the fighting. It has since

evolved into an international youth exchange program. Originally called American Field Service, AFS evolved into a postwar group promoting student exchanges between the USA and the world, and now the program has evolved beyond the US to include Europe, China, South America and other places.

AFS is the world's biggest and oldest non-profit, volunteer-based foundation arranging for high school teens to study abroad for one year and living with foster families, thus promoting global thinking, intercultural understanding and leadership training for young people. The only Filipino in its prestigious global board of trustees is former AFS scholar Francisco de la Fuente Guerra III, also vice president of SC Johnson in charge of developing markets ASEAN and Korea. The current favorite destinations of Philippine AFS scholars are Spain, France, Belgium (the Dutch-speaking Flanders region), Switzerland, USA, Germany, Japan, and Latin America; some even choose to study in Latvia or Russia.

For high school teens who

wish to explore the world through AFS, I urge parents and the teens to contact the AFS Philippine office at the second floor of the University of the Philippines ISSI Building (Virata Hall), E. Jacinto Street, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City, call 928-3342 or 929-5750 or visit the website at [www.afs.ph](http://www.afs.ph). Ideal ages are between 15 to 17-and-a-half years old. Students should be emotionally stable, have leadership potential, good school performance (but no need to be top-honor students academically), possess a high emotional quotient, have a sense of adventure and want to see the world. AFS also provides funding for those students whose families can't afford the costs.

Travel and education overseas are among the best ways to expand our horizons as future leaders in business, culture and arts, science, politics and other fields; they also make us better human beings, more open to other cultures and more aware of the bewildering realities of our fast-changing and future borderless world.

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## FAMILY CORNER



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

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** This is the second of a three-part series on managing job loss and financial stress. This series is based on two new publications, "Managing Job Loss and Financial Stress: A Personal and Family Guide" and "Raising Resilient Children During Tough Economic Times," that are available from the UH Center on the Family. Copies of the publication may be requested by calling (808) 956-4132 or e-mailing: [cof@ctahr.hawaii.edu](mailto:cof@ctahr.hawaii.edu).

## Managing Job Loss and Financial Stress: Raising Resilient Children



Financial hardship can result from many different circumstances—a poor economy, the loss of a job, under-employment, the prolonged illness of a family member, divorce, poor money management, or a combination of several factors. Whatever the cause, the resulting impact on a family can be stressful for all members, including children.

While we tend to think of financial problems as adult concerns, if parents are stressed, children feel that stress as well. The whole family feels the strain when a parent's job loss or reduction in work hours means having less money for essentials or needing to cut back on discretionary spending. Parents who are distracted by their economic worries may be less available to their children or responsive to their children's needs.

Very young children may have difficulty learning how to form important attachments to others if the family must move or change care providers frequently because of financial

strain. This puts them at risk of having relationship problems later in life. Older children may become anxious and have difficulty concentrating in school. If the situation is not explained to them, children who sense their parents' stress may mistakenly blame themselves for the family's problems. Stress from any event or life situation that disrupts children's routines and sense of security puts children at risk for negative outcomes such as poor physical and emotional health, poor school performance, and lowered self-esteem.

The good news is that families that are intentional about pulling together in times of need can turn a serious challenge into an opportunity to build resilience in their children. Resilience is the human capacity to face, overcome, and be strengthened by the adversities of life. Resilience allows families to adapt to difficult situations in positive ways. When children are resilient they can display courage in the face of difficulties and bounce back

more quickly. These children feel comfortable sharing their feelings and asking for help when they need it. Resilient children can feel secure even when circumstances around them are constantly changing.

There are three common areas of strength among resilient children; they have: (a) external supports and resources that provide safety and security—providing them with a sense that "I have people I can turn to in times of need," (b) personal strengths—attitudes, beliefs, and feelings that allow them to bounce back and move forward—allowing them to feel "I

am loved and I am lovable," and (c) social and interpersonal skills for interacting with others respectfully and responsibly—allowing them to believe "I can contribute and share responsibility."

There are key milestones for children at different stages of development. When parents pay attention to children's needs associated with these milestones, their children can develop resiliency even during the toughest economic times. To develop resiliency,

- in early childhood, children need to acquire trust—the confidence that adults will be there to care for them; autonomy—the ability to establish their own rhythms of eating, sleeping, self-calming, and exploration; and initiative—the drive to be actively engaged in learning about the world.
- in middle childhood, children need to acquire friendship—the ability to make friends and gain the approval of peers; a sense of self—confidence in one's ability to succeed in life; and mastery—command of the basic life skills needed to be successful in school and at home.
- in adolescence, children need to acquire identity—the sense of what is unique and distinctive about themselves; and expectations for the future—the ability to prepare for adulthood.

the pressures they are feeling. Maintaining regular household rules and routines also gives children a sense of security during an unsettling time. When parents convey to their children that "we are in this together and we will survive," they strengthen family bonds, and everyone is able to move ahead with hope for the future. To create an environment that builds resilience in their children during times of economic stress or other hardships, it is important for parents to:

- Show affection:
  - ▶ Express love in physical and verbal ways.
  - ▶ Find ways to have fun together.
- Explain the situation to children at a level they can understand:
  - ▶ Tell them that the situation is not their fault.
  - ▶ Be specific about what will change and what will remain the same.
  - ▶ Reassure them that the family will get through this.
- Encourage good problem-solving skills:
  - ▶ Engage every family member in discussions about the hard choices that this situation might require.
  - ▶ Acknowledge everyone's ideas and solutions.
- Build responsibility:
  - ▶ Assign chores.
  - ▶ Show appreciation for each person's efforts.
- Monitor children:
  - ▶ Maintain rules and routines.
  - ▶ Always know where children are.
  - ▶ Maintain communication when apart from children.
  - ▶ Get to know children's friends.
  - ▶ Stay involved in children's homework and activities.

Children develop resilience in families that communicate well, work together to solve problems, and do things together. These children thrive when parents continue to show their love and affection despite

By consistently using these strategies and adapting them to different stages of children's development, parents can help their children develop resiliency even during the toughest economic times.



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## LEGAL NOTES



By Reuben S. Seguritan

## Immigration Reform Bill to Be Introduced Soon

It was attended by thousands of immigrants from Hispanic, Asian, African and other communities from about twenty states.

Rep. Gutierrez is the chairman of the Immigration Task Force of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and is one of the strongest and most vocal advocates for immigration reform.

He has been conducting nationwide tours to drum up support for reform and has met with many advocacy and civil rights groups, faith-based groups and labor groups.

In a statement, Rep. Gutierrez declared that Americans can no longer wait for a

bill that will unite families, protect workers and provide legalization for the twelve million undocumented workers. "It is time we had a workable plan making its way through Congress that recognizes the vast contributions of immigrants and that honors the American Dream," he said.

The key components of his proposed bill include a pathway to legalization for undocumented workers and students, humane treatment of detainees, expanded labor rights for workers, employment eligibility verification system, allocation of sufficient employment visas to meet actual labor market demands and increase of family

visas to promote family unity.

This new push for reform will certainly reinvigorate the immigration debate that has been overshadowed by other priorities of the current administration like health care reforms. During his campaign, President Obama promised to tackle immigration reforms in the first year, but he has said recently that the issue will most likely be pursued early next year.

Senator Charles Schumer has said that he will introduce his reform bill in the Senate sometime this fall.

Last June, he announced the seven principles that would form the basis of his bill. These principles include legalization of undocumented

workers, family reunification, effective enforcement and employment verification

Fixing the broken immigration system has been a divisive issue. During the previous administration, similar legislation failed to pass twice despite support from President Bush.

But immigrant advocates are hopeful this time that comprehensive immigration reform will pass. President Obama has expressed his unyielding commitment several times and Senate Majority leader Harry Reid and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi have expressed their full support.

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

**A**t a rally held in Washington DC last October 13, Rep. Luis Gutierrez outlined the core principles that will serve as basis for the comprehensive immigration reform bill that he plans to introduce in the House soon.

The rally was sponsored by several advocacy groups including the Reform Immigration for America campaign, National Capital Immigration Coalition and Families United.

## HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

## 15 Filipinos Gain RP Citizenship

Fifteen Filipino residents recently took their Oath of Allegiance at the Philippine Consulate General and reacquired their Philippine Citizenship under Republic Act 9225, or the Citizenship Retention and Reacquisition Act of 2003.

The new Philippine citizens include: Alberto Cabanilla De La Cruz Jr., Bernardita Rosales De La Torre Dixon, Buena Abella Calacala Fernandez, Simeona Navares Navasca Sansona, Carlito Mendoza Lampico, Cresolita Costales Pablo, Orlino Tejada Pascual, Conrado Domingo Pabalan, Ophelia Cristobal Lagundino Pabalan, Bienvenida Rigates Valdez Sevilleja, Abundio Aliviado



The 15 Filipinos who gained RP citizenship are shown here with Consul Lourdes Tabamo (standing, extreme right) and Consul Lolita Capco (standing, extreme left)

Saramosing, Ronaldo Jose Tacadena, Catherine Laureta Temperante Mott, Luzviminda Tuanquin Varquez Buenafac and Germani Maglente Yutob.

RA 9225 allows natural-born former Filipinos who have been naturalized as citizens of another country to retain or

reacquire their Philippine citizenship. Applicants must file a petition, submit necessary documents and take an Oath of Allegiance. More information on dual citizenship is available online at: [www.philippineconsulatehonolulu.com](http://www.philippineconsulatehonolulu.com) or by calling 595-6315.

## Rep. Finnegan to Serve in Women's Leadership Role

State Rep. Lynn Finnegan was elected State Director of Hawaii for the National Foundation for Women Legislators (NFWL) at the 2009 NFWL Annual Conference in Santa Ana Pueblo, New Mexico.



Rep. Lynn Finnegan

The NFWL is the nation's oldest organization that addresses the needs of elected women at all levels of government.

"I am honored to have been selected and eager to reach out to all of the elected women who serve in Hawaii to build rela-

tionships and include them in the many important programs and initiatives that the National Foundation For Women Legislators offers," Finnegan says.

NFWL President and CEO Robin Read described Finnegan as an articulate and impassioned leader.

"Her leadership will be an asset to the Foundation. I am confident that with her commitment, this will be one of the most exciting and productive years that NFWL has seen,"

Read says.

Elected women from across the nation gathered at the 2009 NFWL Annual Conference to identify solutions to some of the nation's most pressing issues. The non-partisan conference encouraged dialogue and information-sharing, coalition building among legislators and sharing of constituent concerns and successful initiatives.

Topics discussed included teen violence, Native American community development, financial literacy, HIV/AIDS awareness, access to broadband technology, women in politics and the media, alternative health care solutions and international relations.

## PICTORIAL NEWS



QUEZONIAN OF HAWAII

Quezonian of Hawaii members pose for a photo with General Leoncio R. Cardenas (middle) and Consul Paul Cortes (far left). The group recently visited the Philippine Consulate for a courtesy visit and to welcome Consul General Cardenas on his second stint to Hawaii. The 30-member strong Quezonian of Hawaii, a socio-civic organization of Filipinos who trace their roots from the Province of Quezon, was represented by Andy Villamin, Bert Cabalteya, Lena Duck, Aida Ilagan, Mrs. Cabalteya and Luz Ocanar. The Quezonians also took the opportunity to plan their upcoming Christmas Party on December 26, 2009 at the Philippine Consulate's lanai area.

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## PHILIPPINE NEWS

## Emergency Job Program to Hire 93,000 Workers

By Paolo Romero /  
Monday, November 2, 2009

**M**ANILA, Philippines – Government agencies will hire some 93,000 unemployed or underemployed Filipinos this year for a P1.77-billion roadside maintenance program in line with President Arroyo's call for agencies to strengthen the country's economic foundation in the face of continuing uncertainties in the global economy and international labor markets, Malacañang announced yesterday.

National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC) Secretary Domingo Panganiban said the move was in line with the development plans of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) and the Arroyo emergency job plan under the Economic Resiliency Program (ERP).

"The country's national roads are essential to the strength and stability of the economy, helping to encourage investments and create jobs for a vast number of the Filipino poor," Panganiban said.

"While experts have noted signs of recovery in the global economy, now is not the time for complacency," the NAPC chief said. "We are still in the thick of what is probably the worst economic slump in modern history."

NAPC, which is under the Office of the President, oversees the Comprehensive Livelihood and Emergency Employment Program (CLEEP), launched by Mrs. Arroyo in October 2008 to address the need for new jobs as a result of the global economic meltdown.

The Arroyo government has assured the availability of jobs



and employment opportunities for poor Filipinos amid the global economic slowdown through the employment program.

The President has cited ERP and CLEEP as priority programs that the government is vigorously implementing.

Mrs. Arroyo had said that local government units (LGUs), in partnership with the private sector, are working doubly hard

in creating and maintaining jobs as well as in investing on vital infrastructures, livelihood programs and other economic activities that will help generate more employment.

Panganiban said the new hires would work on some 30,000 kilometers of national roads under the Out of School Youth Towards Economic Recovery (OYSTER) program of

the DPWH.

"The workers will see to the maintenance of around 30,000 kilometers of national roads under PULIS OYSTER Program of the DPWH," Panganiban said.

Panganiban said the DPWH had already met a considerable portion of its emergency employment targets and was able to hire 42,930 workers for various roadside maintenance projects nationwide as of Sept. 30 this year.

He said the government plans for the employment of some 59,968 roadside maintenance workers in Luzon while 14,120 more laborers are put to work in roadside projects in the Visayas.

"Another 19,120 workers will be employed in roadside maintenance projects across the island-region of Mindanao," Panganiban said. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com))

## Edith Burgos Brings Son's Case to European Public

By Paolo Romero /  
Monday, November 2, 2009

**M**ANILA, Philippines – More than 900 days after activist Jonas Burgos was abducted, his mother went on a speaking tour in Europe to bring her son's case, and that of many others like him, to the attention of foreign human rights organizations.

Dr. Edith Burgos, chairperson of Desaparecidos, an organization of families and loved ones of victims of forced disappearances in the Philip-

ppines, marked the 38th birthday of her son on Oct. 27 by speaking in London, United Kingdom, and in Cologne, Bonn and Berlin in Germany about their experiences in dealing with their loved ones' disappearance.

She also went to the Netherlands on Oct. 29 then to Bologna and Milan in Italy. She is now headed to Belgium, to meet with European parliamentarians and human rights organizations in Brussels, Gent and Antwerp.

"I hope that I can help peo-



Dr. Edith Burgos

ple realize what is happening to good people like my son and many, many others in the Philippines," she said.

JL Burgos, Jonas' brother and head of the Free Jonas Burgos Movement, presented films and art works to the audience. Proceeds from the sale of art-works would help fund the activities of the movement.

Jonas, an agricuturist and land rights activist, was abducted, in broad daylight in Quezon City, by armed men on April 28, 2007.

He is the son of the late anti-Marcos newspaper publisher Jose Burgos. Jonas trained San Miguel, Bulacan farmers in organic farming.

The farmers he had been helping were members of Alyansa ng Magbubukid ng Bulacan (AMB, Alliance of Peasants of Bulacan), a branch of the militant peasant organization Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP, Peasant Movement of the Philippines).

Desaparecidos claim that suspected security forces of the Arroyo administration are responsible for the disappearance of more than 200 people who expressed opposition to the policies of the government. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com))

## Group Urges Government to Probe Latest OFW Death

By Dennis Carcamo /  
Monday, November 2, 2009

**M**ANILA, Philippines – An overseas Filipino workers advocacy group has called on the government to probe into the latest reported death of an OFW in Saudi Arabia.

John Leonard Monterona, Migrant Middle East regional coordinator, said they are urging the Department of Foreign Affairs-Office of the Undersecretary for Migrant Workers Affairs to press the Philippine Consulate General (PCG) in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia to investigate the death of Joy Cabansi Sarto, 28, of



Echague, Isabela.

Sarto, the 13th victim this year who died due to maltreatment, was reportedly raped and found dead in Jeddah last

Sept. 22, Monterona said.

Monterona said the victim's husband already sought the assistance of the DFA and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) but no action has been taken.

"Until now, Sarto's family has not been given any official report on the circumstances leading to the death of the victim and what actions should be taken to give her justice," Monterona said.

Meanwhile, Migrant is also urging members of the House Committee on Overseas Workers Affairs scheduled to conduct its first-time ever overseas congressional hearing to put the issue of OFWs protection on top of their agenda. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com))



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## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

### CONCERT TO RAISE FUNDS FOR TYPHOON VICTIMS, KARITON KLASURUM / SATURDAY

November 7, 2009 • Philippine Consulate • 12 nn - 4 pm. • For reservations, please call Stephen Callo at 537-5714, Danny Villaruz at 778-0233, Jean Jeremiah at 387-5481 or Jun Abinsay at 469-7351.

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## MAINLAND NEWS

### U.S. Pledges \$8.5 Million in Food Aid to RP

The U.S. has pledged food assistance worth \$8.5 million for typhoon victims in the Philippines, according to Tom Vilsack, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, during a recent meeting with President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo.

The donation will be made available under the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Food For Progress Program. Vilsack says about 7,000 metric tons of U.S. rice and 680 metric tons of non-fat dry milk would be processed into milk and biscuits for distribution to flood victims. The amount is enough to feed roughly 438,000 people for 60 days.

"As a long-standing friend and partner of the Philippines, the U.S. stands ready to continue our cooperation and assis-

tance in the future," says Vilsack, who visited Manila on a four-day trade mission.

The Philippines is the largest recipient of USDA Food For Progress in Asia, having received a total of \$217 million worth of commodities since 2000. This year alone, the USDA has signed three Food For Progress agreements with the Philippines totaling \$25 million.

### Legal Filipino Immigrants in U.S. Total 600K

At 600,000 strong, Filipinos comprise the second largest number of legal permanent residents (LPR) in the U.S. as of 2008, according to statistics from the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Department.

An estimated 12.6 million legal permanent residents are living in the U.S. The numbers include those who have been granted lawful permanent residence status and green-card holders. One half obtained legal permanent resident status since 2000, while one-fourth earned the status from 2005-2007.



Mexicans comprise the largest legal permanent resident population at 3.4 million, followed by Filipinos, India (500,000), China (500,000) and the Dominican Republic 400,000.

The top five countries com-

prise 43 percent of LPRs with the remaining 56 percent coming from Cuba, El Salvador, Canada, Vietnam and United Kingdom.

Fifty-nine percent of lawful permanent residents obtained their status in four states beginning with California with 3.4 million LPRs, followed by New York with 1.5 million, Texas with 1.3 million and Florida with 1.2 million.

According to the report, LPRs are eligible to apply for naturalization after meeting requirements such as a five-year U.S. residency, except for spouses of U.S. citizens who only need three years to be eligible. (www.Inquirer.net)

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