

HAWAII

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STUDENT LOAN DEBT: A \$1.6 TRILLION CRISIS

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EDITORIAL

It's Time to Work on the Student Loan Debt Crisis

The student loan debt is alarming but it's a crisis without massive calls for reform, even ignored by most Americans besides the millennial generation. But when looking at statistics and the devastating impact on students, parents, and higher education – it's clear that the problem cannot be left neglected any longer.

The accumulated student loan debt is nearly \$1.6 trillion, which exceeds the accumulated car loans and even credit card debt. At a debt growth rate of 7% a year, the student loan debt could be as high as \$3 trillion or more in the next decade.

Most everyone knows personally a few students saddled with repayment schedules. Some are so egregious that repaying a student loan can span decades, with large monthly payments. According to an analysis by Moody's Analytics, student loans have grown "persistently at double digit-rates throughout the last decade" and "college costs have outpaced overall inflation by a significant margin." A report by PNC Bank finds that students hold an average of \$45,000 in student loan debt.

Why this becomes an urgent problem needing immediate action is increasingly more Americans – students and their parents – are finding higher education simply unaffordable and could eventually close the doors on millions of Americans' chances for a better life.

State and federal funding is experiencing shortfalls that some higher education institutions are cutting financial aid or even freezing enrollment at campuses.

The financial industry has found student loans also to be very profitable, extending loans at interest rates higher than prevailing interest rates. Students and parents who are desperate often resort to taking loans at high interest rates.

Adding to the student debt crisis is the lower-wage job market. Normally students would leave college with thousands of student loans under their name, but higher salary jobs awaited them to be able to handle monthly payments easily. Today's college graduates are not so lucky as many find the job market after graduation tighter with low-paying employment opportunities, and jobs without the guaranteed perks decades ago like health insurance or 401K plan that ultimately make paying off student loans more difficult.

How massive student debt affects the overall economy? – consumer spending drops across the board from sales of homes to cars that otherwise could be adding to businesses' bottom line.

Some parents who have taken out a second mortgage to help pay for their children's college also are burdened, pumping less into other industries of the economy.

How did we get here?

According to the American Council on Education, the chief culprit of rising tuition costs has been major reductions in state support. Public funding in higher education were cut by more than \$7 billion between 2008 and 2018. What this has done is shift the cost of instruction onto students and their families.

Similar to the top-heavy salaries of executives in the private sector, the same pyramidal payout is happening at universities and colleges. Increasingly presidents and top senior administrators are receiving often multi-million dollar salaries. Coaches, specifically some football and basketball coaches, also receive salaries typically over a million dollars.

Experts say the growth of administration is also driving tuition costs up in what they call "administrative bloat." Non-academic, non-teaching jobs at universities and colleges have been growing.

(continue on page 3)

FROM THE PUBLISHER

Students and parents across the nation are finding the cost of higher education overwhelming. While the average student debt upon graduating from college is \$45,000, there are many cases of students with professional degrees starting their careers with debts upwards of \$125,000.

For our cover story this issue, associate editor Edwin Quinabo writes about some of the factors driving up the cost of tuition, some possible solutions being floated around that could reverse this trend, as well as share some real life examples of students grappling with college debt. He also writes what some experts suggest to keep student debt down. The problem of student debt is exacerbated by today's lower-wage job market which makes paying off college loans even more difficult. And there is no other option available but to work with creditors on a repayment schedule (often with high interest rates) because bankruptcy law excludes student loans from discharge. Student debt is allowed to be legally written off in very rare cases. Why is student debt increasingly becoming an urgent national crisis? With the cost of higher education rising at a faster rate than inflation, in a few years it could shut the door for more Americans wanting to get a higher education but cannot afford it. This would hurt the entire nation, especially minority and immigrant communities. Student debt is fast becoming a national issue and included among several 2020 presidential candidates' platforms.

Also in this issue, HFC's Mark Lester Ranchez contributes a film review on Matthew Rosen's internationally-lauded film, "Quezon's Game," a political-historical drama on the Philippines during World War II. The film retells the story of the Philippines second President Manuel Quezon's role in saving Jews from the Nazis by allowing Jewish refugees to enter the country. Quezon succeeded in taking 1,200 Jews safely into the Philippines. It's a part of Philippines history not many people are aware of. Ranchez comments on the film, "It is sincere, and it paints a clear, unhindered picture of a human story. What adds to its wonder is perhaps the audience's genuine lack of knowledge of this significant chapter of the Philippines and the Holocaust, and it succeeds in making use of that, so that each scene always begs for more explanations, or questions."

HFC columnist Elpidio Estioko submits "How Will the Electoral Votes Weigh In vs Popular Votes?" It's an important article on the outdated Electoral College that Americans have been calling for a change since 2000 when Al Gore lost the presidential race to George W. Bush via the Electoral College even though Gore garnered more actual votes (by 540,000). The same pattern occurred in Clinton vs Trump; Clinton racked up 3 million more actual votes than Trump, but she lost in the Electoral College. It appears odd to most Americans (and the rest of the world) that a U.S. national popular vote has not been adopted yet. Read why and how states are working to adopt a popular vote system without changing the Electoral College.

In HFN news, we've provided a guide for Hawaii residents to register to vote. The Primary Election is Aug. 8, General Election Nov. 3, but given the huge implication the 2020 elections will have on our community, we're getting an early start to get as many people registered to vote. Election results in Hawaii could appear to some as a done-deal, but we cannot leave anything up to chance and must safeguard our priorities, values by voting. Throughout this year we look forward to providing election news, features, and cover stories as we normally do each election year.

Be sure to read our other news and columns, including Atty. Reuben Seguritan's "Provisional Waiver for Same Sex Couples," Atty. Emmanuel Tapon's "Trump Innocent – God Sees the Truth But Waits," and Melissa Martin's "Stop Big Game Trophy Hunting."

Thank you for supporting your community newspaper. And for many in our community, have a solemn and reflective Lenten Season which just started on Feb. 26. Until next issue, warmest Aloha and Mabuhay!



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Chona A. Montesines-Sonido

EDITORIALS

Americans Should Look at Trump's Budget Proposal as a Serious Warning

Ot cannot be clearer where President Donald Trump wants to make deep cuts as outlined in his 2021 fiscal year \$4.8 trillion budget proposal. If Americans looked at just policy alone in making their decision for the next presidential election, pay attention to Trump's budget proposal. It's very revealing as to what his priorities are.

What's in it? Trump wants to gut social safety nets and divert that money to funding an already bloated defense budget and funds for his proposed southern border wall that Congress refuses to fund. Like his first year in office, he is also proposing more tax cuts that benefit corporations and America's wealthiest.

The safety nets he wants to cut:

- \$1.5 trillion cuts to Medicaid
- \$845 billion cut to Medicare
- \$25 billion in cuts to Social Security
- \$21 billion cut to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
- 220 billion from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistant

(It's Time...from page 2)

But due to state universities power as being independent and autonomous, there really isn't accountability on trimming duplicative and redundant administrative work.

What to do?

Besides addressing the problems that contributed to today's high tuition rates -- lowered state funding, multi-million dollars salaries of presidents and top staff, administrative "bloating" -- there are other ways to help students and their parents with student loan debt.

- Allow students to refinance student loans at current low interest rates.

*Reorganize student loans under the same protections as bankruptcy. Bankruptcy laws have many shield protections that encourage more Americans to pursue business entrepreneurship and ventures without putting themselves at risk of facing a life-time debt. The idea behind this is that the overall economy benefits. The same protections should be afforded to students.

- Extend student loans repayment over 20 years instead of the current 10 years.
- The most controversial suggestion

Program (SNAP)
 • \$207 billion in cuts to the student loan program

• 9 percent cuts to non-defense programs that would cut Section 8 public housing, Head Start, the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) nutrition program, and Low Income Home Energy Assistance

• What Trump wants to increase funding for -- increase military spending by \$34 billion next year, a 5 percent boost and fund \$8.6 billion to build his southern border wall.

The president's plan, according to the Wall Street Journal, calls for hiking America's already outlandish military spending to \$740.5 billion in FY2021 and pouring more into the construction of a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border.

Winners-Losers

Who are the losers should Trump has his way: seniors, working Americans, the poor, students, and the marginal group at risk of becoming homeless.

Who are the winners? Billion dollar defense contracting corporations and other top corporations to benefit from more tax breaks.

Critics of the budget say the president is going hard with heavy cuts because in his first half of his administration he overspent, ballooning the national deficit, and the treasury is collecting less with the passage of the corporate tax cuts.

The fair question is "why should the most vulnerable sectors of society now have to pay for what essentially benefitted the wealthiest corporations and Americans?"

Rep. John Yarmuth (D-Ky.), chairman of the House Budget Committee, condemned Trump's budget proposal as "destructive and irrational."

"The budget reportedly includes destructive changes to Medicaid, SNAP, Social Security, and other assistance programs that help Americans make ends meet—all while extending his tax cuts for millionaires and wealthy corporations," said Yarmuth. "Congress will stand firm against this president's broken promises and his disregard for the human cost of his destructive policies."

Bobby Kogan, chief mathematician for the Senate Budget Committee, echoed Yarmuth,

talked about and gaining serious momentum is making state colleges and universities tuition free. While it sounds "controversial," experts say it really is not. Somewhere along the way of having to fund for other competing worthy public projects, state and federal commitment to higher education tapered off. Where to get the additional public funds to make public higher education tuition free? Tax on billionaires whose tax rates are extraordinarily low relative to what they have been paying, 10-, 20-,50-years ago. They have been benefiting from an educated work force -- directly as their employers and indirectly by consumers -- but have not paid their fair share of being socially responsible.

It's time to reprioritize and reform higher education. It's time to recommit to the idea that higher education is a public good, not just through rhetoric, but practically by making public universities and colleges more affordable. ■

calling the FY2021 blueprint "enormously cruel."

Other cuts: Trump's budget proposal would also slash the Environmental Protection Agency budget by 27%, the Housing and Urban Development budget by 15%, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention budget by 9%—even amid the deadly coronavirus outbreak.

Political Impact

Remember the House flipped from Republican-controlled to Democrat-controlled in the last midterm election because of the near-death (by one vote) of the Affordable Care Act.

Americans should look at Trump's proposal of what could happen should the Republicans once again win control of the presidency and both chambers of Congress.

Under Speaker Nancy Pelosi and the Democrat-majority in the House, Trump's clearly partisan budget will not go anywhere.

But Americans -- specifically vulnerable sectors of the

nation -- must take Trump's budget as a warning of what could be if they do not vote. Make no mistake that in addition to safety nets, Republicans would also go after the Affordable Care Act, again.

Budget is unfair

It is reasonable for lawmakers to optimize programs that can include cuts to all the social safety nets where wasteful spending is found.

But, as Trump is proposing, to then take that next step of increasing spending in areas that are not needed undermine the original logic of making hard cuts in the first place.

This is where the hypocrisy, cruelty, and unfairness lie in the budget proposal.

Urgency to vote

Putting aside all the many reasons why Trump is undeserving of a second term, just on policy alone based on his 2021 budget proposal -- this is more than enough to get Americans voting. Spread the word, organize, and get out to vote! ■

Calling All Jose Rizal College (now JRU) graduates of Class of 1971

JRC Class of 1971 is celebrating its Golden Jubilee/50th Anniversary on February 21, 2021 in Manila.

If you belong to the graduating Class of 1971, please contact Chona Montesines-Sonido via email at filipinochronicle@gmail.com.

Or you can join our Facebook group named JRC High School 71@50 in preparation for the event.

GET reconnected with your classmates, teachers and friends! Share us your whereabouts and be a part of the grand celebration!



Student Debt Strangling Millennials

By Edwin Quinabo

For many college graduates, their student loan debt has been a shadow hanging over their heads, having to make high monthly payments on high interest loans over years, and in some cases, decades. College graduate millennials commonly complain that because of their student debt, their start on careers and on life are comparatively debilitating to previous generations.

In the past, it was not too uncommon for college graduates to pay off their loans within 5 years. But with the average student debt at \$45,000 for recent graduates, that is becoming increasingly difficult. For other graduate-professional degree holders, their post-college education debt can soar in the \$100,000-plus range, and even higher for graduates from top universities.

Student debt is widely accepted as a costly byproduct to be endured for a better future. But at what point does higher education become too expensive that it closes the doors of opportunity on millions of Americans? This is what students, parents, and now politicians are searching for answers to before future generations simply cannot afford to go to college.

Ashley Adriano of Ewa graduated last year from Chaminade University with a total student loan debt of \$35,000. She got Sallie Mae and Nelnet student loans with a 10-year repayment schedule. She went on to major in Journalism at UH-Manoa.

Adriano admits that making her monthly payments has been okay, but only because she still lives at home and saves money that way. "But if I were to go on my own it could be really hard to keep up with my loans," she said.

To keep her student debt from rising higher, while in college Adriano worked two part-time jobs that afforded her enough spending money.

She says getting a college education even with the hefty cost was worth it, but adds, "but I don't think that's the case for everybody."

Cora Guevarra from Moanalua moved to Califor-

nia for college. After receiving her BS in accounting, she went on to get her MBA to better her chances of getting a higher paying job. She has had two deferments on her student loans, but now her debt is up to \$93,000. She wasn't able to get a third deferment.

"Now I got debt collectors coming at me. With all the other living expenses I have along with paying back these student loans, I literally can't afford everything and could lose everything. I can't get forgiveness on my student loans. It's like you'd have to be disabled to get one," said Guevarra.

Guevarra is not certain that she would do it all over again if she had a chance. "All this debt for how good life can be with higher education seems like empty promises. It weighs on me everyday that I have this debt hanging over me.

"I feel I didn't know better when I was 18, but really, who does at that age. We commit to major financial responsibility kind of in the dark. Sure there are dozens of stories with better outcomes than mine, but there are also others in similar situations to mine that we're just struggling to get by," said Guevarra.

"Getting a college education to better ourselves, to be contributors to society shouldn't have to cost this much. It wasn't like this for our parents. Something needs to change. We need help."

By the numbers

The accumulated student loan debt is nearly \$1.6 trillion, which exceeds the accumulated car loans and even credit card debt.

According to an analysis by Moody's Analytics, student loans have grown "persistently at double digit-rates throughout the last decade" and "college costs have outpaced overall inflation by a significant margin."

According to figures released by the College Board, the average annual tuition and fees at a college or university conferring a four-year degree in the United States is \$8,893 for in-state attendees of public colleges, \$22,203 for out-of-state attendees of public colleges, and \$30,094 for private nonprofit colleges.

On top of that, these figures do not include room and board, books, transportation, food or other living expenses.

The College Board estimates the typical living cost for a full-time student attending college (tuition plus housing and estimated living expenses) during the 2016-2017 academic year ranges from \$11,810 on the low budget to \$17,620 on a moderate spending budget.

Multiply those annual figures 4-6 times, the time it usually takes to get a bachelor's degree, then it's clear to see how most students are carrying a heavy financial burden after graduation.



How did college become so expensive?

The biggest contributor to rising tuition has been major reductions in state and federal support, according to the American Council on Education. Public funding in higher education were cut by more than \$7 billion between 2008 and 2018. As state and federal governments cut funding to these institutions, colleges have had to make up for that lost income somewhere. The easy way to recover those funds has been to pass it on to students.

Other driving costs includes substantial rise of salaries of university presidents, top level administrators and football coaches which collectively run in multi-millions annually, which critics say mirror the exorbitant payouts at the top of today's corporate sector. Higher education is big business and the payouts are top-heavy.

A 2019 report from the Chronicle of Higher Education gathered the salary data of more than 1,400 chief executives of both private and public universities, and found 17 public university presidents make more than \$1 million annually.

At big universities, sports coaches are the highest paid employees with salaries in the millions. A sampling of a few of the highest paid coaches per year: Duke University's basketball coach Mike Krzyzewski \$8,932,325; University of Al-

abama's football coach Nick Saban \$8,307,000; Ohio State University's football coach Urban Meyer \$7,600,000; University of Michigan's football coach Jim Harbaugh \$7,504,000.

Experts say "administrative bloating," massive growth in non-teaching jobs is another major overhead at universities that is passed onto students.

Market trends and demand also dictate tuition costs. Competition allows colleges and universities to set their own profit margins.

Robert Frank, the Henrietta Johnson Louis Professor of Management and Professor of economics at Cornell University, said "Universities face increasing pressure to bid for the various resources [top students and faculty] that facilitate the quest for high rank. These pressures have spawned numerous positional arms races that have already proved extremely costly, and promise to become more so. While the race benefits individuals who get admitted, it works to the disadvantage of the group because it inflates expenses."

Possible solutions to help students with student debt

Besides correcting or reversing some of the drivers of cost listed above, education reformers suggest ways to help students with their debt:

- **Restructuring student loan rates** to make them low-

(continue on page 5)

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COVER STORY

(from page 4)

er than prevailing interest rates and enabling students to refinance student loans with less restrictions.

• **Changing bankruptcy laws** to allow students to work with creditors. Bankruptcy law excludes student loans from discharge. It is extremely rare for a court to find a student debtor meeting the legal standard of undue hardship that would force creditors to work with students in coming up with a bankruptcy repayment schedule.

Bankruptcy laws have many shield protections that encourage more Americans to pursue business entrepreneurship and ventures without putting themselves at risk of facing a life-time debt. The idea behind this is that the overall economy benefits. College graduates say the same protections should be afforded to students.

• **Extend student loans repayment** over 20 years instead of the current 10 years. This would allow monthly payments to be more manageable.

Should public college education be free?

While state colleges are not tuition free, this is becoming a trend that some wealthy universities are offering. A few well known universities offering free tuition to qualified students include: USC, Stanford University, Cornell University, NYU.

USC just announced this month that families making \$80,000 or less, can attend USC tuition-free.

At Stanford University, students whose families make less than \$125,000 a year and have assets worth \$300,000 or less, qualify for free tuition. Students whose families make less than \$65,000 also do not have to pay for room and board.

Last year, Cornell University started to offer free tuition to qualified students at its medical school. In 2017, NYU's School of Medicine abolished tuition for every medical student.

Other colleges are offering major reductions to qualified students in the way of scholarships to a large percentage

of their student body, even as high as 50 percent of all their students. A few of these colleges offering major reductions to qualified students include: Amherst, Brown, Columbia, Dartmouth, Harvard, Northwestern, Princeton, Rice, University of Chicago, Vanderbilt, and Yale.

Two major presidential candidates – Sen. Bernie Sanders and Sen. Elizabeth Warren – are running campaigns with the promise of making public college education free.

While it's considered radical to some, analysts say it really isn't.

Robert Reich, Professor of Public Policy at UC Berkeley, has written extensively on the need to reinvent American education. He asserts that in the 1950s and 1960s higher education was practically free; and that junior colleges as late as in the 1980s were practically free. He says lawmakers then believed higher education was a public good and that society benefitted from it, similar in support for public education from K-12 to high school. But somewhere along the way, government has lost that commitment.

He said, "a decent society wouldn't push millions of students into debt. It would recognize that higher education isn't mainly a personal investment. It is a public good."

Tips for students to contain cost

Here are some ways students can avoid ballooning student debt:

• **Start out at a junior college.** Attending a community college for two years is a great way to reduce the costs of a college education and avoid some student loan debt. Many junior college credits are transferable to universities conferring four-year degrees. At most universities, the first two years requires that students take basic college-level courses.

For example, every freshman and sophomore has to take English 101, a natural science class such as biology or chemistry, U.S. history or civics, and a college-level math class. At a typical university, it will cost \$400 to \$600 or more per credit hour for these basic classes,

which means each one will cost you \$1,200 to \$1,800. Community colleges typically charge \$45 to \$250 per credit hour. Attending a community college for two years enables students to get all their basic classes out of the way while saving a significant amount of money.

• **Consider majors at junior college that are high-paying and in high-demand.** There are many lucrative professions that do not require four-year degrees which educational requirements can be fulfilled at the junior college level such as Allied Health careers and health tech jobs.

• **Actively seek grants and scholarships.** Remember grants and scholarships do not have to be paid back.

• **Choose a university or college that is affordable.** Most people price shop for everything, why not for college? Besides a college's reputation and other common reasons why students choose a college, mixed into that decision-making should be cost.

• **Find a college or university located in an affordable town or city.** Living costs while in college is a major contributor to student debt. At-

"A decent society wouldn't push millions of students into debt. It would recognize that higher education isn't mainly a personal investment. It is a public good."

—ROBERT REICH

Professor of Public Policy at UC Berkeley

tending school where housing, food, and other living expenses are affordable could lower student debt.

• **Get a part-time job or paying intern position.** Most college students work a part-time job out of necessity. Some students find working more hours and taking on less credits per semester could make expenses manageable. It might take longer to complete a degree, but it will also lower a student's debt because a student doesn't have to take on additional loans for living expenses while in college.

Student loan default will get worse

Economists say the cost of tuition and borrowing will continue to rise. Federal student loans are the only con-

sumer debt segment with continuous cumulative growth since the Great Recession.

More than 1 million student loan borrowers each year go into default (when a person has not made a payment toward their education debt in roughly a year); and by 2023, it's expected that nearly 40 percent of borrowers are expected to default on their student loans.

Sen. Elizabeth Warren said, "If Wall Street can borrow money at 0.75% interest, so can college students. We need to stop treating students as profit centers."

Consumer advocates are demanding that it's time for government and the private sector to work on structural changes to higher education. ■

HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

Get an Early Start, Register to Vote

Hawaii residents can register to vote in the 2020 Elections several ways:

- Online: Visit olvr.hawaii.gov. You must have a current Hawaii Driver's License or State ID to complete an application online.
- Mail: Print and submit a completed Voter Registration

Application to your Clerk's Office.

- In-person: Visit the Office of Elections or your Clerk's Office to submit an application in person.

Applications are available at any of the following locations: Office of Elections, Clerk's Offices, State Libraries, U.S. Post Offices, Most State

Agencies, Satellite City Halls.

Voter registration application is also available in Ilocano and Chinese.

Registration deadlines are Primary Election – July 9, 2020; General – Oct. 5, 2020.

To register to vote, applicants must be a U.S. Citizen, a resident of the state of Hawaii, be at least 18 years of age. ■

Bill Introduced to Extend Statute of Limitations for Childhood Sexual Abuse

Rep. Cynthia Thielen introduced HB2177, legislation to amend statutory limitations on the time period in which a survivor of childhood sexual abuse may file a civil suit. The bill also permits the court to order restorative justice measures, if deemed appropriate.

The proposed legislation extends the statute of limitations to up to forty years after the 18th birthday of the child-

hood sexual-abuse survivor. Current Hawai'i law requires victims to report and file a lawsuit within eight years of their 18th birthday, up to the age of 26, or three years after discovering that an injury or illness during adulthood was caused by childhood sexual abuse.

Survivors of childhood sexual abuse often suppress the truth about their experiences until they reach adulthood.

The delay may stem from fear, disbelief, anger, helplessness, anxiety, embarrassment, or other feelings that are not the survivors' fault.

Some studies have estimated that between 60 and 80 percent of childhood sexual abuse survivors withhold disclosure of their abuse until adulthood. The average delay is approximately 20 years, while some survivors delay disclosure for up to 50 years. ■

OPINION



By Melissa Martin, Ph.D.

Stop Big Game Trophy Hunting

cats, mountain lions, wolves and other domestic wildlife fall victim to trophy hunting, damaging natural ecosystems. www.humanesociety.org.

The United States, international trophy hunting is addressed by several laws, including the Endangered Species Act. ESA does not regulate trophy-hunting activities within range countries directly; rather, the law governs what can be imported into the United States. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) regulates trophy hunting, in part, by issuing permits to import trophies of species that are listed as threatened or endangered under ESA. www.crsreports.congress.gov.

Excuses. Excuses. Excuses. Trophy hunters rationalize reasons out the wazoo to justify killing of animals in the wild. Hunters pump money into the economy. Hunters help with conservationism. Really? Hunters kill for the thrill. And hang their prize on walls to brag. Decorate your walls with something else. Is destroying wildlife for

pleasure unethical? Yes.

“Trophy hunting—the killing of big game for a set of horns or tusks, a skin, or a taxidermied body—has burgeoned into a billion-dollar, profit-driven industry, overseen in some cases by corrupt governments. Many countries in sub-Saharan Africa allow trophy hunting, with varying degrees of transparency and control, establishing yearly quotas meant to reflect the status of species and creating exclusions for highly vulnerable populations. South Africa, for instance, no longer allows hunting of leopards. Kenya has banned trophy hunting outright since 1977, and in Botswana, a comparatively wildlife-rich country, a temporary ban in government-controlled hunting areas went into effect in 2014,” according to an article in National Geographic.

Cecil, a famed black-maned lion in Zimbabwe, was lured with bait, shot with an arrow and suffered for more than 10 hours before his hunt-

ers tracked and finished killing him in 2015. Cecil’s death sparked international outrage in 2015; his son, Xanda, met a similar fate two years later. www.humanesociety.org.

Cecil, the lion, was stalked and killed by a Minnesota dentist under the guise of conservation. How much did that cost him for bragging and boasting rights?

Trophy hunting in places where animals are bred and held captive for the purpose of being killed (canned hunting) results in cutting off the head of a creature to decorate a wall. Ah, have a beer and boast. Oh, have a bratwurst and brag.

Why do people thrill kill animals? “Why we may never understand the reasons people hunt animals as ‘trophies’” is an explanation by criminologist Dr. Xanthe Mallett. “Perhaps hunting large animals is an example of some people’s need to show dominance over others. Research shows increased levels of hostility and a need for power and control are associated with

poor attitudes towards animals, among men in particular.” www.theconversation.com.

“Of all the animals, man is the only one that is cruel. He is the only one that inflicts pain for the pleasure of doing it.”—Mark Twain

Writing this column, I searched around my house to make sure I was not being a hypocrite. Any items made of ivory? No. Any bearskin rugs on my floor? No. Any boots or bags made of crocodile skin? No. Any coats made of animal fur? No. Any pillows made of duck feathers? No. I do own a purse and a pair of boots that are partly made of cow hide (leather). I’m assuming the leather is a byproduct of the meat from the cow which feeds humans. While growing up, I ate venison. Chicken, turkey, and seafood have a place on my table. And on occasion, I eat bacon. But I’ve never committed an animal thrill kill. ■

MELISSA MARTIN, Ph.D., is an author, columnist, educator, and therapist. She lives in Ohio. www.melissamartinchildreauthor.com.

FILM REVIEW

QUEZON’S GAME: A COMPASSIONATE QUEST FOR FREEDOM

By Mark Lester E. Sanchez

There is something quietly miraculous about Matthew Rosen’s internationally-lauded debut film, *Quezon’s Game*. Set in 1938, the political/historical drama sheds an urgent light into the heavily obscured history of the Philippines in the incipient years of the Second World War. It retells the story of the country’s second president, Manuel L. Quezon (Raymond Bagatsing), and his noble and nearly self-destructive plight into bringing in Jewish refugees from the Nazi concentration camps of Germany and Austria to the country at a time where the rest of the world seemed to turn a blind eye.

Upon learning the Jews’ grave circumstances in Europe during a game of poker, President Quezon, together with his trusted circle—the future US president, Colonel Dwight

Eisenhower (David Bianco), the American diplomat Paul McNutt (James Paoleli), and Alex Frieder (Billy Ray Gallion), himself a Jewish—sets to pave the way for the Philippines to admit tens of thousands of Jewish refugees within its borders. The scheme proves to be expedient and compelling on paper; however, there was one significant hindrance: the United States does not want anything to do with the Jews.

Quezon—passionate and strongly driven by a weighty moral compass—proves to be more obstinate and far more clever. With frantic determination, he proceeds to conspire to trick the Department of State and Germany into letting in Jews without a second glance; this time not as refugees but professionals seeking employment into the country’s newest city. However, instead of the



10,000 visas McNutt promises to collect, only two hundred are allowed for disposal for the rest of the year. This numbing reality-check trickles into the most distressing moment of the film: Frieder and Quezon scraping off names of the thousands of others who will not make it to the country, made more harrowing by the snippets of concentration camp shots.

Other than threats of external antagonists, Quezon is equally plagued internally: by the wavering support of his staff after discovering his plan,

and the swift declining of his health. The latter, though, ultimately spurs him into galvanizing his intent, and, eventually, Quezon will succeed in taking 1,200 Jews safely into the Philippines, with the help of rallying Filipinos, a number he willingly concedes to despite being less than what is initially aimed for. He will die in his estate in Saranac Lake, New York, in 1944, and will neither witness the end of the war, nor the Philippines’ independence from the US in 1946.

Quezon’s compassionate quest for the Jews’ freedom from the Nazi may seem unfounded in the eyes of his colleagues; the former president, Emilio Aguinaldo, one of the looming antagonists in the film, a radical nationalist, strongly believes so. But Quezon’s ambition, as we are given to understand, aligns with his utmost desire to regain Philippine’s independence—and its dignity—from its occupier. This is revealed in one of the

film’s most powerful scenes: Quezon confiding to Osmeña, then his vice president, the racial inequality and prejudices Filipinos confront everyday in Washington or even in the country.

Despite the modesty of the production values, or due to it, the film pulls punches at intended places. It is sincere, and it paints a clear, unhindered picture of a human story. What adds to its wonder is perhaps the audience’s genuine lack of knowledge of this significant chapter of the Philippines and the Holocaust, and it succeeds in making use of that, so that each scene always begs for more explanations, or questions. Certainly, its dramatic theatricality sometimes is overdone, resulting in an awkward scene or a clumsy shot; but the film in its entirety is well-put, well-executed. And with its screening around the globe, I only hope that many Filipinos, or otherwise, will get to see it, and witness a history they haven’t seen before. ■

WHAT'S UP, ATTORNEY?

Trump Innocent - God Sees the Truth But Waits



By Atty. Emmanuel S. Tipon

"God sees the truth but waits" – Leo Tolstoy

On February 5, 2020, the Senate declared President Trump innocent of the false charges made by the Democrats. God – who had seen the truth – did not wait too long.

Congratulations, Mr. President. We pray that the Almighty will continue to bless you, the First Lady, and your family.

As we had confidently predicted, you will not be removed from office by impeachment. But the Devil has other tricks to be guarded against.

People said that the Democrats had a weak case against you. I say they had no case against you.

The Democrats fighting you are like the incompetent lawyer epitomized by the saying: When the facts are against you, pound on the law. When the law is against you, pound on the facts. And when the facts and the law are against you, pound on the table.

The Democrats have changed the last sentence: When the facts and the law are against you, pound on the judge. In this case, the judges are the members of the Senate. Certain Democrats have accused the Senators of a cover-up because they did not want to subpoena witnesses. Some called them biased.

We had a deportation case like month. The Judge said that he would not allow me to call my witnesses, saying that I had submitted their names beyond the deadline. I argued that there was no deadline for submitting names of witnesses and at any rate I should be allowed to present witnesses in the interest of truth and justice. He said he would allow

me to present one out of the seven I named.

Did I denounce the Judge of a cover up? Did I call him biased? Absolutely not. I had submitted in evidence written declarations of my prospective witnesses so that even if they did not testify, what they had to say was already in evidence.

I WON the case which was extremely difficult because it involved a man whom I contended was wrongfully convicted of alleged sexual abuse of a minor. In Hawaii, as in many parts of the United States, it is very difficult for a person of color – and that includes Filipinos – to get justice.

Why did not the Democrats do what I did? Why did they not submit the written statements of the witnesses they wanted to call so that it would be part of the record already, such that even if the witnesses were not called to testify what they had to say was already in evidence. Amateurs. Inexperienced. Lacking in foresight.

The Democrats were bragging when they filed the impeachment charges that their evidence was overwhelming. If so, why did they still want to call witnesses? How overwhelming did they want their case to be?

It has been said that "it is the quality of the testimony that is controlling, not the number of witnesses who testify. <https://www.nycourts.gov/judges/cji/1-General/CJI2d.Credibility.pdf>

Weak on the Facts

The truth is the "case" of the Democrats against President was weak on the facts and weak on the law. They should not have pounded on the judges (Senators). They should have pounded on their own heads.

The Democrats charged President Trump with (1) abuse of power and (2) obstruction of Congress.

As for abuse of power, the Democrats charged



President Trump with "pressuring" the Ukrainian President to investigate the Bidens in exchange for foreign aid. The facts do not support that charge.

On July 25, 2019, President Donald Trump called President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine to congratulate him. In the course of the conversation, President Trump said: *"There's a lot of talk about Biden's son, that Biden stopped the prosecution and a lot of people want to find out about that so whatever you can do with the Attorney General would be great. Biden went around bragging that he stopped the prosecution so if you can look into it... It sounds horrible to me."*

Where is the abuse of power? Where is the pressure in that conversation? Where is the talk of foreign aid?

[Why are the Democrats so obsessed with giving millions of foreign aid to Ukraine? Why not help Americans who are poor, hungry, sick, aged, and homeless? What kind of values do the Democrats have?]

As for obstruction of Congress, President Trump allegedly acted "in defiance of subpoenas issued by the House of Representatives" by directing Executive Branch agencies "not to comply with those subpoenas".

Have not these Democrats heard of "separation of powers" and "checks and balances". Even an aspiring citizen who prepared for his naturalization test knows those principles. If President Trump subpoenaed members of Congress, would they obey him?

Weak on the Law

The United States Con-

stitution provides: "The President, Vice President, and all Civil Officers of the United States, shall be removed from Office on Impeachment for, and Conviction of, Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors." Art. II, Sec. 4.

The charges against the President do not constitute "Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors".

Only crimes are impeachable offenses. Those who say otherwise did not study statutory construction or if they did they slept in class or did not understand it. There is a Latin maxim known as "expressio unius est exclusio alterius" (what is not expressed is excluded). Abuse of power and obstruction of Congress are not mentioned. So they are excluded.

Another rule of statutory construction is "ejusdem generis" The term "other high crimes and misdemeanors"

is not defined in any statute. Applying the statutory construction rule ejusdem generis (Latin for "of the same kind" meaning that where general words follow an enumeration of specific things, such general words are to be construed to apply only to things of the same kind as those enumerated), the term "or other High Crimes and Misdemeanors" means crimes and misdemeanors which are as serious as treason and bribery.

Still another rule of statutory construction is that "penal laws should be strictly construed". The Constitutional provision on impeachment is penal in nature because it punishes the offender. It should be strictly construed to limit the offenses for which a President may be impeached to those expressly enumerated.

Short of 18 votes to convict

The Democrats knew that they needed 18 Republican turncoats to impeach the President. How did they expect to get that? They got one – Senator Romney – who voted to impeach President Trump on the "abuse of power" charge.

I am very, very disappointed with Romney. I flew to Los Angeles to meet him in person when he was running for

(continue on page 10)

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NEWS FEATURE

HFC PUBLISHER CHONA MONTESINES-SONIDO RECEIVES THE 2020 JRU ALUMNI ACHIEVERS' AWARD IN JOURNALISM

By Jim Bea Sampaga



Every year, the Jose Rizal University's Alumni Association (JRUA) awards

and recognizes outstanding JRU alumni with exceptional achievements and contributions to their respective professional fields. Past JRUAA Achievers' Award (JRUA) recipients include former Philippine President Ramon Magsaysay, former Manila mayor Gemiliano Lopez, Jr., Rustan's founder Bienvenido Tantoco and PBA player Vergel Meneses.

The 2020 JRUAA Achievers' Awards was held in the JRU Auditorium last February 7 where Chona Montesines-Sonido, Hawaii Filipino Chronicle's co-publisher and



HFC Publisher Chona Montesines-Sonido with JRU President Dr. Vincent Fabella and JRU Chairman of the Board Mrs. Marinela Fabella

managing editor, was awarded the Achievers' Award in Journalism for her outstanding contributions in journalism and to the Filipino-American community in Hawaii.

"I never thought when I was a student here that many years later I would be standing here accepting this prestigious award... and to be among other recipients, both past and present," Montesines-Sonido said during her acceptance speech.

She graduated as a valedictorian of JRU Class of 1971 and received the 1971 Presidential Gold Medal Award. She went to the University of Santo Tomas and received a degree in Psychology. She was a grad student at Ateneo de Manila University before she pursued her Master's degree in Psychology at Columbia University in New York City in the 1980s.

In 1993, she founded the Hawaii Filipino Chronicle alongside her husband, Dr. Charlie Sonido. For the past

25 years, Montesines-Sonido made sure that the Filipino community, in Hawaii and the mainland, are recognized and informed of the events and issues our mother country is facing. With her husband, she has also been to several mission trips to the Philippines, providing underserved communities with free medical care, medical prescription and supplies.

"The Hawaii Filipino Chronicle will do its best to continue our high standards

and excellence in journalism," Montesines-Sonido said as she ended her speech. "And most importantly, continue to serve our Filipino communities locally and globally."

Below are the 2020 Jose Rizal University Alumni Achievers' Awardees:

- Arts & Culture**
- Dr. Jaime G. Ang, HS '81
- Medicine**
- Dr. Maria Lolita E. Reyes-Uy, HS '71
- Economics**
- Dr. Robert R. Teh, Jr., HS '71
- Business**
- Mila S. Aujero-Villanueva, HS '60
- Visual Arts**
- Noell El Farol, HS '77
- Journalism**
- **Chona A. Montesines-Sonido**, HS '71
- Entrepreneurship**
- Ricky V. Valerio, HS '79 ■

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AS I SEE IT



By Elpidio R. Estioko

How Will the Electoral Votes Weigh In vs Popular Votes?

With the Senate impeachment trial now over and transitioning towards the November elections as the next battle ground, the issue continues. The issue is now very much at the top of the national political landscape gently pushing the electorate to make their decisions through the ballots by exercising their inherent right to vote.

Democrats need to learn from the past that in the end, it's the electoral votes that matters, not the popular votes although delegates/electors that compose the Electoral College are determined by popular votes. Two of the nation's last three presidents won the presidency in the Electoral College, even though they lost the popular vote nationwide. In 2000, Al Gore outpolled George W. Bush by more than 540,000 votes but lost in the Electoral College, 271-266. Sixteen years later, Hillary Clinton garnered almost 3 million more votes than Donald Trump but lost decisively in the Electoral

College, 306-232. And, as a recent *New York Times* poll suggested, the 2020 election could very well again deliver the presidency to the loser of the popular vote.

Take note that it's the same Trump who won over Clinton who tallied more popular votes than he had, who is running for re-election this election year, so the Democrats need to learn from the past. They need to make sure that during their campaign for popular votes, they have enough delegates/electoral votes to win the presidency. It's the Electoral College that will catapult them to the presidency. Trump capitalized on this in 2016 and should have the experience to attempt duplicating it in 2020.

Let us remember that the Electoral College is a process established in the Constitution by the Founding Fathers. It consists of the **selection of the electors who will** vote for President and Vice President and counting of the electoral votes is done by Congress. At that time, there were a few voting precincts in remote areas, no vote by mail, the internet was not there yet, and people had a hard time traveling to polling places situated in the town/city proper. That being



the case, the Founding Fathers thought of electing delegates to the Electoral College to represent the people.

As per the US Constitution, the Electoral College consists of 538 electors and a majority of 270 electoral votes is required to elect the President. States have the same number of electors as it does members in its Congressional delegation: one for each member in the House of Representatives plus two Senators.

Technically, the Electoral College is a thing in the past, meaning it may not apply any more to the present times as envisioned by the Founding Fathers because of the emergence of the internet, institution of the vote by mail, and the voting precincts are now available in remote places. But, for as long as it is still not amended and ratified by the states, it is still a matter the politicians can't ignore. It needs two thirds of supermajority in Congress and three fourths to be ratified by the states, so we are stuck with the Electoral College this coming November.

(WHAT'S UP, ATTORNEY?: Trump Innocent...from page 7)

President in 2012. I went to Florida during the Republican convention to nominate him. I contributed four figures to his campaign. I have a mind to ask him to refund me. Why did he become a RINO?

(Republican in name only). Ask him.

WHAT NEXT?

"Ana ngaruden?" as they ask in Ilocano. What next?

The Devil never stops disturbing the peace. That is his/her/it life-long career. ■

We need to educate more the American people to understand how the popular votes would impact the electoral votes, but for the meantime, we, the people, need to really cast our votes this coming November!

Let's face it, the Electoral College is the ultimate factor in electing our president and vice president... for now! This is the naked truth for the politicians and the American people to understand and contend with.

There is a national referendum, I learned it lately, being circulated by *Actionnetwork.org* reaching out to people urging their lawmakers to join the *National Popular Vote compact* to fix the broken Electoral College. This is great but don't you think this is rather too late?

Under this plan, whoever wins the most votes nationwide should be elected President of the United States. States must pass the National Popular Vote compact to reform the outdated, anti-democratic Electoral College.

For the second time in five elections, many Americans are outraged that the presidential candidate who won the most popular votes lost the election. The *winner-take-all* Electoral College system must be changed so that voters in all 50 states have a say in choosing our president. The *winner-take-all* concept otherwise known as unit rule tells us that the party that wins the most votes in that state appoints all of the electors for that state.

This became the norm across the nation by the 1830's. Currently, the only exceptions to the unit rule are in Maine and Nebraska that allocate their electors by congressional district, plus two at-large electors awarded to the candidate who wins the state's popular votes.

To correct this, according to the online action group, states can decide how they award their electoral votes, so if enough require their electors to vote for the winner of the nationwide popular vote (instead of who won in that state), it would fix the problems of the Electoral College without needing to amend the Constitution.

Until enough states join in, this National Popular Vote compact wouldn't take effect but... we're closer to that by now-- 15 states and the District of Columbia have already signed on, totaling 196 electoral votes of the needed 270.

Activating the National Popular Vote compact would reshape our democracy for the better because not only would it ensure that the person who actually got more votes win the presidency, but it would also force candidates to spend time with voters in all 50 states, instead of just a few swing states.

The American people are still supreme... whether it be through popular votes or through electoral votes! ■

.....
ELPIDIO R. ESTIOKO was a veteran journalist in the Philippines and an award-winning journalist here in the US. For feedbacks, comments... please email the author at estiokoelpidio@gmail.com.

ATTY. TIPON has a Master of Laws degree from Yale Law School and a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of the Philippines. His current practice focuses on immigration law and appellate criminal defense. He writes law books for the world's largest law book publishing company and writes legal articles for newspapers. Listen to *The Tipon Report* which he co-hosts with son Noel, the senior partner of the Bilecki & Tipon Law Firm. It is the most witty, interesting, and useful radio program in Hawaii. *KNDI 1270 AM* band every Thursday at 7:30 a.m. Atty. Tipon served as a U.S. Immigration Officer. He co-authored the best-seller "Immigration Law Service, 1st ed.," an 8-volume practice guide for immigration officers and lawyers. Atty. Tipon has personally experienced the entire immigration process. He first

came to the United States on a student/exchange visitor visa to study at Yale. He returned to the Philippines to resume practicing law. He came again to the United States on a non-immigrant work visa to write law books, adjusted his status to that of a lawful permanent resident, and became a naturalized citizen. Atty. Tipon was born in Laoag City, Philippines. Tel. (808) 800-7856. Cell Phone (808) 225-2645. E-Mail: filamlaw@yahoo.com Websites: <https://www.tiponlaw.com>, <https://www.hawaiianimmigrationattorney.com>, <https://www.bileckilawgroup.com>. This article is a general overview of the subject matter discussed and is not intended as legal advice. No attorney-client relationship is established between the writer and readers relying upon the contents of this article.)

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CANDID PERSPECTIVES



By Emil Guillermo

Democrats' New Political Virus: "Berniephobia"



When the market fell yesterday by 1,000 points, I was reminded of my Filipino American father, a hotel/culinary worker, who was always too poor to invest in the stock market. He arrived in America during the Great Depression and, even as I was growing up, he never saw the market as his go-to economic barometer of choice.

When he wasn't at a card table, he preferred to derive value from an honest day's work as a proud union member, where he believed in the power of the vote, even if just for shop steward.

And if he were alive today, I know who he'd be backing.

Bernie Sanders. No question.

He'd consider Sanders a youngster. And they'd talk about income inequality and their heart attacks.

Maybe my dad's vote would be different if he were a hedge fund manager and had a little more than the rent in his bank account and bus fare in his pocket.

But then who else is speaking out for the working class and for immigrants and people of color in ways that might make a difference in their lives?

That's Sanders' appeal and why he won fair and square at the Nevada caucuses.

With his 34.3 percent of the vote, Sanders nearly doubled his closest rival, Joe Biden (17.9 percent). Pete Buttigieg (15.2 percent) and the latest hot debater performer Elizabeth Warren (12.8 percent) were even further back.

What happened?

People had a real choice for a change.

And now all the power brokers in the center are finally realizing that paying lip service to Asian Americans and people of color, as well as working class Americans of any color in general, no longer works.

People aren't just giving up and falling silezntly back in line when they're ignored by the big political players, who simply lock us in place by saying, "Where are you going to go?"

At the Nevada caucuses, honest, hardworking voters tired of being shut out of the system turned out for Sanders.

On "60 Minutes," Sanders admitted his secret to winning in November would be turning "non-traditional voters into voters."

It's about getting those who have opted out to opt back in for democracy's sake.

Bernie's Coalition

Nevada also shows that Sanders has built a real coalition for the New America—voters historically diverse and tired of a politics heavily weighted toward rich, white, corporate elitists.

According to entrance polls reported by the Washington Post, Sanders did it with 29 percent of the white vote, 51 percent of the Hispanic vote, 27 percent of the Black vote, and 65 percent of voters under 30—a multiracial, youth-oriented vote.

Sanders is the only candidate so far who can legitimately proclaim the diversity litany as a victorious battle cry.

"We are bringing our people together — black and white and Latino, Native

American, Asian American, gay and straight," Sanders reportedly said at a Sunday rally in El Paso. "We are bringing our people together around an agenda that works for the working people of this country."

Others can say it, but the results are showing Sanders is actually attracting those who've felt left out and neglected.

But can he win in the general?

Not if Democrats repeat what happened in 2016, when party leaders freaked out and changed the rules at the last minute.

And not if Democrats fail to understand that Sanders is for real and continue to red-bait Sanders from within. Right now, that's a big threat to Sanders. Every good day for Sanders exposes America's one-party system that advantages the wealthy and mostly white. Ever wonder why Bloomberg and Trump can be a Democrat one day and then a Republican the next? Because when America is controlled by oligarchs and their money, it doesn't really matter. Everyone else is just along for the ride.

The Berniephobes

But now the Sanders threat is real. You can't keep talking about income inequality and empowering the middle class of this country without making the rich feel a little uneasy.

That's why Lloyd Blankfein, Goldman Sachs CEO, doesn't hesitate to say it's harder for him to vote for Bernie Sanders than it is for Donald Trump. Or why financial

pundits on CNBC are calling Sanders "Communist," echoing Michael Bloomberg's comment during the Nevada Debate. (For the record, Sanders isn't a communist, no matter if reports say he honeymooned in Moscow. He's more Democratic Socialist as in Scandinavian countries).

And then there are the millionaire political pundits on MSNBC, one of whom compared Sanders' crushing blow of Democratic rivals to the victory of Hitler in Europe. Chris Matthews didn't say Sanders was Hitler, but was comparing the inevitability of their victories. A fine line, perhaps, but it does the trick. Mention anyone in the same sentence as Hitler, and you've just performed a major hit job.

People are scared. The mainstream power folks have no viable candidates and have resorted to name calling.

They can't agree on an anti-Trump, so they're acting just like Trump. Enough to vote for him even.

It's positively Trumpian.

It's the flip side of the Never Trumpers. Here come the Never Bernies.

Some pundits are mounting more reasonable attacks against Sanders, saying that nothing he proposes has a

chance of passing in a Senate controlled by Republicans. That may be true, but nothing anyone else is proposing to help the middle class would pass either. The critics then say Sanders ideas would cost too much. Will it cost us more than what Trump is doing—cutting taxes for the rich and growing the military to obscene levels in peacetime? The Congressional Budget Office in January said the government debt will grow by \$1 trillion this year and average \$1.3 trillion a year through the next decade. That would put us at \$31.4 trillion by 2030, 98 percent of our GDP, the highest since World War II. That's the direction we're going.

Pro-Bernie types would simply ask whether you'd rather tax the rich a little bit more so that working people can struggle less.

All the negative talk begins to spread like a virus. Coronavirus, a/k/a COVID 19 fears spooked Wall Street this week. It works the same way in politics. When you add the reports the past few days that Russia continues to meddle even before the election, suggesting in some stories it prefers Sanders over Trump, and it only adds to the confusion. It works in people's heads. Just like a virus, or an out-in-the-open hack in the election process. People begin to doubt everything they

(continue on page 12)



Michael A. McMann, M.D.

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A Decade of Dancing with Ian Navasca

By Jim Bea Sampaga

Every week, Ian Navasca teaches at least seven dance classes between Waipahu Intermediate School and his non-profit Waipahu dance studio, Treasure Box Studios. A former Jabbawockeez Show performer in Las Vegas, the 25-year-old Navasca has been dancing for more than a decade now.

"I was inspired by watching the Jabbawockeez on TV in 2008," Navasca said. "That encounter led me to emulate and practice all their moves at home."

The Jabbawockeez are a hip-hop dance crew from San Diego, California who won the first season of America's Best Dance Crew in 2008. Known for their mesmerizing hip-hop dance performances and staple outfit of white masks and gloves, Jabbawockeez mainly consists of Filipino-American members.

"They inspired me because they were excellent in their craft and when they took off their masks," Navasca said. "I discovered that the majority of them were Filipino which made me happy and

also surprised."

In 2010, he started his YouTube channel where he would constantly post his dance training sessions during the first year of his dancing. "YouTube was my accountability partner at the beginning of my dance journey," Navasca said. "I used YouTube as a way to critique myself through the footage I would record."

Navasca's primary dance style is hip-hop but his dance style changed over the years through the different dance teachers that he worked with during his career. Recently, he started creating more story-telling dance choreography videos which can be viewed through his YouTube channel.

His passion for dancing led him to multiple amazing opportunities such as performing alongside hip-hop dance crew Jabbawockeez for their Las Vegas headline shows in 2011 and 2015.

"Working with Jabbawockeez was truly a dream come true. They were the very ones who inspired me to start dancing which made the experience much more meaningful," Navasca shared.

One of Navasca's biggest hardships in his career that he still struggles with to this day



Ian Navasca

is self-doubt. And getting the position as a performer in the Las Vegas show was not an easy task.

"I felt that I was failing so much in terms of the quality of dance that I was performing," he shared. "At that time I needed to push past my capabilities and believe [in myself] in order to secure my position on the show."

Navasca said it's all about breaking past the mindset of "I can't do it."

"I remember the feeling I felt that I was scheduled to perform the live show and it was the greatest feeling in the world. I wouldn't have gotten there if I didn't put in the work to become greater at the craft," he said.

In 2012 and 2013, Navasca and his dance group Black

Canvas competed in the Hawaii edition of the popular dance competition World of Dance. They won 2nd and 3rd place respectively.

"The process of preparing for those competitions took hard-work, patience, and a lot of failures," Navasca reminisced.

"We needed to work hard: physically, mentally, spiritually and creatively. All in all, what pushed the team forward through the hard times was our commitment and focus to the vision of our crew."

When Navasca moved back to Hawaii from Las Vegas in 2015, his next goal was to become a full-time dance teacher. Formerly known as "The Playground," Navasca established Treasure Box Studios in Waipahu, a faith-based non-profit organization that offers free dance classes to the public. He also teaches dance classes at Waipahu Intermediate School.

"I could recall that the first couple weeks teaching dance again really opened my eyes to see that educating and developing people in the art of dance is what truly makes me happy," Navasca said.

As an artist, there will always be times that the passion for the craft and artistry starts to fade away. But every

time Navasca starts to feel this way, he looks back and reflects on his purpose, identity and future. He calls this the "three waves of reflection."

"The first wave is to really dig deep and rediscover your purpose in why you started that craft," Navasca shared. "The second wave is to identify anything in your life now that could be a passion drainer. The third wave is to set your trajectory upward."

For the next decade, Navasca hopes to create more dance shows, raise future dance teachers and performers, and contribute to making a positive impact in communities worldwide.

For aspiring dancers who want to follow their dreams of being a performer and choreographer, Navasca said: "If you love what you do, create a structure for you to accomplish your goals. You'll find that your dreams are more tangible than you think."

Ian Navasca is a performer, dance instructor and choreographer. He teaches free Beginner Urban Choreography at Treasure Box Studios, Waipahu every Wednesday at 6:30 PM. Visit mytreasureboxstudios.com for more details. Follow him on instagram: @iannavasca. ■

(CANDID PERSPECTIVES: Democrats'......from page 11)

read and hear and vow not to participate. And it's starting to work. Well-meaning supporters of the also rans are saying, "Yeah, Bernie's a threat to democracy."

Meanwhile, our democracy is really threatened every

day by the unchecked and unbalanced Trump with his administrative purges and assault on norms.

And this at a time when Democrats should be rallying around the emerging and overwhelming front-runner, right?

Nope. They're trying to take him down. It's full fledged "Berniephobia."

It's the kind of infighting that can kill a democracy.

South Carolina

We'll see the impact in Saturday's race in South Car-

olina. Can Sanders keep and grow his coalition, especially among Black voters. Will a solid No. 2 emerge? And then it's on to California, Texas, and the big prize Super Tuesday on March 3rd.

If you're a Bernie fan, inoculate yourself now from the daily barrage of anti-Bernie "revelations." There will be something new every day.

Wash your hands after watching cable news if you must. You have nothing to lose but your oligarchs.

If you're not a Bernie voter, don't engage in all the insults and red-baiting. Instead, encourage your candidates to build a better winnable coalition. Either that or encourage them to drop out and support one candidate. In 2016, that candidate was Hillary Clinton.

This year, who will it be?

With all the moderates divided, the math still works right now for Sanders. But there's still time left for someone to emerge who can appeal to both the working class and the oligarchs. That—not name-calling and fearmongering—is what it would take to stop the Senator from Vermont.

All Asian Americans, including Filipinos like my late father, know what it's like to be subjected to xenophobia. Now Sanders knows Berniephobia.

None of it belongs in an American democracy. ■

EMIL GUILLERMO is a veteran journalist and commentator. He was a member of the Honolulu Advertiser editorial board. Listen to him on Apple Podcasts. Twitter @emilamok.

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LEGAL NOTES



By Atty. Reuben S. Seguritan

Provisional Waiver for Same Sex Couples

Individuals who are not eligible to adjust their status have to depart the US to process their immigrant visa at a US embassy or consulate abroad. The problem is if they leave, they will be subject to a 3 year or 10 year bar from re-entering the US because of their unlawful presence. The 3 year bar is imposed if they have overstayed for more than 6 months. The 10 year bar is imposed if they have overstayed for more than a year.

Examples of individuals who are not eligible for adjustment are crewmen, those who entered without inspection, and those who entered as fiancé(e) but did not marry their petitioner.

Fortunately there is a process available to waive their unlawful presence. They may file for an I-601A provisional waiver.

The I-601A Application for Waiver of Grounds of Inadmissibility is a way for the undocumented immigrants to show that their qualifying US citizen or lawful permanent resident (LPR)

relative/s would be under extreme hardship if they are not allowed to re-enter the US or remain in the US with them. There is no one definition for what constitutes extreme hardship but various cases of the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) have stated that there is a non-exclusive list of factors that will be considered to determine whether the illegal immigrant can remain in the US or re-enter the US on the ground of extreme hardship to his/her qualifying relative.

These factors are: the presence of LPR or US citizen family ties to the US; qualifying relative's family ties outside the US; conditions in the country or countries which the qualifying relative would relocate and the extent of the qualifying relative's ties to such countries; financial impact of departure from the US; significant conditions of health and the unavailability of adequate medical care in the country which the qualifying relative would have to relocate to if the immigrant's waiver is denied; and any other factors peculiar and relevant to the case such as being a same-sex couple or being members of the LGBT community.

The USCIS has recognized the inherent difficulty that same-sex couples and

members of the LGBT community face in the world. It has explicitly stated that "social ostracism or stigma based on gender identity or sexual orientation should be considered in waiver applicants."

The waiver application of the LGBT undocumented immigrants should clearly show the challenges they face in their country because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. They include instances of abuse of any kind, including sexual, emotional, physical and psychological and include records of wounds, hospitalization, treatment and scars. The waiver applicants should describe the problems they faced in the community and how they were treated differently because of their sexual orientation. The waiver application should narrate in detail how they became aware of their sexual orientation and gender identity; their fears, hopes and dreams during those early days and; how these have changed throughout the years.

What is crucial in the waiver application is the detailed description of what their life was like before

and after the US citizen or LPR spouse came into their lives. The dangers and discrimination faced by members of the LGBT community in the country of origin should also be enumerated. These will include the lack of legal recognition of LGBT relationships in marriage, inheritance rights, visitation rights, right to adopt children, psychological trauma by daily danger of fines, flogging, death and inability to find work.

Reports from the country of origin would also be helpful because it is not common knowledge in the US how some countries have cultural norms and restrictions which do not recognize the LGBT community or outwardly reject them and impose the death penalty on them. If the waiver applicant and his spouse are of different races, this would also be significant because the difference in

race may place the couple in a worse situation than if the same sex couple were of the same race.

A psychological evaluation should be included in the waiver application to establish the fear, depression and emotional and psychological state of the US citizen/ LPR spouse of the waiver applicant because of the possibility that the undocumented immigrant would be deported and no longer with the US citizen/ LPR spouse. All of these details should be clearly explained in order to convince the USCIS that they should remain in the US or be allowed to return to the US, as the case may be, in order to stay with their US citizen or LPR spouse. ■

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

PHILIPPINE NEWS

Infected Pinoys on Ship Rise to 80

By Shiela Crisostomo
Wednesday, Feb. 26, 2020

MANILA, Philippines — Twenty-one more Filipinos from the cruise ship Diamond Princess have tested positive for the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), bringing to at least 80 the number of those who had to skip yesterday's repatriation to submit to treatment in Japan.

Health Secretary Francisco Duque III said that with this development, the



projected number of 480 Filipinos to be repatriated on two special flights back to the Philippines had dwindled to 450.

Records show there were 538 Filipino crew and passengers on board the virus-stricken ship, with 80 of them

(continue on page 14)

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PHILIPPINE NEWS

(Infected...from page 13)

contracting the virus. Two of the Filipinos who got infected have recovered but there is a "special arrangement" for their repatriation.

"Only those who tested negative and are asymptomatic (to COVID-19) can join the repatriation. Maybe around 450 passengers were repatriated. This does not include the nine medical team members from DOH (Department of Health) and four from DFA (Department of Foreign Affairs)," he said in a radio interview.

Repatriation flights

The repatriates were to arrive last night at Clark International Airport in Pampanga and then taken directly to

the Athletes' Village in New Clark City, Capas, Tarlac.

Special flights fetched them at Haneda airport in Japan yesterday with the first chartered flight, Philippine Airlines' PR-8422, departing Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) Terminal 2 around 10:30 a.m.

The other chartered flight departed NAIA at 12:20 p.m. Both were direct flights to Haneda with two pilots and six cabin crew each.

All cabin crew are to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) on the flight back to Clark, authorities said.

The first flight had one passenger representing the DFA while the second had two

DFA representatives aboard.

Earlier, officials from the Philippine embassy in Tokyo, DFA and the DOH medical team were in Yokohama for the disembarkation of the Filipinos from the Diamond Princess.

Duque noted that the Japanese government used military buses to transport the Filipinos from the ship docked off Yokohama to the Haneda airport where they were again tested for symptoms by quarantine officers.

The DFA ensured the repatriates were well taken care of from disembarkation until their safe arrival in the Philippines last night.

It also took care of preparations such as securing clear-

ances and permits for the disembarkation, land transfer and arrangements for the chartered flights.

A source told The STAR manning agency Magsaysay Maritime Corp. is paying for the repatriation of the Filipino ship crew from Japan.

Health protocols

Under the approved agreement among all concerned agencies, the DOH shall provide human resources and their transportation to the quarantine site, on-site medical needs of the repatriates, hospitalization expenses through PhilHealth and PPE for the first five days of quarantine.

The DOH will also coordinate all these efforts with the Inter-agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF) member agencies, World Health Organi-

zation, Philippine embassy in Japan and the Magsaysay Maritime Corporation.

Upon the return of the flights, the pilots and cabin crew of the two PAL special flights shall also undergo self-quarantine for 14 days.

An airport source told The STAR that local carriers are still appealing to the task force to lift this restriction. "The long quarantine period affects the supply of deployment of cabin crew and pilots for regular flights," said the source.

Duque said the IATF still has to decide on the request made by the Air Carriers Association of the Philippines (ACAP).

"There is this recommendation to exempt them (from the quarantine period) since they are sealed off from the passengers and also because

(continue on page 15)

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(Solution to Crossword No. 14 ebruary 15, 2020)

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

WAIPAHU CENSUS FAIR: COMPLETE FILIPINO COUNT | Saturday, March 14, 2020 | Waipahu High School, Honolulu | Learn more about the upcoming Census Survey at the Waipahu Census Fair. For more information, contact Raymund Liongson at rliongson@gmail.com

MABUHI PACIFIC EXPO & SUMMIT | July 24-26, 2020 | Hawaii Convention Center | Panelists-presenters on various topics are being accepted for the Expo. For details, contact Rose Cruz Chuma at rosechurma@mac.com

Have your organization's events listed in our community calendar. It's recommended to submit press releases a month in advance of your organization's event. Send information to filipinochronicle@gmail.com.

MAINLAND NEWS

Schatz Calls For Health Security Position to Be Filled as Threat from Coronavirus Grows

WASHINGTON, DC-- U.S. Senator Brian Schatz (D-Hawai'i) and 26 senators called on National Security Advisor Robert O'Brien to appoint a senior global health security expert to the White House's National Security Council (NSC) to coordinate administration efforts in response to the 2019 Novel Coronavirus and other global health security threats.

The top global public health position at the NSC has remained vacant for almost two years.

"Families concerned about the novel coronavirus threat need to know the NSC has a dedicated, senior official with appropriate expertise and authority to address the domestic and global health threats from the virus. It is of paramount importance that this person approaches this role through a public health lens," wrote Schatz and senators.

More than 44,000 people in

more than 20 countries who have contracted the novel coronavirus, which has killed more than 1,100 people.

The World Health Organization has declared the outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern, and on January 31, 2020, Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar declared a public health emergency in the United States. ■

(PHILIPPINE NEWS: Infected...from page 14)

they are wearing personal protective equipment," he said.

He said the task force may come up with new protocols for the members of flight and cabin crew today.

P10,000 assistance

The Filipino crew of Diamond Princess are getting P10,000 each in financial assistance from the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA).

Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III said the financial assistance to all active OWWA members among the ship's crew is meant to help them

with their expenses while completing the 14-day quarantine.

Bello said he understood that the Filipino seafarers who served aboard Diamond Princess were to be redeployed for work by their manning agency once quarantine is completed.

"So we could only provide temporary financial assistance, not the same assistance that we will extend if they come home permanently," Bello said in an interview.

Bello said the Filipino seafarers are also being considered to be granted a "Bagong Bayani" award

for continuing to serve ship passengers while already under quarantine.

"They have shown gallantry by working while under quarantine," he said

Although it would be unlikely for the seafarers to quit their jobs, Bello said OWWA is ready to provide assistance to those who would choose to stay in the country for good.

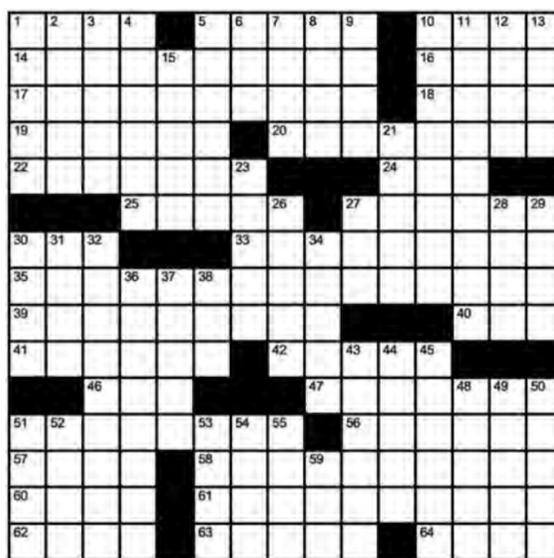
The DOLE chief also cited Magsaysay for its commendable handling of the situation of the Filipino crew. (www.philstar.com) . ■

KROWORD ni Carlito Lalicon

PAHALANG

- 1. Buli
- 5. Panyo
- 10. Kitil
- 14. Nuynuyin
- 16. Abismo
- 17. Disparidad
- 18. Isang uri ng kakanin
- 19. Di-pahintulutan
- 20. Magkalas
- 22. Samahan
- 24. Nguyngoy
- 25. Bakat
- 27. Plantsa
- 30. Miserable
- 33. Keha

- 35. Masungit
- 39. Salamin sa mata
- 40. Malaki at mailap na hayop-gubat
- 41. Alintanahin
- 42. Masunurin
- 46. Dumit
- 47. Nalaman
- 51. Pampagana
- 56. Balaba
- 57. Bagsik
- 58. Imbasor
- 60. Asim
- 61. Di-tiyak
- 62. Inuminan
- 63. Alyado



64. Munting wawa o bunganga ng ilog

PABABA

- 1. Pagado
- 2. Suwitik
- 3. Bingas
- 4. Buhat
- 5. Liwas
- 6. Kanta ni Freddie Aguilar
- 7. Dumiiin
- 8. Bagsak
- 9. Silag
- 10. Agkat

- 11. Ipiit
- 12. Daong
- 13. Saluysoy
- 15. Kaaya-aya
- 21. Isang uri ng panghuli ng isda sa ilog
- 23. Binga
- 26. Akma
- 27. Kung
- 28. Pawid
- 29. Akma

- 30. Bawal
- 31. Hinhin
- 32. Katumbalikan
- 34. Katwiran
- 36. Bukas
- 37. Ikulong
- 38. Rin
- 43. Sapo
- 44. Ipugal
- 45. Bagkos
- 48. Dapil

- 49. Apid
- 50. Bantad
- 51. Amag
- 52. Lapisak
- 53. Kibo
- 54. Esposo
- 55. Alon
- 59. Batas

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