

1998  
*Presidential Awards*  
*for*  
*Filipino Individuals*  
*and*  
*Organizations Overseas*

*(The facts and accounts of circumstances that are contained in the profiles of the 1998 Presidential Awardees were taken from the materials submitted to the Awards Secretariat for the consideration of their nominations.)*

## THE PRESIDENTIAL AWARDS SYSTEM

**T**he Presidential Awards for Filipino Individuals and Organizations Overseas is a biennial awards system intended to give recognition to Filipinos and other individuals or organizations that contribute to Philippine development and progress, or to promoting the interests of overseas Filipino communities. The awards are also given to Filipinos overseas who have distinguished themselves in their professions, and have brought honor to the Filipino people.

The awards system was institutionalized in 1991, with the signing of Executive Order No. 498. The first set of Presidential Awards for 22 individuals and organizations was given by Corazon C. Aquino in December 1993. The second Presidential Awards was presented by Fidel V. Ramos to 45 individuals and organizations in December 1996. In 1998, it will be conferred on 30 awardees.

The Presidential awards consist of five categories. The *Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino* Award is conferred on Filipino associations or individuals for their significant contributions to Philippine national development efforts. The *Kaakabay ng Bayan* Award is given to Filipino communities, groups of individual Filipinos, or Filipino associations overseas who have united for the common ideal and purpose of providing support to the progress and development of the country. The *Kaanib ng Bayan* Award is accorded to foreign organizations for their contribution to Philippine progress and development. The *Banaag* Award is given to Filipino and foreign individuals or associations for contributions which have significantly benefited a sector or community in the Philippines, or advanced the cause of Filipino communities abroad. The fifth category, the *Pamana ng Pilipino* Award is conferred on Filipinos overseas who have consistently pursued their work or profession with excellence and distinction.

This year's awardees were selected from 118 nominations endorsed by Philippine Embassies and Consulates in 34 countries. Of the 30 awardees, 22 are individuals and 8 are organizations from 14 countries, namely: Australia, Bahrain, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, France, Italy, Japan, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Spain, People's Republic of China (Special Administrative Region of Hongkong), Thailand, United Kingdom, and United States of America. The 22 individual awardees include 13 women and 9 men, representing diverse backgrounds.

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**Malacañan Palace**  
Manila



*Message*

As the President of a proud and great nation, it is my distinct privilege to lead our people in the commemoration of the Month of Overseas Filipinos this December. I also take pride in bestowing upon men, women, communities, and organizations of great deed and excellence, awards symbolizing our people's appreciation and gratitude for their achievements and selfless dedication in the service of others.

Over four centuries have passed since the first recorded Filipino migrant had set sail in search of the "new world". Since then, at least six million other Filipinos have followed, each one equipped with the resolve to succeed and to find his meaningful place in the global community.

Imbued with an unwavering faith in this country, our countrymen overseas continue to share their resources whenever the opportunities call for their involvement in the affairs of the nation. Their remittances, direct investments, technology and skills transfers, assistance to development efforts, and involvement in addressing the compelling issues facing our country and their communities overseas, have been major features of the partnership between this country and its people overseas. Through their world-class achievement, Filipinos overseas have also made this country proud. Their personal milestones are affirmations that we, Filipinos, have contributed so much in the realization of the gains of other nations and the world, at large.

*Sa lahat ng aking mga kababayan sa ibayong dagat, ikinalulugod kong ipaabot sa inyong lahat ang pasasalamat at pagbati ng inyong mga kababayan. Nawa'y magpatuloy ang pakikipagtulungan natin sa ikauunlad at ikapapayapa ng ating bansa at ng sandaigdigan.*

*Maligayang Pasko at Manigong Bagong Taon sa inyong lahat.*

A stylized, handwritten signature in dark ink, likely belonging to Joseph Ejercito Estrada, written in a cursive script.

**H.E. JOSEPH EJERCITO ESTRADA**  
President of the Republic of the Philippines

11 December 1998

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Republic of the Philippines  
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS



*Message*

As the nation finds itself at the threshold of a new millennium, our countrymen abroad are answering the call to nation building with a deeper sense of purpose and optimism. With them, we share common dreams and aspirations, determined to strive for a better future for our country and our people.

We observe the Month of Overseas Filipinos this December as a way of recognizing the importance of every Filipino, including those overseas, and their significant contribution to our collective efforts at nation building. We pay homage to our countrymen abroad, who, by their endeavors, have helped improve the quality of life for our people and brought prestige to our nation.

This year's recipients of the 1998 Presidential Awards for Filipino Individuals and Organizations Overseas are fine examples of men and women who have distinguished themselves in their professions and have given their unwavering support for our country's development efforts.

Their exceptional accomplishments and dedicated service, which have served as a beacon of inspiration to us all, truly deserve our accolade and gratitude.

*Sa ating mga kababayan sa ibayong dagat, malugod ko kayong binabati at pinasasalamatan.*

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, featuring a large, sweeping initial 'D' and a cursive 'Stazon'.

DOMINGO L. STAZON, JR.

Secretary of Foreign Affairs

and

Chairman, Commission on Filipinos Overseas

11 December 1998

April 1948





Department of Foreign Affairs  
**COMMISSION ON FILIPINOS OVERSEAS**



*Message*

The Commission on Filipinos Overseas takes pride and honor in recognizing our most distinguished men and women overseas, whose achievements and contributions have served the cause of Filipinos here and abroad, and who have set themselves to be fine examples of exceptional Filipino talent and ability.

The 1998 Presidential Awards for Filipino Individuals and Organizations Overseas also gives us the opportunity to reinforce our continuing ties with Filipinos overseas, who have become the formidable community of almost seven million that it is today. We hold optimism that the common bond between Filipinos overseas and Filipinos here at home will continue to bring about stronger and more meaningful partnerships as we all move along toward a new millenium.

In congratulating the 1998 Presidential Awardees, we express our hopes that they will continue to inspire others with their exemplary achievements, and as role models, help in bringing out the best among the increasing number of Filipino youth overseas.

I take this opportunity in greeting all a very Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year!

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, sweeping loop followed by a series of smaller, connected strokes.

**JOSE Z. MOLANO, JR.**  
Executive Director

11 December 1998

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*Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino*

*The Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino award is conferred on  
Filipino associations or individuals for their contributions  
to Philippine national development efforts.*

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**AWARDEES**

Feed the Hungry, Inc.  
*United States of America*

H.O.P.E. Foundation International  
*United States of America*

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## FEED THE HUNGRY, INC.

*"We departed Manila before sunrise, bringing along pails, filled to the brim with food and other household items. Our destination: one of the remotest barrios in Pampanga. We ultimately reached our destination by riding a banca. Though brief as it may seem (about 10 minutes), the ride made me ponder on the extent of the ravages of lahar (the area used to be covered by land), on the lives it has changed, and on the struggles of the people... I expected a gloomy fishing village. But as soon as we got off from our bancas, I felt a festive mood. I continued to search and look for answers until I gazed upon the eyes of the people beaming with joy ... without any trace of despair and self-pity....."*

- FtH Volunteer



Preparing to distribute nipa shingles to calamity victims in Lucena.

Every year, FtH outperforms its accomplishments of the past. In trying to address the needs of communities they have visited, FtH contributions have evolved from food items, medicines, and small tokens to scholarship grants, livelihood projects, marketing support for products, and deepwell projects, giving its beneficiaries invaluable lessons in self-reliance. FtH begun to fund the college education of scholars nationwide through the "Adopt a Scholar" Project of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas beginning 1994. It has supported the establishment of many livelihood projects which generated employment opportunities among poor families, as well as the construction of deepwells for use in underserved communities.

FtH has given hope and brought dignity to the people whose lives it has touched.

**T**he Feed the Hungry, Inc. was born out of a burning desire among the Filipino community in Washington, D.C. to share their blessings with less fortunate compatriots in the Philippines. It began in 1993 with very modest intentions, i.e., to bring cheer to orphans and abandoned children in the Philippines by giving them food and small tokens during the Christmas season.

Spearheaded by the World Bank Group/IMF Association and the Foundation for Aid to the Philippines, FtH has evolved into a community endeavour with the support of other Filipino American organizations in the Washington, D.C. area. FtH has been all over the Philippines distributing books and kitchen utensils, pails of clothes, toys, food-stuffs and other basic items, medical equipment, and *nipa* shingles. The outreach programs of the FtH have made a big difference in the lives of thousands of orphans, streetchildren, elderly, disabled, indigenous tribes, squatter families, battered women, disaster and calamity victims, and many others from Luzon to Mindanao.



Volunteer talking to children who are among the beneficiaries of the FtH gift-giving project.



# H.O.P.E. FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL

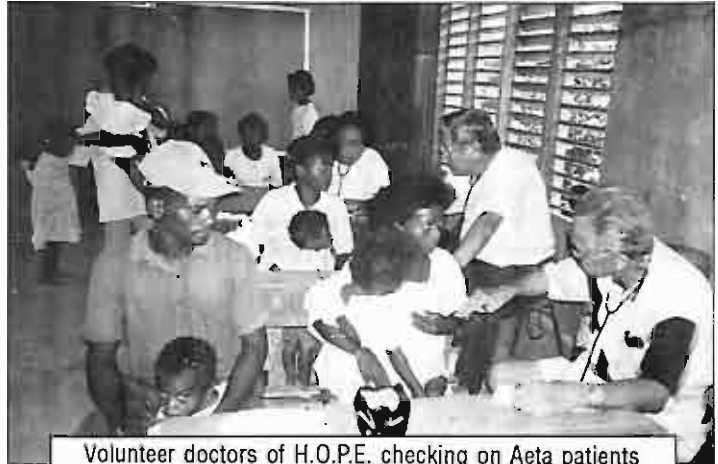


**T**he H.O.P.E. Foundation of Rhode Island, USA is a non-profit organization of Filipino doctors and medical professionals which provide medical and humanitarian assistance to Filipinos in disaster stricken areas in the Philippines and to various needs groups. The members of the group have been rendering volunteer work in their personal capacity and have established a systematized effort at giving free medical services to the poor in the country.

The Health Organization for the Poor Enterprise Foundation International, or H.O.P.E., as it is more popularly known, conducted its first medical mission in January 1995. The main beneficiaries from its initial mission were the Aetas who used to live along the foothills of Mt. Pinatubo. This initial undertaking allowed the members of H.O.P.E. to understand and appreciate the needs of the displaced Aetas. Apart from basic food and shelter needs, it was evident that health and hygiene concerns also had to be addressed to ensure the well-being of this often neglected sector of the Philippine society.

H.O.P.E. has been regularly conducting medical missions in the Aeta communities in Zambales, Sorsogon, and Davao City. More than 2,000 patients from the Aeta communities have availed of free medical services of the doctors and medical professionals of H.O.P.E. Foundation, which include cataract operations, surgical operations, dental operations, and other medical treatment.

In all its medical missions, H.O.P.E. also donates medical supplies and various medical equipment such as hearing aids, hospital beds, gurneys, dental chairs, ECG machines, walking canes for the blind, wheelchairs for needy patients and for various community health centers in the service areas. H.O.P.E. also conducts hearing impairment classes for the deaf, and provides instructional materials for the blind.



Volunteer doctors of H.O.P.E. checking on Aeta patients displaced by the Mt. Pinatubo eruption.

In addition to free medical aid, H.O.P.E. has also given two Aeta youths the chance to pursue a nursing career. These scholars, whose tuition and other educational needs are shouldered by the H.O.P.E. Foundation medical scholarship, are now in their third year in nursing school.

They have also begun a feeding program for 150 Aeta schoolchildren at the Kanaynayan resettlement site, which significantly reduced cases of malnutrition among the Aetas.

In January 1998, a 25-bed medical facility for the Aeta community was built by H.O.P.E. at the Kanaynayan resettlement site in Zambales. This facility, costing around US\$100,000, has rooms for a pharmacy, a surgery room, outpatient services, and dental rooms, and is envisioned to make medical services readily accessible to the thousands of Aetas in Zambales.

The efforts of the Filipino medical professionals of H.O.P.E. have shown that even amidst success and personal achievements, the greatest accomplishment can be derived out of serving the disadvantaged in the Philippines.

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*Kaakabay ng Bayan*

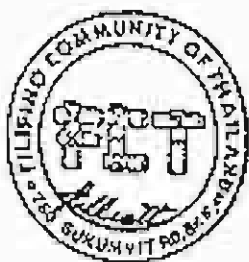
*The Kaakabay ng Bayan Award is given to Filipino communities, groups of individual Filipinos, or Filipino associations overseas who have united for the common ideal and purpose of providing support to the progress and development of the country*

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**AWARDEE**

Filipino Community in Thailand (FCT)  
*Bangkok, Thailand*

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## FILIPINO COMMUNITY OF THAILAND

**T**o Filipinos who have experienced living overseas, the presence of *kababayans* is very reassuring. For no matter how well one has adjusted in the host country, speaking to a compatriot in the mother tongue to express one's innermost thoughts, sentiments, and even the latest gossips at home, sharing the much-coveted *adobo* and other Filipino delicacies which are not easily available in local restaurants, and simply knowing that someone will always be there to help, makes all the difference.

cultural activities for Filipinos in Thailand by inviting cultural song and dance groups in the Philippines to perform in special concerts for the Filipino expatriate community.



FCT members at the forefront of cultural activities for Filipinos in Thailand.

More than these efforts, FCT provides assistance to those who have been victims of unfair labor practices. Through the mediation of the FCT and the Philippine Embassy in Bangkok, employment

To the small Filipino expatriate community in Thailand, the Filipino Community in Thailand has made all the difference in making them feel at home in a foreign country, and more. The FCT is fine example of the unique Filipino *bayanihan* spirit. It has unified Filipinos through the promotion of the Filipino heritage and culture. It holds *fiestas*, cultural exhibits, and was a major proponent in the staging of the Centennial celebration of Philippine independence in Thailand. It has been at the forefront of

and benefits cases have been settled amicably between Filipino professionals and their foreign employers.

The FCT was established in 1987 to foster close relations among the members of the Filipino community and with their Thai hosts, as well as to promote Filipino culture in Thailand. To date, it has remained the only Filipino association in Thailand, embodying unity and a sense of purpose among its members.

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*Kaanib ng Bayan*

*The Kaanib ng Bayan Award is accorded to  
foreign organizations for their contribution  
to Philippine progress and development.*

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**AWARDEES**

Association Alouette  
*France*

Philippine Development Assistance Programme (PDAP)  
*Ontario, Canada*

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association

ALOUETTE

## ASSOCIATION ALOUETTE

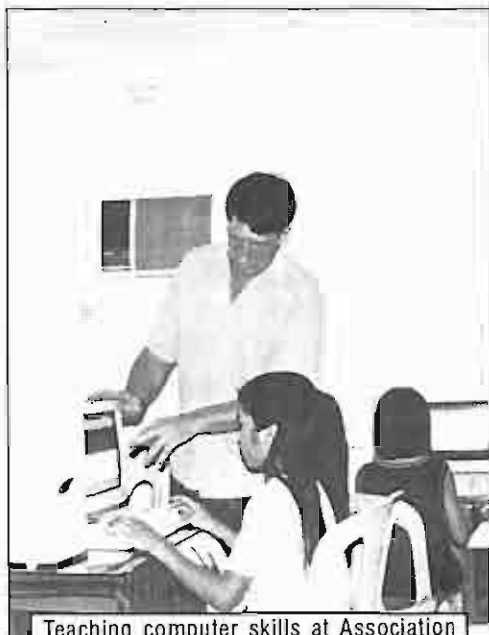
**A**louette is a French word for lark. It is a small migratory bird often seen during harvest time in France and is known for its melodious voice and soaring flight pattern. Like the bird from which it derived its name, Alouette is a lean and efficient organization choosing to serve the destitute families and abandoned youth as a means to glorifying God.

The extension of Alouette's mission to the Philippines started in 1990 when its founder, Mr. Bernard Pierquin lived with the poor families and street children of Malibay, Pasay City and was able to witness their struggles and listen to them articulate their hopes for a better life. Responding to their needs, Mr. Pierquin established the Alouette Foundation of the Philippines in Pasay City in 1993. True to its goal of developing self-reliant Filipino children, families, and communities, Association Alouette, through its Philippine counterpart, set up six (6) programs to respond to the various needs of the youth and indigent families. These are: (a) the Sponsorship Program; (b) the Educational Assistance Program; (c) the Day Care Program; (d) the Health Assistance Program; (e) the Livelihood Assistance Program; and (f) the Computer Training Program for Out-of-School Youth.

Foremost among Alouette's services is the Sponsorship Program which was established in 1993. It gives children from poor families opportunities to study and pursue developmental activities. French sponsors "adopt" a child whom they support in terms of school expenses. To date, the program has benefitted 250 children and youth. The Educational Assistance Program, which began 3 years ago, is a fund pooled from various sources for the school expenses of other children not otherwise funded under the Sponsorship Program. Since its inception in 1995, the program has already served 275 grade school and high school students. The third educational program offered by Alouette is the computer training for out-of-school youth and street children of Pasay and Metro South. Established in 1997,

the program has benefitted 250 out-of-school youth and street children in the said areas.

Recognizing the importance of ensuring the physical well-being of families from depressed areas, Alouette began conducting free medical and dental consultations and services in 1994. The program also includes emergency assistance for medical treatment and hospitalization and referrals for clients with special medical concerns. The organization also helps inculcate good health practices through incorporation of lectures on health and hygiene in the monthly meeting of parents from poor communities. In the last 4 years, 500 children and families have availed of these health services.



Teaching computer skills at Association Alouette's computer training program in Pasay.

Children ages 3 to 6 years old whose mothers work to augment the family income are kept busy with play activities and are ably cared for by trained caregivers at Alouette's Harmony Day Care Center. The Day Care, which started in the same year that Alouette Philippines was established, has already benefitted 550 children. In addition to socialization activities, the caregivers instill among the children good moral and spiritual values, environmental awareness, and love of country.

Alouette also helps the poor achieve economic empowerment by providing funds for livelihood projects. These include food vending, bag (*supot*) making, and establishment of *sari-sari* stores. Twenty (20) families have already availed of funds and put up their own enterprises.

Alouette's contributions may be considered modest compared with those of other non-government entities, but its impact on the lives of the association's beneficiaries is beyond measure. Alouette's noble work in enabling the poor unleash their strength and soar to greater heights is a most fitting gift to the Lord, a beautiful song that glorifies the Almighty.



## PHILIPPINE DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME (PDAP)



**T**he Philippine Development Assistance (PDAP), a coalition of Philippine and Canadian non-government organizations (NGOs), shines as an example of an enduring relationship between the Philippines and Canada. PDAP as it is more commonly known in the NGO network, stands out because of its good track record in sustaining its commitment "to promote just, equitable and ecologically secure development" for the disadvantaged communities in the Philippines. It is able to realize this through its systematic approach to program planning, implementation, and evaluation of poverty alleviation projects.

PDAP is a non-profit organization registered with Industry Canada, with more than 10 years of experience supporting economic and social development in the Philippines. PDAP collaborates with disadvantaged communities and with Canadians active in global development issues, accessing financial resources and technical expertise, and providing training and policy leadership. It is governed by a nine-member Board of Directors elected from across Canada.

In addition to helping the communities access financial resources from Canada, PDAP also lends technical expertise in various development endeavors such as cooperative-building, sustainable agriculture, and policy leadership. Its involvement in Philippine socio-economic concerns has resulted in 300 community-based projects all over the country which has benefitted approximately 1.2 million Filipinos. Aside from its regular projects, PDAP also quickly responds to calls for assistance in times of calamities. It helped raise more than \$ 500, 000.00 and contributed other resources to help communities affected by natural disasters in the early 1990s.

PDAP's Central Loan Fund (CLF) facility is one of its more notable projects. As an alternative banking mechanism owned and managed by NGOs and People's Organizations (POs), the CLF helps the poor access funds for the establishment of micro-enterprises. The affordable interest rates and the trainings on entrepreneurship and sound business values enabled the borrowers to make their en-

terprises viable. It has also enabled them to repay their loans efficiently. Unlike most loan programs, the CLF has a remarkable repayment record of 100%. Given the success of the micro-businesses, the CLF loan portfolio has now grown to PhP 60 million, from its initial investment of PhP 20 million.

PDAP's socio-economic development programs have been cited for their innovativeness and effectiveness and are now replicated in many developing countries in the world. Because of this, PDAP was also able to generate more support in terms of financial and technical resources and active participation of Canadians for its undertakings. In recognition of its accomplishments in the area of social development, the national association of Japanese NGOs (JANIC) singled out PDAP as one of the most successful organizations with cross-cultural and cross-sectoral partnerships in development work.

Through the years and despite political and economic changes, PDAP remains a key partner of the Philippines, in helping achieve holistic, equitable, and sustainable development for Filipinos.



CIDA and PDAP officials led by Mr. Ted Langtry turnover fingerlings to the Bangus Fish Cage Project of the MNLF Saranggani Bangsa Moro Multipurpose Cooperative in Malapatan, Saranggani as part of PDAP's Program for Peace and Development.

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# Banaag

*The Banaag Award is given to Filipino and foreign individuals or associations for contributions which have significantly benefited a sector or community in the Philippines, or advanced the cause of overseas Filipino communities.*

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## AWARDEES

Rodrigo C. Acosta  
*Bahrain*

Leticia R. Aranilla  
*Walthamstow, England*

Antonio C. Bautista  
*Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*

Dr. Sian Chun Cheng  
*Hongkong*

Fr. Eugene Docoy, Jr.  
*Seoul, Korea*

Catherine D. Dasodas  
*Canary Island, Spain*

Hongkong Bayanihan Trust  
*Hongkong*

Kawayan Philippine Language  
and Cultural School  
*New South Wales, Australia*

Celso T. Mataac, Jr.  
*Maryland, United States of America*

Chiyo Miyake  
*Aichi Prefecture, Japan*

Philippine Heritage Band  
*Ontario, Canada*

Conrada P. Quiblado  
*Hongkong*

Fr. Raymond T. Sabio  
*Inchon, South Korea*

Benita B. Tendencia  
*Verona, Italy*

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## RODRIGO C. ACOSTA

Engineer Rodrigo Acosta has been working for the government of Bahrain for the past 21 years. Through hard work and perseverance, Mr. Acosta rose from the ranks to become Advisor and Head of Civil Engineering of the Special Projects of the Construction Projects Directorate of the Ministry of Works and Agriculture.

Mr. Acosta's reputation as a builder of well-known infrastructures in this wealthy Middle East country is surpassed by his reputation as a builder of strong Filipino organizations. While he could have just chosen to alienate himself from the problems of overseas Filipino workers in Bahrain, Mr. Acosta has developed a personal commitment to help his countrymen in distress.

He put to good use his managerial skills to get the cooperation of Filipinos in Bahrain to develop a site where they can socialize and cultivate friendship. In no time, Mr. Acosta was able to raise enough funds to build the Filipino Club in 1980 which served as a venue for social interaction such as sports activities and celebration of Philippine festivities. He set the Club off to a good start by serving initially as treasurer, then as chairman of the Executive Committee in 1981 and 1982. Through his pioneering spirit and able leadership, the Club membership grew rapidly. The Club, as the association came to be called, is known among Filipinos in Bahrain for its sports and social activities, and in helping Filipinos in distress. In 1990, as chair of the Gulf War Contingency Plan Committee, Mr. Acosta, gathered the support of other Club members to provide shelter and food to Filipino evacuees from Kuwait at the height of the Gulf War. The Club also liaised with pertinent agencies in Bahrain regarding the employment of Filipino workers affected by the Gulf War.

Long after he relinquished his leadership role in the Club, the organization's civic endeavors continued to grow, thereby showing the strong and solid foundation he ably established for the Club. Prior to the establishment of a Philippine mission in Bahrain, the Club acted as the link between the Philippine govern-



ment and the Filipino community in Bahrain. Its headquarters likewise served as a refuge for a large number of distressed Filipino workers in Bahrain by providing welfare assistance and consular services until the Philippine Embassy in Bahrain opened in 1992.

As the camaraderie among the Filipinos in Bahrain grew stronger, Mr. Acosta once again took the opportunity to generate support for the establishment of a Philippine school in Bahrain to cater to the needs of the children of Filipino migrant workers. In August 1995, the Philippine School in Bahrain finally opened. From 152 students during its first year of operations, the school now has 260 enrollees. It has also become a viable and financially stable institution through the untiring efforts of its Board of Trustees which Mr. Acosta chairs.

Mr. Acosta has successfully built edifices and public structures in Bahrain that are noted for their strength and beauty. To the Filipinos in Bahrain though, his greater achievements rest upon the goodwill that he established among his *kababayans* and the rich Filipino culture and values he helped cultivate through the Filipino Club and the Philippine School. For them, the strong bonds of friendship and the love of country which he helped nurture are the more enduring legacies, as these will live in their hearts forever.



## LETICIA R. ARANILLA

Ms. Aranilla is also instrumental in revitalizing the Girl Scouting Program by making it more responsive to the present times. She spearheaded WAGGS projects that foster better international understanding in the Asia Pacific Region, as well as highlight major world concerns such as environmental protection, gender equity, and child rights.

She also played a pivotal role in securing the first official bilateral exchange between Thailand and the Philippines and the Chinese Young Pioneers in 1995 and 1996. She has been actively working for a stronger link of the Hongkong Girl Guides Association with Mainland China through the All China Women Federation and the Chinese Young Pioneers.

**L**eticia Aranilla is a member of the Filipino community in Walthamstow, London and an active parishioner of the St. Patrick Church. Her parish activities include the conduct of workshops for Filipino teenagers, children and parents, and married couples. Before she migrated overseas, she served the Girl Scout Movement in the Philippines for 28 years. She rose from the ranks, from a training assistant of the Girl Scouts of the Philippines-Southern Luzon in 1970, to the position of Assistant Executive of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGS) in 1981, and finally as Executive in 1983. Before she joined the Girl Scouts, she was a public school teacher at the Enverga University of Lucena City.

Presently, Ms. Aranilla is an Executive for the Asia Pacific Region of WAGGS, the voluntary organization for girls and young women in the world, servicing nearly 100 million individuals in 136 countries. The WAGGS Asia Pacific Region, which covers 27 countries, is the largest of the five WAGGS regions. As WAGGS Executive, Ms. Aranilla directed the organization's efforts toward involving the traditionally less-involved youth from Cambodia, Nauru, Bhutan, Mongolia, Cambodia, Laos, the Federated State of Micronesia, Vietnam and the People's Republic of China in the WAGGS.

These experiences served her well in her capacity as a member of the Board of Governors of the St. Patrick's Primary School in Walthamstow, where she represents the interest of ethnic minority groups. Her extensive experiences in cross-cultural relationships have proven to be vital in her current work as Chairperson of the Curriculum Committee. This has also been useful in increasing the equality of educational opportunities for all children and in the development of relevant school programs given the diverse cultural backgrounds of school children. This is particularly true of the Filipino community which comprises a large portion of the student population at the school.

Ms. Aranilla plays a leading role in providing advice and support to the Filipino community, not only in language and educational development, but also for families. Be it among the Girl Scouts or the St. Patrick parishioners, the energy, dedication, integrity, and level of commitment of Ms. Aranilla has greatly contributed to the development of children, youth, men and women whom she had worked with.

## ANTONIO C. BAUTISTA

**W**orking in a foreign country can be lonely, especially if socializing among fellow workers is not the norm, and restrictions are imposed against establishment of social organizations. For Filipinos, who are a naturally sociable people, this can prove to be an additional burden to the challenge of working and living abroad, away from their families and loved ones.

One Filipino who has managed to overcome this limitation is Antonio Bautista. An overseas Filipino worker in Saudi Arabia for more than two decades, Mr. Bautista is sensitive to the problems of fellow OFWs. He is a Business Administration graduate of the University of the East and worked as a secretary at San Miguel Corporation until 1979, after which he went to Saudi Arabia and worked as an Assistant Planner to the Planning Engineer at Aluminum Products, Inc., a steel fabrication plant in Dammam. He is currently an executive secretary to the Managing Director of the National Commercial Bank in Jeddah, KSA.

Antonio Bautista is also a founding member and the present chairman of the All Filipino Tennis Players' Association (AFTPA), which is the biggest sports association in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He is an advocate of showcasing the warmth and hospitality of the Filipino people by promoting camaraderie and unity through sports.

AFTPA holds the annual AFTPA Open Tennis Championships, a major sports event among Filipinos and Saudis. This yearly tournament has been instrumental in forging friendships and partnerships between

Filipinos and Saudi officials, entrepreneurs, and even businessmen, who serve as co-sponsors of the event. Among AFTPA members, the breakthrough policy of "open membership" pioneered by Bautista has not only increased the original membership of the AFTPA from 350 to 1,400 members, but has given the association the opportunity to inter-relate with their Saudi hosts and other foreigners in Saudi Arabia in an atmosphere of friendship and common love for sports. This approach has definitely gone a long way in establishing a sense of community among Filipinos, their expatriate co-workers, and Saudi nationals.



Bautista is also the Executive Council chairman of the Kapulungan ng mga Samahang Pilipino (KASAPI), the biggest federation of Filipino Associations in the Kingdom. KASAPI is an offshoot of an earlier federation called Bandila (Flag), organized in 1990 which assisted in the repatriation of Filipinos affected by the Gulf War. Under his able chairmanship, KASAPI has continued to unite Filipino organizations to continue the ideals upon which the federation has been founded. KASAPI has also spearheaded projects to assist the victims of disasters and calamities in the Philippines, such as the 1991 Mt. Pinatubo eruption.

Bautista is a proponent of the Ten Most Outstanding Overseas Filipino Workers in the Western Region, an award given to OFWs in the Western Region of KSA who have contributed to the community and the welfare of OFWs in KSA. He believes that contributions of OFWs are worthy of recognition and praise.



## SIAN CHUN CHENG

A humble man with a big heart. A modern day Good Samaritan. These encapsulate the qualities of Dr. Cheng as seen by thousands of Filipinos in Hongkong whose lives have been touched by his compassion and kindness.

Dr. Cheng, who is of Chinese origin, has been the Honorary Doctor of the Philippine Consulate General in Hongkong for the past 44 years. He was designated as such by then Vice President Carlos P. Garcia. For more than four decades now, Dr. Cheng has given free medical services including medicines to expatriate Filipinos and Filipino migrant workers. Despite his being a foreigner to the people he has committed to serve gratuitously, Dr. Cheng and his wife have been active participants and contributors to many Filipino events and activities in the former British Colony.

Dr. Sian Chun Cheng studied medicine at the University of Santo Tomas in Manila and graduated with a degree of Doctor of Medicine in 1950. After taking the Philippine Medical Board Examination, he went to England for post-graduate studies and hospital work from 1950 to 1954.

His genuine concern for the welfare and well-being of Filipinos has been manifested in countless assistance and services rendered to Filipinos in Hongkong. As testified by Ambassador Tomas Padilla who was Consul from 1964 to 1968, "Dr. Cheng is well known to many Filipino residents, contract workers, and many visiting Filipinos for his invaluable medical services, very often and beyond the call of duty to his profession".

In all these years, it is no surprise then that the consular office has been a witness to many heartwarming experiences so generously shared with Dr. Cheng. He was once responsible for saving the lives of two Filipino residents. He has also become a fatherly im-



age to many young Filipino residents and workers who face the many intricate realities of living away from home. His civic consciousness inspires many others.

For leading a life of dedicated service and being a true model of Dominican values and principles of concern for life and well being, Dr. Cheng was awarded in 1998 by H.M. King Juan Carlos I of Spain with the decoration of La Encomienda De La Orden De Isabel La Catolica.

He was also given a citation in recognition of his forty long years of unqualified dedication and commitment to help ensure the health of Filipinos in Hongkong by Secretary of Foreign Affairs Domingo L. Siazon, Jr. in June 1998.

Dr. Cheng is indeed not your typical doctor. He is a sincere and dedicated person of "high moral values and integrity". A very unassuming person, he is a "friend of long standing" to all Filipinos in Hongkong.

## FR. EUGENE DOCOY, JR., SVD

**T**he life of Fr. Eugene Docoy has been characterized by many challenges. As a young boy, he had to walk 3 kilometers to and from school on a muddy dirt road. He went to school barefoot, with only a pencil and pieces of scratch paper as his tools for education. As a teenager, he made native brooms called *walis tingting* to finance his high school education. As a college student, he cleaned the corridors and toilets of San Carlos University. To the young Eugene, hard work, trials, and challenges have played a large role in shaping his attitude towards life.

Eugene Docoy's encounter as a young seminarian with a South African-based Filipino missionary nun had a telling effect on the apostolate which he would pursue in the years to come. He found inspiration in the challenges and the sense of fulfillment the nun achieved out of attending to the needs of African tribesmen and migrants. In 1992, Fr. Docoy went to South Korea in pursuit of an apostolate in the service of Filipino migrants, including Filipinos in intermarriages.

His work in South Korea is considered a pioneering effort in protecting the welfare of overseas Filipino workers. As a pastor, he extended spiritual assistance to distressed overseas Filipino workers and seafarers. Given the problems of OFWs, however, his work extended to the provision of legal and financial assistance to facilitate the release and shipment of remains of demised workers. He has also been instrumental in seeking justice for many OFWs who have been victimized by their abusive employers and spouses. He also pursues advocacy program to promote workers' rights through the publication of articles in international magazines and through the production of a video documentary on the problems faced by OFWs in Korea.

One of his major accomplishments is the establishment of a welfare center called the Ansan Filipino community center. Its beginnings could be traced to a rented room which served as an office and temporary

shelter for distressed OFWs. Through effective community mobilization effort, Fr. Docoy raised enough funds to build a small center.

The Ansan Filipino community center is a counseling center which caters to the needs and problems of the migrant workers. It currently provides services to more than 10,000 OFWs.

Because of its many contributions to the cause of OFWs in South Korea, Fr. Docoy was cited by the Philippine Embassy in Korea for his exemplary service to his fellow Filipinos, and in 1997, was also awarded the *Kabalikat ng Manggagawa* by the Labor Secretary.

Fr. Docoy has been a source of spiritual strength and renewal for many Filipinos in South Korea. Beyond this, however, he has been a relevant and practical instrument of the Church in the promotion of faith and well-being among Filipinos in South Korea.





## CATHERINE D. DASODAS

Catherine Dasodas is a native Igorot of the Kankaney tribe. She completed her high school education at the Jesuit run San Jose High School in La Trinidad, Benguet. Unable to pursue a college degree, she began to work as a vegetable dealer and sales lady in Baguio City after she graduated from high school. She also opened her own *sari-sari* store in Sampaloc, Manila and later, decided to try her luck abroad.

She first worked as a domestic worker in Singapore in 1979 and then in the Grand Canary Islands of Spain in 1982. Given the failure of her employer to work out the regularization of her status, she had to work as an irregular worker in Spain.

Her unfortunate experience as an irregular migrant may have been the crucial and compelling element which motivated her to work for the interest of Filipino migrants. Through her friendship with a Jesuit priest, Fr. Jose Maria Serrano, Ms. Dasodas was encouraged to help form the LuzVim Assosacion Filipina in 1985, whose particular focus is to assist distressed Filipinos who are victims of abusive employers and are in hiding in the Canary Islands.

It was a challenge for Ms. Dasodas to lead the LuzVim Assosacion during its first years. She steered the organization through its more turbulent times, managing to unite the members and render services to distressed OFWs. The trust and confidence bestowed upon her by members of the LuzVim Asociacion as their head for more than ten years stands as a testimony to her innate abilities as a leader.

As president of LuzVim Assosacion Filipina, Ms. Dasodas assists fellow overseas Filipinos to integrate in Spanish society by offering free language lessons and raising funds to assist them in times of distress. For runaway domestic workers, Ms. Dasodas provides free board and lodging until her association is able to arrange suitable accommodations and new employment for them.



She has distinguished herself by selflessly helping fellow domestic workers and other OFWs. She serves as a translator for Filipinos who are seeking employment, and even as a negotiator during deliberations on their employment contracts. She collaborates with the Spanish government and non-government organizations in Spain by serving as an intermediary of OFWs when they encounter problems in the processing of employment documents, health and employment claims. Catherine also offers the option of repatriation to many irregular OFWs who have given up the desire to remain in Spain.

Many Filipinos in the Canary Islands owe Catherine Dasodas and the LuzVim Assosacion a debt of gratitude for the helping hand that she and her organization have extended to them in times of trials. Catherine Dasodas epitomizes the best in the overseas Filipino, rising above her personal limitations to help fellow OFWs.



## HONGKONG BAYANIHAN TRUST

**T**he Hongkong Bayanihan Trust lives by its name. A considerably young organization, HBT, for the past five years, has been in the forefront of efforts to promote the total development of thousands of Filipino domestic helpers in Hongkong.

Hongkong Bayanihan Trust is a charitable non-profit organization founded on December 15, 1993 by a group of Filipino businessmen and women in Hongkong. Among its distinguished initiators is the internationally renowned business leader Manuel Pangilinan of First Pacific Co. Ltd., himself a Presidential Awardee in 1996.

The Hongkong Bayanihan Trust was established to provide facilities for recreational, social and educational programs for Filipino domestic helpers in Hongkong. Its achievements and accomplishments over a short period of time speaks for its pro-active approach in responding to the developmental needs of the Filipino domestic helpers in Hongkong.



Members of the Hong Kong Bayanihan Trust attend an organization meeting.

In December 1994, with the support of the Home Affairs Department of the Hongkong government, the Trust opened the first Sunday-Only-Site (SOS) in a secondary school. This provided the venue for weekly gatherings and socialization of domestic helpers. Later, skills training and other educational programs were also offered. To date, there are six SOS centers in different areas in Hongkong under the management of the Trust.

Through the concerted effort of its members, the Trust, in 1995, established two (2) permanent centers in Kennedy Town and Mongkok as venues for gatherings and activities of Filipino domestic helpers. These Bayanihan Centers are also home to the Trust's comprehensive educational program. Members of these Centers can enroll in non-formal courses on Computer and Information Technology, Sewing and Handicrafts-making, Hair and Beauty Culture, Livelihood Skills, Music, Dancing and Leisure, Martial Arts and Self-Defense, Culinary Arts, Food Catering and Management, Food Processing, Fruit and Soap Carving, and

English and Cantonese Languages. Graduates of these courses often serve as the Center's trainers and volunteers, sharing recently acquired skills with new members.

These Bayanihan Centers have also grown in membership and diversified activities and programs since 1995. They now help about 10,000 members composed of Filipino and other Asian domestic helpers, more than 250 OFW associations, and 500 active volunteers. Equipped with the necessary facilities, members of the Centers can remit their money, attend Sunday masses, watch movies, go ballroom or disco dancing, sing in a karaoke, meet friends, enjoy Filipino food, socialize and learn new skills, and simply find a place of solace with their *kababayans* after a week's load of work.

Actively supporting the programs of the Philippine government and consular office, the two Bayanihan Centers served as application and testing centers for almost 1,500 teacher applicants who took the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) in

September 1997 in cooperation with the Philippine Professional Regulation Commission and Department of Education, Culture and Sports.

The Hongkong Bayanihan Center in Mongkok is the first and, so far, the only overseas Learning Center established with the University of the Philippines Open University (UPOU). Since it started in February 1997, the UPOU has produced about 200 graduates in certificate courses leading to Master in Education (major in Language and Social Studies) and Certificate Courses in New Entrepreneurial Planning (NEP) and Personal Entrepreneurial Development (PED).

In August 1997, the Philippine Technical Education and Skills Development Authority awarded the Trust the *Kabalikat sa Laang Bisig* Award in recognition of the organization's contribution and assistance in technical and vocational education and training.

## KAWAYAN PHILIPPINE LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL SCHOOL

In 1990, forty Filipino-Australian families set up the Samahang Kawayan, Inc. (SKI), the goals of which include the promotion of unity, friendship, community service, and the sharing of and being true to one's roots. Now with a membership of close to 400 families, the SKI is also known for its outstanding achievement in propagating and teaching of the Filipino language in Australia.

The Kawayan Philippine Language and Cultural School (KPLCS) is an ethnic language school which teaches the Philippine language and promotes the appreciation of Filipino heritage and culture among Australians of Filipino ancestry. The Ethnic Language and Cultural School, as it was initially known, began teaching Filipino language classes in New South Wales in 1993. It is the first Philippine language school in Sydney, with autonomous branches under a "Consortium of KPLCS Schools" in three areas of Sydney — Erskine Park, North Shore, and Campbelltown.

As rationalized by the SKI, the establishment of the KPLCS is "for our children's bright tomorrow in this land of many faces and diverse cultures, so they may not get drowned in a river of conformity and assimilation, but rather, be strong and proud of their rich heritage in the midst of diversity and make their mark in the history of this nation without forgetting who they really are, for their roots should never be forsaken".

Beginning with two classes of 30 students each in

its first campus at Erskine Park, the KPLCS now offers Philippine language classes in three "campuses". It has also expanded the number of classes in each of the three KPLCS campuses with the assistance of a government grant from the New South Wales Department of Training and Education Coordination. For schoolyear 1997, the enrollment of the three KPLCS campuses has reached 84 students.



KPLCS students during the celebration of "World Peace Day"

KPLCS is also involved in the development of an Instructional Module for the Teaching of Filipino in an Australian setting for Lower, Primary Upper, and High School students, which began implementation in the formal school system in New South Wales in November of 1998.

The major achievement of the KPLCS is its successful lobbying with the local government in New South Wales to include Filipino as one of the languages accredited to be taught in main-

stream schools under the "Language Other Than English" program. With Filipino now included in the High School curriculum in 1998, the KPLCS has also adopted an Outside Tutor Mechanism for those enrolled in Australian high schools who are studying Filipino as an elective language course.

The KPLCS contributes to enriching the growth and development of Filipino-Australian children as they mature under the influences of a diverse Australian environment.

*"Ang hindi marunong magmahal sa sariling wika,  
ay higit pa sa hayop o malansang isda."*

*- Jose Rizal*

## CELSO T. MATAAC, JR.

**C**elso Mataac is an accountant by profession. He graduated from the University of the East with a degree in Business Administration, major in Accountancy. He was the youngest CPA board passer of his batch at the age of 19, and had to wait until he turned 21 before he was given a license to practice accountancy.

Prior to his departure for the United States, he worked as senior auditor of Sycip, Gorres, and Velayo. He is now a senior partner in the Maryland CPA firm of Regardie, Brooks, and Lewis, a large regional firm in the United States.

As a practicing accountant, Mr. Mataac has assisted newly arrived Filipino CPAs in finding employment. He renders *pro bono* tax work for Filipino senior citizens, and for those who are not able to pay for professional fees of accountants.

In a personal capacity, Mr. Mataac donated parcels of land in Poctoy, Banuyo, and Tamalagon, Marinduque, where parish churches and barangay centers now stand as a symbol of his generosity and compassion for the poor. During his annual vacations to the Philippines, he brings with him medicines and other medical supplies for donation to various hospitals in Marinduque.

Mr. Mataac is an active member and official of several socio-civic organizations in the United States. He also sits in the Board of Trustees and committees of several Filipino associations in Maryland, USA, whose aim is to give assistance to needy Filipinos in the host country. He is the chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Philippine American Foundation of Charities, Inc., an umbrella organization of some 150 Filipino associations which regularly conducts medical missions, fund-raising campaigns, and disaster relief operations in the Philippines.

He is currently the president of the Marinduqueños of the Capital Area in Maryland and chairman of the



Marinduque International Executive Council. He sits on the board of several private schools in Montgomery County, Maryland. He is also very active in the District of Columbia CPAs and the American Institute of CPAs.

During his term as an adviser of the Lubang Looc International (LLI), a recipient of a National Award for its socio-civic organization in the Philippines, he personally donated funds for the education of various Filipino accountancy scholars in the Philippines, as well as supported the various civic projects of the LLI in Lubang Island, Mindoro. He assisted in organizing a medical mission of Filipino and American doctors to Marinduque, and established a scholarship program for students in the Marinduque Institute of Science and Technology.

Celso Mataac is a very involved member of the Filipino community in Maryland. His hands-on leadership in all the organizations he chairs and helps direct has benefitted thousands of Filipinos in his native country, and for this, Filipinos are forever grateful.

## CHIYO MIYAKE

Coming from the prominent Sugita family of Nagoya, Japan, Ms. Chiyo Miyake would not only become one of Japan's award-winning poets and novelists, but a philanthropist whose cause was directed at assisting indigent Filipino eye patients.

Her relationship with Filipinos started during World War II when her husband, Dr. Torazu Miyake, was assigned to serve the Japanese Imperial Army in the Philippines. Soon, word reached Ms. Miyake and her family that Dr. Miyake's entire battalion was killed in battle, and the doctor was stranded and dying in a Leyte jungle. In 1944, he was presumed dead.

Despite this presumption by many, Mrs. Miyake felt in her heart that her husband was still alive. She would realize much later, that her instinct was right all along — her husband had survived the war. But this would not have been so were it not for the humanity and compassion of two Filipinos who rescued and rushed him to an American Army field hospital. This act of kindness in the midst of the atrocities of war deeply moved the Miyake family. Mrs. Miyake had visited Leyte twice in an effort to trace her husband's saviors, but fate would not have her come face to face with the two Filipino "heroes".

Years after his return to Japan, Dr. Miyake put up the prestigious Miyake Eye Hospital. His sons also pursued careers in the medical profession. The eldest eventually became the director of the said hospital, while the second, Yozo Miyake, became an associate professor of ophthalmology at the Nagoya City University. While at the Harvard Medical School, Yozo was trained by Dr. Felipe Tolentino, a Filipino. Yozo introduced Dr. Tolentino to his family when the latter was in Nagoya in 1981 for a series of lectures, and recounted to him the extraordinary experience of his father in the Philippines during the war.

Through Dr. Tolentino, who was then the head of the Association of Philippine Ophthalmologists in



Mrs. Miyake (2nd from left) and PGH officials inspect the facilities of the new Miyake Eye Operating Room at the Philippine General Hospital.

America and Association of Philippine Ophthalmologists, Inc., the Miyake family agreed to support the establishment of an eye operating facility in the Philippine General Hospital as a means to express their deep gratitude to the Filipino people.

Mrs. Miyake and her family donated \$300,000.00 to fully equip a modern eye operating room at the PGH. This room, called the Miyake Eye Operating Room, was inaugurated in 1989. This generous donation enabled the PGH to save thousands of indigent Filipinos from total blindness. It also jumpstarted other projects including the modernization of another eye operating center, called the Eye Referral Center, and the Mobile Eye Clinic which have been providing, since 1990, free services to far-flung and depressed areas in Metro Manila and the countryside.

Mrs. Miyake's benevolence meant a lot more than just a symbol of gratitude to the thousands of Filipinos whose lives she has changed by her own compassion and humanity.



## PHILIPPINE HERITAGE BAND

**T**he rise to fame of the Philippine Heritage Band represents a phenomenal success for a band which had simple objectives. Starting with a simple idea of putting a more festive mood with the singing of the Philippine National Anthem, PHB is now regarded as an exceptional musical band that preserves a Filipino tradition.

PHB was founded in 1980 by a Toronto-based Filipino, Mr. Oscar Fariñas, who, after attending a Filipino community program, campaigned for the formation of a brass band to accompany the singing of the Philippine National Anthem during community events and affairs to evoke the "fiesta-like" atmosphere which has been the trademark of Philippine merry-making. In September of that year, ten musicians signed up and constituted the Philippine Heritage Band of Toronto, Canada. In December also of that year, PHB was incorporated as a provincial not-for-profit organization. Among its goals are the preservation of the community band and heritage, development and training of young musicians, and projection of a positive image of the Filipino youth.

The first members of the band were seasoned musical players who started their passion for music in the Philippines. They were former members of the Rizal Park Band, Manila City Hall Band, Manila Symphony Orchestra, Philippine Cultural Center Philharmonic, and Elizade Band. Equipped with the proper musical training and background, it did not take too long before the band started to play harmonious melodies.

Over the years, the members of the band grew ten times its original composition, which currently stands at 100 members. It is a family-oriented organization which has a role for about every interested and prospective member — as instrumentalist, majorette, color guard, or other supportive roles.

It is its unique brand of discipline and family orientation which earned the band numerous recognitions and awards since it was founded in 1980. One event that could attest to the kind of discipline and hard work the

members acquire after joining the band was the 1994 Fourth of July celebrations in Maryland, USA. On the day of the event, the band did not know that they were invited to play in three different parades in three different towns in one day. But true to their professionalism and integrity, PHB gave its usual outstanding performance. It was a recipient of the Best Band Award from the Fort Erie Santa Claus Parade in 1991, Heritage Days Parade in Stratford, Ontario in 1992, Brampton Santa Claus Parade from 1994 to 1997, and Port Dover Canada Day Parade and Field Show in 1996 and 1997.

PHB is also an annual participant to the Philippine Independence Day celebrations in Canada and US, Toronto Santa Claus Parade, Mississauga Santa Claus Parade, Brampton Santa Claus Parade, Canada Day Parades, Fourth of July Parades, Our Lady of Fatima Pilgrimage, Martyrs Shrine Pilgrimage, and Metro Toronto Caravan. The band also participated in numerous successful events such as the Nations Parade in 1996 in New York City, Ameriflora '92 in Columbus, Ohio, Disneyworld Magic Music Days in Orlando, 50th Strawberry Festival in 1990 in West Virginia, and Macy's All-American Thanksgiving Day in 1987.

More than a linkage to its Filipino cultural roots and heritage, the Philippine Heritage Band is truly a showcase of Filipino musical ingenuity and excellence.



The Philippine Heritage band marching on the streets of Toronto.



## CONRADA P. QUIBLADO

**M**s. Conrada Quiblado has been working as a domestic helper for almost seventeen years. Though a management degree holder, the economic realities in Abra in the 1980's prompted her to seek a better paying job overseas. First working as a domestic worker in Saudi Arabia in 1981, she went to Singapore in 1984 where she stayed for four years, and then moved to Hongkong.

As a contract worker herself, the problems and needs of migrants were nothing new to Connie. It is precisely this consciousness that led her to lend a helping hand to the Philippine Embassy in Singapore in its effort to help workers like her. With her leadership ability and keen mind, she was elected president of the United Filipinos (UNIFIL) Singapore, which she led during the four years that she stayed there. As its President, she was able to integrate the Filipino community in Singapore, and helped the Embassy gather support for its various activities and projects.

When Ms. Quiblado moved to Hongkong in 1988, she readily helped organize the migrant workers in Hongkong, starting with those coming from her hometown in Abra. She founded the Luba-Tubo HK Group and led it from 1988 to 1991. During her term, the Luba-Tubo HK Group was able to send material contributions to seven barangays in Luba and one barangay in Tubo, Abra.

In 1989, Ms. Quiblado also founded and led, with commendable achievements and accomplishments, the Sampaguita Organization of Hongkong. For almost a decade now, the Sampaguita Organization of HK has made significant contributions to the plight and welfare of migrant workers not only from the Philippines but from other countries as well.

Composed of domestic workers from the Philippines, India, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia, the Sampaguita Organization of Hongkong seeks to promote sisterhood, brotherhood, unity, and cooperation among contract workers.



Ms. Quiblado initiated fund-raising activities to support community development projects not only in the Philippines, but also in other countries which needed assistance and help. Among the projects supported by the Sampaguita organization include assistance to earthquake victims, construction/improvements of school buildings and churches, construction of deep well projects and waiting sheds, scholarship grants, and rehabilitation assistance to young drug addicts. In the Philippines alone, the group has donated over P180,000.00 worth of rehabilitation assistance over the last nine years.

These commendable services and contributions to community development projects in the Philippines earned the Sampaguita Organization the Lingkod Bayan Award for two consecutive years in 1994 and 1995 by the *Kabayan* Center Philippines HK. The group was also recognized as the Most Active Association in 1996 by the *Bayanihan* Center. Ms. Quiblado was also chosen as one of the Ten Most Outstanding Leaders '95 by the *Ang Lahing Kayumanggi* Magazine HK in 1996.

The remarks of Ms. Quiblado's Hongkong employer can best sum up her qualities — "In addition to her commendable characteristics and enthusiasm and selflessness, I can confirm that she is a person of proven honesty and integrity. There is no doubt in my mind that overseas workers in Hongkong owe a great deal to her past and continuing efforts".

## FR. RAYMOND T. SABIO, MSC

**F**r. Raymond Sabio is a Catholic priest belonging to the order of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart. He finished his Theology course at the Ateneo de Manila University. He is the Director of the MSC Formation Center in Seoul and the Chaplain of the Apostleship of the Sea, a church organization catering to sea-based workers, which has an office in Ansan City, Incheon, South Korea.

Father Sabio pursues his mission with a passion to promote not only the spiritual needs of his flock, but also their social and economic well being. Beyond the extension of personal service and assistance, he advocates for Filipino workers' rights by writing in the Korea Herald about the different problems faced by our Filipino workers and seafarers.

He has extended countless legal and financial assistance to distressed overseas Filipino workers and seafarers and has been instrumental in resolving numerous cases involving maltreatment and unfair labor practices. His name has become synonymous with assistance for Filipino seafarers in South Korea. He has been in the most challenging circumstances, providing that all important link between the disadvantaged and abandoned Filipino seafarers and the network of support generated by the Philippine Government and other non-government organizations.

Fr. Sabio is a consistent supporter of activities of the Philippine Embassy in South Korea and has been helping the embassy officials in aiding Filipinos who are victims of maltreatment and unfair labor practices. Recognizing his capacity to mediate between workers and embassy officials, the Philippine Embassy in Seoul



has appointed Fr. Sabio as its Labor Adviser in 1993. In this capacity, he has raised US\$4,000 to initiate the establishment of an emergency fund to be used by the Philippine Embassy in assisting distressed OFWs.

Because of his exemplary service to fellow overseas Filipino workers, Fr. Sabio has been cited by the Philippine Embassy in Korea, and awarded the *Kabalikat ng Manggagawa* Award in 1997.

Fr. Sabio has come to be more than a priest or spiritual counselor to overseas Filipino workers. He is their friend and ally whom they can approach without hesitation, and one they are confident, will help them to the best of his abilities.



## BENITA B. TENDENCIA

**B**efore she decided to take her chances and work overseas, Benita Tendencia, or "Beng" as she is fondly called, was already the regional manager of the United Telecommunications Company in Western Visayas. Lured by an unqualified attraction overseas, Mrs. Tendencia chose to go abroad to become a domestic helper.

Undaunted by the demands of her work, Beng continues to pursue her love for the arts, writing, and foreign languages. She speaks and writes in fluent Spanish and Italian. She is an accomplished painter and poet, and has even read her poems in public performances in Italy, where she now works. She writes children's books and has published her first one in London, entitled "The Fairies and Dwarfs of Castelvecchio" (Minerva Press, 1998). The book has received favorable reviews from critics. She has also performed in numerous Italian opera concerts in Verona. She continued her studies and has received her Certificates in Advanced English and Proficiency in the English Language from Cambridge University.

But what makes this awardee truly outstanding is not only her obvious desire for self-improvement as an individual, but her selfless dedication in helping distressed Filipino women working abroad. Numerous Filipinos under abusive employment conditions were able to extricate themselves from such situations through the brave exploits of Beng. She risked her life in helping these women, waiting all night to pick them up, hiding and feeding them, caring for them if they are sick or injured, and even arranging for new employment. She is considered a local legend within the Filipino migrant community in Italy. Her name is a sort of talisman against future travails, since every

newly arrived Filipino would be told by the long time residents, "*Kung magkakaproblema ka, eto ang address at telepono ni Beng*".

Being a domestic helper herself, Beng is familiar with the experiences of Filipinos who are unfortunate to have abusive employers. Fortunately, Beng's employers since 1987 have been supportive of her efforts to "rescue" not only fellow Filipinos but other women in dire situations.



Some of the more outstanding cases she has helped resolve was the case of a fellow domestic helper who killed her Kuwaiti employer in Italy. She hired the services of a lawyer and looked for funds for the defense of the woman, whose original penalty of death was successfully reduced to 15 years in prison. When Beng was still in Egypt, a Filipino working for the sister of a high ranking official in Egypt was regularly subjected to beatings. The physical abuse was so severe that when Beng eventually helped the maid escape,

the latter could hardly stand and walk on her own. Beng nourished her back to health and eventually helped her find employment with an American couple living in Milan. Another Filipina maid employed by a high-ranking official in Egypt, who was made to work from early morning until very late in the evening, even when she was ill, escaped with the help of Ms. Tendencia. She hid the maid until she had safely arranged for her departure.

These acts of heroism truly make Benita Tendencia a Filipino worth emulating. She serves as an inspiration and hope not only for Filipinos in Italy, but for all who left their families and loved ones behind to seek "greener pastures" overseas.

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## *Pamana ng Pilipino*

*The Pamana ng Pilipino Award is conferred on Filipinos overseas who have consistently pursued their work or profession with excellence and distinction.*

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### AWARDEES

Sharifa Zeannat Alih Salih  
*Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*

Dr. Manuel M. Garcia  
*Ontario, Canada*

Ophelia G. Balcos  
*Minnesota, United States of America*

Jessica Hagedorn  
*New York, United States of America*

Dr. Merlinda Bobis  
*New South Wales, Australia*

Loida Nicolas Lewis  
*New York, United States of America*

Pura Santillan Castrence  
*Victoria, Australia*

Nasser B. Maulana  
*Jubail, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*

Salvador P. Castro  
*Brunei Darrusalam*

Teresita B. Sagun  
*Chicago, Illinois*

Anita B. Chen  
*Ontario, Canada*

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## SHARIFA ZEANNAT ALIH SALIH

**B**eneath the warm smile and gentle mien lies a woman of exceptional virtue. Sharifa Ali Salih, nurse, educator, and a mother is greatly admired for her compassion, and leadership skills. Her personal career milestones are made more meaningful by the fact that she has established a niche in a country that is not traditionally known for offering good career opportunities to women. In a country like the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the practice of nursing as a profession is in itself a big challenge.

Twenty years ago, Ms. Salih flew to Saudi Arabia in search of better economic opportunities to provide for the needs of her growing family. She was accepted at the King Abdul Aziz Hospital in the Holy City of Makkah, and was eventually promoted to become the first Filipino expatriate instructor at the Faculty of Health Institute for Girls in Makkah in 1985. At the Institute, Sharifa introduced some measures based on Filipino nursing standards which gained overwhelming acceptance. While she generously shared her knowledge with the students in the school, she continued to excel in her work as a health care giver in the hospitals in the Kingdom.

In 1984, Sharifa was appointed member of the Scientific Committee of the Ministry of Health Haj Program by the Director General for Health Affairs, the first foreigner and nurse to become part of the said body. From 1984 to 1986, she took the lead in setting up different hospitals in the Holy City of Makkah which include: the Al Rusaifa Maternity Hospital, the Markas Taulid Maternity and Children's Hospital, the Heatstroke Treatment Center, and the Hera General Hospital where she became the first nursing director. She also helped in setting up the Al Sulaimana Surgical Hospital in Riyadh and the Heatstroke Treatment Center in Medina. Sharifa continued to rise from the ranks and in 1990, she was appointed Regional Director of Nursing at the Ministry of Health in Holy Makkah, the only expatriate in the Kingdom to ever hold a key position in the health office.

Amidst her tight work and academic schedule, Ms. Salih still found time to conduct and complete three research studies on the following: the Patho-Physiology Program in Nursing, A Keystone to Quality Manage-



ment; the Makkah Incentive Program, a Breakthrough to Quality Improvement; and the History and Development of Nursing in Holy Makkah.

Beyond these personal successes was a keen desire to serve her compatriots in the Kingdom. During the 1990 Gulf War, she was designated Chairman of the Medical Committee by the Philippine Consulate General Office in Jeddah. She took an active role in extending assistance to overseas Filipino workers stranded in the Middle East. She travelled to Riyadh, Dammam and other areas near the war frontiers to help in the evacuation of Filipinos and attend to their medical needs.

Ms. Salih's notable contributions to the development of an efficient and effective health service in the KSA has earned for her numerous awards and recognitions. Among these are the Certificate of Merit conferred by the Administration of the Health Institute for Girls for her excellent and outstanding service to the school; Certificate of Award by the Directorate Office for Health Affairs, Ministry of Health Affairs, Holy Makkah for her extraordinary efforts in serving all hospitals in the region of Makkah; the San Lorenzo Award for Outstanding OCW; and the Most Outstanding Nurse of the Year in 1996 by the Directorate Office for Health Affairs of the Ministry of Health.

Ms. Salih's personal achievements are a source of great pride for her country... her compassion for the needy, a source of hope for her countrymen.

## OPHELIA G. BALCOS



**O**phelia Balcos will be remembered as the first woman and the first Asian to be elected to chair the Minneapolis Commission on Civil Rights (MCCR). She headed the Commission for five consecutive years from 1988 to 1992, and was appointed commissioner of MCCR since 1981 by two successive mayors of Minneapolis. The Commission has the power to award damages resulting from discrimination, and reinstate people to jobs. It also has subpoena power.

Balcos' election in 1988 came at an opportune time when the Commission was beset by internal conflict among the representatives of the different ethnic groups in Minneapolis. This loss of credibility magnified the immense responsibility given to Balcos, as she was put in charge of a quasi-judicial body that enforces civil rights laws and works within the city's Civil Rights Department.

An outstanding characteristic of Balcos' achievements during her five years as head of the Commission was to refurbish the image of the Commission and motivate its members to improve their performance. Best of all, Balcos successfully led in the creation of a civil rights curriculum and its integration in the Minneapolis public schools (in the ninth grade), increasing public awareness on discrimination and the Commission's work.

Her capacity to understand people and lead them in implementing projects and activities of noble objectives naturally made her the appropriate candidate to head various PTAs, and eventually, other bigger

groups such as medical auxiliaries and medical alliance groups in her capacity as a registered nurse and wife of Dr. Emmanuel Balcos, the chief of colon and rectal surgery department at Hennepin County Medical Center. Her leadership of these groups and associations set a record of the many firsts that will mark Balcos' career as a civil rights worker.

She became the first Asian to be elected president of the Hennepin Medical Association Alliance (1986-1988). She was also the first Asian and Filipino to be elected president of the Minnesota Medical Association Alliance, a humanitarian, non-profit, volunteer organization composed of spouses of physicians, residents and medical students. This group supports and promotes medically-oriented educational and charitable endeavors that improve the health and quality of life for the people of Minnesota.

Balcos also became the first president of the Association of Filipino American Colon and Rectal Surgeons Auxiliary, enabling the organization to bring Filipino Americans together and send donations to the Philippine General Hospital.

But what could be considered the most endearing first for this woman of extraordinary leadership is her service as the first woman president of the Fil-Minnesotan Association (1978-1979). Her involvement with this Filipino organization gave her the opportunity to initiate projects which enhanced awareness and instilled appreciation of Filipino culture and heritage among the younger generation of Filipinos in America. She founded the annual Debutantes' Ball, a yearly gathering of Filipinos in Minnesota together with their children, to forge stronger ties among themselves and to promote Filipino culture and tradition through Filipiniana presentations.

With all these achievements to her credit, it is no surprise that Balcos has been the recipient of numerous awards and citations, among which is one of the Twenty Outstanding Filipino Americans in the United States and Canada in 1996.

# MERLINDA BOBIS

After completing her baccalaureate degree in Public Administration with the highest honors from the Aquinas University in Legazpi City, Ms. Merlinda Bobis chose to carve a niche for herself in the arts, particularly in literature. She honed her talent by pursuing an MA in Literature from the University of Sto. Tomas, then moved to Australia to finish her doctorate degree in creative arts at the University of Wollongong.

Realizing her artistic inclination proved to be both fulfilling and rewarding for Ms. Bobis. To date, she has three poetry books, more than 50 poems, short stories, and research articles in literary anthologies, journals, and magazines. The themes of her writings focus on social issues that affect Philippine and world realities. These include writings on war, prostitution, and multiculturalism. Her creative ingenuity gave life and color to these realities in a way that aroused compassion. It also highlighted the positive traits of the characters in their struggles to rise above their angst and difficulties.

The numerous awards she has won, as well as the international performances and readings she has done for her plays and poems attest to her exceptional talent in her chosen field.

The "Cantata of a Warrior Woman Daragang Magayon", her doctoral thesis, has been presented in 30 international gatherings and select venues such as the Philippine Day at the World Forum on Women in China, the Sydney Asian Theatre Festival, 3rd International Women Playwrights Conference in Adelaide, and the Cultural Center of the Philippines, to name a few. This famous epic poem, a protest against war, was inspired by the legend of Mt. Mayon. But unlike the legend from which it was derived, Professor Bobis gave the heroine's role a twist from being a submissive lass to that of a brave and principled woman.



Through this epic, she was able to illustrate the strength of character of Filipino women.

Aside from being a three-time winner of the prestigious Carlos Palanca Memorial Award for Literature in the Philippines, Ms. Bobis is also a recipient of mainstream Australian Awards. She has won first prize in ABC's Ian Reed Foundation for Radio Drama for her play, "Rita's Lullaby." The play revolves around the poignant experiences of two Filipino children who lost their parents, and their fight for survival through theft and prostitution. She also won ABC Radio National's Books and Writing Short Story Competition for the "Parable of Illawarra Street" a year ago.

Ms. Bobis generously shares her talents in poetry, prose, fiction, and artistic performance to aspiring writers as lecturer at the Faculty of Creative Arts at the University of Wollongong. She also continues to write literary masterpieces and reap honors for her work, bringing unending pride to the Philippines.

## PURA SANTILLAN CASTRENCE

**P**ura Santillan-Castrence is an educator, writer/author, linguist, and diplomat. Mrs. Castrence's lifetime achievements speak of a life spent in the pursuit of excellence in all her undertakings whether it be in the confines of the academe, the publishing house, or in the foreign service.

Mrs. Castrence was born on 24 March 1905. She graduated from the University of the Philippines and completed her Master's degree in Chemistry *cum laude*. She pursued her Ph. D. in Romance Languages at the University of Michigan, USA.

As an educator, she taught Chemistry and French at the University of the Philippines. She also taught at the Bonn University and tutored extensively in different languages in the United States, France and Australia. She speaks six languages — English, Filipino, French, Spanish, Italian and German. She takes pride in being one of the founders of the Cape Bolinao High School which made a big difference to the students of this town in Pangasinan who, prior to the founding of this school, had to travel to Lingayen to complete their secondary education.



Mrs. Castrence started her writing career with the Manila Daily Bulletin in 1938. She eventually became a regular columnist of the Manila Times and the Manila Daily Bulletin. She also wrote for *Liwayway* and was a contributor to numerous local magazines. She published a book in United States with the Princeton University Press entitled, *As Others See Us*. She also wrote a book on the collection of essays on *Woman Sense*, and another book on the female characters of Dr. Jose Rizal's novels. She has been anthologized in many books. Many of her works can be found in the Philippine National Library, University of the Philippines Library, and in the national libraries of France and Germany.

Mrs. Castrence used her linguistic expertise to raise the level of awareness of foreigners about the Philippines by writing brochures in French and in German about the Philippines and its culture, translating several Filipino books into French and German, translating the French essays of Dr. Jose Rizal into English and translating Filipino short stories into German and German short stories into Filipino, among others. Another project was in relation to works of Filipino artists where she provided captions in German.

Mrs. Castrence started her career in the foreign service as translator in French and German languages. She then moved on to serve the Department of Foreign Affairs in various capacities — as Chief of the United Nations Division, Chief of the Cultural Office Division, and as Minister Counsellor. Upon her return to the Philippines, she was promoted Ambassador and Assistant Secretary for Cultural Affairs in 1964.

Mrs. Castrence is presently residing in Victoria, Australia where she has been actively supporting the activities of the Filipino community for the past 20 years. At 93 and already half-blind, she still actively writes syndicated articles in Victoria and New South Wales, Australia, the United States, and for the *Radyo Kabayan* and SBS Radio.



## SALVADOR P. CASTRO

Salvador P. Castro, Jr. is a project manager who holds the distinction of having supervised the construction of the Istana Nurul Aman, the palace of the Sultan of Brunei which is listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as the biggest palace in the world. As Chief Operating Officer for this project, he was responsible for managing a team of 20 international consultants, 50 international contractors and an estimated 3,500 workers from 30 countries.

This feat has earned for Mr. Castro the recognition from the Council of the United Kingdom's distinguished Association of Project Managers as its first and only foreign member to be awarded in 1994 the grade of Fellow for his expertise and "superior responsibility" in the Brunei project. The Association of Project Managers is the United Kingdom's only professional project management body, with almost 4,000 members from the United Kingdom and other Commonwealth countries. It has awarded only 49 members with the esteemed grade of "Fellow" since its establishment in 1972. Mr. Castro is the first and only Filipino accepted as Associate of the Chartered Institute of Building (UK).

As a student, Mr. Castro was employed by his father as timekeeper and draftsman, until he was delegated to manage modest teams that eventually grew in size as the demand for their expertise also increased. Upon obtaining his Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering from the Mapua Institute of Technology in 1964, he ventured on his own as a private civil engineer practitioner. He served in various capacities for real estate developers and for the Philippine government.

In 1985, Mr. Castro ventured as an independent project manager, opened two consultancy companies, SP Castro & Associates Sdn. Bhd. in Brunei, and Asian Technicon Managers and Consultants, Inc. in Manila. Among the landmark projects that he supervised and managed in the Sultanate included the Brunei International Convention Center which served as the venue for the 1989 ASEAN Ministerial Conference; Jame'



'ASR Hassanal Bolkiah Mosque; Kampong Ayer A and B (a 500-unit housing project on stilts) and Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Foundation Complex, the country's biggest shopping complex.

Mr. Castro's accomplishments are recognized by no less than the Sultan of Brunei. He has been included in the official guest list of His Majesty since 1980, the first and only Filipino to be given this distinction in a personal capacity. He also holds the distinction of being the first and only Filipino in his personal capacity to be appointed as Management Consultant of the Government of Brunei.

Mr. Castro's success in the Sultanate has greatly enhanced the image of the Philippines among the Bruneians and promoted good relations between the Philippine and Brunei. Prior to the establishment of diplomatic ties between the Philippines and the Sultanate, Mr. Castro, as Country Manager of Ayala International in Brunei, sponsored the entry visas of Filipinos and high ranking officials who visited Brunei. He has also provided support in the establishment of the Philippine Embassy in Bandar Seri Begawan and has been indefatigable in providing support to programs and projects of Filipino organizations in the Sultanate.

## ANITA B. CHEN



**D**r. Anita Chen has distinguished herself in sociology, a field of study that requires rigorous academic research and a keen eye for observing social phenomena. Her academic work focused on the migration of Filipinos and other Asians in Canada. Among her recent works include the "Elderly Filipino in Canada"; "Filipinos in Canada: A Graphic Overview"; and "Demographic Profile of Southeast Asian Refugees and Voluntary Immigrants in Canada". Her latest book entitled "From Sunbelt to Snowbelt: Filipinos in Canada" was published by the Research Center for Canada Ethnic Studies, University of Calgary. Her latest article, "Filipinos in Canada," will be included in *The Peoples of Canada: An Encyclopedia for the Country* and will be published by the Multicultural History Society of Ontario, Toronto.

In addition to her large collection of scholarly work on Filipinos and Asians, Dr. Chen will be remembered by the students, faculty, and administrators of Lakehead University for establishing the Department of Sociology. Barely 4 years after she completed her Ph.D. in Sociology at the University of Chicago as a Fulbright scholar in 1962, she took on the task of setting up the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Lakehead. She served as its founding chairperson from 1966 to 1968. From 1971 to 1972, she served as founding chairperson of the Department of Sociology in the same institution.

In her 32 years of service at Lakehead, Dr. Chen was able to help build the good reputation of the Sociology department through her studies and publications on her special areas of interest which include: aging, ethnicity and migration, Southeast Asian regional studies, and Filipino Canadians. She was also responsible for the development of new courses, namely, Gerontology and Sociology of Medicine. Together with her husband, Dr. Min Sun Chen, Ph.D., she established a bursary in Sociology for the 30th anniversary of Lakehead University.

Despite the hectic academic schedule she keeps, Dr. Chen still finds time to promote the cause of Filipino Canadians at the community level. She served as the founding president of the Filipino Canada Association of Thunder Bay in 1982. At present, she serves as consultant to the Science and Technology Advisory Council of the Philippine Consulate General in Toronto.



## MANUEL M. GARCIA

**D**r. Manuel M. Garcia or "Maestro", as he is fondly called by colleagues and friends all over the globe, is a world-renowned expert in microbiology, especially the detection and cure of microorganisms causing animal diseases and foodborne pathogens.

He obtained his Bachelor of Science in Agriculture (Honors) and Master of Science from the College of Agriculture, University of the Philippines at Los Banos. He pursued his Ph.D. in Microbiology at the University of Guelph in Canada under the Dean's Grant of the National Research Council of Canada, and was the first Ph.D. graduate of the University of Guelph in 1967.

Dr. Garcia was the the first Filipino and Asian to hold the position of Research Scientist at the prestigious Animal Diseases Research Institute, Agriculture, Canada. In 1974, he was appointed as Head of Microbiology in recognition of his international reputation as a scientist and problem-solver.

In the late 1970s when the sudden appearance of a highly contagious venereal disease in race horses called *Contagious Equine Metritis* (CEM) occurred in Europe and later in the US, Dr. Garcia was dispatched to Plum Island, N.Y. as the only Canadian microbiologist charged with identifying the causal agent in imported and Canadian horses. At the height of the international spread of the disease, no CEM was diagnosed in Canada.

His series of publications on the physiology, pathogenicity, ultrastructure and molecular characterization of the anaerobic *Fusobacterium necrophorum*, led to countless invitations to speak in international conferences. Dr. Garcia is well-known for his pioneering work to develop vaccines against bovine liver abscess which is mainly caused by this pathogen.

Until its eradication in Canada in 1985, Dr. Garcia was at the forefront of efforts to wipe out the highly contagious disease in animals and man caused by *Brucella*. His expertise in the treatment of this disease resulted in his selection as Canadian expert and research advisor to the United Nations University-Biotechnology Programs in Latin America and the Caribbean Brucellosis Research Network.

In recognition of his expertise in reproductive infections, Dr. Garcia was invited to participate as chief microbiologist for a Bovine Fertility Project funded by the Ca-



nadian International Development Agency (CIDA) to assist Jamaicans improve the productivity of their cattle industry. His findings and innovations were considered by the Jamaican Department of Agriculture to be a significant milestone in its efforts to increase its cattle production.

Dr. Garcia has been generous in sharing his expertise on technologies in microbiology by serving as consultant to developing countries in Latin America, the Caribbean, and Asia. He has also helped advance the technology on food safety and microbiology in the Philippines as UNDP-TOKTEN voluntary consultant and as foreign expert of the Philippine Department of Science and Technology.

Dr. Garcia's professional career has not stopped him from furthering the interests of Filipinos in Canada. He was an active member of the International Club, and was twice president of Filipino Canadian Association of Ottawa during which he actively promoted cooperation with the new Philippine Embassy in Canada.

A multi-talented man, Dr. Garcia also served as conductor-director of the *Himig Pilipino* Chorale for many years. Through the group's performances and with matching funds from the Philippine Development Assistance Program (Canada), they were able to raise over US\$20,000 for the homeless in Cebu City and for a reforestation project to support the livelihood of Mangyans in Mindoro.

Dr. Garcia was a pioneer in establishing the United Council of Filipino Associations in Canada, the forerunner of the present National Council of Canadian Filipino Associations, officially recognized by the government of Canada as the official voice of Filipino Canadians.

## JESSICA HAGEDORN

When she was still in her teens, Jessica Hagedorn left the Philippines with her family and moved to San Francisco in the early 1960s. She became enamored by the vast opportunities the country offered to nurture her passion for writing. She was particularly struck by the emerging literary counterculture in San Francisco. It was Ms. Hagedorn's English teacher at Lowell High School who helped discover her inborn talent for prose and poetry. She credits Kenneth Rexroth, a well-known poet and translator in San Francisco, as having greatly influenced her style.

Jessica Hagedorn's literary style has been called avant-garde; yet this very element has captivated her readers from different cultures. She has indelibly impressed the sophisticated American literary scene, with critical acclaim of her works. Her first novel, entitled *Dogeaters* was voted best book of the year by the Before Columbus Foundation, and was nominated for the 1990 National Book Award for fiction. Her second novel, *The Gangster of Love*, sold well in New York and the West Coast and in cities not included in the promotion tour of the book such as Chicago, Houston, Denver, and Minneapolis. She edited *Charlie Chan is Dead: An Anthology of Contemporary Asian American Fiction*, which features 48 writers with varying literary styles and cultural backgrounds. She is also one of only 14 poets featured in a book on leading Asian-American poets, *Black Lightning: Poetry-in-Progress*.



Jessica's ability to present the reality of human conditions and emotions is the key to the cross-cultural appeal of her work. This is evident in her novels *Dogeaters* and *The Gangster of Love* as well as her other works where some of her own personal experiences are manifested. That some literary critics react strongly to the way she depicts her characters in her novels proves that her

writings are powerful and thought-provoking.

.....

*in brazil/ the women samba/ only with their legs/  
their faces are somber  
/and their upper torsos/ never move*

.....

*her dreams were filled with ghosts/ perched on  
her bony wrists/ grinning gargoyles  
/who menaced her every step/ and wouldn't/ let  
her go*

*she longed to be/ her mother/ in a silver dress/  
some softly fading memory  
/lifting her legs/ in a sinous tango*

-from "THE WOMAN WHO THOUGHT  
SHE WAS MORE THAN A SAMBA"  
by Jessica Hagedorn

# LOIDA NICOLAS LEWIS

A Filipina with a keen business sense, and above all, a generous heart. This few words conjures an image of a woman with a passion for success and compassion for humanity. This is Loida Nicolas Lewis.

Loida Nicolas Lewis is the chairman and chief executive officer of The Lewis Company (TLC) Beatrice, a well-known food conglomerate and retailer in Europe and Asia. She took over the company a year after the demise of her husband, Reginald, in 1993. Under her leadership, the company's profitability was restored. This she did by cutting costs, selling non-performing or non-core assets, and repaying debts. Since her takeover in 1994, the value of shareholders' investments increased 40% annually. As proof of the company's growth, in 1997, TLC's net income was posted at \$160.2 million, compared to the 1996 income of \$19.6 million. In recognition of her outstanding business management, she was ranked first among women business owners in 1994 by Working Woman Magazine.

Loida's achievements in the business world are highlighted by major breakthroughs just as the company's beginning and growth was. Reginald Lewis acquired Beatrice International in December 1987 in a \$985 million leveraged buyout, considered the largest offshore LBO ever. Over the years, Reginald carried the company to greater heights and bigger profitability. When Reginald died of cancer in 1993, shareholders panicked and stock prices fell.

The need to revive public confidence in the company and most especially, the task of rearing her two daughters were the major challenges Loida prioritized to undertake. Married to Reginald for almost 25 years, Loida has been by Reginald's side as his confidante and adviser. After a year of mourning, Lewis took charge of the company in 1994 to continue what her legendary husband had started. She assumed this responsibility with determination and success that proved her adversaries wrong.

Loida is a graduate of the University of the Philippines College of Law and a cum laude graduate of St. Theresa's College. She is the daughter of one of the Philippine's pioneering leaders in the furniture industry. She was the first Asian woman to pass the New York State bar exam without having studied law in the US. Loida first made her imposing presence felt in the U.S. legal landscape in 1979 when she filed and won a discrimination complaint on the basis of race, sex, and national origin against the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). She filed the complaint after realizing that she was far more qualified than the applicants hired by INS. She served as General Attorney of INS until 1990.



Loida has written three books on US immigration law, including *How To Get A Green Card* which has been a bestseller since its publication. In 1972, she established a monthly magazine for the Filipino American community and served as the magazine's publisher until it merged with another publication in 1979.

Her successes as an entrepreneur is a product of sheer industry, commitment to succeed, and belief in the natural abilities of others most specially, one's self. Today, the financial achievements and track record of TLC Beatrice speak of the kind of management Loida has introduced into the company.

Over the years, Loida has also played an active role in the activities of the Filipino community in the US. Aside from her contribution as an immigration lawyer in the past, she has helped lead advocacy efforts toward the restoration of benefits to Filipino World War II veterans through the Veterans' Equity Bill.

She was also one of the founders of the National Federation of Filipino American Associations (NaFFAA), a national umbrella group of Filipino American organizations. By hosting meetings and providing financial support to the NaFFAA, she has been instrumental in paving the way for the political empowerment of Filipino Americans in the American political arena.

Loida Nicolas Lewis' achievements symbolize more than just one person's personal struggle to succeed. Her principled pursuit of her goals is more than just a feature of a woman's extraordinary belief in her capabilities. Her personal struggles and successes is a representation of the Filipino people's talent, industry, and passion for excellence and success.



## NASSER B. MAULANA

construction and repair of concrete works for equipment foundations and other structures. He has also helped in maintenance of plant infrastructures to prevent operational disruptions.

The threat of rapid and massive deterioration of plant structures due to corrosion of steel reinforcements and the exorbitant costs of maintenance work inspired Nasser to develop a product that would eliminate all these problems. With SABIC's second search for the Best Innovative Application of Primary Plastics - Petrochemical Industry serving as impetus, Mr. Maulana designed an alternative reinforcement material to steel bars.

Using a downstream product of ethylene, the same substance used for PVC pipes, he created a plastic bar that can replace the steel bars for non-structural concrete fixtures such as manholes, sidewalk pavements, floor slabs, and drainage systems. Aside from being non-corrosible, the reinforced plastic bars are resistant to tensile and shearing stresses that usually cause the deterioration of infrastructure.

Nasser's entry was among the 400 technical proposals submitted by top caliber technical personnel and evaluated by a consultant company through rigid testing procedures. On March 1998, he was awarded first prize for his innovation. His product, aside from being able to address the infrastructure problems of SABIC's companies, will also be one of the product lines that SHARQ will manufacture.

With his award-winning technological breakthrough, Nasser has made his country proud. He has proven that Filipinos can contribute significantly to the advancement of science and technology and help make the world a better and safer place to live in.

**E**ngr. Nasser Maulana is one of the few Filipinos who has made a mark in the highly competitive field of engineering. He developed an innovative idea that would significantly impact on construction technology for non-concrete fixtures not only in the Middle East countries but in other countries as well. His work is a product of inherent ingenuity, and constant search for improvements in the technologies of his field.

Engr. Maulana has been employed as an engineer at the Mechanical/Civil Maintenance Department of the Eastern Petrochemical Company (SHARQ) in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the last 7 years. SHARQ is one of the affiliates of the Saudi Arabia Basic Industries Corporation (SABIC), which is the world's largest petrochemical company and among the top 10 performers in the global petrochemical industry. As supervisor for the special maintenance projects in the company, he has gained extensive experience in the

## TERESITA B. SAGUN

**T**eresita Bulan Sagun is the first female, first Filipino, first Asian American and longest-tenured serving commissioner in the Department of Sewers, City of Chicago. A remarkable Filipina with an immense drive for excellence, Sagun is living proof that one's gender or ethnicity is no barrier to achieving success.

Teresita Sagun was born on May 21, 1941 in Solano, Cagayan. She completed her degree in BS Civil Engineering and BS Sanitary Engineering from the National University of Manila in 1963 and 1964, respectively. She was completing her sanitary engineering course while employed as a junior engineer and part-time high school teacher, when a professor told her that her skills and abilities were of immense value and that she should seek further training abroad.

After spending a year as Soils Engineer in Canada, Ms. Sagun moved to Chicago to join the Department of Public Works. In 1973, Ms. Sagun transferred to the Department of Sewers where she rose from the ranks to become Deputy Commissioner. In 1987, she was named Commissioner of the department up to the time she retired in 1998.

Dedicated to enhancing the lives of the city dwellers for almost three decades now, Mrs. Sagun's brand of public service is indeed a source of great pride for the many Filipinos and other ethnic minorities in Chicago. As Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Sewers, Mrs. Sagun was key to the development of a method for delegating responsibilities between divisions under the department. She also instituted a more cost-effective, systematic program of sewer replacement. But what sets her apart from others were the many innovative programs and projects she implemented when she became Commissioner of the department.

These include a direct outreach initiative for recruitment of women and minorities to meet the city's



affirmative action goals. She was also responsible for the sound fiscal management of the department which enabled it to implement a \$400 million infrastructure rehabilitation program, the largest funding in the agency's history.

Ms. Sagun was also key to the implementation of remote videotaping of the sewer systems that enabled the department to monitor the conditions of the city's sewerage system. This system put Chicago in the lead in this field among other US cities. With her brand of leadership and kindhearted personality, she was assigned to take charge and direct key city agencies in solving the crisis of the Great Chicago Flood of 1992.

Since 1994, she has donated her time to the Philippines every year as a consultant to help evaluate the implementation of a modern national sewer system.

A registered Professional Engineer in Illinois and Sanitary Engineer in the Philippines, Teresita Sagun's achievements and contributions earned her accolades through her years of public service. She was the recipient of the Kathy Osterman Award for Outstanding Executive Employee in 1988, and Public Service Award by the Illinois Institute of Technology in 1993.

**1998 PRESIDENTIAL AWARDS FOR FILIPINO  
INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS OVERSEAS**

*Awarding Ceremonies and Testimonial Dinner  
Friday, 11 December 1998, 6:00 p.m.  
Ceremonial Hall, Malacanang Palace*

*Programme*

6:00 p.m.	Arrival of Guests
6:30 p.m.	Cocktails
7:30 p.m.	Arrival of H.E. President Joseph Ejercito Estrada
7:30 p.m.	Opening Remarks Hon. Jose Z. Molano, Jr. Executive Director, CFO
7:36 p.m.	Presentation of Awards
7:51 p.m.	Message on behalf of the Awardees Ms. Loida Nicolas-Lewis
8:01 p.m.	Introduction of the Guest of Honor Hon. Rora Navaro-Tolentino Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs
8:02 p.m.	Message of H.E. President Joseph Ejercito Estrada
8:16 p.m.	Dinner

**Ms. Cheche L. Lazaro**  
*Master of Ceremonies*

## COMMISSION ON FILIPINOS OVERSEAS: An Overview

The increasing trend in international migration in the middle of the 1960s and in the 1970s drew particular attention to the conditions and potentials of the growing number of Filipinos going overseas. In 1980, Congress passed Batas Pambansa Blg. 79 creating the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) to promote the interests and well-being of Filipinos overseas, in particular those of Filipino emigrants.

The CFO has a distinct clientele not dealt with by the programs of any other agency of the Philippine government. They are the following:

- ☛ Filipinos who are permanent migrants or permanent residents abroad;
- ☛ Filipinos overseas who have become citizens of other countries;
- ☛ Filipino spouses/fiancees of foreign nationals leaving the country;
- ☛ descendants of Filipinos overseas as defined in B.P. 79; and
- ☛ Filipino youth overseas.

Batas Pambansa Blg. 79 mandates the CFO to:

1. provide advice and assistance to the President and the Congress of the Philippines in the formulation of policies and measures concerning or affecting Filipinos overseas;
2. develop and implement programs to promote the interests and well being of Filipinos overseas;
3. serve as a forum for preserving and enhancing social, economic, and cultural ties of Filipinos overseas with the Philippines; and
4. provide liason services to Filipinos overseas with appropriate government and private agencies in the transaction of business and similar ventures in the Philippines.

These functions have been translated into a framework consisting of four main programme areas: Migrant Social and Economic Integration, Filipino Education and Heritage, All-Filipino Unity and Sustainable National Development, and Policy Development and Data Banking.

Under Migrant Social and Economic Integration, CFO programs and services ensure that all Filipinos migrating to other countries are adequately prepared to meet the practical and psy-

chological problems attendant to international migration.

The Filipino Education and Heritage programme promotes the provision of critical educational services, as well as continued exposure of younger generations of overseas Filipinos to Philippine language, history, culture and institutions.

CFO activities under All-Filipino Unity and Sustainable National Development seek to foster better cohesion and unity of purpose within and among the various overseas Filipino organizations so that their own interests and well being can be promoted, supported or enhanced within a greater and more formidable all-Filipino community.

In Policy Development and Data Banking, CFO is involved in providing a continuing study and review of the economic, social, legal and administrative environment which have bearing on the status of overseas Filipinos.

Specific programs and services of CFO under these programme areas include the following:

### 1. Migrant Social and Economic Integration

#### *Orientation Seminars*

CFO holds daily pre-departure orientation sessions to prepare Filipino emigrants for their settlement and adjustment in their countries of destinations. Discussed during these seminars are travel and settlement tips, cultural realities in countries of destination, rights of immigrants in host countries, immigration and social security policies of host countries, employment concerns, and rights and obligations of Filipino migrants. Country-specific seminars are conducted for those bound for U.S.A., Canada, and Australia.

#### *Guidance and Counseling Services*

CFO conducts daily guidance and counseling sessions to help Filipino fiancees/spouses of foreign nationals to arrive at informed decisions on intermarriages. These sessions cover topics on marriage concerns, cultural differences, ways of coping with difficult situations, available welfare and support services overseas, migration laws affecting intermarriages, rights of migrants overseas, support services for migrants, and coping mechanisms. As part of this service, basic language classes are also held for Japan-bound Filipinos.

#### *Peer Counseling*

About 30% of Filipino emigrants belonged to the 19 and below age group. CFO developed a peer counseling service specifically to address the concerns of Filipino youth migrants going abroad.



### **Post-Arrival Orientation Services**

CFO obtained the cooperation of Filipino and international organizations based in the U.S., Canada, and Australia, for the conduct of post-arrival orientation services for newly arrived emigrants. Through the post-arrival services, new migrants are given orientation and linked with employment agencies, migrant resource centers, support groups, and Filipino associations in their areas of settlement.

### **Public Information**

CFO organizes and conducts information campaigns on migration realities in the various provinces/ cities across the country. Information materials such as comics and posters are distributed.

Symposia in schools, radio and TV interviews, press conferences, and *pulung-pulongs* with local officials and leaders of civic, youth, church, and non-government organizations are some of the activities during the information campaigns.

An important project is the establishment of the Migrants' Advisory and Information Network (MAIN). Involving the cooperation and support of 12 agencies, the MAIN seeks to make information on migration and counseling services more accessible to the public so that individuals and families can make sound decisions on the migration process.

### **Educational Modules on Migration**

CFO, in cooperation with the DFA, DOLE, and the DECS, developed educational modules on international migration for integration in the academic curriculum of the elementary and high school levels. National and regional teachers trainings on the use of the educational modules have been conducted in preparation for initial implementation in SY 1998-1999.

## **2. Filipino Education and Heritage**

### **Lakbay-Aral**

Under the Lakbay-Aral Program, CFO arranges intensive study-visits and cultural immersions in the Philippines for children of Filipino migrants overseas. The program seeks to enable these children to learn more about their Filipino culture and heritage.

### **Philippine Community Schools Abroad**

Community schools abroad were established to provide children of overseas Filipinos with quality education that will enable them to re-integrate into the Philippine educational system. CFO serves as Secretariat to an Inter-Agency

Committee, which provides policy direction and assistance in the operation of Philippine schools overseas.

## **3. All Filipino Unity and Sustainable Development**

### **Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino (LINKAPIL)**

In recognizing the vast potentials of Filipinos abroad as partners in nation-building, CFO established the *Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino* Program. Literally translated as "service to Fellow Filipinos", LINKAPIL is designed to provide a mechanism for transferring financial, material, and technical assistance from Filipinos overseas to various beneficiaries in the Philippines.

CFO assists and supports the donor institution by providing advice on the existing procedures and guidelines governing duty-free importation of donations and by monitoring and preparing reports on the status of the donations. CFO coordinates with the project beneficiaries and facilitates the release of the donations through coordinative efforts with the concerned agencies.

### **Publications**

CFO maintains linkages with Filipinos overseas through its publications, such as the *Handbook for Filipinos Overseas*, which contains relevant information on government programs and policies affecting overseas Filipinos, and *Filipino Ties*, the CFO newsletter.

## **4. Policy Development and Data Banking**

### **Policy Review and Formulation**

CFO prepares policy papers and project proposals regarding issues and concerns of overseas Filipinos. Such areas include intermarriages, land ownership, taxation, transfer of skills to the Philippines by overseas Filipinos, absentee voting, and anti-trafficking of Filipino women.

CFO also maintains data bank of registered emigrants including a database of Filipino associations overseas. Data generated from the registration figure are used as basis for policy formulation and program development purposes.

### **Technical Assistance to Inter-Agency Undertakings**

CFO is a member of various inter-agency committees and working groups. Among these are the Inter-Agency Committee on Philippine Schools Abroad, the Technical Working Group on the Educational Modules on International Migration, the Technical Working Committee of the Assistance to Nationals Task Force, Inter-Agency Committee on the Exchange Visitors Program, and Inter-Agency Committee on Intermarriages.



## 1998 Presidential Awards for Filipino Individuals and Organizations Overseas

### Executive Committee

Chairman	Hon. Domingo L. Siazon, Jr. Secretary of Foreign Affairs
Vice-Chairman	Undersecretary Daniel C. Victoria Presidential Assistant for Protocol
Members	Mr. Ricardo S. Pascua President and Chief Executive Officer Fort Bonifacio Development Corporation
	Msgr. Ramon C. Arguelles Chairman, Episcopal Commission for Migrants and Itinerant People, Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines
	Ms. Cheche L. Lazaro President, PROBE Productions, Inc.
	Hon. Jose Z. Molano, Jr. Executive Director, Commission on Filipinos Overseas

### Technical Committee

Department of Foreign Affairs	Mr. Rolando Gregorio Executive Director, Office of the Legal Assistant for Migrant Workers' Affairs
	Mr. Mariano Dumia Special Assistant, Consular Assistance Division
Commission on Filipinos Overseas	Ms. Betty P. del Castillo Director, Administrative and Finance Office
	Mr. Chito A. Amboy Officer-in-Charge, Projects Management Office

Awards Secretariat

Commission on Filipinos Overseas



## 1993 PRESIDENTIAL AWARDEES

### *Linkapil Award*

Philippine Cultural Organization in Saarland, E.V.  
World Bank/IFC-IMF Filipino Association

### *Kaakabay ng Bayan Award*

Foundation for Aid to the Philippines, Inc. (FAPI)  
Pagkakaisa Samahang Pilipino/Confederation of Filipino Overseas Organization

### *Kaanib ng Bayan Award*

Books for the Barrios  
PAG-ASA Group, Japan  
"Salamat Po Kai"

### *Banaag Award*

Grace Fe N. Covarrubias (Posthumous)  
Jose L. Evangelista  
Filipino Ladies Association of Guam (FLAG)  
Aurea Helbig  
Carmencita Hernandez  
Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Concepcion  
Ramon A.P. Paterno  
Reuben Seguritan  
Tahanan (Diocesan Center for Filipino Migrants)

### *Pamana ng Pilipino Award*

Diosdado P. Banatao  
Lupo T. Carlota  
Angelita A. Castro-Kelly  
De Guzman, Rodolfo A.  
Ermani G. Menez  
Rosendo K. Palis

## 1996 PRESIDENTIAL AWARDEES

### *Linkapil Award*

Philippine American Foundation (PAF)  
Philippine Children's Charity Fund (PCCF)  
Philippine Economic and Cultural Endowment (PEACE)  
Science and Technology Advisory Council - San Francisco

Gloria T. Caoile  
Jesus T. Ho  
Emanuel N. Nacario  
Isabelo S. Torio  
Jose G. Vijunco

### *Kaakabay ng Bayan Award*

Aloha Medical Mission  
Volunteer Business Counselors (VBC) of Doha

### *Kaanib ng Bayan Award*

Association Philippines International - Geneva  
Consuelo Zobel Alger Foundation

### *Banaag Award*

Tsakos Shipping and Trading, S.A.  
Balik Bohol Medical Mission  
Filipino Americal Human Services, Inc. (FAHSI)  
Penang Support Group for Migrant Filipinos (PSG)  
Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants -  
Riyadh (PICPA)  
Rizal-Blumentrit Society Austria

H.E. Essa Mohammed Al Zedjali  
Moh'd Ali Carlito Astillero  
Lilia R. Juele  
Angel T. Ramos  
Mona Lisa L. Steiner  
Emilio Y. Uy  
Prospero C. Zamora

### *Pamana ng Pilipino Award*

Anacleto R. Alcantara  
Jacob V. Aranda  
Evelyn Panganiban-Bebars  
Lilia Calderon-Clemente  
Paciente A. Cordero, Jr.  
Frederic and Dorothy Cordova  
Jorge M. Garcia  
Ma. Cynthia J. Goh  
Venancio C. Igarta  
Erlinda T. Layosa

Evelyn L. Mandac  
David C. Medalla  
Irene Natividad  
Rey D. Pagtakhan  
Manuel V. Pangilinan  
Mel Red Recana  
Raul M. Sunico  
Romeo V. Tabuena  
Velma R. Voloria

Department of Foreign Affairs  
COMMISSION ON FILIPINOS OVERSEAS  
1998