

FROM THE FRONT PAGE

Filipino nurses still rule...

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 “They would be better off staying back for a year at least after graduation to polish their Taglish to English and gain practical bedside experience,” she said.
 Andam, however, admits she cannot blame new graduates from wanting to immigrate immediately to the United States to start earning dollars.
 Between 12,000 and 15,000 nurses and other medical professionals reportedly leave the Phil-

ippines each year for better-paying jobs abroad. Many end up in the United States.
 Though the value of the dollar has dropped to the peso in recent years—from P55 to P46 to the dollar—it is still attractive to work in the US.
 Nurses generally work 12 hours a day, three days a week pulling in about \$25 an hour or between \$45,000 and \$50,000 annually. With overtime they can easily make \$60,000 a year, 10 to 15 times what they make in the Philippines. ■

Filipinos among arrested...

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 According to ICE, the Fugitive Operations Teams focused on targets in four area counties—Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino. Of those taken into custody in this area, a total of 308 were immigration fugitives, immigrants who have ignored final orders of deporta-

tion or who returned to the US illegally after being removed.
 ICE said that nearly a third of the illegal immigrants arrested locally also had criminal histories in addition to being in the country illegally.
 “The deployment of more Fugitive Operations Teams, together with enhancements in our ability to track leads in these cases, have resulted in the arrest of record numbers of immigration fugitives this year and we expect that trend to continue,” said Department of Homeland Security Assistant Secretary Julie L. Myers, who oversees ICE. “Individuals who defy immigration court orders to leave the country need to understand there are consequences for willfully disregarding the law. ICE is committed to enforcing these outstanding deportation orders and strengthening the integrity of our nation’s immigration system.”
 The three-week raid in California coincided with a similar raid in Chicago, Illinois where it was confirmed that Filipinos were arrested.
 ICE arrested 144 fugitives and immigration violators in Chicago, suburban communities, and northern Indiana during a four-

day initiative targeting fugitive aliens, illegal aliens who failed to appear for their immigration hearings, or who absconded after having been ordered to leave the country by a federal immigration judge, according to ICE.
 Those arrested during the four-day operation were from the following 26 countries. The list included the Philippines. It was not determined how many Filipinos were arrested and/or sent back by Chicago ICE officers.
 Soriano said that the PWC is working with the Philippine Consulate and the Archdiocese of Los Angeles to help undocumented immigrants.
 “It’s definitely a growing concern as they increase intensity of the raids,” said Soriano. “For Filipinos that need help or are concerned we invite them to contact us. We are putting together different programs trying to bring affordable legal service and fundraising to have a fund to assist people who have been picked up by ICE. So we encourage people to get involved. Even if there weren’t a lot of Filipinos picked up in this raid it still affects the community. It is spreading fear among immigrants and families and making people afraid to access services.”
 (Joseph Pimentel)

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