

COMMUNITY JOURNAL

IMMIGRATION CORNER



ATTY. MICHAEL GURFINKEL

The December 2008 priority dates

The December 2008 priority dates for the Philippines are follows:

FAMILY CATEGORY:		Priority Date
First Preference	Unmarried sons and daughters of US citizens (over 21 years of age)	June 1, 1993 (In November 2008, the priority date was May 1, 1993.)
	2A. Spouse and minor children (below 21 years old) of green card holder	April 1, 2004 (In November 2008, the priority date was February 8, 2004.)
Second Preference	2B. Unmarried sons and daughters (over 21 years old) of green card holder	July 15, 1997 (In November 2008, the priority date was June 15, 1997.)
	Married sons and daughters of US citizens.	May 15, 1991 (In November 2008, the priority date May 8, 1991.)
Third Preference	Brothers and sisters of US citizens.	April 15, 1986 (In November 2008, the priority date was March 22, 1986.)
LABOR CERTIFICATION:		
	Third Preference	Professional/Skilled Workers
Other workers	Non-Skilled Workers	January 15, 2003 (In November 2008, the priority date was the same.)

Petitions by Citizens:

The priority date for the First Preference Category, F-1 (unmarried sons and daughters of US citizens, over 21 years of age) date moved forward by 1 month from May 1, 1993 to June 1, 1993.

The Third Preference Category, F-3 (married sons and daughters of United States citizens) priority date moved forward by 7 days from May 8, 1991 to May 15, 1991.

The Fourth Preference, F-4 (brothers and sisters of United States citizens) priority date moved forward by 24 days from March 22, 1986 to April 15, 1986.

Petitions by green card holders:

The Second Preference, F-2A (Spouse and minor children (below 21 years old) of green card holder) moved forward by 1 month and 24 days, from February 8, 2004 to April 1, 2004

The Second Preference, F-2B (unmarried sons and daughters, over 21 years of age, of green

card holders) moved forward by 1 month from June 15, 1997 to July 15, 1997.

Petitions by employers:

The Third Preference (professionals and skilled workers) of



CITIZEN PINOY'S THANKSGIVING SPECIAL FROM MANILA! Newscaster, Correspondent, TV Host, Ms. Bernadette Sembrano (left) joins leading immigration attorney Michael J. Gurfinkel (right) in this special Thanksgiving episode of the most popular immigration program on television – Citizen Pinoy! Stay tuned for many surprises, and have your immigration questions answered! This special episode airs on TFC this Sunday at 5:40 pm (PST), with a replay on Tuesday at 11:20 pm (PST). Citizen Pinoy also airs on ANC-US every Sunday at 12 midnight, with replays on Sunday at 8 am and Thursday at 7 pm, all PST; and on ANC-Philippines every Sunday at 4 pm and replays at 12 midnight on Mondays all PST.

Employment-Based Petitions (Labor Certification) priority date remained the same at May 1, 2005. The priority date for unskilled (other) workers remained the same January 15, 2003.

Each month, the Visa Office of the State Department publishes the priority dates for that particular month. This means that visas (or green cards) would now be available for persons whose priority date is earlier than the cut-off date listed below. If your

priority date was “current,” but retrogressed before your immigrant visa was issued (or before you adjusted status in the US), you would have to wait until it becomes current again.

Michael J. Gurfinkel is licensed, and an active member of the State Bar of California and New York. All immigration services are provided by, or under the supervision of, an active member of the State Bar of California. Each case is different.

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(Advertising Supplement)

Western Union gives the perfect gift



The hardest part of the holidays is finding the perfect gift for your loved ones, especially those who are not close by. Western Union strives to continuously provide excellent service so that you can send them the perfect gift: cash. For the hard-working Filipino immigrants that are sending the perfect gift home, Western Union is giving back to them by supporting community organizations that provide services that will support their efforts and enable them to be successful Filipino Americans. With numerous involvements all around the United States with different Filipino community organizations, this worldwide leader in money transfer services demonstrates the perfect example of giving back to the community. Two particular ongoing projects that Western Union has been working on is their support of the Bayanihan Filipino Community Center of Queens, New York and the national Philippines Nurses Association of America.

The term *bayanihan*, literally translated as the spirit of camaraderie, was chosen as the name of the community center to portray the idea of helping each other out, working “shoulder-to-shoulder.” The center was created to provide a place for the growing Filipino community in Queens where children and adults could have access to free programs, information, and other helpful services. Western Union has been sponsoring several of the center’s programs, including the Palaro SportsFest, the computer literacy program, and the community newspaper.

The Palaro SportsFest, an eight-week program, kicked off with a basketball tournament. The purpose of the *sportsfest* was to provide a productive activity for youth during the summer while they are out of school and to encourage development and empowerment. Although the center only had manpower for one tournament this year, they hope to expand by next year to include additional sports tournaments.

For adults, the most popular program has been the computer literacy program, which offers an opportunity to learn basic Word programs and Internet browsing. Many have found it beneficial to learn how to use the Internet in particular, because they can communicate with their families in the Philippines via web cameras and emails, which is a cheaper

alternative to phone calls. In addition, the center publishes a monthly newspaper called the *Sanlahi*, to inform the local Filipino community with news and upcoming events.

Another organization that Western Union has diligently supported is the Philippine Nurses Association of America. The PNA was formed in response to address the issues and concerns of Filipino nurses in the United States. “Western Union has helped us through the years as a major sponsor of our annual national conventions. We look forward to a continued Western Union collaborative relationship with our ethnic professional association,” stated Leo Jurado, President of PNA. Recently, Western Union has also worked with the PNA to launch an educational and mentorship program, which was designed to empower Filipino nurses with medical knowledge and information, allowing them to advance their careers and make a significant impact on the lives of the people they care for.

Western Union’s continuous support is crucial to the continuation of the Bayanihan Filipino Community Center and the PNA’s programs, and the company plans to continue support to provide these services to the Filipino community.

Western Union continues to look for various ways to support the Filipino community. While supporting the community with these endeavors, the corporation also strives to provide their customers with the best service possible. Consumers can send money home in minutes* and enjoy the benefits of choice—selecting from US Dollar** or Philippine Peso Payout; and added value—accruing reward points and benefits from the Western Union Gold Card Program for Senders in the US. Within the US, there are over 45,000 Western Union Agent locations ready to serve and help consumers with their money transfer service needs. In addition, there are over 7,300 Western Union Agent locations in the Philippines, including the provinces of Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao where receivers can collect the money. For Tagalog-language customer support or to send money using a credit card over the phone call Western Union at 1-877-PERA-ITO. For more information, please visit www.westernunion.com.

(Advertising Supplement)

Philstar.com unveils new website

PHILSTAR.COM, the online presence of *The Philippine STAR* and its sister publications—*Pilipino Star Ngayon*, *The Freeman*, *Banat* and *People Asia*, unveils today a newly redesigned website for the Filipino global community.

In this latest redesign, the new *philstar.com* offers richer content, more interactive features, audio and video streaming capabilities, and fully searchable archives, among others. A new section to be unveiled is the Filipino Global Community section, which will feature news and special reports on Filipinos and Filipino communities abroad.

Since 1997 when *The STAR* first established

a home on the Web, *philstar.com* has always taken pride in bringing news and information to local and overseas readers and of having established a vibrant community of readers that discuss national issues interact with each other online.

In the new website, *philstar.com* hopes to strengthen this community and be able to create an even more vibrant space for discussion, for sharing of insights and opinion and for getting informed and entertained.

Philstar.com also hopes to showcase in its coverage of news and events in the country and overseas the best of the Philippines and help bring back pride in being Filipino. →

‘The Great American Pinoy Atlantic City Bus Tour’ – Nov. 29

The public is invited to join The Great American Pinoy Atlantic City Bus Tour on November 29. Points of departures are the following.

- From Jersey City-Newark Ave. (in front of Phil-Am Foodmart), 2 pm;
- From Westside Ave. & Ege Street, 2 pm;
- From Bergenfield (363 So.

Washington Avenue), 1 pm; • Departing from Queens, NY Roosevelt Ave. & 69th Street, 1 pm.

To reserve and pay for bus tickets - (212) 682-6610. \$30 - Jersey City / \$35 - Bergenfield & Queens, NY. Payment in advance required. Purchase of tickets to the concert not required. For more info, call (212) 682-6610 or e-mail: [sep-](mailto:sep-mgzn@aol.com)

mgzn@aol.com. While you’re there, watch the premier concert event sponsored by Trump Entertainment Resorts, Special Edition Press Inc. and ERJ Productions.

“The latest multi-media, family-friendly production will sparkle at Trump Taj Mahal with entertainment for day-tripping families,

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