

IMMIGRATION CORNER



ATTY. MICHAEL GURFINKEL

Voting could result in a lifetime ban

clipboards, asking them if they want to register to vote. They are asked a few simple questions, they sign the form and the next thing they know, they receive a sample ballot and the address of their polling place to vote.

A non-citizen could also inadvertently register to vote when renewing his or her driver's license, as the renewal form has a section asking if a person wishes to register to vote.

Just because somebody outside a supermarket may register you to vote does not make it "legal" for you to vote in a federal election. And it could come back to haunt you. For example, the application for naturalization contains the following questions: "Have you ever registered to vote in any federal, state or local election in the US? Have you ever voted in any federal, state or local election in the United States?" Therefore, if you are not a citizen and registered to vote, or voted, it could create problems for you.

While there are some exceptions to this prohibition (i.e. if the

alien permanently resided in the US before his or her 16th birthday and reasonably believed that they were a citizen, or they can prove that they did not act "knowingly or willingly,"), still you will make your life a lot easier if you simply do not register to vote or vote until you are finally a US citizen.

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, Gawad Kalinga welcome new homeowners to Naic housing community



NAIC, Cavite—The Western Union Company turned over last Sept. 10 the first ten homes to selected families in Brgy. Bucana Sasahan, Naic, Cavite. The ceremony, led by Western Union executive vice president for Asia Pacific Ian Marsh, completed the first phase of the company's housing project in collaboration with non-government organization Gawad Kalinga.

The ten selected families were also given a "moving-in kit" which included a roll-up bed, basic home tools and furnishings such as a coal stove for cooking and heating (given the lack of electricity supply in the area).

Cavite currently accounts for the highest number of organized overseas Filipino worker (OFW) families among the Philippine provinces. The province has 6,021 OFW family organizations. Nationwide, there are now more than 154,000 organized OFW families. According to the National Statistics Office (NSO), there are nearly one million households in the Philippines with at least one family member working abroad.

"Western Union recognizes the contributions made by the OFW communities in Cavite. By



working abroad, they are able to provide not only financial support to their families but also to their respective *barangays*," said Marsh. "We at Western Union are optimistic that these homes we have built with Gawad Kalinga will serve as the first step towards realizing the dreams of the families of Brgy. Bucana Sasahan," he added.

Western Union offices in Israel and 16 European countries started working with Gawad Kalinga last year to build a total of 30 houses in Cavite, a small fishing village where most residents have loved ones working overseas. Gawad Kalinga hopes to reduce poverty in the country by providing land,

homes and food to Filipinos living below the poverty line to effect positive social transformation in the country. Its projects are supported by over 100,000 volunteers ranging from private individuals to corporations, while Gawad Kalinga beneficiaries also help with construction.

To date, Gawad Kalinga has built more than 1,700 villages and aims to complete a further 300 villages by end of this year.

The housing project in Brgy. Bucana Sasahan is part of Western Union's Our World, Our Familyism program which helps families stay connected, overcome barriers and achieve their dreams.

(Advertising Supplement)



ENCORE PERFORMANCE - CHARICE PEMPENGO ON CITIZEN PINOY. With spine-tingling performances with Andrea Bocelli in Tuscany and Celine Dion in Madison Square Garden, watch Charice's encore performance on Citizen Pinoy in Chicago. Join hosts Attorney-to-the-Stars Michael J. Gurfinkel (left) and broadcast personality Gel Santos-Relos (right) when they bring you Citizen Pinoy this Sunday at 5:40 pm (PST), with a replay on Tuesday at 11:20 pm (PST) on TFC. Citizen Pinoy also airs on ANC-US every Sunday at 1 am, with replays on Sunday at 9 am and Thursday at 8 pm, all PST; and on ANC-Philippines every Sunday at 4 pm, with replays at 12 midnight on Mondays and Friday at 11 am; all PST.

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Barry Flores
Filipino Fleet Sales Manager

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