

# 2 Pinay entrepreneurs receive international award

by MOMAR G. VISAYA  
AJPress

**N**EW YORK—Two Filipina entrepreneurs received the Cartier Women's Initiative Award during a ceremony held recently on the occasion of the Women's Forum for the Economy and Society in Deauville, France.

Manila-based Renee King and Caroline Cua, co-founders of Tamang Timpla Foods, a food manufacturing startup that promotes naturally pure and healthy Filipino foods were among the five women entrepreneurs who won the coveted award. Tamang Timpla's star product is the Kalamansi Squeeze, a pure and convenient, ready-squeezed, unsweetened calamansi concentrate with a shelf life of six months.

King and Cua received a Cartier trophy, a US\$20,000 cash award, and will benefit from a full year of coaching from Cartier, McKinsey & Co., and INSEAD Business School.

After two grueling rounds of competition, an international jury of entrepreneurs and members of the business community selected five laureates from around the world for the creativity, sustainability and social impact of their start up projects.

A recent graduate of Ateneo de Manila University with a major in Business Management, Renee Francesca King is motivated to turn Tamang Timpla Foods Inc., her food startup dedicated to pure and healthy Filipino food products, into an international success.

From an applicant pool of 400, one winner from each region (Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, North America) was chosen.

"If as many women were to be engaged in start-up businesses as men, we would see thousands of jobs and opportunities open up across all markets and on all continents", said Aude de Thuin, Founder and President of the Women's Forum for the

Economy and Society.

"More than ever, our economies need the spirit of enterprise, the taste for challenge. Small businesses play a key role in building the global economy. We believe that these brave and spirited laureates will be drivers of change for their communities and the future of their countries," added Bernard Fornas, President and CEO of Cartier.

Created in 2006 by Cartier and the Women's Forum for the Economy and Society in partnership with McKinsey & Company and INSEAD management school, the Cartier Women's Initiative Awards are an annual international entrepreneurship competition for women. Five laureates, one per continent, are awarded each year and receive US\$ 20,000, coaching support for a full year and an exclusive trophy designed by Cartier, one of the world's most esteemed luxury brands.

### The Project

In 2006, Renee teamed up with fellow female students Jenica Cruz, Caroline Cua and Gabbie Ocampo to enter their university's School of Management Business Accelerator Program.

The course enables participants to design and start their own business, with the guidance of professors and successful entrepreneurs from various industry sectors. The four aspiring businesswomen came up with the idea for Tamang Timpla Foods, Inc. and launched their pioneer product, Kusina Klassics Kalamansi Squeeze.

Kalamansi, a small citrus fruit native to the Philippines, is widely used in food preparation, seasoning and drinks. However,



(Top) Lee-Anne Kassel, 2008 Finalist for Africa, Paulina Avila, 2008 Finalist for Latin America; Barbara Ngoyombo, 2008 Finalist for Europe; Chenda Chhay, 2008 Finalist for Asia Elisabeth Vaino; 2008 Finalist for North America Wu Man, 2008 Finalist for Asia. (Bottom) Aude Zieseniss de Thuin, Founder and President of the Women's Forum; Mame Diene, 2008 Laureate for Africa; Laura Chicurel, 2008 Laureate for Europe; Renee King, 2008 Laureate for Asia; Cynthia Guy, 2008 Laureate for Latin America (right next to her is her daughter) Mona S. Jhaveri, 2008 Laureate for North America Bernard Fornas, President and CEO of Cartier.

it is difficult and time-consuming to prepare.

Renee's idea was to develop Kalamansi Squeeze, a convenient, ready-squeezed calamansi concentrate with a shelf life of six months. Unlike existing products on the Filipino market, Kalamansi Squeeze is all-natural and contains no added sweeteners.

"By bottling calamansi extract, we're giving people a convenient and healthy source of calamansi while supporting local calamansi growers and creating new jobs," King said.

In the long term, Tamang Timpla Food, Inc. hopes to create new products and export them worldwide, especially to areas with significant numbers of overseas Filipino workers.

For Renee, her business goes beyond being a food provider; it is a way of spreading Filipino culture around the world.

"I see food as a cultural vessel. I hope that our company's products will give people across the globe an appreciation of Filipino cuisine. We aim to be cultural ambassadors for our country," she added.

King and her co-founder also hope that they will be able to obtain a patent, increase their product's shelf life to one year and expand sales to local restaurants, cafes, caterers and hotels.

"Our current focus is on improving our business communication skills so that we can enter new markets and increase



Caroline Chua



Renee King

production. With the help of the coaches from Cartier, McKinsey and INSEAD, we hope to optimize our strengths and overcome the challenges we face as an up-and-coming small business," King explained.

The other awardees were:

**Laureate for Africa:** Mame Khary Diene, Founder of Karistal (Senegal), a local laboratory promoting the finest African cosmetics and essential oils. Karistal uses natural products with high saturated active ingredients, extracted mechanically without using chemicals products.

**Laureate for Europe:** Laura Chicurel, Founder of Chicurela (United Kingdom), a producer and distributor of eco-friendly salmon skin leather. Chicurela has introduced a novel approach

to addressing the problem of waste fish skins, by turning them into luxury leather goods.

**Laureate for Latin America:** Dr. Cynthia Guy, Founder of the Instituto de Implantes Cocleares (Panama), the only provider of cochlear implants for people with severe and profound hearing loss. So far, IICSA has successfully carried out three cochlear implant operations, and plans to perform 18 more in 2008.

**Laureate for North America:** Mona Jhaveri, Founder of Foligo Therapeutics Inc (USA), a biotech company aiming to improve the detection and treatment of ovarian cancer. Her company, Foligo Therapeutics, Inc., is developing early diagnostic techniques and DNA-based therapeutics that aim to destroy cancerous cells and reduce suffering. ■

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