

No limit to the Filipino spirit

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Kansas, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania and New Jersey until she reaches New York City.

Joy is expected to arrive at the Philippine Consulate on Fifth Avenue on September 8. By then, she will have run an estimated 5000 kilometers in 120 days, 20 of which will be spent for resting. "The goal is the same," said Joy at the launch of the *Takbong Pangarap* channel on www.thepoc.net. "It's to reach New York running. And I hope I'll still be in one piece after 5000 kilometers," she smiled.

Takbong Pangarap will also see Joy reuniting with her *Hakbang Pangarap* trainer and running partner Mateo Macabe, as well as team manager Chuck Crisanto.

Unlike in the *Hakbang Pangarap*, however, Mat will not be able to run with Joy the entire course after he underwent open-heart surgery in 2008, but he will be her pacer and navigator. He will also take turns manning the *Takbong Pangarap* support vehicle with Chuck. Mat is a story of resiliency in his own right.

Aside from pursuing her own dream, Joy will also share her endeavor with the Filipino people. During the course of 12 states, the *Takbong Pangarap* team will make contact with the different Filipino communities along the way.

Asked if her supporters in the US would be allowed to run side by side with her, Joy answered smiling "Definitely!" Chuck said this would help inspire others about the benefits of living a healthy lifestyle.

Another goal of the dream run is to raise funds for two beneficiaries: the Anti-TB Program of the Inner Wheel Club of Quezon City District 378 and the Social Services Division of the Philippine Heart Center.

"So many people have helped us make our dream come true and now, it's our turn to make other people's dream come true," shared Joy.

Realizing the dream

Joy and the *Takbong Pangarap* team plan to accomplish all these goals through hard work and determination.

But realizing the dream run lies in the support of the people, too, whether through donating to the *Takbong Pangarap* fund or hosting the team while they pass through your area.

People can also be a 5K sponsor. By donating \$100, five kilometers of the run will be dedicated to Joy's supporters, as she will attach a running bib where their own aspirations will be written.

"Manny Pacquiao, he's a prize fighter. He's an athlete but there's a big prize waiting for him at the end of the fight," Chuck recounted, "Joy Rojas is not a prize runner. At the end of the road, it's just [about] accomplishing something."

Joy is known for pushing herself to greater distances and achieving higher goals with each endeavor.

"That's the reason that drives you and the passion that drives her as well," he said.

For more information on how to help the *Takbong Pangarap* team, visit www.thepoc.net. ■

ASIAN AMERICAN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT CONFERENCE AT CUNY Opportunities abound despite economic downturn

by MOMAR G. VISAYA
AJPress

NEW YORK—We have all heard about how bad the economy is and how the recession has been affecting everyone's day-to-day existence.

For some, this means saving up for the harder days to come and for others, it is all about exerting more efforts to keep their jobs. Yet for a few, this is an opportunity to start specially since after all these economic talk is over, there is nowhere to go but up.

The Asian American/Asian Research Institute (AAARI) of the City University of New York (CUNY) organized the Asian American Economic Empowerment Conference last week at Baruch College in order to bolster this belief that there are opportunities out there for small business owners.

"We want to provide our community with information about starting a business and growing a business. There is a tremendous interest in entrepreneurship in the Asian American community, and we wanted to make sure that they get the resources, that they have the ability to network

and that they get information that is honest and accurate," Joyce Moy, AAARI's executive director told the *Asian Journal*.

A variety of topics were discussed, including opportunities and strategies needed in order to survive this difficult economy.

"If you want to borrow money so that you can jumpstart your small business, now is the right time. Don't look at the economic downturn as a downturn, look at it as market change," said Pearl Chin, executive director of Chinatown Manpower Project during a panel discussion on starting one's own business.

The sessions covered many questions, including the ABCs of starting your own business and whether one should start a new business in this economic climate.

"Do your research. Ask questions. Ask people for help in making your own business plan. Ask yourself if you are entrepreneurial material," said Brian Yeung, business advisor of York College—Small Business Development Center as he rattled off the basics in

coming up with a small business.

As an organization, York-SBDC has been helping small business through all phases of growth for almost two decades now, including helping clients access millions of dollars for their businesses.

Before setting off into the entrepreneur world, one needs to know the roadblocks and problems that can be found along the way. York-SBDC helps their clients in improving the viability of their small business through one-on-one assistance in areas of access to capital, business planning, marketing, financial management and technology transfer.

The good news to budding entrepreneurs is this: York-SBDC does not charge for its

services since the program is administered by the State of New York and sponsored by the State, the US Small Business Administration and the City University of New York at York College.

"We help entrepreneurs, business and the industry solve problems. The timing now may be off but there are still opportunities around," added Yeung, who has over 10 years of diversified experience and expertise in small business development. ■



Joyce Moy, executive director of Asian American / Asian Research Institute (AAARI)
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