



The lovely Anna Sayas with husband, Atty. Joe Sayas

ANNA SAYAS

Fil-Am Mom Par Excellence

by NICKEE DE LEON-HULD
AJPress

ON THIS SPECIAL DAY FOR MOTHERS, the *Asian Journal* (AJ) had an opportunity to chat with Anna Sayas, wife of successful Fil-Am trial attorney Joe Sayas, a wonderful homemaker and a devoted mother to her kids. The magnanimous Sayas couple has earned the respect and admiration of the Fil-Am community here in Southern California because of their altruism. And this is what Anna did in the interview as well -- sharing generously some of the wisdom that she has gleaned from being a wife, a mother, and above all, an active member of the Fil-Am community.

AJ: Being a Filipina mom in America, what was your experience in raising your kids in a culturally-diverse environment?

Anna: Raising kids in America is harder because there are so many distractions. You have to instill discipline, at the same time [you need to] challenge them intellectually. You have to find what their interests are so they will keep themselves busy. The important thing that I taught my kids was a love of reading. I also taught them to love the Philippines, to learn to respect where they came from so that their friends [would] respect them. Every time my kids bring home their friends, I try to feed them Filipino food. In fact all of my daughter's friends know how to eat Pinoy food. I always instill in them to be the best that they can be, be assertive yet, at the same time, always be kind and charitable in everything.

AJ: What would you say was the biggest challenge you encountered in parenting your kids?

Anna: Reconciling Filipino and American values. Communication is very important. Expressing one's self without being disrespectful. Instilling religious values without being condescending and judgmental. Christ should be the center of their lives. We should always be thankful for the graces that were given to us. I feel that my kids should not feel a sense of entitlement.

AJ: How were you able to strike a balance between taking care of your career and your family?

Anna: I am just lucky, with the grace of God. I am able to leave early and pick-up my kids and take them to their activities. I take the time to talk to them and try to keep communicating openly with them.

AJ: What do you think is your biggest achievement, both in your career and family life?

Anna: [My biggest achievement would be] when people tell me that my kids are well-mannered and respectful. One time, while we were

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