

Getting to know...

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University of the Philippines-Los Baños.

Nicky Perlas is known for repressing the opening of the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant and the plan to build 11 others during the term of former President Ferdinand Marcos. He also served as consultant for two administrations: for the Presidential Committee on the Philippine Nuclear Power Plant during the administration of former President Corazon Aquino and for the Philippine Council of Sustainable Development during the time of former President Fidel Ramos. Perlas was the chief negotiator for a network of national networks, which involved 5000 organizations, that successfully stopped the agenda of radical and one-sided liberalization in the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation or APEC.

In the mid-1990s he was one of two technical writers of *Philippine Agenda 21* or *PA21*, which is a creative response to the challenges of elite globalization. *PA21* is still officially the blueprint for sustainable development in the Philippines.

Perlas is the co-founder and spokesperson of Karangalan which hosted a series of national conferences highlighting important global and national innovations and achievements by Filipinos in many disciplines and fields. Karangalan aims to stimulate the creation of a visionary Philippines.

He was an adviser on Strategy and Integral Sustainable Development and Member, Board of Directors, Lifebank, and Board of Trustees of Lifebank Foundation, both of which help close to 35,000 economically poor fami-

lies thru micro-finance.

Perlas has been the resource person and keynote speaker in over 70 global conferences and events in over 20 countries, and over 120 national conferences on a wide range of topics. He has provided consultancy work for several UN agencies, the Philippine Senate, donor agencies and foundations, as well as many other businesses, and global civil society networks and organizations.

He was part of the civil society coalition that helped oust President Joseph Estrada in 2001, and who called for the resignation and impeachment of Arroyo at the height of the "Hello Garci" election fraud scandal in 2005.

During his introduction of Nicky Perlas in the press conference last June 17, Panjee Tapales said, "His integrity is unquestionable. If there is anyone who can go into a system full of temptation in every shape and form and maintain his integrity and values and clean up the mess, it is him. He simply cannot be bought because his love for country is authentic. His qualifications are unmatched and you can just google his name and find out, or simply visit his website. It's all there. He makes me believe that I can see this country rise to its full height and glory again so that not just my children-but every Filipino child rich or poor-- can be everything



they are meant to be, right here in their own country. Because of him I know that there is true hope that no mother should ever leave her family again in order to make ends meet."

If elected, Nicky Perlas said he would focus on poverty reduction by eliminating corruption to be able to attract local and foreign investments.

According to Atty. Precioso Perlas, all the volunteers and team members to help Nicky win the presidency have signed a waiver that they will not work for the government; they are just kindred spirits "*na nagmamahal sa bayan natin*".

There are presidential aspirants richer and more popular than him, but Perlas hopes to match their machinery and campaign funds by mobilizing a million volunteers, saying money "cannot buy hearts and minds that dream of something better." (Cynthia de Castro, AJPRESS)

FilAms give hope & goods in Covina

by CYNTHIA DE CASTRO
AJPRESS

THE City of Covina was treated to a day of fun, excitement, kindness and love recently by a group of Filipino Americans. Men and women of different ages and races - Caucasians, Latinos, Europeans, African-Americans and Asians - came out of curiosity and came home carrying bags of food and goodies in their hands and filled with hope in their hearts.

"Coming from a Third World country like the Philippines, we Filipinos have been so used to being on the receiving end of gifts and blessings. This time around, we want to be at the giving end to the predominantly white community here in Covina. Today, Filipinos are giving away \$20,000 worth of free food, products and services to families of different cultures. *Tulong natin sa kapwa pero nakakataas din ng dangal nating mga Pilipino*," explained Pastor Jaren Lapasaran, the head coordinator of the project with his wife, Rose.

The program is called Giving Back Hope and their slogan is "Making Hope Visible".

"In Tagalog, we're saying *Isalarawan Mo Ang Pag-Asa*—that's our battlecry. Amidst these hard times, we want to give back hope to the community. And we thought that we could do this by giving a concrete image of

hope to the people by meeting their practical needs," said Pastor Jaren, lead pastor of Heights Worship Center International Ministries, and head of 75 FilAm Christian churches under the Filipino American Christian Fellowship of the Assemblies of God.

Held at the community park in Badillo St. in the City of Covina last July 1, Giving Back Hope was the kick off event of the City's Wednesday Celebration Series. From 2-7 pm, the community was treated to a number of exciting activities at the park: free health screening and services, exciting games and rides for children, free haircuts, pro bono financial, legal and foreclosure counseling services, performances and a musical concert by various local artists, and free bags of food, home products and groceries. The successful affair was made possible by the generous participation of its sponsors: St. Francis Medical Center, Teen Challenge Skateboard Clinic, Marinello School of Beauty, Azusa Pacific University, Mabuhay Alliance, Darren Silver and Associates, the Convoy of Hope, Asian Journal, the Filipino American Christian Fellowship of the Assemblies of God and many more.

Pastor Jaren explained that he thought of the project after learning about the increasing number of crimes committed by people, especially during the

economic crisis. "The suicide of the man dressed as Santa Claus after he killed nine people right here in Covina and the other suicides in various parts of the country point to the fact that so many people have lost all hope; their lives have lost meaning. By instilling compassion in people and helping people meet their basic needs, we want to show them that people still care for people. By doing this, we pray that their hearts will be opened to accept the ultimate hope which is the Lord Jesus," said Pastor Jaren.

A third generation pastor Jaren used to have a television ministry and pastored a huge church in the Philippines, the Jesus Our Hope International Assemblies (formerly known as Ali Mall Charismatic Fellowship) with 44 daughter churches. He immigrated to California in 1997 and served under the Assembly of God, and is now heading 75 FilAm churches in the same denomination. His father, Pastor Nilo Lapasaran, who was working side by side with him in Giving Back Hope in Covina, used to be a missionary in Japan while another sibling, Sharon, has been a medical missionary in Cambodia for 13 years.

"We envision this to just be the first of many events such as this in America. Filipino American Christians must be at the forefront of Giving Back Hope to our nation," emphasized Pastor Jaren. ■

2010 Census quickly...

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If a household does not return the census form by mail, a Census Bureau representative will visit the home between May and June and conduct a personal interview to ensure everyone is counted. Census

workers will always carry official identification and will never ask someone's immigration status, social security number or bank account information.

For more information about the 2010 Census, please visit www.2010.census.gov. ■

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