

Pacquiao throws ceremonial pitch at SF Giants Game

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Being one of the most successful and influential people not only in the ring, but also in the world, the press asked Pacquiao if he feels any pressure living up to people's expectations.

"That's what I'm trying to do in every fight, I'm doing my best to make people happy," he said.

With this, Arum informed the members of the press that Pacquiao is one of the nominees of *TIME Magazine's* 100 Most Influential People in the World. "Now you can vote, you can go online and vote," he said but added, "I'm really disappointed in the Filipinos. Two weeks ago, Manny was tied with Barack Obama. And now he's nine places back." So he is encouraging the Filipinos to go online and vote to push Pacquiao on top of the list.

Still, popularity is the last thing on Pacquiao's mind as his motivation is thinking about the people he truly cares about. "I think what gives me inspiration is my family, and the Filipino people for their support," he said and added, "I would like to think that I am the most popular boxer in the world, but what I'm trying to do is give good work and train hard for the fight and give the fans what they want."

Roach, who has been Pacquiao's trainer for the last



Top Rank promoter Bob Arum, trainer Freddie Roach and Manny Pacquiao during their public appearance at the Seals Plaza.



SF Giants President and COO Larry Baer presents the \$50,000 check donation for Filipino-Americans nonprofit organizations to Hydra Mendoza.

few years, is confident about his ward's chances. He was also coy on what their strategy is for the May 2 fight.

"Hatton's a rough guy. We're working on dealing with that. Manny will show our game plan on May 2. Manny is sparring with fighters who have the same style as Hatton's. So far, of the seven sparring partners he's had, Manny has knocked down four of them," Roach said.

"Manny is an easy guy to train. I even have to slow him down. Like today, for instance, I said 'Let's do one more round, get out of here and have an easy day.'

But Manny kept saying, 'one more round, one more round.' He's one of the most dedicated fighters I have worked with, and one of the hardest workers in this sport," Roach added.

Arum, for his part, said that the focus right now is on this fight and not on who's next.

"This will be a difficult fight," Arum stated. "I hope that Manny wins this bout. Whoever wins will have a lot of time to decide the next fight."

"I don't know what will happen on May 2," Pacquiao said, "but I am prepared."

Pacquiao's other appearance around the ballpark was at Seals Plaza near the San Francisco Bay where he greeted the thousands of Filipinos enjoying the festival atmosphere.

Prior to Pacquiao's ceremonial pitch, the pre-game homeplate ceremony included Hydra



Jennie Tolentino, 19 years old, a student from Skyline College proudly shows her Manny Pacquiao bobblehead.

Low levels of contraceptive use threaten Filipino women's health, undermine childbearing desires

New study highlights the benefits of improving contraceptive services in the Philippines

LOW levels of contraceptive use in the Philippines result in high rates of unintended pregnancy and a broad range of negative consequences for women, their families and the national health care system. Meeting Women's Contraceptive Needs in the Philippines," a new report from the Guttmacher Institute and the University of the Philippines Population Institute, documents the considerable social and financial benefits that would accrue from investing in contraceptive services to enable women to avoid unintended pregnancies.

Three in 10 Filipino women at risk for unintended pregnancy—that is, women who are sexually active and able to have children, but who do not want a child in the next two years or at all—use no contraception; another two in 10 use traditional methods. More than half of the Philippine's 3.4 million annual pregnancies are unintended, and 92 percent of these occur to women who either use no method or use a traditional one. Expanding access to contraception could result in 800,000 fewer unplanned births, 500,000 fewer induced abortions and 200,000 fewer miscarriages. What's more, it could prevent as many as 2,100 maternal deaths each year—nearly half of all deaths from pregnancy-related causes. Better access to contraceptive services could also save 120,000 productive years of women's lives, years that are currently lost to ill-health resulting from unintended pregnancies.

"Investing in contraceptive services not only enables women and their families to plan their births and avoid the serious health complications that often accompany unintended pregnancy, it also saves money," said Sharon Camp, president and CEO of the

Guttmacher Institute. "Although the initial expense of providing contraception to all women in need may seem great, the costs associated with unintended pregnancies, including treating the consequences of unsafe abortion, are much higher."

The study finds that providing modern contraceptive services to all women at risk of unintended pregnancy in the Philippines would raise annual family planning costs from 1.9 billion Philippine pesos to 4 billion pesos. However, the report estimates that the medical costs associated with unintended pregnancy would fall from 3.5 billion pesos to 600 million, resulting in a savings of 2.9 billion pesos (nearly US\$1.4 billion). These savings, the report suggests, could be used to improve and expand a range of health and social services, helping the Philippines to achieve the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

Fulfilling the demand for contraceptives would particularly benefit poor women, who represent the largest segment of women with unmet contraceptive needs. The 35 percent of Filipino women aged 15-49 who are poor account for 53 percent of the unmet need for contraception.

"Increasing contraceptive use will require increased investment in contraceptive supplies and services, from both international donors and the Philippines government," said co-author Josefina V. Cabigon, professor at University of the Philippines Population Institute. "This investment is especially critical to improving the health of poor women, who face the greatest barriers in achieving the family size they desire. Ensuring contraceptive access is not only wise fiscal policy, it would have a profound effect in improving public health." ■

Mendoza and other community leaders honoring several Filipino American World War II veterans, the handing of a check donation to a few Filipino nonprofit organizations by the SF Giants organization, and a number by the Likha Pilipino Folk Ensemble.

This is the third Filipino Heritage Night conducted by the SF Giants organization. According to Al Perez, Filipino American Arts Exposition president, about 11,000 Filipino Americans bought tickets to this heritage event, exceeding the combined Filipino Heritage Night events total of 6,500 in 2008.

"This is the largest ever event

of the San Francisco Giants that is a heritage night," Perez said. "I think they are going to use this as their template for their heritage nights due to the success. The Giants organization is very, very happy, and they are so easy to work with. In fact, during a post-event survey that the Giants conducted last year, it indicated that 30% of the people who bought tickets to Filipino Heritage Night were first-time attendees to a Giants baseball game. They are pleased that we are bringing new patrons to the game."

What also makes Perez and other members of the Fil-Am community happy is the fact that Filipino culture is exposed to a

wider audience.

"Through events like this, Bay Area baseball fans get to experience and appreciate Filipino culture, and Filipinos who may not have had motivation to go to a baseball game are introduced to one of the greatest American traditions. I am glad that Filipino Heritage Night is a bridge that connects the Fil-Am community to the sports community," Perez explained.

"Filipino Heritage Night gives us a chance to be proudly both Filipino and American," Perez added.

Perez also hinted at another Filipino Heritage Night event scheduled for later in the baseball season. ■



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