

FROM THE FRONT PAGE

Historic Filipino-American meeting with Obama administration

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to keep homeowners in their homes. They will also be announcing a joint taskforce, led in part by Mabuhay Alliance that will seek to eliminate predatory for-profit companies that falsely promise to protect but in fact steal their equity from their homes.

A forefront in fighting for the community

"Mabuhay Alliance is in the forefront of this vision to help the community through predatory counseling, and the organization is also seen as the local police force," Bautista said.

Bautista has also been recently appointed to be part of the Minority Depository Institutions Advisory by the Office of Thrift Supervision (OTS). This is the first time for OTS to establish such committee to preserve minority institutions and encourage their creation. As a member of the committee, Bautista will be providing Washington, DC regulators informed advice and recommendations regarding a range of issues involving minority institutions.

Mabuhay Alliance and NaFFAA also took the lead in urging that the government spend up to \$100 billion to help small businesses, including the estimated 400,000 Filipino-American owned, in securing credit necessary to preserve and expand their businesses.

One of the key suggestions is to increase the SBA (Small Business Administration) budget from \$1 billion to as much as \$30 billion so it could provide technical assistance and capacity building to small-, minority- and women-owned businesses. Another suggestion is to provide up to \$5 billion to microbusinesses which create one out of six private sector jobs. Mabuhay Alliance has been a leader among Asian American organizations in this field.

In addition, Mabuhay Alliance and NaFFAA criticized the federal government for failing to award 400,000 Filipino-American owned businesses and professionals. (Last year the government awarded \$650 billion in contracts with 97 percent going to giant white owned businesses.)

And as part of the effort that began in November 2007, as a result of the Desperate Housewives attack on the credibility of Filipino-American professionals, Mabuhay Alliance and NaFFAA raised the issue of Filipino American empowerment. One matter raised was the lack of Filipino-Americans on the board of directors of Fortune 500 corporations. (Only two of the 6,000 board members of these corporations are Filipino-Americans.) As a result of a Mabuhay questionnaire sent out to 10 prominent Filipino-American organizations last week, the community will be submitting the names of three prominent Fil-Ams to be on the board of directors of Citigroup.

The Secretary of Treasury, Chairman of the Federal Reserve and Chairman of the FDIC are part of the selection process for the board of directors of Citigroup since the government is now its largest shareholder. Mabuhay Alliance and NaFFAA also secured provisional interest from the FCC in holding a hearing in Los Angeles this fall on the discrimination against Fil-Ams and other minorities.

It will be co-hosted by the Fil-Am community to discuss the absence of minorities within the entertainment industry and the need to end racial and ethnic stereotyping. The national NAACP, the nation's most prominent African American civil rights organization, informed Mabuhay Alliance at a Washington, DC meeting that it would join in this effort to end racial stereotyping. The FCC is likely to request that all Hollywood and TV network CEOs attend.

Call for a unified voice

Bautista also believes that it is time for the Fil-Am community to unite. "It's time to have a unified stand—one voice—collaborating in the issues that matters," she said.

Bautista, who helped arranged the Washington, DC government meetings stated, "Desperate Housewives demonstrated to four million Filipino-Americans that unless we are united and outspoken, we will continue to be attacked. Mabuhay Alliance and NaFFAA are proud to be part of a growing and long awaited united Filipino-American effort to expand our influence and ensure that never again will the Filipino-American community be negatively stereotyped or unfairly attacked."

"Our successful DC meetings with key Obama Administration leaders demonstrated our growing influence and unity. We are optimistic that our efforts regarding averting to end the foreclosure crisis, expand small business opportunities and create more minority job opportunities will help expand the economic, social and political rights of our community. We are particularly optimistic because we have growing support for these efforts from the Pan Asian, the Latino and the African American communities. [Due to the efforts of Mabuhay Alliance, the Filipino-American community now has effective working relationships with the CEOs of more than two dozen Fortune 500 corporations including, Sempra, AT&T, Verizon, BofA, Wells Fargo, and JP Morgan Chase.] We will be meeting with the CEOs of US Bancorp and AT&T early next month in Los Angeles on further empowering the Filipino American community." ■

Greetings to a wounded warrior



(L to R) Rudy Panaglima, 79, and Celestino Almeda, 92, of the American Coalition for Filipino Veterans, greet Eric Shinseki, the new Secretary of the Department for Veterans Affairs, during a reception at the Arlington National Cemetery on the 20th anniversary of the cabinet status of the VA department, March 15, 2009.

Almeda requested Shinseki to meet with visiting Filipino veteran leaders on April 9, the Bataan Day of Valor in Washington. Almeda asked about their new benefit law. Shinseki said, "We're working on it" to promptly implement their "Filipino Veterans Equity Compensation Fund" (P.L. 111-5 Title X, Sec. 1002), that provides \$15,000 in one-time lump sum payments to US citizens and \$9,000 to Filipino citizen veterans and to recognize their US military "active service" in WWII. Gen. Shinseki (ret.) was wounded twice in combat in Vietnam and was a former US Army Chief of Staff.

ACFV photo by Eric Lachica

BSP sees remittances to remain strong in '09

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faster than the 0.8 percent month-on-month growth in December 2008, when the volume reached US\$ 1.4 billion from the previous month's US\$ 1.3 billion.

In the whole of 2008, remittances sent by Filipinos abroad registered a 13.7-percent growth after it reached US\$ 16.4 billion.

"We have enough reasons to expect that remittances will remain strong, probably beyond December growth," he said on the sidelines of the Chamber of Thrift Bank (CTB) national convention at the Dusit Thani Hotel in Makati City.

Guinigundo said initial figures from the Philippine Overseas

Employment Administration (POEA) showed that nearly 200,000 Filipinos have been sent to work abroad in the early part of this year.

He said more job orders are on the pipeline and once these are filled up, will continue to power remittance growth.

Remittance is among the major

fuels of the economy's growth in 2007 when the domestic economy posted a 7.2 percent growth.

Monetary officials said the current global economic situation will result in job loss of Filipinos abroad, thus, this will lower the volume of remittances sent here; but they also said that this will be offset by the fact that demand for highly skilled OFWs remains strong. ■

NY Times awards Fil-Am teachers

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gone above and beyond the call of duty to help students learn English and develop the skills to create successful new lives in the United States. Essential to the success of any immigrant is the ability to speak and write English. For that reason, *The Times* created the annual ESOL Teacher of the Year Award, for one outstanding teacher of ESOL in New York City.

Rosemarie E. Parreno arrived in the United States in 1986 as an exchange teacher scholar of Northern Illinois University. Ms. Parreno was an English as Secondary Language (ESL) teacher/supervisor for five years at International Catholic Migration Commission, a US-funded organization for refugees bound for America.

She started teaching ESOL from her love of culture and languages. In New York City, she has spent 22 years teaching ESL in the Adult Programs at CUNY's colleges, PROMESA and Fil-Am Needs. PACCAL, a non-profit organization will also award Ms. Parreno as "Woman Achiever for 2009" in education, an addition to her seven past teaching awards.

Parreno has been a teacher for 40 years, and this is her eighth award but it is different because it is from the *New York Times*, a very prestigious publication, different from the past awards she has received. She did not expect to receive this award after 22 years at CUNY.

The selection committee asked her during the screening of nominees, "Where have you been hiding?"

Parreno said she doesn't teach for the awards because she wants to just be ordinary and blend in with the rest of the teachers. She also used to teach incarcerated adults, drug addicts and HIV patients.

Nestor Villamil Tebio started his English-language career in the Philippines at the International Catholic Migration Commission under the UNHCR Program.

Mr. Tebio began as an ESL teacher and was later promoted to ESL/work orientation supervisor. He is very much grateful to all of his trainers—mostly from the School of International Training whom he credits for giving him a foundation in the very challenging world of ESL. All of his students at that time

were refugees trying to learn the language and the American culture, and they inspired him to continue his career when he arrived in New York City.

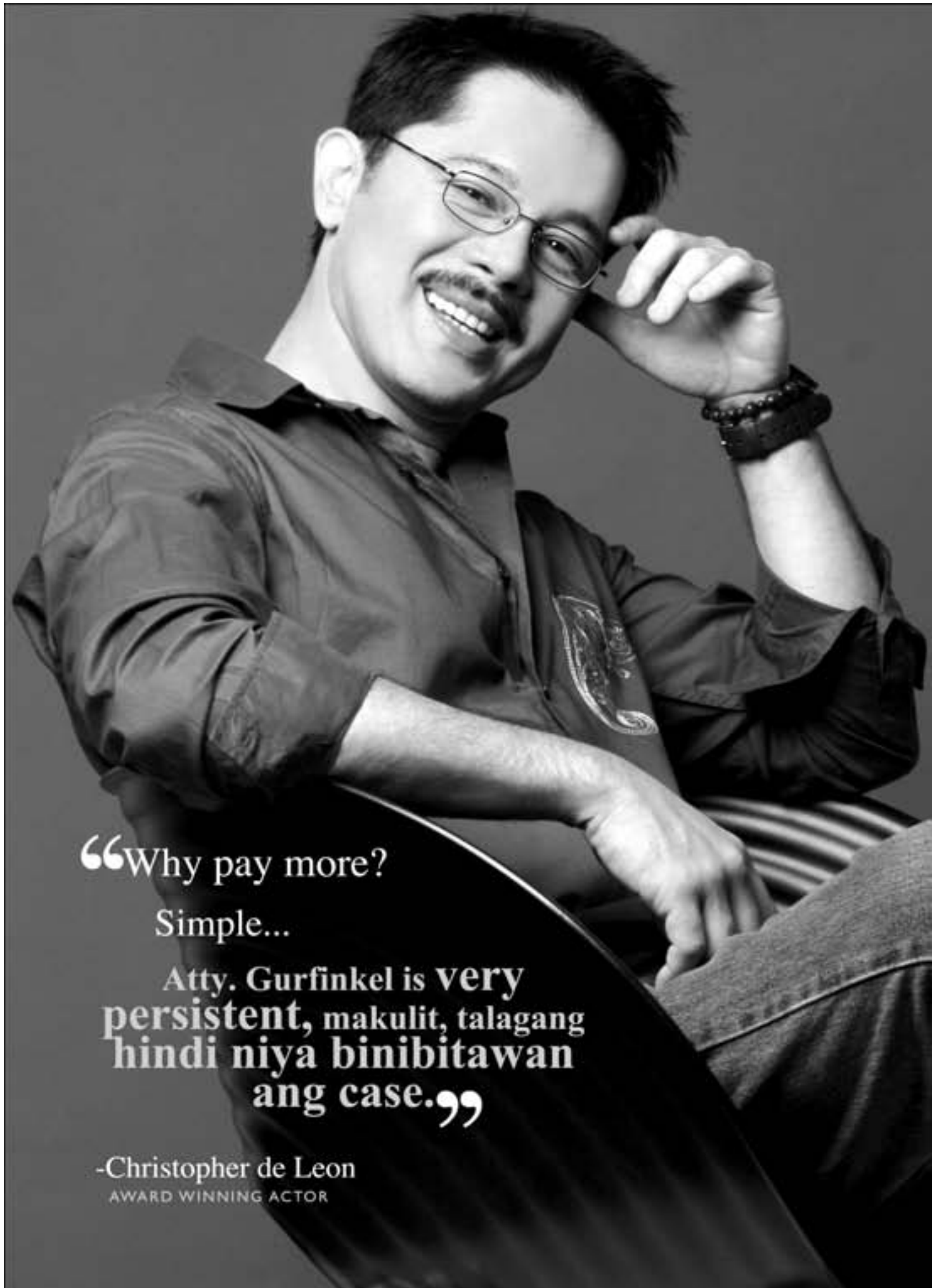
Mr. Tebio earned his master's degree in Management at the University of the Philippines; he also took life skills training at Columbia University and paralegal training at the Center for Immigrant Rights, both to better prepare himself for his new country. These training paid off when he started integrating them into his ESL curriculum.

Mr. Tebio thinks learning is fun when students seek what is beyond the language and explore real-life situations. He likes to help them prepare for a better tomorrow and achieve their American dream. Mr. Tebio is currently a program manager, staff developer and teacher at Catholic Charities neighborhood Services and a part-time teacher at HANAC – Hellenic American Neighborhood Services. He says his students are his inspiration and "they are the sunshine of my life in this part of the world."

The purpose of this award is to recognize one teacher in New York City whose commitment to his or her students is demonstrated by consistently going "above and beyond" the call of duty to help students learn English and develop the skills needed to create successful new lives in the United States.

From The City University of New York to The New York Public Library, teachers of English for Speakers of Other Languages are making their mark, nurturing dreams as they help immigrants build new lives in this country. The criteria includes: Effectiveness of the nominee in teaching English to his or her students, Innovation and teaching method that the nominee brings to the classroom, Impact the nominee has had on the lives of his or her students.

The *NY Times* has a tradition of supporting education and literacy initiatives; they are very pleased to extend that support to the critical area of English language instruction, which is so fundamental to the success of the city's growing community of immigrants. With these awards, the hope to raise awareness of the important work being done every day in libraries, schools and community institutions all over New York. ■



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-Christopher de Leon
AWARD WINNING ACTOR

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