

**Brian Fajardo young artist**

THE Arts Supervisors Association, headed by its president Mary Passero, sponsored the 2009 and 5th Annual Nassau All-county Art Exhibition at the Ruth S. Harley University Center, Adelphi University, Garden City, New York on March 22, 2009.

The art exhibit, consisting of drawing, painting, printmaking, computer graphics and photography, honored the most talented young visual artists of Nassau County selected from among the kindergarten through twelfth grade students of the 43 school districts of the county.

All of the outstanding pieces were produced in alignment with the New York state standards for visual arts.

Brian Fajardo, a 14-year old Filipino and an eighth grade student at the Great Neck South middle school, was among those



privileged to exhibit his portrait drawing of Drake (of the popular Drake & Josh TV sitcom). Brian is the only son of Neva Togonon-Fajardo of Dumangas, Iloilo and Ramoncito Fajardo of Gen. Tinio, Nueva Ecija. ■

**Why choose a healthcare career**

PAGE 9 ◀

word "care" in their general job descriptions for nothing. Nurses, physical therapists and other allied health professionals engage in duties that require them to give care to other people. Whether it's to assist them in their rehabilitation, carry them on a wheelchair, administer their dosage or help heal inflexibilities in their body, healthcare professionals are always in a position to help others. It's no surprise then that based on the most recent study of the National Opinion Research Center in Chicago for Job Satisfaction in the United States, more than half of nurses and physical therapists have a job satisfaction rate of 50% or higher. The satisfaction derived from seeing someone healed, nurtured and made well keeps healthcare professionals inspired and encouraged at work, despite the demanding tasks of their job.

All of us, even those who live in underdeveloped communities, have, in one way or another, been positively influenced by a healthcare professional. These people have been essential not only in sustaining life, but also in nurturing it. They've given care and have

helped millions of people at the most critical juncture in their life. The four factors above illustrate just a few of the benefits of working in the healthcare industry. But perhaps what's more important is that when you choose a healthcare career, you enlist yourself in a professional corps that makes a huge impact on people's lives.

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Charmaine Teodoro is the Senior Vice President of JUNO Healthcare Staffing, a group of companies that recruit RNs, LPNs, CNAs and allied healthcare professionals and deploys them to healthcare facilities on a full-time, part-time, per diem or travel assignment. It also sponsors foreign-trained RNs for immigration to the US. JUNO has offices in New York, and in New Jersey where it offers homecare services.

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PHILIPPINE INDEPENDENCE DAY COUNCIL, INC.

**Diwa ng kalayaan search goes on**

SIX young beauties are early entries for the Diwa ng Kalayaan (Spirit of Independence) beauty, brains and talent contest being conducted by the Philippine Independence Day Council, Inc. (PIDCI) as part of this year's commemoration of the 111th anniversary of the declaration of Philippine Independence, it was announced.

In making the announcement, the chairperson of PIDCI's Diwa ng Kalayaan Search, Selection and Coronation Pageant and Gala Committee, Joji J. Jalandoni, added that the contest is still open and the search goes on for candidates.

Four of the six candidates who have registered were at the initial photo shoot called by the Committee this past week. The four who showed up were Janette Gomez of New York, and Renee Nicole Lago, Natasha Abella and Alexandra Uy of New Jersey. ■



L-R: Janette Gomez, Renee Nicole Lago, Natasha Abella and Alexandra Uy. Four of six candidates who have signed up as candidates for the Diwa ng Kalayaan (Spirit of Independence) beauty contest, part of the 111th anniversary commemoration of the declaration of Philippine Independence being conducted by PIDCI.

**PIDCI: All set for 111th Independence day**

NEW YORK—The Filipino and Filipino-American communities of the population centers of New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Philadelphia, including states, cities and municipalities on their peripheries, comprising mainly of organizations and associations, are all set to be regaled by the celebratory events commemorating the 111th anniversary of the declaration of Philippine Independence.

New York's annual commemoration of Philippine Independence has been touted and continues to claim its proud billing and recognition for 15 years now as the largest celebration of Philippine Independence outside of the Philippines, where it is observed as an official national holiday.

The yearly commemoration is planned, organized, produced, executed, directed and presented to the public by the Philippine Independence Day Council, Inc. (PIDCI) since 2003. It is, however, now on its 20th year, having been introduced to the New York region in 1990 by an ad hoc conglomerate of Filipino community leaders convened by the Philippine Consulate General.

2009 PIDCI President Guillermo "Gerry" M. Austria, who is also Overall Chairman of the multi-event commemoration, has announced that the celebration committee he and the PIDCI Board of Directors empanelled have now completed and are well on the way of executing plans for the individual events.

The celebratory events are spread out over several months with the Grand Marshal Gala, honoring Teofila Malanum Santos, MD, this year's Independence Day Parade Grand Marshal, starting off this year's schedule.

**Grand Marshal Gala:** Reeling off the 111th independence anniversary commemoration is the Grand Marshal Gala, scheduled at the

Grand Ballroom of the Astoria World Manor at 25-22 Astoria Boulevard, in Astoria, Queens, New York 11102-2940, phone (718) 278-7766, on Saturday, April 4, 2009, with a cocktail reception at 7pm and dinner and dancing from 8pm to midnight.

A short program during the night will install Dr. Malanum Santos when she is pinned her ceremonial PIDCI Grand Marshal 2009 sash by last year's Grand Marshal, Msgr. Oscar A. Aquino, assisted by Philippine Consul General Cecilia B. Rebong and PIDCI President Austria.

For information and/or invitations, please call Nida Cortez (718) 393-0348 or (646) 644-4101, Dr. Alice Francisco (201) 641-9452 or (201) 370-8363, or PIDCI President Austria at (201) 238-1785.

**'Diwa Ng Kalayaan' Pageant And Gala**

The search for the next "Diwa ng Kalayaan" (Spirit of Independence) had commenced even before the composition of the "Diwa ng Kalayaan" Committee was completed. This was done to gain a head start on the tedious and demanding process of vetting and selecting the contestants.

"Diwa ng Kalayaan," after all, is the number one beauty, brains and talent title of the northeastern, if not the US Filipino community. Thus, it is the most coveted, just as the annual Independence Day commemoration is the most awaited. The "Diwa ng Kalayaan" contest has been one of the first component events of the commemoration having been introduced into the anniversary celebration in 1991.

The winning titleholder reigns during the months-long commemoration until the time she brings up the rear of the Independence Day Parade, as the Spirit of Independence, in her own special float, preceded by another

float bearing the "Diwa ng Kalayaan" court of beauties.

As in past years, her grand prize for winning the "Diwa ng Kalayaan" title is a round trip airline ticket to the Philippines. And every year, for the past several years, she joined the Ambassador's and the Consuls General's Philippine Tour as the official Goodwill Ambassador of New York's Philippine Independence Commemoration and its corporate organizer, PIDCI.

This year, the "Diwa ng Kalayaan" Selection and Coronation Pageant and Gala will take place at the Grand Ballroom of the Sheraton Newark Airport Hotel at 128 Frontage Road, Newark, New Jersey 07114-3721, telephone (973) 690-5500. For information and invitations, please call committee chairperson Joji Jalandoni at (201) 401-7559 or any of her co-chairs; Elvira Reyes at (551) 208-4986, Linda Limcaco (609) 903-1123, Rudy Mariano (860) 848-7055, Tony Abellar (973) 704-0191, Medy Tazza (646) 415-3040, Edwin de Guzman (917) 402-0063, Arthur Acosta (973) 731-5537, Laura Garcia (908) 627-1954, Millie Hornilla (201) 467-1441, Rena Penecilla (201) 245-4970 or PIDCI President Austria at (201) 238-1785.

**Independence day**

Every year, Philippine Independence Day is celebrated by New York region Filipinos and Filipino-Americans on the first Sunday in June, this year falling on June 7th. It's on this day that the big trio of major events take place in the heart of Manhattan Island, New York City.

The three main events are ushered in by an early morning flag ceremony, replete with the singing of "Lupang Hinirang," the Philippine National Anthem, at the Philippine Center at

▶ PAGE 12

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