

Asian-Americans blast UC admissions policy

They say new standards are unfair, will reduce their numbers on campus

SAN FRANCISCO—A new admissions policy set to take effect at the University of California system in three years is raising fears among Asian-Americans that it will reduce their numbers on campus, where they account for a remarkable 40 percent of all undergraduates.

University officials say the new standards—the biggest change in UC admissions since 1960—are intended to widen the pool of high school applicants and make the process more fair.

But Asian-American advocates, parents and lawmakers are angrily calling on the university to rescind the policy, which will apply at all nine of the system's undergraduate campuses.

They point to a UC projection that said the new standards would sharply reduce Asian-American admissions while resulting in little change for blacks and Hispanics, and a big gain for white students.

Asian-Americans are the single largest ethnic group among UC's 173,000 undergraduates. In 2008,

they accounted for 40 percent at UCLA and 43 percent at UC Berkeley—the two most selective campuses in the UC system—as well as 50 percent at UC San Diego and 54 percent at UC Irvine.

Asian-Americans are about 12 percent of California's population and 4 percent of the US population overall.

The new policy, approved unanimously by the UC Board of Regents in February, will greatly expand the applicant pool, eliminate the requirement that applicants take two SAT subject tests and reduce the number of students guaranteed admission based on grades and test scores alone. It takes effect for the freshman class of fall 2012.

President defends policy

Some Asian-Americans have charged that the university is trying to reduce Asian-American enrollment. Others say that may not be the intent, but it will be the result.

UC officials adamantly deny the intent is to increase racial diversity, and reject allegations the policy is an attempt to circumvent a 1996 voter-approved ban on affirmative action.

Yudof and other officials disputed the internal study that projected a drop of about 20 percent in Asian-American admissions, saying it is impossible to accurately predict the effects. "This is not Armageddon for Asian-American students," Yudof said.

At San Francisco's Lowell High School, one of the top public schools in the country, about 70 percent of the students are of Asian descent and more than 40 percent attend UC after graduation.

Increased competition

One of the biggest changes is scrapping the requirement that applicants take two SAT subject tests. UC officials say the tests do little to predict who will succeed at UC, no other public university requires them, and many high-achieving students are disqualified because they do not take them.

The policy also widens the pool of candidates by allowing applications from all students who complete the required high school courses, take the main

SAT or ACT exams and maintain a 3.0 grade-point average. Under the current policy, students have to rank in the top 12.5 percent of California high school graduates to be eligible.

Students still have to apply to individual campuses, where admissions officers are allowed to consider each applicant's grades, test scores, personal background, extracurricular activities and other factors but not race.

The policy is expected to increase competition for UC admission. This year the university turned away the largest number of students in years after it received a record number of applications and cut freshman enrollment because of the state's budget crisis. (AP)

Pacman's Lucky Charm

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paid the *Asian Journal* a visit and shared his story of friendship and endearment with the pound-for-pound champ.

It is not unknown to many that the Pacman is a devout Catholic and a tad bit superstitious when it comes to his fights. Mayor Leonardia shared how Pacquiao's Catholic devotion and superstitious beliefs became instrumental in forging a strong partnership with the mayor.

So what brought Manny to the shores of Bacolod City in 2005 and compelled him to create a lasting relationship with Mayor Leonardia? Perhaps, it's the fact that Bacolod is known for being a "relatively friendly city, bearing the nickname City of Smiles." Perhaps, it's the charm of the MassKara Festival, a noted celebration and an annual attraction that gravitates millions of tourists every year to Bacolod City. Or perhaps it's because Mayor Leonardia has personally invited the pound-for-pound champ to become "Bacolod's adopted son."

One thing is certain—Manny was moved and overwhelmed by the warm and eager reception he got from the people of Bacolod. A beautiful, poignant and profound friendship soon entailed after his meaningful encounter with Mayor Leonardia and his townsfolk.

Soon after, Manny paid the city of smiles another visit and personally asked Mayor Leonardia to hold on to his boxing belt. It was initially unclear to Mayor Leonardia why he was afforded this privilege and he was hesitant in the beginning. He found out later on that he has become a sort of "lucky charm" for the Pacman.

Mayor Leonardia amusingly recalled Manny's reason: "*Simula noong hinawakan ni Mayor ang belt ko, di na naagaw.*" He jokingly reiterated that he was Manny's magnet—affording Manny five victory boxing belts to date.

But Manny's friendship with the Mayor of Bacolod City goes beyond superstitious beliefs. Theirs is a symbiotic relationship—one that was forged from trust and from believing in each other's capabilities.

Superstitious or not, Mayor Leonardia will continue to be a formidable supporter of the pound-for-pound champ in all his endeavors and will be rooting for our *Pinoy* pride. (AJPress)

Questions and answers about swine flu

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Q. Is the same swine flu virus making people sick in Mexico and the US?

A. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said the Mexican virus samples match the US virus. The virus is a mix of human virus, bird virus from North America and pig viruses from North America, Europe and Asia.

Q. Are there drugs to treat swine flu in humans?

A. There are four different drugs approved in the US to treat the flu, but the new virus has shown resistance to the two oldest. The CDC recommends the use of the flu drugs Tamiflu and Relenza.

Q. Does a regular flu shot protect against swine flu?

A. The seasonal flu vaccine used in the US this year won't likely provide protection against the latest swine

flu virus. There is a swine flu vaccine for pigs but not for humans.

Q. Should residents of California or Texas do anything special?

A. The CDC recommends routine precautions to prevent the spread of infectious diseases: wash your hands often, cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze, avoid close contact with sick people. If you

are sick, stay at home and limit contact with others.

Q. What about traveling to Mexico?

A. The CDC has not warned Americans against traveling to Mexico but advises that they be aware of the illnesses there and take precautions to protect against infections, like washing their hands.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (AP)

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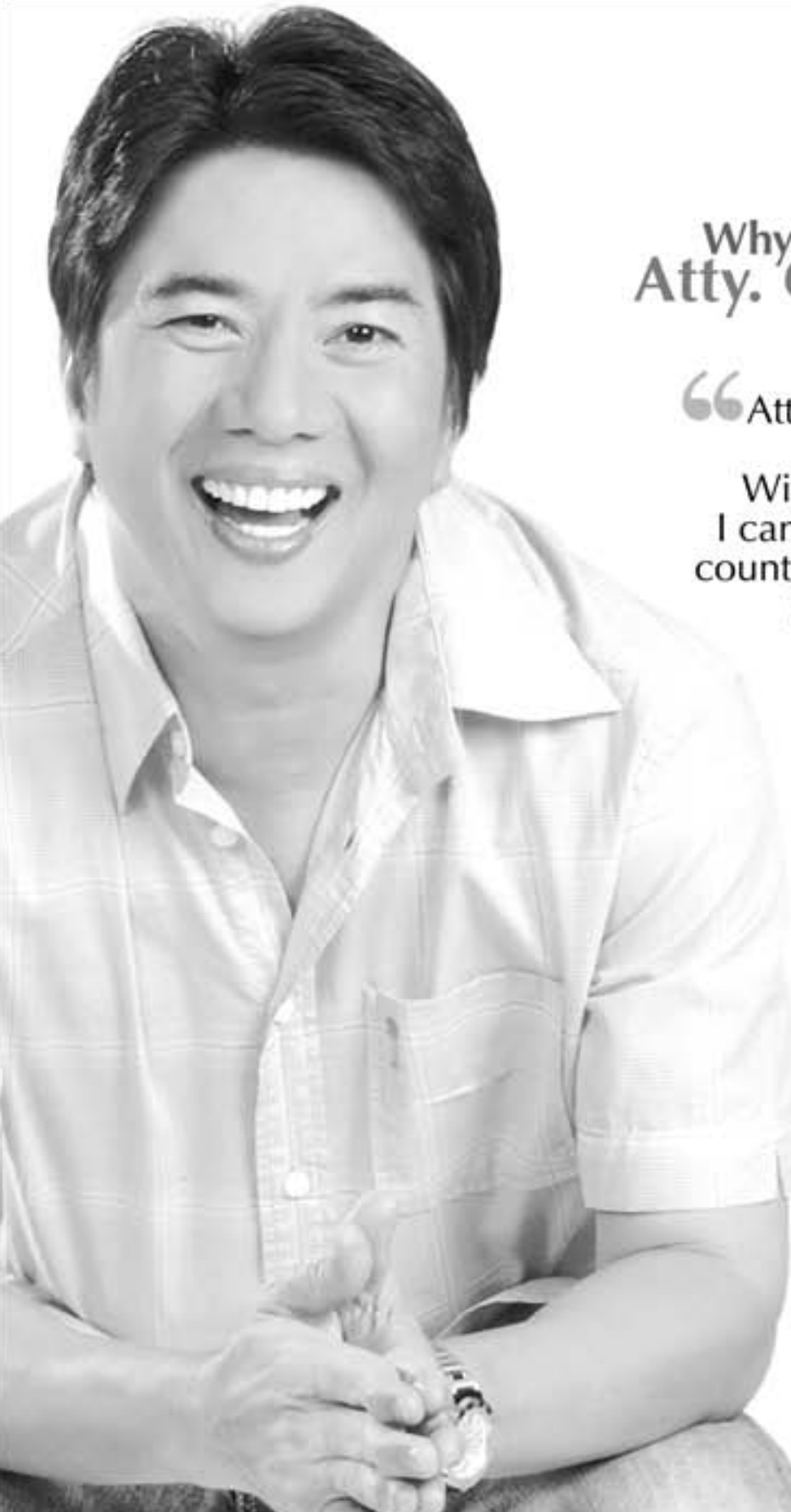
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