



Hi!
Society
SAN FRANCISCO

By MONET LU

FRIEDA BROOKSHIRE, DDS

Former Ms. Body Language is now Beautiful Smile Diva!



Frieda Brookshire with Monet Lu

is distinctively hers *talaga*. Moreover, she's caring and compassionate.

Like most who watch TFC, I saw Dr. Brookshire bare her story on *Citizen Pinoy* as her beloved brother faced an immigration crisis.

I was happy to have played a little part in connecting Dr. Brookshire and Frederick to attorney Michael Gurfinkel, who was able to help the siblings resolve the issue. It's a heart-warming success story that's inspired a lot of our *kababayan*s in their quest to attain the American Dream.

I just want to say to Dr. Brookshire, you are one great lady. You are truly the Beautiful Smile Diva!

LA-based celebrity stylist Monet Lu was born in Marikina, Philippines. In the 80s, Monet left a thriving salon chain business in his hometown to migrate to the US. He had the vision to recreate his success in the US by building a beauty business that served the needs of Filipino Americans. Currently, Monet is the proud owner of four salons with branches in Van Nuys CA, Panorama City CA, Los Angeles CA and Las Vega NV. He has since branched out to event productions through his events and marketing company, Events Specialists International, producer of the longest-running [20 years!] and most prestigious Filipino-American awards/fashion show in SoCal. In 2006, Monet kicked off another passion to develop his own line of all-natural, beauty care products, Skin By Monet.

Monet is also a humanitarian and has supported many charitable organizations such as the Marikina Revitalization Project, AIDS Center in Pasadena, Alab Ng Puso, Every Nation Ministries, Gawad Kalinga, Bantay Bata 163, and many more. To contact Monet, please visit his site: www.monetsalon.com.

Opening opportunities for immigrants

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from the Philippines."

At Upwardly Global, they assist jobseekers by looking at their background, degree and experience. First of all, they help them work on their resumes so that basically it's in an American format that will be successful here. "Foreign resumes are usually 5 to 6 pages long, and contains information that is not appropriate here in the US," said Kirwan.

Applicants also undergo workshops to learn how to target their job search such as the type of company and position they are looking for, as well as how to have a marketing pitch, that includes professional background and their career objectives.

Breaking the barriers and the importance of networking

One of the barriers new immigrants face when looking for jobs in the US is not having the right network. Kirwan explained the importance of creating a network for the jobseeker and how to network, American-style.

"You know when people leave their countries they leave behind a network—their social, personal and business networks—they have to build that from the beginning again. So we help jobseekers to build contacts," said Kirwan, adding that seven out of ten people in the US find their jobs through personal connections, colleagues, people that they went to college with, or people they have worked with previous jobs who referred them to open divisions. "So we're just helping immigrants to basically build that kind of network and also to learn rather the kind of cultural intricacies of being successful in their American job search."

"We map each jobseeker with a mentor, usually with a professional who has a similar background and who can basi-

cally answer all their questions and give them support in the industry they want to join."

Once jobseekers have learned the basics, in terms of targeting their job search, being confident about interviewing, Upwardly Global then helps them with mock-up interviews and connect them with employers here in the Bay Area. At present, the organization has a network of a hundred employers that they work with and present jobseekers with open opportunities at those firms and we also encourage jobseekers to look for jobs independently.

Meneses believes that without the help of Upwardly Global, it would have been more difficult for her to find the right job. "It would have been difficult if I'm doing it myself. Upwardly Global taught me how to face employers, what to say during interviews," she said and added, "I really learned a lot, by understanding the process of recruitment to landing a job. They help you understand life in the US in general."

There are other barriers, Kirwan said, like licensing and credentialing (for lawyers, physicians or engineers) and teaching applicants how this process works. Culture is another, as well as language, but she said that English is not an issue among Filipino jobseekers.

One concern that they also push through is on how to educate employers about foreign degrees and experience. "A lot of employers are not familiar with foreign degrees and foreign experience. So, if they're faced with resumes and one of them has local experience and an American degree, they usually have an easier time to understand the quality of that education. So we are basically educating them about the immigrants we work with,"

Kirwan stressed.

"Another area that we need to educate employers about, especially here in California, is that this is a pool of talents that is permanently work authorized, everybody that we work with has a green card, are permanent residents or have come from refugee or asylum channels and are not required visa work sponsorships," Kirwan explained and further added, "There is not a lot of awareness about how people come here to the US—they come from family reunification channels, from the diversity lottery, married to an American spouse for example."

Awareness, she said—that is what Upwardly Global wants the receiving community of American employers to have—to educate employers about this pool of talents.

As for Meneses, she is now employed also by a non-profit organization, in the same career that she left off back home. "It would have been better if I have known them (Upwardly Global) before I started here," she said and added, "I was in the midst of going home, but Upwardly Global explained to me the difficulties and because they have access to lots of possible employers, along with the workshops, I was able to get the job that I want."

Upwardly Global is located at 582 Market Street, Suite 1207, San Francisco, 94104 with telephone number (415) 840-0334. They also have a New York office at 401 Broadway, Suite 800, New York, NY with telephone number (212) 219-8828. You can also log on to their website, www.upwardlyglobal.org.

*Special thanks to Ms. Cecily Victor of Upwardly Global for her assistance. ^{AJ}

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