



SINAG

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DAWN Executive Director Joins Vital Voices Global Advisory Council



DAWN Executive Director Mel Nuqui with US Senator and Vital Voices Honorary Co-Chair Hillary Clinton

DAWN's very own Executive Director, Ms. Carmelita Nuqui has accepted the invitation of Vital Voices to join its Global Advisory Council.

In its letter to Ms. Nuqui, Vital Voices stated that "as an outstanding woman leader in your country, we would like to invite you to join the Vital Voices Global Advisory Council - a prestigious group of 35 women leaders from around the world who are recognized for their pioneering work to advance the economic, social, and political progress of women."

The members of the Global Advisory Council serve as the eyes and ears of Vital Voices around the world. They provide information about the most pressing issues facing women in their own regions, and team up with Vital Voices to address them.

Vital Voices is a global partnership to support women's progress in building democracies, strong economies and peace. Its programs focus on expanding women's

political participation, increasing women's successful entrepreneurship and combating trafficking in women and girls and other human rights abuses against women.

Ms. Nuqui first met with the women of Vital Voices when she was invited to present a paper at the Conference on Human Trafficking in Asia held in Tokyo, Japan on June 23-24, 2004. This was followed by an invitation to participate in the Vital Voices Women's Global Leadership Summit held on March 5-10, 2005 in New York City, where she had the chance to meet US Senator and Vital Voices Honorary Co-Chair Hillary Clinton and other women leaders from various countries.

For the last sixteen years, Ms. Nuqui or Tita Mel, as she is fondly called by the staff and members of DAWN, has been involved in migrant NGO work.

Aside from serving as

(To page 4)

DAWN is Finalist at Changemakers Innovation Award

DAWN joined the search for this year's Changemakers Innovation Award to End Human Trafficking. The entry, which DAWN submitted, describes the work it does to curb trafficking in persons.

The Changemakers Innovation Award is an on-line contest, which encourages individuals and organizations to share their practices on how to end human trafficking.

Sixty-nine (69) organizations and individuals from twenty-one (21) countries submitted entries to the contest. Of the 69, sixteen (16) finalists were chosen. Each entry described each organization's initiatives and interventions to prevent trafficking in persons and protect victims of trafficking.

DAWN was one of the 16 finalists chosen to vie for the award. It is the only organization from the

(To page 11)

WHAT'S INSIDE?	
2	Editorial
5	DAWN Celebrates Family Day
6	2005 Teatro Akebono Summer Workshop
9	PMRW Questions Legality of OWWA's Collection of US\$25 from OFWs
10	Sikhay Corner
12	DAWN participates in sex trafficking conference

Editorial

Comments on the 2005 US Anti-Trafficking in Persons Report

The US State Department recently released its 2005 report on Trafficking in Persons (TIP). The report includes an analysis of trafficking and government efforts to combat it in 150 countries, including the Philippines.

Last year, Japan and the Philippines were both included in the Watch list. This year, Japan has moved from the watch list to Tier 2, while the Philippines, for the second consecutive year, remained on the Tier 2 Watch List because of its "failure to show evidence of increasing efforts to convict traffickers." The efforts made by the Philippine government, according to the report, were not enough for the country to be removed from the list.

The Development Action for Women Network (DAWN) does not agree with some of the findings of the 2005 report, and we remain critical of the Philippine government's efforts to curb human trafficking.

On the Issue of Prosecution

(1) Malacanang reacted to the report by admitting the need for a more vigorous campaign to curb human trafficking in the country. Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said that, "the government is doing everything possible to arrest and prosecute those involved in the illegal human traffic trade." DAWN agrees with the palace's statement. But we wish to point out that there will be lesser cases for prosecution if the problem can be prevented. We are concerned not just with international trafficking, but also with the rural to urban trafficking in persons that persists in the country.

On Protection

(2) It takes several hundreds of man-hours, not to mention several millions of pesos, to draft a bill and have it signed into a law. It took eight years of lobbying and intensive spadework on the part of

women and migrant NGOs, including DAWN, for the proposed anti-trafficking bill before it was finally passed by Congress and signed into law by the President on May 23, 2003. We hope it will not take another eight years to have the law properly implemented.

The Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act passed in 2003 has been hailed as one of the most comprehensive and progressive anti-trafficking law ever passed. However, content of the law and its implementation are two different things. As the 2005 US Trafficking Report says, "more progress in its law enforcement efforts is needed."

(3) For victims of trafficking, government agencies such as the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) provide for a range of protective services. The role that NGOs play should not also be undermined. They too have programs parallel to some of the services of government. In fact, some government agencies, as well as the Japan Embassy, refer cases to NGOs, like DAWN.

(4) We call on the Philippine government and its agencies like DSWD, OWWA, POEA, CFO, etc. to put up a strong and viable re-integration program for returning OFWs. Time and again, DAWN and several other NGOs have called for such a program. We know for a fact that many OFWs who come home either do not have enough money to put up their own business or do not know what business to go into. Some find it difficult to get re-employed in the Philippines. Thus, it is not surprising that many women returnees from Japan go back to Japan despite the painful experiences they had there. We call on government to review the OWWA policies so that they may benefit all of its members.

On Prevention

(5) Understanding of the issue of human trafficking as well as knowing

one's rights are crucial for the prevention of trafficking in persons. More intensive effort is needed to educate the general public on the issue of human trafficking. Ask an ordinary man on the street what he knows about trafficking and let's see what reply one will get.

(6) While the government recognizes the issue of trafficking of our women, it does not accept the fact that its policy of deployment of overseas performing artists (OPAs) to Japan exacerbates the problem of trafficking.

Republic Act No. 9208 or the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act defines trafficking in persons as "the recruitment, transportation, transfer or harboring, or receipt of persons with or without the victim's consent or knowledge, within or across national borders by means of threat or use of force, or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or of position, taking advantage of the vulnerability of the person, or the giving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person, having control over another person for the purpose of exploitation which includes at a minimum, the exploitation or the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery, servitude or the removal or sale of organs."

It is common knowledge that most Filipinas who work in Japan as entertainers do not really work as entertainers in the real sense of the word. Some never get the chance to perform as singers or dancers on stage, but end up doing hostessing jobs. While Philippine and Japanese laws prohibit the practice of *dohan* (dating customers outside the club or bar), most entertainers are forced to agree on this practice for fear of being sent back to the Philippines or not receiving their salaries. Women also continue to sit down with customers and are touched on private parts. Other violations of the women's contracts

include the practice of flying booking (transfer from one club to another), cleaning of the club by the entertainers, confiscation of passports of the entertainers by the employer or club owner, and withholding of salaries. These are against the rules and regulations of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA). These violations have been reported to the government. The experiences of these women have been articulated by NGOs like DAWN to the concerned authorities.

Several researches conducted by NGOs and scholars have documented the experiences of our women entertainers in Japan and attested to their persistent trafficking (DAWN, 1997, 2003; CATW, 2001; Ballescas, 1991; IOM, 2001; ILO, 2004).

IOM calculates that Japan's sex industry hosts about 150,000 foreign workers today, and ILO Japan reports that the Philippines, Columbia and Thailand are the top source countries, although the number of women from Russia, Korea and China has gone up. The 2005 US report cited that a significant number of the 71,084 Filipino women who entered Japan as entertainers in 2004 ended up in sex trade trafficking.

Despite all these findings and claims, the Philippine government still encourages our women to work as entertainers in Japan. A high-ranking government official, when confronted with the kind of work the women do, replied, "What is wrong with sitting down with customers?"

Another case in point is the coffee table book published in 2004 by the Department of Labor entitled "The Filipino Workers: Global Citizens." The book is a compilation of stories of "successful OFWs in their heroic efforts to find better employment opportunities while in the process of empowering themselves."

One of the featured "success" stories is that of a 16-year old girl who went to Japan some twenty years ago, married a Japanese, and is now a businesswoman, recruiting Filipina entertainers to Japan. We find it astounding that the government is

championing her case when it was written in the book that at a young age she was "exposed to adult forms of entertainment."

"Every six months, she would fly in and out of Japan. This lasted for two years as she danced in Japan's night clubs and became part of the entertainment troupe. The first months of working in Japan might have caused her some "culture shock." But she certainly did not let her family back home know about her apprehensions."

These instances are clear indications that the Philippine government condones trafficking.

(7) When the Japanese government, in its efforts to curb human trafficking in their country, finally recognized that there is something wrong with the work of our Filipino entertainers in Japan, they announced the implementation of a new immigration policy. This new policy requires entertainers to have two years experience outside Japan or two years of formal schooling in singing and dancing.

In reaction to the new policy, the Philippine government made several appeals to the Japanese government for a moratorium/delay of its implementation. It sent missions from the Department of Labor and Employment (DoLE), Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), POEA, Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO), and representatives from both Houses of Congress.

DAWN was disappointed with the way the Philippine government dealt with the implementation of the new Japanese immigration policy. Japan was merely addressing the problem of human trafficking in their country. The Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) in a statement said that, "the government should not be asking for a moratorium, which is like begging for the continuation of this illegality."

Sen. Manny Villar, vice chair of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations expressed dismay because "the very agencies that were sent by the Philippines – the DFA and DoLE – to appeal for the cause of the OPAs betrayed them." He further added,

that "the DFA and DoLE sold the OPAs out like the *makapilis* did during the war." (Manila Bulletin, p. 12, March 28, 2005). Such a statement smacks of ignorance of the issue, and shows a low regard for the Filipina. Government officials ought to know better and want something better for these "entertainers."

(8) The Arroyo government was worried about the economic dislocation that the ruling will bring. They will have to reckon with over half a million entertainers and their families to be affected by the new policy. Or maybe, it is more concerned about the hundreds of millions of dollars the country stands to lose in remittances from the OPAs. DAWN feels that while our nation needs all those billions of dollars in remittances to prop up our economy, protecting our OFWs from abuses and exploitation is more important. We do not wish to see more dreams shattered, and more lives ruined.

Rather than make appeals to Japan, the Philippine government should have sought ways to make up for the economic loss of OPAs in Japan.

The Philippines should have seen the action of Japan coming. We failed to act on a problem that has been staring at us for a very long time.

(9) It is the government's duty and responsibility to take care of its people. President Arroyo promised the creation of a million jobs for Filipinos. But where are these jobs? Were there jobs created for our women? For our returning OFWs? The only jobs created, it would seem, were those of the street cleaners who were very visible before the 2004 elections but who one by one disappeared after the May 2004 elections. The lack of decent jobs and livelihood opportunities in the country forces our people to go to foreign lands, and at times force them into the web of human trafficking.

(10) Rather than lobby to Washington for the removal of the Philippines from the watch list, the Philippine government should prove not only to the US, but more so to the Filipino people, that it is serious in its efforts to combat trafficking in persons. In some ways, it can learn from Japan

Reflections... from page 7

JFC Summer Workshop



Junko strikes a serene pose prior to the presentation at Battig Hall

By Junko Fujiwara

Every summer, DAWN has this tradition of holding a workshop for the Japanese-Filipino children. It has a lot of purposes: to be able to let the children gain confidence, and to enhance their talents in a musical play.

A lot of children attended this year's workshop, including myself. All in all, there were eighteen of us who attended the workshop. Some of the children are already familiar with this kind of workshop because they have attended previous summer workshops organized by DAWN, while the others are new to this kind of activity.

The workshop was held from April 25 up to May 13 at the St. Scholastica's College.

This summer workshop is one of the most extraordinary workshops I have ever attended. A lot of things were taught to us by Danny Lopez, our facilitator and director, Aries Clemeno, our choreographer and Acey Aguilar, our stage manager. We also learned a lot from Dennis Magno, our production designer.

Congress Calls for an Inquiry on Japanese Note Verbale No. 1291

The House Special Committee on Overseas Workers Affairs invited DAWN to a public hearing in relation to the issuance of a note verbale by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, which has a bearing on the thousands of Filipino overseas performing artists working in Japan.

The said Japanese Note Verbale issued on April 11, 2005, concerns the verification system procedure being practiced by the Philippine Embassy in Japan.

Under the verification system procedure, any Japanese promoter, authorized by the government of Japan to engage in hiring foreign entertainers, would not be allowed to invite them unless the Embassy of the Philippines in Tokyo, or the Consulate General in Osaka, issues a Certificate of Verification (CoV).

The Government of Japan feels that this is discriminatory because this, as well as the escrow bond system, is practiced by the Philippine Government only in Japan. The Japanese government therefore requested the suspension of such procedures by the Philippine government, to which the latter immediately complied with.

In the hearing held on May 4, DAWN, through its Research and Advocacy Officer Liza Garcia, presented its position regarding the matter. In summary, DAWN stated the following: (1) it has always upheld the rights of all migrant workers, including Filipino overseas performing artists in Japan; (2) the verification procedure is not a guarantee of protection for OPAs in Japan; (3) the protection of its nationals should start from the Philippines – from the verification and issuance of legal and valid documents, to the proper implementation of laws; and, (4) there is a need to re-examine the deployment policy of the Philippines, and to look into the push factors that made Filipinos leave the country for abroad. DAWN also believes that the Escrow Bond system should apply to all and not just to Japan.

Our facilitator gave us different exercises that enhanced the talents of the children. Some of the exercises given to us were so difficult that some of us almost gave up. But we all persisted and made it until the end.

The children learned many things from the workshop. At the same time, many also gained confidence and are no longer shy. Their talents improved, and even they themselves could not believe that they can be like that after the workshop. The younger children also improved in the exercises we had.

We applied what we have learned from the workshop to our own stage play that was presented at the Battig Hall of St. Scholastica's College. We had plenty of audience from DAWN, as well as some friends of our director, who watched the play. 🎭

DAWN Exec. Director ... from page 1

executive director of DAWN, Ms. Nuqui is also the President of the Philippine Migrants' Rights Watch (PMRW), a civil society network that promotes the recognition, protection, and fulfillment of the rights of Filipino migrants.

Vital Voices has a global network of affiliates and thousands of network members throughout the world. It partners with leading universities, non-profit foundations, corporations and governments who share their dedication to improving the economic, political and social status of women everywhere.

The invitation to join the advisory council is a recognition of Ms. Nuqui's outstanding work in the Philippines to advance the cause of women. It is an affirmation that her work, accomplishments, and talent have not gone unnoticed. 🎭

DAWN Celebrates Family Day

by Maria Corazon Gomonan



DAWN staff and members partake of a sumptuous lunch

It was a hot, sweltering, sunny day, ideal for taking a dip in the pool. That is how May 21 can best be described. It was also the day when fifty-six members and staff of DAWN, including Tita Pearl Flores and Ms. Agnes Mineko Hara, trooped to Pansol, Laguna for our annual family day celebration.

The children have been looking forward to this day. For weeks, they have been asking the DAWN staff when the family day will be and where it would be held.

We left the DAWN office at seven in the morning and arrived in Pansol after nine. Immediately after our arrival, the children changed into their swim wears and headed for the pool. The staff and some of the mothers meanwhile helped prepare lunch.



The children enjoying themselves at the pool

Several activities, prepared by the staff, were lined up for the day. These included games, a mother's day program, and of course, swimming. Both the JFC and their mothers participated in the activities.

For the mother's day program, each child presented a token gift to his/her mother and said a few words of appreciation.

Those whose mothers were not present also participated. Michael Suzuki and Susan Adachi presented Ms. Hara and Tita Pearl, respectively, with a gift each.

"I have known *Sensei* since I was small, and in a way, she has been like a mother to me," said Michael.

Susan thanked Tita Pearl and wished her all the best.

This year's family day celebration was a fun time with lots of food, laughter, music, and sharing. The children really enjoyed themselves at the pool, while many of the mothers had a fun time belting out tunes from the videoke.

We left Pansol at three thirty in the afternoon. It was still early and we would have wanted to prolong our stay, but we still have a long journey home.

The day ended with almost everyone tired. In fact, it was quiet in the bus on our return trip since many slept their way home. 📺

Editorial... from p. 3

who has put in place concrete actions to curb trafficking in their country.

(11) While we laud the efforts and concrete actions of the Japanese government to combat trafficking in persons through the amendment/passage of policies and laws beneficial to victims, DAWN also urges the Japanese government, especially their embassies to be more thorough in screening visa applicants to their countries and continue the monitoring of the violations of rights of women in the various clubs in Japan.

The Japanese government should also realize that a two-year work experience outside Japan or two years of formal schooling in singing and dancing will not solve the problem. The demand of Japanese men in buying women from other countries should be stopped.

(12) At the same time, the policy of the Philippine government to send our women to Japan or to any other country as overseas performing artists, who end up as hostesses, should be stopped because the nature of the woman's work makes them very vulnerable to trafficking.

The trend of migration will continue. The Philippines in the next several years will continue sending its people to work abroad. The problem of human trafficking will persist. And while such is the case, the Philippine government has to exert more effort to combat trafficking. As we have stated in our unity statement, we should all take stock of the impacts and consequences of the deployment of Filipino entertainers to Japan. Nicely written reports will not save a person's life. Determined action is what is needed. 📺



A visit from the US State Department's Office to Monitor & Combat Trafficking in Persons

2005 Teatro Akebono

The summer workshop is one of the most awaited summer activities of DAWN's Japanese-Filipino children (JFC) members. They participate in the theater workshops not only to hone their thespic skills and improve on their creativity, but also to see old friends and meet new ones.



Workshop facilitator Danny Lopez

This summer, eighteen JFCs successfully finished the workshop, which started on April 25 and ended on May 13.

More than half of this year's participants are new to this kind of activity. They have not yet experienced being part of a theater workshop.

It is the first time for the Kawaguchi brothers, Kengi and Joynichi, to participate in DAWN's theater workshop. The same is true with siblings Seiji, Mako, and Michi Sato. The other first timers are Masami Cabugao, Ian Ichiro Kadowaki, Satomi Sato, and Yorgie Cerezo.



The children attentively listening to a lecture

The youngest participant in the workshop is Naomi Nakaya, a 7-year old grade one student from San Mateo, Rizal. She and her sister Kana, 8 years old, are also joining the theater workshop for the first time.

Sisters Junko and Kinako Fujiwara have taken part in past theater workshops and joined the Japan tour. Hisaco Garcia, Hiromi Ozawa, Key Celine Andrade, Ai Risa Akase and Jennifer Verano are likewise not new to theater workshops.

The 18 workshop participants literally sweated it out during the 3-week workshop, enduring the summer heat and going through the difficult exercises given to them. Aside from the usual lectures and exercises on acting, there was also a lot of sharing of experiences and insights, and soul searching. This year's workshop focused more on teaching the children movements. At the start, the children were complaining of body aches and pains after each session, but eventually, they got the hang of it. Aries Clemeno from the Asian Council for People's Culture (ACPC) taught the children how to use their bodies to express moods and tell a story.

The workshop culminated in a 30-minute theater presentation at the Battig Hall of St. Scholastica's College on May 13. The theater was filled not only with the parents of the children, the DAWN staff and volunteers, but also with theater lovers who wanted to see the children perform.

The play presented by the children was an application of everything they learned during the workshop. The culminating activity was different from their past workshops. They presented a play that was a fusion of both Filipino and Japanese cultures.

The "Japanese-ness" of the play was added to introduce to the children the



Aries Clemeno teaching the children movements



Rehearsing the moves



Mothers watch their children

arts and theater of their fathers. Through the patient guidance of Mr. Clemeno, the children learned some *butoh* movements, reminiscent of the Kabuki theaters of Japan. The play however, did not lose its Filipino aesthetics nor the message that it was trying to convey. The play is one that can be understood by viewers even without much dialogue. Mr. Clemeno's sensitive choreography surely added soul to the play.

The success of the workshop was made possible by theater veteran

Summer Workshop

Danny Lopez, who was over-all facilitator and director of the activity. He was assisted by Acey Aguilar, a student at the Philippine High School for the Arts in Makiling. Aries Clemeno did the choreography, while Dennis Magno was in charge of the costumes and production design. Prof. Aurora Yumul of the De La Salle University provided inputs for the improvement of the play.



The presentation at Battig Hall

Awarding of Certificates

For having completed the three-week workshop and in recognition of their active participation, the 18 JFCs were awarded certificates of participation. DAWN Executive Director Mel Nuqui and workshop facilitator Danny Lopez presented the certificates to the children after the play presentation.

It was such a sight to see the children and their parents proud of their achievement.

Selection for the Japan Tour

After weeks of agonizing who will join the Japan theater tour this October, Ms. Nuqui finally announced the names of the children who are joining the theater tour scheduled in October.

"It would have been fun to include all the children in the Japan tour because they all did well during the workshop and the May 13 presentation. But financial circumstances dictate that the number be limited," said Nuqui.

Several criteria were considered in choosing the children to join the Japan tour. The discipline and good performance the children showed during the workshop were a major consideration. Good behavior and attitude also count. The cases and situation of each child were also looked into. Of course, the workshop

facilitators were consulted. Danny Lopez, Aries Clemeno, Acey Aguilar and Dennis Magno, together with DAWN staff Liza Garcia held several discussions on who are potential candidates for the theater tour. There were a series of deliberations before they submitted names to DAWN for further evaluation.

Nine children are joining this year's Japan tour. They are Junko Fujiwara, Ian Ichiro Kadowaki, Ai Risa Akase, Joynichi Kawaguchi, Naomi Nakaya, Yorgie Cerezo, Masami Cabugao, Kana Nakaya, and Kinako Fujiwara.

These children will again undergo a series of workshops and rehearsals every Saturday in preparation for the tour scheduled from October 4-17, 2005. 📷



The JFC, with DAWN staff and facilitators, proudly displaying their certificates

Reflections on the Workshop ...

My Unforgettable Workshop



By Ai Risa Akase

I cannot forget this year's workshop because of the many different things I experienced. This is the most serious and hardest of all the workshops I have ever attended. I learned a lot from our workshop facilitator, Danny Lopez.

Our workshop was very hard. But I can say that because of this, I even got to know more about myself. I learned that difficulty results in good work. I experienced how to be really tired. My body ached after the exercises given to us.

I learned that you have to give your best in everything you do. You have to believe in what you can do, even if you are not talented as today's actresses like Claudine Baretto or Judy Ann Santos, because God gives something especially for you.

Kuya Danny with Kuya Acey, Kuya Aries and Kuya Dennis taught us how to be good and responsible actors. One does not have to cry to prove that one can act. The important thing is to feel and internalize one's role. You have to forget yourself and transform yourself into the role given to you.

Nothing is impossible if you believe in yourself. Be confident and happy with what you are doing.

(To page 4)

DAWN Visitors

The second quarter of 2005 has been a busy one for DAWN. Aside from the daily work that we do, we received many visitors.

These visits from partners and friends provided us an opportunity to present our programs.

On May 2, a study tour group from Japan visited DAWN. They were briefed on our programs, and had the opportunity to meet the JFCs.

We have had two visits from the US State Department's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. Mr. Anthony Eterno, whom Ms. Nuqui met during the Singapore Conference on Sex Trafficking, came to visit DAWN on May 5, while Msrs. Mark Taylor and Nien Su met with DAWN on June 19. We also had a visit from Ms. Peta Dunn of the Australian Embassy, Ms. Rangita de Alwis of the Spangenberg Group, and Mr. Jeffrey Tiangco of People's Journal.



Ms. Peta Dunn of the Australian Embassy visits Sikhay



Mr. Jeffrey Tiangco of People's Journal interviews Ms. Nuqui



Japanese Visitors with Ms. Agnes Mineko Hara and Ms. Nuqui



Mr. Anthony Eterno of the US State Department and Mr. Dave Maness of the US Embassy in Manila



Ms. Rangita de Silva-de Alwis of the Spangenberg Group, doing a mapping of organizations for the Ford Foundation



Mark Taylor of the US State Department Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, and Mr. Dave Maness of the US Embassy

Mothers Hold Their Workshop, Too

by Michelle Galvez

The Self-Actualization Workshop for Mothers held last May 9-13, 2005 was a success.

Ms. Michelle M. Galvez of the Philippine Normal University



Vangie Cerezo & Gina Sato doing a collage presentation

facilitated the said workshop. She made sure that the workshop could maximize the one-week time frame allotted for the mothers by giving them learner-centered activities.

This workshop was conducted to tap the creative side of mothers. It also served as a venue for a meaningful sharing of experiences of old and new members of the organization. It focused on the theme "My Community and I".

The mothers' potentials were tapped by engaging them in activities like collage making, journal writing, song writing, story sharing and narration about their experiences abroad, particularly in Japan.

On the culminating day of the workshop, the mothers prepared a



The mothers doing a song number

song number and did a collage presentation. They also made pledges as part of the program's activity. But the highlight of the day was the awarding of certificates to the mothers.

DAWN Executive Director Mel Nuqui awarded certificates of recognition to Evangeline Cerezo as Best Journal Writer, and Corazon Garcia as Best Narrator during the open forum. Angie Cabugao, Jinuela Nakaya and Gina Sato also received certificates for their active participation.

"This is a very good experience on my part. Aside from receiving a certificate for attending, I also learned so much from the workshop," said Jinuela, whose two daughters are attending the JFC theater workshop.

Evangeline meanwhile hopes to attend more workshops given by DAWN because she wants to develop her writing skills. 📷



Mothers with facilitator Michelle Galvez holding their workshop certificates



Jinuela receives her certificate from Ms. Nuqui

PMRW Questions Legality of OWWA's Collection of US\$25 from OFWs

The Philippine Migrant Rights Watch (PMRW) recently launched a signature campaign to protest the illegal mandatory payment of US\$25 fee by overseas Filipino workers (OFW).

Dubbed "Bayad Ko 'To," the signature campaign aims to gather evidence from past and present OFWs that indeed they were the ones who paid for their OWWA membership fees and not their employers.

The OWWA, formerly known as the Welfare Fund for Overseas Workers, was created by Letter of Instructions No. 537, signed by the late President Marcos in 1977. Section 5-A of the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of the Welfare Fund states that foreign employers hiring Filipinos shall contribute to the fund, while Section 5-B stipulates that, "in no way shall the fees be charged or collected from the worker."

Reports indicate however that the US\$25 fee is routinely passed to the OFWs. For instance, OFWs who have their overseas employment contracts processed by the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency (POEA) are required to contribute US\$25, or its equivalent, to the OWWA Fund before their applications are processed. Receipts issued to them indicate that the employer paid for the fee, when in fact such is not the case. The OFW after having paid for the membership fee does not get reimbursed for it.

PMRW President Carmelita Nuqui clarified that their group is not advocating for the abolition of the US\$25 membership fee. "What we are questioning is the legality of collecting the fees from the employee instead of the employer. Section 5b of the Implementing Rules and Regulations of Letter of Instruction (LOI) 537 states that the US\$25 should not be collected from the employee."

"At the same time, we are questioning the provisions embodied in the omnibus policies which limit OWWA services to member-contributors only. OWWA was created by law to provide welfare services to all OFWs. There is no law which limits its services to so-called member-contributors only," Nuqui continued.

It will be recalled that last February 2004, the PMRW filed a case against the OWWA Board, questioning among other things, the legality of the fees being collected from the employees themselves, and limiting of OWWA services only to member-contributors to the OWWA Fund.

To date, the intensified signature campaign has reached PMRW's networks in Hong Kong, Korea, Saudi Arabia, Taiwan, and Europe. About 100,000 signatures are expected to be gathered by September 2005.

"Bayad Ko 'To" campaign was launched on May 3, 2005 during the PMRW forum entitled "The Next Level: The Migrant Worker Sector Agenda," which reported on the recommendations of the 2004 World Conference of OFWs entitled "Shaping the Future of Filipino Labor Migration," held in December. Representatives from different NGOs, government agencies, and media attended the said event.

On June 16, 2005, PMRW held a forum at the Mandarin Hotel and presented before members of the diplomatic corps the results of the Round Table Discussion with foreign missions held from July to September 2004, the proceedings and recommendations of the 2004 World Conference of OFWs, as well as the findings of the research "Preparing to Work Abroad." The "Bayad Ko 'To" campaign was also presented to the representatives of the different embassies in the Philippines. 📷

Sikhay Corner

The Joy of Sharing One's Skills

by Mary Joy E. Barcelona



Seated from L-R: Rose, Josie, Gina, Luz
Standing: Mary Joy and Retchel

Alternative livelihood is one of DAWN's programs for Filipino women returnees from Japan. It provides women with skills training, which they can use to earn a living. Aside from training women, DAWN also provides alternative work to some of its members through Sikap-Buhay or Sikhay.

Sikhay gives chance to women returnees from Japan. It helps them develop their skills and redirect their lives. We believe that given a chance, these women are willing to work and can have a decent way of living. Through

Sikhay, some of DAWN's women members earn a living and support their Japanese-Filipino child/children (JFC).

Retchel Bitas, 28 years old, is the latest addition to the DAWN family. She joined Sikhay in March 2005 and is currently doing the sketch and design for Sikhay's product lines which include dresses, skirts, blouses, and bags.

"By working at Sikhay, I am able to apply the skills I learned before I went to Japan in December 1999. I have also developed camaraderie with the other women by sharing my skills with them. Being part of Sikhay makes me happy. I now have new friends," says Retchel.

Retchel works at home and only reports to Sikhay twice a week. With such a working arrangement, she is able to earn a living and at the same time take care of her four-year old daughter, Mhika. 📷

Sikhay Attends GGFTI Product Development Clinic



With design consultant Carlo Tanseco and his team

of the Gifts and Graces Fair Trade Foundation, Inc. (GGFTI), a non-stock, non-profit organization that aims to provide marketing support to products of various livelihood programs of select non-government agencies.

International design consultant Carlo Tanseco and his team saw the different product lines of Sikhay. They expressed interest in four of Sikhay's products, namely the cotton shawl, hallow bag, back pack, and eyeglasses

O n June 22, 2005, DAWN attended t h e product develop- m e n t consulta- tion clinic

holder. They asked Sikhay to provide them with samples of each product with their suggested cloth and color specifications.

DAWN also showcased its products at a mini-bazaar held at the second floor lobby of the Philippine Daily Inquirer building.

Mary Joy Barcelona of Sikhay, Liza Garcia of Research and Advocacy and volunteer Yuuki Nozaki attended the said clinic. 📷



Ms. Sandy Prieto-Romualdez of PDI looking at Sikhay's products

DAWN is... from p. 11

Right now, Yuuki is assisting Macoy Gomonan of Social Services Programs in the handling of cases of women and JFCs referred to DAWN. She translates documents for DAWN and joins Macoy on home visitations. She also helps Joy in the various bazaars of Sikhay and assists in the rehearsals of the JFC musical for the Japan tour.

"I am interested to know the background of the women members of DAWN, join the Akebono tour, and to see some JFC grow up," said Yuuki.

Yuuki is particularly interested in the issue of Japanese-Filipino children. In fact, her college thesis is on JFCs from the view points of law, human rights, and society. She believes that the government of the Philippines and Japan should work hand-in-hand to protect the entertainers and their children.

When asked how she feels about her work at DAWN, Yuuki said, "I enjoy my volunteer work and my stay here. I learn a lot from the staff, the women and the JFC. I hope they can also learn from me during my stay."

She added, "DAWN is my family and of course DAWN-Japan, too."



SINAG ("akebono" or "yoake" in Japanese) means dawn or daybreak. It is the quarterly publication of the Development Action for Women Network (DAWN), a non-government, development organization devoted to issues concerning migrant women and their Japanese-Filipino children.

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Welcome to the DAWN Family

by Nancy Bondoc

The first half of 2005 saw many changes in the DAWN family.

Liza Garcia and Maria Corazon Gomonan joined DAWN as Research and Advocacy Officer and Social Services Coordinator, respectively, replacing Jannis Montanez and Marilyn Bo, who left DAWN last April and May.

Upon her entry to DAWN, Liza immediately joined the JFCs for the Teatro Akebono workshop. Nine JFCs are now rehearsing for the musical tour in Japan slated from October 4-17, 2005.

Prior to joining DAWN, Maria Corazon or Macoy was a social worker for Families and Children for Empowerment and Development (FCED)..

DAWN is also lucky to have Yuuki Nozaki (see opposite story) join



Sr. Mila, Macoy, Hai-jung and Sang-hee with the women members of DAWN

DAWN as a volunteer. She has been helping out Macoy at Social Services, doing translation of documents and letters, and joining the home/school visits. She will also be temporarily taking over the Japanese language class of Ms. Agnes Mineko Hara, who left for Japan recently.

Aside from Yuuki, two South Koreans, Sang-hee Lee and You Hai-jung, are doing immersion work at DAWN.

Sang-hee is a human rights lawyer, while Hai-jung is actively involved in NGO work. They are interested to find out about the programs of DAWN, and the human rights violations experienced by migrant women.

To Liza, Macoy, Yuuki, Sang-hee and Hai-jung, we say, "Welcome to the DAWN Family!" 🗣️

DAWN is Finalist.. from p. 1

Philippines that submitted an entry and made it to the finals.

Entries to the contest were judged based on systemic impact, tipping point, replication, sustainability, and innovation. Community on-line voting began on June 1 and ended on June 13.

The entry winners, which were announced last June 15, are the following: Anti-Slavery Project from

Australia, Stop Trafficking and Oppression of Children and Women from India, and Soap Operas to End-Trafficking in West Africa from the United States of America.

Each of these entries will receive US\$5,000 from the organizers.

We would like to thank all those who voted for us. DAWN ranked number ten among the sixteen finalists. 🗣️

"DAWN is my Family"



Yuuki with Naomi & Kenken

Just a few months after graduating from Kobe College with a degree in Global Communication, Yuuki Nozaki, a 22-year old lass from Osaka, Japan, packed her bags and left for Manila.

She arrived in the Philippines in May to pursue a master's degree in Women and Development Studies at the University of the Philippines and to do volunteer work at DAWN.

This charming young lady with a ready smile for everyone is no stranger to rendering volunteer work and community service. During her college days, she was involved with various community programs that help children in Japan. Her practicum in Minnessota, USA also involved community service. In fact, Yuuki has been a member of DAWN-Japan for the past three years.

As a member of DAWN-Japan, Yuuki has helped in the translation of documents needed to facilitate the resolution of cases referred to DAWN. She was also part of the team that translated from English to Japanese the book "Pains and Gains." She also helps during DAWN's theater tour to the various cities and prefectures in Japan.

(To page 10)

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DAWN Participates In Sex Trafficking Conference

DAWN Executive Director Mel Nuqui was one of the participants to the Singapore Conference on "Tackling Demand for Child Sex Tourism and Sex Trafficking in East and Southeast Asia," held on April 25-27 this year.

The Singapore conference, hosted by the National Committee for UNIFEM, Singapore and the War Against Trafficking Alliance, was organized to seek and explore key strategies that address the demand side of sex trafficking and child sex tourism, and offer opportunities to form and strengthen the effective national and international networks.

International sex trafficking remains the third largest source of profit for organized crime after narcotics and weapons. Each year, between 800,000 to 4 million women and children are transported illegally across international boundaries. Those engaged in this lucrative business are estimated to earn \$19 billion annually.

Sex trafficking is highly organized and it will take considerable



DAWN Executive Director Mel Nuqui, with participants from the Philippines, and conference guest Ms. Lea Salonga

effort not just of one organization, to fight this crime. According to the organizers, "it will take a network to fight a network."

The conference was attended by representatives from government, the academe, and non-government organizations (NGOs) from different countries in East and South East Asia. Highlights of the conference included discussions on existing and pending legislation on trafficking and child sex tourism, a review of experiences, discussions in transnational cooperation in

areas of enforcement of migration and border controls, sharing of information, gathering and use of evidence, sharing of best practices in identifying offenders and victims, and handling cases. There was also a discussion on corporate social responsibility in the travel and tourism businesses and the development of an action agenda to support quality tourism practices in ASEAN tourism.

Among the speakers who participated in the conference were Dr. Jean D'Cunha of UNIFEM, Dr. Mohamed Mattar of the Johns Hopkins School of

Advanced International Studies, ASEAN Secretary-General Ong Keng Yong, Congresswoman Linda Smith of the United States, and Professor Viti Muntabhorn of the Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok.

"There was so much to learn from the sharing of experiences and exchange of ideas in the conference, including strategies for intervention and for the restoration of victims of trafficking and the sex industry," Ms. Nuqui said. The conference also served as a venue for DAWN to meet other networks involved on the issue of trafficking in persons. 📷

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