

Balitaan

Search to Involve  Pilipino Americans

SIPA Super Summer Celebration



Folklorico youth dancers perform at SIPA's annual summer community event featuring entertainment, games, health information, food and refreshments for the entire family.

One of SIPA's most successful annual events is the Super Summer Celebration and this year it is scheduled for Saturday, August 23rd. It's a day where youth and families come to SIPA and enjoy entertainment, food, and games in the summer sun. This one-day celebration brings together SIPA clients, residents of the surrounding neighborhood, and other local agencies. Not only is it time for fun and games, the Super Summer Celebration offers many parents and families the opportunity to have access to numerous health and other significant community services as well.

The Super Summer Celebration started in the late 90's. Originally, it was created to bring together SIPA's board of directors, staff, and clients and began as a one-day event held at Loyola Marymont University (LMU). Today the celebration is a much more community-accessible event where everyone's invited and welcome to join in on the festivities.

With over 200 participants last year, the event allows SIPA to outreach to a majority of its neighbors and the surrounding community. A highlight of the celebration is the youth FunRun with prizes going to the top winners in each age division. The rest of the day is filled with a program of music, performances, food and games.

Tables and tents are also set up for other community agencies to provide information, distribute literature, and talk with attending youth and families. Participating organizations include the Los Angeles Fire Department, Asian Pacific American Legal Center, New Economics for Women, Pacific Asian Consortium for Employment (PACE), Asians for Miracle Marrow Matches (A3M), Asian American Drug Abuse Program (AADAP), WRAP Family Services, Association for the Advancement of Filipino American Arts & Culture (FilAm ARTS), and others.

For this year's upcoming event, the Summer Program for Empowerment & Leadership (SPEL) high school interns will be given major responsibilities in organizing the Super Summer Celebration. Now, not only does the gathering expose SIPA to the community but it is also used as a valuable learning tool to help develop future community leaders. SIPA looks forward to another successful Super Summer Celebration where the community can come together and obtain information and participate in something fun and healthy.

Gateway to Opportunity

Sadly, for many of our youth growing up in Historic Filipinotown, busy streets are often the nearest or only playgrounds, youth programs are practically non-existent, and crime is widespread.

Fortunately, Search to Involve Pilipino Americans offers a variety of programs that helps keep children safe and provide them with structured, fun activities. One of SIPA's longest running programs is the Temple Gateway Youth Sports League (TGYSL), a summer basketball league coached by community volunteers and funded this year by the Los Angeles Times Family Fund of the Robert R. McCormick Tribune Foundation.

For the past 6 years, TGYSL has given neighborhood youth the chance to take part in organized sports, an opportunity they might not otherwise experience. Over 60 teenage boys ages 14-18 from Belmont, Eagle Rock, and Verdugo High Schools are now participating. TGYSL Coordinator Alvin Terre sees the beneficial affects of the program each day when he's out on the court. "I watch the boys experiencing the challenge of teamwork and thrill of competition and I know the program is worthwhile. More than a few of the players have come up to me and told me it's one of the best times they've ever had."

Some of the TGYSL alumni have even moved on to excel in higher-level athletics. One past participant now plays football for the University of Redlands, one at San Francisco State University and another at the University of Cebu in the Philippines.

Each player has a brand new jersey emblazoned with his favorite number. Games are being held every Saturday for 8 weeks during August and September at King Middle School. The season will culminate in an awards banquet in September.

For more information about the program, please contact TGYSL Coordinator/Youth Activities Specialist Alvin Terre @ (213) 382-1819.

From the Executive Director

Welcome to the revival of BALITAAN!

On behalf of our worthy clients, enthusiastic volunteers, diligent staff, and esteemed Board of Directors, it is my pleasure to invite your involvement in the many and varied activities of Search to Involve Pilipino Americans (SIPA) as we enter our 32nd year of service.

Although it has been awhile since the last issue of our newsletter, this fortuitous return comes in good times as we celebrate the first anniversary of the official declaration of Historic Filipinotown and the production of our annual **SIPA Super Summer Celebration**. Summer at SIPA is a busy and demanding but rewarding time for us and we are often reminded of the significance of our work.

Whether it be developing and building our second affordable family housing project in Silver Lake or collaborating on a brand new after-school arts and culture program, or continuing to help small and micro-enterprise businesses grow and prosper, we strive to fulfill our mission to enhance the quality of lives in the Los Angeles Pilipino American community.

I am also very proud to announce the commencement of SIPA's **Capital Improvement Project**, which will transform one-half of our 3200 West Temple headquarters into a more fully functional community center with a much expanded multi-purpose room and improved outdoor athletic court facilities. We expect both the interior and exterior phases of this renovation to be completed by December 2003.

Please consider becoming an active supporter of our ongoing community programs including SIPA's traditional health and human services as well as community economic development activities. One of the cornerstones of SIPA's growth is collaboration and partnership. If there is any way we can work together, please feel free to call me at (213)382-1819. Thank you very much for your interest and support of Search to Involve Pilipino Americans. *Mabuhay ang komunidad Pilipino Amerikano!*



Joel F. Jacinto
Executive Director

A Night to Remember

SIPA's Awards Benefit Dinner, "Gabi Ng Mga Awit At Pagdiriwang/A Night of Song & Celebration" was a resounding success. More than 400 supporters and friends gathered to celebrate SIPA's 31st Anniversary at the Renaissance Hollywood Hotel on April 5. Pictured below are scenes from that night to remember.



Clockwise from upper left: California Assemblymember Jackie Goldberg with honoree Tim Dayonot; members of honoree Kapitanang Mandrigma; actor/singer Paolo Montalban; SIPA Small Business Counselor Julie Orquiza flanked by emcees actor Dion Baco and actress Joy Bisco.

INTERVIEW WITH AN ICON:

Melissa Constantino

Melissa Constantino, age 16, is the winner of the Filipino American Icon singing contest, which was held at SIPA's annual dinner in April at the Renaissance Hollywood Hotel. The contest was open to Los Angeles youth ages 12-18.

When and how did you start singing?

I always sang along with my Lola (grandmother) playing the piano for fun. But I wasn't very serious about singing until I was about 11. Also, I never performed a solo in front of an audience until I was almost 15. So, I don't have all that much experience.

What do you want to do when you grow up? Anything besides the entertainment industry?

Right now, I want to become a successful singer. But I also have an interest in history and so I might go into a profession involving that.

How did you feel when you won the Filipino American Icon event?

I was very happy! I had just come from San Francisco that very morning from a choir trip so I was tired and my voice was a bit worn out. I was worried about the competition, but when I won it really woke me up.

Why did you choose "Chain of Fools" by Aretha Franklin for your performance? Who are your greatest musical inspirations?

I chose "Chain" because it's groovy! I really enjoy singing it. The song allows me to just have fun and interact with the audience. It's not too rigorous on my voice and I don't have to stretch, I'm just feeling the story of it. I also sang "Saving All My Love for You" by Whitney Houston because it shows different parts of my voice. My musical inspirations are Aretha Franklin definitely, Whitney Houston, Mariah Carey, Ella Fitzgerald, Celine Dion, and just anyone with a strong BIG voice!

What are you going to do with the prize?

I'm planning on using my prize money to record a demo. Although I would love to give a few dollars to my Lola to use in Las Vegas!



Maraming Salamat Po!

Search to Involve Pilipino Americans (SIPA) would like to extend our deepest appreciation to the individuals, corporations, foundations, and government agencies that have helped us provide health and human services as well as community economic development programs to the residents of Historic Filipinotown and the Los Angeles Pilipino American community in 2002–2003.

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The Honorable Eric Garcetti,
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**Listing represents cash donations, grants, and contracts from July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2003.*



Honorees at SIPA's Volunteer Appreciation Day: Donna Tabut, Francis Cullado, Jade Agua, Joe Bernardo, Executive Director Joel Jacinto.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: Donna Tabut

Volunteers are at the heart of SIPA. With a small staff of just 15 full- and part-time employees, we rely on volunteers to help us with everything from tutoring to administrative and clerical tasks. Giving of their valuable time and talent, these kind-hearted folks inspire us all. That is why, to thank them for all they do, we established a Volunteer Appreciation Day, held for the first time on June 3, 2003.

SIPA honored fifteen deserving volunteers for devoting more than 20 hours of service. One volunteer in particular, however, was Donna Tabut who went above and beyond by serving over 100 hours of her time in two months alone, demonstrating exceptional dedication to SIPA and the Los Angeles Pilipino American community.

In her own words, Donna testifies, "I heard about SIPA through a friend who had interned here. She told me it was a wonderful organization but I had no idea how true that was until I started volunteering." Donna continues, "The staff at SIPA made me completely comfortable. And the tasks I took on were truly rewarding."

A gifted individual, Donna volunteered to carry out countless jobs. She designed printed promotional materials for Historic Filipinotown Farmer's Market, which SIPA co-sponsored with FilAm ARTS this summer. She tutored youth in the elementary and middle afterschool enrichment programs. And she helped with a variety of administrative and clerical tasks as well. She also provided valuable assistance with the coordination of Filipino American Network (FAN), a new group of Pilipino American professionals that holds monthly mixers at various L.A. hotspots.

Search to Involve Pilipino Americans salutes Donna and all of our volunteers. We couldn't do it without you. Maraming Salamat Po!



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September @ SIPA

AFTERSCHOOL TUTORING is held every Monday and Thursday afternoon from 3:30pm to 5:30pm and open to any youth in need of any academic assistance.

THE SIPA READING CLUB meets Tuesdays from 2pm to 3:30pm. Children ages 7-14 participate in group-storytelling and share family and neighborhood tales through numerous creative writing exercises.

CULTURAL & MODERN DANCE LESSONS are held on Tuesdays from 4pm to 7pm. Youth are taught a variety of dances each week ranging from Tinikling to modern hip-hop routines.

LIKHA: PILIPINO ARTS & CRAFTS workshops take place on Wednesdays from 2pm to 3:30pm. Youth participate in a "hands-on learning experience" taught by local Pilipino artists.

OTHER ACTIVITIES are held Fridays from 3pm to 6pm. SIPA youth participate in a variety of recreational events organized by program staff. Such activities include "Movie Night," swimming, and off-site field trips to museums, and Southern California amusement parks.

TEMPLE GATEWAY YOUTH SPORTS LEAGUE basketball games tip off every Saturday from 9am to 12noon @ King Middle School. Watch local high school youth compete for the coveted TGYSL trophy.

For more information on SIPA youth activities, please call Lolit Lledo, Program Manager @ (213) 382-1819.

Special Events

The Association for the Advancement of Filipino American Arts & Culture (FilAm ARTS) presents the **12TH ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF PHILIPPINE ARTS AND CULTURE**, "HARMONY," from September 6 to 7 at Pt. Fermin in beautiful San Pedro. For more information, please call FilAm ARTS at 213-389-3050.

The Filipino American Library **SPIRIT AWARDS DINNER BENEFIT GALA 2003** is set for Saturday, October 4 at 6pm in the Crystal Ballroom of the Millennium Biltmore Hotel. For more information, call (213)382-0488 or www.filipinoamericanlibrary.org.

Save-the-Date: **SIPA 32ND ANNIVERSARY AWARDS AND BENEFIT DINNER**, Saturday, May 1, 2004. More details to come.

Meet the SIPA Staff



(Seated L to R) Director of Development & Communications Peter Corpus, Director of Programs & Services Teresa Vallente, Executive Director Joel Jacinto, and Director of Administration Dorothy Gamoning. (Standing L to R) Community Educator Olivia Dimayuga, AmeriCorps*VISTA Development & Communications Coordinator John Paul Capulong, AmeriCorps*VISTA Volunteer Coordinator Hannah Nacu, Outreach Specialist Marysol Lopez, Case Manager Fred Payo, Youth Activities Specialist Melinda Masa, Program Manager Lolita Lledo, Director of Finance Mina Ladlad, Receptionist Nancy Norris, and Business Development Specialist Julie Orquiza.