



Banaag

The *Banaag* Award is conferred on Filipino individuals or associations for their contributions which have significantly benefited a sector or advanced the cause of overseas Filipino communities.

A W A R D E E S

Marilou S. Chin

Fidel M. Escurel
Qatar

Kapit-bahayan Co-operative Ltd.
Australia

Rodrigo B. Maristela
Germany

Philippine Society of Mechanical Engineers
– Central Region, Saudi Arabia
Saudi Arabia

**Philippine Nurses Association of
Metropolitan D.C., Inc.**
United States of America



PHILIPPINE NURSES ASSOCIATION OF METROPOLITAN D.C. INC.

United States of America

It is an honor for a country as small as the Philippines to be named an empire of care mainly because of its immense Filipino nurse labor force that is practically present in all of the world's continents. In the US, and elsewhere in the globe, Filipino nurses are highly prized because they can speak English fluently, are trained in state of the art and modern medicine, and enjoy a reputation for their tender loving care, treating patients as if they are real family members.

But it wasn't always an easy road for Filipino nurses, especially when they first migrated to countries like the US. Being foreign graduates, they need to pass stringent nursing licensure examinations before they could practice their profession.

In 1971, a small group of Filipino nurses led by Ms. Tess Sanchez Cauterrucci formed the Philippine Nurses Association of Metropolitan DC. (PNAMDC), primarily to assist newly arrived Filipino nurses in their area and help them pass the examinations. The association developed a board review curriculum and hired credential reviewers in preparation for the state board examinations. Upon receiving approval of the curriculum from the Nursing Boards of the District of Columbia, Maryland, Florida and Virginia, PNAMDC started to offer review classes to all foreign graduate nurses in preparation for the state boards for a minimum fee of \$5 per subject. It became instrumental in the review courses which most of the time boasts of a hundred percent passing rate in the board examinations.

After more than four decades, PNAMDC which is now part of the Philippine Nurses Association of America, still continues to thrive based on its commitments and fellowship, and under the present leadership of Ms. Lorna Imperial Seidel. PNAMDC's milestones and accomplishments as an association is enriched by the dedication of its past and present officers who maintain its mission to uphold the positive image and welfare of its constituent members, promote professional excellence and contribute to significant outcomes to healthcare and society.

In 2001, PNAMDC was instrumental in the elimination of the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS) examination for licensed practicing Filipino nurses from other states seeking endorsement to practice in the District of Columbia. In 1995, PNAMDC collaborated with the PNAA in seeking legislation in the extension of H-1A visas to foreign educated nurses. As a result of this concerted lobbying efforts, a bill was passed averting the mass layoff of nurses mostly employed in long-term care facilities. The association also provides a comprehensive orientation program on integration in the US and assistance to job placements for the newly arrived nurses. It also launched a wellness initiative for the members, which includes dance exercise and fun run.

PNAMDC further extended their scope of involvement in civic engagement by holding conferences and trainings to improve the nurses' skills and professional excellence, inter-agency collaboration, and conduct of civic activities and humanitarian missions for the less privileged Filipinos in the US and the Philippines. The organization also initiated a health-screening program serving the local community of Washington, DC. It provides free health screening, first aid service and flu shot vaccinations to low income senior citizens. It also organizes health fairs, in partnership with other organizations.

As of 2015, PNAMDC has conducted a total of 13 medical, surgical and dental missions to the Philippines, which provided free healthcare services and medication to more than 50,000 indigent patients. These missions were conducted in underserved areas in Zambales, Ilocos Sur, Leyte, Cebu, and Misamis Oriental. The association also provided relief goods for the victims of Super Typhoon Haiyan. Remarkably, with the grant it received from the Philippine Humanitarian Coalition Supporting Orphans for the Prevention of Human Trafficking, PNAMDC was able to adopt and assist in the education of four children who became orphans in the aftermath of the typhoon.

In 2015, PNAMDC embarked on its new global educational outreach program in collaboration with Liceo de Cagayan University in Cagayan De Oro City for the academic development and clinical practice of their nursing students.

PNAMDC has come a long way and has evolved in terms of providing services which was recognized thru the awards they have received – 2009 Global Geny Lopez Jr. Bayaning Pilipino Award and 2014 PNAA Transformation Award.

In conferring the Banaag Award to the Philippine Nurses Association of Metropolitan D.C. Inc., the President recognizes its exemplary services in helping Filipino nurses be integrated in Metropolitan D.C., and philanthropic spirit in helping thousands of underprivileged individuals and families in the United States of America and the Philippines.



2016 Presidential Awards for Individual and Organizations Overseas Awarding Ceremony
19 December 2016 | Malacañang Palace

