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# INtouch

The Official Publication of Philippine Nurses Association of New Jersey, Inc (PNANJ, Inc.)

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SPRING 2007

## PNANJ Celebrates 30th Annual Dinner-Dance and Awards Night

Belle M. Villafuerte, RN, MSN, CNA-BC



The grand celebration of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Philippine Nurses Association of New Jersey (PNANJ) was held on October 13, 2006 at the Marriott Liberty Newark and was a huge success. The theme "Celebrating our Journey: Migration, Acculturation, and Achievements," was very fitting for the occasion. After the welcome address of our current president Susan Castor, Rosario May Mayor, gave the PNA presidential greetings. Dr. Dula Pacquiao, EdD, RN, CTN, helped us capture the litany of experiences in providing us the one meaningful theme statement that we adopted for this gala event.

PNANJ presented their C.A.R.E. awards to individuals who have proven their excellence in their chosen fields of nursing. Last year's Administration C.A.R.E Awardee is Belle M. Villafuerte, RN, MSN, CNA-BC. Clinical Practice Staff Nurse is Arturo Eijansantos, RN, BSN, CCRN, and Advance Practice is Teresa De Peralta, MSN, RN, APRN-C. Scholarships were awarded to Melvin Carrillo, RN, BSN-BC, as Graduate student, and Adrienne Sumallo received the Undergraduate Scholarship Award. The AETNA/ NCEMNA Scholarship awardee is Sherrie Corcuera Bragg, BS, RN.



Atlantic/Cape May County Sub-chapter inservice.



Meet the Executive Board and Advisory Board

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- May 19, 2007**  
2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Leadership Workshop  
UMDNJ, Newark  
Susan Castor • [suecastor@yahoo.com](mailto:suecastor@yahoo.com)
- May, 2007**  
Philippine Cuisine  
Robert Wood Johnson Hospital  
Teresa de Vries
- May, 2007**  
Health Fair - Annual Filipino Heritage Day Parade  
Veteran's Park, Bergenfield  
Belle Villafuerte • [bvillafuerte@bergenregional.com](mailto:bvillafuerte@bergenregional.com)
- June 3, 2007**  
Phil. Independence Day Committee  
(PIDC) Parade • New York  
<<http://www.pidci.org>>[www.pidci.org](http://www.pidci.org)
- June 9, 2007**  
Ocean County Founder's Day Celebration  
Toms River, New Jersey  
Beth Campos • 732-286-2630
- June 10, 2007**  
Passaic PIDC Parade and Festival  
Passaic, New Jersey
- June, 2007**  
Management of a Stroke Victim  
Robert Wood Johnson Hospital  
Teresa de Vries
- July 11-15, 2007**  
28th PNA Annual National  
Convention - PNA, California  
[philippinenursesaa.org](http://philippinenursesaa.org)
- July 16, 2007**  
Deadline - Submission of Applications  
CARE & SCHOLARSHIP AWARD
- August 12, 2007**  
PNANJ Annual Summer Picnic  
& General Membership  
Monmouth County Sub-chapter  
Marietta Datar or Mense Miranda
- August 18-19, 2007**  
Health Fair - Philippine Fiesta  
Meadowlands Exposition Center • Secaucus, NJ  
Darlene Borromeo or Miles Dumapit
- September 21, 2007**  
31st Annual PNANJ Dinner & Awards Night  
Marriott Hotel • Liberty International Airport, NJ  
Marley Nicolas
- TBA**  
Post Conference Executive  
Board Meeting  
Susan Castor - [suecastor@yahoo.com](mailto:suecastor@yahoo.com)
- Oct. 12, 13 & 14, 2007**  
EASTERN REGIONAL CONFERENCE  
Hosted by PNA Delaware  
[philippinenursesaa.org](http://philippinenursesaa.org)
- October, 2007**  
Halloween Party Fund Raising  
Middlesex County  
Teresa de Vries
- DATES TO REMEMBER**  
**May 15 • June 19 • July 17 • Sept. 18**  
**• Oct. 16 • Nov. 20 • Dec. 7**  
NJ Board of Nursing Regular Meeting  
Time: 9:00 am to 1:00 pm  
Contact: Leo Felix Jurado at [ljurado@ccm.edu](mailto:ljurado@ccm.edu)

# From the desk of the President

## The Best of 2006

Taking a look back and reviewing the year, we can reflect on the accomplishments and achievements of all the members of PNANJ. I believe that we have made big strides and progress towards our success for the organization's future. Our membership which reached a high of 836 due to a handful of leaders who took time to bring the team together are our valuable assets. We also shared a common goal to uphold the image and foster the welfare of Filipino-American nurses in New Jersey as a professional group. Our success is attributed to its openness and willingness applying changes as needed. The increase in attendance and participation on every Executive Board meeting, membership meetings and all six educational sessions, were positive signs in moving forward to a preferred future of PNANJ. The launching of the Mentorship Program sponsored by Western Union has contributed to PNANJ having the highest membership chapter in PNAA. It enabled us to recruit and retain more members.

Building on the many achievements of this past year, we look to the future with determination to continue expanding our membership throughout the state by reaching out to other counties and creating more subchapters. The Membership drive campaign are rewarded to members for bringing in new recruits. Winners will be



Susan G. Castor RN, MSN, CCRN

recognized during our annual Spring Conference on April 21, 2007.

Leadership Development workshop, revival of our newsletter, "In Touch" and revitalization of PNANJ's website are some of the biggest accomplishments that I can be proud of. Our past presidents, especially Nelson Tuazon and Leo Felix Jurado never cease to amaze us by continuously adding milestone to the history of the PNAA, having been elected to the highest positions at the New Jersey Board of Nursing

Looking ahead in the year 2007, there is a line of quality educational offerings that will be hosted at each subchapter.

We are so excited to share all these benefits to all our members and I look forward to an amazing year for all.

Sincerely,  
Susan G. Castor

## Annual Report • April 2006- March 2007

### PNANJ Goals 2004-2006

#### GOAL # 1 MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The viability of PNANJ depends largely on the long term commitments and contributions of its members. PNANJ recognizes that members are instrumental to the growth and achievement of its goals. Maintaining positive image and enhancing the membership benefits are essential to recruitment and retention of members.

- Recruitment of qualified members throughout the year. Increased membership by over 90% from 420 to 836 members for 2006.
- Instituted individual permanent membership ID number and laminated membership card of lifetime members.
- Expedited the membership application process and mailed membership ID between 3-7 days.

- Establishment of Atlantic/Cape May County subchapter with 110 new members.
- Revival of the Mentorship Program and provided seven Educational inservices hosted by Middlesex, Somerset, Ocean County, Morristown, Monmouth, Essex and Atlantic/Cape May subchapters with extremely high turnout in each seminar and each received excellent evaluations.
- Scholarship awarded to Mel Carrillo, MSN student and Adrienne Sumallo, BSN student.
- Recognized members for their significant achievements and contributions in the fields of clinical nursing (Arturo Eijansantos), administration (Belle Villafuerte), and advanced practice nursing (Teresa De Peralta) at the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner Dance and CARE Awards Night last October 13, 2006.
- Recognized Dula Pacquiao Research (PNAA CARE) Awardee, Sherrie Corcuera – AETNA/NCEMNA Scholar (MSN), Leo- Felix Jurado – AETNA/NCEMNA Scholar (PHd) and newly elected 2006- 2008 PNAA President-elect, Darlene Borrromeo, PNAA Awards Committee Chair and Susan G. Castor, PNAA – Circle of President Eastern Regional Liaison Officer.
- Developed the Member get a Member recruitment initiative policy and procedure.
- Participated in the PNAA National Convention in Boston, and in the Eastern Regional Conference in Baltimore with highest number of chapter delegates.
- Revived the "IN TOUCH" newsletter and upgraded the PNANJ website to improve communication with members.

#### GOAL #2 LEADERSHIP AND COUNTY SUBCHAPTER DEVELOPMENT

Leaders take charge in the day-to-day operation of the organization. Building a stronger foundation is of vital importance to be an authentic leader. Strength is in numbers. PNANJ embraces the formation of county subchapters.

- Presented the first Leadership Development Workshop in May. It was designed to provide comprehensive orientation of all the PNANJ Executive Board and officers

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Leo Jurado, PhD (c), RN, CNA, APN, C – Advisory Board of PNANJ is the newly elected President of the NJ Board of Nursing
- Nelson Tuazon, MSN, Med, MBA, FACHE, CNA – Advisory Board of PNANJ received the ONENJ Impact Award the highest award bestowed to an individual. He was also recently promoted as Senior VP/ CNO at East Orange General Hospital.
- Rosemarie D. Rosales BSN, RN, MPA, CCRN –PRO of PNANJ – received APIC certification. She was also inducted in the EMERALD Who's Who for Health Care Professionals.
- Ronnie Dato, MSN, RN, CRNI –Asst. Treasurer of PNANJ – received certification in Infusion Therapy.
- Amor Castro MA, RNC – Advisory Board of PNANJ – was selected as Retired Certified Nurse Ambassador by ANCC. She is the first Filipino-American to achieve this distinction.
- Rebecca Graboso, MSN, CCRN, APN, C – Board Member of PNANJ, recipient of Performance Award in the International Stroke Conference in San Francisco for her abstract.
- Darlene Borrromeo, BSN, RN, BC, FACDONA - was inducted to the Beta Nu Delta Nursing Society as its honorary member during the 1st NDINAN Nursing Symposium held at the AVR of College of Nursing, Notre Dame of Dadiangas University, Philippines, on April 03, 2007.
- Belle Villafuerte, MSN, RN, CNA-BC- won the Director of the year award from New Jersey Nursing Directors Association.
- Beth Campos, MSN, RNC, Larnie Dosono, BSN, RN and Jonathan Gapilango, MSN, RN, OCN - Clinical Instructors for LPN Program at Pinelands School of Practical Nursing.
- Monaliza Gaw, MSN, RN– Member – promoted as Clinical Educator at East Orange General Hospital & Allied Health, Inc.
- Joel Jacalan RN, - VP Middlesex County Subchapter – Promoted as Head Nurse on One Tower, Robert Wood Johnson Medical Center.
- Maribeth Tecson, BSN, RN – promoted as Assistant Director of Patient Care at Community Medical Center.
- James Herrada MSN, RN – Member – promoted as Director of Emergency Services at East Orange General Hospital.
- The following Associate members were promoted at East Orange General Hospital: Gertrude Schall, MSN, RN, Denise Smith, RN, MS, CNA, CNLC, Harriet Sarkodie, MSN, RN & Dawn Zimmerman, MSN, RN – Clinical Educators and Aldyth Stanford, RN – Infection Control Coordinator.
- Celeste Wayne - promoted to Assistant Professor at the County College of Morris.

The following PNANJ- Monmouth County Subchapter members were nominated for Riverview Medical Center Nurse Excellence for 2006:

- Orly Gimotea, RN, BSN- Inpatient Behavioral Health Unit

- Myrna Abetria- Ramas, RN, BSN- Emergency Department
- Jeanette del Rosario, RN, BSN- Stroke Unit
- Mike Hibionada, RN, BSN, Stepdown- Telemetry

The following subchapter members attained the highest Clinical Ladder as Nurse Scholars, Riverview Medical Center, Red Bank, NJ in 2006:

- Glynda Daradar, RN, BSN- Stroke Unit
- Rocel Besa, RN, PhD, Stroke Unit
- Juliet Urbano, RN, BSN- Stroke Unit

## Two PNA members featured in 2007 Men in Nursing Calendar.



The Institute for Nursing celebrated their "Men in Nursing" Gala last December 6, 2006. The 18 month calendar was developed to spotlight a group of professionals here in New Jersey. There were 150 men who applied from different hospitals and nursing schools, 18 were selected. Gerald Gutierrez is employed by Capital Health System and has been a nurse for 18 years. Cezar Dumago RN, APRN, is an advance Practice Nurse at Morristown Memorial Hospital. Congratulations!

### 2007 Membership Report

Active Lifetime	87
Inactive Lifetime-	25
Active 2007	436
Active 2008	222
Active 2009	4
Active Honoraries	17
2006 Expired members	137

### Membership by Subchapter Counties

•Atlantic/Cape May	110	•Bergen	64
•Essex	40	•Union	8
•Middlesex	106	•Monmouth	55
•Morris	32	•Ocean	118
•Passaic	27	•Somerset	36
•MAL	170		

Total Active Members - 766

# Giving back to our Homeland - Changing the lives of People through GK

Cynthia Dayrit-Demetillo and Roberto Demetillo

There's a feeling of satisfaction when one receives gifts during special occasions, such as birthdays and holidays. But this feeling is insignificant compared to the joy and happiness felt by the gift-giver, especially when the gift is shared with sincerity and love. In November 2006, PNANJ had just done that-shared a special gift to the poorest of the poor.

PNANJ, under the able leadership of Susan Castor and the PNANJ Executive Board, donated \$2,400 (for 2 houses) to ANCOP (Answering the Cry of the Poor) Foundation USA, a 501 (c)3 non-profit organization that is considered the resource and promoter of a movement called "Gawad Kalinga" (GK). Gawad Kalinga (means "to give care") is "an alternative solution to the blatant problem of poverty not just in the Philippines but in the world. GK's vision for the Philippines is a slum-free, squatter-free nation through a simple strategy of providing land for the landless, homes for the homeless, food for the hungry and as a result providing dignity and peace for every Filipino" ([www.gawadkalinga.org](http://www.gawadkalinga.org)). Holistically speaking, GK is more than just building houses for the poorest of the poor. Providing a decent home is just the beginning of the transformation of the people and the community. The goal of this movement is to help the poorest of the poor and give back their dignity. It is a unique program of value formation and sharing and giving sweat equity to acquire a home. To give a house to anyone is simple and a house can easily be just a structure. But, with Gawad Kalinga, the recipient needs to be transformed and has to agree to have a "change of heart and life". Each recipient has to provide physical labor to the building of the houses of their respective community. The recipient also undergoes a period of value formation, which includes a commitment to refrain from vices such as gambling and drinking. These inapt activities are prohibited by the Kapitbahayan Association, a group composed of house recipients, which is responsible for the overall management of the community. The thrust of GAWAD Kalinga is provide a "middle class environment for the poorest of the poor, give them middle class dreams and aspiration ... and they will have to work for it" as the director of GK, Tony Meloto, envisioned it.

One thing we've learned from working for ANCOP and GK is the many faces of the generous "heroes" that ANCOP had acquired through the years. They are called "Partners" and "Advocates". A number of these people are considered "well-off" in life. Some are ordinary people like us, working hard to make a living. What unites us all is the willingness to give and share whatever resources we have to those who are less fortunate, whether financially or some types of services or volunteerism. We all have one goal- to put an end to poverty, to end slum community, to give land to the landless, homes for the homeless and food for the hun-

gry, and to take care of our fallen brethren in a way that CHRIST took care of us.

Last January, we went home to the Philippines and visited several GK sites. We were amazed by the "transformation" in life of the recipients of the GK houses. We were also astounded by their accomplishments and how the GK assisted them in building new lives. These people are so grateful that they were given the chance to live decently and with hope for the future. They attribute this from the GK donations that are flowing from all over the globe. The sense of fulfillment and pride for their new life is so obvious and are reflected in their daily lives. They know that they worked hard in "sweat equity" to acquire their home and there is a new sense of pride that you can see from the way they dress and the way their houses are kept. They are so willing to share the small amount of food that they have on the table. There is a sense of community belongingness, pride and protectiveness—"these belongs to us"! The GK kapitbahayan spirit is alive in all of them. When we witness their lifestyle, we saw such simplicity in their lives. The children in the community are well kept, clean and well behaved and most of all, the children are regularly attending schools. There is a future change. As a visitor to this community that was established by Gawad Kalinga, we know that we were transformed. We were able to confirm that what we are doing, as GK volunteers and advocates, is a worthwhile calling. It is so pleasing to see and a blessing to validate the goodness of people through the eyes of people with "new hope" in life.

PNANJ, is now a GK advocate! Our vision is to build a GK community named after our association. It is not a dream...It is very possible that we can start building 30-50 houses and have our own, PNANJ-sponsored GK site! We invite you to join us in helping the poorest of the poor and in rebuilding our beloved native land, the Philippines!

There is much information that we want to share with you regarding the numerous villages that have already been established and other information regarding ANCOP Foundation, USA ([www.ancopusa.org](http://www.ancopusa.org)) and Gawad Kalinga([www.gawadkalinga.org](http://www.gawadkalinga.org)). Please contact us via email at [bombet29@comcast.net](mailto:bombet29@comcast.net) and [cdemetillo@comcast.net](mailto:cdemetillo@comcast.net). God bless!

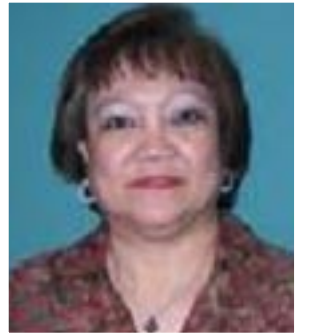
**Share your articles and news.**  
(promotion, achievements, announcements)  
**We want to know! It will be published in an upcoming issue of "In Touch" newsletter.**



## SUPPORT OUR OWN

Belle Villafuerte RN, MSN, CNA-BC

Rosemarie Rosales BSN, MPA, RN, CCRN



I recently took a trip to the Philippines after over 35 years of absence. I came to the United States in 1971 and did all my high school and college schooling here. (BV)

As a nurse who came to this country 28 years ago, I know how it feels to be an outcast, even to the point of being singled out in a unit or in a room. We can only make things better and not make it worst. Let us not forget our past.

Belle and I are products of cultural migration but it does not stop there. We ventured like other Filipino nurses, and we are fortunate

enough to be involved in PNANJ. We always have to embrace what we can offer to our colleagues and we can best do this by being involved in this organization. I have been a member since 1990 and have no regrets. Every year is a challenge we face especially with the migration of Filipino Nurses here in the US. Our organization with our mother organization PNAA, has helped materialize the removal of CGFNS in New Jersey and the Philippines becoming an NCLEX site. These are just a few of the many accomplishments our organization has achieved.

Our organization has a lot to offer to its members, like giving educational offerings every other month with provision of CEU's at a very low cost. We have our annual national

convention in the spring, picnic in the summer and CARE and Scholarship awards and dinner dance in the fall. These are just a few of the perks you can avail as a member of this organization. Your accomplishments are recognized and published in the newsletter and discounted rates at educational offerings. We currently have over 700 members and have instituted a "Member get a Member Campaign" initiative to reward members for recruiting them to the organization.

**"WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER"**  
Our success is your success!

### Annual Report

*Continued from Page 2*

from each subchapter. Historical highlights and By-laws of the association were presented. Robert's Rule of Order and responsibilities of key officers have been reviewed. This program will be offered annually and 2<sup>nd</sup> presentation is on May 19, 2007 at UMDNJ.

- Distributed PNANJ Information Handbook to every EB and subchapter officers.
- Inducted newly elected officers of Ocean County, Monmouth, Somerset, Morristown and Atlantic/Cape May County subchapters.
- Executive Board meetings were held almost every month to assess individual and organization's strength and weaknesses, celebrate accomplishments.
- Provided guidance, advice, and directions on matters related to the formation and revitalization of county subchapters
- Supported the goals and initiatives of subchapters through provision of available services and resources.

- PNANJ Annual Picnic and General Membership Meeting was hosted and organized by Bergen County subchapter at Darlington County Park in Mahwah, NJ.
- GOAL #3: PARTNERSHIPS AND ALLIANCES WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS**  
Maximize the visibility of PNANJ. Explore opportunities for leaders and members to engage and participate in the activities and programs of other organizations.
- Collaborative partnership with New Jersey State Nurses Association (NJSNA), National Federation of Filipino American Associations (NAFFAA), Asian American Association for Human Services (AAHS), Organization of Nurse Executive (ONE).
- Participated in the celebration of Philippine Independence Day both in New York and New Jersey through the collaboration with other agencies and organizations.
- Continue to support the Poverty Alleviation Project sponsored by the Philippine Consulate Office.

- Donated \$2,400.00 to Gawad Kalinga for 2 houses. Monetary donations to victims of Typhoon Reming.
- Highest number of delegates to PNAA Annual Convention in Boston, Massachusetts and 9th Eastern Conference in Baltimore, Maryland.
- GOAL #4: MAINTAIN FINANCIAL STABILITY**  
PNANJ strives to generate funds to support scholarship and educational initiatives and to sustain its operation. Our goal is to explore avenues to generate revenues from non-due sources.
- A \$10,000 Mentoring Program grant, "Mentoring, Leadership Development and Empowerment of Filipino Nurses in New Jersey" was awarded by Western Union. Through this grant we were able to offer educational program at low cost.
- 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner-Dance Celebration was a huge success. There was an increase in number of sponsorships and attendees.
- Each subchapter organized their own fundraising events.

# Mentoring, Leadership Development and Empowerment of Filipino-American Nurses in New Jersey

*A mentoring program by the Philippine Nurses Association of New Jersey, supported by a grant from Western Union.*  
By Jovita Solomon-Duarte & Leo-Felix Jurado

In the October 2006 issue of In Touch, an overview and goals of the mentoring program made possible through a financial grant from Western Union was published. To revisit that article, it was indicated that the first two programs hosted by Somerset County and Ocean County subchapters were attended by more than 120 nurses.

Since October 2006 to March 2007, four other PNANJ sub-chapters hosted mentoring programs which drew approximately 180 nurses. Morris County under the leadership of Miles Dumapit hosted the program entitled "Motivating and Preparing Future Leaders" on October 28, 2006; Monmouth County led by Marietta Datar chose "Career Transition" on January 6, 2007; Essex County coordinated by Mae Guzman hosted the program entitled "Heal Thyself, Physically, Mentally, Financially" on February 5<sup>th</sup>; and the newly formed Atlantic-Cape May County

subchapter led by Fe Eguaras hosted the program: The Nurse as a Manager of Care: "Leadership and Critical Thinking are Basic Tools" on March 3, 2007.

To date, more than 300 members and non-members benefited from the mentoring programs offered by PNANJ, Inc., with overwhelmingly favorable evaluations from the participants.

The last mentoring program is slated on May 19, 2007. For more details about this program, log on to PNANJ, Inc. website at: [www.pnanj.org](http://www.pnanj.org) or contact any of the following:

Susan Castor MSN, RN, CCRN  
2006-2008 President, PNANJ, Inc.  
[suecastor@yahoo.com](mailto:suecastor@yahoo.com).

Jovita Solomon- Duarte, MSN, RN, CCRN  
PNANJ, Inc. Mentoring program Grant Manager  
Chair, Education and Practice Committee  
[rduarte@comcast.net](mailto:rduarte@comcast.net)

Leo Felix Jurado PhD (c), RN,CNA, APN,C.  
PNAA, President Elect  
PNANJ adviser  
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## Reflections from a PNANJ Insider

Majuvy Sulse MSN, RN, CCRN, CNE



In the 1990's when I was working with members of the PNANJ, I did not fully understand what the organization was all about. Except for an attendance at a spring convention, I never got involved in any of the organization's activities. While at Kean University in 2004, I met Nini Jurado, then

President of PNANJ. She encouraged our group to be members of PNANJ. Without hesitation, I signed up for one-year membership. This time I attended seminars sponsored by PNANJ. It was on those occasions that I met colleagues. The networking, educational offerings and socio-cultural activities had a tremendous impact on my personality. Barely 2 years in active membership, there is much I need to say about this great organization.

- PNANJ is about OPPORTUNITY- PNANJ provides opportunity for networking, collaboration, and participation in community health and socio-cultural programs.
- PNANJ is about EMPOWERMENT- PNANJ believes in the

power of the individual and creates opportunities to help people succeed.

- PNANJ is about FAMILY & HERITAGE- PNANJ promotes unity to uphold & preserve Filipino-American nurses.
- PNANJ is about INNOVATIONS & SHARED SUCCESS- Through its great leaders, PNANJ is proud to claim important milestones and share its success with everyone.
- PNANJ is about DOING WHAT IS RIGHT
- PNANJ is committed to doing what is right simply because it is.

The challenge - GET INVOLVED! GET EMPOWERED! BE PART OF OUR PNANJ FAMILY!

**THE PHILIPPINE NURSES  
ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY  
HONORS NURSES  
for  
NATIONAL NURSES WEEK  
MAY 6-12, 2007**

## SUB-CHAPTER REPORTS

### Middlesex Sub-chapter

Teresa de Vries, BSN, RN, CCRN

The Halloween fund raising party last October 2006 was well attended at the Radisson Hotel. We also had a costume contest on the scariest and best dressed couple. There was a dance act by our vice president and her husband. This is part of our fund raising for a deserving nursing student in the Philippines. Our goal was to raise about \$4,000.00 for a four-year nursing course in the Philippines. These will include tuition and books. The nursing student will be selected from one of the Alma Mater of our Middlesex officers. We have set our qualifications for deserving students. We had our dance event last February 24, 2007 to focus on women's wellness program in the hospital. It was represented by exhibitors and speakers from different services. Our special guest was Mario Lopez from dancing with the stars, entertained us all evening. Our chapter has a target goal of 150 members by the end of this year.

### Monmouth County Sub-chapter Hosts Educational Presentation

Marietta Datar, BSN, RN – Subchapter President

Monmouth County Subchapter ushered in the year for the Western Union grant series of educational presentation by the PNANJ. Titled Career Transition in Nursing the 3.5 CEU course held at the Borden Auditorium at Monmouth Medical Center on January 6, 2007 was presented by two dynamic speakers whose resumes were by itself a testimony of their expertise in the chosen topic of discussion; Mr. Nelson Tuazon and Dr. Carolyn Zagury.

Breaking the Glass Ceiling presented by Mr. Nelson Tuazon outlined the process of preparing for the transition using the Q5 framework. Creating and implementing a reality oriented career plan based on the assessed professional assets, marketability and set goals was the highlight of his presentation.

Dr. Carolyn Zagury aptly followed the above discussion with her presentation of Career Alternatives: The Power in Nursing. In her presentation, she directed our focus once again to redefining nursing in relation to our careers, professional growth and personal well-being. She presented alternative jobs and positions in nursing as well as non-nursing that are out in the market for nurses to explore and consider. She also emphasized the importance of obtaining higher education, self-empowerment and determination as key to a successful career move.

Introspectively the some participants whose career ranges from 2 years to 30 years were one in saying that the

program helped them redirect their efforts in their pursuit of a different direction in their present careers. The Western Union grant whose aim was to mentor, develop leaders and empower the Filipino Nurses in NJ was awarded to PNANJ in 2006.

### Essex Sub-chapter

### Hosts Western Union Mentoring Program

Amelia Guzman, MS, RN, CCM

The Essex subchapter hosted a 3.5 contact hour educational presentation entitled "Heal Thyself: Physically, Mentally and Financially". It is one of a series of mentoring programs provided by an unrestricted grant from Western Union. It is one of the best attended seminar with 58 attendees. Tom Rutan, APN,C. of UMDNJ presented the American society's current health challenge- metabolic syndrome.

The NJ Board of Nursing President Leo Felix Jurado gave some insight on the BON's requirement on continuing education as a prerequisite for RN license renewal and career choices for higher education. On the financial side, CEO Paiyen Chung explained some financial concepts to get the nurse started on her way to financial freedom. Different retirement plans, educational plans and types of insurances were discussed. This program was coordinated by Rene Montero, President of Essex subchapter, Madelyn Yu, President elect of PNANJ and Mae Guzman, Co-chair of the Education Committee, PNANJ.

### Ocean County Sub-chapter

Beth Campos MSN, RNC

Ocean County subchapter is relentlessly renewing membership and recruiting new members. The subchapter has donated \$1000.00 to the Filipino Community Center, a project of Filipino organization alliance in Ocean County. This subchapter also contributed bags of food to Saint Joseph Food Drive in Toms River.

On June 15, 2007, we will host a dinner dance to recognize nurses who achieve clinical excellence in 5 clinical fields: Medical-Surgical, Critical Care, Emergency Department, Geriatric and Maternal and Child. The theme "Celebrating Clinical Excellence" will be held at Quality Inn in Toms River, NJ.

Invitations and nomination forms have been mailed to all subchapter members. Please nominate deserving candidates no later than May 15, 2007 and save the date for an educational seminar on September 8, 2007.



## Manila Should Not Have Gone Through All the Trouble to Get NCLEX Site

When the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) announced last month that Manila was finally selected as a new international NCLEX test site, one could just imagine the euphoria of those who worked so hard to pull this through. That it came in the aftermath of the June 2006 nurse exam leakage would seem a better reason to celebrate. The NCSBN had always put in question the Philippines's ability to protect the integrity of national tests. As our luck would have it, the RN test leakage happened. Those who worked to convince the NCSBN that the Philippines is worthy of an NCLEX test site deserve all the credit. They had been up against an establishment that seemed to put one barrier after another in setting up a Manila test site.

PNAA President May Mayor, President-elect Leo Jurado and Task Force NCLEX Chair Filipinas Lowery, along with Philippine government officials led by CFO Chairman Dante Ang, no less, trooped to Chicago to make their case before the NCSBN. It was a burden of proof they didn't have to take. If integrity was really the issue, other international test sites where large scale cheating also occurred should not have been chosen by the NCSBN before the Philippines. The Philippine government, PNAA and PNA should not have gone through all the trouble of campaigning for an NCLEX test site in the Philippines because it made absolutely no sense not to make Manila a test site. It is an undisputed fact that close to half of first-time NCLEX takers are from the Philippines. According to more recent estimates 9,000 Filipino nurses take the NCLEX yearly. In the meantime, the number of NCLEX takers from Canada, Mexico, India, South Korea and China trail far behind ours. So why did it take so long for the NCSBN to come to its senses? Why did it set up 17 other test sites everywhere else since it began international testing in January 2005? Why did London, U.K.; Seoul, South Korea; Hong Kong; Sydney, Australia; Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver in Canada; Frankfurt; Mumbai, New Delhi, Hyderabad, Bangalore and Chennai in India; Mexico City; Taipei, Taiwan; Chiyoda-ku and Yokohama in Japan all have their NCLEX test sites before the Philippines if close to a majority of the takers were Filipino RNs?

Why wasn't Manila selected as the first test site? The deliberate delay in setting up an NCLEX test site in Manila would be best understood if the public were aware of the certification process for foreign RNs who enter the US. First

of all, the RN certification process is unnecessarily costly, time-consuming and worse, duplicative. Foreign nurses have to undergo CGFNS certification in order to start the immigration process to the US. When their visa petitions are approved and they are eventually deployed to the US, foreign RNs still have to take the NCLEX and secure their state RN licenses to be able to practice their profession. On the other hand, foreign RNs who can afford to come to the US can take the NCLEX and skip the CGFNS certification altogether. This is because the NCLEX fulfills both the requirement for immigration and for the practice of the profession. Guess who would stand to lose if Filipino RNs took the NCLEX, instead of the CGFNS exam? Filipino RNs know only too well how costly it is to obtain a CGFNS certification. These circumstances inevitably beg another question— was NCSBN putting off the Manila test site as an accommodation to CGFNS? It is ironic that even if the understaffing of medical facilities in the US has reached critical levels, the US nursing establishment has laid out a veritable obstacle course for foreign RNs, with the CGFNS offering the most hurdles. Now that Filipino RNs would be able to take their NCLEX in Manila, CGFNS certification will most likely be rendered obsolete. But all is not lost for CGFNS.

As immigration laws would have it, foreign health professionals are required to obtain a Visa Screen Certificate, which is intended to prove that the health worker has the requisite knowledge, skill and English proficiency to work in the US. The Visa Screen is issued by the CGFNS. It is a separate legal requirement under the Immigration and Nationality Act, even as it is essentially the same certification as the CGFNS and the NCLEX. Weeks before the NCSBN Chicago meeting, the CGFNS floated the proposal to issue a blanket Visa Screen denial for all Filipino RNs who took the June 2006 nurse licensing exam. The timing was uncanny with doubts about "competence" being raised by both the NCSBN and the CGFNS. Are we about to see another hurdle for foreign RNs? We certainly hope not. If the NCSBN is quite satisfied with the handling of the RN test leakage that it agreed to the Manila test site, then there is no reason for the CGFNS to take a tougher stand against Filipino RNs. Filipino RNs are in demand worldwide, not just in the US. That wouldn't be the case if their competence as health professionals are in question, as the CGFNS seems to suggest.

## TOMATO

Madelyn Yu, RN, MSN, PNAANJ President-Elect



A fruit- oh yes, it's a fruit- but in the United States we treat the tomato like a vegetable. Thomas Jefferson grew tomatoes at Monticello back in 1781, but they did not really start to become popular here until after the Civil War. Now the tomato is the third most popular vegetable in the United States- after potatoes and lettuce.

Once called the Peruvian apple, the tomato is a member of the nightshade family. It originated in South America, and our name for it comes from the ancient Nahuatl name tomat. The French called it the love apple, and the Italians named it the golden apple because the first tomatoes were small yellow fruits. After the early Spanish explorers sent seeds to Naples, the Italians went crazy for tomatoes, and the rest- all the way down to pasta and pizza sauce- is history.

A really good tomato is sweet, tender, juicy, and except for the yellow varieties, a deep rich, red color. A great tomato is worth looking for. There must be a thousand varieties of tomatoes. Some of the most popular are Burpee

Big Boy, Early Beefsteak, Rutgers, Ramapo, Fireball and Jetstar.

Why all the dissertation on tomatoes? You see, some brave PNAANJ Executive Board members dared to join a friendly competition by the PNAANJ to become the biggest losers by May 2007. Several member states joined and true to their locales trumpeted their proud names. Ten brave men & women from the New Jersey chapter, proud of hailing from the Garden State, and prouder of its Jersey tomatoes, called themselves the Jersey Tomatoes and started to answer the challenge from the other PNAANJ chapters. Leo Jurado, Rene Montero, Madelyn Yu, Darlene Borrromeo, Rose Rosales, Susan Castor, Marley Nicolas, Eileen Espiritu, Majuvy Sulse and Theresa Domider called themselves the team to beat.

Every month since October of 2006, the team members have reported their own individual weights to team leader, Madelyn Yu, who promised confidentiality in holding this very important and sensitive information from each member. On the first two months of competition the Jersey Tomatoes have stayed "plump and juicy", as some members called themselves. Some lost a few pounds, some stayed the same, and not surprisingly, with the advent of the holidays, some gained some pounds.

Creative efforts are underway to lose those pounds. All in all, it is not only a good-natured friendly competition that PNAANJ has sponsored, but also promotes a very healthy lifestyle that most of us healthcare professionals teach but sometimes do not practice.

Here's to a Happy Healthy New Year! Go Jersey Tomato!

## Advance Magazine Features One Of Our Own

Mel Carrillo, BSN, RN, BC - President Bergen County Subchapter



The President of the PNAANJ's Bergen County Sub-Chapter, Mel A. Carrillo, RN, BSN, BC was recently featured in the cover story of Advance for Nurses magazine (January 8, 2007, Vol.7, No. 1). Mr. Carrillo is the Nurse Manager for Bariatric Surgery at Hackensack University Medical Center, Hackensack, NJ. Under his

leadership, the program was recently granted full level 1A certification as a Bariatric Surgical Center by the American

College of Surgeons. They are the 28<sup>th</sup> program in the country, and only program in New Jersey that has achieved Level 1A designation by the ACS.

In the cover story, "Big Changes: Transforming lives with Bariatric surgery", Carrillo talks about the lifestyle changes and emotional issues inextricably linked to bariatric surgical procedures. In addition, Carrillo addresses the need for obesity sensitivity training for health care workers and discusses the specific environmental concerns that need to be addressed by all health care facilities that care for the morbidly obese client. Educational concerns are also brought up by Carrillo, which was the focus of the cover page pictorial. Carrillo takes the reader through the process for bariatric surgery including candidate selection, pre-surgical screening, post-operative care, dietary changes and lifestyle changes.

**STAY CONNECTED**  
Send your updated address to  
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**MAKE THE MOST  
OF YOUR MEMBERSHIP.  
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## Career Transition-Hindrances or Challenge?

Meriam Canares, BSN, RN, CCRN



I was sitting on the examining table in a neurosurgeon's office when he told me; "Based on my findings your problem will get worse if you don't change career." As I was driving home, I was thinking, after 13 years in the critical care and 2 years in the cath lab, where will I go, which doesn't require lifting and moving heavy patients?

Looking back, in my nursing career, I still clearly remember my first job as an office/clinic nurse, then as a medical representative for 12 months, a staff nurse for 10 months, and settling into a company as an industrial nurse (occupational nurse) for about 3 years. At that time, everybody thinks I had the perfect job, with a decent salary compared to other types of nursing and a "less

stressful job". My job consisted of first aid treatment to the employees who got hurt in the job, referral to the doctors, and giving lectures on preventive health, which made me stay there for 3 years and even turn down a job opportunity to become a flight attendant for I was enjoying my job and also I was getting married at that time.

Approximately one year after passing CGFNS I left the Philippines to work in the emergency room of a New York State Hospital. I guess my first aid experience with burns and cuts was considered by the interviewer as an emergency experience, but I know it was not enough and I feel that I needed more experience in order to work in one of the busiest hospitals in Brooklyn, so I requested the manager to orient me to the Intensive Care Unit for a month and while I was on orientation in their ICU, they had review classes for ACLS (recently introduced training at that time) so I grab that opportunity, studied hard for it and got certified, which gave me the needed confidence to work in the emergency room. Two and a half years in the Emergency Room, when my son started school I went to the Philippines. While taking care of my child, and having a lot of

free time, I enrolled at the University of the Philippines for a masteral degree. I met a lot of deans, and chief nurses and was offered a job teaching senior students "Care of the Adult and the Aged".

After 2 years in the Philippines, I had the urge to go back to bedside nursing. I was offered a job in New Jersey as an ICU nurse, then became an ICU nurse educator, preparing the unit for the JCAHO visit, before transferring to the newly opened Cath Lab. I started having pains from wearing lead aprons all day. The experience was rewarding but I decided to look for another job after the pain had gotten worse. Looking back, I realized that career transition shouldn't be difficult to attain. Having ventured into different nursing opportunities, I am happily settled in a big pharmaceutical company as a safety data manager still using my basic knowledge and skills as a nurse.

My point is, take every opportunity as a challenge and arm yourself with knowledge and skills. Be actively involved in organizations which would boost your skills and open doors through networking. It will positively impact your decision and direction with your career transition. Good Luck!

## Advance for Nurses - Featured Story

Belle Villafuerte RN, MSN, CNA-BC

Advance for Nurses, February 5, 2007 published a feature story written by one of our Board of Directors. Belle Villafuerte RN, MSN, CNA-BC, also the President-Elect of the Bergen County Sub-chapter, wrote about a patient success story titled "Awakening- A second chance on life." In this article, she provides a heartwarming recount about a patient who came to the chronic ventilator unit at Bergen Regional Medical Center on a sunny day in May, tracheal and intubated, after sustaining a skull fracture, a pneumothorax, and left side body injury. "She was a mess" as the patient and her family recalled. By the time she went home in October, the staff's compassion and caring had changed her life forever. The story is an accounting of the patient's trials and success and her expressed gratitude to Virginia Tan, the Nurse Manager of the unit and her staff. Virginia is now an Associate Director of Nursing and is the Assistant Treasurer of the Bergen County Sub-Chapter. Belle Villafuerte is the Director of Nursing for Long Term Care Services at Bergen Regional Medical Center, Paramus, New Jersey.



Arturo Eijansantos - President PNANJ Passaic Sub-chapter.

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## Community Medical Center Receives National and Local Awards



Marley Nicolas, MSN, RN

On April 28, 2007 at the PNC Arts Center, Holmdel, New Jersey Community Medical Center will receive for three years in a row the NJ Sharing Network Top Tissue Donor Hospital Award, Most Donation after Cardiac Death for 2006, and a certificate for reaching the goal of 75% or higher conversion rate for 2006.

Last October 2006 the Medical Center received the Department of Health and Human Services Medal of Honor Award in recognition of their achievement of 75% or more organ donation rates.

Marley A. Nicolas, Organ Donation Liaison accepted the award on behalf of the hospital in New Orleans with Arbie Ramos.

As part of the hospital's campaign to increase awareness of the importance of Organ Donation and current trends and best practices, Marley has presented at the New Jersey Hospital Association (NJHA) and is featured at the hospital's orientation for all new physicians and nurses.

Marley has coordinated a continuing medical education (CME) program for physicians and offers continuing education for the hospital's nursing staff and employees.

In addition, a robust effort has been made to reach out to the public by offering informative presentations to the community, Toms River Regional Schools, and presence at health fairs sponsored by local banks, Ocean County Mall, and Ocean County Court House. She is available to any patient and/or family members who have questions about organ or tissue donations.

Marley is the Vice-President and chair of dinner and awards night of PNANJ and also the President of the Filipino American Association of Ocean County (FILAMA).

## Jovita Solomon-Duarte Appointed Diversity Coordinator for the School of Nursing at Thomas Edison State College



TRENTON, N.J. — Thomas Edison State College has appointed Jovita Solomon-Duarte, MSN, RN, CCRN, as diversity coordinator for the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grant, which was awarded to the School of Nursing.

The \$600,000 federal grant is being used to recruit and prepare minority nurse educators in online education and to develop a collaborative network of diverse nurse faculty members to enhance nursing programs nationwide. Solomon-Duarte's primary responsibilities include recruitment and selection of program participants (minority educators to be trained in online pedagogy); preparation and coordination of the annual distinguished lectureship; and development of an online minority nurse educator directory/database. In making the announcement, School of Nursing Dean Susan O'Brien, said, "Jovita has the kind of nursing experiences that we need to promote diversity in nursing — we are delighted to have her with us."

Solomon-Duarte is an active community nurse leader and educator. She is an adjunct faculty at Trinitas School of Nursing evening and weekend division; an executive board member and chairman, Education and Practice Committee of the Philippine Nurses Association of New Jersey (PNANJ); and vice president of Communications, Region 4, New Jersey State Nurses Association (NJSNA). "I'm surrounded by dedicated and passionate colleagues who are concerned about the future of nurses and nursing education," said Solomon-Duarte. "I'm very proud to be part of a great team."

Solomon-Duarte noted that she has a profound commitment to diversity and the unique needs of disenfranchised diverse populations. She is a past recipient of numerous academic and clinical awards, and a past scholar and mentee of the National Coalition of Ethnic Minority Nurses Association (NCEMNA).



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