FILIPINO MIGRANTS IN THE U.S.

The Philippines is among the top three migrant sending countries worldwide, with an estimated 9 to 10 million Filipino migrants scattered around the world. Of this number, around 4 million live in North America today.

Filipino migrants contribute significantly to both the Philippine and U.S. economies. In 2004, Filipino migrants sent at least $8.5 billion in remittances to the Philippines. In the U.S., Filipinos take on jobs, such as nurses, teachers, caregivers as well as business and household service sector jobs, to fill the significant manpower shortage in these sectors.

As newcomers in a foreign land, Filipino migrants face the difficulty of adapting to their new environment. Many of them are economic migrants who come to the U.S. without their family members. They are caught in backlogs in family-sponsored immigration and cannot reunite with their families for years, causing them distress and isolation. In instances where spouses and children are allowed to join Filipino migrant workers to the U.S., these family members are not permitted to find employment. Filipino physicians and other professionals encounter obstacles to their professional mobility, and accept jobs that do not match their training and background.

Filipino migrants who have adopted the U.S. as their home continuously face the challenge to be economically, culturally and socially equipped to integrate. They need to empower themselves in order to become positive contributors to their host country and in their country of origin. Such has always been the character of the Filipino diaspora to the U.S.

Migrant Heritage Commission (MHC), Inc.

Bringing people together to foster a culture of unity and service

Migrant Heritage Commission (MHC), Inc.

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LIVE A LIFE THAT MATTERS!

HELP /VOLUNTEER NOW & BE PART OF A WORTHY CAUSE !

MHC is a national, 501 (c)(3) tax exempt, service-oriented non-governmental organization. Donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law under Section 170 of the 501 (c) 3, Internal Revenue Code. MHC is also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under Sections 2055, 2106 or 2522 of the Code. For donations, please make checks payable to MHC and mail to the Virginia Office address.

EIN : 56-2618684

MHC Executive Board

3 EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

ARNEDO S. VALERA,ESQ. **JESSE A. GATCHALIAN**

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3 Executive Directors with

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MIGRANT HERITAGE COMMISSION, INC. (MHC)

***HONORING AND SERVING THE IMMIGRANTS ***

Bringing People together to foster a CULTURE of UNITY & SERVICE

MHC: A RESPONSE TO MIGRANTS' NEEDS

The MIGRANT HERITAGE COMMISSION, INC. is a response to recognize and preserve the cultural identity and rights of Migrants in the United States. The Migrant Heritage Commission was founded on 30 December 2005 to address the needs and issues confronting migrants, including in the U.S. MHC started as an NGO to undertake activities and programs recognizing the more than 100 years of sustained Filipino migration to the U.S. and highlighting the many achievements and significant contributions of Filipinos in the cultural, social, political and economic fabric of the United States. With other migrant communities availing of all year round MHC services and supporting MHC programs, it is being gradually expanded to include all migrant communities who are also faced with the same challenges of being active contributors to the United States. MHC primarily serves as a resource center, and has the following objectives:

To implement socio-economic integration programs that would help realize the potential of migrants and enable them to make more positive contributions to the U.S. and their respective motherlands.

To promote the migrants' knowledge and understanding about their human rights, and to encourage cultural diversity and respect for the dignity of migrants.

To help enhance cooperation among organizations and institutions, local and international, in their work for the rights of migrants and that of their families.

To promote the migrants' pride for their cultural heritage and identity.

To advocate for the protection of the fundamental human rights of migrants and their families, as enunciated in the United Nations Migrant Workers Convention, and other related International Human Rights Instruments and UN Resolutions on Migrants' Rights, and to provide services to migrants towards this end.

Under the banner "Honoring and Serving the Migrants," MHC embarks on projects recognizing and honoring immigrants, among which are the People's Mass, Fiesta Asia, People's Ball, Cultural and Solidarity Nights, Immigration Seminars & Immigrant Workers' Day Celebration/Int'l Migrant Heritage Festival. It initiated the Filipino Overseas Migrant Fund to assist migrants who are in dire need of financial assistance. It has collaborated with local and international institutions working in the field of migration and development. Since its inception, MHC has been holding events with record breaking attendance reflecting overwhelming support from the Fil-Am communities and other migrant communities.

MHC PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

- *LEGAL RESOURCE PROGRAM* – MHC works with volunteer lawyers to provide free legal services to immigrants , especially victims of abuse and domestic violence in relation to their immigration needs; handling of highly significant cases of migrants who are victims of illegal recruitment, discrimination, human trafficking, immigration detention cases and other forms of human rights violations. It also documents cases involving racial profiling & discrimination. MHC also provides daily legal consultation on current immigration laws and legal issues that impact on immigrants. MHC also works with government & non government institutions to pursue policy reforms that will promote the welfare of migrants.
- *HEALTH CARE RESOURCE PROGRAM* – Under this program, MHC provides health care resources & refers underinsured or uninsured immigrants requiring health care services to licensed physicians. Under this project, MHC helps provide free medical consultations, health screenings and conduct health expos through the cooperation of volunteer doctors, nurses, health care providers & similar agencies and/ or in partnership with other civic minded organizations.
- *SOCIO-ECONOMIC INTEGRATION PROGRAM* – Through this program, MHC aims to create a Financial Assistance Program meant for securing and improving the finances of low-income immigrants in Maryland, Virginia, and D.C.; provide free business and accounting classes ; conduct financial counseling; provide immigrants solid understanding of the laws governing their economic welfare; building a network of legal and financial experts who can guide clients through their economic troubles and, if necessary, create the support networks crucial to waging and winning clients'courtroom battles; partnering with local & national banks, cooperatives & other financial institutions to assist immigrants in establishing savings accounts and building credit.
- *CULTURAL RESOURCE & SUPPORT PROGRAM* – Under this program, MHC provides free consultation/artistic support and guidance to schools, other institutions & organizations. Through this program, MHC mobilizes community participation at high profile and significant U.S cultural events to increase visibility of the Philippines & the immigrant community to the American mainstream, to recognize the immigrant community's affinity with the American people and showcase the immigrants' rich cultural heritage (National Cherry Blossoms Festival, Fiesta Asia, America's National Day Parade, Asian Festivals, Dance DC Festival etc.) This program also seeks to establish a Cultural Resource Library that can be utilized by any institution, group or individual engaged in the promotion and preservation of immigrants' cultural and ethnic identity, and in promoting racial and ethnic diversity in the U.S.
- *THE FILIPINO OVERSEAS MIGRANT FUND* - is a special program designed to extend funeral assistance on the occasion of death of a Filipino migrant bereft of funds and without immediate relatives in the U.S.
- *RESEARCH, PUBLICATION AND INFORMATION PROGRAM* To broaden awareness about immigrant rights, MHC is the publisher of the MIGRANT HERITAGE CHRONICLE, a monthly publication of rights and issues affecting immigrants; organize public forums and seminars; provide resource speakers to ventilate migration issues; & conduct other public information activities. MHC also conducts research to support policy initiatives beneficial to immigrants.
- *NON-FORMAL EDUCATION/ SKILLS PROGRAM* – This program intends to equip Filipino migrants with practical knowledge and skills that would enable them to achieve personal, social and professional growth. Through the program, MHC conducts various seminars and trainings, such as on the rights and obligations of migrants and current trends on immigration laws and policies.
- *NETWORKING & OUTREACH PROGRAM* – MHC periodically undertakes projects in partnership with various local and international organizations. It supports charitable projects of partner organizations, as well as activities of several NGOs & associations in the U.S. and in other parts of the world. Under this program, the People's Mass, People's Ball and the Migrant Workers' Day / Int'l Migrant Heritage Festival are celebrated annually to honor outstanding migrants in the U.S. & to designate Envoys for UNITY AND SERVICE.

Be counted in 2010. It is important, easy and safe.