



PAGA MATTERS

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President's Message

Happy New Year to all friends and supporters of PAGA!

Another exciting and successful year has passed ... but what exactly do we at PAGA mean when we say that 2018 was successful?

Clearly the recent college graduations of two of our beneficiaries, both education majors, was a major success, for them, their families, and for PAGA. These young adults stayed the course and achieved an enviable goal with excellent prospects for future employment and financial independence as well as service to society. Congratulations to Kate Roque and Ashley Lopez - you will continue to be role models for the next generation of PAGA scholars!

PAGA's very reason for being is to enable success in our beneficiaries: "to build the intellectual ability, personality and productive skills of underprivileged Filipino-Amerasian children and accompany them on their journey to becoming meaningful, respected, and actively participating members of society".

And how does PAGA accomplish this success? Beneficiaries as young as early elementary students, and their parents, sign an annual letter of commitment to follow the PAGA program by availing of the seminars, focus groups, medical and dental checkups, summer workshops, and civic activities in addition to any financial support that our Social Workers have deemed appropriate.

PAGA becomes a support group and an extension of the family, sometimes for many years, as we

accompany the beneficiaries through their young lives, and through the completion of college or vocational training.

The PAGA program has been designed, implemented, and refined during many years of hands-on experience. It works well and achieves a successful outcome for the vast majority of our beneficiaries.

We are proud and excited to be serving 120 deserving young people today but would be excited to double or triple that number as the need is so much greater than our present staff capacity and services budget permits. There is also an encouraging (but costly) trend taking place - 21 of our beneficiaries are now in Senior High with college intentions, and 12 more are already enrolled.

Please tell your family, friends, and employers about PAGA - ask them to become members, sponsors, and donors, so that we can help bring success to more Filipino-Amerasian children! Refer them to our website, send them our newsletter, or connect with us on Facebook.

Thanks for your support, and here's to an even more exciting and successful 2019!

Best regards,



Terry Haas



God Bless Us, Everyone!


The Annual PAGA Christmas Celebrations once again brought joy and Holiday cheer, when it was held last December 8 at McDonald's Greenbelt for our Manila-based beneficiaries, and December 15 at McDonald's Dau for our Angeles-based beneficiaries.

Wearing their Santa hats, PAGA Chairman Frank Holz, president Terry Haas, Executive Director Deanna Bajar, trustees Benito Tan, Mike Bond, Lisa Pagkalinawan, and David Burgess from ARCADIS Design & Consultancy, distributed presents and

McDonald's gift certificates to the attendees at the Makati venue. Terry Haas, Mike Bond, Deanna Bajar, and this time with Ms. Erlinda Murphy, reprised their Santa roles at McDonald's Dau.

Aside from raffle prizes, each family also received a Christmas basket with 'Noche Buena' goodies. Clothing donations were also given to some of our beneficiaries.

A special treat was the appearance of Grimace and Birdie, who entertained everyone with a special dance number. Many took turns taking selfies with the mascots.



PAGA Christmas Celebration 2018

MAKATI CITY
DECEMBER 8



ANGELES CITY
DECEMBER 15



OUR HEARTFELT THANKS TO ALL OUR SPONSORS FOR BRINGING SMILES TO THE HEARTS OF ALL OUR BENEFICIARIES AND THEIR FAMILIES



Atty. Alonzo Ancheta • Theodore Awad • John Forbes • Linda Murphy • Lisa Pagkalinawan • Benito Tan

CASSANDRA'S JOURNEY

Former PAGA beneficiary Rhea Cassandra Sheryl Anne Santos, or simply Cassandra, works in the Relationship Management section of the Philippine National Bank.



Cassandra's journey to her present job was not an easy one, and it started when she was just seven years old helping her mother sell puto (rice cakes), bibingka and maja blanca around their Sta. Ana neighborhood in Manila.

Sandra, her mother, a second generation Filipino-Amerasian, was also a PAGA beneficiary, but lost her beneficiary status when, as a college freshman, she got married.

Her father only finished second grade so he had to work odd jobs to support his family. He was an ambulant vendor, pushing an ice cream cart or selling coconuts. He is now a pedicab driver and does house painting jobs on the side.

Because their family was often in financial straits, Cassandra's schooling was often interrupted. She recalls stopping at grade 3 and skipping grades 4 and 5. She took an aptitude test and was accelerated to Grade 6.

Cassandra became a beneficiary in high school when a younger brother was hospitalized and her mother sought financial assistance from PAGA.



While in college, Cassandra had to stop for a year when her mother got sick due to high blood pressure and she took over her work trimming bags that were sold to tourists in Boracay.

Cassandra and her mother Sandra

It was tedious work, but was grateful that it afforded her the chance to go to the island paradise.

It was in Boracay that she saw the wide gap between the lowly working class and those who were gainfully employed, that she began to appreciate the value of education, that it was the ticket to a better life. She swore to herself that she will go back to school to finish her college studies.

To defray expenses for her college education, Cassandra even accepted laundry work in their community.

Cassandra earned her degree in Public Administration from EARIST, the Eulogio Amang Rodriguez Institute of Science and Technology.

Her first job, a project hire at an insurance firm, lasted only a few months. Later an employment agency placed her at the savings department of the PNB.

After 5 months Cassandra took and passed an eligibility exam given by the bank and was absorbed in 2017. Cassandra attributes her good fortune that has come her way to PAGA.

"If not for PAGA, I would not be where I am now." More than the financial assistance, for which she is very grateful for,, Cassandra values the trainings and personal development programs that she received from PAGA.

Two siblings, Judy Ann ad John Centennial, are still PAGA beneficiaries. She is hopeful that they will be able to achieve thei dreams just like she did



MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS SEMINAR WORKSHOP HELD

Mental Health is important at every stage of life.; from childhood through adolescence to adulthood. It is a timely and important topic for our underprivileged beneficiaries and their families as they face many challenges in their strenuous lives.

Held at the PAGA office, a total of twenty-four participants attended the day-long event last November 18.

PAGA Board Chairman Frank Holz and PAGA trustee Bill Pfluger delivered opening messages at the start of the seminar workshop.

The participants were oriented on the conscious and subconscious mind and its relations with everyday living; reflecting on the emotions that that usually brings in any given situation

The day's resource person and facilitator was Ms. Veronica Ester Mendoza whose educational background is in Clinical Psychology, Counseling, and Organizational Development.

