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CAUCUS COMPILATION

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1. WHAT ARE

THE STRENGTHS, ASSETS AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE FILIPINO COMMUNITY?

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FILIPINO ADVOCATES/SERVICE PROVIDERS

- Sense of community and togetherness; crisis brings us together and brings out the best in us
 - "United we stand, divided we fall"
 - Strength in numbers, to organize, and more to run for office
- Community developments and grassroots organizing (e.g. Unicef, World Health Organization), ethno-cultural diversity (within the Filipino community?)
- Breaking grounds, making statements
- Informal coalitions help newcomers integrate into Canada easier
- Strong sense of family values
- Many Filipino newcomers are bi-lingual or multi-lingual; new comer Filipinos overall are proficient in English making it easier for them to acculturate compared with newcomers from other countries
- Filipinos are adaptable and flexible
- Many in the community are professionals; has a variety of skillsets; are hard workers and strong work ethic
 - Resilience, grit
- Filipinos value and emphasize education
- Many are musically inclined, e.g. karaoke
- There is a large presence of Filipinos in the arts including: photography; dance; acting; film-making; hip hop
- Sense of humor, Filipino culture values
- Fun loving, nurturing, hospitable
 - "good looking"
- <u>Achievements</u>:
 - Fiesta Filipino (also a strength --> organizing and engaging)
 - The community spearheaded the attainment of AB healthcare coverage for the children of Temporary Foreign Workers who are born in Canada

PHILIPPINES CULTURAL CENTRE (PCCF)

- Friendly, hospitable, lovable, hardworking, easy to get along with, helpful, loyal, family oriented, utang na loob
- Would like to help the poor (donation)
- Always willing to give a hand, good leadership (solution: get common goals/interests)
- Would like to help the association
- Would like to have a big Filipino cultural building, mostly educated, hospitality, respect for elders
- Mostly educated with an ability to communicate in English
- Respect for elders
- Easily assimilate into Canada
- Are good planners
- Achievements:
 - PCCF acquired a centre located in the NE area of the city
 - PFCA launched a successful 'Fiesta Filipino" and now on it's fourth year
 - Alberta opened it's Philippine Consulate Office here in

BABAE COUNCIL OF FILIPINA-CANADIAN WOMEN

- Filipinos are very hardworking people, and very resilient
- Filipinos are God-fearing and by nature not aggressive
- Have good command of English language
- Large numbers of Filipinos that come to Canada are skilled, highly educated and have post-secondary degrees
- Large numbers of Filipinos are able to transfer to professional jobs
 - e.g. Nanny to health-care aid, level 3 childcare worker or nurse
- Filipinos generally are not a burden to the system as immediately they source for a survival job shortly upon arrival to Canada
- Filipinos have a good reputation to mainstream Canadians
- Has strong values around respecting elders
- Our number is quite large as a visible minority and therefore we have the opportunity to influence policy or have a voice to reckon with; the Filipino community has strong leaders
- "Bayanihan"
- Achievements:
 - One of our biggest achievements here in Calgary is the installation of the Philippine Consulate office

YOUTH

- Food
 - Sense of identity is established
- Celebrations
- Language
- Friendly
- Acceptable/ Tolerant
- "Bayanihan"
- Resilience
 - As proven by Filipinos ability to smile and have a sense of humor even through tough times
- Flexible and adaptable
 - As proven by Filipinos' ability to live, work, and prosper in any part of the world. Possibly due to Filipinos' ability to tolerate differences and find a way to mold their own culture into their adopted country
- Family Oriented
- Strength in numbers
- Achievements:
 - Youth For Christ (YFC)
 - EC (extra credit)
 - Fiesta Filipino
 - Youth Empowerment Program (YEP)
 - These are all achievements because it shows unity among Filipinos and a push towards establishing the Filipino community in Canada. These are platforms that allows us to promote and share our culture in this country

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES

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ISSUES AND PROBLEMS THAT YOU FACE, THAT WE FACE AS A COMMUNITY?

FILIPINO ADVOCATES/SERVICE PROVIDERS

- Family disintegration
- It's hard for Filipinos in their early twenties (e.g. second generation or 1.5 generation) to relate to other Filipinos
 - This makes it hard to form a "community" with other communities
- Decolonization is a challenge because of internalized racism and colonial mentality
 - This keeps Filipino youth disengaged
- Lack of civic engagement in all generations
- One issue is our community's lack of awareness of who are in which sectors

PHILIPPINES CULTURAL CENTRE (PCCF) KAPHIAN

- Health and other benefits for OFWs/TFWs
- The Filipino community is fragmented
- It's a big challenge to unite many different Filipino organizations
- Filipino organizations are very good in planning but plans are not implemented due to lack of commitment.
- Organizations' problems and/or challenges become too personal
 - We tend to personalize arguments; Sama ng loob
- Bad attitudes are an issue in the Filipino community
- There is a big communication gap between organizations
- The achievements of organizations are not widely known to other groups
 - Example: Not many in the Filipino community know that the physical PCCF centre exists
- The Filipino community doesn't have to give as much (compared with other ethnocultural communities)
 - There is no time because many Filipino community members have two jobs
 - Not united, regionalistic, prefer to stay with people of same origin (province)
 - Diversity in goals, no common interest
- Submissiveness especially for women
- · Domestic violence / family conflicts
- Many youth ending up in gangs, not healthy activities
- Seniors isolation and abuse
- Growing generation gap

BABAE COUNCIL OF FILIPINA-CANADIAN WOMEN

- We are very rationalistic and not socially cohesive
- Many in our community are not able to transfer their skills to professional jobs
- Challenges around family reunification
- Many Filipino families are involved with Children Services
- Racism and discrimination are being experienced by Filipinos
- In certain jobs, men are being preferred over women
 - e.g. massage therapist
- There is a lack of support for mothers in terms of availability of short term caregivers and overall chid care cost
- Value set of Canadian and Western caregiving for our Filipino children is different from our own values
- "Mahiyain", Filipinos will generally be more comfortable if their Filipino neighbour is from their region
- Filipinos are less likely to access help and available resources
- There is a lack of information around community resources and available help
- Trust issues among Filipinos
- "Pasikatan" -> being showy, trying to get attention
- The Filipino community is not united

YOUTH CAUCUS

- Language barriers:
 - Filipinos who face this challenge would find integrating to Canadian culture very difficult
- Stereotypes, discussed the "within Filipino stereotypes" through division of categories including:
 - a) Filipinos born and raised in Canada and are pretty much "white"

b) Filipinos born and raised in Canada who are balanced (accept Filipino heritage and still open to other cultures)

- c) New Immigrants ("FOBS")
- d) These divisions seem to stem from "accents", difference in culture/beliefs and can be influenced by environments that the youth are exposed to (e.g. school they go to; quadrant of the city they are from)
- Stigma on mental health
 - This might be due to lack of education and exposure to mental health issues
- Lack of integration programs for newcomers
- Outdated standards and expectations from community or family
 - An example given was the expectation of parents on education. E.g. "Be a nurse" or "be an engineer", etc. as the only ways to be successful. When in this time and age there are many unconventional fields that the youth are interested
- Colonial mentality
- "Fetishism" of other cultures by Filipino youth. E.g. Korean, Black culture
- Exclusivity
 - It was discussed how this can be both a strength and weakness. It is a strength because it nurtures and connects Filipinos; it's a weakness because it may restrain openness to other beliefs, values, and cultures
- Loss of language:
 - This is connected to the colonial mentality belief of English being much superior than one's own language. It was discussed how knowing and being fluent in English is being seen and used as an indicator of status, thus some Filipinos would replace their own language and culture entirely

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WHAT ARE ACTIONS AND SOLUTIONS

we can utilize to face these issues and to strengthen our community?

FILIPINO ADVOCATES/SERVICE PROVIDERS:

- Organize a group or network to address social issues in the community
 Formalize, find a structure to help identify who are the Filipino leaders
- Research what works specifically for Filipinos; create a "community of practice"
 - What's out there that's already working?
 - Community of practice is still learning but in an informal way, learning together as a community
- More research to understand issues specific to the Filipino community
- Create a "hub" for Filipinos that is safe and comfortable, and where community members can interact with each other face to face; have a resource guide available for Filipinos
 - Filipino Settlement Centre
- Create a gym or fitness and leisure centre for Filipino youth
- Have a Tagalog language or Filipino culture elective available in schools
 - "Barangay"
 - Flagship
 - Classrooms/learning
 - Have trained brokers/individuals/outreach workers
 - Increase programming for Filipino youth at the Arts Commons
- Have Filipino events occurring more frequently and focused on specific streams
- Address internalized oppression/racism through education
 - E.g. second generation youth learn about internalized oppression to understand their parents and families better
- Hear and listen to feedback from families at different stages of immigration about their struggles and incorporate this feedback into strategies to address struggles
- Family mentorship
 - Have settled families mentor new (to Canada) families, this would provide co-education for parents and children, and hopefully improve family relationships
- Band together to create a Filipino Supermarket co-operative
- Increase the awareness of newcomer resources from Temporary Foreign Workers
 - What to expect; getting pre-post arrival service

PHILIPPINES CULTURAL CENTRE (PCCF) KAPIHAN

- There should be one centralized hot line for emergencies such as natural disasters (e.g. Fort McMurray fire)
- We should educate the community in different aspects
- Utilize Social Media as a form of communication
- We should do 'Research of Success' as we may be able to learn from the results
- Make an effort to reach out and collaborate with different sectors
- While we have PCCF, the Filipino community needs a bigger cultural center
- Filipinos need to learn how to support their own
- Open and transparent communication
- For the business sector, they can help through hiring in partnership with Canada Immigration and through advertisements
- Seek financial support and government funding
- Increased volunteerism in the Filipino community
- Utilizing our volunteers to optimize their work in the community

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- Be more open-minded and reach out for help
- Attend more gatherings, and activities where there are a lot of Filipinos present
- Encourage co-Filipinos to be members of various Filipino organizations
- Encourage co-Filipinos to form small support groups
- Be a good role model and set a good example
- Promote Filipino values
- Promote more activities in church since many Filipinos go there
- Assign or designate a place where Filipinos can identify as a "hub," a place they can access should they need support
- Be more pro-active in getting help in community

YOUTH CAUCUS

- Share our culture
- Promoting our language
- Have a Filipino youth day:
 - Sports
 - Arts
 - dance/KTV
 - Life skills (do it yourself)
 - Cooking
 - Promotion could be expanded to schools (since youth makes up a high percentage of Filipinos) and also Filipino owned businesses (restaurants, salons) because these places already have a following
- It was discussed how the solutions mentioned are pretty much being covered by the Filipino orgs at the moment (Fiesta, YEP). However, promoting these programs do need work
- Establish and increase school clubs and culture clubs
- ESL opportunities
- Embracing diversity
 - It was discussed how this can be done through language. We can do partnerships where those who speak English and want to learn Tagalog can teach English to those who want to learn and vice versa
- Integrating immigrants better

4. WHAT CAN GOVERNMENTS DO TO HELP US FACE THESE ISSUES?

FILIPINO ADVOCATES/SERVICE PROVIDERS:

- Provide funding to support the implementation of establishing a hub for the Filipino community
- Provide funding to organizing groups to help newcomers
- Provide a space (platform) to be included (in policy making)
 - No voice yet in the Filipino communi
 - Request for unutilized building
- Update policies that:
- Recognize foreign/international credentials; recognize Filipino education
- e.g. for engineers have a simpler re-certification and accreditation
 process
- Include Filipino culture/language(s) in schools
- Have all agencies that help Filipino immigrants accredited by the Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO); this will help newcomers avoid precarious situations. A relationship needs to be established between POLO and these agencies
- Have Filipino representation (e.g. trustees) at the municipal, provincial, and federal levels of government

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BABAE COUNCIL OF FILIPINA-CANADIAN WOMEN

- Connect with politicians such as Members of Parliament (MPs) and Members of Legislative Assembly (MLAs)
- Aspire to have a unified voice in approaching the government
- Speak up and advocate for policy changes that will help the community

YOUTH CAUCUS

- Financial funding. e.g. program funding
- Supporting and raising awareness of the Filipino community
- Providing grants for research opportunities that are Filipino based (i.e. centered around the Filipino community)
 - Francia's note: I personally think that research based on the exploration of the Filipino community and what it means to be one would really benefit us. Especially, with youth nowadays gearing towards science based explanations. I feel that providing our community with recent and research based answers on who we are would also help us unite and cooperate with one another.
- Scholarships for Filipino youth
 - It was further discussed how this can be geared towards sports or fine arts since a lot of Filipino youth are active in this fields (e.g. basketball, dance)
- Increase immigration services such as CCIS
- Rights awareness and education
 - It was discussed how this is important and true in the employment setting where some Filipinos are abused, sometimes without them being unaware that is it abuse
- Financial skill building

5. HOW CAN WE

INCREASE THE COOPERATION AMONG FILIPINOS IN ALBERTA? WHAT CAN HELP?

Filipino Advocates/Service Providers:

- Find a common ground (example: food)
- Intergenerational organization
- Concrete incentives
- Genuine engagement
- Service provider network
- Form a community of practice
- Draw out best practices
- Pursue a province wide network of Filipinos who will continue to connect and work together beyond the conference (keep the momentum going)
- Broaden Filipino networks, e.g. a Filipino directory of Filipino businesses/services
- Province-wide balita; website
- Have more of a social media presence in the Filipino community
- Improve accessibility to different venues

PHILIPPINES CULTURAL CENTRE (PCCF) KAPIHAN

- We have to overcome our regionalistic mentality to unite Filipinos
- Leadership: Magpakadakila, someone has to sacrifice and not let pride prevail
- Create a committee who will coordinate with all provincial organizations
- Database of Filipino Albertans: organizations; number of registrants; engage "fresh blood", new participants and leaders
- Stop blaming or pointing fingers and discrediting other organizations
 - E.g. Calgary vs. Edmonton
- Use social media Alberta wide, accessing the Filipinos throughout Alberta
- Develop open minded leaders and develop their strengths and work on camaraderie among these leaders trickling down to the community
- We should develop a better process for consultation towards a common model for collaboration
- Develop a network or web of different organizations willing to work on common issues
- Have a group of "community ambassadors" to connect to and coordinate with all organizations
- A cultural shift from ourselves

BABAE COUNCIL OF FILIPINA-CANADIAN WOMEN

- Be a leader of yourself
- Be an example
- Extend invitations, reach out
- Smile
- Be friendly
- There is a disconnect with those who arrived in the 1960s and 1970s. They are the most established. Try to connect with them to fill in the gap between them and the more recent newcomers

YOUTH CAUCUS

- Spreading awareness
- Broadcasting Filipino events
- Having our own filter on Snapchat
- We can make it more specific as well depending on what we are trying to promote (e.g. Filipino Fiesta filter during fiesta)
- Strengthening inter-communications in communities
- Have a central point of contact
- Something like a "311" Filipino
- Make Jollibee local
- This would unite Filipinos geographically and provide a sense of identity. There's also a sense of pride in bringing a Filipino trademark here.
- Allow and promote differentiation among approaches
- Make the Filipino culture's presence much more tangible
- It was discussed how Filipinos can have the same goal of promoting the culture but go about it in different ways. e.g. restaurants; fashion; arts
- Examples given were Filipino ads (something like "It's more fun in the Philippines)
- Having a "KTV-han" on the streets

WHO ARE THE OTHER

ORGANIZATIONS/GROUPS IN OUR COMMUNITY THAT NEED TO BE A PART OF THIS DISCUSSION?

Filipino Advocates/Service Providers:

- Professional groups
- Youth

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- School age -> 12 to 18 years old
- Young adults -> 18 to 25 years old
- Young professionals
- Immigration generations: first; second; third; etc.
- Alberta Health Service or health sector Filipino workers including doctors and nurses
- Filipino basketball leagues
- Various religious and faith-based groups, strong Filipino networks exist within these groups
- Royal XPSR (Filipino photography group)
- Filipino dance troupes
- The Filipino Students Association with the University of Calgary
- Filipino Asian-Alliance group at Mount Royal University

Philippine Cultural Center Foundation (PCCF) Kapihan:

- Professional: Health workers, Doctors, Engineers
- Alumni Organizations: Mapua, Don Bosco, UP, Adamson
- Youth groups: University of Calgary (Filipino Students Association)
- Faith groups:
 - E.g. Couples for Christ, Seniors for Christ, Christian Fellowships, INK
- Sports groups:
 - E.g. Basketball, tennis, radio
- Filipino Choirs
- CAFFA
- Filipinos in rural areas in Alberta

Babae Council of Filipina-Canadian Women:

- Seniors Group and senior citizens
- Youth
- Sports Group
- Professionals
- Religious and faith based organizations

Youth Caucus:

- Religious groups, e.g. YFC
- New immigrants
- Fil-Canadians
- Mentorship Programs, e.g. Calgary Bridge to Youth Foundation
- University of Calgary Filipino Students Association
- Basketball and sports teams
- Youth in general