

ABOUT MIGRANTE MELBOURNE

“**MIGRANTE**” is the Filipino translation of the word ‘migrant’. In popular language it is often associated with the term overseas contract worker (OCW), but also describes those Filipinos who migrated to other countries like Australia to escape the oppression and exploitation in the Philippines; or to find a better life for their family and children. To a significant number of us Filipinos, these words have come to mean many things. To the ordinary person on the street “migrante” are the countless number of Filipinas and Filipinos who leave the country to find work in foreign lands. To our families left behind, we are the loved ones far away, toiling and hoping to find a better future. And to the policy makers, we are the dollar earners who bring home billions of dollars of remittances (\$6.0 B in 2000*) that help save the debt-ridden economy of the Philippines.

Filipinos in Australia face huge problems relating to work, migration and settlement, welfare, culture, domestic violence and racial discrimination. Most of us left our homeland, the Philippines, due to conditions of extreme poverty, exploitation and gross violation and neglect of people’s rights.

As workers here we suffer low wages, reduced or non-existent entitlements, relegation to menial jobs and de-skilling. Those in professions and who have extensive professional employment previously have to undergo stringent education and training to practice.

Recent arrivals are caught in the welfare trap of not being able to access social security support for two years. This is while they are in that critical period of adjustment, settlement, finding work and in need of welfare support.

Family members endure years of separation due to harsh migration barriers. If we do manage to reunite, parents and children, siblings and other relatives have to overcome the prolonged costs of separation – estrangement, cultural clashes, adjustment to their old and new families. Young people caught in this situation also experience a string of adjustment difficulties relating to education, peer group, identity and culture. We also feel the effects of racial discrimination. Filipinos, in general, are caught between two cultures. While seeking to adjust to the culture of our adopted land, we strive to retain the cultural identity of our homeland. In striving for both, problems of cultural clashes frequently arise (e.g., parenting, disciplining children, social mores, etc.)

* Ibon Features, 01 April 2002, Volume 8, No 18.

Many Filipinas are victims of domestic violence. Although support structures and processes exist for these women, a big need demands specific and culturally appropriate domestic violence support structures. There have been reports since 1998 of Filipina survivors of sex trafficking treated as criminals, detained without due process and suffering the pain and humiliation of deportation.

OUR VISION

A society where justice, freedom and equality reigns so that Filipino migrants can exercise their rights and potentials to the fullest.

OUR MISSION

Motivate, organize and mobilize Filipinos in Victoria to:

- Strengthen Filipino identity and achievements;
- Promote the rights and welfare of Filipino migrants in Australia and
- Support overseas Filipinos in partnership with Migrante International, the global organisation of overseas Filipinos.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We recognize, assert and declare our right as Filipino migrants: to be involved in all matters affecting our lives in Australia, to participate in shaping the programs and policies affecting us and our families in the Philippines and to organize and pursue actions to protect the legitimate interest of Filipinos in Australia and overseas.

We believe that the Philippine government's labor export program is not the solution to the economic crisis in the Philippines. Filipinos should be given all possibilities of employment. This can be made possible through genuine Philippine socio-economic development that addresses the root causes of massive out-migration.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To work for unity among Filipinos in Australia
- To promote the rights & welfare of Filipinos & other migrants
- To support genuine trade union, migrant organization and other pro-people organization
- To generate support for the struggle of the Filipino people for a just and humane society
- To give due recognition to Filipino achievement. We are proud of our Filipino heritage and identity and seek to advance and recognize Filipino achievements

PROGRAMS

• Education, Information and Research

Migrante Melbourne conducts leadership training, skill training and other courses for Filipino migrants. In cooperation with other organisations, it disseminates informative materials such as primers, guides and updates on various issues affecting migrants. Its research program is geared towards developing a database as well as undertaking specific studies on the situation and the plight of Filipino migrants in the various states in Australia.

• Advocacy and Campaigns

Migrante Melbourne seeks action from governments to ensure protection of the rights and welfare of Filipinos. This would include recognition of overseas qualifications, promoting cultural diversity and setting up specific and culturally appropriate domestic violence support structures and systems.

It conducts political actions in support of Philippine based campaigns.

• Organising

Organising of Filipinos and friends in Victoria is a key strategy towards the attainment of Migrante Melbourne’s aims and objectives. Migrante Melbourne will ensure that its progress, projects and activities are responsive to the needs and aspirations of the community.

• Recognition/Celebration of Filipino Achievements

Migrante Melbourne recognises and celebrates the positive achievements and contributions of Filipinos to the political, economic, social and cultural life of migrants. Recognition and celebration will enable Filipino migrants to stand proud of their heritage and identity.

• Solidarity Networking and Linkaging

Migrante Melbourne works for the development of positive relations among the existing Filipino organisation and other organisations in Australia through its activities, projects and programs. These collaboration will strengthen Migrante Melbourne’s work and help attain its objectives.

Get Involved!

Become a member of Migrante and join in our activities

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel (H): _____

Tel (B): _____

Mobile: _____

Email: _____

I would like to:

- become a member of
Migrante Melbourne

- be updated with information
from **Migrante Melbourne**

- donate to **Migrante Melbourne**

Our Commitment to Privacy:

Migrante Melbourne will not in any way publish, distribute or give access to any other party the information which you supply above. This information is strictly to be used for the purposes of informing you of Migrante information and materials.

PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

In Australia

Migrante Australia

(NSW based organisation of Filipinos in Australia)

Gabriela Australia

(Victorian based organisation of Filipino women in Australia)

In the Philippines

Bayan – Bagong Alyansang Makabayan

(New Patriotic Alliance, alliance of progressive mass organisation in the Philippines)

KMP – Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas

(Peasant Organisation)

KMU – Kilusang Mayo Uno

(Labour Federation)

Amihan

(Federation of Peasant Women)

Anakbayan

(Filipino Youth Organisation)

International

Migrante International

(Global organisation of overseas Filipinos)

Gabriela Network

(Global network of Filipino women)



(Organisation of Filipinos in Victoria)

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