President Rodrigo Duterte is the best president ever. He walks the talk and does not engage in what we call as ‘lip service.’ He needs everyone’s prayers so he can succeed to clean up the government and the society of lawless elements. – Carol Flores, Phoenix

While in the Philippines, I witnessed first-hand how a whole family was ‘destroyed’ because of illegal drugs. I am praying that Duterte will pursue to the end his campaign against drug lords and drug pushers. Emma Tapion, Phoenix (from Marikina)

I am voting for Donald Trump because he is the better candidate who can give me hope rather than for the other candidate who has entangled himself with a lot of shameful decisions. – Jonathan Gabriel

Pendegast School District hires Filipino teachers

Phoenix, Az - The Pendergast Unified School District in Phoenix has directly hired 45 Filipino teachers on a J1 Visa. The Filipino teachers who arrived in two batches (July and August this year) are now deployed in various public schools at the Pendergast Unified School District in Phoenix.

Nedda Shafir, the Public Relations Consultant for the Pendergast School District, told The Filipino American Journal during an exclusive online interview that “there are 45 teachers from the Philippines who have joined the school district.”

“We are very pleased to have the Cultural Exchange Program in the Pendergast School District. This is our first year and the entire administration has worked hard to welcome our new teachers to the District, to their schools and to Arizona,” Shafir said.

She also told The Filipino American Journal that “eleven of the twelve schools in Pendergast District have teachers from the Philippines. They are teaching Grades 1-8 and teaching subjects like: Special Education, Science, Social Studies, English Language Arts, and Math.”

CFO to ‘honor’ Filipino youth achievers in Arizona

Phoenix, Az- The Council of Filipino Organizations of Arizona (CFO-AZ) is set to “honor and recognize the youth achievers in the Filipino community in Arizona” during the celebration of the Filipino American History Month also known as Filipino American Heritage Month on October 23, 2016 at Papago Park in Tempe, Arizona.

Dr. James Campbell, Chairperson of the CFO-AZ said, “it is high time to honor and recognize the achievements of the younger generation of our community as they would soon take over the leadership roles from us.”

“There is no doubt that the members of the younger generation in our community have made commendable achievements in vari-
Filipino teachers... from page 1

The District visited the Philippines last spring and worked with two companies to assist and sponsor the J-1 visas and the same process was followed in hiring that we use with all of our candidates. Applications were filed out, resumes were screened, interviews were held and based on positions available and successful interviews, candidates were hired and placed at the schools with openings, depending on the candidate’s qualifications and prior teaching experience.

“We are glad and happy to be hired as teachers and had the opportunity to develop our professional skills as teachers,” said Angelina Tiangsin Soriano, during an exclusive interview with The Filipino American Journal.

Soriano, who now teaches 4th grade pupils at Rio Vista Elementary School, also said that “I never felt alone in the school. All the teaching staff spearheaded by the Principal (Mrs. McCarthy) and the Assistant Principal (Mrs. Bennison) are so accommodating, kind and supportive.”

While still in the process of ‘adapting to the new school working environment’, Soriano said, “with more than 10 years of teaching experience in the Philippines plus the orientation seminars provided by the School District and the once-a-week in-service training will indeed help me cope with the challenges posed by being a teacher in an American setting.”

“I thank all the people that are helping us and most especially God for this great opportunity to be here in Arizona,” said Soriano, who comes from Tarlac.

For her part, Fragielyn Aquisap, who arrived on July 12th and now teaches at Canyon Breeze Elementary School, told The Filipino American Journal, “there is so much support, assistance and training that is provided by the School District that made us feel accepted and happy to work with them and mostly having pride and honor as Filipino teachers representing our country the Philippines here in America.”

“Our coming here is a ‘dream come true’ and we thank God for this wonderful opportunity to work as teachers and experience the culture of this great country – United States of America,” said Aquisap who comes from Angeles City, Pampanga.

For his part, Donato Alonzo Soberano (who issued a statement through Nedda Shafir) said, “I was really impressed the way the district people welcomed me and all of the Filipino teachers. They really helped us feel at home. I feel that they really offer us a great opportunity here in Arizona but at the same time we are privileged and fortunate to receive heartwarming and supportive actions from the district administration.”

Soberano who comes from Mandaluyong and who teaches at Don Bosco International School also said, “I am blessed to be here and work with the District. The Principal, Assistant Principal and the teachers are amazing.”

Soberano who teaches Science subjects in Grades 7 and 8 has also describes his students as “very amazing and have a great thirst to learn especially science.”

“I thought that I will be a stranger to this place because I left my family in the Philippines – not realizing that I have a big family here,” he said.

“There is one of a kind experience and that everything is awe-some here – especially the people.” This is how Honey Kate Araza describe her initial experience as a teacher at the Pendergast School District.

Araza told the Public Relations Consultant of the District, “I never met an administration that is so amazing. They give me positive feedback and helped me lessen my intimidation and be the best version of myself.”

He also lauded the school officials “for giving us strategies to be successful” and that “everyone is so friendly and make us feel so welcome.”

Araza teaches 2nd grade pupils this year.

Upon learning of the arrival of the Filipino teachers, The Filipino American Journal met with some of the teachers at their apartment at 99th Avenue in Phoenix. Among those whom The Filipino American Journal met are: Grace Ann Bonifacio (3rd Grade teacher at Villa de Paz Elementary School) and who comes from Valenzuela City; Fragielyn Aquisap (Canyon Breeze Elementary School) and who comes from Angeles City; Joy Bacwaden of Baguio City and now a Math teacher in the sixth Grade; Vanessa Williams Lim of Binondo Manila and teaches Math for 7 graders at Rio Vista Middle School; Maria Cristina Caguro of Pasay City and now teaches 3rd grade pupils at Westwind Elementary School, Maria Angelita T. Soriano from Tarlac who teaches 4th grade pupils at Don Bosco International School, Donato Soberano of Mandaluyong and teaches 7 and 8 graders at Sunset Ridge School; Melody Andrade and Nad Aven. (Aromin FAJ)