

Written by Bobby Reyes

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Part 10 of [“Should We Do Desperate Moves About the Supposed ‘Desperate Housewives’ Slur on RP’s Med Schools?”](#)

This writer met some of the leaders of Southern California’s Philippine Medical Association (PMASC) and the Philippine Nurses’ Association (PNASC) yesterday at the New Otani Hotel in Downtown Los Angeles, California. The occasion was the highly-successful and historic first-ever “Bayanihan sa Amerika” Conference sponsored by the Commission on Filipinos Overseas. The Philippine Consulate General, the Philippine Tourism Office, the Philippine Department of Trade and Industry Office, the Land Bank of the Philippines, SMART Communications, Inc., and the Asian Eye Institute co-sponsored the conference. In general, the Filipino-American physicians and nurses at the “Bayanihan” conference concurred with our position that the “Desperate Housewives” brouhaha does not call for desperate measures such as boycott of the TV network or picketing of its studios, or worse, filing civil cases that the courts of law would probably reject as nuisance suits.

What our Fil-Am physician-friends need is a well-orchestrated and modestly-funded public-relations’ (PR) campaign to remind American society of their positive contributions to the United States. For instance, the PR blitz could highlight that the chief physician at the White House during President Bill Clinton’s term was a Filipino-American doctor. What is good for the American President obviously is good also for the average American patients.

The PR campaign should highlight also the fact that some Filipino-American physicians are faculty members of prestigious American medical schools such as the University of Southern California. We can also tell the public that there were Filipino-American physicians, all products of Philippine medical schools, who have retired honorably from the United States military medical corps. We can document the responsible positions being held by Filipino-American physicians in distinguished American medical centers as chief of surgery, etc., and etc. In fact, the PR campaign can even highlight that the only general hospital in St. Thomas at the U.S. Virgin Islands boasts of several Filipino physicians as heads of its OB-Gynecology and Pediatrics departments.

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In short, what the Filipino-American medical practitioners must do is simply to enhance their track records of excellent public service by publicizing their achievements and accolades received. Because when our Filipino physicians, nurses and other medical practitioners look good, our community also looks good, if not better. And we all feel good and proud of our positive contributions to the United States and other foreign countries.

Here is an example of an achievement of a distinguished Filipino-American physician in San Diego, California. Our then online magazine, the [www.yimby.com](http://www.yimby.com)

published in October 2000, the historic feat of Maria Reyes Mason, MD. (Editor's Note: She is not related to this writer.)

QUOTE.

First Filipino to Head American Cancer Society in California

By Romeo P. Marquez

Dateline Oakland, California, Oct. 15, 2000, Yimby.com News Bureau - Maria Reyes Mason, MD, of La Jolla, California, dedicates her involvement with the American Cancer Society to her parents.

An award-winning pathologist for her work on body fluids and cancer metastasis, the new ACS president for California knows personally the devastation cancer can cause. “Both my

parents died of cancer, and in their memory I wanted to make a difference,&quot; Dr. Reyes Mason says.

&quot;Cancer is not an abstract, nameless word. It's a real part of our lives, a modern day plague. Every life that cancer claims should be counted toward strengthening the American Cancer Society's resolve to extinguish it,&quot; she states.

Dr. Reyes Mason is excited about helping the American Cancer Society achieve ambitious goals that include a 25-percent reduction in cancer incidence and 50-percent reduction in mortality by 2015.

Noting her goals are aligned with the corporate vision, she wants to increase organizational efforts to reach minority and poor Americans, help eliminate disparities in cancer treatments and burden, and educate the medically underserved about early detection and prevention of cancer.

Dr. Reyes Mason joined the American Cancer Society as a volunteer in 1992, serving first as a member of the San Diego Unit public issues committee. In 1994 she joined the California division board of directors and in 1996 became president of the San Diego Unit.

On Oct. 6, 2000, she officially accepted the presidency of ACS California during the 54th annual meeting of the statewide leadership and board of directors.

Born in Manila, Dr. Reyes Mason earned a bachelor's degree in

medical technology and medical doctorate at the University of Santo Tomas in the Philippines. She completed fellowships at Massachusetts General Hospital/Harvard Medical School and Georgetown University and her residency in pathology at St. Louis University in Missouri.

Her extensive medical background includes serving as medical director of several clinical laboratories in San Diego. She is currently president and medical director of CytoNet Inc. in La Jolla. She is also president of another company, the Community Development Communications (CDC).

Helping Dr. Reyes Mason lead ACS California is newly appointed chair Nancy Brakensiek, a certified public accountant in Los Angeles.

The American Cancer Society is the nationwide, community-based voluntary health organization dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem through research, education, advocacy and service. It has invested more than \$1-billion in cancer research. California is the largest of the national nonprofit organization's 17 divisions. UNQUOTE. # # #

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