



Galing Pinoy showcases the triumph of the Filipino spirit—the Filipino's innate perseverance to rise above. A double entendre, **Galing Pinoy** literally translates to



Nover is a contestant in this seasons The Ultimate Fighter (TUF), a reality based contest on the Spike network that pits professional mixed martial artists (MMA) around the world a chance for a \$100,000 contract to join the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) organization.

The 24-year-old, 155-pound Brooklyn native has already won two of his preliminary lightweight division fights on the show. Most recently, in episode eight of the reality show, Nover planted a rear naked choke hold that made highly regarded MMA fighter Dave Kaplan submit before proclaiming himself as the "toughest RN in the world."

Nover sports an undefeated 5-0-1 professional MMA record. After the win against Kaplan, UFC President Dana White hailed Nover as the next I UFC Middleweight Champion! George St. Pierre, indicative of Nover's tenacious fighting style.

If it still doesn't make sense how a man can be a practicing nurse at the same time as he beats people up for a living, Nover explains his incongruous life.

He is the son of a Filipina mom from Manila and a Polish father from New York. He grew up in Brooklyn, a place where he admits is not the safest area in the world.

Nover said his mother advo-

Philippe Nover: The ulti-

by JOSEPH PIMENTEL / AJPress

FIL-AM Philippe Nover is a walking contradiction.

During the day he works as a registered nurse at a New York hospital emergency room healing and taking care of the sick and wounded, but at night he moonlights as a professional mixed martial arts fighter, pummeling and beating people to submission.

"A lot of people say it doesn't make any sense to them," said Nover to *The Asian Journal*. "For me it makes so much sense. I have a perfect balance of two totally opposite philosophies—how to heal someone and how to hurt someone."



cated for him to learn self-defense tactics. He took up karate and taekwon do starting at the age of five. By the age of nine, he started training with Ralph Mitchell, a renowned instructor at the Universal Defense System.

He continued his training by participating in a number of karate tournaments, but when it came time to step inside the ring, his parents disapproved.

When Nover was 16, he snuck out of his home to participate in his first kickboxing match at a Russian nightclub.

"When I came home, my mom was like 'I know what you did,'" Nover recalls. "I told her! 'I'm sorry. This is what I love to do'... She had to accept it. The biggest thing is she doesn't want me getting hurt and she also doesn't want me to hurt anyone but it's part of the game."

Most importantly, his mother wanted him to pursue an education.

"They told me I can pursue anything that I want as long as I have an education," he said. "I followed my dad's footsteps into nursing, and I thought it was the best thing to do. All my Filipino friends were getting into nursing so I was like why not? It's a great profession, it's a wholesome profession, and it's also a selfless profession because you're really helping other people. You definitely get a good feeling from it. Coming home from a day's work you know you really did your best

to help someone." Nover loved the study of nursing so much that at one point he thought about quitting his life as a professional fighter to become a full time RN.

"But I said to myself 'why can't I do both?'" said Nover.

"That was the deal," he added between him and his parents. "When I got my degree as a nurse, especially because my mom wanted me to finish school, she really had to accept [my life as a fighter]. For anybody that reads this, my advice to anyone is you can finish school first and pursue your dreams at the same time...you don't have to put education on the side."

The dual life is working out pretty well for Nover. He splits his time working as a nurse and trains for fights during his time off.

He said at first he was going to work as a nurse full time and focus on "one or two fights a year" but since he was chosen as one of the contestants in this season's TUF show, Nover's been "full-time fighter, part time nurse."

Nover knows that winning the reality-based contest is his ticket to living out his dream. The TUF show has been a stepping stone for many current UFC fighters.

But first he not only has to survive on a weekly basis against fighters from around the world

vying for a chance to join the UFC, he also has to put up with living in a maniacal frat house setting with those same fighters and having cameras document their every movement.

"It's a 100 percent real-life show," he said. "You can't hide the way you act...your true colors are going to show and you know what, I really wanted to show the world who I am and what I'm capable of."

Nover also said that he wants people to know how fierce and good Filipinos are when it comes to fighting. He wants to be recognized in the same breathe as boxing champion Manny Pacquiao, boxers Nonito Donaire Jr. and Brian Vitoria, and UFC fighter Brandon Vera.

"You know, I have it in my blood and I think every Filipino has that warrior spirit in their blood," he said. "If you look at the history of the Philippines... the whole culture is a war like culture. There's so much history that you can really get in to that warrior mentality. And I, personally, am into that war like mentality. To have the Philippines backing me as a fighter is really important. I want to show the world that as a Filipino, I'm a special breed of person. Filipinos are sportsman, athletic, intelligent and we're professional people, I want to show the world that."

"And that I'm proud to have Filipino blood in me." ■

Pinoy MMA fighter wins bout, moves up to UFC

by JOSEPH PIMENTEL / AJPress

LAS VEGAS — Fil-Am mixed martial arts fighter Mark Muñoz lived up to his nickname as the Philippine wrecking machine.

Muñoz from Northern California pounded Brazilian jiu-jitsu specialist Ricardo Barros for a first round technical knockout win during their match at the Hard Rock Resort and Casino last Wednesday.

"Oh man, I'm elated," said Muñoz to *The Asian Journal* as he was walking to the dressing room after the win. "I feel great. All the hard work and training is paying off."

The 30-year-old, 6'0" 200-pound Fil-Am trained at the Wildcard Boxing Club for the past three weeks leading up to his World Extreme Cagefighting (WEC) match against Barros.

Muñoz said that watching pound-4-pound champion Manny Pacquiao train gave him extra motivation in his performance.

"Just his tenacity," said Muñoz about Pacquiao's training sessions. "I watched him spar and watched him hit the mitts and his tenacity is unbelievable and that's what I wanted."

Muñoz brought that tenacity in the match against Barros, who came in with 4-1 bout record.

The moment the bell rang, Barros grabbed Muñoz right leg and brought him to the ground. It appeared that Barros had the upper hand as he tried to look for a submission move to finish off Muñoz. However, Muñoz, a former NCAA wrestling champion, quickly countered Barros' move and landed on top.

With Barros in the guard position, Muñoz stood up to look for the ground and pound. Barros tried to slither away but ended up turning over revealing his back to Muñoz. As Barros covered himself up like an ostrich with its head in the sand, Muñoz took a backside mount position and landed hard blows to the side of Barros' head. He peppered Barros head with hammer fists and pounded him with five right hooks before the referee stopped the match at the 2:26 mark in the first round.

"I knew he was going to try and take me down. I knew that he was going to try and get on top of me," said Muñoz. "But I knew that if he was going to get on top of me, I was going to get back on top of him. I prepare with the best guys like Renzo Gracie at the Gracie [Jiu-Jitsu] Academy and they are teaching me so much. I knew if I got on my back that I'd be able to get on top anyways and that's why I ended up finishing the fight. I hit hard."

The win improves Muñoz record to 5-0 3 KO's.

The win also signifies his last match with the WEC. The WEC is an MMA organization owned by the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) organization.

Muñoz said he's been called up to the join UFC but unsure about which division he'll be fighting in. ■



Mark Muñoz

Bret Schundler meets Fil-Am leaders; may run again for mayor



Bret Schundler

JERSEY CITY—If Americans have Barack Obama to inspire them, some of the politically-inclined members of the large Filipino-American community in this city, estimated at 20,000, have former Mayor and one time gubernatorial candidate Bret Schundler on their side.

Schundler met with a select group of Fil-Am community leaders last Dec. 2 at the conference room of his office in the Heights section of the city. In that meeting, the former mayor expressed his intention to run again in next year's elections against a formidable line up of opponents, including incumbent Mayor Jeremiah Healy.

The 49-year-old politician was mayor of Jersey City from 1992 until 2001. He was the unsuccessful Republican nominee for Governor of New Jersey in 2001 and he was an unsuccessful candidate for governor of the Republican party in 2005. He was the first Republican mayor of Jersey City, a Democratic-dominated city, since 1917.

Time Magazine once referred to Mayor Schundler's policies as "national model for urban reform."

During his term as mayor, Schundler be-

came the "darling" of the Filipinos in this city. He named a number of Filipino-Americans to sensitive posts in his administration, including two deputy mayors, a director of the city's Water Department, an assistant Tax Assessor and a Chief Finance Officer.

He was a frequent guest in Filipino-American organizations' activities. Even his palate became very close to Filipino cuisine. *Pansit bijon*, (a type of Philippine noodles), became one of his favorites.

During the meeting last Dec. 2, Schundler raised the need for a Filipino-American in the Jersey City Council. He said it was high time for the city council to have a member from the Filipino-American community.

Naturally, the attendees agreed and they asked the former mayor if he could preside over a unity meeting among Filipino-American community leaders that would lead to the selection of a common candidate in the next election. Schundler said "yes" to the delight of those in attendance.

The former city executive also raised issues that are of major concern to the city residents like high property tax, high crime rate, and breakdown in city offices' systems and pro-

cedures, like the much-complained buildings permit office.

Schundler told the Filipino leaders, "A return to machine politics is moving Jersey City in the wrong direction. In the seven years since I left office, Jersey City's political culture has become a national joke, its job growth has stagnated, its property tax levy has increased 50 percent, and its murder rate has doubled."

"We can make Jersey City one of the safest, most tax-affordable, most livable, most beautiful, and most culturally exciting cities in the country. But we have to break away from the machine politics to which this city has returned," Schundler also said.

Mr. Schundler is expected to meet again with more Filipino community leaders during the December 10, 2008 Pulong Bayan sa Jersey Christmas Party at Sinugba Restaurant at 561 West Side Avenue, Jersey City at 7 pm.

Among those who attended the Tuesday meeting were Rev. Gaudy Soriano, Paul Ver-soza, Ador and Lilia Equipado, Emmanuel Agbanlog, Ronnie Atinaja and a dozen other leaders. ■



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It's the flu season, get vaccinated

by MOMAR VISAYA / AJPress

NEW YORK—In order to let more people know about the importance of vaccination, officials recently announced that the National Influenza Vaccination Week (NIVW) will be observed from December 8 to 14, 2008.

Now on its third year, NIVW is an annual joint effort of the United States Department of Health and Human Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the National Influenza Vaccine Summit, and other immunization partners.

"It is not too late to get vaccinated since the flu season usually continues through February," Capt. Anthony Fiore, MD, a medical epidemiologist from the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases told the ethnic media roundtable held recently at the CUNY Graduate School of Journalism.

The panel, which included representatives from the Department for the Aging, CDC and various local hospitals, underscored the seriousness of influenza and the value of vaccination.

"It is important that the awareness of influenza be taken to new heights, that children and the elderly must have their vaccination. We need to take this message to the community," said Josefina Carbonell, Assistant Secretary for Aging.

Carbonell added that aside from the children and the elderly, it is also extremely important that caregivers must get vaccinated as well because they take care of the family members.

Senior citizens 65 years or older is one of the groups hardest hit by the flu.

"The flu vaccine is especially important for people 65 and older, particularly those with chronic medical conditions such as heart disease, asthma, diabetes, kidney disease, or cancer," said Dr. Jeanne Santoli, Deputy

Director of the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases at CDC.

Local health departments, public health partners, and providers are encouraged to enhance vaccine availability by scheduling additional clinics, extending clinic hours, and facilitation mass vaccination in retail and other locations during the NIVW and through the remainder of the flu season.

Every year in the United States, an average of 36,000 people die, and more than 200,000 are hospitalized from serious flu-related complications, according to data from the Department of Health and Human Services. Flu complications can include bacterial pneumonia, dehydration, and worsening of chronic medical conditions.

Symptoms of the flu are generally worse than those of the common cold and can include high fever, headache, coughing, weakness and muscle aches. ■