

UST Singers bags two first prizes in Cali Choral tilt

THE University of Santo Tomas (UST) Singers won two first prizes in the recently concluded 2009 California International Choral Festival and Competition held in San Luis Obispo, California. The festival, which started in 2007 and is held every two years was attended by choral groups from the United States, Macedonia, Congo, Saudi Arabia and the Philippines.

The group was awarded the top prize in the Required Pieces category in which all participating choirs performed same two pieces of music and a third piece of their choosing. The two required pieces for this category were *Ave Maria* by Morten Lauridsen and *Alles was Odem hat Lobe de Herrn* by Johann Sebastian Bach. The exceptional interpretation of the UST Singers of these two pieces landed them the first prize with the Cuesta College Chamber Singers and the Fullerton College Concert Choir from the United States placed second and third respectively.

For the Folk Music Competition, the UST Singers who sang three pieces namely: *Ayug Ti*



Amianan, *Waray-Waray*, and *Tirindingding* which were all arranged by Prof. Fidel G. Calalang, Jr. won them the first prize. For this category, the Cuesta College Chamber Singers from the US and the St. Zlata Meglenska all-female choir from Macedonia garnered the second and third prizes respectively.

During the 3-day long choral competitions, the public was given the chance to vote for their favorite choir and the People's Choice Award was accorded to the UST Singers.

The competition was adjudicated by three distinguished judges in the choral world namely, Dr. Ginger Covert Colla, Professor William Hatcher, and Professor Christian Grube.

The UST Singers who is on a concert tour of the United States and the Pacific left Manila in May and will be going back to the Philippines in July after their scheduled performances in San

Francisco, San Jose, and Ontario in California.

Under the tutelage of Prof. Fidel G. Calalang, Jr., the choir is composed of students and alumni representing the different colleges and faculties of the Royal and Pontifical University of Santo Tomas. The group was formed in 1992 and in its 17 years of existence, the ensemble has achieved more than 45 top prizes in prestigious international choral competitions in the United Kingdom, Italy, Bulgaria, France, Czech Republic, Germany, Netherlands and Switzerland. (Peter C. Carrillo)

Positioned to compete...

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from each other. Today, these zones, although being run by two different government agencies, are working with each other to achieve the same goals, positioning themselves as globally competitive air, ship and logistics hubs in the Southeast Asian-Pacific region.

"We are now not only talking business but also doing business," declared Secretary and Internal Affairs Adviser Edgardo Pamintuan. "This is now walking the talk," he quipped. "Of course all these would not have been possible were it not for the genius and foresight of President Gloria Arroyo, to transform these bases into bastions of economic activity," Pamintuan commented.

He said that Clark is now the home of the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport, which is being managed by the Clark International Airport Corporation. The DMIA complex is comprised of a 2,367-hectare area within the Clark Freeport Zone. The airport is now designated as a new international gateway. "Last year, DMIA had an international traffic of 500,000 passengers," Pamintuan announced. "This year, we will have no less than 20 per cent of growth." Pamintuan said that the DMIA has become the favorite airport of low-fair airlines.

The DMIA is now handling international flights to Korea, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Macau and

Kota Kinabalu. There are now 11 domestic flights to Cebu and to Boracay.

Since the construction of the 100-kilometer highway connecting Subic Bay with Clark -- the umbilical cord between the two zones -- standards and processes have been laid down between the two free ports.

Pamintuan also announced that a North Rail system connecting Clark to Manila is in the pipeline. At Subic, two new terminals have been added that are capable of handling up to 600,000 containers. "We can do more during the last 10 months of this administration," Pamintuan said, at the same acknowledging that poverty is still rampant. "There are still lots of people who are living in quagmire and poverty," he said. "You cannot do it overnight."

He said that the country has achieved the highest gross domestic product (GDP) of 7.2 per cent in 2007, at the time that the global economy was creeping in. Last year, despite the recession, the country still managed a 4.6 per cent growth in GDP, and this year, still managed to grow by 1 per cent. "We have been paying off our debts ahead of schedule," Pamintuan revealed.

"But the opposition does not want to look at the doughnut," Pamintuan observed. "They like to look at the hole of the doughnut. They do not want our projects to be successful. They do not want us to look *pogi*." (They do not want us to look good). (Rene Villaroman/AJPress)

Commodore Ramon...

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When Ramon Magsaysay was Secretary of Defense of the Philippines, he sent Alcaraz to the USA to study the organization of the United States Marine Corps. His report led to the establishment of the 1st Marine Company that grew into the Philippine Marine Corps of today.

President and later dictator Marcos, acknowledging the free and brave spirit of Alcaraz refused to name him as an Rear Admiral despite his seniority in rank and instead named Commodore Dioscoro Papa as the PN Chief.

Alcaraz retired from the service and went to the United States to form opposition to

Marcos instead. He became a stalwart of the Movement For a Free Philippines (MFP).

And much more he led the Filipino veterans against the Marcos dictatorship having political differences with Manglapus who led the purely-anti Marcos movement. Together with General Jose De Veyra, his junior PMA officer of Class 1941, they led the veterans movement in the United States in fighting for justice and equity for more than 18 years.

The Justice for Filipino Veterans (JFAV) pays tribute to the great soldier, veterans and anti-Martial Law leader in the United States. ■

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