

# Undocumented Filipino youth...

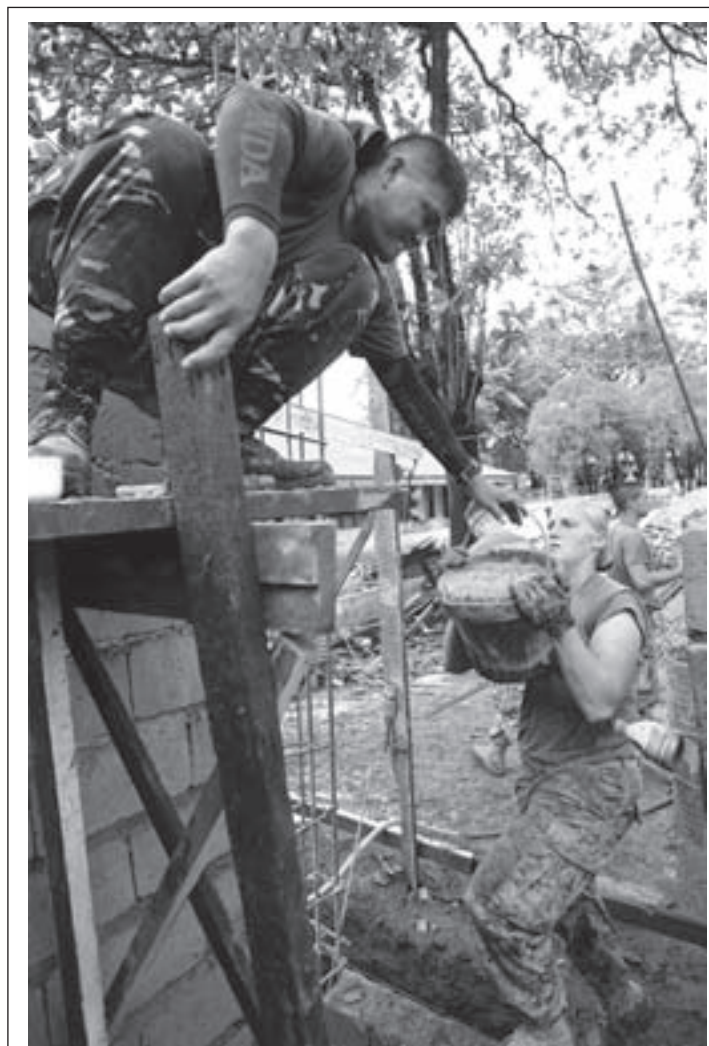
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 in this. Immigration reform is going to be in the top five of our agenda," he told *Asian Journal*.  
 He said the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act will be part of a reform package that aims to improve the immigration laws in the country.  
 "Yes, it will all be incorporated in one bill," he added during a telephone interview last week.  
 The DREAM Act is a bill that would provide certain illegal immigrant students, who graduate from US high schools, a pathway to citizenship.  
 Every year, an estimated 65,000 students graduate from US high schools. But these undocumented residents cannot go to college because they cannot apply for financial aid or scholarships due to their status.  
 While some students manage to graduate from college by paying out of pocket, these individuals cannot find employment because of their illegal status.  
 The DREAM Act would allow undocumented high school graduates in the US to apply for permanent resident status and eventually citizenship.  
 The proposed legislation was introduced unsuccessfully at various times in the House and Senate since 2001. In 2007, the Senate rejected an attempt to begin a debate on this proposal.  
 But it was reintroduced in both chambers of Congress last March by, among others, Sen. Reid.  
 The latest version offers the program to students who have graduated from any US high

school, arrived in the country before turning 16 and have lived here for at least five years. The student also has to have good moral character to qualify for the program.  
 "This (bill) will be a priority this year along with healthcare and energy reforms," Sen. Reid said during the interview.  
 Meanwhile, the senator also said that the comprehensive bill on immigration reform will focus on family reunification.  
 Sen. Reid once told a gathering of Filipino Americans in Las Vegas that he is also frustrated with the immigration backlog that forces families to wait several decades to be reunited in the US.  
 With the current backlog at the United States Citizenship and Immigration office, immigrant petitions for family members can take more than 20 years to be processed.  
 Earlier this year, Sen. Reid told reporters in Washington DC that a comprehensive immigration reform bill is "going to happen at this (legislative) session, possibly within the year."  
 The Democrat senator, who is the Senate majority leader, has control over the Senate's legislative calendar.  
 While not admitting that the comprehensive immigration bill includes an amnesty, Sen. Reid indicated that individuals who are in the US illegally will not be apprehended.  
 He noted that individuals also need to wait for US citizenship consideration behind applicants who have immigrated legally. (*Dymphna Calica-La Putt/AJPress*)

# Feds sign up locals to help enforce immigration

by **SUZANNE GAMBOA**  
*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON – The Obama administration has signed up 55 state and local law enforcement agencies to help enforce immigration laws, including an Arizona county sheriff under investigation for racial profiling, the Homeland Security Department announced Friday.  
 Another 12 agreements have been approved and are awaiting local or state approval.  
 The administration had previously suspended the program, which critics say was mismanaged and allowed racial profiling and discrimination. Before it was suspended, there had been 66 local and state agencies participating.  
 Under the new agreement, Arizona Sheriff Joe Arpaio and his deputies will be able to check whether inmates in the Maricopa County jail are in the country legally. But they will not be given the power to arrest immigration



REBUILDING. US soldiers lend a hand in building classrooms at the San Juan Bano Elementary School in Arayat, Pampanga where 12 people were killed in a landslide. Philstar.com Photo

# House passes resolution urging US...

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In the resolution entitled "Expressing sympathy for the citizens of the Philippines dealing with Tropical Storm Ketsana and Typhoon Parma," Speier urged US President Barack Obama to continue supporting relief efforts in the Philippines in terms of logistical, transportation and financial assistance.  
 "The historical and cultural links between the United States and the Philippines runs deeper than any flood waters. I am honored that I represent the largest Filipino American community of any district in the continental United States," Rep. Speier said.  
 One week after typhoon Ketsana ravaged parts of Metro Manila, typhoon Parma struck Luzon, the heart of the Philippine agricultural region, which supplies half of the nation's supply of rice. The typhoon decimated roads, bridges, entire villages and vast tracts of rice paddies waiting to be harvested later this month.  
 "It is clear that the people of the Philippines will be profoundly affected by these twin tragedies long after the water has receded and the streets swept clean of mud and debris," Rep. Speier added.  
 HR 800 recognizes the hardship caused by Typhoons Ketsana and Parma and "salutes the

resilience and strength of our friends the Filipino people."  
 This resolution urges the United States government to continue providing emergency relief, logistical support and financial assistance to the Philippines and to work with Philippine officials and non-governmental organizations to improve disaster preparedness programs in the country to mitigate heartbreak, havoc and loss of life that could be caused by future storms.  
 "The 12th Congressional District is home to more Filipino Americans than any other in the country. As a resident here all my life, I know about the invaluable contributions Filipino Americans make to the very fabric of our society," Speier said in an earlier interview.  
 Nationally, Americans of Filipino descent are the second largest population of Asian Americans in our country numbering some 3.1 million Americans, according to her.  
 The congresswoman also urged her colleagues to support HR 800 "to show our friends, the good people of the Philippines that as they stood with us in World War II, the American people stand with them during this time of greatest need."  
 The Resolution passed by unanimous consent, with both Democrats and Republicans speaking in support. (*Momar G. Visaya/AJPress*)

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