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## PILIPINO ACADEMIC STUDENT SERVICES

*Committed to the recruitment and retention of Pilipinos into higher education*

# PASS IT ON

## Spring 2012 Edition

By Donna-Jo (DeeJay) Pepito and Jacqueline Lee

Welcome to the last issue of PASS IT ON for the 2011-2012 school year! The External and Public Relations components are more than proud of the three issues we've been able to publish this year and we hope that our newsletters have been able to keep our



alumni and community members as up-to-date as possible. As we wrap up this year, we reflect on my experience as staff members. We always say that going into the PASS staff experience, you never know what to expect, you never know what exactly you're getting yourself in to. But throughout the course of the year, we each reached a point of defining what it meant to be on

a staff together in different ways. Undoubtedly, the PASS 27 Staff, titled this year: the PASS FORCE, have been through a lot of ups and downs throughout the year. We've crisis managed some of the most unexpected events, we've laughed, we've cried, but most of all, we've grown so much since the beginning and into more than just a staff, we've grown into a family.

We would like to call special attention to three staff positions that were not filled for next year: Public Relations Coordinator, Gender Awareness and Sexuality Coordinator, and for the second year now, Student Affairs Advisor. The PASS 28 Staff will again be under several constraints, having to restructure and redistribute responsibilities to compensate for these missing staff positions. Because of this, we encourage the community and past PASS staffers to really support the new and upcoming PASS 28 Staff by volunteering and helping fulfill the responsibilities of the missing staff positions. With Public Relations, each coordinator is going to have to be responsible for creating and advertising their own flyers and the External Relations Coordinator will have to maintain the PASS website and newsletter alone. We hope that community members help continue to facilitate the GSAC spaces: biyuti and Womyn's Committee and the Student Affairs Advisor position will again be shared between the Retention component and the Executive Director. The spaces and programs that PASS maintains are all integral pieces that contribute to the recruitment and retention of our community. We hope that with three entire positions left empty this year, the community is empowered to participate more and ensure that PASS' programming is kept alive—so we challenge you to ask and answer the question: what does it mean when PASS has had a lack of applicants and staff positions for two years in a row now?

As we go on to do our own things, on behalf of PASS 27, we pass the torches on to our successors with complete confidence that they will continue on PASS' commitment to recruiting and retaining Pilipin@s into higher education. Together, we wish the next PASS 28 all the best of luck...may the FORCE be with you.

## Gender & Sexuality Awareness Component Retreat 2012

By Justine Velasquez

This year's Gender and Sexuality Awareness Component Retreat was in Bodega Bay, California. It was the perfect little sanctuary to reflect and to truly survey our identities. Throughout the weekend, we bonded, shared stories, laughed, cried, taught, and learned. We had several workshops and activities that prompted us to be more aware of ourselves and others. We began with a self-exploration workshop where we had

to present what we thought are our identities through artwork, which provided an avenue for us to really re-discover what we are and what we want to be.

We also discussed the importance of words in our movement and in our struggles. The activity gave folks an understanding of where many words we use

come from and how we might not have known or were able to recognize how the words we use can hold so much weight or have an impact on people. We also had an activity involving stereotypes and gender roles, wherein we treated people according to the adjective stuck to their foreheads. We made some interesting conclusions



about how society classifies people in terms of their sex and gender.

Another topic we discussed was about what it means to be gay and what it means to be Pilipina through a mixture of history, video clips, and activities which asked attendees define on their own what these identities meant. This weekend truly challenged

our perspectives and taught us to view everything with a critical eye.

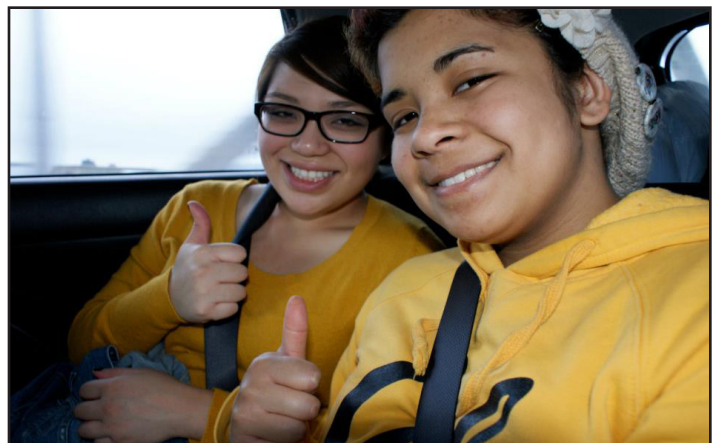
During this weekend, we also learned how important it is to truly know and understand our identities, and to defend those identities defiantly. We learned all of this by delving into what we think we are and what we think our place is. We learned all of this also by listening to each other, experiencing with each other, and understanding each other.

The many ways in which we interacted with one another, whether it be by an activity of acting out different scenarios known as the "theater of the oppressed" or reclaiming negative or derogatory words to have a positive meaning.

This weekend was emotional and informative. It truly ignited in us the passion we have for issues surrounding gender and sexuality awareness. During this time, we were all moved. Within a span of a couple of days, we were able to explore ourselves and each other and discovered what it means to be a community, to be an ally, to be ourselves.

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**Above:** Justine, an intern for the Gender & Sexuality Awareness Component poses in an activity in which attendees were split into teams to take pictures that were to depict different political topics around sexuality and gender. In the image above, the topic is "White as the Ideal Beauty." **Photo by Jason Maier.** **Below:** various photos from the retreat. **Photos by Djenilin Mallari.**





## Passing on the Spirit: a Reflection on Senior Weekend

By Klyde Flores

What is the happiest moment of your life? Can you pin point it down immediately, singling out a memory and say “This is the best damn thing I’ve experienced” without a doubt? I can.

Last year, before I attended UC Berkeley, I lived alone in high school while my father lived with his girlfriend in another city. Though he still provided for me financially, I had lost what it meant to have a close connection with anyone. And so, I lived in an empty apartment. Alone and by myself, I was fazed by my own daily existence. By March, when I received my college acceptances, my reaction was a simple “oh.” I had no idea what it meant to be accepted to college. I got into Berkeley? Great. So what? Who cares, right?

My invitation to Senior Weekend during my senior year of high school changed that mentality. Visiting Cal for the first time was more surreal than I could have ever imagined. The buildings I had longed to see for years were right in front of me. The ground that I had wanted to kiss below me. Most importantly, the people I had

ing what it means to be Pilipino.

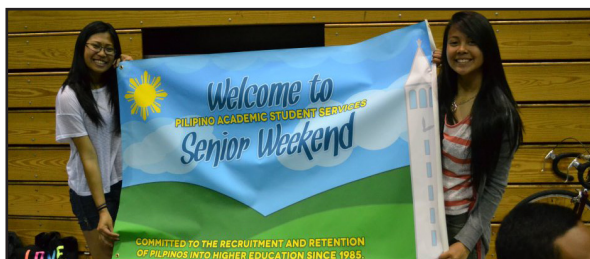
I imagine that’s how some of the seniors at this year’s Senior Weekend were feeling. Even though I am no longer the one catered to, I still see myself in the next generation of students. I saw through how the seniors reacted: that the feelings and experiences I had as an attendee last year were essentially passed onto this new generation of students.

From making bonds with my pamilya, volunteers, and other attendees, as well as participating in the scavenger hunt in San Francisco and all of the other programming that went on, it was nice to see that the spirit of the event continued on this year. For me, Senior Weekend was the beginning of something beautiful and is the best thing I have ever experienced. The magic of Senior Weekend is alive in me as well as the other students who have gone through this program, and I’m passing it on.



dreamt of meeting were all around me. “Finally!” I thought to myself. A sneak-peak at a new chance at life and a glimpse at question-

*Photos by Aldrin Carreon. Above: Klyde Flores at welcoming in Haas Pavillion for Senior Weekend 2011. Below: various photos of Senior Weekend 2012.*



*Top Left: Interns Alyson de la Rosa and Trixy Manansala model our next welcome sign. Bottom Left: A group photo of the Senior Weekend 2012 attendees post-scamper hunt. Middle: Executive Director Brian Villa directs seniors to our meeting spot using a handmade sign at the end of the Multicultural Banquet. Top Right: Senior Weekend attendee 2008 Razel Augustino sings the Senior Weekend song live for the last time at closing, a song originally penned by her sister Aizel in 2008.*



## Invisible Runway: political fashion show

By Aurora Doreza

I could see the lights at the end of the runway as I waited in anticipation for my cue. I was slightly nervous, but I fully understood that what I was doing was for a good cause. I carried a cardboard sign, with the words “For a Better Tomorrow,” spelled out in red ink. As the previous model finally reached the audience and was preparing to come back, I adjusted my pink-and-ivory dress and took a deep breath. It was my turn.

As I raised the sign high into the air, I realized that I was making a difference in my own little way. I was helping to raise funds for an AB540 scholarship that could potentially allow an undocumented student to pursue higher education, a scholarship with the potential to break both economic and social boundaries. Most importantly, this show

was an opportunity for undocumented students to be seen and recognized for their worth and contribution to the community.

The individual stories of these immigrants have been unheard and lost in translation, with few venues for expression. Invisible Runway was a political fashion show, spearheaded by {m}aganda Magazine, that allowed these stories to be visible, through an innovative mix of musical performances, spoken word, fashion design, and artwork. Having their struggles and battles represented through artistic means was not only a display of passion and creativity of the students, (documented or not) but an indication of the hope in striv-

ing for a more just and equal world.

Being part of the show was a new and exciting experience for me, and I will never forget the awareness I’ve gained and the stories I’ve heard through this experi-



ence. Through Invisible Runway, in the effort to fight for a better tomorrow, the voices of that have been least heard and the people who have lived in obscurity have finally been given the chance to be seen – to be visible to the community and society as a whole.

*Photos by Dominique Martinez. Above: Executive Director Brian Villa poses with Advocacy Intern Aurora Doreza, Gender & Sexuality Awareness Coordinator Kristin Aquino, and Assistant Director of Internal Affairs Eric Carnaje with the collection that he designed on behalf of PASS. Below: each of the models representing Brian's collection as PASS' contribution to the show and aiding the cause delivers a message.*



## Are We the 99%?

By Jordan Medina

Twelve o'clock strikes the Campanile, and as you exit your class and walk towards Upper Sproul, you notice a crowd of people listening to a speech about budget cuts, the privatization of education, and marginalized communities affected by it the most.

There's talk about undocumented and AB 540 Students (although they use the terms interchangeably, which is problematic in itself) with neither of them there. "We are the 99%" becomes more of an oxymoron than a statement of solidarity.

The Occupy Wall Street Movement is a movement that seeks to end the enormous economic disparities that exist today (i.e.

in 2007, 42% of the wealth in our country belonged to the top 1% of the population while the bottom 80% owned only 8% of the total wealth). Last Fall, the movement started gaining momentum and spread like wildfire.

While it may be tempting to jump on the Occupy bandwagon (like the folks

who started Occupy Cal), it is important to be critical of popular movements such as these.

One problematic feature of Occupy Cal and its ardent supporters is privilege; in particular, the privilege to protest. Protesting has become integrated into Berkeley culture with historical events such as the Third World Liberation Front and the Free Speech Movement. So it's easy to forget that not everyone has the capability to mobilize without consequence, whether it's the risk of deportation or a history of oppression associated with the color of one's skin.

Other problematic features of the Occupy movement are questions of language ("Occupy") and transparency (who's included/excluded in organizing days of action). The real question for our community isn't whether or not we support the Occupy Movement; it's what we're going to do about it.



*Photo by Anthony Bongco. Staff Members and Interns stand on Salvio Steps as Advocacy Coordinator Maria Vallarta delivers a passionate speech on how the budget cuts play a role in the lives of students of color.*

But something seems amiss. There's talk about marginalized communities of color without their presence.

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