

**PHILIPPINE CONSULATE GENERAL
PRESS RELEASE**

9 July 2007



The design plan of the Philippine Nationality Room to be housed in the Cathedral of Learning



The Cathedral of Learning, a historic landmark, is the second-tallest education building in the world—42 stories and 535 feet tall. It is also the geographic and traditional heart of the University of Pittsburgh.



Consul General Rebong looks at the plan for the Philippine Nationality Room



Consul General Rebong and the Filipino American Association of Pittsburgh at the Nationality Rooms Open House.

**Philippine Nationality Room developing at the University of Pittsburgh.
Community Help Needed in Making a Historical and Cultural Cornerstone.**

A Philippine cultural and historical cornerstone is being built at the University of Pittsburgh's historic Cathedral of Learning. Joining the 26 other classrooms exceptionally built by other European, Asian and American countries, the Filipino American Association of Pittsburgh (FAAP), headed by its 2007 President, Tina Purpura and Architect Warren Bulseco is spearheading this important project to ensure that the classroom commemorates the history, culture, and people of the Philippines. They have

finished the design process and are now raising fund to begin building the room. This unique assembly of rooms attract 40,000 visitors annually and provide spaces for classes, meetings, and cultural activities.

The Philippine Nationality Classroom will be designed by noted Philippine Architects Cristina Turalba, Eliseo Art Silva and local design consultants. With materials, furniture and art pieces created by artisans and craftsman from the Philippines, the design will have museum quality standards, and will comply with the Nationality Rooms' design guidelines and the University of Pittsburgh's construction guidelines. The historical period to be depicted should predate 1787, the date of the U.S. Constitution and the founding of the University of Pittsburgh, as required by the University. .

For the 26 other rooms, community members of participating countries contributed with generous support, often providing architects, artists, materials, and monetary gifts to assure authenticity and superb quality in their classrooms. FAAP hopes for the same for the Philippine Room.

Design search:

Over 5 years of research and consultation with experts and artists to decide on this most important element of the project resulted in three concepts for consideration: Bahay Kubo, Da-Pay, and Bahay na Bato

Bahay Kubo (Nipa Hut) - A rural dwelling on stilts with thatch roofs, and walls made of bamboo, grass, leaves, and reeds. Proposal from the student laboratory of Heritage and Conservation Architect Rene Mata of the University of the Philippines, College of Architecture.

Dap-ay - A circular stone-paved court structure which served as a community space for villagers in pre-colonial days. Proposal by artist Eliseo Art Silva of Philadelphia.

Bahay-na-Bato(Stone Ancestral House) - A Spanish-influenced stately house with stone lower walls and a wooden upper story with high ceilings, sliding capiz shell windows, balustrades, and wood floors and walls. Proposal by Heritage and Conservation Architect and author Cristina V. Turalba of the University of the Philippines, College of Architecture.

Design concept selection:

At a meeting on September 13, 2006, the FAAP PNR committee evaluated the three concepts to select the proposed design for the Philippine Nationality Room. Keeping in mind the principles set forth by the University for the creation of the Nationality Rooms, the committee developed a rigid set of criteria. This included uniqueness (distinctly Filipino), timelessness, ability to promote the country, and finally, its ability to tell the story and the soul of the Filipino. The Bahay-na-Bato (Stone Ancestral House) concept was unanimously voted as the proposed design for the Philippine Nationality Room.

The winning Bahay-na-Bato concept was unveiled to the FAAP membership at its 50th Anniversary Ball on October 28, 2006. Enthusiastic support was evident from the beginning financial contributions generated that evening.

FAAP still needs your help in raising \$250,000 - the projected cost of building a world-class classroom and cultural cornerstone. Their goal is to raise 80% of that amount so they can start building soon.

How to help:

1. Make a tax-deductible monetary contribution.

Your monetary donations can be made directly to the University of Pittsburgh. Please make your personal check or money order payable to:

The Treasurer - Philippine Nationality Room
University of Pittsburgh
Nationality Rooms and Cultural Exchange Programs
1209 Cathedral of Learning
Pittsburgh, PA 15260

The Philippine Nationality Room committee is under the Filipino American Association of Pittsburgh (FAAP). It is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization which promotes culture, education, and charity while preserving, sharing, and enhancing the Philippine culture in the Pittsburgh community.

2. Develop a network of supporters by providing contact information of potential donors, or by hosting gatherings of Filipino American communities for raising awareness of the PNR.

Viewing by tour and by websites:

Since 1944, members of Quo Vadis, a student organization conduct guided tours for nearly 30,000 visitors each year.

For official tours, call phone/tours 412-624-6000 or email natrooms@pitt.edu

Hours Mon. - Fri.:

9:00 am - 2:30 pm (last tour)

Sat.:Sun./Holidays 11:00 am - 2:30 pm (last tour)

Closed on Thanksgiving Day, December 24, 25, 26, New Year's Day

Fees: Adults \$3, Youths ages 8-18 \$1.00

For a FAAP guided tour of the Cathedral of Learning, and the Nationality Rooms in July and December 2007, please contact Tina Purpura and Melody Mendoza at 412-344-6041 or email FAAPday@thefaap.org.

To view the plan for the Philippine nationality rooms and for further information, please visit www.thefaap.org/pnr

For a virtual tour of the existing Nationality Rooms <http://www.pitt.edu/~natrooms>

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