



Villar Foundation, GoNegosyo launch first OFW & Family Summit
Seminars on entrepreneurship, exhibits of business opportunities inspired OFWs to be entrepreneurs

The launch of ‘The 1st OFW & Family Summit 2011: Kabuhayan Para sa Kinabukasan’, which will be a yearly event of the Villar Foundation and GoNegosyo, was very well attended by overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) and their families.

“This summit was really conceptualized for our OFWs and their families. So we really ensured that every aspect of the event—from the program to the exhibitors, is focused on them. We want the summit to be really worthwhile, educational and inspirational for all of them,” said Senator Manny Villar, Chairman of the Villar Foundation, who is a staunch supporter of OFWs.

Various speakers and Villar himself (as keynote speaker) provided the OFWs and the other attendees with insights and tips on entrepreneurship, from basic how-tos on starting a business and financing procedures.

According to Villar, providing OFWs and families with needed business know-how and inspiring them with success stories, can help them better handle their hard-earned money.

“How many times have we heard sad stories of OFWs who returned to the country without any savings . Their hard – earned amounted to nothing. We (at Villar Foundation) want to help them use and invest their money wisely so they can raise themselves out of property.

OFWs-turned-entrepreneurs inspired the audience with their success stories. Former Saudi Arabia-based OFW Prudencio Garcia returned home to help out in their family business Meken, now one of the leading meat companies. Myrna Padilla, a former domestic helper, is now the owner of a BPO company.

The other speakers in the summit were Blas F. Ople Policy Center's Toots Ople, Leonardo Dayao Sr. of Puregold, Dean Pax Lapid of Entrepreneur School of Asia, Natasha's Victoria Villa, Hortaleza's Dra. Rosalinda Hortaleza, and Armanda Bartolome of GMB Franchise Developers.

“This yearly OFW summit is our way of giving importance to OFWs who continue to prop up the country's economy with their remittances. It is not enough to repatriate them when they get into trouble, which we have been continuously doing. We also need to equip them with know-how and skills so they can use or invest their hard-earned money wisely,” said Villar Foundation's Managing Director Cynthia A. Villar.

The numerous exhibitors in the summit, which are involved in franchising and direct selling among others presented the OFWs with business ideas and opportunities. The Villar Foundation also raffled off a Camella house and lot. GoNegosyo also gave away Swift and Kettle Corn cart businesses. Various other prizes and giveaways were also provided by exhibitors and sponsors.

Resource persons from the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) and the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) also spoke about OFW-related matters and bank financing, respectively. OFW-related government agencies such as OWWA, Department of Labor & Employment (DOLE), Philippine Overseas Employment Agency (POEA), Department of Trade & Industry, and Commission on Filipino Overseas also had information booths. ###