

Office of Sen. Manny Villar

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NEWS RELEASE

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Kapampangans honor Manny Villar

Sen. Manny Villar received yesterday the Most Outstanding Kapampangan Award (MOKA) at Bren Guiao Convention Center in San Fernando, Pampanga.

The award was given yearly to Kapampangans who contributed significantly to the welfare of the province. Villar was chosen in the business and entrepreneurship category in recognition of his extraordinary achievements in the field.

"I have always been proud of my Kapampangan lineage. That is why I make it a point to bring something back to the province whenever I can as a senator and also as chairman of the Villar foundation," Villar said.

It was not widely-known that Villar is a true-blooded Kapampangan although he was born in Moriones, Tondo. His maternal grandfather, Nicolas David Bamba, came from Purok Bamba, Barangay San Nicolas in Sasmuan. His mother, Curita Bamba, lived in Orani, Bataan, which was originally part of the Kapampangan Province.

Known as Mr. Sipag at Tiyaga, Villar's rags to riches story inspired many entrepreneurs. As a young boy, he sold seafood at the Divisoria market. He started his real estate business with a capital of only P10,000 and delivered sand and gravel to construction sites. His company, Vista Land, grew to become the largest house-building company in the country today.

Also this year's recipients were PSupt. Bernardo Perez, law enforcement; Felix Tienzo, social service; Patrick Cura, youth service; Leonardo Canlas, education; Norman de Jesus, agriculture; Fr. Victor Nicomedes Nicdao, religion; Lillian Borromeo, culture; John Manalili, mass media; Catalina Bagasina, government service; Allan Pineda (Apl.de.Ap), arts, and Ma. Miguelita Santiago, outstanding honorary Kapampangan.

Awardees were chosen through a rigid selection process by a committee comprised of prominent individuals who excelled in different fields. To date, more than 400 individuals were awarded the MOKA trophy. Since its inception in 1978, the awards became a highlight of the Pampanga Day celebration.

Villar, Nacionalista Party president, was accompanied by wife Cynthia during the awarding ceremony. The Villar couple has spearheaded through the Villar Foundation numerous charitable and livelihood projects in the province. ###