

OCTOBER IS FILIPINO HISTORY MONTH



CFG RESIDENCY OUTREACH RESOURCE LIBRARY

OCTOBER 2020



CARMELYN VEDAR
RESIDENCY OUTREACH MANAGER
CFG HEALTH NETWORK

"MY EARLY YEARS WERE DEFINITELY FILLED WITH A SENSE OF BELONGING, LOVE, AND LOTS AND LOTS OF GOOD FOOD."

By Carmelyn Vedar

I was born and raised in the Philippines since I was about 4 years old. Some of my earliest memories include riding tricycles and jeepneys, playing and showering during a rainfall, participating in one of many fiestas and processions, and running races against my cousins in our tsinelas (flip flops) during the country's frequent brownouts. My neighborhood was my home. Everyone knew everyone. They were either your cousin, your Tita, Tito, Lola (grandmother), or Lolo (grandfather). My early years were definitely filled with a sense of belonging, love, and lots and lots of good food.

"AS A TEENAGER, I WAS LUCKY ENOUGH TO FIND THE MUTYA PHILIPPINE DANCE COMPANY BASED IN PHILADELPHIA TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE COUNTRY I LEFT TO PURSUE THE AMERICAN DREAM.

The country is made up of over 7,000 islands. There is so much variety in my country from climate, to languages (over 100), to religion, to ethnic groups, socioeconomic classes, and landscapes. With recent exposure from travel shows and social media, the Philippines has definitely come a long way in the tourism industry. People come from all over the world to experience our rice paddies, megacities, wildlife, volcanos, world-class surf and diving spots, and THE most amazing beaches you'll ever experience.

As a teenager, I was lucky enough to find the Mutya Philippine Dance Company based in Philadelphia to learn more about the country I left to pursue the American dream. MUTYA is a performing group and a youth organization that provides in-depth education to Filipino-American youth about their heritage. As a dancer for this organization, I remember practicing every Sunday and sometimes more as we prepare to entertain the community with Filipino dance and song. If you've ever seen that dance where you jump through closing bamboo sticks in hopes of not getting your bare feet stuck, I did that! But what most people don't know is that in addition to the rural dances like Tinikling, we also showcase dances from the tribal Igorot region, the beautiful movement of the Moro people with cool instruments like the kulintang, or the beautiful costumes and dance of the Spanish influenced Maria Clara.

In 2015, the dance troupe celebrated its 25th year anniversary. I was asked to return for this milestone and was honored to be part of something so amazing. If you could spare 10 minutes, I encourage you to watch this brief recap that really shows the pride we have for our culture: www.vimeo.com/136875258

There is so much more I can go on about the Filipino culture. But I will end with a discussion of the people. The Filipino people are probably one of the most hospitable people you can ever know. In most Filipino gatherings involving food, you should probably bring a container because we love to send you home with food.

We love to cook, at least enough for a few days because you never know who you will need to feed.

Although Filipinos work hard and can be the most reliable in the workforce, our strong family bond always comes first and we will drop everything for our closest family and friends. Filipinos are generous, kind and loving. So if you get a chance, give a safe, socially distanced air hug to a Filipino. You may just have a friend for life.



Contact Author:

Carmelyn Vedar
Residency Outreach Manager
CFG Health Network
Cell: 215-681-5280
cvedar@cfgpc.com
www.cfghealthnetwork.com



Follow us!



“

“FILIPINOS ARE GENEROUS, KIND AND LOVING.”