



## SYSTEMS PLUS COLLEGE FOUNDATION

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (#2013-09) (Tuesday, September 24, 2013)**

### ***Filipino Military AmerAsian Socioeconomic and Mental Health Challenges Most Closely Resemble Aggravated Refugee and Immigrant Problems SPCF Professor Tells Singapore's ICEASS 2013 Education Conference***

**SINGAPORE** -- Researchers at the Philippine Amerasian Research Center (PARC) of Systems Plus College Foundation (SPCF College) in Angeles, Pampanga, the Philippines believe socioeconomic and psychological problems most frequently confronting an estimated 200,000-to-250,000 military Filipino Amerasians “appear to most closely resemble those encountered by aggravated immigrant, displaced person (DP) and stressed refugee populations. It’s where additional study avenues are taking us on this population cohort and we need to develop further empirical evidence to buttress that hypothesis,” P.C. Kutschera, PhD, PARC Director, a New York State licensed social worker and Visiting Professor at SPCF College told an education panel at the International Conference on Education and Social Sciences (ICEASS 2013) conducted 14-15 September 2013 at the Republic of Singapore’s Grand Copthorne Waterfront Hotel.

Executive Administrator Candice Chang of the Taipei, Taiwan-based Higher Education Forum, sponsors and organizers of ICEASS 2013-Singapore, praised Dr. Kutschera and SPCF College for making the presentation on the topic which historically has had little empirical research devoted to it. She also thanked Dr. Kutschera personally for moderating one of six special education panels at the two-day education and social services conclave which featured research papers, special discussion panels and poster presentations from academics, faculty, commerce and industry representatives, research fellows, and doctoral and graduate students from at least five continents.

The research paper, co-authored with Fort Lauderdale, FL, U.S.-based Professor Dr. Marie A. Caputi, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Walden University, Minneapolis, MN and Professor Jose Maria G. Pelayo III, PARC’s Deputy Director and an SPCF Psychology Faculty, was titled “Formulating Mental Health Treatment Paradigms for Military Filipino Amerasians: A Social Work Education Challenge.” It includes an overview and discussion of an SPCF College Department of Social Work course called “Social Work Practice with Amerasians.” The course essentially provides a geo-political, social history and generalist and clinical/psychiatric social work synopsis of historical, socioeconomic, psychological and

mental health issues confronting military Amerasians. PARC claims the course is the only one of its kind in existence either in East/Southeast Asia or the U.S. mainland.

Professor J. Leo Vicente A. Tago, SPCF's Vice President for Academic Affairs, said the Singapore research paper "is in keeping with SPCF's continuing efforts to promote empirical research on at risk Amerasians abroad and is part of the college's triad national and global mission which also includes a tradition of instructional excellence and community service." Echoing Professor Tago's words, Kutschera told the conference session, "this small, private, non-sectarian liberal arts and information technology college we like to say euphemistically is located 'just somewhere in Central Luzon' must be held up for special recognition. Why? Because of its idealistic leadership and courage and commitment to social inquiry by making evidence-based study of marginalized Amerasians, who inhabit the fabled AMO (Angeles, Metro Manila and Olongapo) Amerasian Triangle, a public service priority."

Military Amerasians in the Philippines, the abandoned progeny of U.S. military servicemen (mostly from air force, marine and navy branches) including private corporate military contractors and federal government employees, were born in the archipelago dating to the days of U.S. colonial and Commonwealth occupation, the World War Era, to independence and creation of the Republic of the Philippines (1898- 1946). Their birthing continued through the Cold War- Vietnam War, bases withdrawal eras (1946-1992) to the present. Although most estimates placed the number at 50,000 children and adolescents in 1991-1992 when the Philippine Senate rejected renewal of the RP-US Military Bases Treaty, Kutschera said preliminary projections place the number of Amerasians of all ages including 2<sup>nd</sup> generation descendants between 200,000-250,000 and possibly many more. A PARC research paper presented at the October, 2012 ICOPHIL-9 Conference (International Conference on the Philippines) at Michigan State University, asserted the numbers are so large Amerasians should have been classified as a special Diaspora population decades ago.

Dr. Kutschera said PARC-SPCF College s looking at developing an additional course curricula on social work treatment with Amerasians. "It would be the next logical step considering that one of the original reasons why the course was formulated was driven by the large number of Amerasians residing in the AMO Triangle; The chances of a future social work student encountering a troubled, socioeconomically stressed or psychologically at risk Amerasian are quite high." The paper also reported that other reasons for the course included the need for future development of "effective intervention strategies" aimed at dealing with Amerasians and their unique environment and quality of life circumstances. The 3-credit elective course, offered to B.S.S.W. undergraduates, was also long overdue from an academic, social conscience, humanitarian and community service perspective according to Professor Tago and Dr. Paulo O. J. Fuller, D.Phil, University at Oxford, former SPCF College of Social Work Dean.

SPCF College is located inside the AMO Amerasian Triangle, believed to contain the highest concentration of Anglo, African, Hispanic (Latino) and Native American biracial military Amerasians abandoned, orphaned or stranded in East/Southeast Asia. The AMO Triangle contained U.S. military personnel and long-standing bases, including the huge Subic Bay-Cubi Point naval complex, Olongapo; Clark air base, Angeles, and Crow Valley Gunnery Range, Tarlac, among dozens of other installations, that were abruptly expelled from the islands by the Philippine Senate in 1991-1992.