



Speech and Presentation

Alma G. Bulawan
Buklod President



In behalf of my family, allow me to extend my sincere appreciation to everyone who made this award possible for me. To Ms. Margo Okazawa-Rey, Suzuyo Takazato-san, and Ms. Jean Enriquez for the nomination -- you have created a very wonderful person out of me. Thank you so much. It is heartwarming to know that there are people who recognize my efforts in advancing women's rights and welfare.


To my Buklod family and co-survivors, I could not thank you enough for all your help and encouragement. Without you, and without Buklod, this award will just be a dream. I am very fortunate indeed, that I have become part of this family. So, to all of you, this award is for you. I have become what I am today, because of you.



This Yayori award is for everyone, not just for women advocates like me. It is for every woman too, that they may choose to come out of their comfort zones, speak up and act on our collective dreams of a world free from discrimination and violence.


This Yayori award is not the culmination of my efforts and initiatives on women rights and issues, but rather a beginning of firmer resolve to dedicate my life in championing human rights issues, especially that of the women, the children and the oppressed...

Rest assured that I will continue to work for women who like me have unfortunate experiences so that I may become a continuing inspiration for them to change their lives and to continue making a difference in the lives of others.




I want to share with all of you how I became involved in organizing Buklod. I was formerly working in the bar, in Olongapo City where the US Military Bases were present. I was in the prostitution bar for almost 5 years as both waitress and entertainer.

While there, I met some women advocates -- Brenda Stolztfus , the late Adul De Leon and the late Bullet Marasigan. I was organized in 1984. In 1987, Buklod was formed and I started to work as organizer who visited the clubs and prostitution bars to talk to women. I attended numerous local, national and international conferences and forums as voices of marginalized and discriminated women rang far and loud.




When Buklod became a “people’s organization” (where all victims-survivors of trafficking and prostitution run the organization on their own), I become the President. I continued working, helping women who are victims of prostitution and trafficking.

In 2004, I decided to ran as a City Councilor of Olongapo City so that I can help more women, not only victims-survivors of prostitution and trafficking, but also women who are victims of other forms of exploitation and abuse. I lost, but as a result, Buklod was recognized by the City Government as a strong organization working with women.



Because of my work in Buklod, in March 8, 2005, I was awarded the “*Pagkilala sa Katangi-tanging Ambag sa Ika-100 taon ng Peminismo sa Pilipinas*” (or Recognition of Unique Contribution in the 100th Year of Feminism in the Philippines) by the Women Feminist group. In April 2009,

I also received an award from Soroptimist International as one of the “*Unsung Women Heroes*” in recognition of my relentless campaign to bring the plight of women in prostitution to the attention of the world, for my actively work in pushing for the passage of the Anti-Prostitution Bill, and for my desire to build a different future for sexually and economically exploited women through education, social and livelihood alternatives.



Buklod is also a drop in center for women in prostitution outside the former U.S. Subic Naval Base. Our organization's members are 85 survivors , 50 women in the streets and 30 women who are still in bars, clubs and karaoke. Our main program is Organizing and Education. In our organization, there are five staff members and 3 volunteers, who are assisting to organize the women. In organizing, we visit prostitution establishments and the women's houses twice a week. Also, we monitor the ships coming in Subic Bay Freeport Zone, or formerly American Military Bases.

20 years past the removal of the US Bases in our country, but prostitution and trafficking continues to grow in our country, especially in Olongapo city, where I live, as well as in Angeles City. And this is because of the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) and the Joint Military Exercises with Philippine military. The American ships still come to our country since 2008, almost every month. As a result, prostitution and trafficking increase.

Thousands of Asbestosis victims are still awaiting full compensation from the asbestos company in the US. Many of them have died for waiting. The Amerasian children's problems are not yet addressed (such as lack of support, lack of education, and lack of opportunities in job placement because of their color) . There is also the issue of people who became victims of toxic wastes both from the previous bases and the current docking ships.

Barhopping



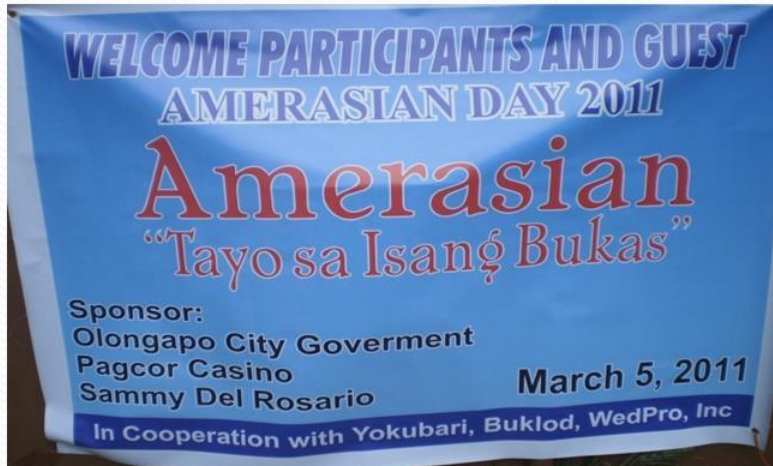
Ships docked at the Alava Pier, Subic Bay Freeport Zone.



Visit house and Street



Amerasian



Amerasians mobilizing, organizing, networking and advocating for their rights



EDUCATION

Reproductive health Seminar



Orientation on Prostitution and Trafficking / Gender Sensitivity Workshop



Violence Against Women and Human Right Seminar



Our Livelihood Project



Cookies Making



Reflexology and Swedish Massage Training



Alternative Learning System(Adult Education)



And because some women did not finish their education we conduct different skills training and livelihood, and also if the women want to finish her elementary and secondary, We conduct an Alternative Learning System (ALS) in our office. We talked to the Department of Education to provide a teacher. Starting 2008, there are 10 women who have passed the examinations and now they study college. The ages of women who are in ALS are 22 to 55 years. Also, we help send the children of women survivors to school. We assist 75 children but if there children ages 18 above, they are included in the Alternative Learning System.

Women and Children under school assistance



Mobilization Against Mining and Coal Power



Celebration 18th Day Campaign to end VAW



Protest Against Zambales Mayor



Mobilization



International meeting and exposure group





MARAMING SALAMAT !!

Thank You Very Much!!!!