

Supportive community, pride in heritage inspire Metro West Princess

By Maileen Hamto
The Asian Reporter

Michaela Canete holds the distinction of being the first Metro West Princess to represent both Century High School and the City of Hillsboro on the Rose Festival Court. Earning the princess crown out of the competitive roster of talented young women from Washington County high schools, Michaela remains humble and grounded.

“It’s a wonderful opportunity to tell the Portland area about Century High School and the Hillsboro community,” she said. “I’m grateful for the encouragement and support of the community.”

Michaela, who was born in Mandaluyong, near the Philippine capital of Manila, immigrated with her family to the United States when she was seven years old. The transition hasn’t always been easy, but she learned much from the challenges of acculturating to her adopted home. Michaela said she feels grateful to be part of the supportive Filipino-American family and community in the area.

“As a Filipina growing up in the U.S., I have been bullied,” Michaela says. “There have been instances when the color of my skin has affected the way people look at me. As time went by, I developed a support system, and embraced my culture.”

Establishing roots in Washington County, the Canetes have maintained a deep sense of ethnic pride as well as strong connections to the local community. Michaela is not only active in her school, but has also served as a City of Hillsboro intern and a member of the city’s Youth Advisory Council.

“Hillsboro’s community slogan is ‘Grow great things,’” she said. “I am most proud of the sense of welcome in this community, particularly for its diverse population. It’s a community where people want to come and stay.”

“While I see myself travelling in the



Photo/Prince Charming Photography



Photo courtesy of @iloveprincecanete

ETHNIC PRIDE & COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS. Michaela Canete (left photo) is seen with her family (right photo, clockwise from top left — Michaela, mother Eleanor, father Larry, sister Krystella Charmaine, and brother Bryce) in a photo taken during a family Christmas gathering. Canete is representing Century High School as its 2017 Rose Festival princess. The Portland Rose Festival’s Queen’s Coronation takes place Saturday, June 10 at Portland’s Veterans Memorial Coliseum.

future,” she said. “Hillsboro will always be home. It will always provide safety and a sense of community.”

Travelling back to the Philippines in 2013 has opened Michaela’s eyes to the reality of poverty and lack of access among Filipinos in the homeland.

“Everything has changed. The poverty level has increased,” she said. “A little boy came to the car as we were sitting in traffic. He was asking for money. I don’t think any kid should ever have to beg for money on the street because they don’t have food.”

“One of the things I want to do later in life is to help the Philippines and assist any way I can to decrease poverty and help children further their education.”

One of Michaela’s more immediate goals involve attending Oregon State University to pursue her studies in the health and sciences field. She is inspired by the work of biomedical researchers, particularly those who work on investigating cures for childhood cancer.

At Oregon State, she plans to double major in biochemistry and education. “I

love science and I have also always had the passion to teach and work directly with children,” she said.

Beyond her community leadership and science acumen, Michaela also is co-captain of the Century High School dance team. She started out on the cheer squad during her freshman and sophomore years, but suffered a concussion. The dance team welcomed the talented and energetic Michaela with open arms.

“Dance is an amazing sport. We work really hard,” she said. “And we have great fun.”

During last fall’s assembly, Michaela developed and led a routine that involved Century football players and cheerleaders. “It was fun to see this 6’3” linebacker performing a dance routine, in front of the entire school. Everyone loved it.”

Michaela said she is honored to bring her energy and creativity to the collection of young women comprising the Rose Festival court. Thus far, she credits “princess training” for focusing on communication, networking, time management,

and other key life and professional skills.

“The Rose Festival lives up to its theme: Brilliant,” she said. “The other princesses are like sisters to me now. The directors, advisers, and volunteers are simply brilliant because of all the hard work they put in. I am truly grateful.”

A Rose Festival princess represents her school and acts as the “face of the Rose Festival” at many events in the community, including parades, volunteer activities, luncheons with community and business leaders, and more. The Portland Rose Festival Foundation awards each court member a \$3,500 scholarship, courtesy of The Randall Group.

To qualify for the Rose Festival Court, a candidate must be a full-time junior or senior at a 4A, 5A, or 6A high school in Multnomah, Washington, or Clackamas county and have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0. Potential princesses are evaluated on citizenship, scholastic achievement, school activities, civic involvement, volunteer projects, communication skills, and overall impression.

The Portland Rose Festival Queen is chosen from all of the court members at Portland’s Veterans Memorial Coliseum on Saturday, June 10 from 8:30am to 9:30am. To learn more, call (503) 227-2681 or visit <www.rosefestival.org>.

Hmong elders in Eau Claire still searching

“If you can hear, they’re super chatty, but when we play bingo, it’s so quiet,” Lee said during the most recent wellness day, laughing.

Kaj Siab Days typically start around 8:00am, Moua said, when he and other organizers start making rounds to pick up elders who need transportation. Throughout the day, the elders play games — bingo is a favorite — paint, draw, knit, take excursions into the community, and spend a lot of time talking with one another.

“A lot of the elders are women, and they’ve been through so much, from childhood to adulthood, through parenthood, through the war and everything,” Lee said. “They weren’t able to focus on themselves and care for themselves, so we wanted to provide that atmosphere for them to

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indulge in whatever.”

In the summer months, the elders maintain a garden to keep a sense of their old life, Moua said, and get some exercise.

A big part of the program, Moua and Lee said, is education on current events in the Eau Claire community and around the nation. At previous wellness days, the elders have trekked to UW-Eau Claire to meet with Hmong students, learned about the history of the Civil Rights Movement for Martin Luther King Day, and have gone as a group to vote.

On April 14, the elders took a tour of the Eau Claire Police Department and asked questions of Hmong officers. The elders asked about translation services should they ever need to call 911 or report a crime, and some mentioned they felt safer after

learning about their options.

“Just be aware that they are here, and they’re a part of our community,” Lee said. “You don’t necessarily have to understand their struggles, but acknowledge that they do have struggles that are not like mainstream elders.”

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China car dilemma: Beijing wants electric, buyers want SUVs

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deciding whether to buy them or develop their own technology.

“Even by 2020, it’s not going to be a profitable business,” said John Zeng of LMC Automotive.

“The industry has to prepare for the worst case,” said Zeng. “That means you have to have all the technology ready in case you need it, but on the other hand, they don’t want to commercialize it now, because it is not profitable.”

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Banned yak meat smuggled in sweaters seized

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and other infectious cattle viruses. It wasn’t clear who was responsible for the meat shipment. Prohibited seeds and dung pods were also seized.

Authorities told NBC New York that the meat was destroyed. The U.S. Customs and Border Protection agency says foot-and-mouth disease is a “worldwide concern that can spread quickly and cause significant economic damage.”

Passenger who was dragged off jetliner settles with United

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depositions, motions, court hearings.”

He said Dao was also impressed that “United stepped up to the plate.”

The incident arose from a common air travel issue — a fully booked flight. Wanting to seat four crew members, the airline offered passengers \$400 and later \$800 to voluntarily relinquish their seats. When no one did, United selected four passengers at random.

Three people got off the flight, but Dao refused, saying he needed to get home to treat patients the next day. The airline then summoned the officers, who forcibly removed Dao.

The dragging was a major public-

relations crisis for United. The company’s response in the immediate aftermath was widely criticized. Munoz first defended the airline and described Dao as “belligerent” before publicly apologizing days later and vowing to do better.

The three airport police officers who took Dao off the plane were placed on leave from the Chicago Department of Aviation.

The agency recently released a report in which the officer who pulled Dao from his seat, James Long, gave his version of events. Long said Dao was verbally and physically abusive and was flailing his arms before he lost his balance and struck his mouth on an armrest.