

Joy Theriot's Filipino International Community of America

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Joy Theriot gave an acceptance speech as the new President of FICA at the FICA Induction of Officers Ceremony on January 26, 2013 at The Learning Center at 4 West 43rd Street.

What started as a support group for Filipino Unificationist wives became one of the largest Filipino organizations in the United States with a mission to create healthy families to resolve the complex problems of society and the world.



Rev. Moon Shik Kim spoke on behalf of Rev. Hyung Jin and Yeon Ah Moon during the FICA induction ceremony.

In 1990, when some Filipino wives came to the United States to join their Unificationist husbands, they created a support group for Unificationists who arrived from the Philippines. In 2007, the numbers of members had grown so large that the group held a national convention to gather members from all over the country to register as a family-based and service-orientated non-profit organization called the Filipino International Community of America (FICA), according to newly elected FICA President, Joy Theriot of New Jersey.



Joy Theriot (third from left), president of FICA, and her husband John (second from left) commemorate the FICA induction ceremony with VIP from the Philippine Consulate together with Crystina Corpuz (fourth from left), Vice Consul Philippine Consulate, who spoke during the FICA Induction of Officers Ceremony on January 26, 2013 at The Learning Center at 4 West 43rd Street.

“At FICA we want to inspire, empower and unite the Filipino families in America,” Theriot said in an

interview with Unification News. “FICA has 200-300 families, and the average family size is five to six people. We are a very fruitful community.”

FICA accepts members who are not part of the Unification faith. “We host membership events and gather other Filipino organizations to present our vision,” said Theriot. If the guests like the vision, they are asked then to attend an Orientation Workshop, which is a one-day Divine Principle workshop where they are exposed to chapters 1 through 9 of the Divine Principle.



FICA members help themselves to a spread of Filipino food.

“We do not force or convert FICA members to become Unificationists; we share our faith we them,” Theriot added. “In some cases, through natural witnessing, non-Unificationist FICA members become interested and inspired by the FICA activities and attend the Blessing ceremony.”

Members of FICA are from all over the country. The majority of members live in New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Chicago, Florida, Las Vegas, California and Canada. FICA will open a new chapter in Seattle.



FICA Youth perform after the induction ceremony.

The activities of FICA members are vast. “We have in-reach activities to take care of Unificationist Blessed families,” said Theriot. “On February 26, 2013, we celebrated ‘Love and Marriage’ to inspire and strengthen the relationship between husband and wives.”

FICA members partake in ballroom dancing, parenting and marriage workshops. There are small groups for a Filipino cultural band as well as a traditional Filipino dance and culture group.



Joy Theriot (far right), president of FICA, hosted a Foundation Day Dinner to celebrate love and Marriages on February 24, 2013 at the Family Federation Clifton Church in New Jersey.

Additionally, in order to take care of the community members Theriot added, “We created a small-group program called ‘Paluwagan’ where families put money, around \$50 to \$100, in a collection for when the time comes when a member is in need, because of an illness and they can’t work, they can borrow the money.”

“The number of young people in our FICA organization is increasing. FICA also added a FICA Youth group to the organization,” said Theriot. “We have FICA youth leaders such as Sammy Yap, the Youth Coordinator, and Christal and Jennifer Theriot and Misook and Miyeong Mendonça, the assistant coordinators, who organize activities and offer guidance for FICA youth members 11-year-old and older.”



FICA members engage in Filipino line dancing.

The purpose of FICA Youth is for the young members to own the Word, the Divine Principle. “We teach the FICA youth members about the Divine Principle by creating outlines and engage in “flip chart” practice lectures,” explained Theriot. She added: “If the young people know the Divine Principle and own it, then they can share it with their friends.”

An upcoming activity in the FICA calendar is a FICA concert on April 18, 2013 in New Jersey that is open to all. The goal of the concerts is to witness to the Divine Principle and increase the organization’s membership, according to Theriot. In June, FICA Youth will perform a traditional Filipino dance at the annual Asian Festival at West Point Military Academy to showcase pride in Filipino culture.



FICA members perform a traditional Filipino dance as part of the entertainment at the FICA induction ceremony.

Theriot was elected president by FICA members and was inducted at an Induction of Officers Ceremony on January 26, 2013 in New York City. Theriot’s vision for the next two years as president is to focus on education to create healthy blessed families and also to create the most loving, dependable and productive group in the united Filipino international community by realizing the standards of living for the sake of others.

For more information about FICA visit their homepage ficaonline.org/Home.html and their Facebook page www.facebook.com/pages/Filipino-International-Community-of-America-FICA/213715905330997

For more information about joining FICA contact Joy Theriot