



Board of Trustees

How it was Formed

A narrative by Dr. Rose de Vera Hipol, MD

After the purchase of the parcel of 3 acres of land and a ranch house that became the first Philippine Cultural Center of VA, the Board of Directors decided to expand to a bigger and a multifunctional building that will serve as the ultimate goal of the council, the future PCCVA that we all dream about.

We started the search for Architects to draw the plan but it seemed very expensive and unrealistic for us to pay. We consulted a builder who has an architectural background and his proposal seemed to be more realistic, but it needs a high degree of sacrifice from us. The major problem was how to finance the construction of the PCCVA?

We seek the assistance of several banking institutions. We were advised that we need families willing to sign as guarantors of the mortgage loan. At first, we were not successful in mustering those families during that period. Most of them were sending their children to college and while at the same time, paying the monthly mortgages of their homes. In addition, the ambivalent feelings of the community became an obstacle.

One weekend while driving home from New York, my husband, Dr. Manny Hipol, voiced out his frustration regarding the building of the Center. He said it has been over 22 years of fund raising and asking the support of the community and the advantages of having a center. The community of Filipino-Americans seemed to be unresponsive to our plea of support. My husband said to me and my dear brother Sid deVera, "I believed that this is my last hurrah and give up the dream completely!" Sid responded to him and said, "Manny, I believe in you and you can do it!" Manny said that he was tired of it and fed up with the negative comments about the Council and up to the extent of misaligning his family. I felt the sincerity of his feelings so I got involved and including my brother. Sid also promised that he will prepare and cook the food for us each time that we would have our weekly gatherings in my home to make an appeal to families as loan guarantors. Concurrently, an appeal for guarantors was also published in the Banner Newsletter. For my part, I personally invited friends whom I am confident that could help and also others that I know who were financially stable.

On October 1, 1997 and at the Hipol's residence, a bank Finance Officer was invited to meet with a group of families as would be guarantors. He advised us what to do and explained to us our responsibilities as guarantors. During that first meeting, there were nine (9) families committed as guarantors. Two (2) more guarantors came up in our October 8th meeting. Thereafter, three (3) more families joined as guarantors. More families have joined and ultimately, thirty-two (32) families have stepped up to the plate and signed as guarantors of the mortgage loan. For that reason, the Board of Trustees was formed.

Who are the Members of the Board of Trustees?

They are simple, happy, dignified and respectable families who signed the loan for the building fund of the Philippine Cultural Center of Virginia. Their responsibility is to pay for the monthly mortgage in the event that there is a financial shortfall. These families came from the grassroots of the community. They are retired military, professionals and proud housewives. About 98% of the guarantors have served the US military service.

I am extremely proud to inform you that the guarantors have not paid a single penny from their pockets for shortfall in payment of the monthly mortgage loan of the PCCVA. Through the fine leadership of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman, the Executive President, most specifically the keen sense of financial record keeping by the Treasurer and all the other officers of the Council, the Philippine Cultural Center has been financially secure in its operational funds.

The guarantors are devoted volunteers, dedicated and with incomparable passion to their commitment to PCCVA! Not to sing our own praises, I am certain that without the Board of Trustees who believed in this project, the Philippine Cultural Center of Virginia could not have been a reality of today.

I am humbled that the thirty-two (32) families have willingly joined me and my husband by laying a strong foundation of trust and dedication to realize the true spirit of our community, the PCCVA. For this and on its 35th Year "Jade" Anniversary of the Philippine Cultural Center of Virginia, the Board of Directors approved the planting of 32 Red Maple trees inside the property to immortalized those brave and audacious families who made this Center, the icon of Filipino unity and a proud living legacy of the Filipino Immigrants. This would serve as the monument that trace back where we came from. Yes! It was **Dream of the Past**, a **Pride of the Present** and a **Hope of the Future!**

Lastly, and without a doubt, the Philippine Cultural Center of Virginia remains as the beacon that lights the pathway of the Filipino Immigrants in search of their American dream!