

## A Lady with a Golden Heart..Across the Miles

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Brains. Beauty .Heart. These are the three words that best describe ZELANDA DAISY PURUGGANAN – TUCAY, a former military nurse who has done our corps and the service proud with her various accomplishments here and abroad.

A natural born leader, Ma'am Daisy had managed the Surgical Department of V Luna General Hospital for several years in the late 60's. With her expertise as a surgical nurse shining through, she was picked to join as a member of the Surgical team of the Philippine contingent to Tay Ninh, Vietnam and was subsequently awarded with "Philippine Flower of Saigon" by Gen Tobias in 1969 which made news and was published in major newspapers. Armed with determination and commitment, Ma'am Daisy along with COLAGUSTINA BENAVIDEZ founded the Military Nurses Association of the Philippines Journal as a venue to showcase the skills and achievements of military nurses.

With her various accomplishments and flourishing career, she decided to leave the service in 1971 in search of a greater adventure. And that she found when she met and married CAPT DOMINGO TUCAY JR of the Philippine Navy the following year pursuing the more challenging career of a wife and mother.

In 1983, the family left for Washington D.C where her husband was assigned as Philippine Navy attaché. Unable to forget her love for her Nursing profession, she joined Georgetown University Hospital as a staff nurse in 1987 and later on joined Group Health Association as Head Nurse in Family Practice from 1989 to 1998.

Nowadays, Ma'am Daisy is still busy serving the Filipino people by organizing medical missions here in the Philippines, the latest project being in Mabalacat Pampanga. With the help of seven physicians, three nurses, one physical therapist and a nutritionist, they provided free consultation and medicines to depressed

barangays. She is also partnering with the National Healthcare Organizations in the United States for possible transfer of healthcare delivery to the Philippines especially to the senior citizens.

Another advocacy closest to her heart is education. With the help of DJ Loakan Foundation, an organization of the Philippine Military Academy Alumni Association, East Coast Chapter, where she is the Director for Development and Scholarship, they grant scholarship to college students and promote leadership education. Their foundation is also involved in building schools- one is Mary Grace Memorial School in San Fernando La Union and another in San Jacinto, Pangasinan, expanding nationwide by the year 2014.

Because of these great and noble achievements last 2003, the U.S National Republican Congressional Committee has presented her with National Leadership Award in recognition of her untiring services and commitment to Republican ideals and in particular for assistance and leadership in promoting a pro-business agenda.

Similarly in 2007, she was given the Award of Recognition and Appreciation by the University Chancellor, Dr. Ricardo Palma of Angeles University Foundation for selfless sharing of time and expertise during the medical and surgical mission conducted in Angeles City last 12-17 February 2007.

Ma'am Daisy has never forgotten her concern for the military service. She volunteered to look for donors in the US who can provide nursing books when The Chief Nurse, AFP, BGEN MARLENE R PADUA, expressed her desire to improve the nursing libraries in the different nursing services. Very recently, she sent ten (10) balikbayan boxes containing reference books on Medical Surgical Nursing, Pediatric Nursing, Microbiology, Maternal and Child Nursing, Nutrition, Nursing Management among others; and several nursing journals.

Ma'am Daisy, you are truly a blessing. We salute you for your generous and kind heart! We are proud of you!



*Memoirs of her Medical Missions in Pampanga*