

**Speech of Mrs. Leticia Cabang
At the Awards Ceremony of the
SOCSARGEN Indigenous Peoples' Visual Art Show in General Santos City
July 30, 2007**

I am greatly honored to be among the attendees and participants to the Awarding Ceremony of the 1st Indigenous Peoples' Art Show sponsored by the Kalinawa Art Foundation in partnership with Kalimudan Culture and Arts Center and the Notre Dame of Dadiangas University. First, to me, implies a series of events by similar concept, content and commitment and that there will be a 2nd, 3rd and 4th and so on of the Visual Arts Exhibit in our area. Let us hope that it would be so. I am in this ceremony this afternoon because of BEAM endorsement. BEAM is a DepEd project funded by the Australian Government in the form of a grant not a loan.. The BEAM Program design provides an explicit and systematic support to indigenous groups, also called "Lumads" in Region XI, XII, ARMM. Like Kalinawa Art Foundation, BEAM caters to the IP's educational and livelihood needs through its ACCESS component.

It is a joy to be involved in this Indigenous Peoples' Visual Art Show. It is enriching in terms of gaining knowledge and information of a Foundation dedicated to discovering and supporting the arts talents of the IP communities, an area, I suppose is taken for granted by many of us. It has always been my belief that we who compose the majority of the Phil. Society – Christians, that is, do not possess the monopoly of talents and intelligences like abstract linguistic, spatial, kinesthetic, music and the arts. This IP visual art show is an evidence that indeed, our lumad and Muslim counterparts have a share of the arts talents, too. The show is a novel avenue where they express, demonstrate and preserve their rich cultural heritage. Thanks to the Kalinawa Art Foundation – Maraming Salamat po.

Someone wrote:

There is nothing more exciting than thinking a new idea.

There is nothing more rewarding than seeing a new idea work.

There is nothing more useful than a new idea that helps meet a goal.

Leafing through the pages of the Foundation Info Sheet, I can say that the Foundation is a package of these three processes – thinking a new idea, seeing a new idea helping the Foundation meet its goals. The advisers and staff of theKalinawa Arts Foundation deserves our salute and congratulations. It is a paradox that a foreign based, foreign funded group is giving the rare opportunity for our IP's to display and demonstrate their arts and design.

Certainly, this art exhibition has stirred a lot of imagination, expression and creativity among the competitors, as well as the dancers and performers, the malong weavers, wood and brass artists. If I may say it, this visual arts exhibition is the first of its kind in the SOCSARGEN areas.

For all of us who are gathered here, let our presence be a genuine expression of our intention, social responsibility and commitment to assist and support within the limits of what we can, our IP and Muslim youth in discovering and enhancing their artistic talents so that eventually they will feel that they, too, are masterpieces of God's creation. Truly the Indigenous Peoples' Visual Art Show is a novel mechanism that exposes the art of the Indigenous Peoples to the world and expands the sector beyond subsistence and livelihood. It serves as an avenue to preserve existing traditions and outlooks among IP and Muslim communities. It creates the occasion to strengthen their sense of achievement, self esteem and pride. Singularly, I proclaim that the Kalinawa Art Foundation through Mr. David Gilinsky, Mr. Carlton Hughes, Miss Raquel, Dhorie and Ronald deserve more than congratulations. You are a special breed of homo sapiens whose mission to discover, develop, recognize, and advertise the artistic talents of the unreachable sector of Phil society is worthy of emulation. You make things happen for others. You succeed.

Thanks for coming and planting the seed of the visual arts industry in here. I wish that the seed would grow and would bear the fruit of putting the IP arts and design to the world through the web. Let this event be the beginning of a strong and sustainable partnership. And together as a team we contribute to the celebration of the splendor, beauty and richness of the Mindanao culture particularly the IP culture. Let me close by repeating the words of Albert Einstein, "Creativity is contagious. Pass it on".