



DR. JOY BRUCE COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

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Joy Bruce has been called a modern Mother Teresa, and for good reason. A physician, she could easily have lived a life of luxury but has chosen, instead, to dedicate herself to uplifting the lives of the elderly. Founder and president of NANAY (National Alliance to Nurture the Aged and the Youth), which also means "mother" in Tagalog, Bruce was inspired by her mother to set up the center. "She believed in the healing profession's power to alleviate pain and suffering. Her passion was to improve people's lives," she says of her mother.

Through Bruce's leadership and strategic alliances with different cultural groups, NANAY, Inc. opened its doors in January 2000 and has provided services and promoted the involvement of elders in community activities. It has also enhanced the elders' ability to handle stress, increased their self-confidence and improved their social interaction among themselves and with the youth through various weekend programs like health counseling, medical check-ups, arts and crafts, conversational English lessons, computer classes and folk dancing. The center is mostly run by volunteers.

In July 2000, Bruce began a youth mentorship and senior companionship service model which encouraged intergenerational activities and discussions about family, goal-setting, values, stress management and conflict resolution. The program con-

tinues via a partnership with student associations, student volunteers and faculty.

For her advocacy of the elderly, Bruce received the community service award from In the Company of Women, Miami Dade Commission, and the Extraordinary Volunteer Award from the Alliance for Aging for Miami-Dade & Monroe Counties in 2000. Prior to these, she had received numerous other awards for her community service, such as: the Outstanding Community Leader Award from the Filipino American Women's Network; the Community Service Award from the Community Political Screening Panel in Florida; the Distinguished Service Award from the Philippine Charities Foundation in Miami; a Presidential Award from the Philippine Nurses Association of Florida; and a Maharlika Award from the Filipino Community Association of Florida.

A graduate of medicine from the University of Santo Tomas in Manila, Bruce is a committed community leader and a hard worker. She is also responsible for planning and coordinating the various programs of NANAY and maintains its website.

She manages the administrative and service staff of NANAY on a daily basis to address concerns and ensure effective operation. Despite her full-time job as a professor at the University of Miami School of Medicine, Bruce finds time to listen to her staff's suggestions, guides and encourages them to develop their full potentials by allowing them freedom to design and manage their own programs. Despite her organizational, entrepreneurial and interpersonal skills, Bruce has remained modest. Rose del Rosario, a volunteer says, "Her infectious enthusiasm, humility and selfless dedication make us all proud to serve."

Powered by Bruce's vision, NANAY continues to expand its coalition efforts and has established partnerships with the Miami Arena, the Asian American Community Partnership, Asian American Federation of Florida, Philippine Nurses Association, Doctors Plus Medical Center, Alliance for Aging, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, ASPIRA, Miami-Dade Public Schools, Miami-Dade Community College and local government agencies. ■