



# THREE DECADES OF HOPE & RESILIENCE

A story of Bahay Tuluyan's history  
working with Filipino children

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## Acknowledgements

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On the back cover of this book are the names of many of the thousands of children and youth who have become part of the Bahay Tuluyan family over the last three decades.

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Our journey has always been inspired by the capacity of children to act as decision-makers and contributors in their own lives, as well as the communities in which they live.

Today, Bahay Tuluyan is thriving organization that is working towards a vision of a world where every child's rights are respected, protected and fulfilled.

The journey to where we are now has been a collaborative effort involving many people over many years. Our history is filled with stories of creativity, commitment and perseverance by staff, volunteers, community members, children and young people.

We don't assume that we can even go close to capturing what Bahay Tuluyan is, has done or has been through in 30 years. There is so much richness in the many, many stories that make Bahay Tuluyan what it is. The best that we can hope is that this book will provide a glimpse into the diversity of the Bahay Tuluyan family and into its many adventures.

We dedicate this book to the children of Bahay Tuluyan, past and present, whose journeys of hope and resilience continually inspire us.

Happy reading!

# Our Beginnings

Bahay Tuluyan had simple beginnings inspired by a desire for social justice.



Bahay Tuluyan was founded by a group of passionate individuals including Gigi Cocquio, Celeste Sambale, Edward Gerlock and the parish priest of Malate Catholic Church, Fr John Gallagher. They were concerned about the growing number of street children in Malate, Manila in the aftermath of martial law.

Supported by the Malate Catholic Church, Bahay Tuluyan was set up in the basement of the Malate Parish Center with a modest grant from the Australian Embassy. It opened its doors in 1987 and quickly became a haven for children to bathe, rest, eat and play.

Based on the principles of social justice and community organizing, the original founders believed that the street children of Malate, despite their poverty and exposure to risks, had great capacity to solve their own problems. This approach became a founding philosophy for Bahay Tuluyan and remains the basis for all programs and activities today.

*We spent many hours teaching the children to read and write their names. One memorable day, a little girl wrote her name for the first time. We were all delighted and celebrated – except that she wrote her name with a rusty nail on the side of a brand new Honda. Bahay Tuluyan spent thousands of pesos repairing that car for the owner. But we still celebrated. Ed Gerlock, Founder*



## "Tatang" (Father) Ed Gerlock

Edward Gerlock (Ed) was born and raised in New York state, US, where he studied philosophy and theology before becoming a Maryknoll priest in 1962. A month after his ordination, Ed was sent to Davao in Mindanao, Philippines where he worked in a parish for 5 years. During this time Ed was inspired by the insights of ordinary people and he became deeply engaged with community organizing activities in the pursuit of social justice.

He took time off to study sociology at the newly-formed Asian Social Institute in Manila after which he returned to Davao and became a chaplain for the Federation of Free Farmers, fighting for land rights for settlers and tribal communities. On the day Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law in 1972, Ed was arrested and taken into detention, ending up in Camp Crame in Manila. After 13 months of legal battles, all charges against Ed were dropped. Prohibited from returning

to Mindanao, Ed stayed in Tatalon, an urban poor area in Manila but was eventually arrested and deported from the country.

While in exile, Ed worked hard to raise awareness about martial law. He left the priesthood and married his long-time friend Mercedes Verzosa. Together they moved to Venezuela where they worked until the Marcos regime ended and they could return to the Philippines.

Shortly after Ed returned to the Philippines he helped to found Bahay Tuluyan. Ed says he was inspired by the capacities of children to mobilize and make a better life for themselves and their families. He served as President of BT from 1993 until 2006.

Ed remains a passionate community activist, applying his passion for social justice to improving protection and support for elderly people. He is a happily married husband, father and grandfather.



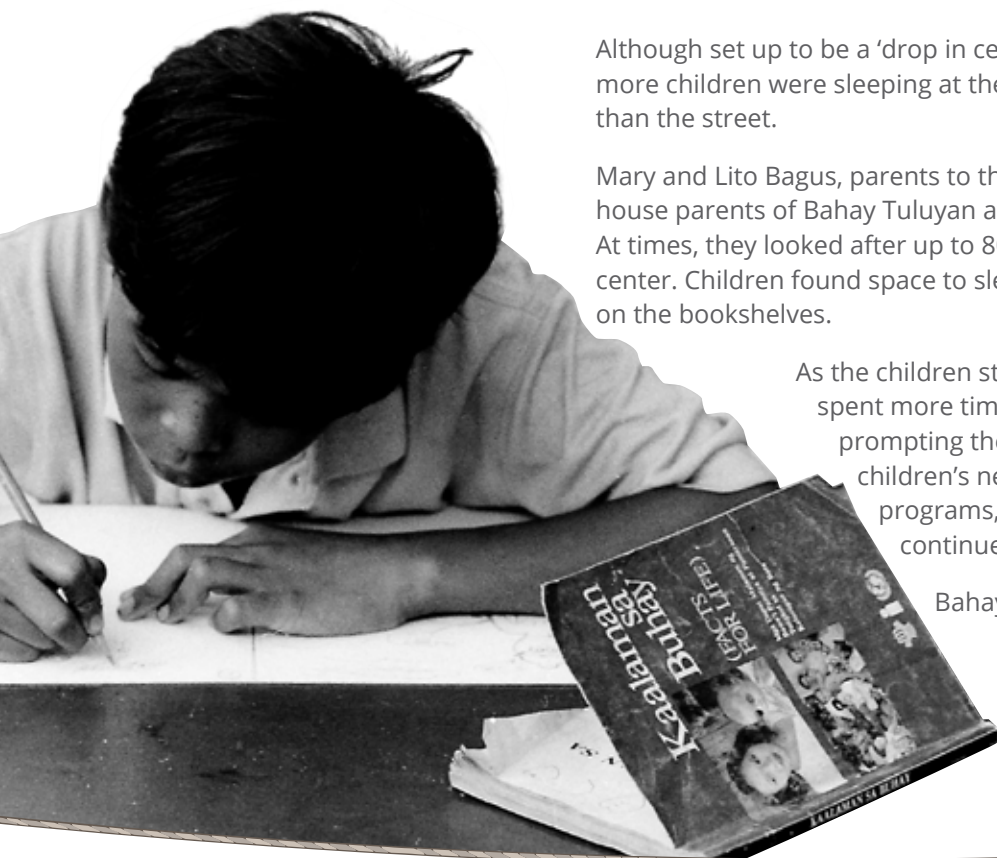
*Community organizing is more than just a method. It is about believing that people have their own answers to their problems.*





# Becoming a home

It didn't take long for Bahay Tuluyan to evolve from a drop-in center into a home.



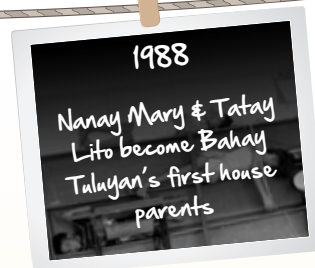
Although set up to be a 'drop in center', as time went on, more and more children were sleeping at the center overnight as it was safer than the street.

Mary and Lito Bagus, parents to their own six children, became the first house parents of Bahay Tuluyan after they sought refuge in the center. At times, they looked after up to 80 children in the sparsely-furnished center. Children found space to sleep wherever they could, including on the bookshelves.

As the children stayed more often overnight, they also spent more time at Bahay Tuluyan during the day, prompting the need to start more programs to meet children's needs. This began with educational programs, music, art and craft and then continued evolving.

Bahay Tuluyan has been a home ever since.

*My mother and father are Mary and Lito Bagus. They are the first family of Bahay Tuluyan. They took children in and they became part of our family. Even now people recognize my mother in the street. Two years ago we were at the market and a man insisted on carrying everything for my mother – he was a former Bahay Tuluyan kid. The children really respected my parents. Girly Bagus, Alumni*



## "Nanay" (Mother) Mary Bagus

After a conflict with extended family left them homeless, Mary and Lito Bagus and their six children lived on the streets, making a living by selling cigarettes from a small pushcart.

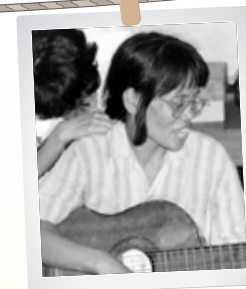
When Mary saw the sign 'Bahay Tuluyan' she approached staff and asked to stay, offering to care for the children who were staying there. The staff agreed and Mary and Lito became Bahay Tuluyan's first house parents and mother and father to the street children whom they loved and cared for.

Mary's duties involved cooking, cleaning, bathing, counseling, teaching, supervising and guiding the children that came into the center. The role was hard, both physically and emotionally, yet she refused to take a salary.

On one memorable occasion, Mary intervened to prevent some of her charges being "rescued" by government officials. To her 9 year old son Rodel's lasting horror, she offered herself and Rodel in exchange for the children's release. Thinking they were being rescued, Mary was surprised when she was instead given a tour of the government shelter. As she did the rounds, many children called out to her. Shortly later her and Rodel went home with an additional twelve children in her care.

Mary and her family remain an important and much-loved part of the Bahay Tuluyan community. Today, Mary's door continues to be open to anyone and everyone. Her own children will testify that she would, and frequently does, give the food from her plate and clothes from her (or her children's) back to anyone in need.

*The kids came to us to eat and watch TV. The TV made the kids come in. And then I said ' "why don't we teach the children?" And so we did - we started teaching the children.*



# A sense of family

The spirit of Bahay Tuluyan is that of a family.

*I was brought to Bahay Tuluyan and my life changed. Suddenly I felt being loved, being cared for and being appreciated.*  
Aisa Flavier, Alumni

*Change happens when you love someone. When you make someone feel at home.* Lily Flordelis, Executive Director

The legacy of family care was born early on and today, social workers, house parents, youth facilitators and managers work together to create a safe, loving space where children feel valued, cared for and respected. All programs and services are delivered within the context of genuine attachments that offer affection, day-to-day care and love.

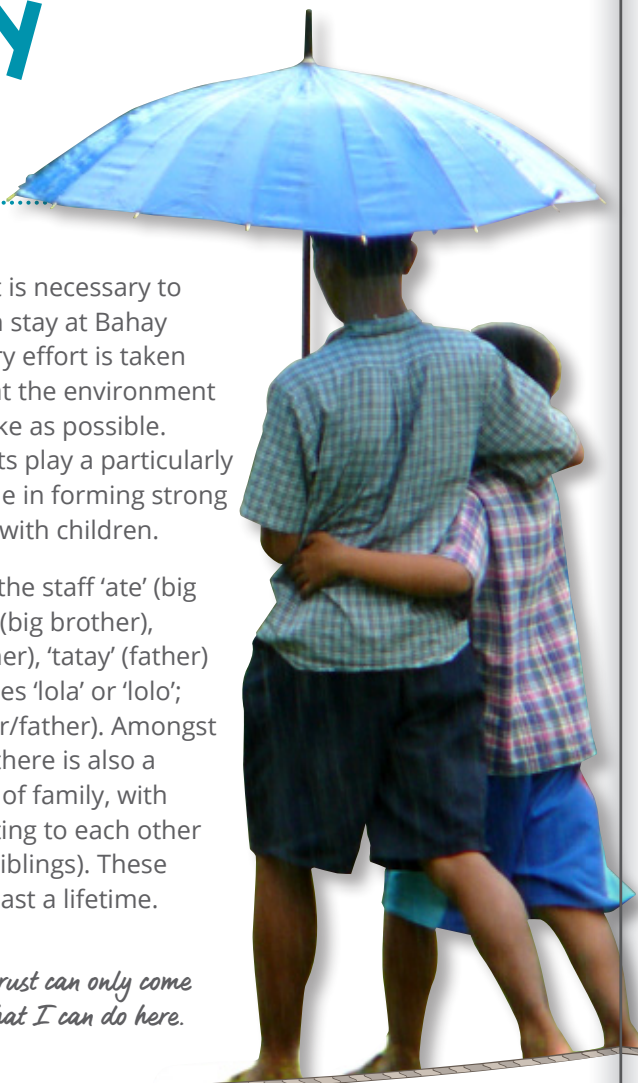
It has always been the priority of Bahay Tuluyan to keep children with their families and reintegrate them into their families wherever possible. Children are sheltered at Bahay Tuluyan only as a last resort and for the shortest possible

time. When it is necessary to have children stay at Bahay Tuluyan, every effort is taken to ensure that the environment is as family-like as possible. House parents play a particularly important role in forming strong attachments with children.

Children call the staff 'ate' (big sister), 'kuya' (big brother), 'nanay' (mother), 'tatay' (father) and sometimes 'lola' or 'lolo'; (grandmother/father). Amongst the children there is also a strong sense of family, with children relating to each other as 'kapatid' (siblings). These connections last a lifetime.

*It is hard to teach children trust. Learning trust can only come when you are given love and care. That is what I can do here.*  
Diana Escobal, Alumni

*I like many things about being a house parent, I like teaching and I like the responsibility. I love the children. I feel like they are my own. Now I have a very big family, I have my birth family, but I also have my Bahay Tuluyan family. If I have a problem, they will support me. They are still beside me and I can be strong and brave in the face of problems.* Liza Abante, Alumni/House Parent



*Gilbert Macayan*

When he was just six months old, Gilbert's parents separated and he was left with his father. Gilbert decided to run away after experiencing physical abuse. He was found and taken to Kibo Children's Home which was later taken over by Bahay Tuluyan. He didn't know his birthday and wasn't sure about his full name, although he thought his surname might have been 'Mediavillo'.

Gilbert lived at Bahay Tuluyan, first in Laguna and then in Quezon, going to school and doing very well. His social workers worked with him to try and trace his family but without a national missing children's database it was like looking for a needle in a haystack. One day while his social worker, was on a trip, several hundred kilometers from Bahay Tuluyan, she noticed, from the bus window, a store with the name 'Mediavillo'. When Jenny told Gilbert about this he was very excited to go there and search for his family.

Starting with very little to go on, the two set off on a trip to find Gilbert's family. They arrived in the small town and headed to the local registry where they looked for any evidence of Gilbert's birth. Unsuccessful, they jumped in a tricycle to head back to the bus. While chatting with the tricycle driver they mentioned what they were doing. Astonishingly, the driver recognized the name and was able to take them to Gilbert's father's family! Although not able to see either of his parents immediately, his mother was located soon after in a town hundreds of kilometers away.

Unbeknownst to Gilbert, his mother had been looking for him since he was about six months old. Gilbert and his mother were reunited on Gilbert's 21st birthday.

Gilbert now works as a Program Staff on Bahay Tuluyan Nature Farm.

*Thank you so much to Bahay Tuluyan for this wonderful gift that I am able to see my mother again. I will never forget this. I am now complete.*



*At Bahay Tuluyan I felt the love and acceptance of having a family, even if they were not my biological parents.*

1992

- Peer counselling group is established
- Anti-child abuse law passed



# Children helping children

Bahay Tuluyan has always believed in the power of children to change the world.



In 1989 Bahay Tuluyan launched its Junior Educators Program. The "JE" started training to be able to teach their peers using informal, child-friendly methods adaptable to the street, community and classroom. Through the Junior Educator's Program Bahay Tuluyan pioneered the Child-to-Child approach in the Philippines.

The Child-to-Child Approach refers to a style of child empowerment where children are active participants in their own development and the development

of other children. This approach is based on the belief that children, from whatever circumstances, are capable of helping themselves. The approach assumes that children will gain more from their development if they are active participants in the development process rather than passive recipients.

Bahay Tuluyan has continued to use the child-to-child approach throughout its programs for nearly three decades.

*Because of the training and the child-to-child approach, I developed myself. I have learnt how to communicate and how to think. I have become a different person. I have many skills inside that I can express to others. Thanks to Bahay Tuluyan, I have the opportunity to advocate. Dominick Abante, Alumni*



The child-to-child approach has proven an effective way to reach out to children in a variety of forms.

Since the Junior Educators Program began in 1989 it has remained a core program at Bahay Tuluyan. As Junior Educators, children are taught to be able to reach out to their peers using a curriculum focusing on children's rights. This curriculum aims to keep children as safe and healthy as possible, equipping them with the skills and knowledge to seek help when it is needed.

Experiencing the effectiveness of the Child-to-Child approach for both the children employing and receiving it, Bahay Tuluyan developed other programs using the approach. Over the years these have included the Junior Health Workers Program, Peer Counseling Program, Junior Environmental Educators Program and Seeds of Change Teams. All of these programs gave children training to help them identify and respond to concerns in their communities, ranging from water pollution to a toe infection.

The Child-to-Child approach has proven transformative for many thousands of children. Over the decades we have observed as children's self esteem, sense of worth and confidence have grown as they have begun to realize that they have something to offer to others.



*Children can understand the issues better than the adults. We can help each other if given the opportunity. I can share things with my friends that I can not share with an adult. Girly Bagus, Alumni*

*I was called to do this work but it is not me doing it. It is the children themselves. They are the ones. Lily Flordelis, Executive Director*

# Enacting children's rights

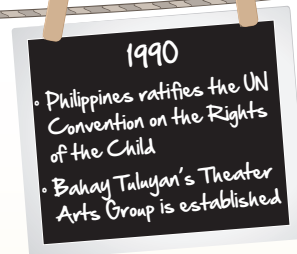
Children's rights form an important protective framework on which Bahay Tuluyan builds its work.



The United Nations General Assembly passed the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1989 and the Philippines signed it on the first day it became open for signature. In 1990 the Senate of the Philippines ratified the UNCRC, making it national law.

Bahay Tuluyan recognised the passing of the UNCRC as a very important milestone for children, realising their status as active holders of rights, not just passive recipients of welfare. This approach reflected the approach that Bahay Tuluyan had already started implementing.

A child rights-based approach remains a core principle of Bahay Tuluyan's work, guiding the implementation of all of its programs. It believes that working towards respecting, protecting and fulfilling rights is the most powerful way to create change for children



## Dominick & Liza Abante

Dominick left his family in Batangas when he was 8 years old, determined to find a better life for himself. After living on the streets for 2 years, Dominick came to Bahay Tuluyan for the feeding program. He quickly became involved in activities including sports, arts and leadership programs, eventually becoming a Junior Educator.

Liza first came to Bahay Tuluyan in 1991 when she was 15 years old, at the invitation of Dominick. Her involvement in the theater program helped her develop self-expression and confidence.

Dominick's commitment and passion for child rights led him to becoming one of Bahay Tuluyan's first "junior staff". In this role he was instrumental in starting a new site in Katipunan, Quezon City where he undertook social investigations and community organizing using the child-to-child approach.

Liza became involved in the Mobile Unit where she helped provide children on the streets with food and basic education. In 1994 she became part of the day care team and then Junior Staff in 1997. In 2003, Liza became a house parent in Laguna. As a house parent Liza is deeply committed to her role which she believes changes the lives of children.

Dominick and Liza's story is also a love story. At Bahay Tuluyan they fell in love, eventually marrying. They now have seven children – one of whom was born at Bahay Tuluyan after an early arrival! Dominick has reconnected with his family in Batangas who are proud of all he has achieved.

*I love building trust with children. They trust me and respect me. I can relate to their situations as I went through the same. I admire the goals of Bahay Tuluyan. I took those goals into my heart, brain and soul. Dominick*

*Bahay Tuluyan changed my life in many ways. I was stuck in poverty. Now I have confidence. I learnt how to be responsible and positive. I learnt how to express my feelings and learn my talents. I didn't know who I was. I know that now. Liza*

*It was not possible for me to find my family, Bahay Tuluyan were my family. Dominick*





# Children becoming leaders

Bahay Tuluyan is an organization that is not just for children, but also by children.

As Bahay Tuluyan evolved it felt the need to give children the chance to shape its future. The idea came about to hold a Children's General Assembly. The first assembly was held in Liliw, Laguna in 1991. Thirty-five children gathered to talk about their lives and their hopes for the future.



One hope for the future that came through clearly was the children's dream to have a place away from the streets of Manila, a place where they could connect with nature, relax, learn and play. The ideas and thoughts expressed by the children became important priorities for Bahay Tuluyan.

This first children's general assembly became the foundation for participatory decision making that has continued for 28 years. This idea of children's participation, a core principle of the UNCRC, is now enshrined in Bahay Tuluyan's policies and practices.

Children's General Assemblies are held annually and the results from these are fed into the organization's strategic planning processes. Mini quarterly assemblies and children's councils also play an important role in guiding decision making.

*They take an interest in you, in your future, in your feelings. But it is up to you, you get to choose, it is up to you how you participate and change, Diana Escobal, Alumni*

*Don't think that because they are children that they don't have answers. If you listen well you will learn that children have something to teach you as well. Ed Gerlock, Founder*

*I love that I have had the freedom to express my views and feelings. Bahay Tuluyan asks children their views and trusts their opinions on their own lives. Mark Salinas, Alumni*

1991  
• First Children's General Assembly is held.  
• First batch of JE graduate and start teaching.



## Diana Escobal

The youngest of seven children, Diana was born in Manila in 1987. When she was 8 years old her family separated due to conflicts and everyone headed in different directions. Diana ended up on the street, sleeping in playgrounds, begging and selling sampaguita (jasmine garlands) to earn money.

Unbeknownst to her, one of Diana's siblings had ended up at Bahay Tuluyan. Once they heard that Diana was living on the street they found her and brought her there. Diana says when she first entered Bahay Tuluyan she was very scared, but she soon made many friends and became part of the Bahay Tuluyan family. She was able to start school and begin to dream of a better life.

Diana became a Junior Educator when she was 12 years old. She learnt about her rights and how to teach other children on the street. It was clear from the beginning that Diana had a natural talent for teaching. She was able to relate to the children on a very personal level. She was determined to be a good role model for children like herself, who felt lost and alone.

In 2007 Diana became a Junior Staff at Bahay Tuluyan and eventually Program Staff, working with the Mobile Unit program and Drop In Center. Diana's passion for justice has many times stirred her to intervene to protect children even when it may put her own safety at risk.

Diana is a proud parent to her son Aerial and a fierce advocate for children's rights.

*At Bahay Tuluyan children learn how to love and respect each other. How to give love to other people. How to resolve bad situations and find answers to problems.*



*I was a street children and then I became a junior educator. I know their situation, I know how to engage them, how to encourage children to come and participate here.*



# Theater for change

Theater has played an important role both in helping children discover themselves and in spreading important messages

Bahay Tuluyan's Theater Arts Group was first established in 1990. Since then, theater arts have remained an important medium of expression at Bahay Tuluyan. Many children, past and present, have reported that theater has helped them develop skills in self expression, build relationships and grow in confidence.

Not only does it give children an avenue through which to express their creativity, it is also a way to process difficult or traumatic issues. Moreover, in the Philippine context, theater is a very effective way to bring important messages to the wider community.

The Philippine Educational Theater Association (PETA) has been a faithful partner to Bahay Tuluyan over many years, developing the artistic talents of our children and youth. Over three decades Bahay Tuluyan children have conducted many theater tours and performed with well known artists such as Gary Granada and Noel Cabangon.

For our young advocates, theater is normally the medium of choice for raising awareness about children's rights issues such as abuse, trafficking, homelessness, exploitation and forced rescue.



## Geraldine "Dayang" Giangag

Dayang came to Bahay Tuluyan in 1989, encouraged by her friends who knew it was a safe place. Dayang says that during this time, her home life was unhappy with family members fighting and not caring for her. For her, Bahay Tuluyan was a refuge that offered peace and safety.

At Bahay Tuluyan, she noticed that all the children came from different and difficult circumstances, yet everyone was treated with respect and dignity. She says that Bahay Tuluyan helped her learn about herself, what she was good at and where she fit in the world.

Dayang took naturally to Bahay Tuluyan's theater program and consistently won the annual 'Best Actress' award.

Dayang's passion for children's rights was ignited at Bahay Tuluyan and carries over into her adult life. Dayang believes that showing children love and attention is what will turn their lives around. Today, Dayang is a powerful advocate for children. One of her greatest achievements is convincing her local barangay (village) council to establish a Barangay Council for the Protection of Children. She is proud of the fact that when there is an issue concerning children in her community, she is consulted and consistently defends the rights of children to be heard.

Not just a vocal advocate, Dayang also "walks the walk". She is currently caring for ten children, including her own two biological children, two adopted children and another six that cannot live with their biological parents due to difficult circumstances.

1992

Anti-Child Abuse  
Law (RA 7610)  
is passed

*At Bahay Tuluyan, the most important role that staff play is making each child feel important and that they have value.*

*Each child is a big responsibility, each child needs to be loved.*



# Searching for solutions

Bahay Tuluyan has always been determined to address the causes of abuse, exploitation, violence and neglect, not just the symptoms.

*I came to Bahay Tuluyan when Miss Universe came to Manila. People in uniforms came around and locked up street families. The workers at Bahay Tuluyan were kind. I felt cared for by the staff and they advocated for us. They asked police not to burn our possessions, they intervened to stop police brutality. They became my family because they protected me. Jonathan Espana, Alumni*

For Bahay Tuluyan, the children seeking its help were just a symptom of deeper societal problems that needed solutions.

In the early 1990s Bahay Tuluyan actively joined rallies and actions to advocate for the passing of the first anti-child abuse law in the Philippines. This critical law, RA 7610 or the Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act was eventually passed by the Philippine congress in 1992 and remains one of the most important child protection laws in the Philippines.

However, despite this new law and the passing of the CRC, children on the street were still suffering disproportionately from police brutality, violence and 'round-ups'. Bahay Tuluyan formed a Participatory Research Team to understand the issues better. The children in this team were given training to be able to react quickly to complaints, reporting them to Bahay Tuluyan staff and helping to respond to children who had been taken into police custody.

Over the years, children have undertaken participatory research with Bahay Tuluyan on various occasions, often prompted by their concerns about emerging issues. The research produced with young people has helped to improve government policies.

1993

Bahay Tuluyan starts the 1st 'Padyak Mobile Library' using a tricycle.

1994

- Miss Universe Pageants prompts widespread "rounding up" of street children
- First Junior Staff employed at Bahay Tuluyan



*Jonathan Espana*

In 1994, Jonathan's family lived on the street in Malate, in an area that would be featured as part of the Miss Universe pageant. One day in the lead up to the pageant, government officials came to lock up street families. They burnt Jonathan's family's pushcart and belongings.

Having been in intermittent contact with Bahay Tuluyan since he was 5 years old, Jonathan decided to go there rather than be locked up. Bahay Tuluyan's sparse basement in Malate became Jonathan's first home. He was 14 years old.

When Jonathan became a Junior Educator in 1996 his small allowance helped to fund his education. He

learnt about children's rights and life skills. He also had many opportunities to communicate with visitors and officials from all over the world about the plight of street children.

In 2003, Jonathan became the first child to graduate from college in his family, completing his degree in social work.

He now works as a case manager in the USA and has a wife and three children. He is proud to have fulfilled his dream to ensure that no one in his family lives on the street anymore.

*The first home I had was Bahay Tuluyan.*

*It was my dream not to live on the street. It was my goal to have my own family. I don't want children to have to live on the streets like I did. I want their life to be better.*

*The change you make is your own. No one is holding you by the neck making you change, you do it yourself.*





# Celebrating together

A family that celebrates together stays together.



The family spirit that binds together the Bahay Tuluyan community is not limited to supporting each other through difficult times. It is felt perhaps just as intensely when the Bahay Tuluyan family comes together to celebrate.

With limited resources, opportunities to get together don't come around very often but when they do they are much anticipated and thoroughly enjoyed. The biggest annual celebration at Bahay Tuluyan is the Christmas party which brings together children, youth,

staff and friends from all our sites. Other chances to celebrate are our summer camps, Halloween parties, family days and children's month celebrations.

No matter what the occasion, a Bahay Tuluyan event would not be complete without a dance showdown between the centers and a roughly-put together skit by the Bahay Tuluyan staff.

In April 2017 Bahay Tuluyan organised its first grand reunion which brought together more than 150 members of the Bahay Tuluyan family to reminisce and celebrate.



1995

- Second batch of JTE graduates
- Bahay Tuluyan youth participate in advocacy campaign in London



1996

Bahay Tuluyan purchases land in Quezon



# Children speaking up

Enabling children and young people to speak out about their situations creates sustainable change.

Activities like 'rounding up' of street children demonstrated for Bahay Tuluyan some widespread misconceptions from the public about street children. This prompted the idea to start a radio program to educate the wider public about the situation for children on the streets.

'A Children's Forum', which ran in 1997, was hosted by Girly and Chris Bagus and supported by a crew of field reporters. The team interviewed children on the street, sharing their stories of daily life and incidents that had occurred as well as police and other officials. The show aired weekly.

Bahay Tuluyan's advocacy through KidsView in Australia led to the establishment of the Bahay Tuluyan youth advocacy group PILAK (Pinag Isang Lakas ng Kabataan / United Strength of Youth) in 2006. PILAK has led Bahay Tuluyan's advocacy efforts since.

PILAK was pivotal in organising Manila's first ever Street Children's Festivals (2008 and 2009) and Children's Rights Festival (2010). They have also led the celebration of International Day for Street Children since 2011 and helped to organise and run various children's congresses.



1997

Children's Radio Program runs

*In order for a child to change, they need to be truly seen. Who they really are and what is in their heart. They need someone to believe that anything is possible.*  
Lily Flordelis, Executive Director



# Youth leading development

The founding of Bahay Tuluyan's center in Quezon City was an example of youth-led development.

In 1998, after Bahay Tuluyan had employed its second batch of Junior Staff, it took youth-led development to a new level when this group of Junior Staff led the opening of a new Bahay Tuluyan center in Quezon City.



The Junior Staff, including Ma. Ana Nebril, Liza Abante, Edwin Burung, Stanton Snyder, Dominick Abante and Chris Bagus spent many hours under the Katipunan Ave/Aurora Blvd flyover talking with the street children who hung out there, gaining their trust and then gradually involving them in activities and workshops.

A year later, the Junior Staff extended the programs again, this time into the Dabu-Dabu community in Manila, establishing a day care program. Sadly, this community was demolished several months later, ending the program.

Bahay Tuluyan was able to discontinue its operations in Quezon City in 2004 after the government established early childhood education programs for children in the area.

1998

- QC office opens - led by Bahay Tuluyan graduates
- 2nd batch of Junior Staff appointed

1998

- Bahay Tuluyan youth participate in advocacy against child labor in Pakistan

*This place is a testament to what young people can do if given the space. Let yourself be impressed by the youth. Let yourself be surprised. Lily Flordelis, Executive Director*



## Chris & Girly Bagus

Chris and Girly came to Bahay Tuluyan with their parents Mary and Lito Bagus and four siblings in 1990. During their many years at Bahay Tuluyan they both developed personal skills and a passion for children which would go on to shape their lives forever.

Girly showed her capacity for teaching at a very young age, becoming a Junior Educator when she was just 9 years old. During a visit by UNESCO, the visitors observed Girly making a lesson plan and considered her skills 'remarkable'. In 2003 Girly was one of Bahay Tuluyan's first representatives at Justcycle in Australia, talking with young Australians about poverty, children's rights and social justice.

Chris graduated from Junior Educator to Junior Staff in 1997 and together with other young people from Bahay Tuluyan, helped open Bahay Tuluyan's new site in Quezon City. At the new center, Chris worked to

replicate the child-to-child approach he had learned in Malate, establishing a drop-in center. Chris became a vocal advocate for children's rights, representing Bahay Tuluyan in advocacy campaigns in the Philippines and the United Kingdom.

Together, Girly & Chris co-hosted 'A Children's Forum', Bahay Tuluyan's radio program that aimed to raise community awareness about the plight of street children.

Girly is now a teacher in a public school in Malate, wife and mother to three children. Chris is a proud father, husband and social worker.

*I came to Bahay Tuluyan when I was 5 years old. It was the best feeling. I felt safe and had somewhere to stay. I belonged to the community and had an address. Girly*

*Bahay Tuluyan changed my life, it opened up new channels for me. Not all street children will have the opportunities like I did. For me Bahay Tuluyan was a very good experience, it helped me grow and become more confident. Now I am a teacher but not a conventional teacher. My approach is like a mother. I feel more for the children and love them. Girly*

*My upbringing at Bahay Tuluyan influenced my life greatly and inspired me to become a social worker. Chris*

# Reaching children on the street

Making sure that services reach children on the street has always been important to Bahay Tuluyan.



Although Bahay Tuluyan has always been fortunate to have buildings from which to base its work, it has also recognised the invisible barriers that stop children from accessing these centers; mistrust, fear and trauma. Hence from the very earliest days Bahay Tuluyan's workers walked the streets of Malate, getting to know street children and their families and gently encouraging them to join in the programs.

In 1993 the program developed when a tricycle was acquired, allowing Bahay Tuluyan to bring a mobile library and food to children. In 1999, when Bahay Tuluyan moved to Sta Mesa it became difficult for workers to reach the children in Malate.



Through the generosity of Arci Cultura e Sviluppo, an Italian organisation, Bahay Tuluyan was able to get its first motorised, customised Mobile Unit van. This van enabled Bahay Tuluyan to continue delivering services to children in Malate. In 2009 the well-used van was replaced with a new one by ANZA.

Bahay Tuluyan continues to provide street education and support to children in various places around Manila at least three times per week.



*I went with Bahay Tuluyan's Mobile Unit to the street. Within minutes, around 60 to 90 children surrounded us. It was in this moment I understood what important work Bahay Tuluyan does for that specific community and probably any community they decide to work with.  
Daniel Mohseni, Swedish volunteer 2014.*

1999

- Move to Sta Mesa
- Bahay Tuluyan's first motorized Mobile Unit improves street education capacity

1999

- Princess Anne visits Bahay Tuluyan
- Junior staff start day care in Dabu Dabu community
- Bahay Tuluyan builds and opens 2 houses in Quezon



## Mary Ann Nebril

Mary Ann was from the Malate area and used to come to the parish center to engage in parish activities. On her way to the second floor she would pass through Bahay Tuluyan and became interested, eventually getting involved with the Theater Arts Group in 1989.

Not long later, Mary Ann's life circumstances changed when her parents separated. She moved into Bahay Tuluyan so that she could continue going to school. She wanted to continue developing the skills she had learnt through theater and so started training to be a Junior Educator and then Junior Staff. She taught children on the street, in the community and in Bahay Tuluyan's center based programs.

Mary Ann helped establish Bahay Tuluyan in Quezon City. She taught day care in Marytown until the center closed in 2004 after which she became a house parent for 5 years.

She describes being a house parent as challenging work – especially when children were traumatized and wanted to leave. As house parent Mary Ann learnt that children need to have an equal relationship with their peers and with the staff. In her view, Bahay Tuluyan is a special place with a unique approach where children and staff become family and where each member belongs and is loved.

Mary Anne is now a mother to her own 6 children and remains a faithful friend to Bahay Tuluyan, never missing a general assembly or Christmas party!





## Jordan Cortez

In around 2004, Bahay Tuluyan noticed that there were increasing numbers of children selling rags on the intersection of Quirino Ave and Osmena Highway in Manila. Using its mobile unit van, Bahay Tuluyan started visiting the area once a week, providing street education and gradually getting to know the children from the area.

One of those children was Jordan Cortez. The eldest of 12 children, Jordan's family lived in a shanty on the edge of the nearby railway line. Their house would shake every time trains came past, less than 10 meters from their door. In a major government redevelopment project, many houses along the railway line were demolished and Jordan's family was relocated two hours from Manila.

Life was extremely hard for the relocated family as they had no access to livelihood. Jordan dropped

out of school and moved back to Manila. He started living under a bridge near where his family home had been and continued selling rags, Sampaguita flower garlands and, on rainy days, begging. He lived on the street like this for 3 years, sending money back to his family. This is where Bahay Tuluyan met him.

After building trust, Jordan eventually went to live at Bahay Tuluyan's center in Quezon. He completed his high school education and went on to college. Jordan worked his way through college on a scholarship, assisted by St Louis University-Sunflower Children's Center and Bahay Tuluyan.

In June 2017 he graduated as a social worker and now helps other children and families in need.

*Today is a the most unforgettable day in my life, where I wear a black toga and walk up on the stage in front of so many people. I am so proud to tell you that the street child of yesterday is graduating from college today.*



*These are the children I want to help, street children who want life to be a little bit easier, who want to be free from poverty.*



## Princess Roque

Princess grew up in Happyland, Tondo, Manila. Happyland is a rubbish dump that is home to thousands of families.

For as long as she can remember Princess was shuffled between relatives. She spent her days scavenging to get food to eat. She would eat 'pagpag' which is scraps of food that has been recovered from garbage and fried. Other times she would just drink water or go to sleep on an empty stomach.

One day, Princess' young cousin died from hunger. This devastated Princess and also strengthened her resolve. She realized that she couldn't rely on anyone else and would have to instead rely on herself to make her life better.

Princess came to know of Bahay Tuluyan through its mobile unit program. While the food got her attention,

what drew her in were the children drawing. At 11 years old, she had never held a pencil. Princess eventually went to live at Bahay Tuluyan and started school for the first time.

She has since become a young leader and has been pivotal in helping several other children get support and shelter. She has also assisted in producing a film about her community: 'Happyland' with street artist Kaff-Eine.

Princess is working towards her dream of becoming a teacher so she can provide opportunities to other children like her.

*At Bahay Tuluyan we welcome everyone without discriminating or judging you for your background.*

*The difference between Bahay Tuluyan and other places is that at Bahay Tuluyan there are a lot of people who always understand and give unconditional love. You can experience having a good place to rest and healthy food to eat. Most of all, I felt being cared for and having my rights as a child fulfilled..*

*Bahay Tuluyan has changed me by giving me a chance to explore and discover my skills. They have given me direction for my future. Most importantly, they haven't given up on helping me..*



# Finding a new home

After 12 years in Malate, Bahay Tuluyan found a new home in Sta Mesa, Manila.

In 1999, Bahay Tuluyan's lease in Malate ended and it needed to find a new home. Fortunately, the congregation of the Sister Servants of the Holy Spirit (SSpS) had a vacant nurse's home in Sta Mesa which they allowed Bahay Tuluyan to use, rent-free.

The house was quite old and rundown. During the wet season, the shelter in Sta Mesa flooded up to three times per week! Nonetheless, this became Bahay Tuluyan's new headquarters and shelter. Located in a residential area that was very different from Malate, it wasn't able to provide the same drop-in services to the children from Malate, but new connections were quickly established with the children of the nearby communities including Pat Antonio.

It was fortunate that Bahay Tuluyan's center in Quezon had just opened up to accommodate boys while Sta Mesa catered mostly to girls.



*I have so many fun memories of Sta Mesa, where we would all be shin-deep in water, bucketing flood water out of the house, soaked and laughing. The house was completely ill-equipped to cope with our needs but it was still a home. Catherine Scerri, Deputy Director*



2000  
Lily Flordelis  
becomes  
Executive  
Director



*Lily Flordelis*

Lily Flordelis was born in Leyte and grew up in Bohol. After completing college in Cebu she went to Manila to study Dentistry. Several years after graduating, she entered the Convent of the Most Blessed Sacrament, the "Pink Sisters", in Baguio, where she was a novitiate. Several years later she left the convent and settled in Los Banos, Laguna, where she was a parish administrator for 10 years. In 1999 she was back to working as a dentist in Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital in Sta Mesa, Manila when Sr Ancille Elvena, SSpS who had recently become a Trustee of Bahay Tuluyan asked Lily if she could help troubleshoot at Bahay Tuluyan for a couple of months.

Lily has now been the Executive Director of Bahay Tuluyan for 17 years. Lily's leadership has been instrumental in making Bahay Tuluyan the organisation it is today.

Far from her work as a dentist, in her role at Bahay Tuluyan Lily has become a social worker, architect, builder, farmer, business woman, hotelier, counsellor, accountant, driver, sister, mother and grandmother.

Her commitment and passion for children is a daily inspiration for those around her.

*These are the children I want to help, street children who want life to be a little bit easier, who want to be free from poverty.*



# Growing our home

Bahay Tuluyan expanded to Laguna through a timely partnership with Kibo Children's House.



The demand for Bahay Tuluyan's services continued to grow and national headquarters in Sta Mesa became less and less able to meet the needs of the organization.

In 2003 Bahay Tuluyan came into contact with Kibo Children's Home, a Filipino organisation that had been set up by Japanese business people in 1990. Kibo had established a center for children in Victoria, Laguna. Although at its peak it had housed up to 150 children at a time, by 2003 it had run out of money and was looking for a way forward.

Bahay Tuluyan entered into an agreement with Kibo and took over the management of the center in April 2003. It assumed custody for the 23 children who were living there and employed the 3 remaining staff of Kibo.

Over the next several years Bahay Tuluyan worked hard to integrate the new center into the organisation. One of the first priorities was to adapt the existing institutional-style building to make it feel more like a home.

Beyond desperate need for physical improvements to the center, there was important work that needed to be done to implement a child-rights based approach. For some children who had been with Kibo for a while, being given the chance to express their opinions was sometimes overwhelming!

2001

Participatory Research Team starts paralegal training & research into youth pimps

2002

Quezon City site moves from Katipunan to Marytown



*Javier Alconaba*

Javier had lived at Kibo Children's House for 4 years when it entered into partnership with Bahay Tuluyan. He says that at first it felt 'like a foreign invasion'. The children were unsure what to expect and were worried they might be moved or separated. Javier's fears dissipated quickly however as he got used to Bahay Tuluyan's different approach.

Javier said that he noticed that Bahay Tuluyan treated children with respect and as equals. This different approach surprised him, he no longer felt that he was someone to be pitied.

As Javier learnt about his rights he became more confident and able to express himself. He says that learning that all children were equal taught him about how to treat others and how to stand up for himself.

When he became a Junior Educator he felt his confidence growing as he learnt to interact with people. He believes that Bahay Tuluyan gave him the guidance to become the person he is today who feels confident to follow his dreams.

Today Javier is working with an Australian engineering company during the week and studying his bachelor's degree in Information Technology on the weekends. He is saving up to marry the love of his life.

*At Bahay Tuluyan I learnt trust. Here I am always equal. They are always behind you, helping you, always there when you need them.*

*I stayed at BT because they are my experience of family. I have many mothers. I have learnt the meaning of dreams and goals. I am proud to be part of Bahay Tuluyan*



# Realizing our dream

The process of developing Bahay Tuluyan Laguna is happening slowly, on a shoestring.

When Bahay Tuluyan took it over, the one large building in Laguna was rundown and institution-like. Children were housed in 3 big dorms that accommodated up to 50 children each. While the surrounding rice fields and mountains provided a beautiful setting, the children lived in a concrete building that was noisy and inward-looking. There was no fence and the large property was overgrown and unsafe. This kind of environment was not the family-based model of care Bahay Tuluyan wanted to provide.

Despite having big dreams, Bahay Tuluyan didn't have funds to develop Laguna all at once. Instead, it put its plans for 'Realizing the Dream' on paper and started looking for supporters. The first support allowed the children's rooms to be subdivided so they had a bit more privacy. In 2006, 200 volunteers helped to build 800 m of perimeter fencing, brick by brick.

From 2004 until 2013, funding from Australia enabled the construction of 5 houses, so children could be moved out of the big building and live in family-style groups. We were also able to build 'Anihan Center', a community center. The houses – McKiRo, Aussie, Scerri, KukKaRo and KangaRo – and Anihan Center, were sponsored by our friends from Australia – BTPA, Rotary Club of Essendon, Kangan Institute, Charles & Clare Scerri and Shirley & Ray Kukuk. Hard work from our Australian and German volunteers helped build our basketball court and playground.

Believing in our dream of building a financially-sustainable center, various organisations, including Crowntech, Filipino Children's Fund, Child@Venture and especially Phoenix Foundation, have helped us to build our social enterprise building, farm infrastructure and renovate our training center.

2003

- Bahay Tuluyan Laguna center starts
- Bahay Tuluyan helps found the Philippines Against Child Trafficking (PACT)



2003

- Anti Trafficking Law (RA 9208) passes



2003

- Volunteer program with Australian Volunteers International starts
- Justcycle (later KidsView) starts



*Bahay Tuluyan is really about participation, everyone has had to work hard to make it is what it is today. Even putting bricks on top of bricks. We have all helped and shared inspiration. Everyone has believed and this has made it happen. Lily Flordelis, Executive Director*



The dream of being able to provide a sustainable, child-friendly alternative family environment for children in Laguna is slowly coming to fruition.

*We are still looking for support and would welcome any contributions!*





# Building an Australian connection

Australian volunteers helped to widen Bahay Tuluyan's horizons.

In 2003 Bahay Tuluyan started a partnership with Australian Volunteers International (AVI) through the placement of long-term volunteer Catherine Scerri and the establishment of a 'Youth Program' through which young Australian volunteers came to work at Bahay Tuluyan.

The first volunteer groups came in late 2003. Upon their return to Australia in early 2004 they established Bahay Tuluyan Philippines Australia (BTPA), an organisation that has gone on to become one of Bahay Tuluyan's greatest supporters.

BTPA took over the running of 'Justcycle' which had been started a year earlier by friends of Bahay Tuluyan. Soon, Justcycle evolved into 'KidsView', a children's rights advocacy campaign that has

continued ever since. Through KidsView, two young people from Bahay Tuluyan have travelled to Australia every year since 2006 to talk with young Australians about social justice, poverty and development and inspire them to help bring about change. Much of the organization for KidsView and BTPA has been done by the indefatigable BTPA volunteer, Clare Scerri - Catherine's mother.

More than 200 Australian volunteers have now volunteered at Bahay Tuluyan and thousands of Australians, including individuals, schools, community groups, funding agencies and the Australian government, have supported it's work.



*Catherine Scerri*

Born in Australia into a family of eleven children, Catherine Scerri first visited the Philippines on a high school immersion program when she was 15 years old. Although her group visited various different children's organizations, Bahay Tuluyan captured her imagination immediately and she decided to return to work at Bahay Tuluyan.

Over the next several years as Catherine completed her education in Australia she returned to Bahay Tuluyan several times to volunteer, staying a bit longer each time.

Not long after returning from the Philippines the first time, Catherine, and her friend Mary Jo Fish, formed a social justice group in Australia to create opportunities for other Australians to be able to understand poverty and development more personally. In 2003 that group brought two children from Bahay Tuluyan to Australia

for Justcycle, a 'ride for kids rights'. Justcycle evolved into KidsView a few years later and continues today.

In 2003, after qualifying as a lawyer in Australia, Catherine returned to work with Bahay Tuluyan through Australian Volunteers International. Her initial placement was for 2 years but she has repeatedly extended her stay and has now worked with Bahay Tuluyan for 14 years, currently as Deputy Director.

She is a proud mother to one daughter and hundreds of Bahay Tuluyan kids.

*From my earliest visit to Bahay Tuluyan I sensed the atmosphere was different. This was not a place where people felt sorry for children. This was a place where kids did amazing things.*

*I remember during my first volunteer stint, talking to Girly Bagus, who was telling me about her life on the street. We had just come from the radio program that she was hosting - at age 15. I was blown away by what she was doing to make the world a better place. This really challenged me to figure out what I could do.*



# Escape to nature

A long-standing dream of Bahay Tuluyan came to fruition with the opening of our center in rural Quezon.



The desire to have a place for children away from the challenges of Manila was first expressed in the children's general assembly in 1991. In 1995, this dream started to come true when the Church of Sweden, in partnership with the Swedish student union, raised funds to purchase a piece of land in San Antonio, Quezon.

The 1-hectare piece of land was uncleared and accessible only by an unmade road which was frequently impassable in rainy season. Although there was said to be a creek at the back of the property, the vegetation was so overgrown few dared to try and find it!

In 1999 two initial houses were built at the front of the property and a group of 14 boys started living there, forming Bahay Tuluyan's first rural center. In 2003 additional construction began, again through funding support from Church of Sweden.

On 30 April 2005, construction was finished and the center was finally opened. It included 5 houses for children, a training center, recreation room, dining room and offices.

Since its opening, the center has developed to include housing for animals and farm infrastructure.



2005  
Bahay Tuluyan  
Quezon center opens



2005  
• Bahay Tuluyan  
advocates for better  
juvenile justice  
• Jeepney donated  
through Bahay  
TuluyanPA



*Steve Estopito*

Steve was ten years old and lived on the streets with his family when he first met staff from the Bahay Tuluyan mobile unit.

At first, Steve was worried that Bahay Tuluyan would be a dangerous place, and for several months he watched the staff delivering services on the street before making his decision to approach. The kindness staff showed the children reassured him that it was a safe place. His desire to go to school was a driving force for him to overcome his fears and join Bahay Tuluyan.

Steve was one of the first Bahay Tuluyan children to experience life at Bahay Tuluyan Quezon. For a child who had grown up on the streets in the urban jungle of Manila, this dazzling green natural environment was paradise. Steve adapted quickly and became a valuable member of the Bahay Tuluyan family in

Quezon. He started to learn about children's rights and dream that another sort of life was possible. Steve eventually became a Junior Educator, Junior Health Worker and a Junior Environmental Educator.

Steve says that Bahay Tuluyan changed his life by helping him find his talents, especially his incredible talent for dance. His dream is to dance on TV.

Although Steve has been offered a job by the famous Filipino boxer Manny Pacquiao, for now he has chosen to work with Bahay Tuluyan. He works on Bahay Tuluyan's farm growing organic black rice and in his spare time is a dance coach and choreographer.

*For me, Quezon was a place where all children's dreams came true. A world where children's rights were respected and where children were taught to spread their wings and achieve their dreams.*

*There are so many special things about Bahay Tuluyan. Bahay Tuluyan helped me find my passion and helped me study. They have been kind to me.*





# Children advocating for children

Children understand and analyse issues affecting them through participatory research.

In 2006, six former street children who had become Bahay Tuluyan's 'Participatory Research Team' launched their book *Batang Bugaw sa Malate/ Youth Pimps in Malate*. This book documented their study into an issue in their community which concerned

them; the issue of youth pimping other youth. The publication of the book was an important milestone in terms of youth-led research and advocacy.

This book was followed by various other studies that children and youth of Bahay Tuluyan produced or assisted to produce.

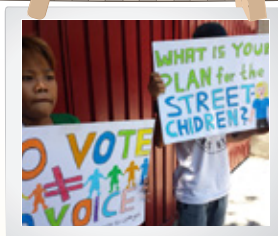
As part of Bahay Tuluyan's mission of both preventing and responding to abuse and violence against children, research often plays a critical role in bringing to light issues that are adversely affecting children. Involving children in researching the issues that concern them is recognising not only their right to participate but also their unique perspective on their lives.

Over three decades Bahay Tuluyan has both conducted its own research and also worked closely with other organizations conducting research.



2006

- "Batang Bugaw sa Malate" youth pimp research by PRT launched
- Juvenile Justice Law (RA 9344) is passed



2006

- Perimeter fence in Laguna built - Game ka na Ba-kod?
- Bahay Tuluyan Sweden established
- PILAK youth advocacy formed



## Mario Agarin, "Tatay Aga"

Mario Agarin, more fondly known as Tatay (Father) Aga, has a history at Bahay Tuluyan that spans more than two decades, three provinces and many different roles. Aga started working at Bahay Tuluyan as a driver in 1995.

When he first started at Bahay Tuluyan, Aga was challenged by managing the needs of children, especially those coming from the street who had complex lives. After a stint as a driver, Aga was given extra responsibilities, including handling money. For Aga, being trusted with this responsibility, was something that both surprised and honored him.

Over the successive years, as Bahay Tuluyan grew, Aga worked in various different roles including as a house parent and currently on Bahay Tuluyan's farm. Aga remembers when the Quezon center was being built and how he had a realisation that this was the

children's dream coming true.

Having only a high school education himself, Aga is grateful for the training provided to him by Bahay Tuluyan. He feels that no challenge is too hard because of the way the whole Bahay Tuluyan family pitches in to make things happen.

Through his work at Bahay Tuluyan Aga has been able to support his three children to finish their tertiary studies as well as provide a house for his wife and his grandmother.

For Aga, these are signs of a life well-lived.

*BT is different from other NGOs in the way it supports children even after they have moved on. It continues to guide them. Even if you are no longer at Bahay Tuluyan you are still family.*

*I am so grateful to those who have donated to Bahay Tuluyan and everyone who has given their support.*



# Our beginnings in social enterprise

Wanting to be free to address needs as they arose, Bahay Tuluyan looked for ways to improve its financial sustainability. Not all of our efforts were successful.

One of the greatest challenges Bahay Tuluyan has always faced is how to find the funding to keep its work going. Early on it was recognised that reducing reliance on external funders would make Bahay Tuluyan's work much more sustainable and needs-driven. The goal was that the organisation would generate its own funding so it could be used where it was needed most.

In 2007 Bahay Tuluyan began its first venture into social enterprise, establishing Child at Venture Café in Laguna. This internet café and coffee shop was an enterprise run by the girls and young women living at Bahay Tuluyan Laguna.

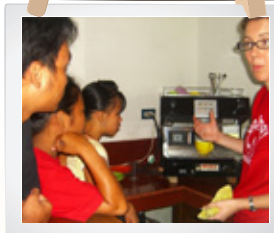
Unfortunately, local politics stopped the café from securing a business permit to operate. After many failed attempts to negotiate it was eventually put on hold in 2010.

The appetite for social enterprise however had been awoken!



2007  
 • Child at Venture Café, Aussie & Scerri houses open in Laguna

*At Bahay Tuluyan they prepare you for life.  
 Mark Salinas, Alumni*



2007  
 • Bahay Tuluyan wins People's Choice award at Global Development Marketplace Competition at World Bank, Washington DC, USA



*Marc Pequero*

As a child, Marc grew up experiencing fear and trauma at the hands of abusive family members. At 8 years old, he ran away to Manila, looking for freedom and an escape from violence.

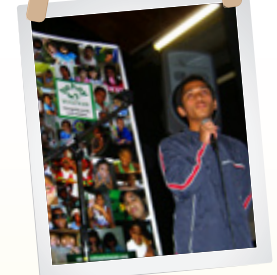
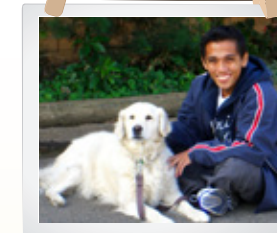
Marc became a street child, earning a small income by begging and sleeping on the sidewalk with his friends. He used to spend much of his time in Manila's largest park, Luneta. At times, when he and his friends wanted to sniff solvent they went to Manila Bay where they would climb coconut trees and sniff there so the police wouldn't see them. One day one of his friends was high from the solvent and thought he could fly. He jumped from the tree and was killed.

Marc was brought to Bahay Tuluyan by friends. At first, he would just come for the food and so he became known as the 'eat and run child'.

One day while Marc was on the street, he was hit by a car. It was raining and Marc passed out from the pain. He woke up in the hospital. Children from Bahay Tuluyan's Participatory Research Team had helped him. They saved him from dying.

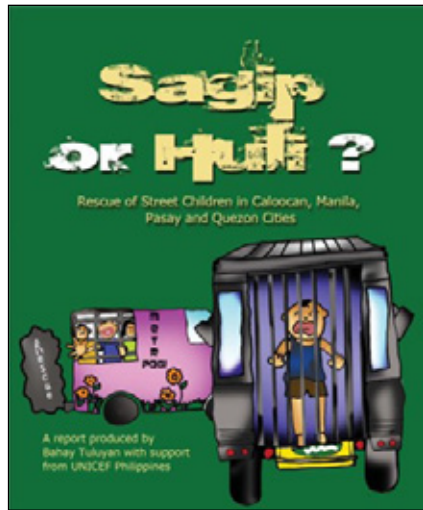
At Bahay Tuluyan Marc thrived, particularly in his academic achievements. Although he began school at 10 years old, he quickly accelerated to grade 5 where he received first honors. He participated in many training workshops and became a role model for other children. Marc considers his co-authorship of 'Batang Bugaw' to be one of his greatest accomplishments.

Marc now lives with his wife and two children. He has graduated from college and works for a Japanese manufacturing company. He speaks fluent Japanese and is a talented artist.



# Working for better “rescues”

Since its very early days, Bahay Tuluyan has worked to improve government policies for children on the street.



The government practice of arbitrarily removing children from the street has adversely affected Filipino children throughout Bahay Tuluyan's history. In 2001 government policy renamed practices of round up as 'rescue' but children still did not feel safe.

'Beginning in 2006, Bahay Tuluyan documented the practice of 'rescue' and it's effect on children. A study sponsored by UNICEF found that rescue was indiscriminate, involuntary, harmful and ineffective. This study, launched in 2009, prompted policy reform by the Philippine Department of Social Welfare and Development.

Over the next several years Bahay Tuluyan continued to lobby for improved policies to translate into improved practices. In 2014 this advocacy led to a government shelter for children in Manila being closed down as a result of serious abuse to children. In 2015 Bahay Tuluyan participated in a senate inquiry into the government's actions to remove children from the street during a visit of Pope Francis to Manila.

Bahay Tuluyan's work to improve policies and programs for street-connected children continues.

2008

- Australian Ambassador Rod Smit visits
- Bahay Tuluyan organises first street children's festival

2008

- "Sagip or Huli" research on rescue launched
- Campaign for A Home of Our Own begins
- Basketball court built in Laguna



2009

Land for new home in Malate bought

2009

Rescue research prompts policy change and comment from UN



## Rachiel Neverio

Rachiel was born in Nagcarlan, Laguna. Her parents separated when she was young and she lived with her mother. Her mother in turn left her in the care of her older sister while she travelled to earn money.

When Rachiel was six years old her mother was hit by a bus. Although she was taken to hospital, the family had no money for medicine and she died.

After her mother's death, Rachiel's life became more and more difficult. She experienced serious abuse and had to work both before and after school to earn money, often until late into the night. She ran away from home several times and once ended up working for a woman who used her as a drug courier. Every time she got caught she would go home where she was abused.

Eventually, Rachiel was able to run away with her younger nephew and come to Bahay Tuluyan. She asked to stay so she that she could go to school. Rachiel completed her high school education, receiving an Academic Achievement award. With the support of Bahay Tuluyan she then studied social work, graduating at the top of her class.

Rachiel is now a registered social worker working with an NGO. She is a proud mother of a beautiful, independent daughter.

*My dream for children is that they grow up full of hope and love for their fellow children. I hope that all children can join and persevere in the struggle for change and peace in the world.*



*I was jealous of other children my age who were always playing and going to school, accompanied by their mothers.*



# A home of our own



After two decades of being housed in properties generously loaned by religious groups, in 2008 Bahay Tuluyan learned that the house it was occupying in Sta Mesa would be demolished. It was time to find 'A Home of Our Own' in Manila.

Bahay Tuluyan's biggest fundraising campaign ever began as the organisation worked to find a piece of land where it could be close to the children it served and build a building that met its needs.

Initially overwhelmed by this tremendous task, Bahay Tuluyan got a massive boost when Planet Wheeler Foundation offered to donate the land and, eventually, a significant contribution towards the building.

Taking more than 3 years to fundraise for and build, Bahay Tuluyan Manila is the result of tremendous generosity, perseverance and hard work. Custom-built for Bahay Tuluyan's needs, the center includes Makabata Guesthouse & Café, a drop-in center, the 'Sinag Center' shelter and offices – all on 500sqm.

Opened on 11-11-11, Bahay Tuluyan Manila is everything that the organisation could need!

Over the six years since it opened, BT Manila has benefited from the support of various local organisations and colleges who have helped truly turn it into a home.

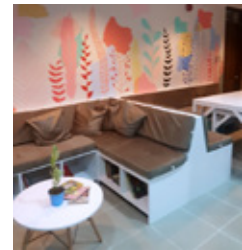
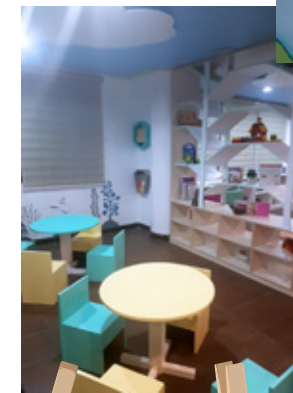
**2010**  
• McKiro & Anihan Center open in Laguna  
• Bahay Tuluyan grows first crop of rice

*Bahay Tuluyan is not a non-government organization but a house where a big and happy family lives. Donnielyn Gamutan, Alumni*



**2010**  
• Bahay Tuluyan organises Children's Rights Festival and publishes 'Munting Tinig'  
• Ground broken for construction in Manila

The campaign to build and open Bahay Tuluyan's center in Manila was one of the biggest achievements in the organisation's history, significantly increasing its capacity to create change.



*I will never forget the sleepless nights in the leadup to the opening of Bahay Tuluyan Manila. Everyone was involved in sanding, shovelling, painting, finishing, furnishing and cleaning. We would sleep on the floor for a couple of hours, get up and keep going. We hung our sign as the visitors were arriving and then because the paint was still wet it fell and landed on one of our VIPs during the opening ceremony! Catherine Scerri*

**2011**  
• Bahay Tuluyan leads celebration of first International Day for Street Children

**2011**  
• Recreate Philippines is born  
• A Home of Our Own opens

**2011**  
• JE Manual is launched  
• Social Enterprise Youth Associate program starts





## Jesus "Mote" Ferrer

Mote first came to Bahay Tuluyan when the police threatened to lock him up if he didn't.

From an early age Mote had turned to crime to raise money for his family and be able to go to school. He soon got a reputation for being a bad influence on his peers –with parents warning their children to stay away from him. During those years, Mote's ambition was to become the 'mayor' or boss of his jail cell – he felt that his destiny was pre-ordained and he hoped to make some money out of it and return some of his wealth to the poor, Robin Hood-style.

Mote was encouraged to come to Bahay Tuluyan as part of a 'Seeds of Change' project. When he first came to Bahay Tuluyan, he regularly slept through workshops, only waking up to eat. He claims the food was delicious and there was plenty of it.

After a while he started to notice that Bahay Tuluyan was a family, the staff kind and respectful to children. He learnt about his rights and started to envisage a different kind of life. With the help of the staff, Mote began to set goals and plan for his future. He studied hard and secured his high school certificate despite having missed several years of education.

Today, Mote has turned his life around and is training to be a police officer – a good cop. He spends most of his time between school commitments volunteering as a youth facilitator and mentor.

He is working hard so that his experience may inspire other children to change their lives.

*Before, my dream was to be the boss of my jail cell. Now I want to be a police man to give inspiration to other children.*

*At Bahay Tuluyan I have a family, they are always positive. They always have your back. They help you.*



## Joseph Pondevida

When Joseph was 17 years old, it felt like his life was spiralling out of control. He was involved in crime and was being physically abused by those responsible for caring for him. The adults around him felt that they had lost control of him and surrendered him to the government.

Joseph was told that he would be referred to Bahay Tuluyan's shelter in Quezon and this made him really nervous. He expected he would be locked up and have every movement monitored. Arriving at Bahay Tuluyan and seeing children playing in the garden and on the basketball court made him very relieved. He saw a 'happy place'.

After a while, Joseph became involved in training on Bahay Tuluyan's rice field. He learnt to plant rice, make organic fertilisers, weed, prepare the land, fertilise, harvest and dry rice. Most of this work was done

manually. At first Joseph found it difficult but as his skills developed it became easier and he loved working with the other children. Joseph says that working on the rice field made him realise that earning money through his own hard work was much more satisfying than getting it through crime. He felt proud that he could have his own money and savings through the skills and knowledge he gained on the farm.

With the help of Bahay Tuluyan's social workers, Joseph was reintegrated back into his family and is continuing his studies. His dream is to become an agriculturalist.

*I learnt how to raise pigs and chickens and how to make organic feed. But most importantly I learnt to be independent, to take care of myself and my belongings, do my own laundry, cook food, be disciplined and follow the rules.*

*I am very thankful to the staff who became my second parents and to the children who helped me learn so much through their experiences and realize the importance of my relationship with my family.*

# Working towards sustainability



After experimenting with social enterprise with Child at Venture Café in Laguna, Bahay Tuluyan was determined to be able to self-generate a significant percentage of its funding through social enterprise.

It started with our young people producing and selling handmade jewellery using recycled materials through 'Recreate Philippines'. Not long later, our youth started leading community walking tours as part of 'Bahay Tuluyan Eco-Cultural Encounters'.



Makabata Guesthouse & Cafe was established when Bahay Tuluyan built its new home in Manila. It was Bahay Tuluyan's biggest venture into social enterprise yet. Opened in 2011, this social enterprise has been able to generate significant revenue for the organisation as well as provide many young people with opportunities to gain skills and earn income.



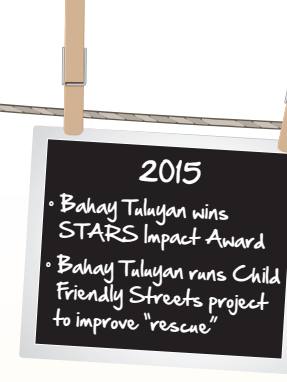
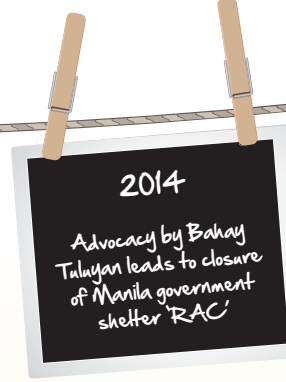
Our second venture into social enterprise has enabled both the organization and our young people to become more financially independent.

In 2010 Bahay Tuluyan first experimented with rice planting in Laguna and by 2014 had purchased a rice field in Tiaong, Quezon. It also started to raise pigs and chickens, self-generating a significant percentage of the food that the organisation serves every day. In 2016 the gardening fever hit Manila, starting an urban rooftop garden at Bahay Tuluyan Manila.

*Give Bahay Tuluyan some rice and they'll feed them for a day, give them a rice field and they'll feed them for a lifetime.*



*The motivation, dedication and multi-skilling of the Bahay Tuluyan team easily surpasses the levels that I've experienced in any profit-driven business despite the very limited resources and demanding environment in which they work. Indeed the organisation is a model business when it comes to staff morale and teamwork. Robert Hill, Australian Business Volunteer*





# Our changemakers

It is the passion and energy of Bahay Tuluyan's staff that make the organisation what it is today.



Beginning with the passion of its founders, Bahay Tuluyan has sought out staff that can help achieve its vision of a world where every child's rights are respected, protected and fulfilled.

Some of our staff have always known that they wanted to work with children while others, like our Executive Director, landed in their roles by happy accidents. Regardless of how they came to Bahay Tuluyan, everyone that has worked with the organisation over the years has one thing in common – a heart for children. Bahay Tuluyan has stuck by the philosophy that skills can be taught but passion must be inherent for without this, the work would be much too difficult.

Despite being frequently under-resourced and under-staffed, Bahay Tuluyan has refused to punch below its weight. Instead it has continued to push to achieve the greatest possible impact for children. This has been able to happen because the staff behind Bahay Tuluyan have consistently given their hearts and souls to the work.

The great transformations that have been able to be made in children's lives have been possible because of the great sacrifices of not only our staff, but also their families.

*The most important person for me in Bahay Tuluyan is my social worker because she is always open to listen to all my problems and concerns. Princess Roque, 14 years old*

*Bahay Tuluyan is special because they will never give up on you, no matter how much you give up on yourself. Instead, they will keep believing in you and will give you many chances until you find yourself again. Aisa Flavier, Alumni*



Ana & Jenny

## Ana, Jenny & Lecyl



Lecyl

Cumulatively, Ana, Jenny & Lecyl have given 30 years of service, talent, commitment, stress, passion, love and care to Bahay Tuluyan. All starting as social workers, they have worked in different roles and locations and now each lead one of Bahay Tuluyan's centers. Their families are very much part of the Bahay Tuluyan and they are best of friends.

### Ana

Ana had just given birth to her first child when she began her life at Bahay Tuluyan in 2005 running Alternative Education programs.

She has now worked in all of Bahay Tuluyan's centers. She believes that the most powerful thing she can do to change the lives of children is to listen to them, allowing them to express their feelings and take action in their own lives.

*This is more than a job. We are a family and it is my mission. The children are part of my being. Annaliza Samarita-Alinvalas, RSW - Center Manager (Laguna)*

### Lecyl

Originally from the southern Philippines, Lecyl was searching the internet for a job when the happy faces of the Bahay Tuluyan children caught her eye.

Starting as a social worker in 2008 she has worked in Sta Mesa, Quezon and Malate. For Lecyl, it is Bahay Tuluyan's unconditional support for children that sets it apart. She hopes that Bahay Tuluyan can grow to serve the many children that need help.

*The children are the reason I am still at Bahay Tuluyan. Lecyl S. Roja, RSW - Center Manager (Manila)*

### Jenny

Previously working in drug rehabilitation, Jen felt the Bahay Tuluyan 'heart' as soon as she was interviewed in 2008. She felt that for the first time in her life she had really been listened to.

Jenny believes that the children make her stronger, that they are her 'stress and her stress-reliever'. She takes great pride in seeing children going from begging on the street to earning their own money.

*I was a social worker. Now I am also a driver, farmer, business woman. Jenny Sano, RSW - Center Manager (Quezon)*

# Our committed volunteers

The formal volunteer program at Bahay Tuluyan began in 2003 and has since accommodated more than 400 volunteers from 14 countries. Volunteers have contributed in so many ways, giving selflessly of their skills, time and energy to make Bahay Tuluyan what it is today

*During my 12 months at Bahay Tuluyan I spent a lot of time growing black rice! We normally got up at 4 am and planted each single seed by hand. Remember, there are millions of seeds in a field! But I am still (and probably will be until the end of my life) impressed by how much fun it was and how happy the staff and children working there are!!*

*Niko Hinz, Germany*

*I volunteered for Bahay Tuluyan for 2 years and this was one of the most special times in my life. My biggest learning came from Bahay Tuluyan's beneficiaries; the children and young people I got to share this time with. They taught me the real meaning of resilience. They taught me that it doesn't matter what blows life deals you, you can always get up in the morning with a smile and get on with it. That life goes on and it is up to us how we move on forward.*

*Daniel Noriega, Australia*

*Even nearly 6 years after volunteering with Bahay Tuluyan I still remember the simple joys and comfort it brought to three children of Bahay Tuluyan. Even though they had grown up in Manila, as street children they couldn't enter malls as they would always be refused by security. One day we took them into a mall and they asked to ride the escalator. The smiles on their faces were like kids at Disneyland.*

*Kate Quillin, USA*



*No matter who you are or where you come from there is a place for you within the organization to contribute your part in working towards the rights of every child. – Bahay Tuluyan Sweden – Lisa Greger, Katrin Lilius, Michaela Garberg, Lars Greger, Josefin Garberg and Sverre Trygg*

**2012**

- First Kapitan Makabata community dialogue
- First group of Social Enterprise Youth Associates graduates

Hundreds of volunteers have contributed countless hours, energy and passion to help build Bahay Tuluyan.

*I remember waking up at 6am to roosters crowing and pots clanging – sounds which were soon followed by music. The kids had some crazy dance moves (to Whitney Houston), and there was always lots of singing (also to Whitney Houston). The children were so welcoming, running up and calling out "Ate Belinda" –*

*Belinda Parker, Australia*

.....

*Even though the children at Bahay Tuluyan have had sad experiences, they don't forget to smile. I really respect them. Now, I support children in our country.*

*Kazue Noguchi, Japan*



*As a Business Volunteer at Makabata Guesthouse, my brief was to introduce business management techniques and systems to Bahay Tuluyan's enthusiastic team. It is a credit to each member of the team, as to how this social enterprise has developed over the past four years, since our association commenced.*

*About half way through my volunteer year I went to a rally with the Bahay Tuluyan children I had come to know. They were speaking up about abuses they had experienced in a government shelter. I didn't know whether I had the right to be there to protest something I couldn't even really understand. However 'my kids' told me, and gave me the feeling, that I was one of them and should fight side by side with them for what is right. It was a beautiful feeling of brotherhood, respect and love. After that day my relationship with the kids deepened into something much more intense, we could feel mutual respect.*

*Jan Dreier, Germany*

*Wow, the memories! I have had so many fabulous adventures at Bahay Tuluyan. Building houses, fences, swings and toy kitchens, making cushions, T-shirts and posters, teaching Bahay Tuluyan kids how to make coffee and Aussie-style lasagne. But it is the joy, the smiles, the dancing and the singing of the wonderful Bahay Tuluyan community, all in the face of incredible adversity, that has inspired me and kept me coming back for more. What an amazing bunch of people!*

*Melissa Keane, Australia*

**2013**

- First Social Enterprise Youth Associates graduate
- Bahay Tuluyan starts training police in children's rights



# Our community

It takes a village to raise a child and a whole community to help Bahay Tuluyan achieve it's goals.



Hundreds of individuals, school and community groups have visited Bahay Tuluyan and donated their time and energy to working with Bahay Tuluyan to achieve our vision.

Some of the more notable visitors to Bahay Tuluyan over the years have been British Ambassador Adrian Thorpe and British Foreign Minister Robin Cook (1997), Princess Anne (1999) and successive Australian Ambassadors Ruth Pearce (2004), Tony Hely (2005) and Rod Smith (2008). A surprise visit by Madonna in 2016 made headlines locally and globally.

We welcome all those who support our vision!



# Our Trustees

Working behind the scenes, the Trustees of Bahay Tuluyan provide vision, oversight and guidance.

Our Trustees have come from many walks of life, bringing many different skills and talents to our organisation. Some of the Trustees who have served Bahay Tuluyan over the past 3 decades are:

- |                              |                       |                              |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Atty Cielo Maris S. Badilles | Fr John Gallagher     | Ms Carolina B. Nuyda         |
| Atty Herman R. Cimafranca    | Mr Edward M. Gerlock  | Ms Marissa P. Caluyong       |
| Atty Sharon M. Decano        | Mr Exuperio Alcantar  | Ms Milagros Isabel Cristobal |
| Atty Shiela Sison-Javier     | Mr Marietto A. Enecio | Ms Myrna Arceo               |
| Atty Tyrone R. Cimafranca    | Mr Nicanor B. Arriola | Sr Bernadette Oppus, SSpS    |
| Dr Ernesto M. Pernia         | Mr Richard P. Burgos  | Sr Carmelita Victoria, SSpS  |
| Dr Evelyn Flordelis          | Ms Acor Gonzaga       | Sr Irmella Carlos, SSpS      |
| Fr Bernard O'Connor          | Ms Alisa Willis       | Sr Mila Sandoval, SSpS       |



Herman R. Cimafranca

A native of Bohol, Herman R. Cimafranca studied in the seminary for 11 years before earning his law degree. Currently he is an Assistant Solicitor General at the Office of the Solicitor General, where he handles mostly environmental and human trafficking cases. He has been President of Bahay Tuluyan since 2006.

*The local and international recognition of Bahay Tuluyan can be attributed to its uncompromising and proactive stance in promoting and defending children's rights and the courage and sacrifice of its dedicated staff.*

*I hope that Bahay Tuluyan will stay it's course and consolidate if not expand it's gains. I also hope that Bahay Tuluyan will eventually become increasingly self-sufficient in funding it's operations and programs. In the meantime I wish that the assistance from both foreign and local donors will continue to pour in to enable Bahay Tuluyan to sustain its programs at optimum levels. ASG Herman Cimafranca, President*



# The wind beneath our wings

Over our 30 years of work with children, countless people and organisations have faithfully stood by us through the ups and downs. They have supported us, guided us and believed in us. They have helped us in so many ways – big and small. Some have donated in kind, others financially. Some have shared their resources, others their expertise. Some have invested in our big ideas, some have helped us pick ourselves up when times have been hard. They have laughed and cried with us.

None of what we have achieved would be possible without our friends and funders. They are too numerous to mention but every contribution has been integral to creating the Bahay Tuluyan tapestry. On behalf of the thousands of children whose lives you have transformed, we thank you.

We acknowledge not only our major funders, but everyone who has believed in our dream of a better world for children.



- Action Aid, Denmark
- ADB
- American Women's Club of the Philippines
- Anonymous Child
- ARCS
- Art Venture
- Ateneo School of Medicine & Public Health
- Australian Business Volunteers
- Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development
- AVID
- Axiem
- British Embassy
- Canada Fund
- CIL
- Clare and Charles Scerri Consortium on Street Children
- Corpus Christi Community
- Credit Suisse
- Crowntech Corporation
- De Morton Family
- Direct Help Sweden
- DSWD
- Dutch Embassy
- ECPAT
- Ed and Ching Gerlock
- Filipino Children's Fund
- Freelife
- Glenda McNaught
- Greg Mullins & Anne Muldowney
- GRM – Communities 1st
- Helping Hands
- HSBC
- Ito Supporting Committee
- KidsRights
- KOPION
- Mapua University
- MIVA
- Museo Pambata
- Nick & Cathy Nicou
- Our Father's House
- Pedyakamp
- Penson & Company
- PETA
- Philippine Educational Society
- Philippine Women's University
- Probe
- Robinson's Handyman
- Rotary Club of Manila
- Maynilad Seafront
- Rotary Club of Manila Metro
- Rotary Club of UN
- Rotary Club of Warner Bay
- Saint Columban Fathers
- Save the Children UK
- Shirley & Ray Kukk
- Sister Servants of the Holy Spirit
- SNL
- Society of the Divine Word
- Sr Martha, SSpS
- Stroud College
- Sunflower Children's Center
- Tollsvkillingshjälpen
- U Happy Events
- Uvero Family
- VIDA
- Wings of Support



# Our vision, mission and goals

## VISION

We are committed to building a world where every child's rights are respected, protected and fulfilled.

## MISSION

We are a children's rights organization working to prevent and respond to abuse and violence against children.

We achieve this through dynamic collaboration with and empowerment of children, youth, families and the community.

## GOALS

From 2018 to 2020 Bahay Tuluyan aims to reduce violence and abuse against children by:

- Enabling at least 80% of children and youth involved in Bahay Tuluyan programs to develop increased resilience.
- Assisting children to live in safe family environments.
- Enabling systemic change by engaging stakeholders and actively promoting children's rights locally, nationally and internationally.
- Being ethical, humane, socially responsible, culturally-sensitive, and environment-friendly and self-funding at least 30% of its operational costs through social enterprise.

# Our current programs

TODAY, BAHAY TULUYAN'S OVERALL STRATEGIC GOAL IS TO REDUCE ABUSE AND VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN. IT'S 11 PROGRAMS REVOLVE AROUND THE FOUR FOCUS AREAS THAT WE ARE WORKING TOWARDS:

## RESILIENT CHILDREN

Street Education and Support – equipping children living or working on the street with skills to protect themselves from abuse or violence

Drop In Center – making children in need of special protection safer by connecting them to support services and engaging them in community activities

Bridge & Formal Education – assisting children to access bridge or formal education and providing opportunities for them to enhance their educational development

## EMPOWERED YOUTH

Youth Leadership Development – empowering children and youth to be socially responsible leaders and strong advocates for children's rights

Youth Changemakers – enabling youth to lead activities to promote child-friendly communities

Independent Living Skills Program – equipping youth with holistic skills and experience to enable them to lead productive, healthy and happy adult lives

Social Enterprise & Self Reliance – equipping youth with professional and work-related skills through involvement in social enterprise and enabling Bahay

Tuluyan to generate income to cover 30% of its operational expenses

## SAFE FAMILIES

Family Support & Reintegration – providing support to enable at-risk families to provide quality care for children and ensure that children can stay in their families or be reintegrated into their families

Alternative Family Care – providing quality, rights-based alternative family care as a last resort and for the shortest possible time for children without safe family environments

## CHILD-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

Children's Rights Education – educating people about children's rights and issues to empower them to become involved in protecting children from abuse and violence

Children's Rights Advocacy and Research – proactively responding to and advocating about social justice issues and empowering civil society and the government to respect, protect and fulfill children's rights

