

## UPA&FR performs at 2 N.J. venues

Written by Special to the Filipino Reporter  
Wednesday, 25 April 2018 14:44

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**First row, l.-r.: Lena Gonzalez, Christa Bachman (Educational Supervisor, Lakeview School), Diane Valencia (UPA&FR President) and Teya David. Second row, l.-r.: Rudy Reyes, Lee Clemente, Russ Kelner and Leon de Lara after performing for children with developmental and related disabilities.**

The University of the Philippines Alumni & Friends Rondalla (UPA&FR), with grant funding provided by the Middlesex Board of Chosen Freeholders through a grant provided by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, shared their music with the New Jersey Institute for Disabilities on April 13, 2018.

They performed exclusively for over 200 children, adults, caregivers and staff of the Lakeview

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School in Edison, N.J., as well as the Adult Training Center in Iselin, N.J.

The audience enjoyed interacting with the rondalla music, shaking maracas and singing along to the upbeat and familiar tunes.

Diane Valencia, UPA&FR President, remarked, “We are gratified that these concerts brought them a significant cultural experience in addition to being entertained with the different genre of the pieces performed.”

Venus Majeski, NJID Director of Development and Community Relations, was so appreciative as she observed the audience interacting and engaging with the vocalist and instrumentalists.

UPA&FR has been propagating native musical instruments as a string ensemble highlighting the bandurria, laud and octavina within the United States and abroad.

For the past 26 years, UPA&FR has been preserving and promoting Philippine cultural heritage not only through music but also through native songs and folk dances.

Rondalla pieces, mostly arranged by Bayani Mendoza de Leon (1942-2013), their first music director, range from simple folk songs to symphonic arrangements.

UPA&FR has recorded three CDs consisting of well-loved Philippine songs and dances.

Proceeds benefit the rondalla instruments lending program for underserved school children in low income areas of the Philippines.

Free weekly workshops are offered to all age groups interested in learning to play a rondalla instrument — conducted in Linden, N.J.

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For further information, call (732) 317-3364, e-mail [upafr.president@gmail.com](mailto:upafr.president@gmail.com) or visit [www.upafrondalla.org](http://www.upafrondalla.org).

