

How Robin Williams became part of an extended Pinoy family

Written by Administrator

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Robin Williams and Marsha Garces.

The late actor Robin Williams' link to the Philippines goes beyond the impact of his movies and television work on Filipino audiences.

For almost 20 years, Williams was married to Filipino-American philanthropist and former movie producer Marsha Garces, allowing the Oscar-winning star to become part of an extended *Pinoy* family.

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Garces, 58, is one of two ex-wives of Williams, 63, who died in an apparent suicide in his Tiburon, California, home on Aug. 11 after struggling with severe depression.

Williams and Garces met when she was working as a nanny for his first child Zachary by first wife Valerie Velardi.

They were married in 1989 and went on to have their own children, Zelda Rae Williams in 1989 and Cody Alan Williams in 1991.

Garces is half-Finnish and half-Filipino prompting Robin to describe her as “Finnipino.”

She reportedly stood by his side as he battled his addiction, but a relapse after 20 years of sobriety played a large part in their divorce in 2008.

A friend said that while Williams entered rehab and then remained sober, “the trust was broken.”

But longtime Williams friend Richard Belzer clarified that the split was “amicable” as opposed to “a vicious, bitter thing.”

He appreciated her support, telling *People* magazine before that “she’s amazing” and “makes it look effortless.”

Despite the split, Robin said he and his children still make it a point to keep in touch with his Filipino kin.

In a separate interview with the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* in 2011, Williams remembered Garces

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fondly and even praised his former father-in-law Leon Pantaleon Garces, and called him “a great man.”

“My ex-father-in-law Leon was amazing. They (my kids) keep up with the Filipino part of my family,” he said.

Garces worked on some of Williams’ most popular films.

She was a producer on “Mrs. Doubtfire,” “Patch Adams,” “Jakob the Liar,” “Dead Poets Society” and “Hook.”

She won a 1994 Golden Globe for Best Film (Musical or Comedy) for “Mrs. Doubtfire.”

In 2003, she was nominated for a Primetime Emmy for her work on “Robin Williams: Live on Broadway.”