

Profile: **Diana Oosterbeek-Latoza**



### **Founding Chairperson and Social Cultural Worker**

**Stichting Bayanihan , Centrum voor Filippijnse Vrouwen in Nederland**

**Bayanihan Foundation, Philippine Women Centre in The Netherlands**

Diana Oosterbeek-Latoza is one of the three founders of Bayanihan. She was the first chairperson of Bayanihan and has been actively involved with Bayanihan since it was founded in 1991.

Her functions have been multiple: coordinator, opvang *medewerker*, programme officer, project manager, and social cultural worker. She is a volunteer chairperson and social cultural worker of Bayanihan since 2012 up to the present. She is a native of Iloilo City, Philippines and was an English instructor in the University of Iloilo and the Iloilo School of Art & Trades (now Western Visayas State University of Science & Technology) in the years 1966-1976. She has lived and worked for a year in Southern California, USA.

She lives in Bodegraven, the Netherlands, married to Wim Oosterbeek, Electronics technician and Physics and chemistry instructor & former Dutch development worker in the Philippines. They have two adult children Marcel & Marjolaine.

In 2007, she won the ZAMI ( Black, Migrant & Refugee Women Platform in the Netherlands ) award prize. ZAMI Award is a yearly prestigious prize wherein the strength, dedication, quality and uniqueness of black, migrant and refugee women are recognized and honored. Emphasis is given on the distinguishing contribution of these women within the Dutch society and most especially their outstanding influence in the empowerment and participation of women groups and other black, migrant and refugee women. She received her Bachelor of Social Work degree on August 2011 from the Instituut voor Social Work/De Horst of the Faculty of Society & Law of Hogeschool Utrecht, University of Applied Sciences Utrecht.

She was a member of the Supervisory Commission on au Pairs Research done by WODC, Ministry of Security & Justice, the Netherlands 2003 & 2014. She has been doing lobby work for Filipina au pairs since 1996; Lobby work ended successfully on June 2013. She is the initiator in forming the Bayanihan Seniors Group on April 2013.

She is also the recipient of the FILMIS (Filipino Migrants in Solidarity ) Achiever Award 2016 and the Knight Cross of the Order of Orange-Nassau which was awarded by the Kingdom of Netherlands on April 26, 2017.

She says: "I believe that Stichting Bayanihan has a social commitment to enhance and develop the integration and participation of the Filipino women through empowerment in the Dutch society. I'm proud to say that Bayanihan has been doing these important tasks for more than 25 years. In this context I feel that I have an important role too, as an instrument in doing these changes - of moving forward in participating and integrating, bringing with me my many faceted Filipino identities and supporting my fellow " "kababayans"

( kaFilipinas). Thus being with Bayanihan is not an easy decision, it is not an easy task. But Bayanihan work is fulfilling and inspiring. So as long as Bayanihan is asked to do these social services and as long as she is needed to do so, Bayanihan is here to stay and so are the committed Bayanihan women."