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DELY CRUZ gets another feather on her cap. —Photo by Ave Basa

Fil-Am business leader gets national award

By AVE BASA
Editor-in-Chief

DELY Cruz, a prominent Filipino-American business and community leader from Houston, is among the recipients of the "Businesswoman of the Year" award given out every year by the Business Advisory Council of the National Republican Congressional Committee (NRCC).

The award will be present-

ed at a special ceremony and luncheon during the council's Tax Reform Workshop in Washington, D.C., on March 14, 2005, with House Majority Leader Tom DeLay and NRCC Chairman Thomas Reynolds as special guests.

The awardees will also dine with President George W. Bush during the NRCC March Dinner on March 15.

"It is my great pleasure to inform you that you have

been selected winner of our 2004 Businesswoman of the Year award," Reynolds informed Dely Cruz on Feb. 4. "Congratulations! As a prominent business leader in Texas and a key member of our Business Advisory Council, we proudly recognize you as a winner from Texas."

As a winner, Dely Cruz's name will also be listed in a full-page Wall Street Journal ad to recognize her accom-

plishment.

Dely Cruz won the award in her capacity, among others, as operations manager and managing partner of Right Solutions LLP, a health service staffing company. The award also recognizes her efforts in community service as a representative of the Filipino-American community in the city, county, state and national levels as community outreach chair of the

Greater Houston Council of Federated Republican Women, an affiliate of the Texas Federation of Republican Women and the National Federation of Republican Women.

The Business Advisory Council's "Businesswoman of the Year" award is another feather added to Dely Cruz's cap.

See NATIONAL AWARD, p. 3

'AIDS warrior' to speak at Asia Society March 7 forum

ASIA Society Texas, in collaboration with the AIDS Foundation Houston, will present Dr. Krisana Kraissintu in a forum entitled "AIDS: A Global Issue" on Monday, March 7, 2005, at the Intercontinental Hotel (2222 Southwest Freeway - Legends 1).

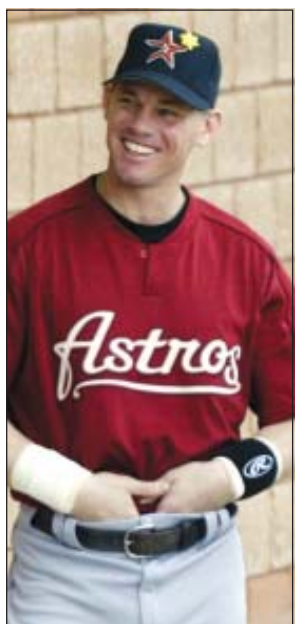
Registration starts at 7:30 a.m. the forum starts at 8 a.m.

Dr. Kraissintu is pharmaceutical consultant to ARV production in African countries and former director of the Research and Development Institute Government Pharmaceutical Organization, Thailand

Dr. Kraissintu gained the title "AIDS Warrior" from her peers for her pioneering work and undeterred passion for producing affordable drugs to combat HIV. She is responsible for developing several locally produced generic anti-retroviral drugs to increase drug access to an estimated 70,000 HIV/AIDS patients in Thailand and an additional 30,000 patients in Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. Despite global regulatory measures to restrict access to low-cost ARV in developing countries, Kraissintu continues her work in Africa—the Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea and Tanzania—to produce affordable HIV/AIDS generic drugs for impoverished patients.

With the recent withdraw-

See AIDS WARRIOR, page 6



CRAIG Biggio is tabbed to open the season as the starting left fielder, with rookie Chris Burke slated to start at second base. But manager Phil Garner is weighing all of his options, and there is a chance that Biggio could see playing time at second. **SPORTS, page 8.**

'Entrepreneurs of the Year' bared

THE Asian Chamber of Commerce (ACC) announced the seven Houston businessmen and women who will be honored as the 2005 Entrepreneurs of the Year.

The winners were introduced at a news conference on Feb. 18, 2005, at the newly opened Hilton Garden Inn Houston Westchase.

The entrepreneurs will be recognized at the Chamber's gala, "An Extravaganza in the Orient," to be held April 8 at the Westin Galleria Hotel. For more information or to purchase tables or tickets, call the Asian Chamber of Commerce at 713-782-7222.

First time winners of the Entrepreneur of the Year award are: Samuel Abraham, of Abrahams Oriental Rugs; Carol Chiu, of Banyan Foods Company; Davin Huang, of Teahouse; and Vican Tan, of Viet Hoa International Foods

Second time winners are: Leeshan Birney, of Stone Mountain Properties; Glen Gondo, of Gondo Company Inc.; and Daniel Wong, Tolunay-Wong Engineers, Inc.



THIS year's winners with Asian Chamber officers. From left are Richard Cole, Asian Chamber of Commerce chairman; Elsie Huang, ACC president; Alice Chen, Chamber Gala co-chair; Leeshan Birney, Stone Mountain Properties; Glen Gondo, Gondo Company; Daniel Wong, Tolunay-Wong Engineers; Carol Chiu and her son Gary, Banyan Foods; Samuel Abraham, Abrahams Oriental Rugs; and Vican Tan, Viet Hoa International Foods. Also pictured are Steve Hsu and Shu-Ying Li Hsu, Hilton Garden Inn Houston Westbelt, where the announcement news conference was held. Entrepreneur winner not pictured is Davin Huang of Teahouse.

—Photo by Sue Davis

Samuel Abraham has been called the "Maharaja of Rugs." Since 1975, Abraham and his wife, Omana, have been selling beautiful rugs made all over the world and now offer fine home furnishings, lighting and accessories, interior fabrics and beddings. From his cavernous showroom at the Decorative Arts

Center to his large retail store across from the Galleria, Abraham offers a dizzying mass of designs, shapes and colors, some representing art that will never be reproduced again.

Abraham serves on the boards of the Houston Grand Opera, Channel 8, the University of Texas Health Sci-

ence Center and Care International.

Carol Chiu took on a big job when she founded Banyan Foods Co. 27 years ago with the intent of switching Texans from beef to tofu. Banyan specializes in the manufacture of tofu, soy milk, tofu egg rolls and other Asian vegetarian products. Although

she started her business with secondhand equipment and furniture purchased at a garage sale, Chiu now partners with HEB, Central Market and Fiesta Marts throughout Texas to broaden the mar-

See ENTREPRENEURS, p. 3

Dragon boat season starts

SPONSORS, TEAMS AND VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR HOUSTON DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL AND GULF COAST INTERNATIONAL REGATTA

HOUSTON—The Texas Dragon Boat Association (TDBA) is again bringing "the second most popular paddle sport in the world" (*Paddler Magazine*) to Houston. The association starts the 2005 season with the 5th annual Houston Dragon Boat Festival, to be held on May 7, 2005, at the Allen's Landing in downtown.

The festival features teams of 20 paddlers, a drummer and a steersman which race down a 250-meter stretch of water in competition for the revered "Dragon Cup." Participants and spectators of the free public event celebrate Asian culture including food,

music and entertainment.

"Houston has the most incredible events, and the Dragon Boat Festival is among the most unique. In addition to showcasing Asian traditions and the sport of dragon boat racing, we also have the opportunity to showcase Buffalo Bayou and the progress, which has been made on our waterfront. I would not want to live and work anywhere else. Houston truly is rich in its multicultural attractions," stressed G.J. "Jordy" Tollett, CEO and president of the Greater



THE FACOST team prepares to race at the Gulf Coast International Regatta on Oct. 23, 2004. —Ave Basa photo

See DRAGON BOAT, page 6

Search begins for Miss Chinatown Houston 2005

AN informational meeting will be held on Sunday, March 13th at 2:00 p.m. for prospective contestants for the 35th annual Miss Chinatown Houston Scholarship Pageant at the Chinese Community Center, 5855 Sovereign Dr. Room 105.

Sponsored by the Chinese American Citizens Alliance, Houston Lodge, this year's pageant will be held on Saturday, July 23, 2005 at the J.W. Marriott Hotel across from the Galleria

Applications will be available for the first time at the

meeting.

Eligibility to enter

- An applicant must be a single female who has never been married, had a marriage annulled, and has never been a parent.

- She must be of Chinese ancestry (father is of Chinese descent), at least 17 and not older than 25 by the pageant date.

- She must not be a professional entertainer or model, and must not have a crim-

See MISS CHINATOWN, p. 6

Fil-Am rights advocate addresses Korea meet

SEOUL—Fil-Am human rights advocate Edward Logan of Jubilee Campaign USA addressed the 6th Annual International Conference on North Korean Human Rights and Refugees held February 14-16, 2005 in downtown Seoul, Korea.

The conference was hosted by the Citizen's Alliance for North Korean Human Rights (NKHR), according to a press statement from Citizen's Alliance for North Korean Human Rights.

Edward Logan, 28, was the youngest human rights advocate ever invited to address the said conference and will empower more than 500 young human rights leaders to continue working on human rights issues



EDWARD LOGAN

worldwide especially for North Koreans.

Other prominent speakers that addressed the conference included Vaclav Havel, former president of the Czech Republic; Kwan-Yong Park, former speaker of the Korean National Assembly; and Carl Gershman, president of the National Endowment for Democracy USA.

Logan has played a pivot-

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