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“The Learning” Follows the Hopes and Trials of Four Filipina Teachers Coming to America, Premiering on PBS on Tuesday, Sept. 20, 2011; Film Streams on POV Website Sept. 21 – Oct. 21

A Century After American Educators Helped Create Public Schools in the Philippines,
Filipino Teachers Are Returning the Favor — In America’s Inner Cities

A Co-production of CineDiaz and ITVS in Association with The Center for Asian American Media

“**The Learning** is like no other teaching film — it sensitizes you in fresh and unexpected ways to the transactions between instructors and students.” — Michael Sragow, *The Baltimore Sun*

MEDIA ALERT – FACT SHEET

National Dates: Ramona Diaz’s **The Learning** has its national broadcast premiere on **Tuesday, Sept. 20, 2011** at 10 p.m. on **POV (Point of View)** on PBS. (Check local listings.) The film will stream in its entirety on the POV website, www.pbs.org/pov/learning, from **Sept. 21 to Oct. 21**. American television’s longest-running independent documentary series, POV is the winner of a Special Emmy for Excellence in Television Documentary Filmmaking, an IDA Award for Best Continuing Series and the National Association of Latino Independent Producers’ 2011 Award for Corporate Commitment to Diversity.

The Learning has the distinction of being selected for [The Economist Film Project](#), which presents documentary films in partnership with *PBS NewsHour*. A special segment from the film is available on the [PBS NewsHour website](#), along with an [online panel discussion](#) with director Ramona Diaz and a group of education experts, moderated by *NewsHour* correspondent Hari Sreenivasan.

The Film: One hundred years ago, American teachers established the English-speaking public school system of the Philippines. Now, in a striking turnabout, American schools are recruiting Filipino teachers. **The Learning** is the story of four Filipina women — Dorotea Godinez, Angel Alim, Grace Amper and Rhea Espedido — who reluctantly leave their families and schools to teach in Baltimore. With their increased salaries, they hope to transform their families’ lives back in their impoverished country. But the women also bring idealistic visions of the teacher’s craft and of life in America, which soon collide with Baltimore’s tough realities. Chronicling the women’s determination and unshakeable belief in education, **The Learning** is a bracing and timely evocation of a teacher’s indispensable work.

The Learning is a co-production of CineDiaz and ITVS in association with The Center for Asian American Media, with funding provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and American Documentary | POV.

Embed a trailer, download press materials and learn more at www.pbs.org/pressroom.

POV Website: POV's website for **The Learning** – www.pbs.org/pov/learning – includes additional video, an interactive map showing areas of the United States with large numbers of Filipino immigrants, traditional Filipino songs, and information on the impact of remittances to the Philippines — on the country's economy and in social and cultural costs.

Outreach: POV works with public television stations and national and community groups across the country to foster dialogue around the issues presented in our films. For a list of upcoming screening events go to www.pbs.org/pov/outreach. POV and nationally recognized media educator Dr. Faith Rogow are developing a discussion guide with background information to help event organizers. Cari Ladd, M.Ed., is creating a lesson plan. Educators may record and show **The Learning** in their classrooms for one year following the premiere broadcast.

Filmmaker's Statement: "In my 2005 film, 'Imelda,' I tried to understand how First Lady Imelda Marcos was able not to steal power from the Filipino people, but rather to use their fascination with myth and symbols, their pride and their deep insecurities, to coax power from them during the years of martial law," says filmmaker Ramona Diaz. "In **The Learning**, I wanted to look at power from another vantage point. Whereas Imelda Marcos was charming and ruthless in her pursuit of power, the Filipina teachers in this film are women cornered by economic circumstances.

"While I was born and raised in the Philippines, I've lived my entire adult life in the United States. I'm both an insider and an outsider, which allows me to have a distinct point of view."

Bio: **Ramona Diaz (Director/Producer/Writer)**

Ramona Diaz is a Filipino-American filmmaker whose credits include "Spirits Rising," a feature documentary about women's role in the 1986 People Power revolution in the Philippines. The film won a Student Academy Award, the Ida Lupino Directors Guild of America Award, a Golden Gate Award from the San Francisco International Film Festival, a Certificate of Merit from the International Documentary Association, and a Gold Apple from the National Educational Media Network. "Spirits Rising" has been screened internationally and broadcast on public television stations in the United States and Australia.

Diaz's documentary "Imelda," about the former first lady of the Philippines, won the Excellence in Cinematography Award for Documentary at the 2004 Sundance Film Festival and the ABC News Videosource Award from the IDA. The film was released theatrically in the United States and the Philippines, screened in more than 50 film festivals internationally and broadcast on PBS' *Independent Lens* in 2005.

Her other directing credits include "Don't Stop Believin': Everyman's Journey" (2010), about the band Journey, their new lead vocalist Arnel Pineda (discovered on YouTube) and his homecoming in Manila. She is in development on "Pacific Rims," based on the book of the same name by Rafe Bartholomew that looks at the Filipino national character through the country's obsession with basketball. Prior to directing, she was an associate producer for *Cadillac Desert*, a PBS series about the quest for water in the American West.

Diaz lives with her husband, Rajiv Rimal, and daughter in Baltimore. She is a graduate of Emerson College, Boston, and holds a master's degree in communications from Stanford University.

Related Stories: "More Baltimore graduates attend two-year colleges, where they are less likely to earn degree," by Erica L. Green, *The Baltimore Sun*, Sept. 11, 2011. <http://tinyurl.com/6fbrl6l>

"STEM and Teachers: The Critical Link," by Yolie Flores, *U.S. News & World Report*, Aug. 29, 2011. <http://tinyurl.com/6hklrtj>

"The Philippines and remittance: The house that Saud built," by Morong, *The Economist*, July 21, 2011. www.economist.com/node/18989185

"Documentary Follows Women from Philippines Who Teach in America," by John Seidenberg, Suite 101, June 29, 2011. <http://tinyurl.com/62p2fn2>

"Toiling Far From Home for Philippine Dreams," by Norimitsu Onishi, *The New York Times*, Sept. 18, 2010. <http://tinyurl.com/5s9xxxy>

"The Learning Curve," Documentary Edit and Story Lab, Sundance Institute, June 20-27, 2010. www.sundance.org/stories/slideshows/the-learning-curve/

Credits: Director/Producer/Writer: Ramona Diaz
Executive Producer: Tony Gloria
Cinematographers: Gretchen Hildebran, Gabriel Goodenough
Editor: Leah Marino
Total Running Time: 86:46

POV Series Credits:

Executive Producer: Simon Kilmurry
Co-Executive Producer: Cynthia López
Vice President, Production & Programming: Chris White
Series Producer: Yance Ford

Festivals: AFI/Discovery Channel Silverdocs Documentary Festival, 2011; Maryland Film Festival, 2011

Pressroom: Visit POV's pressroom, www.pbs.org/pov/pressroom, for press releases, embeddable trailers, downloadable art, filmmaker biographies, transcripts and special features.

POV: Produced by American Documentary, Inc. and now in its 24th season on PBS, the award-winning **POV** series is the longest-running showcase on American television to feature the work of today's best independent documentary filmmakers. Airing June through September, with primetime specials during the year, **POV** has brought more than 300 acclaimed documentaries to millions nationwide and has a Webby Award-winning online series, *POV's Borders*. Since 1988, POV has pioneered the art of presentation and outreach using independent nonfiction media to build new communities in conversation about today's most pressing social issues. More information is available at www.pbs.org/pov.

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