

Paul Moñozca: game for PROGRESS

Be it in sports, business or media, Paul Moñozca shows how it is to seize every opportunity that comes his way and turns it into something beautiful.

When asked what he remembers most about his childhood, Paul Infante Moñozca mentions that walking home from school and waiting for his dad on the rooftop of the hospital (where his father worked) were his most memorable moments.

"Both walking home from school and waiting on a rooftop gave me the necessary time everyday to reflect on how I am going to make a difference in this world," says the 38-year-old Negrense, who hails from Bacolod City. "My conclusion was, you can't plan your life, you just need to go with the tide and enjoy every moment of it," he says with a laugh.

Moñozca, indeed, seems to be making a difference now—and how. Based in Singapore for the past 14 years, he was recently awarded the prestigious Sporting Singapore Inspirational Awards 2006 by Singapore's Sports Minister and the Singapore Sports Council. Moñozca is so far the only Filipino ever to receive such recognition from the Singapore government, with only the biggest names in the corporate industry having received the award and becoming role models in the highly funded sports industry in Singapore.

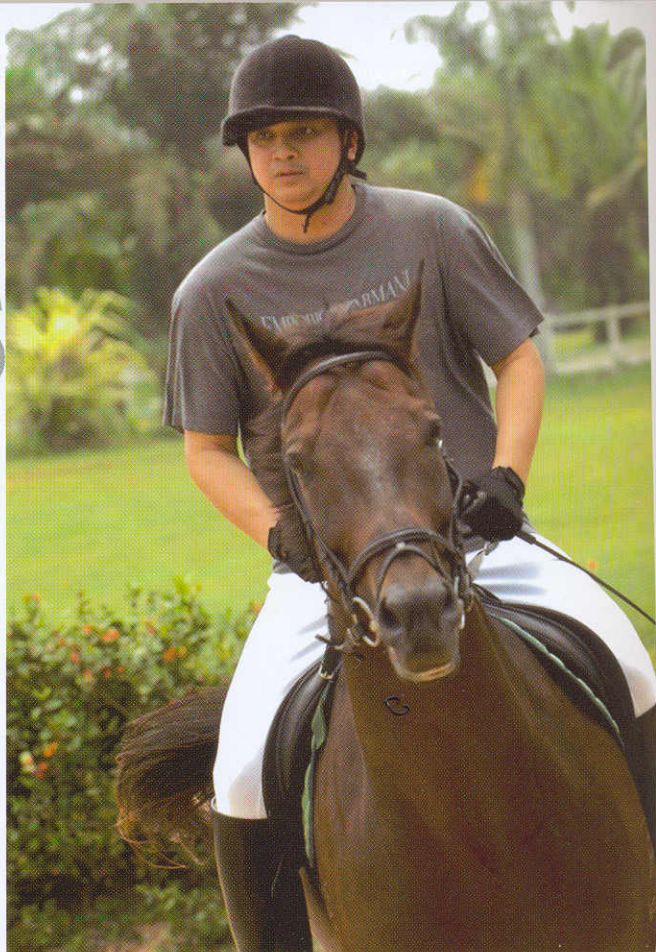
The sports award is a result of Moñozca's exemplary contributions and ideas as founder and tournament director for Asia's biggest international celebrity golf event and the Gatorade Basketball Academy, which provides training clinics to Singapore primary schools. He has also been credited for bringing in and showcasing the first Formula One simulators in Singapore's major shopping malls to bolster Singapore's bid for a new Formula One track. Aside from that, he is currently assisting in the new Singapore Sports Hub, to showcase regional athletes in media campaigns to promote talent diversity in the Lion City.

His high profile fundraisers have raised over US\$300,000 for various charitable causes, including the Dr. AB Moñozca Foundation, named after his father, which provides medical missions to the Philippines.

During one of the medical missions, there was a nine-year-old girl who was diagnosed with a severe thyroid infection. She needed to be hospitalized and it would cost US\$1,000. As the foundation only has budget for medicines and medical staff, Moñozca, without blinking, went to an ATM in the nearest town and withdrew the money from his personal funds. He then told two of his friends to drop everything and take the girl to the hospital, along with instructions that the doctors in the medical missions be paid well. He said it wasn't about them and that it was all about the needy — 'I want the best doctors for our foundation', a friend quotes him as saying.

His achievements are the talk of the town both in Singapore and the Philippines. He first hit the headlines in both countries three years ago when he single-handedly gathered young taipan entrepreneurs to form

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Parmon Group and acquire contracts with government-linked companies in Singapore. "Paul is probably the most connected second generation Pinoy in Singapore — he is a star when it comes to bringing people together and is a good dealmaker at that," says a close friend.

Aside from sports, his business projects have been quite visionary. A few years ago, a project called Century brought down the cost of remittances in Singapore by 50 percent, benefiting the 125,000-strong Filipino community. This created a shake-up of plans around the region on payment systems to the Philippines by banks. Another project integrated postal cargo to the Philippines and paved the way for a buy-out from a top local bank to position itself as a leader in OFW services integrating fund transfer and cargo services.

A new project in media aims to assist in the Philippines' quest to address negative publicity and position the Philippines as a global brand. Master planning provinces for new age townships is also part of his initiatives. Most of all, it has propelled Paul to the elite million dollar club in terms of his personal investments in Singapore and he has created a bridge with several business personalities on both sides to do more projects together.

When asked what the future holds, he answers, "I really just want to take things one at a time, I need to learn to enjoy more and most of all, listen to more people." New roles are chasing him. He has been named Regional Head for Asia for business development for global powerhouse PricewaterhouseCoopers, with focus on the Financial Services Industry. "Being involved in private equity deals regionalizing Philippine companies is going to take on a whole new meaning," he says. "We used to be number one in Asia in the 1960s; we need (to get) that standing back," he said.

Paul spends his weekends horse riding, playing golf, shooting and playing an occasional game of basketball. Most of all, he says, "I miss the old cathedrals back home where I can reflect and pray for more strength." When asked who he looks up to, Paul says "I look up to any Pinoy who understands what it takes to bridge the gap between the rich and poor." ■ — Djong Tan