



RETIRED MEN'S ASSOCIATION OF GREENWICH, Inc. (RMA)
Invites you to its meeting **April 11, 2018** at
First Presbyterian Church, Lafayette Place, Greenwich, CT

Bea Blahing

The Indigenous Peoples of Mindanao



Bea Blahing, a member of one of the Hill Tribes in the Philippines, will discuss her peoples' struggle to join the 21st century with their cultures fully intact. She will give a brief history of the indigenous people of Mindanao, the second largest island in the Philippines. Through her personal narrative, she will reveal some of the challenges her tribe is currently facing. She will address the efforts her people are making to recover their indigenous homeland through the full implementation of the Philippine national law, the Indigenous People's Rights Act of 1997. Her people are trying to develop and cultivate their lands to foster their agriculturally-based village economies in a sustainable and productive manner they call "Just Enough." Their challenge is to protect and restore 22,000 square miles of degraded hillsides, transforming them into a tropical forest, a project they call "Monkey Bridge."

Bea Blahing 27, a college educated, single mother from the Tboli Tribe in Lake Sebu, Mindanao, is a member of an extraordinary corps of indigenous professional, community organizers, called Earthwalkers. Bea holds no rank in the Earthwalker Corps but, because of her new status as an immigrant to the USA, she has been mandated by the Brotherhood of Tribal Chieftains to speak on their behalf. Bea is not a pundit or an academic, but an authentic and articulate witness to, and participant in, her peoples' struggle against the tangle of destructive social and economic forces that would – if left unchallenged--push the Hill Tribe Peoples to extinction. And most significantly, Bea will present the case of why we should care about preserving and sustaining the cultural heritages of indigenous peoples.

Next Week: April 18, Katie DeLuca.

The Greenwich Retired Men's Association offers a free program every Wednesday that is open to the public, both men and women; no reservations are required. Our social break starts at 10:40 AM followed promptly by our speaker at 11:00 AM. Programs are at the First Presbyterian Church, 1 West Putnam in Greenwich. For additional information see www.greenwichrma.org or contact info@greenwichrma.org