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OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE EAST

KAMON MAGSAYSAY MEMORIAL MEDICAL CENTER

AESCULAPIAN



PHOTO BY MYKE LIMIN

Contents

NEWS

Filipino Alternative Medicine Month of the Holy Rosary	2
Silver Jubilarians UERMMMMC-MAAA Librarylink Project	3
New APMC-SN Secretary-General MSC In Retrospect	4
No Smoking?	5
Nursing Sportsfest Palarong Med	6
17th Dance n'APO	8
Filae Aesculapii's Heatstroke 2008	9
Mu Lambda's Carolfest 2007	10
Mr. and Ms. Nursing 2007	12
Phi Alpha Sigma's Lantern Queen Pageant 2007	15
19th Annual UERMMMMC Alumni Reunion	18

FEATURES

As Long As I Have Music	10
A Beauty Queen: Perfectly Flawed	13
The Scars of Success	16
Rock Star: UERM	28
Learning Through Music Light of Hope	29
A Christmas Story	30
Coming Home	32
On Values Formation	34
On the Proper Usage of Time	35
Haah! Haah! Haah!	40
Puti	42
Practice of the Art: The 5Cs	44
Internet Saves Lives	45
Laugh Trip Muezzin	46
The Spirit of Fire	48

COVER STORY

Giving Back	20
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ART

Photo Essay: Hopeful One	19
Photo Essay: Mga Anak ng Dumagat	24
Photo Essay: Light and the Lack of It	26
Absolutely Smitten	39
Godzilla vs Ophtha	40
Night Time at Agno Beach The Persistence of Time	
Techie Tribal	43
Photo Essay: In His Hand	46

POETRY

Umiibig sa Iyo A Moment in Motherhood	36
Chimera Elusion Alamat ng Tala	38
Silver Melodies	39
Blood	42

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ABOUT THE COVER

Father and son await their flight departure to a destination abroad. Many Filipinos, especially those from the health sector, have followed suit to pursue success in lands other than their own. There are a few who have returned home, giving back to where they originally started.

PHOTO BY CHINKIN CORUÑA

AESCULAPIAN is the official student publication of the University of the East – Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Medical Center.

HOW TO REACH US

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Editorial

Flowing Water

Like a gentle, healthy stream, another school year concludes as part of its annual cycle. For *most*, it heralds the beginning of a needed vacation, a time to breathe, greet the sun, and inadvertently allow the pages of education to seep in. The lessons learned are a variety of sorts; theoretical notes, seeing them in practice, and dealing with people, including a smile to patient care that lasts. For *others*, it adds to the anticipation of meeting deadlines, unfinished business, and momentary burnout. Deficiencies accumulated are in need for clearing. For a minority, it is a final wrap-up to their stay in the institution. They are the ones who have experienced what is fresh to *most*, what is tiring to *others*, all coherent in their farewell to four or five years of stay.

For students that are in between *most* and *others*, they are in transit, eager to witness what lies ahead, and keen on the final stretch of their studies. In this torrent of potential, they sense the tardiness of doctors, power trips of residents, smug satisfaction by secretaries, dilly-dallying of faculty, early lunch breaks and late work resumption by staff, and even poorly maintained restrooms. But they also see the genuine compassion of some physicians, rounds of theirs that really instill learning, return demonstrations that work, honest and accommodating personnel who offer service without needing to be asked or given tokens in kind, those with mistaken first impressions; under the guise of sternness but with reason and timely empathy. They also see a system with salient strengths and deficiencies in need of help, and all are weighed according to each subjective scale. For those who will survive this migration, they are the ones who do not resist the system; they are the interns who respect it for all its imperfections and noted potency. They see the rains to have paused this time of the year, but they know condensation will precipitate in no time, continuing the yearly run of life's surrounding rivers.



JUAN AGUSTIN D. CORUÑA IV
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



Filipino Alternative Medicine at UERM

REPORT AND PHOTO BY CHINKIN CORUÑA

LARGE INTESTINE 4 ACUPOINT. Medicine student Deniece Agcaoili performs a return demonstration of acupuncture to former Secretary of Health Dr. Jaime Z. Galvez-Tan; from unpacking a needle, to insertion, stimulation and removal. Alternative Health Care is included in the Special Topics selective of Year III Level II students. Dr. Ronaldo Marcelo Macaraig of the Department of Pharmacology oversees the activity.

Mama Mary: Seeing God Through Her Eyes

REPORT BY NOEMI MAUREEN LANSANG

PHOTO BY CHINKIN CORUÑA



To commemorate the Month of the Blessed Mother, and to open the official celebration of the Month of the Holy Rosary, the UERMMMMC-Catholic Communities Program held a three-day exhibit featuring varying icons of Mary, the Blessed Mother. The event started with a solemn celebration of the Holy Eucharist followed by ribbon-cutting graced with the presence of Dean Carmelita Divinagracia of the College of Nursing. The celebration was culminated by the Annual Living Rosary Celebration held at the hospital parking lot last September 23, 2007.

Silver Jubilarians

REPORT AND PHOTO BY CHINKIN CORUÑA



HIGHLY ESTEEMED SPEAKER. Dr. Joven Cuanang delivers a message to the class of Medicine '72 celebrating 25 years of graduating from the Medical Center.

New Bridge

REPORT BY SUSAN PEREZ-SUNTAY MD



SAN FRANCISCO MARRIOTT. From left, MAAA Executive Director Dr. Sonia Rico-Todd, MAAA National Convention Commissioner Dr. Susan Perez-Suntay, and Aesculapian EIC Chinkin Coruña discussed the makings of the MAAA-Aesculapian Editorial Scholarship – a program sponsoring student editors of this magazine, and the MAAA website.

It is undeniable that a generational gap exists between UERMMMC alumni and current medical students. This gap, however, doesn't have to be anything else but the discrepancy in age. The UERMMMC-Medical Alumni Association of America (MAAA), Inc. is the perfect avenue for alumni and current students to bridge this gap and collaborate on worthwhile projects.

The MAAA is a relatively young alumni association, having been around for only 20 years. The Medical Alumni Association in Manila, the operations of which is patterned after the association based in the US, was founded only last year. Though young, the MAAA is fulfilling one of its Charter goals, which is "to unite all medical alumni of the

UERMMMC into one national organization to encourage contact among fellow alumni through reunions, publications, message forums, and person to person contact."

The UERMMMC-MAAA, Inc. is now an IRS-501 (c) (3) Corporation, which means it is organization operating with charitable and educational goals, under the tax code of the US. This was indeed a great milestone for the National Association; with this IRS charitable status, the MAAA, Inc. is now able to legally receive tax-deductible donations and other forms of contributions for UERMMMC. Through donations from alumni, current medical students will receive the same quality education that UERMMMC has provided its former students.

Dr. Susan Perez-Suntay is from Medicine '77. She served as their class president all four years. She formed the Medicine Student Council in 1977 and became its first president, coordinating with other medical schools to hold down a six-month commitment instead of the planned two years of Post-Graduate Rural Service for all Philippine medical graduates then. Dr. Suntay has been engaged with medical management and consultation for the last 20 years.

UPCOMING EVENT:

The 20TH UERMMMC-MAAA, Inc. & AFUSA, Inc. Annual Convention and Reunion will be held on July 3-6, 2008, at the San Francisco Marriott. This event will be co-hosted by the MAAA - Northern California Chapter



LIBRARYLINK Project

REPORT BY MARIA JULIANA NOCES

On August 23, 2007 a Memorandum of Agreement was signed between the University of the East - Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Medical Center Library and Ayala Foundations, Inc. for the LIBRARYLINK Project. Maria Juliana Noces, Acting Chief Librarian, and Aurora Tambago, Assistant Chief Librarian, represented our institution. The project seeks to electronically link participating libraries for mutual access to Filipiniana collections. The agreement took effect upon signing, and shall be valid for three years starting August 30, 2007, and may be renewed for a period with terms and conditions agreed upon by the two parties.



Puzon is New APMC-SN Secretary-General

REPORT BY JONATHAN CLARK ZANTUA
PHOTO BY MARIA CLAUDIA CHAVEZ



NEWLY ELECTED APMC STUDENT NETWORK OFFICERS. From left: Godfrey Adante, Michael Dizon, Katrina Festejo, Danilo Sanchez, Jr., Precious Relles, Ken Puzon and Jorge Masa.

Eugenio "Ken" Puzon III, RN was elected as the Secretary General of the Association of Philippine Medical Colleges – Student Network (APMC-SN) at the recently concluded 8th APMC National Convention in Davao Medical School Foundation, Davao City last January 24-26, 2008. The annual conference was attended by 23 medical schools from all over the country. Puzon won over Gerald Abesamis of UP-PGH and Katrina Festejo of DLS-HIS via unanimous decision. Puzon was the APMC-SN's National Coordinating Secretary in 2007 and has held several positions in APMC-SN NCR Chapter and UERMMMNC's Medicine Student Council. Other officers elected were Katrina Festejo as National Coordinating Secretary, Gerald Abesamis as National Secretary for Special Projects and Affairs, Precious Relles (PLM) as NCR Regional Speaker, Gian Carpio (UP-PGH) as NCR Deputy Regional Speaker, Michael Dizon (AUF) as Luzon Regional Speaker, Jorge Masa (DLS-Bacolod) as Visayas Regional Speaker and Godfrey Adante (MSU) as Mindanao Regional Speaker. Claudia Chavez (UERMMMNC) was also appointed as Finance Officer for APMC-SN NCR chapter. Dean Alfaretta Tan-Reyes was elected as Vice President of the APMC Foundation.

ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

UERMMMNC has been a proactive member since 2001 as a founding APMC member. Our students were the biggest delegation from NCR. They were composed of third years Jonathan Clark Zantua, Jason Triton Ligot, Anna Fatima Lopez, May Angela Pelayo, Christopher Pagaduan, Neilson Tino, and Eugenio Puzon; second years Claudia Chavez, Regina Ferraren and Francis Pua; and first years George Cordova, Niccolo Buenaventura and Victor Castillo. The Faculty delegates were composed of Dean Alfaretta Tan-Reyes, Dr. Grace Encelan-Brizuela, Dean Fernando Sanchez, Jr., Dr. Benalexander Pedro, Dr. Gabriel Martinez, Dr. Milagros Magat, and Dr. Maria Petrina Zotomayor. At the same conference, Ligot won third place after the research poster presentation.

MSC In Retrospect

BY JONATHAN CLARK ZANTUA

Taking the reins of the Medicine Student Council (MSC) this year has been one of the most challenging tasks in my life. I have been a PRO, a secretary, a treasurer, an external herald, a youth vice mayor and a vice president of different organizations from elementary through graduate school, but this is the first time I have taken the top post. And I figure, maybe being the President of the MSC is a good culmination of my 14-year career as a student leader. I thank the student body for putting their trust in me to lead.

Although this administration lacked experience, it has survived because of teamwork and cooperation. Much of the MSC's projects can be credited to Vice President Ayz Ligot, who took abstract ideas and converted them into concrete plans. MSC Secretary Shana Aguirre, also our representative to the Association of Philippine Medical Schools-Student Network (APMC-SN), ensured UERM's visibility in the Student Network. Treasurer Honey Lopez was keen on outsourcing funds to maximize MSC resources. PRO Topz Pagaduan mediated effective communication between the MSC and the different organizations and departments of UERM. Councilors Neil Tino, Mark Go, Claudia Chavez, Gelo Gilbuena, Nathaniel Wong, and Paul Sinnaco served as the students' voice in the MSC. Ken Puzon, our ex-officio, was there to guide the Council.

The MSC has, for several years, been dependable in providing assistance to the school administration and the faculty. It is well represented in committees such as the Special Development Fund (SDF) and the Board of Discipline, among others. However, there were complaints of lack of visibility, lack of cooperation, and lack of relevance to the students which it seeks to serve. When this administration took over, it chose to focus on these

areas to rekindle students' enthusiasm in becoming a proactive student body.

DEVELOPED LEADERSHIP

This administration worked to develop leadership among the student body by empowering the student organizations. It institutionalized the General Assembly by holding regular meetings and in effect encouraging participation in the decision making of the student body. To develop student leaders, this administration hosted leadership training and creativity workshops attended by class and organization officers. It also hosted forums on current issues to increase social awareness among the student body.

STRENGTHENED TIES

This administration strengthened ties among the Medicine, Nursing and Physical Therapy student councils, collectively known as the Tricouncil. This fostered increased cooperation and awareness as a community and led to joint projects such as the UERM 50th Anniversary's Student Day Concert.

INCREASED STUDENT SERVICES

Despite having the lowest student council fees among the three colleges, the MSC continues to have the most student activities and the most student services. This administration obtained, through the SDF, uniforms for 91 athletes who participated in the APMC-SN Palarong Med. It also provided food and refreshments for our athletes during these events. Team UERM landed third place overall, with our athletes taking home five trophies and five gold medals.

This administration improved academic student services by approving the purchase new microscopes for the Anatomy, Microbiology and Pathology Laboratories and the renovation of the junior interns' quarters.

PROACTIVE PARTICIPATION

Student participation was encouraged not only inside the school but also in national and international conferences.

This administration sent 30 delegates to the second Annual Medical Students' Summit, which tackled current issues in medical education. It also sent the biggest student delegation from the NCR to the APMC National Convention in Davao City. During the convention, Ken Puzon was elected Secretary General, the highest position in the AMPC-SN. Ayz Ligot presented his research group's paper on a Quasi-Experiment Evaluating the Effectiveness of a Public Information Campaign in Raising Awareness Among Filipino Adolescents Regarding Depression and Suicide. It won third place out of 26 papers and will be the Philippine entry to the first Asian Medical Students' Research Conference in Pune, India this month. Student delegates also performed well at the Foundation for Lay Education for Heart Disease Convention. Lee Roi Buenaventura won second place in the singing contest while Chinkin Coruña was a finalist in the oratorical contest.

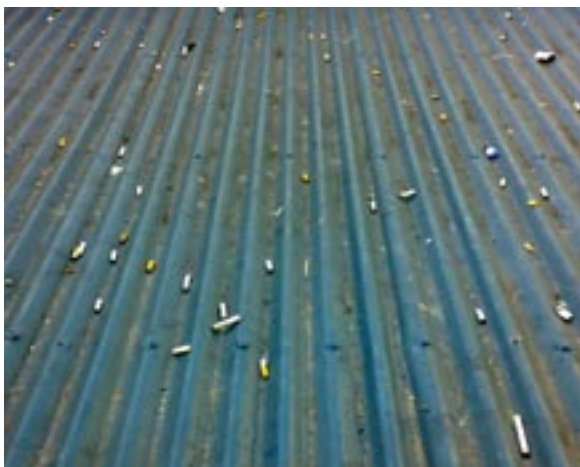
Throughout the year, the UERM medicine student body remained one of the most active among the medical schools in the country. This helped boost the morale and pride of our school. We now look back and ask, "Was the school year a success?" Only the student body can answer that; for we should not confuse activities with accomplishments or achievements with fulfillment.



MSC 2007-2008. From left: Topz Pagaduan, Joke Zantua, Dean Alfaretta Tan-Reyes, Honey Lopez, Ayz Ligot and Shana Aguirre.

No Smoking?

SMOKING IN UERM. A cigarette butt constellation litters the roof of the hospital parking lot's stage. Consultants, residents, students, staff, security personnel, and patients, throw their tobacco waste from the third floor. Other areas where Medical Center members smoke are in doctors' clinics, male interns quarters, the hospital end of the bridge connecting Charity and Pay, the staircase uniting Neurology Department and Anatomy Conference Rooms, other lobbies of the Medicine Building, areas of construction, and the parking lot of the JMC Building. Despite No-Smoking announcements in many locations, implementation by administration and discipline among individuals remain juvenile.





Behind the Field

REPORT BY MARTIN ISIDRO
CAPUCION

PHOTO BY MYKE LIMIN

The Nursing Student Council (NSC) continues to uphold its mission in providing holistic activities by producing the much awaited annual Sports Fest 2007. Despite all the exams, duties, case presentations, oral revalidas and such, the four batches headed their way to the Marikina Sports Complex last October 23-25 to clash, barn, and outwit each other on their aim of being the champion. The theme for this year, 4 Forces, 3 Voyages, 2 Chances, 1 Torch, paved students to do their best in each sport in order to collect victory. The NSC initiated basketball, volleyball, cheering, dance sport, badminton, table tennis, swimming, track and field, and various board games. The games included a novel aspect, *Palarong Pinoy*, including fun games such as *talong relay*, *tug of war*, *kadang-kadang*, *piko*, *Chinese garter*, *sepak takraw*. Also introduced this year was football.

Although the weather did not cooperate during most of the days, it did not hinder the active participation of students. The heat

among the four batches was felt especially during the anticipated games of basketball, volleyball, cheering, swimming, track and field, and *Palarong Pinoy*, which made everything more enjoyable.

The last day revealed itself to be packed, with the four forces meeting at the closed gymnasium, supporting their players for the championship rounds and the most awaited cheering and dance sport competitions. The roars and shouts of each batch were heard at the opposite ends of the complex. The feast ended with the awarding ceremony placing Altairs 2011, Xenoliths 2008 and Aeolus 2010 as fourth, third and second placers respectively, with Oasis 2009 up as champion with an astounding 860 points.

For the part of the NSC, it was heart-warming when students of the College of Nursing participated and enjoyed the event. All their hard work led to much happiness after the event. All the cheering shared was changed into smiling faces of tired but satisfied students. And after long, tedious hours of preparation, a well-earned victory was earned. Congratulations to Oasis 2009, Congratulations to the NSC.



APMC-SN NCR Palarong Med 2007

REPORT BY AYZ LIGOT
PHOTOS BY MYKE LIMIN

Team UERM won in the following events in the APMC-SN NCR Palarong Med 2007 at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex last November 2007: *Champion Women's Volleyball*, *2nd Place Men's Volleyball* and *Women's Table Tennis*, *3rd Place Men's Basketball* and *Men's Football*. *Swimming Gold Medals* courtesy of Frances Alexandra Sapinoso (Medicine 2009) and Lynette Aleeza Ang (Medicine 2008).





Dance n'APO in its 17th Year

REPORT BY KRISTINA ELIZA ROSALES
PHOTOS BY CHINKIN CORUÑA

The Alpha Phi Omega (APO) International Collegiate Sorority - Alpha Phi Chapter, headed by Alexis Milan, has again proven to be of service to the UERMMMCC community. A break from the academic world, the 17th Dance n'APO organized by May Cristine Obana, was held last 27th of September 2007 at Cinema One of SM Centerpoint.

The competition was participated by six groups — Insignia Dance Org (College of Nursing), Crutches 'n Cane (College of Physical Therapy), Golgi Bodies (Medicine 2010A), Two Left Feet (Medicine 2010B), Infusion (Medicine 2009A), and Chikadees (Medicine 2009B). The judges were Giovanni Respall, member of the Philippine Choreographers Network; Adrydeo dela Cruz, senior member of the University of the Philippines Pep Squad; and Thou Reyes, You Can Dance Version 2 finalist.

The 17th Dance n'APO commenced with an opening number from the brothers and sisters of APO, who danced Red Hot Chili Peppers' *Hump de Bump*. After which, the contest began. Insignia Dance Org won *1st Prize*, Chikadees *2nd*, and Two Left Feet *3rd*. They received a trophy and a cash prize each.





Filiae Aesculapii's HEAT STROKE 2008

REPORT BY MARIA CHRISTINA LACABA
PHOTOS BY CHINKIN CORUÑA

There's nothing that fills the daydreams of medical students the way the thoughts of summer does. Summer, no matter how long or short it is, or what came before or will come after it (e.g. internship), will always mean sheer bliss over time to resume your existence outside the world of medicine school. Sweet, sweet time to catch up on the things you inevitably had to put aside as medicine school asks no questions and just goes on even after you've tried the best of your tactics to make it stop spinning. Seriously, no one understands the luxury of summer the way a medical student does.

In preparation for this break we all deserve, the Filiae Aesculapii will not stop at anything to start it off the best way we can imagine. On March 14, the eve of the first day of summer 2008, we will be holding our 5th annual Heat Stroke, a year-end party that is mainly a fashion show wherein students, faculty members and consultants of the

UERMMMMC participate. Just to name drop, last year's participants included the likes of Dr. Raul Quillamor, Dr. Maribel Co-Hidalgo, Dr. Paul Anthony Sunga, Dr. Janet Dy, Dr. Napoleon Alcedo, Dr. Joanna Marie Abando, Dr. Benida Fontanilla, Dr. Marivic Villamor, Dr. Juliet Ver-Bareng, Dr. Isaura Guiang, Atty. Rochelle Galano, and Dean Georgina Paredes. The fashion show this year will be featuring designs of Toni Galang under the direction of Raymond Villanueva. During intervals, school bands will be performing to complete the evening. It might be important to mention as well that participating student models will be strutting in swimwear and that it is a drink-all-you-can-cocktails-and-beer party.

Aside from promising you a good show, we promise that it is also for a good cause. Heat Stroke is meant to raise funds for medical missions while a percentage of the proceeds will be donated to the wards of the UERMMMMC hospital. As a third promise, if you go, you will not regret it. This is definitely a party you should not miss. If the Freshmen Night was a start-off to help you hold on to your fun side, Heat Stroke is proof that you did.

Tina is from Medicine 2009. She is the President of Filiae Aesculapii.

The Melodious Sounds of Carolfest 2007

REPORT BY MARIA CLAUDIA CHAVEZ

PHOTO BY MYKE LIMIN

It was a night of music, a night of song and festivities, of harmony and happiness. Set across a backdrop of a brightly wrapped gift to remind us of the season of giving, the Mu Lambda Fraternity, together with the Mu Lambda Sorority, presented the 33rd Annual Carolfest at the UERM Gymnasium last December 12, 2007. With the theme *Umawit Buong Puso, Ipagdiwang ang Nalalapat na Pasko*, the event was hosted by Grandmaster Kristoffer Tanseco and Most Exalted Sister Cristina Lorenzo, who regaled the audience with their witty remarks and playful bantering. Dr. Vicente V. Tanseco, advisor of the fraternity, formally opened the event.

For 33 years, the tradition of the Carolfest of the UERMMM Community has never failed to bring the spirit of Christmas into the hearts of the choirs hailing from the different colleges as well as their enthralled audience. There is nothing like song and music to commemorate the miracle of Jesus' birth and the joy of the yuletide season. Five choirs from the three colleges endeavored to do this: College of Medicine – 2009 - The Singing Eclampsias, 2010B and 2011A, the College of Nursing, and the College of Physical Therapy. Each choir brought their own style

and creativity to the contest piece *Noche Buena* as well as adding their own personal flair to their song piece of choice.

The difficult job of deciding who would win the Carolfest rested on the shoulders of Ms. Charity Orense, Ms. Jhemmyrut Teng and Dr. Phillip Richard Budiangan, who scored each individual group based on voice quality, harmony and interpretation of the two song pieces, as well as audience impact. While the judges were deliberating, Testing Waters from the College of Nursing brought their music by performing an appreciated intermission number. At the end, The Singing Eclampsias won Champion for the second time in a row, bagging the prize of 7,000 Pesos and a trophy. The College of Nursing won First Runner-Up while the College of Physical Therapy won Second Runner-Up. The festivities officially closed with the prayer of peace, led by Vice Grandmaster Rafael Madarcos.

Claudia is from Medicine 2010. She is fond of cats and firmly believes that she has lost a few of brain cells during her two years in medicine. She also expects to lose a couple more in the future.

As Long As I Have Music

BY ANNA FRANCESCA BAYRANTE

PHOTO BY CHINKIN CORUÑA

The first few days we started practicing for the Carolfest, we were very confident. We had a good instructor and many of the best voices in the batch. We had our eyes on the prize. Seven thousand Pesos is hard to come by, and this was an opportunity for us to lay our hands on some cash to buy our Kris Kringle gifts. Besides, this was our last chance as third year students to join in something like this. A little more than a week later, we started hoping to win. By the second week, we stopped hoping altogether and just wanted the thing over with.

We were The Singing Eclampsias, a quirky, easy-recall name we gave ourselves after spending two weeks into the Women's Health module. We were 15 sleep-deprived, PD paper-laden juniors pitting ourselves against four other choral groups with over 20 members. We started to worry early on. As I said to Pat Manalastas and Betsy Go, "We're crazy to feed ourselves to the sharks." We only had ten practices in total and because of scheduling problems; all fifteen members did not meet as a complete group until the day of the competition itself. Eleven of the fifteen were female, only four were male. For lack of tenor singers needed for an eight-voice—Yes! Eight voices!—choral arrangement of our choice piece, five of the altos were turned into tenors. It was insane! We could not say how we were going to pull it off because how do you make a girl sound like a boy in six days' time?!

The week of the Carolfest arrived. There was no backing out. We sang the contest piece *Noche Buena* first, followed by our choice



THE SINGING ECLAMPSIAS. This year's back-to-back Carolfest champions are from Medicine 2009.



piece, *Gumising*, as arranged by UE Chorale choirmistress Anna Abeleda-Pequero. For the next hour, we did not bother to wait or expect anything. Any fantasy of winning the competition was blotted out of our minds. We did win last year's Carolfest but that did not mean we could do it for a second time. We were not even banking on having a place. Later on, we just decided to belt out our best and enjoy ourselves. As long as we have the music, we can never really lose anything.

When Dr. Christine Elma came onstage to award the first prize and proclaimed us as the winners, I did not have time or the presence of mind to register what was happening. Days before, we were caught in a financial crisis and we were fast losing hope. Betsy told me, "Don't expect it. Just let it come and it will." Betsy was right, because it did. It did! My feet carried me, jumping and screaming like a banshee, along with the rest of the choir towards the stage. It was an unexpected win, proof that numbers were unnecessary to bagging the

prize. The only important number we were thankful for was the score we received. I could not remember exactly what it was. Never mind. I count that night as one of the happiest in my life, a happy memory I will feed on until the next Christmas season.

In behalf of the group, I am thankful to the members and officers of Mu Lambda Sorority and Fraternity for giving us the opportunity to showcase out talents; Dr. Carl Facto, Darwin, Russell, Jean, and the rest of the members of the UE Chorale who took time out of their busy schedules during the Christmas season to bring out our voices, for their patience in infusing quality to the way we sing, and their support. I am also eternally grateful to Ms. Magbiray and the Biochemistry Department for letting us use Biochemistry Room 1 for our practices. I thank our classmates and friends who partially financed us, who kept and carried the heavy keyboard to and from Medics, who stayed to watch us during our practices and the actual performance, and who documented the event for us. My deepest thanks

to Pat and Betsy for sticking with me and the choir despite all the disappointments and the difficult days. You are both blessings to me and the choir.

Finally, I thank the members of The Singing Eclampsias—the four gentlemen who braved the strange world of choral singing, our five androgynous altos / tenors, the three remaining altos for braving the split and my two amazing co-sopranos—who joined and stayed and without whom there would never have been a bloody good show!

To end, I share a text message sent to us after the competition: "Congratulations to you guys. It was Christmas when you sang." This was very warm, and for us, it was also Christmas when we won.

Due to the success of Carolfest 2007, members of The Singing Eclampsias intend to resurrect the Chorus Medicus, the official choir of the College of Medicine of the UERMMMCC. Everyone belonging to the medical community – students, interns and consultants are invited to join and swell the ranks.

Mr. and Ms. Nursing and Nursing Night

BY JOSE EDGARDO PALMARES, NURSING 2009

PHOTOS BY CHINKIN CORUÑA

"As Mr. Nursing 2007, I wish that I would be an instrument in instituting the joy of friendship, the gift of love and the spirit of fellowship and camaraderie to each and everyone of us – today, tomorrow, and everyday. More significantly, I would like to be a humble yet shining mirror wherein my peers could discern our oneness of purpose – that of improving people's lives and well-being."

- Dennis Madarcos, Mr. Nursing 2007



The day was Saturday, November 24, 2007. The event was the all-anticipated Mr. and Ms. Nursing Pageant, to be followed by the annual Nursing Night celebration. One could definitely sense the anticipation and excitement of the entire UERM Nursing Student Body as the time for the day's festivities drew closer. That was the feeling of the atmosphere at the time, at the lobby of the SM Centerpoint Cinema One. The area was filled with eager students who harbored the desire to encourage and support the individual representatives of their batch, their own candidates.

The stage was decorated in a simple Greek theme, in which various linens and fabrics hung from certain parts of the stage adorned with vines to establish effects consistent with such theme. When the program started, it was as if the entirety of all the students' consciousness and attention were fused into one essence and focused on the bright, festive stage that stood in front. Four students were hosts for the event, and as such, officially started the festivities scheduled for the day.

The program started with a short doxology, followed by the Philippine National Anthem and the UERM Hymn, courtesy of the talents and efforts of a promising Nursing Ensemble. The audience was amazed and exhilarated by the degree of professionalism this particular co-

curricular group exuded at the time, as they serenaded with the marvel of their vocals. Kristel Sy, President of the Nursing Student Council gave the opening remarks for the event. Following that, it was a welcome to the candidates as they presented loud and colorful costumes.

The Insignia Dance Org introduced the candidates with a production number, giving tribute to the overall theme of the pageant: Gods and Goddesses of the natural world. As the contestants entered the stage, the cinema instantly filled with cheers of joy and delight as the audience spectacted at the individual Greek-inspired costumes of the eight contestants.

The judges were introduced for purposes of recognition and respect; the criteria for judging were mentioned to formally establish the standards for such awards. After a few minutes of careful deliberation and assessment, the winners of the Best in Costume were announced. It was fourth year representative, Dennis Madarcos, who emerged victorious among the gentlemen. He was Atlas, bearer of the world. Third year representative, Mary Anne Joy Romero, bagged the award among the beautiful ladies. She modeled an intricate and magnificent aqua attire featuring an elegant arc with fierce spike accents mounted on her back.

An intermission number was

presented afterward, allowing the contestants to prepare for the talent portion. Alexis Bitanghol, a nursing alumnus and current faculty member, sang Michael Bolton's *Go the Distance* for students and faculty to remember Hercules. It was enlightening to be able to see and experience the talent of an admired and respected teacher.

The contestants each had seven minutes to present their talents to the audience where creativity and resourcefulness were major assets. The presentation was according to batch, starting with the male candidates. Altairs' Gian Carlo Lasam presented a play with a personalized rendition of the drama series: *Maalaala Mo Kaya*. Paulo Angelo Sunga, from Aeolus, presented a song number by playing the electric guitar with his band. The third year representative, Mykee Lamson, presented a modern, interactive and animated play in which he personified fictional characters such as Don Quixote, Super Mario and Spiderman. The Xenoliths' Dennis Madarcos sang along tunes he was making with the organ, following with an en masse dance number. Female numbers immediately impressed with Altairs' Ainsly Aguilera singing. The Aeolus' Vea Cayaba, did the same, incorporating a short dance performance with her number. Mary Anne Romero from Oasis played

the flute to the tune of Rihanna's *Umbrella*. And lastly, Xenoliths' Paola Young dance the traditional Muslim *singkil*. Stephanie Simon continued the intermission with Lea Salonga's *Reflection*, remembering Mulan.

The formal wear portion of the pageant came next, with The Akafellas crooning the contestants while they modeled in style. All the candidates were stunning in their own ways. The awaited question and answer portion came afterward, with the contestants still in their formal outfits, adding to their overall aesthetic and dignified effect. It was within this particular moment that the candidates demonstrated and proved their overall level of reasoning, intelligence and logic under the circumstances of stress and time limitation. In the end, the answers of the contestants to the questions of the judges were admirable as they were witty yet entertaining.

While waiting for the judges to announce the results of the winners, the audience was presented with messages from the winners of last year. Projected onto the main screen were Mr. and Ms. Nursing of 2006 – Miguel Natividad and Michelle Nocon, both from the new batch of UERM graduates, Scyons 2007. They imparted messages of inspiration and enlightenment as well as words of encouragement for all students and the upcoming winners of the pageant. Their words were heartwarming and motivating for all in terms of uplifting the morale and spirit of the batches as one body. In the end, it was fourth year Dennis Madarcos and the third year Mary Anne Joy Romero, who were declared Mr. and Ms. Nursing 2007 for the UERMMM College of Nursing. Such was the conclusion of the pageant, and as the hosts officially ended the event, the cheers from the crowd continued onward and never seemed to end as it blended into a melody of praise, fueled by eternal conviction.

After the pageant, Nursing Night pursued with students listening and enjoying the lively, upbeat songs of bands that performed. Famous bands such as Imago and Callalily were invited by the College, adding to the experience which was definitely satisfying and entertaining. The evening ended with everyone tired and exhausted from standing up the whole day, but with a message of looking back and recalling the events as humbling and fulfilling; since it shall be carried unto memory well after graduation. It would be reminisced that a batch spirit was so united, where no failure can shatter the very bonds of its being.



A Beauty Queen: Perfectly Flawed

BY MARY ANNE JOY ROMERO
PHOTO BY CHINKIN CORUÑA

Pageants were never my cup of tea. In fact, it was a subject matter I did not pay much attention to. It was a world of seemingly flawless women full of confidence and poise that projected a certain magnificence and exquisiteness on stage. I was a foreigner in that realm of the unfamiliar. So I guess you can imagine how surprised I was when I discovered I needed to undergo a transformation of my own. I was chosen to represent my batch and college in two events: Mr. and Ms. Nursing 2007 and the Lantern Queen Parade. A fanatical dream was about to become a reality.

The preparations for these events were intense. I was aware of what these programs were like since they are annual events, but I was clueless on where to begin. I never imagined that I would be the one to be watched this time around. Do you remember the movie *Miss Congeniality*? When Ms. Gracie Heart had to go through all that training of gliding gracefully, going down stairs in four-inch heels and walking across a stage while keeping her head high, stomach in, and shoulders back? That is pretty much the task I had to endure and I am sure my coach did not have an

easy time either. There might have been a time when I actually enjoyed shopping and fitting into all those different gowns. It made me feel... pretty. Kidding aside, the amount of expectations in gaining a triumph was so great that I felt pressured into being perfect. As the event neared, there were minor setbacks such as lack of materials, manpower, and time. I had sleepless nights from all the nervousness and anxiety. I had to balance class hours with practice. It left me emotionally and physically drained, up until I found the strength in God and the people who believed and supported me. They were my family, my friends, my mentors, and batchmates. They encouraged me to march on when I no longer had the strength to move forward amidst all the trials, discriminating eyes and criticizing whispers that confronted me. I am in deep gratitude to those genuinely kind people who equipped me with the realization that perfection does not exist, but being the perfect version of me was all that mattered.

The first episode of my ordeal was among the nursing batches of my college. Its main objective was to harness the potential of the students while encouraging unity and camaraderie in promoting our vision: Ladies of Poise and Gentleman of Culture. That night was entitled Quintessence: The 5th essence. I stood for the element of water. My chosen Goddess was Leucothea, the Lady of the Ocean. She was responsible for nurturing and caring for those ship-wrecked sailors back to health when they were stranded at sea, similar to the calling of my profession as a nurse. I needed to symbolize this force that sought out to replenish and revitalize those in search for nourishment, like the true meaning of my batch Oasis 2009.

I was palpitating rapidly backstage as I heard the audience slowly inching in. I tried distracting myself to hear anything but the sounds of my pounding heart. The two weeks of restless nights flashed before my eyes, and materialized into this one moment. I tried to keep my emotions in check as I prepared to conquer

the one fear that would make it or break it for me: The stage. The wires, dextrose bottles, and mussel shells that composed my ocean inspired costume felt infused in my skin. The giant frame that hung on my back swayed like a current as I glided across the stage for the first time. The pushes from my partner made me take one step forward into the limelight. I was finally there and there was nothing that can change what I had decided to do: Accomplish my reckoning. The blinding yet brilliant lights frightened me at first but I was empowered by my real waves in the audience. The impact of their cheers gave me the courage to stand tall and proud as I gave everything I had. In the end, seeing the trail of silver glitter that I left behind gave me a sense of pride somehow knowing I would leave a legacy that would fill the hearts of many.

The next chapter was the Lantern Queen Parade. This time around, all three colleges of the Medical Center were faced to compete with one another, namely: Nursing, Physical Therapy, and Medicine. It was another challenge for me to test if I could still put into effect all that I learned from my first pageant. The importance of winning the title of Lantern Queen means prestige not only for the winner, but also for the college represented. I was extremely proud to stand for Nursing. The brilliant glow of a joyous and caring heart during the holiday season was indeed exemplified during that occasion. The spirit of Christmas brought the contestants in an atmosphere of merriment and friendship and I was grateful that I had the chance to meet such great and unique people from the different colleges. It was not as competitive as I anticipated it to be, and in the end, we all had a good time.

Winning both pageants was something I never expected and I could not grasp the aftermath of its splendor. It was a surreal emotion that left me in complete astonishment. The smiles and celebrative moods of everyone around me were certainly worth the hard work. As I was congratulated in the halls, there was

a smile plastered on my face that would not fade. Strangers would walk up to me to commend a job well done; it was during moments like these that made me truly proud of myself. It was a victory that I shared with my batch and college. All I could do was sit back and humbly accept my success.

Months have passed and the euphoria of my victories has settled but the duty that accompanies it has not. The crowns not only come with glory, but with responsibilities and expectations as well. I would like to say that I am still the same girl before all this fame and recognition, and this label will not change my true character. However, I now have to uphold an ideal example of what a student should be especially since I am looked up to as a role model among my peers. I will try my best to be a true lady of poise whether on stage, classroom or wherever my duty calls.

There are moments in your life that make you, and set the course of who you are going to be. Sometimes they are little, subtle moments. Sometimes, they are big moments you never saw coming. No one asks for his or her life to change, but it does. It is how you face new challenges and gain lessons from new experiences that help you find out who you are and what you are capable of. This is the main message I want to impart to you after experiencing these two ordeals. In all aspects of life, nothing is impossible if you put your heart and soul into it. If you begin to doubt yourself, turn to God and let your prayers revive the greatness that He has blessed you with. Your eyes will begin to open and see that there are people who believe in you and your doubts will no longer govern your thoughts. A stronger desire to do your best will eventually defeat your fears and you will discover that there are enough reasons to keep your head high. And you do not need to be a beauty queen to realize that.

Beauty in Our Midst

REPORT BY REGINA ALMA QUIOGUE

PHOTOS BY CHINKIN CORUÑA

The Phi Alpha Sigma Sorority, advocating the ideals of womanhood, grace, and intelligence, held its annual Lantern Queen Pageant last December 19, 2007 at the UERM Gymnasium. The event was hosted by Mimay de Joya of the Phi Alpha Sigma Sorority and Biboy Ramos of the Alpha Sigma Phi Fraternity.

Students from the Colleges of Medicine, Nursing, and Physical Therapy eagerly watched and cheered, each proud of their chosen representatives, as the candidates presented their Jingle Bell Rock dance number. The eight Lantern Queen 2007 candidates were Margarita Justine Bondoc of Medicine 2009A, May Angela Pelayo of Medicine 2009B, Mary Santos of Medicine 2010B, Jennifer Garcia of Medicine 2011A, Leanne Salanga of Medicine 2011B, Marie Tuason from Physical Therapy, Mary Anne Joy Romero of Nursing 2009, and Vea Cayaba of Nursing 2010.

The candidates exuded confidence while tasked to explain the significance of their class lantern. The panel of judges also had questions for each. Judging the event were Iris Frances Tan, Mutya ng Pilipinas 2007 First Runner-Up, Dr. May Anne Dela Paz, an alumna of the Phi Alpha Sigma Sorority, and Dr. Susan Suntay, also an alumna and past Most Exalted Daughter of Aesculapius.

In behalf of Lantern Queen 2006 Michelle Nocon of the College of Nursing, Dang Rescober of Medicine 2009B passed the crown to Romero, crowned Lantern Queen 2007. The runners-up were Santos and Bondoc. Tuason was awarded both Ms. Dermclinic and Ms. Photogenic, Santos was named Ms. Congeniality, and Pelayo won the People's Choice Award.

The Phi Alpha Sigma Sorority would like to thank Fuijfilm YKL, Dermclinic, Darlington Socks, PLDT, Dr. Suntay, Dr. Bascon, the Sazon, Dona, and Claridad families. Credits go to Myke Limin for the photos of the candidates, and Testing Waters for the serenade. Proceeds of the event are for the benefit of charity patients in the Pediatrics Ward.

Reg is from Medicine 2009. She enjoys good conversations, and it doesn't take too much to make her smile.



LANTERN QUEEN 2007 Mary Anne Joy Romero



FIRST RUNNER-UP Mary Santos



SECOND RUNNER-UP Margarita Justine Bondoc



PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARDEE May Angela Pelayo and **MISS DERMCLINIC & MISS PHOTOGENIC** Marie Tuason



BY GRACIEUX FERNANDO, MD
PHOTO BY TOM PEDROSA

The Scars of Success

The question reverberated through my thoughts the entire night and continued to gnaw at my insides that cold December morning as I stared at that long patch of dirt that would serve as the race track for the day's event. The place was an empty lot opposite the Total gas station at Filinvest, Alabang. The day was a Saturday, the 15th of December 2008. The event was the first 12-hour endurance race for mountain bike enthusiasts, pioneered by Sabak Sports, a local bicycle shop specializing in mountain bike sales and promotions. And the question was, "What the hell am I doing to myself?"

I've always been very sports-oriented but my first love had always been basketball. However, the combination of an advancing age, a physically abused body, and so much younger competition had all conspired to convince me that maybe it was time to give up the sport for something else. Besides, it was becoming infinitely harder to gather a group of guys of my age to engage in an intense game of basketball. Most had either gone on to golf or had given up the ghost of physical activity all together. This need to quit something that had given me so much joy for so long left me with the two-fold problem of what to do in its place so as to keep up my own fitness and keep back the ever present threat of weight gain. I had some experiences with cycling a few years back, and actually tried road cycling for several years – only giving it up when time from work and my grow-

ing interest in scooters started focusing my interest elsewhere. Besides, someone had stolen my old bike. But that experience had inculcated into me a deep appreciation for the sport so that I even became a fan of the Tour de France. Also, my scooter adventures had introduced me to a group of guys who were into the sport of mountain biking. So when my own brother eventually took up the sport and began really enjoying it, it was just natural that he and our friends would influence me to get into it as well. So, with the decision of quitting basketball staring me in the face, I eventually gave in. I rode my first mountain bike, a functional rented unit, on a Good Friday at what was shaping up as one of the great mountain bike areas south of Manila: Sta. Rosa, Laguna. I remember it as one of the hardest things I have had to endure to date but it was also challenging and fun enough for me to consider actually getting into the sport. A few months later, I bought my very first mountain bike. And I have been into the sport for the last year.

Being a Johnny-come-lately to a sport that involves many of your friends is not an easy thing to do. Having been into mountain biking for many years, many of the guys I would be riding with were flat out horses and incredible technical riders. They could climb long, steep inclines with flawless ease and could handle terribly technical tracks and steep descents with so much reckless abandon. What made that fact more

amazing, and intimidating to my psyche, was the fact that almost all the areas that they would bike on consisted of gravel tracks no wider than a footpath. Some did not even have any paths at all! And most were rutted and muddy, threatening you with the dual danger of either sliding out your back wheel or, far worse, suddenly flying over your handle bars in a spectacular move called an "endo". Being the newcomer to the group meant perpetually being the tail, the "baby" of the group, the one the best riders would nurse all the way home. And being terribly competitive by nature, I hated every minute of it! I mean, that feeling was harder to take for me than the highest climb I have had to endure, or the most painful fall I have had to survive. It almost made me give up the sport in the first place! But, when you have invested much into a dual-suspension, disc-braked, scandium alloy mountain bike, quitting seems not much of an option. So I dug deep. I borrowed a stationary trainer from my brother, put together a second, training bike, a hard tail, and hooked it up on the trainer just a few feet away from my bed. Then, I dug deeper. Given the often unforgiving schedule of my daily work, it took real effort to find time to train, but find time I did. Every moment I could spare, I was on that trainer. I did spin drills, endurance work, and the dreaded intervals. I logged hours of saddle time with my bike going

nowhere. To get a feel of the road again, I started road work every Sunday, using overpasses to train for short hills and the long stretches of Roxas Boulevard and Macapagal Highway for endurance and sprint training. Little by little, I noted some improvement. My weight dropped. My wind got so much better! I went on off-season rides with my friends, enduring the dreaded "reverse palace" route, a monster of a climb that begins on the flats of Sta. Rosa, passing through Canlubang, behind the Sta. Elena Golf Course, then proceeding to the heights of Tagaytay via a wide dirt road, ending just outside the climb to the Peoples' Palace Park entrance. For me, it represented three grueling hours of pain on earth and taught me the true meaning of the word, "endure".

This then was the lot of my life for the first eight months of 2007, an endless cycle of trainer rides, road work, and the occasional forays into the trails of Sta. Rosa. For a long time there I actually believed that I could never reach the level my friends had achieved, forever serving as the tail of the group. Then, one day a good friend who hadn't been on the trails for a long time invited me to accompany him on a Sunday ride. All the other guys were either out of town or busy so it just the two of us. I'd ridden with him before and always ate his dust but this time I knew he was not in full riding shape. To make a long story short, I did not smoke him but he could not shake me. I was always there, breathing down his neck, matching him pace for pace, losing time only in the technical areas of the trail. That ride gave me confidence. A week later, riding with my brother, I was able to stick to him in all the big climbs. Later on he would comment on how strong I'd become. To me, that was like winning the gold medal in the Olympics. So, when I got the email about a week after that, inviting me to join in the first 12-hour mountain bike endurance race, I signed on as a member of my brother's team without any hesitation. The word "twelve hours" did not even faze me. I had paid my dues for the last eight

months. Now was the time to reap the fruits of my investment.

This brings us back to that cold Saturday morning on the empty lots of Filinvest, Alabang. We decided that I, as the weakest member, would be sandwiched between the two stronger riders and would therefore ride second in the relay. Each team had to complete 36 laps minimum for the 12 hours, a lap being about 2.8 km long. Each member of the team had to complete at least 12 laps within the 12 hours. The team with the most completed laps in 12 hours would be declared the winner. I was so nervous that, when my turn came, I shot out of the starting gate and immediately attacked the first series of hills with wild abandon. A friend riding just behind me told me to calm down that we still had 11 hours of riding to do. Eventually I did but still was able to average 10.5 mins on my first two laps, a surprising time given only a week before I had averaged 16-18 mins/lap during practice. Our team decided on a strategy of two-lap intervals between each of us. That way we could maximize our speed without sacrificing our endurance. We all started at 10:00. By 2:00, it had become so hot many teams were beginning to slow down, some even opting to stop altogether for a much needed rest. My team pushed on through the day and by 4:00 we had completed the required 36 laps. Other teams did, as well, but many opted to quit early, saying pride had been satisfied by completing the minimum. For a while I was almost tempted to feel the same, that I had done my bit for king and country and it was time to put an end to this physical madness. But then, someone had told us that our team was in excellent position to finish within the top ten teams. That lit a fire under us so we decided what the hell, let's go for it and see just what we can really do. We changed strategy and started doing single laps each, all the better to conserve energy while maximizing speed. We did this till nightfall, when all riders were now required to strap on lights to navigate the course. I broke out our borrowed head-mounted light and tested it together with my old bike light from ten years ago. It was like using a flashlight to navigate the course. Add to that my bad depth perception in

the dark and you can imagine how hard that effort turned out to be. Gone was the worry of exhaustion, replaced by the fear of sheer uncertainty in almost pitched darkness. Still we persevered, pushing ourselves with each lap, all the while keeping our eyes on the clock that was counting down to the end of the race. I remember doing four or five laps in total darkness. Many other riders just gave up after darkness set in. I remember that as I was pushing off for my last exchange of the day, my friends from the mountain bike community were all patting me on the back, praising me for surviving the 12 hours of hell. I remember telling them that I would try to see if we could have time for one or two more laps additional just to boost our final total. After all that effort, the competitor in me still wanted to finish strong. So I blazed that last lap. I felt it was the fastest lap of my day. And I eventually paid for it, crashing from a spectacular low side on a tight hairpin curve, just two turns from the finish. That fall gave me some very nasty scars on my right forearm and right knee. I crossed the finish line bloody but my head held high. My teammates were able to squeeze in two more laps before time finally expired. In the end, we completed 61 laps. I contributed 17 of those laps, for a grand total of almost 48 kilometers in 12 hours.

A week later, I received a text from my brother, informing me that we placed fifth in a field of 20. I remember walking around the rest of the day with a damn big smile on my face. Two weeks later, I was back on the Sta. Rosa trails, hammering it out with the guys, and managing to catch some of the stronger riders on some of the climbs and the flats. At our second rest station I would receive the ultimate accolade from our group: the guys I had just smoked were now threatening me with the same on the way back home. This time, though, I could care less. Finally, I had become that which I never believed I could be: a mountain biker. A real one. Not just an owner of an expensive mountain bike ridden on street roads on weekends. A true, blue dirt rider. And I have the scars to prove it.

Dr. Fernando is from Medicine '87.

Reflections on the 19th Annual UERMMM Alumni Reunion

BY JOSELLI RUEDA-CU, MD

The moon was at its fullest as the plane touched down JFK, New York's shimmering and silvery runway. Three of us, women classmates of Medicine '75 sprightly hurried to clear Immigration and Customs, lest they discover the delectable Filipino *pasalubong* (*puto bumbong*, *minatamis na pili*, tarts, *atbp.*) carefully tucked in our valises. Our necks were craned trying to locate a familiar face amongst equally eager faces along the rails of the arrival area. At the far end emerged a figure with still recognizable features, ushering memory lane circa 1971 to 1976.

Trips from one place to the next followed, and were all filled with endless *kamustahan*, inquiry into the whereabouts of classmates, jokes focused among those whose loved ones were lost and never found, thereafter seeing each other once more in different situations of life were favorite topics. Noticeable poundage (midline gravitation), crow feet, laugh lines (thank goodness for the socially acceptable term), deepening naso-labial folds, bigger face area to wash for men, double/triple eye bags, thinning pompadour with discordant long hair of the eyebrows, salt and peppery hair, with shades of different hues, especially women (compliments of L'Oreal and others), were the features of the day. It was a magical voyage not just reminiscing, but rather acting out the good old days of youth – carefree, careless attitudes, dreams, and ambitions. Recounting failure, discouragement, difficult residents, consultants, fellow interns and other negative events seem to be memories, narrated as if those experiences are requirements, for the right of passage in medical school.

The grand date of the program was set at August 3-5 at the J. W. Marriott, in the middle of historic Washington D.C. The attendance was from Medicine '61 to '07, an eclectic admixture of the young once, the young ones, the not-so-old and the not-so-young (a politically correct

expression). It was a surprise that graduates in this part of the globe put so much emphasis on the year of their graduation. A slip of the tongue quoting a year older is a lot of concern, especially among men. It was most noticeable amongst those from Medicine '60s.

Drs. Amelia Ledesma-Pajaro, Luming San Diego-Velasquez, and myself, who braved the long hours of those thousands of miles across the Pacific, were jubilantly welcomed by our classmates. Our presence bolstered the recreation of yesteryears. In small group gatherings of each class, pieces of the entirety were sewn and patched together with aid of photo and graduation albums. The long hours of those three nights of togetherness were not enough to capture the experiences catapulting the graduates to where they are now. I suppose, those attending reunions are the successful ones in their own field of specialties. They are present to give honor to the institution that gave them the necessities of becoming a medical healer, a respectable member of society to which they belong, and success where the measure is that from various gains from hard work.

Speakers were mostly from Medicine '80s, two from the Silver Jubilarians, all with impressive curriculum vitae and teaching hospital/university affiliations. There was mastery and authority in the delivery of their lectures; an exhilarating feeling of pride and honor as part of the learning process of these well respected professionals and colleagues brought mistiness in my eyes. A teacher's feather on the hat is to see and perceive their students to have become better than their mentors.

The Jose Cuyegkeng Memorial lecture, the culmination of the 1st day morning activity, delivered by our dear Dr. Joven Cuanang elicited mixed feelings. He has credibly pointed out the poignant realities of the present health care delivery in the Philippines, with only a

handful of Medical Centers accredited with universal standards of Medical Tourism. Amidst successful men and women produced by our dear Alma Mater, it sends a pang of sadness that we are not included in the mentioned listing. Happy and proud because there stands before us one of the greatest doctors the Medical Center has graduated, Sad because he has become a part of another institution vying to be one of the most successful Health Care Providers. Hushed murmurs flew across the room, and there was an uncomfortable clapping of hands at the end of the lecture. As a spectator, I could not delineate whether it was the acceptance of the challenge, submission, or the usual accolade of a beguiled audience. We, graduates of UERM, should work hard for the realization of the institution's vision of providing health care at par with the International Standard. The challenge is loud and clear. We should wear the Vision - Mission in our Coat of Arms proud and determined.

I believe that those feelings will be recaptured year after year, for the old, the new and the future graduates. For those who are reading this article now, especially medical students of this great university, you can jettison yourself years from now. It is a nice feeling, at times intoxicating, especially for those who have reaped the fruits of success. I can't help but have a choking sensation in an attempt to control my emotions upon seeing, hearing my colleagues once more. We all started on the same doorstep at different times; some with small, tentative, unsure ones, some with one big step with a sure determined direction, and some who, along the way, have veered towards another direction. Those steps should be the start of a lifetime, with a single purpose of becoming a great, humane medical doctor bringing honor and pride to our one and only Alma Mater, the University of the East – Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Medical Center.

Mabuhay ang UERMMM!

Dr. Cu is from Medicine '75.



Hopeful One

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY MIGGY UNABIA

It's some kind of music
I cannot put my fingers on
It is endearing, quick, and strong
Yet mellow, soothing, and calm

It's strings flow smoothly
Like the river that trickles down gently

My fingers pass smoothly
Through keys of white and black
Gentle to the touch and brings color
No kaleidoscope can ever present

The vibrant beating of the percussions of time
Slow and steady, no force can stop
Only heaven may intervene

It runs deep in my soul, this strange music
Yes. I've heard it before
But I have never heard it more clearly than ever
As it resonates through my being
And through my little sanity

With fear of what this music really is
It matters not
For I will keep on listening and play with it
And maybe, just maybe
I'll be part of it

Miggy Unabia is from Medicine 2011. He is a beach boy from Silliman who is a cockroach magnet, a woman repellent, and overall, a geek minus the glasses, acne, crooked teeth, and snorting laugh.

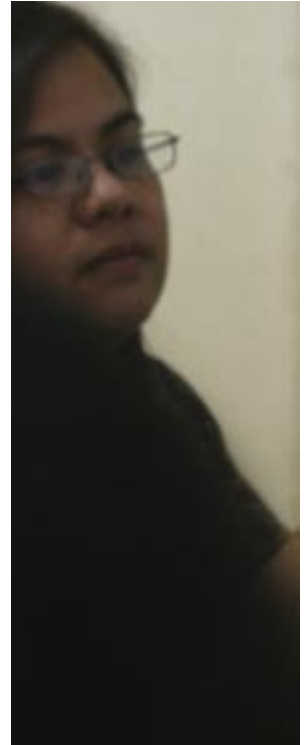


Cover Story:

GIVING BACK

BY GWENALYN GAIL GARCIA
NOEMI MAUREEN LANSANG
PATRICIA ISABEL MANALASTAS
FRANKLIN DAVID SAPALO
PHOTOS BY CHINKIN CORUÑA

This issue's cover story profiles skilled professionals and dedicated educators who have chosen service to Alma Mater, community and country, over financial and professional opportunities both here and abroad.



DOCTORS ALL. From left: Dr. Edward Santos spends time assessing a patient, he makes a difference taking the road less traveled; Dr. Roderick Dizon enjoys a candid moment after clinic hours; Dr. Efren Garcia manipulates a lens for indirect ophthalmoscopy; Dr. Joan Tagorda takes time to teach Patient-Doctor III classes in Surgery, sharing her specialization in breast oncology.

A Passion to Serve

Whether going out to practice in a far-flung area of the country, coming home after getting the chance to train abroad, or devoting career toward the improvement of the Medical Center, Dr. Edward Santos (Medicine '98), Dr. Joan Tagorda (Medicine '97), Dr. Roderick Dizon (Medicine '99), and Dr. Efren Garcia (Medicine '79), are remarkable examples of physicians who have heeded UERM's call to service.

MULANAY, OR RATHER, BATANES: SA PUSOD NG PARAISO

Before starting his residency training

at UERM, Dr. Edward Santos, now a consultant at the Department of Pediatrics, served two and a half years under the Doctors to the Barrios program of the Department of Health (DOH).

Dr. Santos was originally accepted as a resident in pediatrics at the Philippine Children's Medical Center, but quit on his first day because he felt that he still had something to do before starting residency. He then applied to the Doctors to the Barrios program, a plan that he had been considering for some time already. He says he was inspired by *Mulanay: Sa Pusod ng Paraiso*, a movie about a rich doctor who became a doctor to the barrio in Mulanay, Quezon.

In the movie starring Gina Alajar and Jacklyn Jose, the doctor struggled with a corrupt mayor and the frustration of being unable to make much of a difference in the villagers' lives.

Dr. Santos was accepted into the program in February 2000 and assigned in Batanes. Although he was delayed in completing his residency training, he says that nothing can compare to his experience with the Doctors to the Barrios program. "It's like you're the OB, surgeon, pediatrician, ...everything in one. You're on call 24 hours a day. "Minsan naglalakad ka lang, may nagpapa-consult na sa 'yo," he recalls about being the only

doctor in his area in Batanes.

Dr. Santos was fortunate to have a good relationship with the mayor, so he was able to organize the community, activate the health workers in the area, and source equipment and funding for different projects. He was also able to improve the health center and acquire a computer for the town. Even if he received no monetary compensation for his services, food was abundant, as patients brought him food whenever they went for consult. "The people of Batanes are very nice and very appreciative. 'Di ko pinagsisisihan yung pagiging doctor to the barrio. I was able to serve and make a difference by taking the road less traveled," says Dr. Santos.

Although the Doctors to the Barrios program requires only two years of service, the residents in Dr. Santos' assigned community requested for an extension of his stay. Their request was granted and he stayed in Batanes for another six months.

Upon graduating from the program, he was awarded as an outstanding barrio doctor and requested by then DOH Secretary Manuel Dayrit to give a speech in behalf of the doctors to the barrios. His speech has since then been published in the Pfizer company newsletter, Philippine Star, and Philippine Daily Inquirer. After his service in Batanes, Dr. Santos pursued his residency training in pediatrics. Most of his patients in Batanes were children, and that inspired him to choose pediatrics as a specialty.

Dr. Santos encourages medical students to join the Doctors to the Barrios program. Although joining the program will require a lot of sacrifices, he says that these are worth it. "No monetary rewards can replace what you've seen when you're able to help. It's something you will be able to treasure after you've finished, you'll be able to make a difference. Don't be afraid to take the road less traveled," he says.

FOR THE LOVE OF UERM

After completing her residency in general surgery at UERM, Dr. Joan Tagorda, received training in breast surgical oncology at the University of Louisville, Kentucky and at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, New York. Dr. Tagorda has had to overcome a lot of challenges to get to where she is right now. She decided to train in general surgery because she had enjoyed working in surgery as an intern. Back then, however, the department was not accepting many women in the residency training program, and she was told that she had to do better than the male residents. Despite having a hard time, she enjoyed her training and eventually became chief resident.

Having worked closely with surgical oncologists such as Dr. Isaac David Ampil, Dr. Edgardo Cortez, and Dr. Agapito Tuason during her residency, Dr. Tagorda says that she has always been partial to the field. Since breast surgical oncology was not an accepted specialty in the country at that time, she was arranged a grant by Dr. Andres Borromeo, currently the Head of the Department of Surgery, Dr. Benjamin Rigor, Sr., a UERM alumnus active in faculty development, and UERM alumni, for a scholarship and visiting physician training at the University of Louisville. They were also able to arrange a rotation for her at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center.

Dr. Tagorda considered her training to be a good opportunity since the Philippines ranks first among Asian countries in terms of breast cancer incidence and breast cancer deaths. She says that patients usually go to doctors when their cancer is already in the late stage. "Natatakot pa sila at tinatago pa nila, they cannot accept it," she says. "They don't know that there are a lot of treatments already and the goal for early stage breast cancer is cure." She says that since there had been increasing awareness on breast oncology as a fellowship in the past five years, and that since her being a female surgeon may bring

more breast cancer patients in for consult, she decided to pursue the specialty.

Dr. Tagorda completed her training in the US from August 2006 to February 2007. Despite offers to stay and train further in the US, she decided to return to the Philippines. She says that she had always planned to come back to UERM to teach and develop a breast clinic, since only a handful have training in breast surgical oncology.

So why teach and practice here at UERM? Dr. Tagorda says that it's because she loves UERM. "You have to love it kasi walang ibang magmamahal doon. The mentors here are academicians also," she says. "Who else will stay in UERM? You can't expect graduates from other institutions to come here and teach; it's up to us." According to Dr. Tagorda, it is important to "picture yourself doing something you really want to do for the rest of your life, then go in that direction. What's the point of working if you're not enjoying it?"

A CEREBRAL SPECIALTY

Dr. Roderick Dizon, a consultant at the Department of Clinical Neurosciences, entered the Internal Medicine Residency Program at the Michael Reese Hospital/University of Illinois at Chicago in 2002, finished his residency in Adult Neurology in Tufts-New England Medical Center in Boston in 2006, and completed his clinical fellowship in Spine and Nerve Disease at the University of California San Francisco (UCSF). He also taught at UCSF for four months before coming back to practice in the Philippines.

According to Dr. Dizon, it was the residents he worked with during his junior internship that inspired him to pursue neurology. He says he learned a lot from Dr. Erman Fandalian, also a consultant at the Department of Clinical Neurosciences, who was then his resident. Dr. Dizon played around with the idea about becoming a neurologist for about a year and a half, and decided to go



LOOKING BEFORE CROSSING. Professor Maria Luisa Uayan believes that nursing is a meaningful vocation.

for it when he went to the United States. “Neurology’s a very cerebral specialty, no pun intended, ...you do a lot of thinking,” he says.

Despite his impressive list of achievements in the US, Dr. Dizon says that he wasn’t really expecting anything when he first arrived there. He thought that if he got into a neurology program, he would be happy. He considers himself lucky because he got to work with neurologists like Allan Ropper, one of the co-authors of Adam’s and Victor’s Principles of Neurology and chairman of the neurology department at Tufts’ School of Medicine. After completing his fellowship, he worked in the US because he wanted to give back what he had learned during his training.

Dr. Dizon thought about going back to practice here in UERM, and as it turned out, it was Dr. Erman Fandalian who invited him to join the Department of Clinical Neurosciences. He took up his mentor’s offer to be able to give back to his country as well, and to prove that one doesn’t have to stay in the US to be successful.

Dr. Dizon encourages medical students to continue on with their studies. “You’ve already gone this far so pursue it. Pursue your dreams and on your own terms. Study,” he says.

HARI NG CATARACT SURGERY

“Siya ‘yung hari ng cataract surgery sa UERM, madami siyang patients,” says Dr. Lorelei Vicente, a senior resident at the Department of Ophthalmology, about Department Head Dr. Efren Garcia.

Dr. Garcia is the head of the cataract service at UERM and innovated the three-suture technique in extracapsular cataract surgery. Doing the surgery in three sutures instead of the usual five to eight results in a faster surgical time.

Dr. Garcia originally planned to pursue residency training in general surgery, and afterward specialize in urology. However, there was no vacancy in the general surgery residency program at UERM during the time he applied, so he opted to enter the institution’s EENT program instead. When ENT and Ophthalmology were separated into two different departments in 1988, Dr. Garcia chose to stay with Ophthalmology. He said that he has no regrets with this decision because he loves microsurgery and finds it fulfilling and rewarding. His patients are grateful because he is able to bring back their vision. Because there are only a few emergencies in ophthalmology, most of his patients are elective and he is able to make time for his family.

When asked why he decided to practice in UERM, Dr. Garcia replies, “I trained here, I love UERM, and my loyalty is with UERM, so I’m giving back. I consider it as my home. I would also want my children to be a part of UERM because I am also a part of UERM.”

His word of advice to medical students is: “When you become doctors, apply what you have learned from your first year until your graduation, especially the basics. You can’t diagnose unless you know the basics. Know the hows and whys. Retain and apply them, especially the JIs and the undergrads. Read to learn things you don’t know, or you can ask the consultants. Read not only from books, but also from the internet. Basta retain, read, and ask questions.”

Coming Home, Giving Back

With a doctorate degree in Health Sciences from the prestigious University of Tokyo, achievements in community service, and years of teaching experience to her name, Professor Maria Luisa Uayan (Nursing ‘88) serves as an inspiration to students in the pursuit of excellence. She humbly shares her outlook towards change, improvement and wholehearted service to God, university and community. She also talks about her insights, experiences and achievements as a student, as a professional, and as an educator.

ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Professor Uayan graduated with the Saril-Anyo DRAGONS, the first class to undergo the competency-based, community-oriented curriculum of the College of Nursing.

“During my student days, I was an ordinary student, very happy but very competitive,” she recalls. She was a scholar of the Nursing

Alumni Association, USA from her second to fourth year, and a student representative all four years. She was also active in journalism as the Associate Editor of *Aesculapian*. She graduated fourth in her class and received an award for community service.

While waiting for the results of the board exam after graduation, she enrolled as a post-graduate trainee at UERM Hospital, completing a graduate course in Cardiovascular-Pulmonary and Neurological Nursing Care. After passing the board exam, she was immediately accepted as a staff nurse. She held this position for a year and a half. She then transferred to the College of Nursing, where she worked as an instructor from 1989 to 1993.

She left the country in late 1993 to take a post-graduate course in Maternal and Child Nursing in Tokyo, Japan, under a scholarship from the International Nursing Foundation of Japan. After that, she returned to the Philippines and to the College of Nursing to teach community health nursing. She then earned her Master's of Science in Nursing at St. Paul College Tuguegarao under a scholarship from the Commission on Higher Education.

In 2006, she earned her Doctor of Health Sciences Major in Community Health and Minor in Geriatric Nursing at the University of Tokyo. During her studies in Japan, she was able to travel to France and Switzerland to present papers at international conferences.

Professor Uayan is currently a faculty member and clinical instructor at the UERM College of Nursing. She has been teaching for 15 years with a strong background in both national and international nursing education systems. She is also involved in evaluating nursing programs as a Philippine Accreditation Association of Schools, Colleges, and Universities (PAASCU) accreditor.

LEAVING FOR JAPAN

"I studied, I built networks, I observed. It's like one big immersion program. I learned everything about the culture, lifestyle" Professor Uayan says about her experience in Japan.

She was able to build a network of contacts from different countries consisting of her Japanese colleagues, foreign classmates, and fellow educators such as Ministers of Education from Israel and Russia. She is also proud to have introduced UERM to her contacts. "For the past several months, a lot of my Japanese colleagues from other universities in Japan came to observe the university [UERM]," she says.

COMING HOME

Professor Uayan sees her Alma Mater as her home and training ground as a professional and as an educator. "This career of mine started here. The education of being a nurse and the profession as a staff nurse and as an educator started all here," she says.

She was faced with the decision to either stay in Japan or come back to the Philippines. "The moment I went out of the country, there was always a decision that I would come back," she says. "There is a special program in Japan wherein if they teach you or educate you, they have a job waiting for you. That's the job that I turned down, ...there was a job waiting for me here in UERM," she says.

"I believe that UERM, our university is one of the best. Our students, my students deserve the best, ...they have the right to quality education, [and] that's why I came back," she says.

SOWING SEEDS, REAPING FRUITS

Professor Uayan has been working to give back something to her Alma Mater. "If UERM is willing to accept, I will give back all the things I learned, all the things I have. Time is limited. All I can give is the now, all I can do

now. What you see is what you get. I'm willing to give back everything," she says.

Her passion for change and improvement in the academe brings out her zeal for self-improvement as an educator and as a professional. "I always want improvement in the academe. I see the educator as a very strong and potent instrument towards the change in the educational system of the country in general," she says. "If a student changes, if he knows something that he didn't know before my class, it's like epinephrine or adrenaline to me."

"I always focus on what is essential, and that is service. When I'm serving my students, I'm also serving God," she adds.

Professor Uayan is also actively serving her community in Antipolo, Rizal. In coordination with St. Michael's Retreat House, she is facilitating a refresher course for Barangay Health Workers (BHW). The course aims to empower community members through the BHW.

She is connected with the Diocese of Antipolo Family Life Ministry, which is responsible for the pro-life advocacy of the Church. "Being a nurse, they seek my help on how to promote life and health," she says.

She was also able to help jumpstart Kanlungan ni Maria, a geriatric home in Antipolo, in terms of proposing its design, its framework and how it would start operations. These plans were eventually approved by the Bishop.

Professor Uayan sees the sacrifices that she has made—the high salary and housing benefits that she was offered in Japan—as seeds of promise. "If I give back and give up something now, I don't see the results now, but I know they will come later. I'm like a gardener. I'm sowing seeds. Later on, we reap fruits," she says.

(continued on page 37)

Mga Anak ng Dumagat

TULA, SANAYSAY AT MGA KUHA NI CHINKIN CORUÑA

*naglalaro sa Bundok ng Sawing Baleta
na yakap ng mahiwagang Gabaldon
sa pugad ng kalikasan nitong Nueva Ecija*

Ukol sa Batang Dumagat ang lathalang ito. Matatagpuan sila sa matataas na bulubundukin ng Malinao, Gabaldon, sa Nueva Ecija. Isang buong araw ang itinakda sa pagkuha ng mga litrato upang mabuo ang munting tanghalang makikilala - mula sa umagang pamamanaag ng araw, kung saan asul talaga ang himpapawid at numiningning pa ang mga tala, hanggang lumubog itong nagdudurugo sa pag-agaw ng dilim.

Mahilig sa mga alamat ang musmos na Dumagat. May pagkiling sila sa pagtatanong, samantalang buhay ang pagkatuwa tuwing naglalaro. Gising ang kanilang pakikitungo sa kalikasan, dala ang pagtataka sa ilalim ng mga totoong ngiti. Araw-araw ito nangyari, habang yakap nila ang tunay na pagtingin sa kanilang pagkamunti.

Sinisikap ng palabas na itong gisingin at bigyan ng kaukulang pansin ang mga malalalim na suliraning maaaring lutasin ng mga taong naninirahan sa bayan, sapagkat, manggagamot tayo, Pilipino, at kinakailangan tulungan ang kapwa mamamayang humihingi ng gabay.





Light and the Lack of It

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY MYKE LIMIN



I've always been fascinated with light and the effects it makes in various circumstances. I love the way the rays of the sun get filtered through the clouds as the sun rises above the mountains. I just adore the flickering candles in homes during brownouts and in churches and cemeteries. Of course, who wouldn't want to catch sight of that perfect, breathtaking sunset? Light is one of the few things that remain constant, never polluted despite constant manipulation. Wherever you are, whatever you add, light will still be light. Seeing the beauty of it all is the challenge, seeing it in different perspectives, in different lights so to speak. In fact, even a little light can produce wondrous works of art.

Photography's crucial ingredient is light. However, scarcity of light, no matter how little, is NOT a hindrance of the art. Rather, it can be a medium for

creativity and imagination. Lowlight conditions more often than not require slower shutter speeds, which mean capturing light trails, ...capturing blur. It may seem tricky but it actually is pretty easy. There are several ways to do it. There are no rules. Therefore, there are limitless possibilities. How you do it, is entirely up to you.

Clockwise from left:

ALL SAINTS DAY. A cluster of candles perched on a grave stone.

INFINITY. Ceiling lights.

RUBBER DUCKIE CAROUSEL. My daughter's favorite bath toy.

Rock Star: UERM

BY ARTHUR ALCID

PHOTO BY CHINKIN CORUÑA



As much as being in a band looks cool and seems cool, I can't find a way to describe how it feels to be in a band without sounding un-cool.

I suppose I could tell you how rocking out on-stage is a thrilling, natural high where electricity flows from my body into the guitar and then comes out of the amplifier as a sonic boom of awesome. But the more I think about writing things like that, it sounds lame.

What I can say is that playing in a band has been a healthy outlet from medical school. It's something I lucked into, meeting a couple classmates with similar musical tastes who could've used a bass player. Playing with the Alcoholics Anonymous the last three years has definitely been one of my more rewarding experiences in this school.

The various school organizations have gigs for student bands throughout the year, offering much-needed breaks from the daily grind of studying. Functions like Freshman Night or Red, Hot and White offer students with musical talent and/or the courage to stand in front of a crowd the opportunity to be rock stars, if only for a few fleeting minutes. And every year, numerous students heed the call, trading their white uniforms for black t-shirts typical of rockers.

I'm sure at some point of everyone's life, most likely during their adolescence, they have dreamt of being a rock star. Maybe that's why things like karaoke

or Guitar Hero are so popular. However, performing live music isn't as easy. These gigs are exciting, but they can be harrowing at the same time and they rarely go off without a hitch. A missed beat, a wrong chord or some forgotten lyrics can easily make you a guitar zero.

Regardless of whether the performance goes well or not, it's a life experience unlike any other. Where else can you get an idea what it's like to be in the Beatles or insert your favorite band here? Keep in mind it's still your job to entertain and put on a good show, pseudo-rock-star or not. If you manage to put all your heart and soul into doing just that, the audience will show their appreciation. And once you hear the high-pitched screams of approval from your peers, it makes all the time spent practicing when you should've been studying worth it. It's truly rewarding.

And then it's over, just as fast as it started. The black t-shirt becomes the white uniform once again as you revert back into a student.

I hope that didn't sound un-cool.

Arthur is a part-time bass player and from Medicine 2009. He thanks to all the Alcoholics Anonymous, past and present, for helping him rock out: Mark Go, Alex Fullante, JB Franco, Jeff Gonzalez, Janice Amon and Jazz Hussin.



Learning Through Music

BY JASMINE CORINNA BALBUTIN

PHOTO BY CHINKIN CORUÑA

My exposure to music started when I was 5 years old. My father, who was more than eager for me to learn, enrolled me to a violin school. I remember getting really upset because I had to give up my ballet lessons in exchange for a 30-minute violin lesson every week. My mother, who despite having no musical background, accompanied me to every lesson – patiently taking notes from my teacher. I never thought I would love playing the violin. I was not one of those kids who'd be so eager to practice regularly since practicing was something that I considered a chore. It took so much prodding from my parents to make me appreciate classical music and the violin. The unwavering encouragement from my parents and exposure to international conventions fueled my love for violin playing.

Fast forward to ten years and I find myself in my parents' shoes – this time as a violin teacher encouraging little kids to practice. I was just 15 years old and the opportunity to teach was something that I did not waste. The responsibility of molding a child in music is overwhelming yet these challenges push me to bring out the best in every student.

Aside from the financial rewards of teaching, it imparts rewards that no amount of money can buy. Nothing can

be more fulfilling than seeing my student play during recitals or seeing that huge smile plastered on their faces after finishing a piece.

Though teaching, I get to extend myself to others. It's a way of immortalizing lessons that I've learned along the way in hopes of inspiring a child to appreciate the joy of playing music.

It has been four years. Four years of crazily dividing my Saturdays to accommodate my students and academic workload, four years of dealing with idiosyncrasies of students as well as parents, four years of countless twinkles, and four years of sort-of financial independence to the delight of my parents.

No matter how hectic my schedule can get, I make sure I find time to teach. It's my outlet from all the stress of studying. Although there were times where I thought of quitting, the fulfillment of sharing the talent I am blessed with overtakes the feeling of giving up.

Jacee is from Nursing 2009. She is a member of the Philippine Suzuki Association and has been representing the country in various international conventions. She is currently a Suzuki primary violin teacher at Greenhills Music Studio.



GIVING LAB. Mrs. Magbiray hands over a pipette to medicine student KC Jigo.

Light of Hope

BY FELISA REYES-MAGBIRAY, RMT

It's a grassy area, Hidden.
The sun shared its light with me.
In the process, it hurt my eyes
but I must go on, enter that cave.

It's dark all over, but...
There's a flicker of light.

To me, that flicker of light
revealed the richness of the cave.
It guided me to continue my search.

Mrs. Magbiray is the medical technologist of the Department of Biochemistry. She has been with the Medical Center since August 29, 1969, and holds UERMMMC, its faculty and staff, its students and their collective thrust, in highest respect. This is her first job, and will be her last.

A Christmas Story

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY ROBERT HUIBONHOA



BABY NALAM. So called because his parents did not name him. During his stay, interns on duty chipped in for Baby Nalam's diapers, endotracheal tubes, formula milk, antibiotics, lab tests and other necessities. Mothers of other children at the ward likewise shared with him their extra supplies.

I was planning to make a visual story about the diabetic patients confined at the surgery ward, and I happened to mention and share this idea to a friend one day on our way home. It was then that the story of Baby Nalam was shared with me. The story I learned that day stirred my interest, and I knew that my original plan had to be put on hold for this. That day I learned about a certain Baby Nalam, a pre-term boy who was left by his parents to fight sepsis and multiple nosocomial infections on his own. I also learned that the interns on duty were the ones providing for Baby Nalam as well as other mothers around the ward who had extra supplies. I had not seen the baby at that time, but I guess the sense of urgency of the interns rubbed off on me.

An email was circulating at that time which clearly described the situation:

Hey Everybody,

For those who don't know me, I'm Keiko Hendrick, 4th year at UERM. I'm rotating in Peds right now where we have a patient baby boy, born pre-term at 32 weeks AOG, who has been with us since birth in October with sepsis and nosocomial infections. He's been intubated and currently undergoes suctioning and physiotherapy every 30 minutes all day, everyday. His parents don't visit him, don't bring him food, clothes or diapers, and don't pay for medical tests or medications. Up until now, my groupmates and I have been paying for his medicine and tests. Dr. Salazar had previously told us not to buy medicine for him anymore since he was already in septic shock and on the

way towards dying. His parents had already signed a DNR order for him. But yesterday, Baby Nalam was re-assessed by Dr. Salazar who says he is improving and would now benefit from medications. My groupmates and I have already been writing to pharmaceutical companies, and petitioning for sponsorship for him. When I was a first year student, my class sponsored a child in the Charity Ward in need of financial help for Christmas. So right now, we're trying to find donations from whoever is willing to help buy formula and diapers for Baby Nalam since he will be with us for a long time. My sister Ash mentioned that some of you might be interested in helping out this little dude for Christmas. He's a fighter in every sense of the word. Literally, he yanked his ET tube out at least three times a day before we got around to restraining him. Every time people give up on him, he comes around. And he's hella smart, as in he can figure out any way possible to get the ETT and the OGT out. All he needs is somebody to care about him and take care of him. Thanks in advance.

I took pictures at the Pediatrics Ward and saw Baby Nalam in the isolation room. I talked to the parents of the children and the interns on duty as well, and in the span of a couple of hours, I stumbled upon a parallel yet contrasting relationship between Baby Nalam and the majority of the kids at the ward. It was a subtle yet distinct association which might be labeled as generalizing or even sweeping, but its irony at that exact moment was enlightening, and this is exactly what I wanted to convey with the pictures I took. The contrast between the concern of most parents over their ill children as opposed to the situation of Baby Nalam being isolated, alone and deprived of his parents

– the very source of nurture for a child – was something that stood out. As to what the true intentions of his parents were, that is beyond my knowledge and comprehension, but it would only be fair to consider the possibility that the root of all this could be attributed to the unsolvable problem of poverty. Whether it be due to lack of finances, coupled with not wanting to see their child for the pain it may bring them, or due to sheer irresponsibility and neglect, it does not change the fact that in the arms of our care from October until the end of December, Baby Nalam, a child not even formally named, was orphaned. It does not remove the sadness of his story.

I was hoping that the story would end happily because everything looked so sad from the beginning. Seeing the

pictures for the first time and editing them into something coherent was difficult. The last time I visited Baby Nalam, everything seemed hopeful, and I was informed that he seemed to be showing signs of response to the medications given to him. Unfortunately, Baby Nalam passed away last December 28, 2007. The idea of sharing the pictures suddenly seemed pointless, but I was reassured by a friend that at the very least, Baby Nalam's story would live on and he would be given a chance to be remembered. His story has touched many people and hopefully through this, will continue to do so. And although the Christmas season has gone by in the blink of an eye, just as Baby Nalam did, there is renewed hope that amidst all the harsh realities in this world, we are still capable of reaching out and touching other people's lives whatever time of the year it may be.



LITTLE HELPER. Eight year old Vic has dengue fever. He sleeps deeply with his Santa Clause doll after a long day of play at the Pediatrics Ward of the Charity Building.



YULETIDE FAITH. Three year old Clark wears his mother's rosary around his neck. She prays that his swollen left jaw subsides so they may go home and prepare for the Christmas season.

Coming Home

BY JO ANNE VILLAROSA

PHOTO BY CHINKIN CORUÑA



COMMUTING TO WORK. Along with many other migrants, an Overseas Filipino Worker seeks his fortune abroad.

For most developed countries, it is a novelty, a luxury even, for its citizens to travel and live abroad. The term fascinatingly changes to exotic when 'abroad' means Asia or Africa or Latin America. A wild adventure for many, a search for self for some. Whatever the agenda, citizens of developing countries fly away from their homeland with excitement - wide, bright-eyed smiles plastered on their faces. They leave by their own free will and they are able to come home whenever they wish.

The rest of the world is another story.

We Filipinos, for example, leave our homeland for a much varied set of reasons. The lucky ones leave for the rich learning that traveling provides, still other fortunate souls leave for better education or training, some leave for financial reasons, and then there are those who leave to survive. Unfortunately, the reason one might have for leaving the country is largely dependent on one's social and economic status in our unjustly stratified nation.

It is one of the greatest ironies of our culture: family members living oceans away from each other and elementary textbooks saying that Filipino families are very closely knit. Yes, the closeness can exist despite the distance but one would think that it wouldn't seem so natural for Filipinos to leave their families behind. Note that there is a distinction to be made between Filipinos forced to leave out of necessity - those who leave to live - and those who leave because they can

and they choose to do so. After that distinction is made, however, it all boils down to this: the Philippines becomes a distant home to these uprooted Filipinos, and after many years of being away, that distant home becomes a vague concept that departs from the world of reality and remains in the realm of nostalgia and memory.

Why do people leave and seldom come back? Or only entertain thoughts of coming back when they read about the Peso becoming stronger? The government seems to be perfectly happy with this pattern, but what about the Filipino people?

Filipino doctors signing up to be nurses, Filipino teachers selling cosmetics, Filipino engineers securing hotel lobbies - it seems that our current migration pattern is not only taking our people away from their families, but it is also taking them away from themselves, from what they set out to accomplish in life. Filipinos are transforming themselves into something else that they already are just to get out and stay out of the country. Worse, it is the very Filipinos who are much needed in the country who are leaving. While there is honor in each and every profession, that honor is sometimes lost when professions become merely a means to an end. Honor is blurred when life becomes less about curing the sick or educating the youth and it becomes more about money, money, and money. Money at the expense of spending time with one's family, money at the expense of being true to one's self and one's calling, money at the expense of

everything else that matters. Money at the expense of staying in the Philippines and fighting to make it better.

Whilst the Filipino culture is full of ironies – religious yet superstitious, strong yet resilient, comedic yet dramatic – it shouldn't sound ironic for the Philippines to still be called our homeland.

How have we as a people allowed ourselves and our nation to come to this?

The government and its enthusiasm in exporting Filipinos in exchange for remittances is an easy cop out. It is true that they are worthy of such blame, but we should also be pointing our fingers to ourselves. It is our country, our homeland, and yet we turn our backs to it now that things are not so sunny and abundant. We demand for things and we possess a sense of entitlement to a better life. We have no loyalty, or we've lost it along the way. We are proud Filipinos who are not willing to exert the mental, emotional and physical energy to really own our country and take care of it and improve it.

But we are also people of passion and conviction. Filipinos are capable of believing in something greater than themselves, beyond themselves, and we stand up and fight for our beliefs. We are genuine and yes, we are welcoming and accepting. We Filipinos have innovative minds, diligent hands, and loving hearts. We can lead and we can nurture. We are versatile people. All things considered and in the most positive light, Filipinos can be what they are needed to be at their finest hours.

We just need to step back, re-evaluate, and give more, sacrifice more, go above and beyond ourselves; wisely direct our passion and conviction towards rightfully electing a trustworthy government, truly believe that our country can still get better, welcome and accept foreign help without condoning abuse and exploitation of our people and resources, lead squarely and righteously, nurture what is left of our youth's idealism. And we need to accomplish all these with commitment – unfailing, wholehearted, steadfast Commitment. And we need to have a firm grip around Hope, because it will be hard and it won't come easy.

Times have been hard, and it is but understandable that most of us have been inclined to look out only for ourselves, for our blood relatives. But things might be easier if we go back to the good old things that we are known for: Bayanihan, for one. We can push ourselves further, be ourselves, only better and wiser.

We were truly a great nation once – our neighboring countries looked to us for ideas and models to improve their own economies. We cannot say the same thing today, but that doesn't mean that we should just leave. That we should just fly away and wait it out somewhere

else until our country's ills are cured – and only then will we come back or decide to stay. We – this generation, the one before it, the one after it – are responsible for our country and where it is heading. It is not just the government or the elite members of society who have the power to change things for the better. We, the Filipino people, are responsible for that and we are capable of doing so. We just need to be committed and willing to work for it. We cannot proudly call ourselves Filipinos and abandon the Philippines. We cannot expect for our country to take care of us if we are not willing to care for it first.

This is not a commentary on whether the Filipino Diaspora is right or wrong. It is neither entirely one nor the other. I know for a fact that some people who are away from the homeland now are only preparing themselves as much as they could so when they come back home, they can give their best and take the worst and hopefully substantially contribute to the recovery of the nation. Filipinos have gone, are leaving, and will still leave the Philippines for years to come. But we can take action now to rebuild our country and ourselves as its people. We can take little steps forward until we are home again.

Jo Anne Villarosa has not been living in the Philippines for eight years now, and wishes to return to her homeland and mobilize change soon. She realizes that the ideas presented in this article are mostly vague – due to space constraints and for the sake of coherence. She is more than open to discuss concrete plans with anyone who is committed to working towards a healthier Philippines. You can e-mail her at joannedpvillarosa@gmail.com.

Ugat

BY JO ANNE VILLAROSA

Intaglio and Acrylic on Paper, 7" x 10" 2005.



On Values Formation

BY FRANCES GAIL TURALBA, RND

PHOTO BY CHINKIN CORUÑA

Every person has a different set of values which he holds on to. These values are constantly nurtured as one grows into a matured individual. But the formation of a value system begins at childhood and may only end when a person has reached self-actualization. As a person experiences various things in life, he discovers what is essential and what is not. The wisdom gained in each stage of life is somehow collectively translated into unique values that make up the being of the person.

There are values that are shared by many individuals. And there are also some that are possessed only by a few. Some values such as love of God and service to God, independence and work alone, and prestige or status and recognition, are similar in nature. Other values can be classified according to what aspect of life they encompass. Examples of these classifications include interpersonal and intrapersonal values, religious ones, and those pertaining to family.

Somehow, people with the same values get along well. Those with related values also tend to bond easily. However, those that have totally different values in life have a tendency to repulse each other. In one way or another, having the same values with someone can mean that the manner in which they were brought up are alike. What a person considers important in his life will form a value system that he may carry until his elder years.

Not all values that a person acquires will remain the same as the years go by. A person may abandon values he had since childhood if having those values caused pain at some point in life. But childhood values may even be strengthened more if possession of those values has contributed to a great deal of success in life. It is possible to add more values in life as wisdom, knowledge, and experience are gained.

It is important that values that help an individual grow

into a thriving person be passed from one generation to another. This is where the legacy of having strong family values comes in. There is belief that values held by the ancestors will be the same values that will strengthen the present generation. It would not hurt to follow this kind of tradition most especially if the clan that practices passing of values is a successful one.

Being in the same family does not always mean having the same personalities; since having different personalities in a family is common, adapting different values is also possible. Harmonizing of values, no matter how diverse, is a way of keeping family values intact. What is important is to be able to uphold the family values of one when needed.

Formation of values is important in an individual's life because one has nothing to hold on to without them. Values exist with the purpose of guiding an individual in making life-changing decisions. Being able to form the appropriate values is needed to survive the complicated world of real life. If one is equipped with the right values, then he should not be afraid to go out there and share himself to others.

Having been able to form the right values is like having an expensive pocket watch. When the time is needed, the watch is simply brought out. This is also same with values. During tough times and those of need, values are brought out in order to sustain the strength of character of each one. It is through these values that people are able to survive the ups and downs of life.

Gail is from Medicine 2011. She is fond of reading magazines and inspirational books, loves the beach, enjoys traveling, and really appreciates the natural environment. It is important for her to be able to spend time with family and friends. Because breathing fresh air is a luxury nowadays, she always looks forward to going back home in UP Los Baños.

On the Proper Usage of Time

BY JORGE GABRIEL ANG
PHOTO BY CHINKIN CORUÑA



Procrastination is perhaps the biggest enemy of any student. I doubt of course that there is any person alive who, as a student, has never ever felt the pressure of doing absolutely nothing over the need to actually do something. Certainly, procrastination does not necessarily mean that one wastes time doing nothing when something of importance and urgency itself needs doing. Rather the more realistic meaning is when one does something of far less importance than the task at hand which screams obligation. Every student here has felt the powers of procrastination, and have at least once in their lives felt the consequences of falling prey to its temptations.

There is probably no greater need to address this issue than the present; specifically, medical school. In a way life in college could be dealt with instances of utter laziness and enjoyment even when grades were in the balance. We had time for a few moments of pettiness and enjoyment, considering the fact that most of us only had four hours of class a day, which really gave us a lot of time for both studying and pleasure. That probably isn't the case now, since we practically spend six to eight straight hours in class, with only a one hour break in between, and classes regularly end in the late afternoon. Upon getting home, the fact is aggravated since we only had about six hours for anything before we had to sleep in hopes of realistically getting up in time for another day of school; time is thus of the essence.

That doesn't mean however that we future doctors are doomed to a life of endless textbooks, lectures and undue stress. There is time for life and leisure in the midst of all this necessary education. All it really takes is some proper time management – organizing one's activities so you have time for both work and play. As everyone knows, all work and no play makes Jorge a dull man, and all play and no work makes Jorge unlicensed and unemployed.

One has to take into consideration why one even entered medical school in the first place. All of us already know, without a doubt, that medical school poses the biggest challenge in our academic careers. Medical school will eat up the biggest chunks of our time, and we were supposed to have been ready for it. Anyone who is even remotely serious about becoming a doctor knows the sacrifices that must be made, and the unprepared or lax end up being cut from the rest. If one is really serious about the chosen profession, than the stress associated with this rigorous schedule should only be a bump on the road to attaining the right to be called "doctor."

To effectively organize one's time, all one really needs is a little bit of foresight. Foresight in order to know what he needs to do now, what he can do some other day, and what he can do in between. One has to take on the urgent priorities first before starting to figure out the problematic future. When the present has been fulfilled, one can look into the future and plan ahead. One can start planning the inevitable so he can be prepared when it comes. It is in this time that we can finally rest and enjoy ourselves, when the toils and tasks of the day are done, and the visions of the future are organized. These are the days when we can rest our wings and be content for a while, relieving our stress and enjoying our non professional lives.

As the days continue, more and more responsibilities will pop out; but with time management, we are neither cramming our work nor too exhausted to continue. A doctor always has to be on his best mode and senses, and only when he has the time for both others and himself can he truly be at his best.

Jorge Gabriel Ang is from Medicine 2011.

Umiibig Sa Iyo

LYRICS AND MELODY BY REY CHRISTIAN CABREROS, MD
PERFORMED BY ROANN MALLARI
ARRANGED BY ELMER BLANCAFLOR

Ano ba naman itong
Nakita ko sa iyo
Lagi kitang naaalala sa isip ko
Kahit malayo na'y malapit ka pa rin
Sa puso ko'y walang iba pang hahanapin

Chorus 1

Heto na naman akong
Nag-iisip sa iyo,
Tila nahihibang
Di ko malaman.
O ano ba itong nadarama
Ng puso'y ko ibang-iba
Ako nga ba ay umiibig sa iyo?

Sa bawat sandaling kapiling ka sinta
Lubos ang kasiyahang aking nadarama
'Wag kang mangangamba ito'y pangako ko
Pag-ibig na walang-hanggan ang alay ko sa iyo.

Chorus 2

Heto na naman ako
Nangagarap sa iyo,
Tila nalilito
Di ko matanto.
Ang alaala mo'y aking tanglaw
Tibok ng puso ko'y ikaw
Sa tingin ko nga'y umiibig ako! Sa iyo!

Wala akong hinihiling na kapalit
Dito sa puso ko ikaw lamang ang sinasambit
Bukod tangi ka sa lahat ng yaman sa mundo
Dahil higit pa sa ginto ang binigay mong ligaya.

Dr. Cabreros is from Medicine '99. He is an Assistant Professor of the Department of Pharmacology. When making beautiful lyrics, he can hear the melody already. His ultimate dream is to have his songs played over the air, and appreciated by all. With other physicians, they produced the album Bliss, under Concorde Records released February 2007 and available at flicktunes.com.

A Moment in Motherhood

BY JOSEFINA CADORNA-CARLOS, MD

She clutches the bed bars with might;
her fingernails buried on her skin
her face becomes distorted
as she grimaces in pain.

Her belly rises, tightens to a mount;
a stifled cry escapes her mouth
tears swell in her eyes,
and run passed her cheeks
dropping on the linen sheets.

Such events are replayed periodically;
in an episode which occurs rhythmically
like the intermittent contraction of the womb
of a mother who is in active labor,
lasting from several seconds to a minute or more
depending on the intensity of the contraction
as defined by several factors that come into play
such as maternal forces, the passenger, and the passageway.

And when finally the baby makes its exit
from the limited space of a womb into this vast universe
a shrill cry dominates the air,
as he gasps for breath
his first established tie with the external.

And as the mother hears her baby cry
a smile suddenly brightens her face,
oblivious of all the pains she has just borne
and now aware of a new individual human person.

Such is the miracle of birth!
Such is the mystery of life!
Which only a woman is privileged to share,
in an experience of pain and joy;
both rolled in a single event
such is a moment in motherhood,
CHILDBIRTH!

Dr. Carlos is from Medicine '78. She wrote this poem when she was a clerk. Being a pediatrician, she knows that children don't lie. Their innocent gestures reveal themselves.

(continued from page 23)

With regard to her future plans, she is allotting three years to work at the College of Nursing. After that, she is still uncertain whether or not she will stay in the country for good. However, she definitely does not want to miss the PAASCU Accreditation and the Golden Jubilee of the College of Nursing in 2009.

FINAL INSIGHTS

Professor Uayan shares the following words of advice to nursing students:

“I know most of you were forced by your parents to take up nursing because of the promise of greener pasture. It’s like an old record playing and playing all over again. If you put that in your mind, you won’t be happy,” she says. “Money is not everything. My coming back is proof, evidence that you can go against the tide. It’s not all money.”

“Love the profession. If you don’t love it, you cannot love others—that is what nursing is all about,” she adds. Aside from knowledge and competence, Professor Uayan emphasizes the heart of the nursing profession, which is care.

“Be happy with what you’re doing. Nursing is not a job, it’s a vocation. The moment that you realize that makes your nursing career really meaningful, ...you will never burn out.”

Rongie Magdangal: The Pride of Physical Therapy

Many aspiring therapists in the College of Physical Therapy see him as an older brother rather than a professor. His lectures in Anatomy and in PT subjects are often something to look forward to amidst the toxicity of the course. Mr. Rongie Bren Magdangal, PTRP (Physical Therapy ‘05) is truly a well-loved professor.

Sir Rongie has been with the academe for two years, mainly teaching Anatomy for third year students. Although his love for teaching is unquestionable, he also has plans to conquer new horizons by opening his doors to opportunities that lie overseas.

The young therapist plans to work as a clinician specializing in sports rehabilitation. If given the chance, he would also continue to study to keep himself updated with advancements in his field, and bring what he has learned back home with him.

With all the opportunities offered abroad for physical therapists, still Sir Rongie does not close his doors to working in the Philippines. More importantly, he does not close his doors to UERM, the institution that taught him to be the best and made him who he is today.

What is fascinating about this young therapist is that he has that fire in him to return to his humble beginnings and repay debts that have long been paid. This time around, Sir Rongie would like to render service to patients as a practicing clinician.

Although he eventually wants to become a clinician, Sir Rongie has no plans of relinquishing being an educator. He would also like to increase awareness of Filipinos on the vital role of physical therapy in

the medical field. He believes that physical therapists are individuals whose potentials must be harnessed and broadened. They should not be confined to basic knowledge and skills but rather be given the chance to explore the numerous possibilities toward improving a patient’s condition.

Sir Rongie’s ties with UERM, its students and faculty will definitely stand through time. He advocates loyalty to this institution among his students and strongly believes that success lies not in the number of horizons and uncharted waters you have conquered. You can never be successful enough if you have never learned to look back and appreciate the humble beginnings that made you who you are.

Sir Rongie has touched lives as an educator. He will be touching and improving patients’ lives once he achieves his goal of becoming a clinician. He will be dealing with people of different faces and different personalities, honing them into individuals that are functional in society. Undoubtedly, he will make everyone around him proud. But the real beauty of his plans is that no matter where he goes, whether teaching in the academe or practicing in the clinics, he is simply a physical therapist doing his very best to help others.



FESTIVE GLOW. Rongie Magdangal, PTRP shares humor with students from the College of Physical Therapy.

Chimera

BY CAMILLE SALVADOR

I saw you standing there or so I thought...

But you were just a mirage, a figure that beguiled my sight
The spring a nomad saw in the middle of his lonely plight.
You were just a figment, an idea trapped in my mind
The thought of you haunted me every day and every night.

I saw you standing there or so I thought...

But you were just a delusion, spawned one cold and feverish night
Venom that seeped through my very soul, a force that I can't fight.
You were just an inclination a choice that I could rather make or not
A person whom I can live with but never without.

I saw you standing there or so I thought...

But you were just a caprice, someone I desperately wanted since birth
A doll or a toy that would be a source of endless mirth.
You were just a whim borne out of my juvenile idealisms
My knight who saved me under the pale moon gleaming.

I saw you standing there or so I thought...

But we are just a fantasy reality got the best of you and I
A couple that would never be, the sacred bond we'll never tie.
We are just a fallacy, a result of a mistaken logic
Our union a big tragedy, just starting out but has ran out of magic...

I saw you standing there...

Camille is from Nursing 2009. She is a simple girl with simple dreams.

Elusion

BY HANANEEL ASIEL MORENO

Cherries and butterflies,
a portrait of you undressing:
pale skin and bones
in your sharpest,
most feral
form of beauty.

Yet,

in this dance of fluttering wings,
I stopped hearing music
long before your sharpness
started tearing
your own skin
apart, and mine;

we are falling.

Cherries are as dry as we are now,
and butterflies turn into
never-healing bruises
of heavy hands,
heavy moans, and
heavy lies made

out of love.

*Hannah, from Medicine 2011, is a
slasher, die-hard yaoist, L'Arcist,
druist, aspiring artist, drama queen,
pro-cat, and anti-fish.*

Alamat ng Tala

NI BINOI

ikaw sinta, ang natatangi kong tala
sa gabing mapanglaw, liwanag mo ang nakikita
itong aking puso'y labis na umaasa
ikaw aking tala, kailan nga ba makakasama?

ang aking damdaming nilukuban na ng dilim
nagpapatid ng pilit, nagsusumamo ng taimtim
aking pagsinta sana ay iyong mapansin
handang ialay ang lahat, iyo lamang lingunin.

anong uri ng gayuma sa buhay ko'y iyong dala?
kapag ika'y nakikita, ay labis akong lumiligaya!
batid na ba ng iyong puso ang aking paghanga?
alay kong pagmamahal, iyo kayang alintana?

ikaw aking tala, sadyang napakahiwaga
liwanag mong taglay, tunay na nakahalalina
pero anong silbi nitong pagiging makata?
gayong ikaw aking tala, ay kanyang langit at lupa.

anong habag naman, nitong pusong nasasaktan
ikaw nga'y aking tala, ngunit hindi man lang mahawakan!
kaya't ang paghangang ito'y ikukubli na lamang
pilit kang iwawaksi sa aking puso at isipan.

minamahal kong tala, minimithi kong mutya
anong ningning ng liwanag mong tunay na kay hiwaga!
ikaw nga'y aking tala, pag-ibig, buhay at ligaya
ngunit wala naman sa akin ang tunay mong pagsinta.

*Mula sa Medisina 2010 si Marvin Mendoza, na tumutula
bilang si Binoi. Nakakagawa siya ng mga malikhaing
sining sa oras ng kabagutan, mga obrang halaw sa
mga kwentong barbero at bulung-bulungan na kanyang
naririnig sa loob ng pamantasan.*

Silver Melodies

BY PATRICK ONG

---- is like the drops of rain
Which pours eventually unto my vein
It is like an unbreakable, precious stone
Which will never let me fall alone

---- sparkle on the riverside
From which its flow cannot hide
It is such an unbearable scene of teardrop
From which it will never ever stop

---- is like a green, wide pasture
In which bliss is its main structure
It is like a land of treasure box
In which it is hidden in a cave of rocks

---- is like a hail of snow
From which its coldness barely blow
It is like a book of endless tales
From which the story is as long as it entails

---- transpire like a written rhyme
Which lures within the stone of time
It is known to its gleaming, sparkling abyss
Which will forever be like a dismal series

---- unlock the gate of life
In which it vanishes the fear of knife
It is sung in the depths of deep harmony
And reached the unreachable sweet silver melody...

*Patrick Ong is from Nursing 2008. He shares that
---- symbolizes any word that fits the phrase, e.g.,
love, life, death, etc.*



Absolutely Smitten

BY NIKKI CHAN

WATER COLOR PENCIL ON BOND PAPER, 10"X4" 2007.

Inspiration for this came from tango, the dance of passion. Anna Katrina Chan is from Medicine 2010. She enjoys designing clothes for her past time.

Haah!

Haah!

KWENTO NI MUDZ

Godzilla vs Ophtha

BY REY EMMANUEL BARBOSA

Sign Pen on Notebook Page, 2007. Rey is from Medicine 2009. When spacing out from lecture, he doodles on his notebook to his heart's content.



Wla tlga sa hnagap ko na di2 ako makkapsok. Nka-set n nga ang utak ko n s iba tlga ako mappunta eh. Kumbga, 3rd choice ko lng di2. D nm n s ayw ko di2 ha, pro iba kc 2 s plno ko. Pro mtpos ang ilng arw n pg-aanty, ilng Lnggong pkkipgsgnguni s Diyos, finly snagot nya ko n di2 n lng dw ako. Malay ntn, 1st sign n 2 ng pygman nmin! Wuhu! Kya ayun, ngicng n lng ako 1 arw med student n pla ko sa UERM. Hehe... Rak en rol!

Hay, no chois but 2 move on. Alm ko smething gud wil hapen skn d2. At! Tma ako! Sa 3 taong pgpsok ko di2, mdmi akong nkila2ng mga taong tlga nmng tumtak s kaibuturn ng nucleus ko. Cla ung mga taong khit na feelng ko stge 2 HTN nko pg nkkaslamuha ko cla, eh hndi magging gni2 ka-rak en rol ang buhy ko. Cla ung mga taong pg nwla eh tlngng mapa2nsin mong wla. Cla ung mga taong l'm sure eh hndi lng ako ang nkkarmdm ng gni2ng ksdhing dmdamn pg

nakkita cla! Hrdcore 2 kya cguro aftr kong gwn tong artcle n 2 eh ggawa n ko ng "thank-u cards" sa mga taong ngpsaya skn lalo n s mga ng-order skn ng Avon. At kung mkta nyo c Met-Met (ang kptd kong pyat) n pumsok s 2torials, alm nyo n, mlmng bnebnthan ko n c Sn Pedro by dat tym ng Avon dhl sa lyf-threatning-artcle na 2.

Cmuln ntn sa pgpsok. Cno b ang unang sumsalubng stn pg pumpsok tau? Cno fa? Eh d mga sekyu! My 1 sekyu na sbrng knaasran ko. D kna sya nkkita ngaun eh. Pro kung cpag at cpag lng sa pgbuks ng bag, aba, dpat sya ung dneploy sa mga bomb-prone place. Sa sbrng cpag nya n kht gling kna sa loob ng buildng tpos lumbas k tpos la png 10 seconds eh naicpan mong pmsok, d ka mkkalgtas sa knyng mlupet n mga mata at killer-stick n png-inspect ng bag! Wuhu! Kya ako dti, pg naaning kna ang knyng swbeng one-sided-hair s entrnce ng med lobby o kya

sa ospital, ay re-route n 2! Pg 18 n nga ko at ngkataong sya ang nandun, ti-timng tlga ako sa ibng pumpsok pra cla ang mains-peksyunan. Pro weird, nakkita p rn nya ako! Bionic eye? Pro pg no chois tlga, deadma n lng ulit pg psok. See no evil! Hear no evil! Mnsn naiicp ko bkt gnun sya. Bka bored na sya, s bgay kw ba nm n mghpon kng nkbntay lng eh, kesa nm n mpanis ang lway nya eh wlng sawa n lng sya mgssabi sau ng "Mam, bag po." Kya manong gard kung san ka mn nroon, jan ka na lng! Aamin ko mnsn nmmiss kta, s sbrng miz ko sau, dedicted ko sau ang creative shot ko! Ikw tlga ang naiicp ko sa bwat pgpose ko. Inspired by you. Rak on!

Hay eto na. Cguro nm n lht tau nakgmrit n ng pc sa MISD. Sa mga dp gumgmit, ay nku, syang IT Fee nyo sa tuition. Dpat be4 kau lumisn sa UERM, maexperience nyo mg-net at mnghrbor ng sndmak-

mak n iba't ibng strain ng mallupit na virus. Anti-tga-Lipa rules! Pro hnd ang mga virus di2 ang ngp-pastge 2 HTN skn, kung hnd ang mga, janjaranan, make way! Heto n ang sorority ng MISD! Wuhu! Ano ha?! Ano ha?! Cnong frendz ng mga 2? Sori ha sa sbrang taas ng kilay nla dhl sa katryan, khit p my mga lovelyf cla, eh pra clang destined mging old maids! Cguro nsa preamble ng consti nla na dpat clang mgtaray lalo na sa mga babae, mas mtaray, mas mataas ang kilay! Ay mga ate, ang kilay nasa baby bangs nyo na. Ito n ang tmang oras pra malamn nyo n ang lkas nyong mng-urat ng tao! Wuhu! Precipitator of stress kau! Iniic ko n lng, cguro bdtrip dn cla sa Anti-Tga-Lipa. O bka nm n past tym nla ang mg-taray ng alng dhlan? O bka sdyang lagi lng clng may regal? Ay, my dugo pb kau? Hays, ang point lng eh mga ate, it does not hurt to be a kind, wrming and amiable person. Hnd kau massesante dhl dun promise! Peace Love Rak en Rol mga Lola! Phabol lng, sis nyo rn b ung se-cretry sa taas? Pg hnd pa, recruit nyo na! Psok n psok sa criteria! Bsta hnpin nyo n lng, I'm sure my mrrramdman kaung lukso ng dugo pg nakita nyo sya! Just follow your heart.

Ahm, ang nxt na tao ay d ko alm kung nppansin nyo sya. Bsta pgala-gla lng sya, fvorite tmbyan nya eh kung hnd s mga clinics ng mga doctor, s my canteen nm n. Berks nya ang mga medreps! Wuhu! Free Meds! Dati, d ko rn sya bnbgyan ng special attention, kumbga dedma lng tlga. Pero l8ly mejo pnpakulo nya ang dugo ko. Oo na, alm ko dpat syng galngin dhl sa katndaan nya, at d rn nm n nya ko inaaway tlga. Pro d ko tlga mapgiln na ma-annoy sknya pg nakkita ko sya eh. Mnsn kc OA sya mgppansin sa mga chums nya. Tpos mnsn wirdo xa lalo na pgssakay ng elevtor s ospital. Ng-hhurumentdo sya pg mssarhn sya ng elevtor! At tlngng ippamukha nya sau n ikw na ang pnakawng galng na tao n nbuhay s lupa kc hnd mo sya hnintay. Eh sa liit b

nmn nya, mlmng d xa mkkta minsan! At wirdo dn kc n kung san psara na ang pnto, bgla-bgla sya drating frm nower! Ng rappel? Grabe, Mtgal ko n rn tnatnong s srili ko kung ano ba tlga ang papel nya s ospital kc lgi ko tlga sya nakkita! Bsta my negative transference tlga! Bka in my past lyf eh mdrasta ko 2 n umaalpin skn. At pg naroon ako, tlngng nandun dn sya! Hmm...bka espiya sya ng mga old maids. Tsk tsks... Bsta aalmin ko tlga papel nya sa ospital. Malau nm n janitress sya, kc mga gmot ung ni-rooroom hop nya eh. Bsta meron lng akong narramdang negative energy sa knya...Huuummm....

Since nsa loob n rn ng ospitl ang png-uuspan ntn, derederetso na 2! Sbi ko p nm n ayw ko xa isulat. Pro dhl na rn sa ngkkaisang dmdmin nmng mgkkaklase towards her, xa, isinma ko na sya, dhl mlmng ndi lng kmi ang nkausap nya pg nsa ward. At tlga nmng winner sya! As in winner sya sa kaepalan! Yes! 1 syng J! Huy ha, isolated case 2, sya lng tlga ang nmmukud-tnging epal na J! na nkilala ko. Sympre higher year, ms mrrming experience, kya cguro feeling nya sya n c netter. Naturl lng tlga na mkarmdam ng ganung feeling, khit ako ganun dn mnsan. Pro ang wirdo dun, eh mnsn luml-gpas na sa lebel ng pgging J! nya ang kaepalan nya! Ewan ko, 2lad n manang-mhilg-s-gamot, bgla-bgla na lng sya umeextra! At makkigulo sa gngawa nyo. Ok lng sna kung my kailngan syng gwin eh. Pro hnd eh! Past tym dn ata n2 mghnp ng lwer year n nghistory o nagPPE. At ang dialogue nya lgi ay "Cnong precept nyo? Cnong precept nyo?" At! Hnd pa dun mttapos ha, pgkasgot sa tnong nyng yun, mgttanong pa sya ng mga kung anu-anong bgay. Ahm, ate OSCE b to? Prang mppasabi kn lng ng "Huh, sa'n to gling? Doc, o, d ngduduty." Nku, mnsn malas tlga pg naksabay nyo sya sa OR, daig pa ang surgeon sa pgttanong eh. Mgbbihis pa lng ngttanong na! Ahm, ate ate, easy k lng. D k n nm n ntulog. Ewan ko kung i2 ung way nya ng pgso2cialize nya ha. Or bka nm n malimit dn syang bulihin nung bata sya, kaya nging panata na nya na-mambuli dn pg upper year na sya.

Aw, wawa... Tsk tsks...

At sa pnkhuling tao na sadyang hbm-buhay ko cgurong d mallimutan ay ang batang c Gigi. Mkkita nyo sya sa photocopying area ng skul. Hay, ilng beses na ko ndala sa batang 2. Dpat tlga uminom ng prophylaxis pra sa skit ng ulo pg ppunta ka sa puwesto nila. No chois ako kc dun tlg kmi ngppaphtox eh. D nm n tlga sya ang bantay dun, pro mnsn sya ung sub. Hays! Sbra tlga to. Payo lng ha pg mgppgawa kau dun na kelngan nyong balkan, isulat nyo ang instructions for her o kya idrowing! Kc tlngng 90% of the tym mappsabi k ng, "Waaaaa!!!!!! Gigi!!! Fil-Am kaba??? Filipino-laki sa AM!" Kht cguro controlled-breathing technique ni Dr. Galvez-Tan hnd ttalab sa tndi ng sulak ng dugong aakyat sa utak mo pag sya gumwa ng trans nyo! Waaa!!! Ayan, iniic ko lng sya ha, umiinit na pkirmdam ko. Met! Tubig! Gnyn ksidi ang narramdaman ko ke Gigi. Aha! Bka long lost twin sister ko sya, sbrang lukso ng dugo tlga eh! Pro at least mgalang nm n xa unlyk ng mga tao sa Alva na s sbrng itim ng budhi eh lumalabs sa balat nla. Ano ber, sis nyo rn b ung mga old maids? Hays, tindi tlga!

Woo! At least I cn now fully move on dhl nlabas kna ang lht ng naipong init sa ktwan ko pg naalaala ko cla, at ang mga intimate moments nm n. Alm ko, hnd lng ako nkarmdm ng gani2ng bugso ng dmdmin sa knla. Uy, aminin! Hhba ilong nyo cge kau! Bsta i2 lng ang effective thing n gwin nyo pg gustong-gusto mo n clang spakin sa mga nakka-urat nlng mga banat... Reydi? Hngang mlalim...ms mgnda pg pumunta ka sa mini grden jan sa ilalim ng hgdanan papuntang AA, sbay release lht ng init ng ulo... Haah! Haah! Haah! Yan...ready na ulit ako 4 my next hate list. Peace! Rak en Rol mga Dod! Wuhu!

Kabilang si Mudz sa mga bagong JI na papasok ngayong taon.

Puti

NI LILIBETH JANUARY GARCIA
KUHA NI CHINKIN CORUÑA

Maraming araw na rin ang lumipas noong nagpahinga ako mula sa payak at malayang uri ng pagsusulat. Marahil, parating abala ang mga daliri sa pag-type ng reports para sa PD, pag-highlight ng trans, paggamit ng steth, pagtapos ng database, paggawa ng discharge summary, at pag-aayos sa gusot ng puting uniporme. At sa pagiging abala sa mga bagay na ito, suot ko ang puting uniporme. Ang puting uniporme na nagpapaalala ng mga gagawin sa bawat araw na lumilipas, and saplot na kasabay mo sa pag-abot ng mga pangarap. Ang kasuotan na nagbubukod sa akin mula sa isang taong may pangarap pa lamang makahantong kung ano ang kalalagyan, at sa isang taong, inaakyat na ang pedestal ng kanyang mga pangarap. Parang kailan lang, malutong at walang dungis ang puti kung uniporme.

Libo na rin siguro ang mga pahinang nadaanan mula sa mga aklat na libo ang presyo. Libu-libo na rin ang nagastos na pera ng mga magulang para sa aking pag-aaral. Kasama na roon ang inaabangan na pagtagaktak ng pawis sa mga darating na araw ng susunod pang mga taon. Ganoon din karami ang mga taong nangangailangan ng serbisyo ko, libu-libong komunidad na nakalakip sa libu-libong pangarap.

Kung gaano naman karami ang mga taong nangangailangan ng tulong, kabaliktaran ng dami nito ang natitirang oras na maaring magamit para matutunan ang lahat. Kasabay na rito ang pagbabawas ng ilang oras

para sa ibang bagay, pati na rin ang oras sa sarili. Kaakibat ng pagtulong sa maraming nangangailangan ay ang dami ng kailangan mong maintindihan. At sa maliit na panahon upang maging katha ang bawat konsepto mula sa mga aklat, nababawasan mo na rin ang tulog, ang pahinga, ang pagninilay, at iba pa. Dahil sa mga oras na ito, unti-unting nababawasan ang mga sandali na maari kang magkamali, dahil bukas o sa makalawa, alam mong buhay na ang nakasalalay sa iyong nalalaman. Isang buhay na umaasang mabibigyan mo ng tulong, isang buhay na pinanghahawakan ang pangako mong gagawin mo ang lahat, tao, dugo, at laman, na haharap sa iyo at hihingi ng payo tungkol sa kanyang kailangang pangkalusugan. Buhay-taong may puso, may isip, may pakiramdam, humihinga, at nagiisip.

Marahil hindi talaga naiisip o nararamdaman ng marami kung ano ang ibig sabihin ng paggamit ng unipormeng puti. Kadalasan ay nababahiran ito ng maling paniniwala at maling impresyon. Puting uniporme na maaring maging susi ng tagumpay, at susi rin ng kabiguan. Marahil sa puting unipormeng nakabalot sa aking sarili ay siya rin maging susi para mabulag ang sarili sa katotohanan. Dahil ngayon, sa puting unipormeng ito, bagamat malinis at dalisay ang itsura nito, ay nauulapan na rin nito ang sarili mula sa mga bagay na dapat pagtuunan ng pansin. Ito ay ang mga responsibilidad na kaakibat ng pagiging isang tao. Ang pagninilay sa mga karapatan, ang mga bagay na may halaga rin bukod sa pagyakap sa

mga tungkulin ng pagsuot ng puting unipormeng ito.

Sa puting unipormeng ito, bagamat malambot na at hindi na kasing bago noong una ko itong isinuot, ay linggu-lingo pa rin itong pinaplantsa. Katulad ng pagtuwid ko sa maling sarili, katulad ng pag-ayos ko sa gusot, mantsa na dumidikit dito. Sa puting unipormeng ito, na nababasa ng pawis araw-araw, natatalsikan ng dugo. Sa unipormeng ito na hindi malayong masukahan ng hindi katanggap-tanggap na ideyalismo. Sa puting unipormeng ito kung saan lumulungad pa ang ibang pangarap para sa ikaunlad ng bayan. Sa puting unipormeng ito na sana hindi mabahiran ng makasariling layunin. Na sana sa darating na panahon, hindi masunog ang puting unipormeng ito sa posibleng pag-alab ng plantsang paulit-ulit na tumatahak sa kanya. Hindi sumabay ang pagnipis ng pag-iisip, habang maya-maya ay nilalabhan ito para maging katanggap-tanggap ang layunin. Puting uniporme—ang pamana ng magulang ko, ang kasuotan na bumabalot sa pangarap ko.

Si LJ Garcia ay mula sa Medicina 2008. Siya ay full-time, part-time: Freelance writer, nature and music enthusiast, at soy milk drinker.

Blood

BY FIONA JAVELosa, NURSING 2008

With each today
i am more a failure
than yesterday
But it is in my failure
that i see Your strength
it is in my grief

my shame
my death
that is see Your joy
Your grace
Your life

You give life to this corpse
and no one else
You are the reason i breathe
the reason i feel
the reason i am.
You give life to this corpse
and no one else.

Night Time at Agno Beach BY ALEJANDRO MARVIN OPULENCIA



DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPH, CANON DIGITAL IXUS 750. This is where I spend most of my summer vacations. One of my favorite places in the world. Marvin is from Medicine '07. At present, he is a Senior Intern acting as photographer-on-call. He dreams of replacing his box camera with a dSLR soon. Not really good with words, his fascination for celestial bodies and sky speak lucidly of his friendliness and good nature.



The Persistence of Time BY JOSE QUIOGUE

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPH, CANON EOS D30. It is currently my 25th birthday, safe to say my own silver anniversary. However, turning 25 accompanies a lot of reflection; I am in the quarter-mile of my life and what have I done with it? Well, in our lives, there is only one staple... time. Friends come in and out of our lives, so do material possessions, economies crumble, family members eventually pass away. Yet one thing is always constant... time. Carpe Diem! This is a photograph of an actual sculpture by the artist Salvador Dali, with a bit of touch from my imagination. Jose Quiogue is from Medicine 2009 and a member of the Pi Sigma Fraternity. Pushing his limit in photography, his work reflects a spontaneous pursue in redefining the avant-garde.

Techie Tribal BY MIMI GOTACO



PENCIL ON BOND PAPER, 8.5"X 11". Mimi is from Medicine 2009. She is an impressionist, enjoying what she sees.

Practice of the Art: The 5Cs

BY BENJAMIN POLICARPIO, MD PHOTO BY CHINKIN CORUÑA



Dr. Cynthia San Luis and I have had many insightful dialogues during the years she imparted her expertise with us in our Patient-Doctor courses. Her views in patient care and spirituality left a lasting influence in the way I think about patient care and how such an Art must be practiced. I spent many hours of my life contemplating this Art and its practice, most especially during recovery from my pituitary surgery. Those days of convalescence were very fruitful and made my suffering not only bearable but quite meaningful as well.

These 5Cs encompass the desirable qualities of a good physician discussed in several sessions of Patient-Doctor I; they also address what good and total patient care demands in actual practice. It is a useful and valuable guide to junior interns on entry, and to senior interns and residents in training. These 5Cs are worth each physician's genuine reflection, if only to better the practice of one's very own Art.

COMPASSION

One who has this trait is humane, sympathetic and kind. He knows and feels what the other feels. All doctors know that they must have this attribute and most of them think they do. Great physicians have these to say in reaction to what they've seen in the way their colleagues practiced their Art.

"Treat the patient, not the disease."
"It is better to know the patient who has the disease, rather than the disease that has the patient."

While most doctors verbally agree with these aphorisms, it remains a curiosity if most likewise live up to them. In a more profound sense, compassion is the ability to transcend and go deeper. There will be a select few who will have this attribute straight out of medical school. Such is consciously developing and nurturing this inner transformation with each patient seen and examined. Genuine interest and selfless caring without regard to anything else but the physical condition of one's patient is key in doing this. Good doctoring requires knowledge, experience, wisdom, maturity of emotion and wit. Deep compassion unfolds and develops together with these attributes. It is only with deep and genuine compassion that a doctor truly earns the social position that his profession entrusts him.

COMMITMENT

A good doctor stays committed to holistic or total care founded on the principle that man is a biopsychosocial spiritual being. He remains true to his Oath to Hippocrates upon his graduation, to the end of his professional life. A committed physician makes himself available to his patients at all times or through a trusted endorsee during periods of travel or vacation. He makes it a point to be there for them during trying times of their illness. *Walang iwanan* appropriately addresses the travail of patients who come to grief and feel forsaken in their dying days. How many civil cases of negligence are filed against doctors because of this?

On the other end of the spectrum, a

physician, being an agent of health care, must also remain committed to maintain his own. Loyalty and devotion to his family is to be expected from every good and responsible physician.

COMPETENCE

A physician keeps abreast of the advances in the biomedical sciences to remain competent. Knowledge of such advances are necessary for effective and sensible patient care. A good physician reads medical journals, updates online, and attends postgraduate courses and annual conventions. The information explosion today is simply amazing. The internet disgorges an avalanche of fresh reports each day. Daunting as it is, the competent physician maintains his discernment and critical mind as he wades through this morass of facts and fallacies and sorts out the chaff from the grain, differentiates genuine research from mere infomercials, and identifying real information from mere profit-oriented commercializations. He remains guided by cost effectiveness in the management of his patients, and avoids expensive tests unlikely to improve patient care. He uses clinical practice guidelines judiciously as he individualizes patient care.

Note, however, that competence is also having the ability to say "I don't know" when confronted by unfamiliar questions. And in cases involving the terminally ill, competence is knowing when to let go – avoiding mere prolongation of the dying process by meaningless and expensive resuscitation efforts. Last of all, a competent physician maintains his equanimity – that ability to remain calm and composed when under severe pressure, especially in life and death situations. "Keeping his head when all those around him are losing theirs" so to speak.

COMMUNICATION

Doctor and patient communication founds the history, which, even without the physical examination and laboratory exams, allows for an accurate diagnosis 85% of the time. It is strange how the merchants of

gadgets and tests – through ads and commercials – swung public and professional opinion away from this important diagnostic tool. History-taking becoming history itself is not a far-fetched possibility.

None of these technological advances can spot sensitive areas that may be hiding the true problem behind the illness: Body language, facial expression, voice intonation, and actual verbal disclosures that do not escape a good physician – a communicator who simply observes and listens. Communication covers the relatives and significant people in a patient's life as well. The attending staff nurses and other support staff involved in patient care are equally important – a “closed circuit” communication network among these people will dissolve the patient's isolation and loss of connectedness with people, most importantly his physician. Effective communication unerringly answers “What is going on?” any given time.

COLLABORATION / CORROBORATION

These two terms overlap and are mutually inclusive as applied to the team approach in patient care. Rarely does a doctor go at it alone these days. These two terms allows team members to answer “What is going on?”

A game plan emerges for all the caregivers to see, one that is clear, unified and directional. The tactical plan can only materialize as all patient information is corroborated, pondered and agreed upon. Without a game plan, the team virtually wanders aimlessly in an uncharted sea. I call it Headless Chicken Syndrome – the members of the team behave in a similar manner when the unexpected suddenly comes. Perhaps, a lot of civil cases of incompetence against doctors and hospitals would not be if these 5Cs are followed. Ants can be seen carrying heavy food morsels to their nest. If they can practice teamwork, so can we.

Dr. Benjamin Policarpio is from Medicine '63.

Internet Saves Lives

**BY DINDO FERDINAND SANTOS, MD
PHOTO BY MYKE LIMIN**



With the toxic life we doctors have, each one of us should have a prescription for an outlet or a hobby. Common medications are painting, singing, or dancing. And then there are others, myself included, who resort to computers – web site design, in particular.

Having lived through the time when computers in the Philippines were at their infancy, I must say that I, along with these machines, have successfully progressed technologically. My very first computer experience was during residency, and it was with a 286 CPU with only two 5 ¼ floppy drives, no hard disk, and which operated on DOS, with a VGA color monitor. As the junior who attended a four-day toxicology seminar, I was assigned by my senior to echo the topics to our fellow residents. To make it “easier”, we had to reproduce all the materials and the “easiest” way was to use the dreaded computer. I have never used one, so my senior had to teach me how to boot the PC and type using WordStar. To make the story short, this experience made me love the machine. I bought my own for reports, presentations and games.

When I acquired a modem for a dial-up internet connection, I enjoyed visiting personal websites that offered everything and anything under the sun: Household tips, recipes, hobbies, reflections. I studied the craft, learned HTML code and established my own personal website – Filipino Physician OnLine. It contained medical tips, my personal reflections, the beauty of the Philippines,

and a portion where internet surfers can ask medical questions via email.

I had a couple of queries through the years until my personal website became inactive and I focused on the organization website I maintained. But I continued to receive emails and still answered them. One case I cannot forget was that of Grace.

Grace is a teenager living in the US. While her parents were on vacation, she experienced abdominal pain. She found my inactive website and sent me an e-mail. After some history taking online and some maneuvers I asked her to do, I found out that aside from the abdominal pain that started on the epigastrium and localized to the right lower quadrant, aggravated by walking and coughing, and she had vomiting and anorexia. She just wanted to wait for her parents arriving in three days and consult their family physician. But after a day and another e-mail, and the pain had become more severe and generalized, I insisted that she go to a hospital emergency room at once. I did not receive an e-mail from her, until after about four days, she sent an email from her dad's laptop while still at the hospital recuperating from an appendectomy.

We all know that if she had not been operated on, the appendix would have ruptured, causing peritonitis and eventually her death. Never in my dreams did I envision being consulted by someone on the other side of the world. I am a Filipino physician who just wanted my presence to be felt online. But there was Grace, and I can say that the internet saved her life – and mine. The experience of having helped her – miles and miles away – has definitely made this hobby more meaningful than I had expected it to be. This hobby and the endless possibilities that come along with it make my life as a doctor, toxic as it may be, definitely less insane and more worthwhile.

Dr. Santos is from Medicine '88. His website is at www.shekinahgrapix.com/FilipinoPhysician



In His Hand

TEXT AND PHOTO BY BETSY GO

The life we have to come will be an overwhelmingly beautiful one. It will be in a timeless place filled with indescribable wonder where no tear need be shed and no pain need be felt. When you look forward to a future like that, the hardships on earth will seem like a momentary thorn in the heart.



Laugh Trip

BY MARGARITA JUSTINE BONDOC

PHOTO BY CHINKIN CORUÑA

It's Tuesday afternoon. My groupmates and I are in one of the rooms of the Med Ward with our PD precept talking about the week's case. Somewhere during the discussion, we each drift off. Some resort to doodling, some fall asleep, and I am left with my mind wandering. I remember a funny incident and start to snicker. It wasn't just a harmless smile with a slightly audible release of breath. *Oh no.* It's the type that makes classmates notice in that small room for a dozen people. *Good grief!* That made them wonder, I bet. I've checked the DSM IV-TR criteria for psychiatric conditions I might fit into and thankfully, I don't qualify, yet.

I've been wondering if being a bit loopy made me choose psychiatry to be my future specialty. I guess it takes one to know one, right? Not to offend our psychiatrists with this statement though. It might just be applicable to me. Stop with the crazy talk! Ok, let me be rational. It's not like it was a laugh that came out of nowhere right? I mean I was thinking of something funny which brought on the laughter. Although I admit it was out of place. ...Hmmm. Am I batty? *Hardly.* But I sure hope I won't need my own services later on.

Maui Bondoc is from Medicine 2009. She just so happens to have a lot of reasons to laugh—life, love, and people who start laughing for no apparent reason. So what? The world IS funny, if you really think about it.

Muezzin

BY ANNA FRANCESCA BAYRANTE

ART FROM 'IMAGES OF THE CRUSADES' AVAILABLE ONLINE

I would take only one route, as always, going home from school, as I did everyday for three years. It was a narrow bridgeway connecting LRT3's Recto and LRT1's Doroteo Jose stations. It usually took me five minutes at least to get from one end to the other and I would use the time walking alone, thinking of the day's experiences. Yet as time passed by, I stopped thinking and the walk became just that—a long, silent, numb walk. Needless to say, I stopped reflecting and merely joined the people, only one among a crowd of individuals programmed to hurry along. If it took you more than five minutes to finish the entire length of that bridgeway, you have already wasted precious time.

And that was how I thought many months ago.

Until one late afternoon, almost evening actually, after a typically exhausting, seemingly unfulfilling day, I heard a voice. A man, singing. It was barely more than a whisper amid the din of honking bus horns, people cussing down below, and the heavy hurried footsteps of those like me. I had to stop because for a long time, it was the most beautiful sound I have ever heard. Something in my robotic heart stirred. I stopped walking and for a full minute just stood in the middle of that walkway. I remember the time. It was almost six in the evening. Dusk had begun to fall. And his voice drowned all the noise and pulled me towards him.

There, under the last fleeting rays of the sunlight, flashed a golden yellow structure of some sort. I went closer. The smell of sewage and rotting garbage greeted my nostrils. I cleared my eyes. It was a minaret, right smack in the middle of the slums, its golden yellow painted top rising glorious above and among the reek of economic decay and the rusty galvanized iron rooftops. I knew the man singing was a muezzin,

chosen to call all Islam followers to prayer.

Like John the Baptist, he called out to me in the wilderness and woke me up from the daze of living a tedious life. It did not matter who he was or who he worshipped. I joined in his prayer and reflected on the things I did for the day. I needed something new to experience in my life. In a while, I felt as if a heavy burden had been lifted from my shoulders.

To hear the muezzin calling out to everyone to pray even while he is surrounded by abject poverty and hopelessness is awe-inspiring. There is the key element of faith,

which I have no doubt kept him going. It remains a reminder to me that God does not keep company among the affluent in halls of marble and gold but among the poor and indigent in their patched houses of galvanized iron and plywood. Through the muezzin, He touches people's lives and calls upon them to converse with Him through prayer, offer Him all their mistakes and their sufferings when they have nothing else to present. I could not have been more blessed to have made that realization. I am Catholic but the muezzin's voice was as powerful to me as that of a priest's. To me, there was no difference between them. Perhaps, I needed God at that moment and the only way to get to me was by surprise.

And He did because I was.

When I was done with mine, I continued my walk before he finished the prayer. But the person who walked the rest of the way was changed. From that day on, whenever I go down that corridor, whether I hear the muezzin or not, I slow down. Other times, I would stop and talk to Him for a few moments or sing to Him in my head. Whatever I did from the time I woke up until the present moment, I offer Him my thanks. Sometimes, I include an advance request.

On the spot, a three-minute extension no longer seemed like a waste of time.



The Spirit of FIRE

BY NOEMI MAUREEN LANSANG

PHOTO BY CHINKIN CORUÑA

Once there was a band of matchstick brothers living in a matchbox. Their lives were simple. They simply wait for the box to open and watch one of their brothers leave their sullen, dark, ominous, little home. Each time one of them would leave, they would anxiously wait for his return. However, no one has ever returned. And so, the image of what was outside the box remained a mystery for those who have never ventured outside.

As time passed, the brothers began to wonder what has become of their adventurous brothers. Their curiosity on the outside world grew bigger. For there is one common dream that the matchstick brothers all yearn to achieve – to see the light. Having been in the shadows of the box for so long, they've always wanted to see the light, a glorious flame slicing through the darkness. But, without the return of any of their brothers who have gone out of the box, it became even more difficult to find this light they're yearning for.

And then one day, the box opened and three of the brothers were taken out. Unexpectedly, one of them fell outside the box. The box closed and the fourth matchstick brother was given the grand opportunity to see the outside world. He saw the very fate of his brothers. One was used to clean the teeth of a weird-looking creature. His other brother was used to clean the ears of yet another weird-looking creature. But, his third brother... his fate was what astonished him. His brother's head was scratched briskly against the side of the box and behold!!! A glorious flame emerged from his brother's head and spread through his body.

The fourth matchstick was picked up and returned to the box. He was greeted by his anxious brothers who prodded him with questions. He simply told them,

"The flame we are looking for... It is within us.... Always has been in all of us..."

The feelings of incompetence, anxiety, and fear of failure are plagues that befall every individual, at one point or another. No matter how far you travel or how great your list of achievements is, there is still that one moment in your life when you will feel incapable of doing anything. At one time or another, you will feel unqualified to fill your own shoes.

In a few months time, UERMMMCM, our beloved institution, will produce new graduates. More importantly, it will launch the new interns who would be the

vessels of its future.

Like the matchstick brothers, we, students, are curious on what lies beyond the comforts of our school. We are anxious to know what kinds of people are out there, what kinds of patients we will encounter. We are all looking for that glorious moment when we can practice our principles and be called 'doctors', 'physical therapists' and 'nurses'. But, the question of "Are we qualified to do this?" creates a shadow in our minds, turning our anxiety into restlessness and apprehensions.

The flame we are looking for is within us. This holds true for everyone. Where you begin is not the issue. It is how you see your beginnings and how you travel your chosen path that matters. A person born with so much talent but is too afraid to use them, confining such talent in his heart, is not guaranteed fulfillment and satisfaction. But a person with a relentless drive to work hard and improve himself, even with much less talent, can surpass giants and geniuses.

Every single one of us, UERMMMCM students, is the pride of our institution. Each one of us, daughters and sons, is the honor of our families. Both of these are reason enough for us not to doubt our capabilities. Being the best doesn't only come in terms of diploma, title, or privileges. You have to first see yourself as performing your best, after which you realize that vision and accomplish your responsibilities to the extent of your powers. At the same time, you remain humble enough to share whatever you have – knowledge, power, love – to everyone who surrounds you, whether enemies or allies.

So, are you ready to see that flame? Look in the mirror and smile. The flame of life is in you. Be that flame of life to other people, too.



Making Art with Dad

BY SOPHIA NAOMI BARREDO



CRAYON ON BOND PAPER, 8.5" X 11". Sophia is two years old. Her mother is Jacqueline June Flores-Barredo from Medicine 2009.

Teardrop

BY DOT CLAVERIA



PASTEL ON BOND PAPER, 8.5" X 11". Dorothy Anne J. Claveria is from Medicine 2010.



EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
JUAN AGUSTIN CORUÑA IV MED2009

Months before graduating from college, Chinkin made the difficult career decision of choosing medicine over photography. The challenge was concrete because his professional media exposure then was extensive and consistent. Now nearing clerkship, he realizes that he has never been so happy interacting with patients and observing operations in school. After internship, he wishes to train in Orthopedic Surgery and continue to devote free time for family, academia, and taking pictures. Visit <http://chinkin.ph> to appreciate his work.



ASSOCIATE EDITOR
GWENALYN GAIL GARCIA MED2009

Gwen will be graduating from medical school in 2009. She hasn't written for a publication since college, and is glad for the chance to write again for Aesculapian. After graduation, she would like to pursue her medical career as well as continue writing. She is planning on taking the USMLE Step 1 later this school year. In her spare time, she likes going to the movies, reading books, listening to music, and baking for family and friends.



MANAGING EDITOR
JASMINE CORINNA BALBUTIN NUR2009

Jasmine is a 3rd year nursing student. A violinist by heart, she has been classically trained since the age of 6 and has represented the Philippines on various international events around the world. Her weekends are devoted as a Suzuki Primary violin teacher. With her passion for music and learning, she firmly believes that being a musician while balancing the arduous life of a nursing student is possible.



FINANCE OFFICER
EUGENIO L. PUZON III MED2009

Ken is from Las Vegas, USA, and is a nursing graduate from UERMMMMC Class 2002. Already a registered nurse, his ambition to pursue medicine is attributed to the nobility of the profession and his family of health professionals. This dynamic individual has been involved in many projects of the Student Council and currently holds the position of National Coordinating Secretary in the Association of Philippine Medical Colleges-Student Network – a conglomerate of 36 accredited medical schools. After graduation, he plans to join the military and has a high interest venturing into law school.



LOGISTICS OFFICER
PATRICIA ISABEL MANALASTAS MED2009

Pat is currently a 3rd year student from the College of Medicine. Proud of her Kapampangan heritage, she enjoys trying out different varieties of food, watching DVDs, and spending time with her friends and family. She is currently interested in Surgery, although unsure of which medical field she would like to specialize in.



ARTS EDITOR
MICHAEL JAMES LIMIN MED2009

Myke has been dreaming of being a doctor for the longest time. Growing up, he has learned about service, love, and commitment. Currently, he is a full time father, a full time husband, and a full time medicine student. How he does all is admirable to some. Others may find it ridiculous. In the future, he plans to take his training in Canada where his family now resides, and bring back to the country his service and commitment.

DESIGN EDITOR
JASON TRITON LIGOT MED2009

Ayz is from Medicine 2009 and is a scholar of the UERM AFUSA. Apart from being the Aesculapian's Design Editor, he is also the Vice-President of the Medicine Student Council. Upon admission to the College of Medicine, he was awarded with a Special Honors Award and was responsible for conceptualizing and designing the College's 50th anniversary logo during his freshman year. He holds a degree in psychology from the Ateneo de Manila University, and dreams of becoming a specialist in Psychiatry or Neurology some day. His ultimate goal as a doctor, however, is to be of service to his fellowman through government and the academe. You may reach him at ayzligot@yahoo.com.



FEATURES EDITOR
FRANKLIN SAPALO NUR2008

I'm Franklin David from the College of Nursing Xenoliths 2008. I am best described to be a dreamer. I love to dream, to aspire, and to achieve many things in life. With what I have and things I have done, I think there are points for improvement, many items to discover, explore, all to make life more beautiful and interesting. My outlook on life is that we may never have a chance to live it again, so it is better to do what we want and can. Since elementary school, I have been active in extra-curricular activities because they fulfill me. I am never a master in what I involve myself with, but I am a good servant in everything I do. I wish to proceed with Medicine in the future.



LITERARY EDITOR
ANNA FRANCESCA BAYRANTE MED2009

A.F. Bayrante is a 3rd year Medicine student. Born in Manila on October 26, 1984, she believes her heart is ever turned to the peaceful, natural beauty of the countryside more than the chaotic, air-conditioned malls of the city. Fritzie—as friends and family call her—loves reading books, with themes that range from mystery to historical adventure. Her top five authors are J.R.R. Tolkien, Patricia Cornwell, C.S. Lewis, Jasper Fforde, and J.K. Rowling. Her birthday wish is to go to Rome and sit inside St. Peter's Basilica for an hour.



NEWS EDITOR
MARTIN CAPUCION NUR2009

I am Martin, a College of Nursing junior. From the simple suburbs of Cainta, Rizal, the transformation I am enduring now makes a great impact in my life; everything is new – I was not a student leader before entering college. I would like to think I'm melodramatic. I like to walk alone and pray, feel the breeze of the fields at night and see for myself that the true meaning of life is nothing but to pursue the works of God. I am currently the External Vice-President of the Nursing Student Council, and will soon establish Mr. Syomai, a business with my best friend, Gerald Sy.



OPINION EDITOR
NOEMI MAUREEN LANSANG PT2009

Profound writer, certified animè lover, loyal friend, and loving daughter, are just few genuine titles to describe this silent but kikay Makati girl – Noemi Maureen Lansang. She is in her senior year in the College of Physical Therapy. Aside from writing stories and watching animè, she also spends her spare time composing and singing songs. After graduation, she plans to take the Board Exam and hopefully land a stable job in London or in the Caribbean. If there is one wish she would like to be granted, it would be to take her mother and grandmother on a grand tour of the world.





Sunday

BY WILLIAM CHUA, MD

OIL ON CANVAS, 22" X 28" 1997. Dr. William Chua is from Medicine '73. He has his family as a team in doing things he loves to do, such as preparing and celebrating big events, doing business, and going out for fun.