



THE THOMASIAN ALUMNI COMMUNITY

VOL. NO. 9 ISSUE NO. 2

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE UST ALUMNI ASSOCIATION, INC.

Newsletter

UST Rector Inducts AAI Elected Officials

On 10 April 2026, the elected President, Secretary and Treasurer of the UST Alumni Association Inc. (USTAAI) at the March General Assembly trooped to the Rector's Office to pay a courtesy visit and take their Oath of Office before Very Reverend Father Richard G. Ang, OP, University Rector.

Inducted were Chairman Atty. Dwight

Ramos of the Law Alumni Foundation Inc. (LAFI) and Tomasining Ilocano La Union, immediate past president; President Dr. Evangeline Timbang, president of the College of Education Foundation Inc. (CEAFI); Secretary Dr. Jocelyn Agcaoli, president of the College of Rehabilitation Science Alumni Association Inc. (CRSAI); and re-elected

Treasurer Arnel Ocampo of the Education High School Alumni Association Inc. (EHSAAI).

Also present to witness the Induction were Office of Alumni Relations (OAR) Director Joreen Rocamora, USTAAI Business Manager Kaye Bundang and this writer as USTAAI Chief of Staff.

— Nanette O. Fernandez, BSE, 1976

Thomasian Alumni Celebrate Marian Devotion through Exhibit and Flores de Mayo

The Thomasian alumni community formally ushered in the month of floral offerings and spiritual devotion to our Blessed Mother with the launching of the Marian Exhibit 2026 and the traditional Flores de Mayo rites on 14 May 2026 at the Lobby of the Buenaventura Garcia Paredes, O.P. Building, UST Manila.

With the theme "Queen of All Hearts: Finding Peace Through the Mother of



God," the exhibit featured 48 sacred images representing various Marian titles and devotional traditions. The event serves as a collaborative religious and cultural undertaking organized by the UST Office of Alumni Relations and the UST Alumni Association, Inc., in partnership with the UST Museum, and College of Tourism and Hospitality Management.

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Marian Exhibit 2026 concludes with a fuel subsidy turnover for 100 tricycle drivers



The organizers, together with the beneficiary representatives of 5 TODAs.

True to the Thomasian spirit of compassion and community outreach, the Office of Alumni Relations (OAR), the UST Alumni Association, Inc. (USTAAI), UST Museum, and the College of Tourism and Hospitality Management (CTHM), officially concluded the Marian Exhibit 2026 on 20 May 2026, with a solemn closing ceremony held at the Lobby of the Buenaventura Garcia Paredes, O.P. (BGPOP) Building, UST Manila.

The weeklong event, which started

on 14 May, was anchored on the theme "Queen of All Hearts: Finding Peace Through the Mother of God." It highlighted a central focus of turning devotion into action and moved beyond a traditional showcase of sacred Marian images to emphasize social responsibility. Through the fundraising efforts of various alumni associations, the event successfully raised a total of P50,000. The entire proceeds were converted

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UST ALUMNI ASSOCIATION STRATEGIC PLANNING

The Alumni Association held a strategic planning and team building on 27 June 2026 at the 8th floor of the Alumni Center. With Jonathan Peran and this writer as organizers, the exercise aimed to draw a road map to steer the association members into a

direction that answers the mission and vision goals of the association.

The academic exercise started at 9 AM, after a treat of arroz caldo and native delicacies for breakfast. AAI President, Dr. Evangeline Timbang, welcomed the association's committee

heads and AAI officers, with a lively way of getting to know each other. Next, Engr. Jonathan Paran reviewed the process discussed weeks before regarding the strategic planning on how to arrive at the Key Result Areas (KRAs) and Key

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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK: *At Your Service*

by Evangeline E. Timbang PhD

It is an extraordinary honor to step into the role of President of the University of Santo Tomas Alumni Association Inc. (USTAAI), 2026-2029.

Our university is a vast and vibrant ecosystem. While each college alumni association has its own unique traditions and pride, we are all bound by a single, powerful foundation: our shared identity as the UST Alumni Association Inc, the mother organization of all member alumni associations.

We wish to extend our sincere gratitude to our outgoing leadership team and to every alumni association president who tirelessly serve our alumni community. Your leadership keeps the spirit of USTAAI alive across the globe.

As the umbrella organization for all Thomasian alumni associations, our primary mission for the next three years is to **connect or bridge, empower and amplify** the impact of the incredible work being done across all our alumni association members. Our recent planning held last 27 June 2026 gave birth to an interesting 3-year framework with the acronym **CO.M.PACT**, with the following strategic goals:

Year 1 – CONNECT: It highlights how Strategic Goal 1, expanding the alumni database and increasing chapter participation, and Strategic Goal 4, building operational communication channels, serve to rebuild relationships and strengthen the foundational network.

Year 2 – EMPOWER: It aligns Strategic Goal 1, spiritual and professional networking, with Strategic Goal 3, leadership development and continuing education, and Strategic Goal 4, eliminating operational bottlenecks, to foster a culture of mentorship and visionary leadership.

Year 3 – IMPACT: Finally, it shows how Strategic Goal 2, resource development and fundraising, and Strategic Goal 5, scholarships and community advocacies, result in sustainable alumni programs and a lasting culture of service to the university and society.

This comprehensive plan is centered on the theme, **"Thomasians Beyond Borders: United in Purpose, Committed to Service"** and utilizes the **CO.M.PACT** framework to prioritize connecting, empowering and creating a lasting impact. Key objectives focus on modernizing the alumni database, fostering leadership development and establishing sustainable financial support through corporate partnerships and fundraising. The association aims to enhance organizational excellence and operational efficiency while expanding community outreach and scholarship programs. Ultimately, these initiatives serve to transform the organization into a proactive and vibrant network that supports both its graduates and the broader society.

A mother association is only as strong as the unity of its alumni association members. To our alumni presidents, board members, and alumni members everywhere: **We are in this together, and your voice is essential.**

Moving forward, let us connect. We want to hear about your members' goals, challenges and how the Mother Association can best support your initiatives in the next few years.

The USTAAI is the university's living memory and its critical engine for growth, connection and advocacy. With clarity, collaboration and a commitment to our mission and vision we can move forward, united in purpose and committed to service.

Marian Exhibit 2026 concludes with a fuel subsidy turnover for 100 tricycle drivers

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directly into fuel vouchers to provide immediate economic relief to 100 tricycle drivers who ply the busy routes around the University.

The closing ceremony commenced with the solemn recitation of the Holy Rosary. The organizers, alumni, and guests gathered in front of the adorned Marian altars to offer prayers of gratitude and petition, setting a deeply spiritual tone that reflected the event's core mission.

Following the prayer, the program proceeded to the formal awarding of the fuel vouchers to the beneficiaries. Representatives from the organizing committees and alumni groups turned over the subsidies to the officers and members of five key Tricycle Operators and Drivers Associations (TODA) operating around the UST campus

perimeter.

The 100 transport beneficiaries were selected from UTown Manila Dapitan TODA (UMDAP TODA), Navarra Dapitan TODA (NAVADAP TODA), Lacson Margal Blumentritt TODA (LACMABLU TODA), Piy Margal Dela Fuente TODA (PMDF TODA), and Padre Noval TODA (PANTODA)

OAR Director Assoc. Prof. Joreen Rocamora, PhD and USTAAI President Assoc. Prof. Evangeline Timbang, PhD

noted during the turnover that the initiative serves as a practical execution of this year's theme, directly supporting local transport workers heavily affected by fluctuating fuel costs. By bridging religious heritage with community welfare, the Marian Exhibit 2026 underscored the university's ongoing commitment to rendering meaningful, real-world service to its immediate stakeholders and neighbors.

– Office of Alumni Relations



Organizers turn over fuel vouchers to the UMDAPTODA and PANTODA.



THOMASIAN ALUMNI COMMUNITY

OUTLET

THOMASIAN
Planner



Php 500.00



LUCKY CATCH

"When the world was ageless and anything but ordinary, a mother wrote her child's first adventure.

This art piece envisions the youngest years of our conscious existence, when all we knew of was love. Memories are simply stories played on repeat, ever unfolding the same two hours into the vast stretch of eternity.

Thoughts of yesterday can course like the ocean waves, pushing and pulling the mind and the heart together.

Even the smallest of moments spent with the ones you love, can outlast every single lesson that life may have to offer.

When you try to remember happiness, you create art because time cannot reimagine itself."



Created by:
Artist Seb Chua

Php 48,0000

For Inquiries:
Look for Ms. Kaye Bundang
09175231522 / ustaaiscretariat@gmail.com

Proceeds will go to the Thomasian Alumni Community Scholarship and the Disaster Response Programs.



NEW ITEM!

TIGER
DEALS

Php 400.00



FOR ORDERS, PLEASE CONTACT
MS. KAYE BUNDANG AT
09175231522

Proceeds will go to the USTAAI Scholarship and the Disaster Response programs, and will help the association further its other advocacies.



TOTE BAGS



Php 350.00



Php 150.00

NEW COLLECTION

THOMASIAN ALUMNI
TIGER CAP



Php 400.00



Thomasian Alumni Celebrate Marian Devotion through Exhibit and Flores de Mayo

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OAR Director Assoc. Prof. Joreen T. Rocamora, PhD, delivered the opening remarks and welcomed members of the Thomasian community, Marian devotees, image owners and representatives of participating churches and organizations.



Rev. Fr. Wilhelm B. Boñon, O.P., Provincial Promoter of Social Communications and Provincial Archivist of the Dominican Province of the Philippines, served as the event's guest speaker. Fr. Boñon, who also teaches Church History and Theology at the UST Ecclesiastical Faculties, discussed Marian devotion and the Blessed Mother's role in leading the faithful toward peace and Christ.

rooted in Filipino religious traditions, including Nuestra Señora de Peñafrancia de Manila, Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Zamboanga, Nuestra Señora del Porta Vaga de Cavite, Santo Rosario de La Naval de Manila and Nuestra Señora del Santísimo Rosario de Manaoag.

Images associated with protection and safe passage included Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage and Señora de la Paz y Buen Viaje. Meanwhile, Nuestra Señora de la Salud, Maria Salus Infirmorum Niña Maria and Nuestra Señora de los Remedios de Navotas represented Marian devotions centered on healing and consolation.

Several images highlighted devotion to the Holy Rosary, including Nuestra Señora del Santísimo Rosario, Nuestra Señora del Santísimo Rosario Reyna del Caracol and Santo Rosario. Other featured images included Nuestra Señora de La Salette, Nuestra Señora de Valvanera, Nuestra Señora del Carmen de San Sebastian, Our Lady of Victory, Nuestra

Señora de la Peregrina, Señora de la Salvacion, Virgen Alegria, Virgen de las Flores, and Santa Maria Stella Matutina.

Representations of Sta. Ana with Niña Maria and the Sagrada Familia were also displayed showcasing the role of family in nurturing faith and religious devotion.

The organizers presented certificates of appreciation to the individuals, churches, religious organizations, and devotees who lent their Marian images for public veneration.

The Marian Exhibit ran from May 14 to May 20, 2026.

– Office of the Alumni Relations



Among the images displayed were the Immaculada Concepcion de Malabon, La Niña Maria, Nuestra Señora de la Salud, Our Lady of Lourdes, Our Mother of Perpetual Help, Our Lady of Fatima, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Our Lady of Sorrows, and Our Lady of Hope of Macarena.

The exhibit also featured Marian titles



Thomasian alumna, entrepreneur and lay Church leader Emma Ruivivar-Yeung, who served as this year's Hermana Mayor, delivered a special message during the program.



USTAAI President Assoc. Prof. Evangeline E. Timbang, PhD concluded the event by thanking the organizers, partner units, image owners and participating members of the Thomasian community.

UST ALUMNI ASSOCIATION STRATEGIC PLANNING

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Performance Indicators (KPIs), after which committee heads presented the work they had done for comments and suggestions through lunch time, finishing in the early afternoon.

At the closing of the planning session, all agreed that we have come up with a roadmap, for at least the next three years, under the helm of Dr. Timbang which reflected our shared vision of a more engaged and more impactful alumni community that continues to support and serve the University and the community at large.

The strategic plan is anchored on the following recurring themes of the

Committees' presentation:

Alumni Engagement and membership development - to increase alumni associations membership and participation;

Career, Professional, Leadership - to provide career talks, skills development workshops and networking opportunities;

Resource Development - to create a pool of financial and human resource, strengthening fundraising activities that support and sustain annual and special projects, develop strategic partnerships and seek sponsorships while practicing sound financial

management; and

Organizational Excellence and Communication - to improve governance, strengthen committee operations and establish systems for monitoring progress and evaluation of projects.

This strategic plan is more than a document. It is our commitment. Together, we can transform our collective experience, expertise and resources into opportunities that will benefit all the stakeholders of the alumni association.

- Visitacion V. Asiddao, UST High School 1974



TACFI INDUCTS NEW LEADERS AND MEMBERS FOR THE 2026 TO 2027 TERM



On 24 June 2026, the Thomasian Alumni Community Foundation, Inc. marked a significant milestone with the formal Induction Ceremony of its incoming Board of Trustees, Executive Officers and Committee Chairpersons, with Chairman Emeritus Dr. Robert C. Sy as the inducting officer. The event, held at Club Filipino in Greenhills, San Juan, officially began the leadership term

for 2026 and 2027.

The gathering also served as an occasion to formally welcome the newest members of TACFI. Among those inducted were Ms. Visitacion V. Asiddao, an alumna of the University of Santo Tomas High School, and Engr. Jason L. Ong, who served as the president of the UST Engineering Alumni Association from 2019 to 2023.

With the new leadership team

officially installed, the foundation stands ready to expand its strategic initiatives. The incoming officers expressed their dedication to upholding the distinct Thomasian values of competence, compassion and commitment, ensuring that the legacy of service to the community remains both impactful and enduring.

– Engr. Jonathan Peran, BS ECE, 1996

Tomasino Para sa Kapwa Pilipino: A Unified Thomasian Response to the Mindanao Earthquake Victims

In response to the earthquake that struck Mindanao on 8 June 2026, the Thomasian Alumni Community Foundation, Inc. (TACFI), the UST Thomasian Alumni Leaders Association (UST TALA), the UST Alumni Association, Inc. (USTAAI) and committed partners joined forces to provide immediate assistance to families affected in General Santos City.

The initial relief operation was coordinated through UST TALA under the leadership of Chairperson Ms. Angeli S. Tuazon, with valuable local assistance made possible through the

efforts and network of Dr. Ryan Aplicador, former Vice President of UST TALA.

The initiative reflected the Thomasian tradition of service by bringing together alumni organizations, volunteers and private sector partners in a common mission to provide timely assistance. The success of the relief effort was made possible through the collective efforts of TACFI, UST TALA, the USTAAI (under the leadership of President Evangeline E. Timbang); Megaforce Security Services Corporation; Torre, Sobremonte

Associates and Company represented by Kathie Sobremonte, Jennifer Sobremonte and Merilyn Torre, as well as other generous donors and local volunteers.

As communities continue their recovery, this unified circle of Thomasian alumni community and partners remain united in their commitment to uphold the Thomasian spirit of compassion and service, standing alongside the people of General Santos City as they rebuild their homes and lives.

– Hazel G. Bayson, BFA,
Major in Advertising Arts, 2023





UST TALA WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

The UST Thomasian Alumni Leaders Association (TALA) conducted an oath-taking ceremony for its new members on 11 June 2026 at the UST Saint Pier Giorgio Frassati, O.P. Building Auditorium, during the 2nd Student Leadership, Excellence and Dedication (LEAD) Awards organized by the UST Office for Student Affairs (OSA). The event was attended by student leaders from various recognized University-wide student organizations.

Mon Gualvez, a TV5 News Reporter and recipient of the Distinguished Thomasian Alumni Awards (DTAA) from UST TALA, opened the event with



a compelling address, inspiring the new generation of leaders to be vigilant and engaged, and to embody the Thomasian spirit as they transition beyond the University.

Charles Deita, another recipient of the DTAA from UST TALA, gave a brief encouraging new members to

contribute positively to the community take on active leadership roles to help shape the future of the organization.

More than 30 graduating student leaders of batch 2026 then affirmed their commitment as members of the Thomasian Alumni Leaders Association (TALA), with the oath-taking and pinning ceremony presided over by UST TALA chairperson Angeli Tuazon.

Also present during the event were UST TALA President, Judge Froilan Pitpit, TALA member Solon Sy, UST OSA Director, Asst. Prof. Jaezamie V. Ong and this writer as TALA PRO.

— Engr. Jonathan Peran, BS ECE, 1996

UST Golden Cross and Saber Alumni Association Conducts Educational Outreach

Under the warm summer sun of Barangay Villa Cielo in Buguey, Cagayan, the spirit of Bayanihan and Thomasian service came alive on Saturday, 23 May 2026.

The University of Santo Tomas Golden Cross and Saber Alumni Association, Inc. (UST-GCSAAI) successfully mounted a meaningful Brigada Eskwela community outreach program. Moving in seamless synergy with the Operation Brotherhood Community Foundation (OBCF) and the Philippine Coast Guard Auxiliary, the mission brought crucial educational and health resources straight to the heart of this coastal town. This will be the third annual iteration of this program that started in 2023.

With the upcoming school year in mind, GSAAI focused on easing the burden of school expenses of the local families. The group distributed 124 customized school kits and 124

matching hygiene kits to the students.

Inside each student school kit, children found 4 customized notebooks, specially printed, courtesy of Arch. Roland Diwa '70; essential paper supplies, including 1 long pad and 1 half pad paper; and a fully stocked pencil case filled with 1 crayon set, 2 to 3 ballpens, 2 pencils, a sharpener, an eraser, and fasteners.

Recognizing that proper education thrives on good health, the volunteers paired each academic package with a complete hygiene kit. These packs were filled with protective and wellness essentials, including hand sanitizer, face masks, vitamins, tissue paper, wet wipes, toothbrush, toothpaste, bath soap and shampoo.

The outreach team also turned their attention to the hardworking faculty members who keep the classrooms running. To ensure teachers have the administrative tools they need, the

organization donated a substantial amount of teaching and office supplies: 20 reams of A4 paper; 2 sets of printer ink (2 black cartridges, plus each of cyan, magenta, and yellow); 5 boxes of classroom chalk; and 100 brown folders with plastic jackets.

The successful turnover underscored the enduring bond of the Thomasian community, brought to life by a multi-generational group of alumni volunteers. On the ground to personally manage the distribution were Arch. Roland Diwa '70; Auxiliary Commodore Allan Sison '83; Auxiliary Captain Yvan Pagulayan '86; Rodivic Amante '93; and Jemimah David '23. The delegation was led by UST GCSAAI National Commander, RADM Jomar de la Pena. Their presence beautifully demonstrated how a legacy of discipline and compassion can span decades to make a tangible difference in the lives of young learners.





GOLDEN JUBILEE STORY: GLOWING IN GOLD

So how do you reach back 50 years to trace college batchmates, half of whom now go by their married names, while others may have been scattered by Fate across all continents?

Thankfully, there's Facebook. And so started global group chats aimed at gathering Batch '76 of UST's Faculty of Arts and Letters to celebrate half a century of being shaped by Asia's oldest, and the world's largest, Catholic university.

"Planning for the Golden Jubilee took us a year," recalled Sociology major Cecilia de Castro-Villa, who viewed the task as both "privilege and duty." Such a privilege "to work with a core group of Artlets who are creative, results-driven and empathetic," she said, adding that a "sense of duty" propelled preparations to make the occasion a "personal and collective victory."

And indeed, "March 1, 2026 proved us right!" Villa added, speaking of the event held at Heritage Hotel, Pasay City,

with the theme "Glow in Gold—Glitter, Sparkle & Shine."

The enthusiastic response saw funds and prizes pouring in, with so many raffle and game prizes donated that not one—jubilant and guest alike—went home empty-handed. The generous spirit extended to entertainment numbers, including several songs from Prince Ronnie Love, a 3rd generation member of The Temptations, whose hit song, "My Girl" defined a more romantic and innocent era.

But there was no discounting homegrown talents, as Artlets' alumni showed off singing and dancing skills beyond the Name that Tune game: Socio's Mirella Gotangco-Clarete stirred up nostalgia with her "Windmills of My Mind," while a sizzling Swing by Socio major Marivic Munoz-Romualdez and Journalism's Edgardo Santiago sparked speculations that he has a side gig as D.I. in Texas, where he has settled.

The raucous games, meanwhile,

harked back to a younger, more energetic age and had everyone—including Psychology prof Lorgene Mata—scrambling to beat the competition in the Chicken Dance, and to stay afloat while the Boat (Was) Sinking. Such a joyous racket had other guests—Artlets Dean Melanie Turingan and old-time mentors Sociology professor Almadora Zipagang and Political Science prof Zenaida Elepaño, among them—lustily cheering them on.

Admittedly, there were a few challenging moments, such as deciding who deserved to be named Most Outstanding Jubilarian. This batch has a Sandiganbayan judge—Bernelito Fernandez—and other high achievers, but in the end, the core group decided to recognize Marilyn Victorio-Aquino, who has definitely gone a long way: from a Political Science student barely surviving on scholarships, to being a

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Campus Memories

I Remember....

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practice ("quiz na naman?!") but when mid-terms came, reviewing for the exams was easy. He had already "forced" us to review every weekend. And... he was the *crush ng bayan*.

... third year, the most challenging. On the first week in the MassCom class, I realized *oops, this is not for me*. At about this same time, the Faculty opened AB Translations. I opted to move as I knew that the program would also lead me to what I wanted: to write and be in the media. We were, I think, still in third year, when we were commissioned to translate some family planning modules of the UST Hospital. It was our practicum, but we got paid for it.

... Dr. Ofelia Dimalanta. Who would forget her? I have always considered my program to be minor in Dr. Dimalanta. (My major? Mrs. Muñoz.) In our mid-term exams in Lit class, we needed to answer just one question: why a particular novel was a sociological piece and not a philo one. After about 10 minutes, while most of us were still trying to squeeze out our brain juices but producing nothing, a male classmate stood and submitted his blue book. My squinted eyes followed him until he disappeared

through the door. On the following meeting, Dr. Dimalanta announced that he got a 9 out of 10. His answer was: *because it cannot be otherwise*.

... that apart from my academics, there were activities of the Faculty that I helped organize or participated in, and how we needed to stay on Wednesdays to sing in the 5pm masses because of Pax Romana.

... of course, fourth year, the highlight of which was the thesis preparation. I chose Prof. Muñoz, because she was "strict" in the good sense. So, apart from academics, extracurricular activities, and a broken heart, I had to finish one chapter per week—yes, you read it right. Per week. I needed to coax my Dad to lend me his driver so I could deliver my paper to her on Sunday afternoons. She lived in Parañaque and I lived in QC. How lucky I was that my Dad already had an electric typewriter with eraser and that my Mom was an expert in erasing carbon copies.

... Ma'm Nancy Tabirara, my professor in Literature. I had to admit that I did not grasp as much as I wanted to because... oh, well... she knew what I was going through.

... defense time. As my paper was a translation of the philo-moral play of

Ayn Rand's *The Night of January 16th*, I prepared the justification of my Tagalog equivalent, including why *dulaan* and not *entablado* for stage which was the more commonly used word at the time. I memorized my defense. I was so disappointed to be asked just one question: why I chose that play. My answer: because it is unique. I did not even spend 10 minutes in the defense room.

... the flood, of course! I felt like it was a requirement for graduation to go through waist deep flood waters from UST to Welcome AND from UST to Chinese General Hospital.

There are so many highs and lows that are still fresh in my 67-year-old mind, but in the interest of space, these are all I will share.

I am glad that I still get the chance to visit UST to attend meetings of the AAI, to give back to the institution that helped mold me into what I am today. I still do translation projects, apart from teaching, writing and editing. The rod? It keeps me going, telling me when I have overworked myself physically and when I need to shed off flab on my tummy.

— Joy Viray-Gatmaytan, AB Translations, 1980



A Century of Excellence and Enduring Bonds: The UST College of Education Centennial Homecoming

The University of Santo Tomas College of Education (CoE) marked a historic milestone, celebrating 100 years of educational excellence, integrity and compassionate service with its Centennial Alumni Homecoming on 25 April 2025. Centered on the theme "One Hundred Years, One Homecoming," the landmark event beautifully intertwined a deep reverence for the college's legacy with a joyous celebration of lifelong Thomasian friendships.

The event, with this writer as the Chairperson of the organizing committee, began with alumni walking hand-in-hand through the iconic Arch of the Centuries during the Welcome Rites, symbolizing a collective return to their shared roots. At the Dr. Robert Sy Ballroom of the Alumni Center where the main festivities took place, Holy Mass was the first celebration of the evening, with Rev. Fr. Arvin Pangan, Regent of the College, as main celebrant.

A highlight of the evening was the formal Presentation and Recognition of Jubilarians. In a series of moving presentations, the college bestowed commemorative medals upon



returning alumni celebrating milestone anniversaries of their graduation. This formal awarding stood as a visual map of the college's expansive history, honoring individuals whose decades of professional practice have left a wide-reaching impact across global classrooms, scientific laboratories and

the international hospitality and food industries.

The tribute reached an emotional peak when the celebration honored its oldest returning alumni. Representing the golden legacy of the college, Dr. Maria Antonia Vialu-Magalang from the BS in Food and Nutrition Batch 965 stepped forward to deliver a heartfelt Alumni Response.

The nostalgic atmosphere quickly shifted to high spirits as attendees participated in a lively, synchronized community dance led by the IPEA Alumni. The evening of rekindled connections was ultimately sealed when old classmates and lifelong friends raised their glasses together during the grand centennial wine toast led by CEAFFI President Assoc. Prof. Evangeline E. Timbang.

As the College of Education enters its second century, the historic evening left an indelible mark on all in attendance—proving that though decades may pass, Thomasians will always remain united by the enduring friendships and shared history that bring them back home.

— Driselle Peleo-Pajuyo, BSND, 2000

UST Galing Science Alumni Association (GSAA) holds "BalikTanaw, BalikScience" — its Centennial Alumni Homecoming

Attended by a total of 38 batches from the Classes of 1964 to 2026, the UST Galing Science Alumni Association (GSAA) held its Centennial Alumni Homecoming last June 2026 at the Buenaventura Garcia Paredes, O.P. Building (BGPOP) lobby in UST Manila campus with the theme "BalikTanaw, BalikScience."

According to GSAA President Charitess P. Carandang-Barlis who organized the event, "BalikTanaw, BalikScience" was their simple way of not only celebrating the centennial anniversary of the College of Science, but also a thanksgiving for all the years that every Science alumnus/ alumna has been blessed with God's grace. It was a celebration recognizing how far every Galing Science alumnus/ alumna has journeyed in their chosen fields, excelled in their craft and lived the Thomasian spirit and values.

The homecoming event started with afternoon cocktails, allowing the attendees to interact and reconnect



The Galing Science alumni homecomers in front of the UST Chapel and the Carillon after the "BalikTanaw, BalikScience" Thanksgiving Mass.



The UST Galing Science Jubilarians with the College Dean, the College Regent and GSAA President

with fellow alumni and with their former professors. This was followed

by a campus tour then a Thanksgiving Mass at the UST Main Chapel, officiated by the current Regent of the College of Science, Rev. Fr. Quirico T. Pedregosa, Jr., OP. The Thanksgiving Mass was made more solemn and nostalgic by the choral music sung by the College of Science Glee Club (CSGC) Alumni. After the Eucharistic celebration, everyone went back to the BGPOP Lobby, where they were serenaded by a 7-piece ensemble, for the evening program and dinner.

Living up to its theme, College of Science administrators, a few professors and a past GSAA president were also present during the event. The College Regent, Rev. Fr. Pedregosa, Jr., OP and Dean Rey Donne S. Papa, Ph.D., a Galing Science BS Biology, Class of 2002 alumnus himself, led the opening remarks and thanked all the alumni who spent the entire afternoon until evening catching up and being together to celebrate the occasion. The prayer

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From Isolation to Communion: Forming Missionary Catholic Leaders in the Digital Age



As digital technologies continue to reshape the way people connect, learn and live, they also present a profound paradox: while the world has never been more connected, many—especially the young—have never felt more alone. Responding to this pressing reality, the UST Pax Romana Alumni Association, Inc. (PRAAI) hosted the International Catholic Movement for Intellectual and Cultural Affairs (ICMICA) Asia Pacific webinar, "From Isolation to Communion: Forming Missionary Catholic Leaders in the Digital Age," on 12 April 2026.

The regional webinar convened Catholic intellectuals, healthcare professionals, theologians, educators, and lay leaders from across the Asia-Pacific region for a rich interdisciplinary dialogue that integrated medical science, theology and Catholic social engagement. The discussion centered on the impact of social media and artificial intelligence on identity formation, mental health and the mission of forming young Catholic leaders in an increasingly digital world.

Offering the medical perspective was Dr. Ermenilda L. Avendaño, Child Neurologist and Developmental Pediatrician and Department Manager for Medical Services at the Philippine Children's Medical Center. She explained how excessive digital exposure influences

the developing brain, particularly among children and adolescents whose identities are still being formed. While recognizing the benefits of technology, she cautioned against its uncritical use and advocated for digital minimalism as a path toward authentic human flourishing. She encouraged participants to rediscover their "true north" by intentionally disconnecting from screens, nurturing genuine relationships and choosing meaningful face-to-face encounters over virtual interactions.

Complementing this scientific perspective, Fr. Jojo M. Fung, S.J., Ph.D., Associate Professor at the Loyola School of Theology, offered a theological reflection grounded in the conviction that *faith is communion, not isolation*. Reflecting on the opportunities and challenges presented by artificial intelligence, he underscored that technology must always remain at the service of the human person and never diminish the inherent dignity bestowed by God. He called for the ethical and discerning use of AI, reminding participants that authentic evangelization is ultimately rooted not in algorithms but in personal encounter, community and communion.

The dialogue that followed explored the realities of online and in-person worship, the indispensable role of

families in guiding responsible digital engagement and the emerging possibilities of using artificial intelligence to support evangelization while safeguarding the depth and authenticity of the Christian faith.

In their synthesis, ICMICA Asia Pacific participants captured the heart of the conversation: *"We began with a paradox—more connected, yet more alone. The answer is not more content, but deeper communion. The Church is not a platform. It is a people, a mission, a communion."* Participants were challenged not merely to leave the webinar inspired, but to become missionary disciples who foster authentic friendships, vibrant faith communities and meaningful encounters with Christ both online and offline.

The webinar concluded with a prayer and a shared commitment to continue the conversation on artificial intelligence and the Catholic faith. Looking ahead, participants expressed enthusiasm for organizing an international colloquium during World Youth Day 2027 in Seoul, further advancing ICMICA's mission of forming Catholic intellectuals and lay leaders capable of engaging the opportunities and challenges of the digital age with wisdom, compassion and fidelity to the Gospel.

Through initiatives such as this, the UST PRAAI continues to embody the Thomasian tradition of integrating faith and reason, preparing alumni to become missionary leaders who respond creatively and courageously to the signs of the times. In an era marked by unprecedented technological change, the Association remains steadfast in its commitment to forming Catholic professionals whose leadership is anchored not only in competence, but also in communion, compassion, and service.

*- Mary Jean Villa-Real-Guno, MD,
MBA-Health; BS General Science, 1978,
Doctor of Medicine, 1982*

UST Galing Science Alumni Association (GSAA) holds "BalikTanaw, BalikScience" — its Centennial Alumni Homecomingfrom page 8

before dinner was served was led by TOAST 2026 Awardee Dr. Mary Jean V. Guno from BS General, Class of 1978.

The highlight of the evening program was the Jubilee Medal Awarding where 2 Diamond Jubilarians, 4 Emerald Jubilarians, 7 Golden Jubilarians, 23 Sapphire Jubilarians, 15 Ruby Jubilarians, 3 Coral Jubilarians, 6 Pearl Jubilarians, and 9 Silver Jubilarians were awarded

commemorative medals for achieving their milestones. The Jubilee Medal awarding was followed by Messages of Gratitude from the representatives of the Golden, Emerald and Diamond Jubilarians, the representative of TOAST awardee 2024 Mr. Joel S. Cruz, Mr. Roy Redondo, and the GSAA President.

The event was capped off by closing remarks from the former College of

Science Dean John Donnie A. Ramos, Ph.D. and Asst. Prof. Anna Maria Gloria S. Ward, MA, who left the alumni homecomers with a message:

"... You found a reason to return to the College that helped shape who you are. Your presence today is a wonderful reminder that while we may leave the campus, we never truly leave the Science family. For

continued on page 13



-CLICKER-RAZZI-



UST GSAA visits their alumni military doctors in Army General Hospital and Manila Naval Hospital



Thomasian alumni honor their devotion to Mama Mary through a special exhibit and Flores de Mayo celebration



USTAMVAAAI holds Petition Mass and Board Operations for May 2026 CPALE



UST Golden Cross and Saber Alumni Association Conducts Educational Outreach



USTGSAA holds "BalikTanaw, BalikScience"



Glow in Gold: A gathering of Artlets Golden Jubilarians



UST AMVAAAI gives free ice cream



UST AMVAAAI honors Board and Certification Passers at Testimonial Dinner



USTEAAI Strategic Planning



One Hundred Years, One Homecoming: UST College of Education holds Centennial Alumni Homecoming





Prayers and Presence: USTAMVAAAI Mounts Petition Mass, Board Operations for May 2026 CPALE



"Alumni volunteers hold the line outside the testing centers, cheering on Thomasian examinees through every examination day"

The UST AMV Accountancy Alumni Association, Inc. (USTAMVAAAI) accompanied Thomasian examinees through the May 2026 Certified Public Accountant Licensure Examination (CPALE), opening the campaign with a Petition Mass offered for the intentions of the takers and sustaining it through a full Board Operations deployment across all nine testing centers.

Thomasian examinees were assigned

to Doña Elena Tower, Ayala Malls Manila Bay; Ayala Malls Clover Leaf; Holy Trinity Academy; Philippine College of Criminology; La Consolacion College – Manila; Sudeco Polytechnic Integrated College, Inc. – Recto; San Sebastian College Recoletos – Manila; and Manila Central University. At each site, alumni volunteers were on the ground before call time, holding the association banner alongside counterparts from other schools and greeting examinees with encouragement, refreshments and last-minute logistical support through every examination day.

The effort bore fruit. The University of Santo Tomas produced 74 new Thomasian CPAs in the May 2026 CPALE, registering a 64.35% institutional passing rate, more than double the 30.83% national average. The association extends its warmest congratulations to the newest members



Official results card — 74 New Thomasian CPAs; UST passing rate 64.35% vs. national 30.83%. — Caption: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." — 2 Timothy 4:7-8"

of the profession, and its gratitude to the alumni volunteers whose presence turned a licensure examination into a homecoming of sorts.

- John Derick De Recto, BS Accountancy, 2019

A Sweet Welcome: USTAMVAAAI Surprises New Alumni with Ice Cream Cart at Baccalaureate Mass

Manila's summer humidity was in full force on 29 May 2026 as graduating students of the UST College of Accountancy gathered for their Baccalaureate Mass. Waiting for them outside was an unannounced welcome from the UST AMV Accountancy Alumni Association, Inc. (USTAMVAAAI), the traditional sorbetes cart, stationed at the college entrance, serving free scoops to every graduate who passed by.

The gesture was deliberately simple.

Rather than a formal induction, the association chose a small, familiar comfort to mark the moment a student becomes an alumnus: a cone of dirty ice cream, shared in uniform, in the courtyard where they spent the last four years. Graduates queued in their whites and khakis, cones in hand, trading photos and congratulations as the line stretched along the college façade.

Beyond the treat, the surprise carried a message the association hopes the

new batch will keep: that membership in the USTAMVAAAI is not a formality to be processed but a community to be enjoyed. To the newest Thomasian accountancy alumni: welcome home and congratulations. The association looks forward to seeing you at Board Operations, at the testimonial dinners, and someday, on the other side of the ice cream cart.

- John Derick De Recto, BS Accountancy, 2019



A sweet treat for a hot Manila afternoon — and a warm welcome to the association's newest members.



UST GSAA Joins BS Chemistry '81 Lunch Reunion at Cochi, BGC

UST Galing Science Alumni Association (GSAA), represented by President Charitess C. Barlis, joined the BS Chemistry 1981 reunion at Cochi, BGC in Taguig City on 31 May 2026.

Since some of the Chemistry Sapphire Jubiliarians were not able to make it during their February 19 get together at the BGPOP, TOAST 2022 Awardee for Scientific Research Ms. Maria Marjorette O. Pena, PhD. organized and hosted the lunch reunion in BGC. Dr. Pena, who was also part of Batch 1981, is an Associate Professor and Associate Chair of Biological Sciences at the University of South Carolina. She is based in the USA but also currently serves as the President of the Philippine-American Academy of Science and Engineering (PAASE).



UST Galing Science Alumni Association President Charitess C. Barlis and former College of Science Dean Professor Emeritus Fortunato B. Sevilla, III, PhD with some members of BS Chemistry, Class of 1981 at Cochi in BGC, Taguig City.



BS Chemistry, Class of 1981 returns to UST Manila to celebrate their Sapphire Jubilee year.

- Charitess C. Barlis, BS Psychology 2002

UST LAFI President Justice Ronald B. Moreno Honored with Professorial Chair Award



In recognition of his distinguished contributions to the legal profession and legal education, Hon. Justice Ronald B. Moreno, incumbent President of the UST Law Alumni Foundation, Inc. (UST LAFI), was honored by establishing the Justice Ronald B. Moreno Professorial Chair Award.

The Memorandum of Agreement creating the professorial chair was formally signed on 20 April 2026 at the Rector's Hall, UST Main Building, between the UST Research and Endowment Foundation, Inc. (USTREFI) and Hon. Justice Ronald B. Moreno. The

initiative was undertaken by the UST Graduate School of Law and witnessed by University officials, members of the Thomasian legal community, and distinguished guests, including Very Rev. Fr. Richard G. Ang, O.P., Rector Magnificus of the University of Santo Tomas.

A Professorial Chair is among the highest academic distinctions a university can confer. Established through an endowed fund, it provides continuing support to distinguished faculty members who demonstrate excellence in teaching, legal research, scholarly publication and academic leadership. More importantly, it serves as a catalyst for innovation in legal education and the advancement of legal scholarship, ensuring that future generations of law students benefit from outstanding instruction and meaningful academic research.

The Justice Ronald B. Moreno Professorial Chair Award is a fitting tribute to Justice Moreno's remarkable



career in the judiciary, his unwavering commitment to legal education and his steadfast service to the Thomasian community. As President of UST LAFI, he has continued to champion initiatives that strengthen the bond among Thomasian lawyers while promoting excellence, integrity and service.

The Professorial Chair will serve as an enduring legacy—one that will inspire Thomasian legal educators, scholars and students to pursue academic excellence and uphold the highest ideals of the legal profession for generations to come.

- Atty. Mariz Manalo, Juris Doctor, 1995

UST Galing Science Alumni Association (GSAA) holds "BalikTanaw, BalikScience" — its Centennial Alumni Homecomingfrom page 9

me, the College of Science has always been home... It is where I learned with my students, taught them, grew old and found purpose for many years. This year is especially meaningful because as we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the College of Science, I also mark my retirement from teaching... I cannot think of a more fitting moment to reflect with gratitude on the countless students, colleagues, and friends who have

made this place so special... Thank you for finding a reason to come back, for celebrating this milestone with us and for reminding us that home is not just a place, it is the people and the memories we share."

The last alumni homecoming of the College of Science was in 2019, during the time of former Dean Ramos and past GSAA President Joel M. Chavez, Ph.D. The current GSAA officers hope

that this year's Centennial alumni homecoming will strengthen the bond among its alumni members, make the Science alumni community cohesive, and be the beginning of a yearly tradition among GSAA members and the entire Galing Science alumni community.

- Charitess C. Barlis, BS Psychology 2002



UST GSAA VISITS THE GALING SCIENCE MILITARY DOCTORS IN ARMY GENERAL HOSPITAL AND IN MANILA NAVAL HOSPITAL

As part of their alumni engagement efforts, UST Galing Science Alumni Association (GSAA) President Charitess C. Barlis, and 2026 Homecoming Committee Chair Ret. Col. Joel Enrico N. Anastacio, MD (BS Psychology, 1984) visited the military doctors who completed their pre-med college degrees from the UST College of Science.

During their visit to the Army General Hospital on 15 April 2026, they were warmly welcomed by the Commanding Officer of the General Hospital, Headquarters and Headquarters Support Group, Philippine Army (GH, HHSG, PA) TOAST 2026 Awardee Col. Caesar Almer E. Candelaria (BS Biology Accelerated, 1995) and Lt. Col. Eric Roudel C. Ecalnir, MC (BS Biology, 2006).

In a separate visit last 17 June 2026 to the Manila Naval Hospital, they were met by DTAN 2023 Awardee Lt. Col.



GSAA President Charitess C. Barlis with AFP doctors Col. Caesar Almer E. Candelaria, Lt. Col. Eric Roudel C. Ecalnir, and retired Col. Joel N. Anastacio, MC.

Wilfredo Flaviano F. Sevilla, MC (BS Zoology, 1988) who serves as the Executive Officer of the said hospital, and surgeons Major Aileen Bernedette T. Velasco, MC (BS Psychology, 2008), who is the Officer-in-Charge for the Operating Room, Ret. Major Arnel Ferriols, MC (BS Zoology, 1984), who specializes in Underwater Medicine and trauma surgery and Orthopedic

Surgeon Lt. Col. Michael P. Domingo, MC (BS Microbiology, 1998), who is the current Officer-in-Charge for the Out-Patient Section.

GSAA is also scheduled to visit other Galing Science military doctors who are with the Philippine Air Force.

- Charitess C. Barlis, BS Psychology 2002



GSAA President Charitess C. Barlis with Philippine Navy doctor Lt. Col. Wilfredo F. Sevilla, MC of the Manila Naval Hospital and retired AFP doctor Col. Joel N. Anastacio, MC.

USTEAAI HOLDS THE 17TH ENHINYERONG TOMASINO GOLF CUP

The UST Engineering Alumni Association, Inc. (USTEAAI) hosted the 17th Enhinyerong Tomasino Golf Cup on 4 June 2026 at the Beverly Place Golf and Country Club in Mexico, Pampanga.

The event saw impressive drives, precise putting and remarkable teamwork among the golfers. A ceremonial tee-off officially kicked off the golf event before 7AM, featuring both former and current officials of USTEAAI, namely: Engr. Ronaldo "Bong" Fernando, Engr. Rodrigo Gutierrez, Engr. Rommel Diño, Engr. Jerry Alfante and Engr. Resty Cabrera.

A special awards ceremony and lunch

reception followed the tournament, where top-performing individuals received trophies and special raffle prizes were distributed. This segment was hosted by Tournament Director Engr. Resty Cabrera and USTECEAA External Vice President Engr. Monina Evangelista.

The tournament's immense success highlighted the unwavering support of the alumni network and their commitment to helping deserving UST Engineering students through the association's scholarship program, while also extending outreach services to less fortunate and underprivileged communities. The overwhelming

turnout of more than 100 players, coupled with the generous contributions from this year's sponsors, reinforces the Enhinyerong Tomasino Golf Cup as a vital annual event on the association's agenda.

The organizers express their gratitude to all the sponsors, especially the event's Co-Presentor Imperial Nova and Gold Sponsor Davies Paint, through Engr. Jason Ong; its Diamond Sponsor Archipelago Builders Corporation, through Engr. John Paul Pe; and to everyone who participated. Plans are already underway to make next year's tournament even larger.

- Engr. Jonathan Peran, BS ECE, 1996





Campus Memories

The time I went to UST AB after taking the entrance exam was in 1975, when I walked into the Dean's office with my Mom, armed with a medical certificate to let them know that yes, I would enroll in AB but no, not just that school year yet. I had just been discharged from hospital after a 6-hour spinal surgery and more than 30 days of confinement. I remember speaking with Mr. Sese, who I learned later was the Faculty Secretary. There I was, not having started yet but already asking for a leave. Well, it didn't take us long to let him understand why I could not enroll. The Plaster of Paris was obvious through my dress as it covered me from neck to hips (imagine a turtle neck sleeveless shirt). The rod.

Fast forward to 1976, first year, day one. By then, I had already declared "freedom" from my body cast that "imprisoned" me for 10 months. While classmates happily greeted former classmates, I felt OP. I was older by one academic year. A few days later, a classmate was able to trace that we were second cousins. Loodi Bangalan.

PE time. How I envied the students wearing PE uniforms and playing volleyball, and those walking out from the pool area while still combing water from their hair. Because there I was,

enrolled in Alternative PE, sitting on the benches crocheting, knitting, stitching—a reminder of Home Eco class in high school. The rod.

Then, the scandal: I slipped down the stairs from the second floor, with my document bag as my slide. My classmates shouted "ang bakal, ang bakal!" Hay...

I remember.....

that on the encouragement of my Kuya Romy (AB '71), I joined the Students Tourist Guides Bureau. Our training included memorizing the buildings, the programs, the names of almost all the statues atop the Main Building and the Museum collection. So, whenever there were visiting tourists, mostly Japanese, we were pulled out of classes to tour them, babbling what we were trained to say, yet knowing that many of them did not understand even half of what we were saying. But we did our job.

... how we trooped fast to the Coop to ensure that we could eat the famous cheese sandwich.

... Dean Magdalena Villaba who invited us to levitate during one of her Philo classes. No one did, but we later learned that some students in another section welcomed the experience.

... Prof. Clotilde Arcangel who made Geography interesting to me. She was

I Remember....

then heavy with Pia. So, we knew when she was no longer teaching the following semester.

... Prof. Milagros Muñoz who made me more curious about the English language. Two years later, she was my thesis adviser.

... how Dean Villaba called the attention of girls whose skirts were some centimeters above their knees and of boys who didn't have undershirts.

... second year. My circle of friends was now widening. I met Aster Estioko (now Estioko-Guevara), my non-bio twin sister, sharing the same birthdate and birth year. There were times when we would meet in the hallway wearing a similar brand-new pair of shoes or sporting a similar hairstyle. Then, there was Jem Cheng, who was in the Philo program, but our classmate in one subject. He later became my guardia civil, as my Mom called him.

... that this was my most eventful year, but one highlight was becoming friends with Bing Yuzon and Ronnie Castillo, who became Bing's hubby. Together with Aster and Loodi, Bing is my *kumare*.

... vividly, our Eco prof., Mr. Velasco who gave us a quiz every Monday. Initially, we didn't appreciate the

.....continued on page 7

GOLDEN JUBILEE STORY: GLOWING IN GOLD

Bar topnotcher and now PLDT Senior VP, Corporate Secretary and Senior Legal Advisor to the Chairman.

Coming a long way seemed to be a favorite theme among the attendees, and not just among the balikbayan jubilarians who crossed several countries to join their batchmates. This event was "not just a look back at how we were, but a celebration of how far we have come," agreed Economics major Wilihada Fagonil-Chan.

As did her classmate, Teresita Tan Pajarillo: "Who would have thought that the same teens who used to hang out at proletarian restaurants (think canteen food and turo-turo eats) would now be celebrating their Golden Jubilee in style?"

"All we ever dreamed of was to finish school, to reach the pinnacle of the best that we can ever become...And now, all we want is to go back: to relive the experiences of our youth, to savor

memories within the walls of our beloved UST, to be with the friends we love," said Philosophy major Miriam Azupardo-Tamayo, who actively joined the planning from her Sydney, Australia homebase.

"For a few hours," observed Journ major Ignacio Dee, "the Heritage Hotel ballroom felt like the lobby of the Commerce Building, as friends from different majors greeted each other, the hugs and handshakes bridging the years and making us feel 20 again."

Added Santiago: "Gathering once more with college classmates after 50 years was both refreshing and inspiring, as we revisited cherished moments and celebrated the journeys that brought us to this milestone. The occasion reminded us that while time may pass, the connections formed in our youth remain vibrant, meaningful and timeless."

For Communication Arts majors Francis Aquino and Criselda Leano—who

both emceed the fast-paced program—while there's some comfort in cherishing "friendships that have stood the test of time," there must be room too "to honor those no longer with us."

It was a sobering thought, but as Eco major Aurora Gasgonia-Panopio stated, "Life never seemed to be the way we envisioned it during our college years, but we lived it the best way we can. There seems to be no perfect life, but the Artlets Golden Jubilee reunion filled the day with the perfect moments we had longed for."

And on that note, the '76 jubilarians ignored the wages of age and danced the rest of the afternoon off as they lived up to one attendee's precise description of the milestone event: "Dito, lahat bida! (We're all Main Characters here)."

- Penny Azarcon-dela Cruz
AB Journalism 1976

.....from page 7



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RECOGNITION: Association Honors Board and Certification Passers at July 15 Testimonial Dinner

The UST AMV Accountancy Alumni Association, Inc. joined the University's Testimonial Dinner on 15 July 2026, represented by President John Derick De Recto, Secretary Brent Froilan Santiago, and Auditor Anne Marie Querrer, in an evening honoring the newest Thomasian professionals in

accountancy and allied certifications.

The highlight of the association's participation was the conferment of a cash award and a Certificate of Recognition to Christian Joshua M. Paredes, Silver Medalist in the September-October window of the United States Certified Management Accountant (US CMA) Examinations. The award recognizes both an exceptional individual performance on a globally benchmarked examination and the standard of preparation that the AMV College of Accountancy continues to set for its graduates.

The association likewise extends its congratulations to all Thomasian passers recognized during the evening, the newest Certified Public Accountants, US Certified Management Accountants, and Certified Information Systems Auditors. Their achievements affirm the College's reach across the full



Christian Joshua M. Paredes receives his Certificate of Recognition from association officers and college representatives.— "Silver Medalist, US CMA Examinations September/October window."



breadth of the profession, and the association is proud to welcome them into an alumni community that intends to keep supporting them well past the licensure stage.

- John Derick De Recto, BS Accountancy, 2019

USTHS Alumni Alliance Celebrates the 98th UST High School Foundation Day with Historic Excellence Awards

The University of Santo Tomas High School Alumni Alliance (USTHSAA) gathered for an evening of faith, fellowship, and celebration during the 98th USTHS Foundation Day and Jubilee Alumni Celebrations 2026 held last 6 June 2026, Saturday at the Dr. Robert C. Sy Grand Ballroom, BGPOP Building, UST Campus.

With the theme "Kapistahang Tomasino: A Joyful Tribute to Our Legacy of Excellence," alumni from different generations reunited to celebrate the school's proud heritage while looking forward to its much-anticipated Centennial Celebration in

2028.

A major highlight of the evening was the UST High School Excellence Awards 2026—the first-ever Excellence Awards presented in the USTHSAA Foundation Day celebration. The recognition honored distinguished Thomasian High School alumni whose achievements and contributions have brought pride to the USTHS community. The awards marked a significant milestone for the Alumni Alliance, establishing what many hope will become a meaningful tradition in recognizing alumni excellence.

The program also featured inspiring

messages from UST and alumni leaders, the presentation of the Centennial Celebration blueprint, recognition of the Silver Jubilarians (Class of 2001) and Golden Jubilarians (Class of 1976), the symbolic Passing of the Baton, and an evening filled with fellowship, music, raffle prizes, and entertainment.

As the celebration came to a close, one thing was evident: the Thomasian High School spirit continues to grow stronger across generations, united by a shared legacy of excellence and an exciting vision for the future.

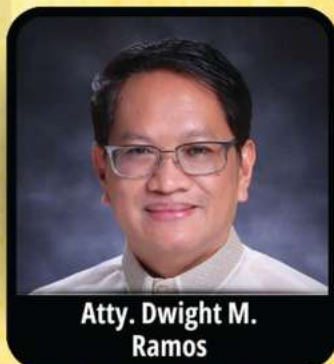
- Rogelio Tapang, USTHS Class 1987





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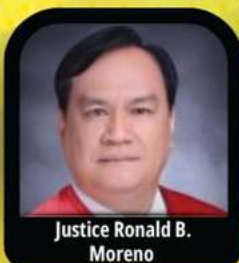
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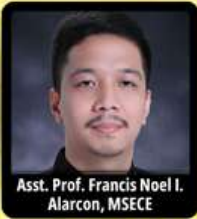
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FEATURED THOMASIAN

REDISCOVERING MY HIGH SCHOOL ALMA MATER
AND FINDING A NEW PURPOSE

Editor's Note: Visitacion "Bess" Assidao is the corporate secretary of the Thomasian Alumni Community Foundation Inc. (TACFI) and the Executive Assistant to the President for Special Projects of the UST Alumni Association Inc. (USTAAI). She is batch 1974, UST High School.



For more than half a century, I carried fond memories of my high school years in UST (High School 1974) but had little connection with the institution that helped shape my early life. Like many graduates, the demands of professional and personal commitments and responsibilities gradually took precedence. The years passed, and the school that had once been a central part of my life became just that... fond memories.

After graduating from college with a degree in Liberal Arts (Asian Studies) and Commerce (Management), I found a dream job in the government service. I joined the Department of Foreign Affairs in 1982. It is a job that would take me to distant lands. The dream job took me to Mexico (1987-94), Madrid (1995-96), Prague (1997-2001), Geneva (2001-2004), Beijing (2007-2013), and Washington DC (2015- 2021), with some years in between spent in the Home Office in Manila. I worked in the Philippine Embassies in those cities (except in Madrid, where I got a diploma in International Studies). Most personnel in the foreign service are generalists, so that my assignments were invariably in the cultural, economic, consular

sections of the Embassy.

Reaching the mandatory age of retirement in government service, I returned to Manila in 2022. Upon retirement from work, I embarked on reconnecting with friends and family. I got invited by high school batchmates to attend a Christmas party in 2022 and somehow became part of the organizing committee to plan and prepare for our 50th. The preparations lead me to stepping into the campus after so many years, enjoying the literal and figurative "walk down the memory lane".

What began as a high school reunion of class '74 soon became a life-changing experience. I met my fourth year Religion teacher, Dr. Evelyn A. Songco! While meeting my '74 batchmates rekindled a sense of belonging, the crossing of paths with Dr. Songco re-purposed my life after retirement-one that was not in my 'what to do list after retirement'. I succumbed (okay, I was inspired) to the charm and convincing power of Dr. Songco, who singlehandedly talked me into joining the Alumni Association. I found myself lending my energy, time, and resources to the Alumni Association. This 'yes' to Doctor Songco's invitation marked the beginning of a remarkable second chapter in my relationship with my alma mater. What I did not expect is a renewed sense of belonging. I also saw an institution that continues to grow while remaining faithful to its mission of forming values and giving quality education to future generations.

Whether assisting in fundraising campaigns, participating in alumni events, or encouraging classmates to reconnect, I know now that giving back is as rewarding as the education I had once received from my High School teachers. I recognize that UST's greatest strength lies in the people who continue its mission.

My message is simple: it is never too late to come home. My experience



proves that every alumna brings something valuable, whether through financial support, volunteer service, mentorship, or simply showing up to strengthen the bonds of community.

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