

SDG 11 - UST Traversing Across Sustainable, Inclusive, and Progressive Communities

The University of Santo Tomas paves roads to cater to the growing cloud of community members, reaching far past the four walls of the institution and cementing camaraderie across the globe. Embodying the Catholic spirit of solidarity, the university's actions all boil down to the profound sense of community and sincere optimism for the oneness of cities and societies. The very mark of a Thomasian is their ability to collaborate for the progression of projects and advocacies. With that, UST targets Sustainable Development Goal #11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, partnering with external factions to foster inclusive, advanced, and sustainable communities.

Apart from spiritual unity, the university also touches on tangible city changes, pioneering research, projects, and activities to adapt its community members to various evolving physical factors. Very Rev. Fr. Richard G. Ang emphasized innovation extending beyond the university's Manila campus and collaboration among government and industries. This is evident in the advocacies of the Thomasian community.

1. Research efforts for the community

1.1 [Knowledge of climate crisis across multiple geographical contexts](#)

- A Nature Climate Change study by UST Department of Psychology Professor Marc Eric S. Reyes, PhD. revealed that at least 66% of over 5,500 adults surveyed worldwide had never heard of climate justice.
- The research emphasized the importance of understanding climate justice beliefs as a propeller for climate action. Participants recognized the impact of capitalism and colonialism on the climate crisis, which disproportionately affects poorer communities.
- The study found that respondents from high-emission countries and those experiencing significant social inequality were more likely to connect climate justice beliefs with policy support and active climate measures. These findings highlight the need for greater awareness of climate justice to foster informed action and equitable climate policies globally.

1.2 [Research honor roll](#)

- Three alumnae of UST's BS Biology major in Environmental Biology and MS Biology programs, along with an alumnus of MS Applied Physics major in Medical Physics, won prestigious awards at the 12th DOST ASTHRDP Graduate Scholars Conference in Cebu.

1.2.1 Top Awards in Research Presentations

- Ms. Anne Parojinog secured first place in the Oral Competition for Biological and Health Sciences with her study on urban ecology in Metropolitan Manila's protected forests. This research highlighted the socio-ecological dynamics of urban green spaces.

1.2.2 Achievements in Poster Competitions

- Ms. Pauline Maglipon claimed first place in the Poster Competition for Agricultural and Environmental Science with her work on plant diversity in fire-affected sites of Mts. Iglit-Baco Natural Park.
- Meanwhile, Ms. Kamille Poblete earned third place in the Biological and Health Sciences category for her poster on methane production shifts in a tropical lake.
 - Both Maglipon and Poblete were guided by UST's academic experts, showcasing the depth of mentorship in the College of Science.
- Mr. Theo Victor Cavite, an alumnus of the MS Applied Physics program, received second place in the Physical Sciences category for his poster on neutron spectrometry at the Philippines' sole research reactor.
 - His project, co-authored with supervisors from the Philippine Nuclear Research Institute and UST, emphasized advancements in medical physics and nuclear research.

2. Partnership for innovation and inclusivity

2.1 [Collaborative IMC Campaign for Bataan](#)

- Fourth-year students from the College of Tourism and Hospitality Management collaborated with Colegio de San Juan de Letran – Bataan and the Provincial Government of Bataan to initiate an Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) Campaign for the province of Bataan.
- The campaign's results will be presented in December 2024, with the theme “Cutting Edge Campaigns: A Look Into The New Destination Marketing Strategies,” marking the culmination of the project and the formalization of the partnership, aimed at enhancing tourism marketing education and providing practical industry experience.
- The project aims to equip students in the discipline of tourism, such as marketing, destination research, planning skills, and trend analysis.

2.2 Internationalization of Health

2.2.1 [Globalization of occupational health](#)

- Student interns from the Department of Occupational Therapy participated in the University of Southern California's Global Initiatives Summer Occupational Therapy Immersion (SOTI) Program from July 1 to 31. The program aimed to broaden the students' understanding of occupational therapy, health, and wellness from a global perspective.

2.2.2 [Speech-Language Pathology's Partnership with Hanen Centre](#)

- The Department of Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) partnered with the Hanen Centre to introduce specialized certifications and workshops in the Philippines.
- From July 22 to 24, academic staff, clinical supervisors, and alumni completed the "More Than Words Certification Program," focusing on empowering parents of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder to enhance their social communication skills.
- This partnership reflects the department's efforts to enhance professional development and support local speech-language services.

2.2.3 [Academic Exchange with Mahidol University](#)

- The College of Rehabilitation Sciences hosted three visiting lecturers from Mahidol University, Thailand, Lect. Supatida Sorasak Siangchin, Ms. Hudasamila Da-Oh, and Mr. Peerayut Saardaiam, as part of a month-long Global Immersion Program (GIE).
- Lect. Siangchin presented her study on smartphone usage among older Thai adults to UST occupational therapy interns.
- The visitors also met with UST's Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs Prof. Cheryl Peralta DrPH and the Office of International Relations and Programs Director Prof. Lilian Sison Ph.D., discussing potential future collaborations.
- These exchanges highlight the college's commitment to fostering international academic engagement.

2.3 Acknowledgement of community roles for climate change movements

- The NCMF-NCR hosted its 1st Climate Change Adaptation Summit, highlighting the role of Muslim Filipinos as environmental stewards.
- UST's Asst. Prof. Shea Kathleen P. Guinto discussed Islamic principles of environmental stewardship in addressing misconceptions about climate change. She emphasized the human role in accelerating climate change and provided science-based clarifications to enhance adaptation efforts.

- Guinto's involvement, initiated by an invitation from NCMF-NCR Director Dr. Dimapuno A. Datu-Ramos, Jr., underscored the importance of inter-religious and multi-sectoral cooperation in climate action.
- The event demonstrated the potential for integrating scientific insights with cultural and religious perspectives to foster effective climate change mitigation strategies in the Philippines.

3. Cultural Preservation at the University

3.1 Seminar-Workshop on Cultural Heritage

- The UST Graduate School Center for Conservation of Cultural Property and Environment in the Tropics (CCCPET) partnered with the Provincial Government of Northern Samar for a seminar-workshop titled [“PAMANARAAN: Cultural Mapping, Cultural Planning, and Heritage Utilization”](#) on August 15 to 16, 2024.
- The event targeted to inform participants on cultural mapping, emphasizing the identification and inventory of cultural assets to support community development, including tourism and education.

3.1.2 Focus on Cultural Planning and Heritage Utilization

- The workshop introduced cultural planning as a strategy to incorporate cultural assets into the broader community with sustainable development efforts.
- It included heritage utilization, demonstrating how cultural mapping can boost local tourism and economic growth.
- The sessions featured interactive lectures and hands-on activities, allowing participants to apply their knowledge in real-world scenarios.

3.2.2 Key Contributions and Commitment to Cultural Preservation

- Key speakers included Ms. Beverly Macayan-Bautista, who discussed cultural mapping processes, and Assistant Professor Jame Monren Mercado, who led the session on cultural development planning.
- Dr. Eric B. Zerrudo concluded the workshop by focusing on heritage utilization and museum creation.
- The event highlighted Northern Samar's dedication to preserving its cultural heritage, including plans for the Ibabao Museum of Northern Samar under the leadership of Governor Edwin Ongchuan.