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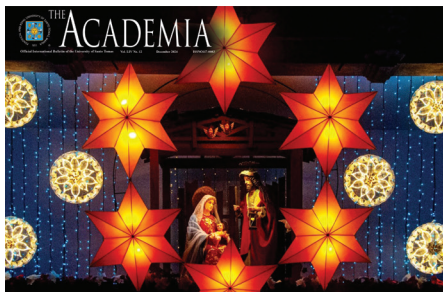
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About the Cover (Adrian Gerard Tolentino of Fotomasino-TPG, 2024)

The *belen*, a Filipino depiction of the Nativity, graces the cover as a reminder to the Thomasian community of the true essence of the Christmas season. Illuminated by radiant parols and shimmering lights, the scene resonates with a message of hope and gratitude. This year's theme, Ever Thankful, Ever Hopeful, inspires a spirit of optimism, reminding us to embrace positivity even in the face of life's challenges.

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CEAP honors Education Dean Romero with Catholic School Heroes Award

The Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP) conferred this year's Catholic School Heroes Award to the Dean of the College of Education Assoc. Prof. Pilar Romero, LPT, Ph.D., at the CEAP National Convention last November in Davao City.

Dean Romero was recognized for her exceptional service to Catholic education, serving as a guiding light to Campus Ministers and Christian Living Education (CLE) teachers through the Christian Formation Program of CEAP.

Dean Romero was previously the inaugural principal of the UST Senior High School from 2015 to 2018, formerly served as Supervising Teacher for Religious Education majors in the Education High School, and was a recipient of the 18th *Dangal ng UST Awards – Gawad Benavides* during her 35th year of service to the university in 2017.

Aside from her work in UST, Dr. Romero is a seasoned textbook writer, editor, and consultant to various Catholic schools on their religious education program. She has been invited to talk on topics related to catechesis, religious education, Catholic education, teacher formation, school administration, and values integration in schools all over the Philippines. She serves as Technical Consultant of the Philippine Catholic School Standards for Higher Education and has participated in international seminars and conferences in key cities in Asia, the USA, and Europe, either as an official University delegate or as paper presenter, and has published articles in journals both local and international.

CEAP is the national association of Catholic educational institutions in the Philippines. Founded in 1941, it now has 1,500 members, which include universities and colleges offering academic and continuing education programs. ■



Dean Romero receives her award. [Photos courtesy of CEAP]

UST's month-long, multi-campus Paskuhan celebrations feature increased community gift-giving efforts, Olympic-themed lights



The University of Santo Tomas concluded its month-long community celebration of Christmas. With the theme "Ever Thankful, Ever Hopeful", the festivities began with the Lighting Ceremony on November 29, 2024, and culminated on December 20, 2024, with the annual Paskuhan concert and pyromusical display.

The said lighting ceremony on November 29, the last school day before the first Sunday of Advent, began with the *Angelus* at 6:00 P.M. The UST Secretary-General Rev. Fr. Louie R. Coronel, O.P., EHL, led the Rite of Blessing for the Christmas Tree and Ornaments.

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For this year, the 21.5-hectare Manila campus was decorated with over 2000 strands of energy-efficient LEDs, including the 20-meter Christmas tree, and various symbolic lights shaped in line with the Olympic theme, such as rings, bigger-than-life sports equipment, and torches.

UST Facilities Management Office Director Rev. Fr. Dexter A. Austria, O.P., shared that the Olympics was chosen as the decoration theme since it is a global symbol of hope and solidarity.

"In our world right now that is being ravaged by different forms of distress and division, the Olympics brings together countries that may be at odds with each other. Stories of athletes' perseverance bring hope to many. The Olympic Games are all about coming together, similar to the birth of Christ, whose birth is a symbol of hope for all nations," said Fr. Austria, who added that the dominant colors visible in the campus decorations are also based on the colors of the Olympic rings.

A highlight of this year's lighting ceremony is the presence and special participation of the Thomasian Olympic athlete EJ Obiena, who served as the torch bearer. As emphasized by Fr. Austria, Obiena's strong heart, faith, and positive outlook amid his hard work and life experiences are symbols of hope that strongly align with this theme.

Paskuhan Mass and Agape

The Paskuhan Mass was held at the Plaza Mayor on December 13, presided over by the UST Rector Very Rev. Fr. Richard G. Ang, O.P., with Rev. Fr. Louie R. Coronel, O.P. as the homilist, and concelebrated by the Dominican Fathers of the Priory of St. Thomas Aquinas.

Prior to the Mass, the *Tanglaw ng Tomasino* parol-making contest, a sustainable initiative themed "*Liwanag ng Mundo, Kulay ng Paskong Tomasino*," served as a pre-event activity spearheaded by the Student Organizations Coordinating Council (SOCC). The various academic units each submitted their own parol.

After the Mass, the Thomasian community partook in the Agape, or Thomasian Christmas Feast. Thomasians claimed their free meal packs from over 20 food stations around campus. Various *Hapag Salamat* stations with free *bibingka*, *puto bumbong*, and ice cream were also available.

During the merry feast, Thomasians were treated to variety shows at different locations around campus. A Christmas-themed drone show above the field signaled the start of the variety show.



The Light of the Cross and olympic torches shine above the campus [Photo courtesy of Hans Malgapu from the UST Communications Bureau]

Multi-campus festivities

This year is also the first time that the Thomasian community's celebrations are not limited to the Manila campus: UST General Santos simultaneously joined the lighting ceremony on December 1, and they had their own festivities at the UST GenSan Main Building on December 17 and 18.

For their lighting ceremony, the Associate Vice Rector for Religious Affairs Rev. Fr. Gerard Zabala, O.P., presided over the Rite of Blessing for the Christmas Tree and Ornaments at UST General Santos, assisted by Rev. Fr. Alfredo Fernandez, O.P., while the Associate Vice Rector for Finance and Administration Rev. Fr. Edmund Nantes, O.P., shared his reflection and declared the Paskuhan Season in General Santos open.

Their Christmas tree, inspired by Mindanaoan design, has five carefully crafted layers, representing the first five program offerings of the school for their inaugural academic year 2024-2025. In a communal display of Christmas cheer, each member of the community—support staff, academic staff, and Dominican priests—held a star, each inscribed with their names and wishes, marking their personal connection to the institution and its future.

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Thomasian Olympic pole vault athlete EJ Obiena serves as the torchbearer and special guest at the lighting ceremony

PASKUHAN FROM PAGE 5



The UST Rector Very Rev. Fr. Richard G. Ang, O.P., Ph.D. serves as main presider during the Paskuhan Mass



The Main Presider UST Secretary-General Rev. Fr. Louie R. Coronel, O.P. (right) and the homilist FMO Director Rev. Fr. Dexter A. Austria, O.P. celebrate Mass during the Paskuhan celebration at the Santa Rosa Research Complex

On December 18, UST Rector Very Rev. Fr. Richard G. Ang, O.P., presided over the first Paskuhan Mass in UST General Santos.

Meanwhile, the Santa Rosa Research Complex also held its first-ever lighting ceremony and Agape on December 14, 2024. Local government officials including Santa Rosa City Mayor Hon. Arlene Arcilla, benefactors, and researchers joined the celebration.

Before the UST Dr. Tony Tan Caktiong Innovation Center (TTCIC) was lit with colorful lights, UST Secretary-General Rev. Fr. Louie R. Coronel, OP, EHL, presided over a Eucharistic Celebration, with the Facilities Management Office Director Rev. Fr. Dexter A. Austria, O.P. serving as the homilist. Fr. Coronel also led a reflection on the meaning of advent and a few rounds of fellowship games for the alumni, students, academic staff, support staff, and benefactors who joined the festivities.

Also gracing the event were civil engineering alumnus and Archipelago Builders Corporation owner Engr. John Paul Pe, who donated the chapel, and chemical engineering alumna, and Green Canyon Resort and Leisure Farm owner Ms. Adela Palad Jose, who donated the interdisciplinary research hotel at the UST-TTCIC building for the UST College of Tourism and Hospitality Management. The facilities were blessed on the same day, including the UST BEATS (Bacteriophage Ecology, Aquaculture, Therapy and Systematics) Research Group's Laboratory.

With TTCIC now operational, the UST-Dr. William T. Belo Interdisciplinary Research Institute will soon rise at the 40-hectare campus in Santa Rosa.

Project Ningning

Never forgetting opportunities to give back, the SIMBAHAYAN Community Development Office leads the University's sharing of blessings through their multi-sectoral gift-giving and aid programs under Project Ningning.

Given that the University's mission is to spread the Light, and the coming of Christ was signified by a bright star, "NINGNING 2024: A UST Paskuhan Community Gift-giving Project" shared over 2000 bags of food and school supplies to various sectors: "Kaagapay" (Kasama sa maAGAp na aksyon at PAYo) for University event partners (i.e. barangay officials, police officers, traffic officers, fire safety officers, and disaster risk reduction officers), "Kaparokya" for families of the Basic Ecclesial Communities of the parish, and the *Sambahaginan* for the maintenance, housekeeping, and security



The UST Secretary-General Rev. Fr. Louie R. Coronel, O.P., EHL. and OSGEA Assoc. Prof. Emmanuel M. Batulan, Ph.D., with University partners during the Kaagapay turnover.



The annual pyromusical display sparkles above the campus (Photo courtesy of Philip Jacob Malabag of Fotomasino-TPG)

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personnel, and the *AKaP* (*Agape para sa mga Kamanlalakbay ngayong Pasko*) for the partner communities of the University. *AKaP* included the turnover of a total of 720 food packs and 480 school supplies to Sulyap Bukas Palad Foundation Inc.; Holy Family Social and Educational Center-Religious of Mary Immaculate; Santissima Trinidad Parish, Malolos, Bulacan; Brgy. Pinagbarilan, Baliuag, Bulacan; Sitio Buga Elementary School; Brgy. Balucuc, Apalit, Pampanga; Brgy. Tabuyuc, Apalit, Pampanga; and Jubilee Shelter Program, Bulacan.

Under Project *Ningning*, all the University administrative offices and academic units prepared and contributed food items and school supplies for community gift-giving. *Sambahaginan* was held on December 8, *Kaagapay* was held on December 13, and *AKaP* distributions were held from December 16 to 20, while *Kaparokya* was held on December 21.

UST General Santos also shared gifts with the Muslim community of Ligaya Elementary School near the UST GenSan campus on December 18 through "*Makibata*", a project advocating for children's rights by means of creative and strategic workshops and activities.

Concert Gala

Following the Manila campus lighting ceremony, the Thomasian Christmas celebration continued with the UST Christmas Concert Gala on December 2, 2024, directed by the Conservatory of Music Dean Assoc. Prof. Antonio P. Africa, Ph.D. The two-hour live concert at the Santísimo Rosario Parish Church featured

popular Christmas songs in English and Filipino performed by various choirs of the University and performers from the Conservatory of Music, which will celebrate its 80th anniversary in 2025.

The concert featured different arrangements of traditional Christmas carols and post-war carols, played by the UST Symphony Orchestra, UST Jazz Band, and UST Wind Orchestra, with vocals by the UST Singers, Coro Tomasino, Liturgikon Vocal Ensemble, and various performers, under the baton of conductors Herminigildo Ranera, Anthony Villanueva, Mark Agpasa, Michael Jacinto, and Reynato Resurreccion, Jr. There were also guest performances from the Parent Advocates for Visually Impaired Children and the Aeta Community Choir.

Designed to be a family concert that people of all ages can enjoy, the Conservatory of Music Dean Dr. Antonio Africa shared that it is meant to be an enjoyable aural experience for Thomasians of all ages. It remains available to [watch online via the UST Facebook page](#).

Month-long celebration

Also included among the Paskuhan activities were the Christmaseum exhibit at the UST Museum Gallery from November 26 to December 20, the Paskuhan Christmas Pop-up Village from December 2 to 7, the Institutional Advent Recollection on December 9, the Community Gift-giving from December 13 to 20, the Paskuhan Mass and Agape on December 13, and the Simbang Gabi from December 15 to 24, among others.

A Thomasian tradition since 1991,



Turnover of school supplies and food packs to a school

the UST Paskuhan season ended on December 20, 2024, with the annual Paskuhan concert featuring OPM Bands December Avenue, Spongicola, and SUD, P-pop group Alamat, and singer Maki. For this day, UST partnered with San Miguel Yamamura Packaging Corporation for their "*Balik Lata, Balik Bote*" project for proper waste management and recycling in line with the University's sustainability initiatives.

Aside from the concert, activities on the 20th also included the "Merrython" Paskuhan Fairgrounds at the Plaza Mayor, the Paskuhan Raffle with over 170 minor and 110 major prizes up for grabs, and the highly-anticipated pyromusical display. ■



The Makibata activity of UST GenSan with children from Brgy. Ligaya Elementary School [Photo courtesy of the UST General Santos Facebook page]

Father Rector leads UST group at QS Higher Education Summit in Macau



(From left:) OGEP Director Mr. Levine Lao, UST Rector Very Rev. Fr. Richard G. Ang, O.P., Ph.D., Office of the QS/THE Rankings Deputy Director Engr. Nestor Ong, REFI Stakeholders Engagement Head Mr. Cristian Naval



Engr. Ong (right) receives a token of appreciation from Prof. Dato Dr. Roslee Bin Rajikan from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia's Faculty of Health Sciences

The University of Santo Tomas (UST) participated in the QS Higher Education Summit: Asia Pacific 2024, held from November 5 to 7, 2024, at the Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST). UST was part of the Philippine CHED Delegation led by CHED Chairman Dr. J. Prospero E. De Vera III. The UST delegation included the UST Rector Very Rev. Fr. Richard G. Ang, O.P., Ph.D., Office of the QS/THE Rankings Deputy Director Engr. Nestor Ong, OGEP Director Mr. Levine Lao, and REFI Stakeholders Engagement Head Mr. Cristian Naval.

This year's summit focused on "Shifting Landscapes, Collaborative Solutions:

Pioneering innovation in Asia Pacific higher education," emphasizing universities' pivotal role in shaping future work dynamics across the region. During the summit, selected Philippine Higher Education Institutions (PHEIs) were provided space within the Philippine Pavilion to highlight their programs and initiatives. Participants also engaged in panel discussions that fostered partnerships between academia and industry sectors. Exploring AI & Lifelong Learning was another highlighted feature during the summit where attendees learned strategies for leveraging AI technologies to enhance educational delivery while building lifelong learning ecosystems.



Engr. Ong (second row, eighth from left) with the Philippine CHED delegation

UST's participation in the QS Higher Education Summit: Asia Pacific 2024 sought to enhance its collaboration with industry partners through several key outcomes: (1) by showcasing UST's programs at the pavilion, the University increased visibility among potential partners, highlighting its strengths and capabilities for future collaborations; (2) by engaging in panel discussions and networking sessions, UST representatives were able to forge stronger ties with industry partners that could lead to enhanced internship opportunities or collaborative research initiatives for the University; and (3) by gathering insights from the sessions on leveraging AI and digital technologies, UST could integrate these tools into its educational offerings, enhancing its appeal as a partner for industries seeking tech-savvy graduates.

An interesting discussion during the summit addressed shifts in learner profiles due to changes in work patterns and global imperatives for upskilling/retraining. The role of new forms of credentials, playing critical roles post-secondary education, aligns well with UST's goals on international reputation enhancement as the University strengthens global connections that drive academic excellence. All of these efforts

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Claravall of Graduate School awarded 'Natatanging Laybraryan'



Dr. Claravall receives her award.

The Information and Library Science program lead Nora J. Claravall, Ed.D., was recently awarded "Natatanging Laybraryan" by the Philippine Librarians Association, Inc. (PLAI), the national library organization of professional librarians in the Philippines.

The award conferred to Claravall was based on her "distinct contributions in the library profession because of her inputs as a role model and outstanding librarian who demonstrated her expertise and dedication, serving as an exemplar to be emulated by other professional librarians in the nation," as mentioned in the plaque awarded to her.

She was honored during the 2024 PLAI National Congress and General Assembly with the theme, "Knowledge Integration: Connecting Minds, Empowering Communities." The event was held from November 19 to 22, 2024, at the Grand Menseng Hotel in Davao City.

This year's congress was geared towards promoting knowledge collaboration, enhancing information access, facilitating interdisciplinary exchange, empowering local communities, and embracing technology for inclusivity. More than 1000 participants attended the National Congress. ■

EdTech holds Tiger Tech Digital Expo

The University of Santo Tomas, through its Educational Technology Center, held the Tiger Tech Digital Expo 2024 from November 20 to 22, 2024. This expo explored how customization and flexibility can shape the future of learning in the digital world and highlighted the importance of these elements in creating a vibrant and adaptable learning environment, offering various sessions aimed at meeting the evolving needs of today's students.

Throughout the event, various internal stakeholders learned about innovative digital tools and strategies designed to support different learning styles. The goal was to create a more engaging and fair educational landscape that caters to the unique requirements of all learners. Key features included presentations on the latest technologies and personalized learning approaches to inspire and empower everyone in the Thomasian community. These innovations aim to make



UST administrators, academic staff, and support staff attending the learning sessions of Tiger Tech 2024 [Photo by Patrisha Buensalida of the UST EdTech Center]

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sure that the use of technology in learning and work feels relevant and meaningful.

The expo served as a lively space for teachers, policymakers, technology experts, and students to discover advanced educational technologies that support personalized and independent learning. Attendees participated in sessions about how these new technologies can lead to customized learning experiences, making it easier for learners to take control of their education through UST's existing subscriptions, such as Zoom Events, Coursera, Grammarly, Adobe Firefly, and Canvas. They also had the chance to explore various exhibition rooms that showcased the latest technology and personalized learning tools.

The keynote speech by Vice Rector for Academic Affairs Prof. Cheryl Peralta emphasized micro-learning and micro-credentialing and focused on the idea of continuous growth for both students and teachers, emphasizing a commitment to lifelong learning that encourages educators to bring fresh ideas and tools into their classrooms. Ms. Mona Magno-Veluz, known for her online presence as “@mightymagulang”, addressed the importance of providing quality information in an age dominated by social media. She explained the concept of “EDU-tainment,” which blends education with entertainment and challenges teachers to manage the bias on the use of TikTok, mitigate its risks, understand the appeal of short-form content, and imagine possibilities to create socially relevant content through innovation.

The expo provided a comprehensive glimpse into the future of learning, positioning UST as a leader in personalized digital education and offering the Thomasian community an exciting preview of how education might evolve. ■



Students interact with the technologies presented by one of the exhibitors, Jenni.ai. [Photo by Patrisha Buensalida of the UST EdTech Center]



Students with their prizes and freebies from the Power Mac Center exhibit. [Photo by Patrisha Buensalida of the UST EdTech Center]

Content creator and influencer @mightymagulang, Ms. Mona Magno-Veluz, speaks about EDU-tainment. [Photo by Patrisha Buensalida of the UST EdTech Center]



A participant attending the Power Mac Center learning session on Why Apple in Education Meet. [Photo by Patrisha Buensalida of the UST EdTech Center]

CTRSE researchers co-author article in Spanish book on Thomistic tradition



Fr. Félix delos Reyes, O.P.



OGEF Director Mr. Levine Lao

A groundbreaking collection, recently released in Spain, titled “*Tomismo Hispano: Ocho Siglos de Tradición Intelectual*,” offers a comprehensive exploration of the rich tradition of Thomism in the Hispanic intellectual landscape. A 2024 publication, this book celebrates eight centuries of philosophical and theological engagement with the teachings of St. Thomas Aquinas.

Highlighting its scholarly depth, the volume includes contributions from renowned academics and thinkers. Among those published is an article co-authored by CTRSE researchers Fr. Félix de los Reyes, O.P. and Levine Andro Lao, “Zeferino González: Inheritor of Salamantine Thomism in the Nineteenth Century”. Their study delves into the life and intellectual legacy of Cardinal Zeferino González, a Thomasian and a central figure in the transmission of Thomistic thought in 19th-century Spain. González played a pivotal role in preserving Thomism, particularly in Manila, a tradition passed down from the Escuela de Salamanca, with the University of Santo Tomás serving as a central institution in its perpetuation.

A living testament to the vitality and relevance of Thomism today, the book emerges from the IX Symposium of Thomistic Studies held in Barcelona in commemoration of the 800th anniversary of the canonization of St. Thomas Aquinas. The symposium was organized by leading institutions, including the Instituto Santo Tomás de Balmesiana and the Universitat Abat Oliba CEU. Scholars, students, and enthusiasts of philosophy and theology will find this book an invaluable resource for understanding the enduring influence of Thomistic thought in the Hispanic world. ■



TOMISMO HISPANO OCHO SIGLOS DE TRADICIÓN INTELLECTUAL

Enrique Martínez
Lucas P. Prieto
(eds.)

Sindéresis

Dickinson, S.L.

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are aligned with the QS rankings criteria emphasizing sustainability.

The Fr. Rector seeks to strategically position UST by addressing global trends while enhancing international collaboration and innovation. Key initiatives include fostering regional excellence, integrating sustainable practices into operations and academics, aligning with QS sustainability criteria, strengthening its academic reputation, and preparing students for future digital challenges—efforts that support innovation and internationalization through capacity-building.

In recent years, UST has consistently demonstrated its commitment to international collaboration and innovation in higher education. In 2023, UST, through Ong, joined a Philippine CHED delegation to the QS Higher Education Summit: Asia Pacific 2023. During the summit, Ong was recognized with a Certificate of Commendation from CHED iAS and a Certificate of Appreciation from QS's Global Advisory Committee for his efforts during the summit.

In September, during Fr. Rector's installation, he spoke of his six-point agenda which includes developing more partnerships and collaborations in government and industry sectors. He also emphasized that “it [UST] should also be one of the most innovative universities in this part of the world.” As such, UST's presence in the summit reinforces this agenda as it strengthens its commitment to fostering global connections that drive academic excellence while contributing positively towards regional educational advancements. This also provides students with a learning environment that bridges education and employment effectively through strategic partnerships with industry sectors.

In the duration of the summit, the UST delegation, as represented by Ong, was given the opportunity to participate in a courtesy visit upon the Philippines Consulate General in Macau SAR China. While the Fr. Rector, together with Lao and Naval, had a meeting with international partners from Malaysia and attended the QS Stars Rating Masterclass.

The next QS Higher Education Summit will be hosted by Korea University in Seoul, South Korea from November 4 to 6, 2025. The summit will focus on “Advancing Generational Potential: Skills and Partnerships in the Asia Pacific.” ■

Ong joins CHED delegation for international qualifications programme in Malaysia



Engr. Ong (seated, second row, second from left) with fellow participants of the Quality Assurance programme

Asst. Prof. Nestor Rubio Ong, M.S.I.E., P.I.E., ASEAN Eng, representing the Philippine Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the University of Santo Tomas (UST), recently participated in the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) Internship Programme 2024 in Putrajaya, Malaysia. The three-day program in September 2024 fostered the exchange of best practices and strengthened collaboration among quality assurance agencies and higher education institutions in Southeast Asia.

Ong, who serves as a Deputy Director at the UST-Office of QS/THE Rankings and a member of the CHED-iNRC (National Review Committee on CHED Funded Internationalization Programs), was granted scholarship to participate in this exclusive internship. The internship program aimed to foster potential partnerships and collaborations between Philippine and Malaysian universities, aligning with CHED's goal of implementing Transnational Higher Education (TNHE) in the Philippines. This initiative resonates with UST's commitment to global engagement and continuous improvement in educational standards.

During the internship, Ong engaged in high-level discussions on several impactful topics, including establishing collaborative frameworks for joint degree programs to enhance academic offerings and provide students with diverse educational experiences or international learning opportunities. Harmonizing quality

assurance standards and accreditation processes was also a key focus, as it is crucial for ensuring that programs meet international benchmarks, fostering mutual trust and recognition between institutions.

Additionally, the development of capacity-building initiatives for TNHE partnerships can strengthen these collaborations by equipping institutions with the necessary skills and resources. Promoting cultural exchange programs was another key topic, as such exchanges enrich the educational experience and promote understanding among students from different backgrounds. Finally, exploring avenues for joint research projects/opportunities can lead to innovative solutions and advancements, benefiting both institutions and society at large.

Reflecting on his internship experience, Ong emphasized the program's impact on shaping international education strategies. He stated, "This internship has provided invaluable insights into Malaysia's approach to quality assurance in higher education. The knowledge and connections gained will significantly enhance the global competitiveness of Philippine higher education, including the University of Santo Tomas and other institutions."

A key highlight of the program was a meeting of Engr. Ong, Ms. Mabel A. Gutierrez the Officer-in-Charge of CHED International Affairs Service, and MQA officials responsible for internationalization.

The meeting explored pathways for lecturer exchanges between the two countries, further strengthening bilateral educational ties and expanding collaboration opportunities.

The successful participation of Ong in the MQA Internship Programme 2024 marks a significant step towards implementing and advancing TNHE initiatives in the Philippines. It is expected to lead to enhanced quality assurance mechanisms, expanded international partnerships, and improved educational standards that align with global best practices.

There were 16 participants from various Southeast Asian countries, including Japan, Taiwan, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines, who took part in the MQA Internship Programme. Together with the Commission on Higher Education, the participants represented institutions such as the National Institution for Academic Degrees and Quality Enhancement of Higher Education, Japan; Higher Education Evaluation and Accreditation Council of Taiwan; Malaysian Medical Council; and Universitas Islam Bandung, Indonesia.

As the University continues to strengthen its position in the global education landscape, collaborations like these play a crucial role in shaping the future of higher education in the country. UST's involvement, through Ong's participation, reaffirms its commitment to upholding its tradition of excellence while embracing international cooperation and innovation in education. ■

CRS academic staff, students present studies at OT congress in Japan



(From left:) Assoc. Prof. Ivan Neil Gomez, Ph.D., Assoc. Prof. Kim Gerald Medallon, Ph.D., Asst. Prof. Paulin Grace Espino, MA

Several academic staff and students from the University of Santo Tomas College of Rehabilitation Science (CRS) Department of Occupational Therapy presented their research at the 8th Asia Pacific Occupational Therapy Congress held from November 6 to 9, 2024 at the Sapporo Convention Center. The congress explored the many facets of the sustainable practice of occupational therapy with this year's conference theme, "Empowering Collaborative Community: Sustainable and Evidence-Based Occupational Therapy."

Assoc. Prof. Ivan Neil Gomez, Ph.D., presented his study titled, "Association between Occupational Balance and Mental Health among Undergraduate Occupational Therapy Students." He also served as a chair in a series of oral presentations clustered under Health promotion. Gomez's research presentation explored the relationship between occupational balance and mental health among undergraduate occupational therapy students. It found that students with a well-balanced mix of activities—combining study, rest, and leisure—reported better mental health outcomes. His study highlighted that poor occupational balance may be associated with increased psychological distress, such

as anxiety and depression. The findings underscore the importance of maintaining a structured yet flexible routine to support student well-being in educational settings.

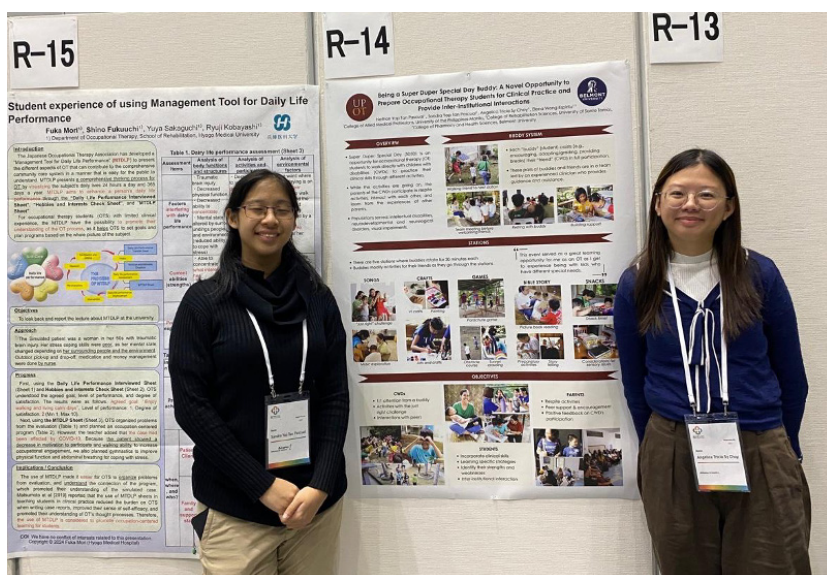
Assoc. Prof. Kim Gerald Medallon, Ph.D., presented his study titled, "Determining the retirement preparedness of Quezon City-based middle-aged Filipino workers using the culturally adapted Retirement Resources Inventory." Medallon's research presentation focused on determining the preparedness of Quezon City-based middle-aged Filipino workers using the culturally adapted Retirement Resources Inventory. The findings of the study revealed that participants who were females, with higher levels of education, or with higher monthly family incomes had the highest emotional, cognitive, motivational, social, physical, and financial resources and, thus, were the best prepared. Meanwhile, preparedness levels based on age, civil status, and number of children varied for the different resource domains.

Asst. Prof. Paulin Grace Morato-Espino, M.A., participated in the poster presentation with her study, "A Peek into Young Filipino Children's Happiness to Understand Their Well-being: A Focused Ethnographic Study." Morato-Espino's research explored how young Filipino children conceptualize well-being. Kindergarten to Grade 2 students enrolled

in private and public schools from different areas in Luzon actively participated in the data collection and analysis. They drew images, took photographs, and discussed within small groups to answer the question, "What makes you happy?" Three general themes were identified, highlighting the importance of the family, the school, and play to children's well-being.

Students Sandra Tan Pascual and Angelica Tricia Choy were part of a team that participated in the student poster presentation with their project, "Being a Super Duper Special Day Buddy: A Novel Opportunity to Prepare Occupational Therapy Students for Clinical Practice and Inter-institutional Interaction." They conducted various activities together with Children with Disabilities (CWDs), ranging from song and dance to crafts; those with the parents of the CWDs conducted respite activities and peer support sessions. Overall, the project allowed them to engage meaningfully with people who have a range of special needs.

According to the conference convenor Mr. Shinichi Yamamo, President of the Japanese Association of Occupational Therapists, the 8th Asia Pacific Occupational Therapy Congress (APOTC 2024) was successfully held with over 2,000 registrants from over 30 countries and regions. ■



Ms. Sandra Tan Pascual (left) and Ms. Angelica Tricia Choy with their research

PASKUHAN 2024



Honorary Professor Cordell lectures on scientific publications, provides insights on developing innovative programs for UST GenSan

UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS
COLLEGE OF SCIENCE
DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY



EVENTS

Honorary Professor Lecture Series with Prof. Emeritus Geoffrey A. Cordell on 'C.A.R.E.: The Writing and Publishing of Manuscripts, and Beyond,' December 4, 2024, at the Central Laboratory Auditorium

[Photo courtesy of the UST Department of Chemistry Facebook page]

The UST College of Science Department of Chemistry, in cooperation with the Research Center for the Natural and Applied Sciences and the Graduate School, recently organized the first Honorary Professor Lecture Series in line with the centennial of the College of Science with Professor Emeritus Dr. Geoffrey Cordell last December 4, 2024, at the Central Laboratory Auditorium. The lecture, titled, "C.A.R.E.: Writing and Publishing Manuscripts and Beyond," was attended by students of the B.Sc. Chemistry program, DOST-ASTHRDP scholars under various natural science programs of the UST Graduate School, and academic staff of the Department of Chemistry.

During the event, Cordell emphasized on the importance of properly communicating one's scientific knowledge through publications in valid, peer-reviewed journals and how this is important in the development of capable scientists. Throughout his lecture, he used the acronym C.A.R.E. to highlight his key takeaways for the audience such as "Conduct Appropriate and Rigorous Experiment," "Commit to Accurate Report as an Experimentalist," "Critically Assessing Research Expenditures," among others. These examples, as well as many other CARE acronyms he has developed, have been published in the journal [Natural Products Communications](#) in September 2021.

Prior to the lecture, Cordell met with Assistant to the Rector for UST General Santos Acad. Professor Emeritus Maribel G. Nonato, Dean of the College of Science Prof. Rey Donne S. Papa, and Chair of the Department of Chemistry Assoc. Prof. Alan Rodelle M. Salcedo to discuss potential program offerings in UST. Cordell's insights as an academic official of the University of Illinois and natural products researcher were instrumental as the department is preparing its program offerings for UST GenSan.

Cordell, who is an emeritus professor in the University of Illinois at Chicago and former Dean of its College of Pharmacy, is a long-time collaborator of several natural products chemists of the UST Department of Chemistry such as Prof. Emeritus Beatrice Q. Guevara, Acad. Prof. Emeritus Maribel G. Nonato and Prof. Ma. Alicia M. Aguinaldo. He was given the title Honorary Professor of Chemistry by the UST College of Science in 2017. ■

Metagenomics expert from Australia delivers lecture for MedTech, Pharmacy students

Head of the Microbiology Laboratory and Lead for Antimicrobial Resistance at the University of South Australia (UniSA), Assoc. Prof. Henrietta Venter, Ph.D., FASM, delivered a discourse on "Beyond Culturing: Metagenomics and Whole Genome Sequencing for Antimicrobial Resistance Detection and Discovery" on November 29, 2024, at the Thomas Aquinas Research Complex (TARC) in the University of Santo Tomas (UST).

This event, sponsored by the Faculty of Pharmacy's Department of Medical Technology, in collaboration with the Graduate School's Medical Technology and Pharmacy clusters, highlighted the application of metagenomics and whole genome sequencing in combating antimicrobial resistance. The participants were officially welcomed by the Dean of the UST Faculty of Pharmacy Prof. Aleth Therese L. Dacanay, Ph.D.

Venter's presentation detailed the advantages of these methods over traditional culturing, explored their use in various settings, and showcased relevant research, such as identifying novel resistance genes and developing rapid diagnostic tools for detecting specific resistance mechanisms.



Assoc. Prof. Henrietta Venter, PhD, FASM (third from the left) receives her tokens of appreciation

METAGENOMICS TO PAGE 18

Session 1

BEYOND THE SCENES

Join us for an inspiring session with Cathay Pacific speakers as they share their professional journeys, deeply rooted in the Cathay brand values of Thoughtful, Progressive, and Clean-Do Spirit.



JOJO VENERACION
Regional Employee Relations
and Policy Manager



CHINEE BAYABORDA
Head of Sales
Philippines



EVA MARIE CONEL
Senior Airport Operations
Manager, Manila



**AIKA
ROJAS-ARELLANO**
Cargo Manager, Manila



Session 2

HELLO HONG KONG

Get ready to discover why Hong Kong is the ultimate destination for students! With its exciting mix of Eastern and Western cultures, vibrant city life, and breathtaking natural scenery, Hong Kong offers endless opportunities for educational tours, internships, and leisure travel.



THESA PANGILINAN
Manager, Trade and Marketing
Hong Kong Tourism Board



LARA LUBI
Associate Business Dev Manager
Hong Kong Disneyland Resort



Session 3

STUDENT LIFE IN HONG KONG

As a tourism and hospitality student, an internship program is a crucial step towards launching your career.



WYATT WHITE LEE
Academic Staff, UST College of
Tourism and Hospitality Management



CTHM co-hosts Cathay for Students Talk Series

Students from the University of Santo Tomas College of Tourism and Hospitality Management (UST-CTHM), in partnership with Cathay Pacific organized, “Cathay for Students Talk Series: Reaching New Heights,” on December 3, 2024, at the UST Albertus Magnus Building Auditorium.

The event was geared towards providing students with transformative insights into the aviation and tourism industries, offering them the tools and inspiration to advance their careers. Bringing together tourism and hospitality students from various universities and colleges, the event fostered a day of

meaningful dialogue and learning.

The Cathay for Students Talk Series featured an array of insightful sessions which included a showcase of Cathay Pacific services as one of the top airlines in the world; a deep dive into the tourism aspect of Hong Kong and its key role as a major travel hub in Asia; and a glimpse of student life in Hong Kong which emphasized the benefits of cultural exchange and global learning.

The learning session ended with CTHM Dean Atty. Gezzez Giezi G. Granado delivering an inspiring message to the students. He emphasized the importance of actively seeking out opportunities, such

as the Cathay for Students Talk Series, which provide invaluable experiences that can significantly enhance one's skills and knowledge. The Dean urged students to take full advantage of such opportunities to broaden their horizons and better prepare themselves for a future of success in the ever-evolving tourism industry.

The Cathay for Students Talk Series exemplifies the strong industry-academe collaboration that is one of the thrusts of the University. By exploring educational events like this, students gain insights that enable them to meet the challenges of an increasingly globalized world. ■

UST Sentro sa Salin conducts lecture series for SLSU



Officials of SLSU with the UST SSAS led by Asst. Prof. Wennielyn Fajilan, Ph.D. (fifth from left)

Translation council members of the UST Sentro ng Salin at Araling Salin (UST SSAS) held a series of lectures for the program “Salin: A Gender Sensitive Training Course in Language Translation” of Southern Luzon State University (SLSU).

Asst. Prof. Ma. Lanie Vergara discussed “Mga Batayang Konsepto ng Pagsasalin” last November

17, followed by Asst. Prof. Elenita M. Mendoza with “Gabay sa Pagsasaling Teknikal”, and Mr. Mark Anthony Etcobañez with “Pagsasaling Teknikal” on November 23 and December 7, respectively.

The talks were conducted via a Hybrid-Flexible (HyFlex) setup.

SENTRO NG SALIN TO PAGE 18

16 NOV SATURDAY 09 - 05 AM PM

SALIN: A GENDER SENSITIVE TRAINING COURSE IN LANGUAGE TRANSLATION

TAGAPAGSALITA AT PAKSA

MGA BATAYANG KONSEPTO SA PAGSASALIN

ASST. PROF. MA. LANIE VERGARA, LPT, MA
UST Sentro sa Salin at Araling Salin

A COLLABORATIVE EXTENSION PROGRAM OF COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES
AND COLLEGE OF TEACHER EDUCATION
UNITED PRIVATE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS (UPEI), INC. (UPEI)
UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION DIVISION - COLLEGE OF TEACHER EDUCATION
SOUTHERN LUZON STATE UNIVERSITY

07 DEC SATURDAY 09 - 05 AM PM

SALIN: A GENDER SENSITIVE TRAINING COURSE IN LANGUAGE TRANSLATION

TAGAPAGSALITA AT PAKSA

TEKNOLOHIYA AT PAGSASALIN

MR. MARK ANTHONY ETCOBANEZ, LPT, MA
UST Sentro sa Salin at Araling Salin

A COLLABORATIVE EXTENSION PROGRAM OF COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES
AND COLLEGE OF TEACHER EDUCATION
UNITED PRIVATE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS (UPEI), INC. (UPEI)
UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION DIVISION - COLLEGE OF TEACHER EDUCATION
SOUTHERN LUZON STATE UNIVERSITY

23 NOV SATURDAY 09 - 05 AM PM

SALIN: A GENDER SENSITIVE TRAINING COURSE IN LANGUAGE TRANSLATION

TAGAPAGSALITA AT PAKSA

GABAY SA PAGSASALING TEKNIKAL

ASST. PROF. ELENITA C. MENDOZA, MA
UST Sentro sa Salin at Araling Salin

A COLLABORATIVE EXTENSION PROGRAM OF COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES
AND COLLEGE OF TEACHER EDUCATION
UNITED PRIVATE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS (UPEI), INC. (UPEI)
UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION DIVISION - COLLEGE OF TEACHER EDUCATION
SOUTHERN LUZON STATE UNIVERSITY

UST Graduate School hosts Food Microbiology lecture series

The UST Graduate School through its Food Science program, organized a lecture series that zeroed in on food microbiology. With the theme, “Frontiers in Food Microbiology: Advanced Techniques, Standards, and Safety,” The series featured expert-led discussions on food safety and microbiology, with a special focus on innovative approaches and regulations within the field.

The lecture series began with a presentation by Ms. Aan Sison-Molino, a faculty member of the Institute of Biological Sciences in the University of the Philippines. In her presentation titled, “Molecular Techniques in Microbial Analysis,” Molino explored various methods for microbial detection in food. She provided insights into nucleic acid-based techniques like Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR), sequencing technologies, Loop-Mediated Isothermal Amplification (LAMP), and protein-based methods such as enzyme-immunoassays and lateral flow assays.

This was followed by the lecture of the Division Chief of the Laboratory Accreditation Division at the Philippine Accreditation Bureau Ms. Michelle Esteban. She delivered a lecture on “Introduction to Laboratory Quality Management Systems, Good Manufacturing Practices, and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP).” She emphasized the importance of adopting Laboratory Quality Management Systems (LQMS) and ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation in testing laboratories. These practices help ensure compliance, enhance product quality, and foster international trade by reducing the need for additional testing. Esteban also discussed the significance of Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) and HACCP in food safety.

In the third lecture, Head of Scientific and Regulatory Affairs at Nestlé Philippines Ms. Maria Josephine Bueno Gonzales highlighted the importance of adhering to food safety regulations, such as those governing infant products and instant coffee in her talk, “Introduction to Philippine Food Laws and Regulations and Microbiological Standards.” In addition, Gonzales also outlined the necessary licenses and permits for operating a food business.

Dr. Hazzel Joy L. Adra, shared her research on biosensors in the fourth lecture. Drawing on her work at the Food



Materials and Safety Laboratory at Kyung Hee University in South Korea, Dr. Adra discussed the development of biosensors for detecting *E. coli*. These sensors leverage polymer self-assembly, electromagnetic properties of organisms, and antibody-antigen interactions, with applications in food safety, healthcare, and environmental monitoring.

The final lecture, “Recent Developments in Biomolecule-Based Nanoencapsulation Systems for Antimicrobial Delivery and Biofilm Disruption,” was presented by the Research Officer at the Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute Dr. Mark Louis Vidallon. Vidallon explored the challenges posed by biofilms in food production environments and discussed how nanoparticles are emerging as a solution for disrupting biofilm-forming microorganisms.

This lecture series served as a valuable opportunity for graduate students to deepen their knowledge of food microbiology, thanks to the insights provided by experts in the field. ■

SENTRO NG SALIN FROM PAGE 17

Officials of SLSU also attended a consultative meeting for translation collaboration with UST SSAS on December 3 at the Memorabilia Room, Albertus Magnus Building.

The SLSU delegation included Ms. Geraldine C. Bacagan, Assoc. Prof. Aprillette C. Devanadera, Asst. Prof. Khristalyn V. Friginal, Asst. Prof. Maria Gloria Nada, Asst. Prof. Michael Anthony G. Nada, Asst. Prof. Jake Arman A. Principe, and Dr. Felino J. Gutierrez.

They were received by the Assistant Dean of the College of Education Asst. Prof. Louie B. Dasas, LPT, Ph.D., College Secretary Asst. Prof. Alvin Ringgo C. Reyes, M.A., Prof. Joan Christi T. Bagaipo, Ph.D., Prof. Arvin D. Eballo, Chair of UST SSAS Assoc. Prof. Wennielyn F. Fajilan, Ph.D., and Asst. Prof. Elenita M. Mendoza, M.A.

The UST SSAS is under the College of Education. ■

METAGENOMICS FROM PAGE 16

The discussion provided valuable insights into this advanced research, potentially inspiring future collaborative projects between UST and UniSA, and fostering further investigation into the application of these powerful techniques within the Philippines and beyond,

ultimately contributing to more effective strategies in combating the global threat of antimicrobial resistance. The discourse itself is expected to significantly impact the field by disseminating knowledge of these advanced techniques to a wider audience of researchers and practitioners.

The UST Graduate School Dean Prof. Michael Anthony C. Vasco, Ph.D., delivered the closing remarks. ■

Geraldo of Accountancy discusses AI in accounting education

Mr. Daryl Angelo M. Geraldo, CPA, LPT, MBA, an academic staff and Pedagogical Lead of the UST-Alfredo M. Velayo College of Accountancy, served as one of the guest speakers at the 6th Scientific Accounting Symposium (SIA VI) and International Conference on November 28, 2024, with the theme, “Artificial Intelligence: Opportunities and Challenges for Educating Accountants.”

Geraldo discussed the opportunities and challenges AI presents in the education landscape. Drawing from the 2023 UNESCO Guidance for Generative AI in Education and Research, he highlighted how AI can enhance the achievement of learning outcomes through personalized instruction, critical thinking development, and advanced teaching resources while emphasizing its ability to engage students effectively through simulations and real-

world case studies. Acknowledging the controversies surrounding Generative AI, Geraldo presented pressing ethical and academic integrity issues, including the use of content without consent. The talk concluded by showing a sample learning plan that suggests practical strategies for integrating generative AI into the teaching and learning process.

The SIA VI and International Conference was organized by the Indonesian Association of Accountants Educator Accountant Compartment – North Sumatra Higher Education Accounting Lecturers Forum in collaboration with the *Ikatan Akuntan Indonesia* (Institute of Indonesia Chartered Accountants - IAI) North Sumatra Region. It served as a vital platform for addressing contemporary challenges and innovations in accounting education. ■



Destination marketing strategies discussed in CTHM symposium



Dr. Tugbang (third from left) and Mr. Bellare (fourth from left) with CTHM officials led by Dean Assoc. Prof. Gezzez Gieze Granado, DCL

A symposium on Destination Management and Marketing was held on December 10, 2024, at the Medicine Auditorium of the University of Santo Tomas with the theme, “Cutting Edge Campaigns: A look into the New Destination Marketing Strategies.”

The event, organized by third year CTHM students, was designed to enhance students’ knowledge in destination marketing, emphasizing the transformative role of digital platforms, AI-driven content generation, and innovative strategies in the tourism sector.

As the University aims to develop closer partnerships and collaborations with fellow Dominican academic institutions, a joint project between UST Tourism students and third year Communication students from the Colegio de San Juan de Letran-Bataan allowed both institutions to create an integrated marketing communication (IMC) campaign. A site visit and the conduct of a Usage, Attitude, and Image survey in partnership with the Provincial Government of Bataan was instrumental to the completion of the IMC campaign. This project was presented during the symposium.

The event, being an output of the task-based approach to teaching, featured talk segments from experts and specialists in the field of marketing. Founder and Managing Director of marketing and consultancy firm Studio Bellare Mr. Shane Bellare and Director for Product Development and Concurrent Director for the Medical Travel and Wellness Tourism Program at the Department of Tourism Dr. Paulo Benito S. Tugbang shared strategies and approaches about modern tourism marketing, destination marketing, and strategic tourism destination management.

This student-led event was an opportunity for attendees to engage with industry excerpts and learn more about trends and innovations in tourism marketing. ■

Sports Science Department organizes wellness day for children with disabilities



CRS facilitates inclusive exercises and games for the children

The University of Santo Tomas (UST) Sports Science Department, in partnership with the QC KABAHAGI Center for Children with Disabilities, hosted a wellness event titled *Hataw at Galaw: Inklusibong Palaro Para sa Mga Bata* on November 28, 2024, at the Amoranto Sports Complex in Quezon City. This community development initiative introduced children with disabilities to fun, inclusive, and developmentally appropriate physical activities.

Sports Science interns and other students from the program conducted inclusive physical activities for children with special needs. Through these activities, the program fostered physical fitness, social engagement, and well-being among participants and their families. Beyond the physical activities, the event cultivated a sense of belonging and community.

Families of children with special needs expressed gratitude for the opportunity to engage in meaningful and inclusive activities.

The event was also an opportunity for Sports Science students to apply knowledge and skills in creating adaptive physical activities and deepening their understanding of inclusivity in sports and recreation.

Hataw at Galaw demonstrated the power of sports and play in bridging gaps and building connections within communities. The UST Sports Science Department hopes to continue creating opportunities that empower children with special needs and promote health and wellness for all. The event's success underscores the importance of service-learning initiatives, highlighting how the academe and community engagement can create lasting, positive change. ■

CTHM, Echague LGU forge partnership for sustainable tourism, economic growth

The University of Santo Tomas – College of Tourism and Hospitality Management (UST CTHM) was successful in forging another LGU partnership through its *UST Sentro Turismo*. On November 24 began a series of events in partnership with the local government unit of Echague, Isabela.

Spearheaded by UST Sentro Turismo and selected classes under the CTHM Department of Tourism Management, the program *Pagtanaw* provided students with a unique opportunity to bridge academic knowledge with real-world applications in tourism management, community engagement, and heritage preservation. Working in small groups, students collaborated on documenting historical and cultural sites, designing sustainable tourism development plans, and highlighting the unique tourism potential of Echague.

Pagtanaw is an off-shoot of the official partnership agreement between UST CTHM and the Municipal Government of Echague in Isabela for activities aligned with the goals of the college and the LGU.



Participants in the weaving workshop

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM FROM PAGE 20



The CTHM Team with their partners from the LGU

The *Pagtanaw* program was an integrated fieldwork and heritage forum designed to engage students in hands-on tourism development projects that benefit the local community of Echague, Isabela. These initiatives were grounded on a deep respect for local culture and aimed toward enhancing the region's tourism opportunities while promoting sustainability.

Their research emphasized the importance of integrating heritage conservation into tourism development plans, ensuring that future visitors can appreciate and respect the area's rich cultural legacy while contributing to the community's economic growth. This commitment to sustainable tourism reflects the core values of UST-CTHM and *Sentro Turismo*: responsible tourism that fosters cultural awareness and benefits local communities.

Another program, a Youth Heritage Forum titled "*Paddarafung LikHabi: Mga Hiyas ng Nakaraan: Gabay Tungo sa Kaunlaran*" was held on November 30, 2024, at the San Fabian Amphitheater in Echague. The event aimed to foster unity among Yogad Ethnic Minority Group students, instill pride in local heritage, and cultivate a deeper appreciation of culture while simultaneously developing entrepreneurial and marketing skills. It



featured a series of enriching activities, including a Rattan Culture Seminar and Workshop facilitated by the Echague Rattan Weavers Association, a Marketing and Entrepreneurship Seminar led by Mr. John Jerick C. Santos, and a Contemporary Dance Workshop conducted by Intenzyc.

Both programs were a powerful testament to the impact of education and community collaboration in shaping the next generation of tourism professionals.

The CTHM Team during the heritage forum

Under the leadership of UST *Sentro Turismo* and with the support of the municipal government, UST students gained critical leadership and organizational skills while making meaningful contributions to the future of Echague's tourism sector. ■

Christmas exhibit, concert featured by UST Museum



The UST JHS Glee Club and Music Ensemble



*Pabalat artworks by the
CFAD students*

The UST Museum's "Christmaseum Concert 2024" was held at the Main Gallery on December 5 and 6, 2024.

The UST Junior High School (JHS) Glee Club, the JHS Music Ensemble, and the Quezon City Performing Arts Development Foundation, Inc. (QCPADFI) Concert Chorus performed festive Christmas songs, which can still be viewed [from the livestream on the UST Museum Facebook page](#).

The Christmaseum exhibit, in collaboration with the College of Fine Arts and Design (CFAD), was also formally opened on November 26, 2024, featuring Pabalat artworks, and ended on December 20.

"Pabalat" is a traditional art form in the Philippines where intricate designs often illustrating Filipino cultural heritage are cut into thin wrappers for pastillas candies, like *papel de japon*. The word comes from the Tagalog word 'balat' which means skin.

UST Museum Director Fr. Isidro Abaño, O.P., CFAD Dean Mary Christie Que, and Interior Design Department Chair Mary Ann Joy Lampano led the ceremonial lighting of the exhibit. ■



*(From left, seated:) Ms.
Lampano, Fr. Abaño, and
Dean Que with officials of
the UST CFAD and UST
Museum*

*The QCPADFI Concert
Chorus*





College of Architecture Dean Ar. Rodolfo Ventura (fifth from left), Regent Fr. Manuel Roux (sixth from left), CFAD Dean Mary Christie Que (eighth from left) and UST officials during the exhibit

The Beato Angelico Gallery and the College of Architecture recently hosted “*Panunuluyan: Nativity Scene Interpretations from Around the World Through the Lens of Architecture*.” The exhibition opened on Wednesday, December 4, 2024, followed by a mini-concert by the Hangad Music Ministry. It welcomed the Thomasian community until December 17, coinciding with the celebration of UST’s Paskuhan festivities.

“*Panunuluyan*” invited viewers to contemplate the profound Incarnation of God through the unique lens of architectural interpretations. From the earliest depictions in Roman catacombs, where the Nativity was often portrayed in a cave symbolizing the divine mystery, to the grand medieval churches and ruins of houses in Europe, where the scene was set in elaborate architectural structures, the setting of the Nativity scene has evolved over centuries. The Renaissance brought a renewed interest in classical antiquity, inspiring artists to depict the Nativity in idealized landscapes. In more recent times, the Nativity scene has been adapted to contemporary contexts, reflecting the diverse cultural and artistic sensibilities of the 21st century.

Inspired by the vision of St. Francis of Assisi in 1223, the first Nativity scene sought to rekindle the spirit of Christmas and remind people of the true reason for the season. Pope Francis, in his Apostolic Letter *Admirabile Signum*, echoes this sentiment, encouraging us to rediscover the simplicity and beauty of this timeless tradition. He invites us to contemplate the mystery of the Incarnation and to draw inspiration from the love and humility of God. By delving into the historical and spiritual significance of the Nativity scene, we hope to offer a fresh perspective on Christmas, one that emphasizes its profound spiritual meaning and invites us to embrace the peace and joy it offers. This exhibition featured the remarkable creche collection of Mr. Elliot Eustacio, a distinguished alumnus of the UST Conservatory of Music.



The “*Panunuluyan*” exhibit

Co-curated by Ar. Noel Cruz as the Beato Angelico Gallery Coordinator, together with another alumnus Ar. Jego Rozzano Ramos and Mr. Patrick Mercene, “*Panunuluyan*” envisioned a Christmas homecoming, aiming to open the doors of the gallery not only to the College of Architecture and the College of Fine Arts and Design communities but also to a wider network of UST alumni artists and collectors. ■

Modern Languages Department holds first Spanish Poetry Recital Contest

The UST Department of Modern Languages held the “*Primer Concurso de Recital de Poesía en español*” (First Poetry Recital Contest in Spanish) at the TARC Auditorium on November 12, 2024.

The Department of Modern Languages, headed by Mr. Royce Randall G. Lim, M.P.H., M.I.S., was joined by the Faculty of Arts and Letters Regent Rev. Fr. George Phe Mang, O.P., Dean Prof. Melanie D. Turingan, Ph.D., who delivered the opening remarks, and UST Office of Public Affairs Director Ms. Michaela O. Lagniton, M.A.

The audience was serenaded by the amazing performances of AB students Emalei Pullis and Kennaniah San Juan with their beautiful singing of “*Bien Canijo*,” “*Hasta la raíz*,” and “*Soledad y el mar*,” as well as Clarence Miguel Torres and his band “The Great Pretenders” for their rendition of “*Besame mucho*” and “*Cariño*.”

English Language Studies student Grace Nakubiana Simasiku won First Place for her performance of “*Mal de ausencia*” by Luis Alberto de Cuenca.

Jozef Benedict Padilla from CICS, who recited Pablo Neruda’s “*Soneto XVII*” was in Second Place, and Legal Management

student Precious Joy Madlangbayan placed third for her recital of “*Volverán las oscuras golondrinas*” by Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer.

The event celebrated the art of Spanish poetry at the TARC Auditorium with the participants, invited guests, students, and faculty members of the Department of Modern Languages.

The contest is part of the year-long celebration of the 60th Founding Anniversary of the Faculty of Arts and Letters. More than 200 attendees were at the event and enjoyed the fantastic performances of the 27 contestants, who showcased their talents in reciting and interpreting different Spanish poems by famous poets in the Hispanic world. ■

Mr. Royce Randall Lim (third from left) with the winning students Grace Nakubiana Simasiku (second from left), Precious Joy Madlangbayan (leftmost) and Jozef Benedict Padilla



OAR holds annual appreciation event for partners, sponsors, alumni groups

The University of Santo Tomas (UST) Office of Alumni Relations (OAR) held its annual appreciation event on December 6, 2024, at the Dr. Robert C. Sy Grand Ballroom.

During Appreciation Night 2024, OAR cited 95 Thomasian Alumni Card partners. Among the alumni card partners include: Astoria Hotels, Belmont Hotel Boracay, Dr. Tooth Smile Dental Clinics, Enchanted Kingdom, George Optical, Highlands Coffee, Hilton Hotels, Makati Medical Care Access Araneta City, Metro Dental Philippines, Paras Garments Alter Station, Red Planet Hotels, Reddoorz Philippines, Shinagawa Diagnostic & Preventive Care, The Farm at San Benito, The Manila Hotel, Tinapayan Festival Bakeshoppe, Vision Express, and Waltermart Supermarket.

Also recognized were the sponsors of the sixth Rector’s Cup: Thomasian Alumni Golf Tournament, which contributed to raising over Php 3 million for the benefit of Thomasian student-athletes. The sponsors include Wilcon Depot, DivinaLaw, Skynet Travel Corp., Philippine Airlines, Boysen Philippines, City Service Corporation, JYL Atletica, and AKB General Merchandise.

Tinapayan Festival Bakeshoppe Operations Manager Potenciano Clarito Chavez, an alumnus of the University, delivered his response on behalf of the alumni card partners during the event.

“As we reflect on the remarkable achievements of our beloved institution and its alumni, we are reminded that the strength of any great university lies not only in its academic excellence but also

in the bonds it forms—bonds that extend beyond the classroom and into the real world,” said Chavez. He pointed out that the collaborations of the partners with the University impact students, alumni, and the communities in which they all operate, thus driving economic growth, technological progress, and societal well-being.

“I extend our sincere gratitude and mutual appreciation for your continued trust to our partnership, and for the opportunity to be part of such [a] vibrant and impactful network,” he added.

For this year’s Appreciation Night, OAR also recognized six alumni associations and chapters who have initiated remarkable programs and activities in line with the mission and vision of the University.

ANNUAL APPRECIATION EVENT TO PAGE 25

ANNUAL APPRECIATION EVENT FROM PAGE 24



First set of Thomasian Alumni Card partners during the awarding of Certificate of Appreciation.



Mr. Potenciano Clarito Chavez during this response message.



Yumul during her acceptance speech on behalf of the awardees.

The UST Alumni Association Hong Kong Chapter (USTAAHK) was awarded The Torch of Innovation for having the most innovative projects involving Filipino immigrants and overseas workers in Hong Kong.

The Heart of Purpose award was given to the UST Senior High School Alumni Association for their meaningful project called, "Isang Patak: Isang Buhay Blood Donation Drive." The association partnered with the Philippine Red Cross – Caloocan City Chapter to reach more communities as beneficiaries.

The UST Atelier Alumni Association Inc. received The Evergreen Award for their most sustainable project, the Vision series. Introduced in 2021, Vision is a chain of quality art exhibits featuring the works of prominent Thomasian visual artists. It has launched five installments titled "Vision: Interpolation," "Vision: Insight," "Vision: Propel," "Vision: Compendio," and "Vision: Paradigm."

Two alumni associations were honored with The Ripple Effect award for their most impactful projects for the University or their chosen beneficiaries.

Tomasinong SOCCSKSARGEN, the alumni chapter in General Santos City, was recognized for their invaluable efforts throughout the years in helping the University for the establishment of the UST GenSan.

The Mega Service series of Alpha Phi Omega-Pi Chapter Alumni Association was commended for the same award. The group launched three Mega Service installments, offering medical, dental, and eye check-ups, reading glasses distribution, feeding program, and gift-giving.

Interest-based alumni group, Thomasian Alumni Leaders Association

(TALA), received The Golden Hand award for having the most number of charitable projects. TALA has consistently launched donation drives during calamities, reaching communities affected by typhoons.

Five companies were also recognized for The Giving Tree award for their generosity and contributions to different University events. These companies were Wilcon Depot, DivinaLaw, Wingfinity – Torre Central UST, Tinapayan Festival Bakeshoppe, and Manila Café.Y

USTAAHK President Jan Yumul gave her acceptance speech on behalf of all the awardees.

"What a celebration it was to finally be seen – recognized, not just here, but overseas – and yet to also be put in this position that carries great responsibility to serve, incorporating the core Thomasian values: competence, commitment, compassion, and – as part of my tall order as president – community engagers in every single thing that we do," Yumul said. "These values have been crucial tools in building the integrity, credibility, and trustworthiness of not just our association but of the Thomasian brand."

The alumni group in Hong Kong was launched in January 2024 and has continued to spearhead events and engagements for its 60+ members, such as free Cantonese classes, donation drives, hospital visit projects, wine-tasting nights, equal opportunities dialogues, sports festivals with other Philippine university alumni associations, and the localization of the Thomasian Alumni Card privilege program in Hong Kong. Yumul promised a more active and community-

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building-focused alumni chapter, hopefully expanding to Macao in the future.

OAR Director Asst. Prof. Joreen T. Rocamora, Ph.D., expressed her gratitude for the commitment and dedication of all the University's partners, sponsors, and awardees. She lauded the efforts of helping the office create impactful programs designed to address the evolving needs of the alumni community. She invited everyone to explore potential collaborations with OAR and build more opportunities for the alumni and industry partners for 2025. ■



The alumni associations and groups cited during the awarding with OAR Director Asst. Prof. Joreen Rocamora, Ph.D. (leftmost)

University Visitors

Bishop Emeritus of Port Pirie in Australia



His Excellency Most Rev. Gregory O'Kelly, SJ, AM (sixth from left), Bishop Emeritus of Port Pirie in Australia, with Santisimo Rosario Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Paul Reagan Talavera, O.P. (fifth from left), the UST Office of Public Affairs Director Ms. Michaella Lagniton (rightmost), and parishioners on December 10, 2024

Rector of the Provincial Seminary of Victoria and Tasmania in Australia

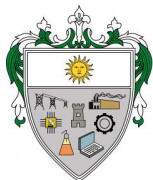


The Very Rev. Fr. Cameron Forbes, DipPhil, SThD (third from left), Rector of the Provincial Seminary of Victoria and Tasmania in Australia and Head of the Moral Theology and Canon Law Department of the Catholic Theological College with (from left:) UST Office of Public Affairs Director Ms. Michaela Lagniton, Assistant Head Librarian for Restoration Ms. Ginalyn Santiago, UST Central Seminary Chancellor Sem. John Alfred Rabena, Assistant Head Librarian for Digitization Mr. Symon Lagao, and Assistant Head Librarian for Reference and Information Services Ms. Kaori Fuchigami on December 9, 2024.

Providence University in Taiwan



Officials of Providence University in Taiwan, led by its President Prof. Lucia S. Lin (third from left), with the Office of International Relations and Programs Associate Director Prof. Karen Santiago, Ph.D. (second from left) and UST Office of Public Affairs Director Ms. Michaela Lagniton (rightmost) on December 5, 2024



Civil Engineers Licensure Examination

November and December 2024

UST Passing Rate: 75.15%

National Passing Rate: 37.09%



5th - 92.15%
Jeriko Emanuel
Gorospe Ordan



8th - 91.50%
JF Nichols
Gozum Cortez



9th - 91.45%
Daniel Ivan
Altoveros Cenidoza



Philippine Bar Examinations

September 2024

UST Passing Rate: 80.35%

National Passing Rate: 37.84%



12th - 83.44%
Andrew Gil
Bruzon Ambray



20th - 82.7950%
Pierre Angelo
Cortes Reque II



Licensure Examination for Professional Teachers - Elementary

September 2024

UST Passing Rate: 100%

National Passing Rate: 45.51%



2nd - 93.80%
Primo Jose
Ramos Magno



3rd - 93.60%
Athena Leng
Fabian Ibañez



4th - 93.40%
Justine Marie
Fernandez Estrada



9th - 92.40%
Daniella Marie
Paus Umingli



Certified Public Accountants Licensure Examination

December 2024

UST Passing Rate: 74.43%

National Passing Rate: 30.17%



8th - 88.00%
Alexia Nicole
Ruiz Guadalupe



8th - 88.00%
Andrew
Cinco Halili



9th - 87.83%
Alexandra
Bulandos Osias



Occupational Therapists Licensure Examination

December 2024

UST Passing Rate: 98.28%

National Passing Rate: 65.86%



1st - 87.20%
Cesar Joseph
Pulmano Lim



4th - 85.00%
Isabella Camille
Colayco Duran



5th - 84.80%
Queenie Jane Brythel
Aparece Apa-ap



7th - 84.40%
Monique
Cuevas Esmile



7th - 84.40%
Zharylle
Robles Gayeta



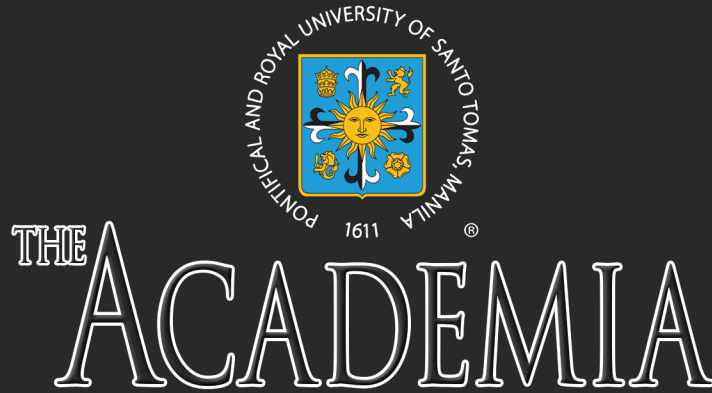
8th - 84.20%
Marion
Carsido Lucero



8th - 84.20%
Ross Alleine
Reyes Ramos



9th - 84.00%
Ray Anthony
Lao Torres



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