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## CAMPUS NEWS



# ASSUMPTION COLLEGE SAN LORENZO RETAINS HIGHEST PAASCU ACCREDITATION LEVEL

**By: Breanna  
Fenella Rain E.  
Muyco**

Assumption College San Lorenzo (AC) retains its highest accreditation level granted by the Philippine Accrediting Association of School Colleges and Universities (PAASCU) Board, marking a milestone to its consistent Level IV standing since Academic Year (A.Y.) 2014 - 2015.

PAASCU accreditors previously visited AC during its General Education (GenEd) culminating week around late November 2019,

witnessing the students' talents in their academics. They inspected the campus grounds, noting its facilities, community involvement, administration, and the Ability Based Learning (ABLE) Curriculum. The Board also organized an assembly to talk with the students regarding their perception of the school's efforts in providing quality education.

Attaining this level, the institution testifies its standards on forming future women leaders of faith and action. The school also holds an Autonomous

Status given by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), the highest grant among private institutions in recognition of its accomplishments in the educational front, valid until 2021.

The Level IV accreditation comes with its advantages of being given the authority to offer new graduate programs in line with existing courses, open distance learning education, and extend classes with prior notice to the CHED Regional Office.

AC will hold its latest accreditation status.

Re-accreditation process is due in 2025.

PAASCU is an independent organization that accredits applied academic programs

that meet the standards of quality education. It is commonly compared to CHED, which is a part of the government inclined agenda aiming to reform

the education system. PAASCU is a private accrediting body that goes through several private schools that have applied for the accreditation.

# AC'S 2ND SEMESTER WRAPS ONLINE AMID CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

**By: Denisse Kyle A. Virtucio**

Assumption College San Lorenzo (AC) culminated Academic Year 2019-2020 online as cases of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in the country persist, urging students to flock over Google Classroom to finish all their academic requirements.

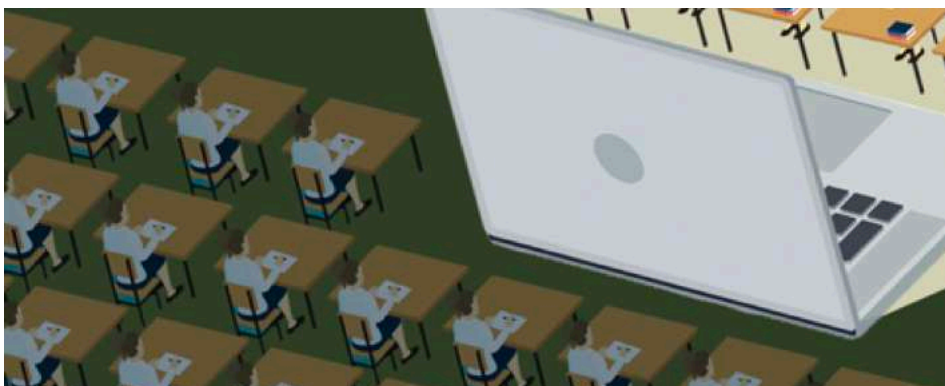
Standard affairs of the institution were put to an abrupt halt due to the surging pandemic - forcing the entire AC community to blindly navigate

the uncharted waters of the so-called "new normal." The shift had tremendously affected students, faculty, and staff alike as they grappled with the harsh realities of online learning during a national healthcare crisis.

The school had first suspended classes independently in early March until President Rodrigo Duterte placed the National Capital Region (NCR) and Luzon on lockdown under an Enhanced Community

Quarantine (ECQ) to arrest the spread of the disease. What started as temporary measures to supplement learning until regular classes resumed soon escalated into numerous extensions of the ECQ ruling. It urged the administration to forego an unprecedented long-term framework to finish the semester online.

Such a drastic change in platform and instruction came with it campus-wide concern throughout members



As COVID-19 cases rise, several academic institutions implement an online mode of learning; students grapple with connectivity issues, especially scholars living in rural areas.  
Image Source: Rappler

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## OPINION

Months after Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) entered the country, President Rodrigo Duterte has been addressing the urgent medical emergency the only way he knows how: reinforcing his brute military.



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## FEATURE

Assumption College San Lorenzo (AC) released a school policy addressed to the AC community that aims to encourage them to adopt an environmentally-friendly attitude.



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## SPORTS

Assumption College San Lorenzo (AC) hosted the 18th season of Women's Colleges Sports Association (WCSA) Competition with the theme "Be the Best You for Others" on February 1, 2020, at the campus' Sports Complex.



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As COVID-19 cases rise, several academic institutions implement an online mode of learning; students grapple with connectivity issues, especially scholars living in rural areas. Image Source: Outside the Beltway

## ‘WOMEN OF ACKSHION’ CONCRETIZED THROUGH AC TAAL RELIEF EFFORTS

By: Kristel Reign B. Nucum



The Assumption College Community at work providing their support to affected evacuees of the Taal Volcano eruption through several good donations such as food, water, clothing, slippers, and many more. Image Source: Assumption College San Lorenzo Facebook Page

After the Taal Volcano phreatic eruption on January 12, 2020, the Assumption College San Lorenzo (AC) Community addressed the immediate measure of providing collective effort upon the start of the second semester. Entitled, “Taal Relief Efforts by the AC Community” operation, the institution quickly gathered volunteers to help with donations.

The community was able to gather non-perishable food, clothes, medicines, toiletries, slippers, and blankets as donations from Old Girls (alumni) and generous donors alike. From the time the operation started, student and staff volunteers

were present to receive the donations at the college lobby to repack them in equal distributions before shipping them off to affected locals relocated to evacuation centers.

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS) stated that the Taal Volcano eruption originated from its main crater, spewing ashes across Calabarzon, Metro Manila, and some parts of Central Luzon. The calamity resulted in the suspension of classes, disruption of work schedules, postponed flights, and the like in affected areas. People living nearby Taal were forced to evacuate, leaving their livelihood and houses.

Institutional efforts prove that the school teaches women to live in faith and action, true to its promise of molding women of ACKSHION.

The social transformative core values that AC leads its students to include: Awareness of the current needs of those affected; Commitment to their volunteerism; Kindness in offering their vacant hours to help repack; Simplicity for donating what they can; Humility for helping within means; Integrity for allotting everything to Taal evacuees and having no self-interest; and making this operation possible through Oneness and Nature.

### AC’s 2nd SEMESTER WRAPS ONLINE...

*Continued from page 1*

of the institution, especially those who did not have proper access to stable internet connection and devices to aid in their academics.

Scholars got the brunt of this transition, with some living in far-reaching areas barely receiving any reception, clinging solely on limited data on their phones to join online classes. One stressed in an interview, “Although people have this perception of AC being a school for the privileged, we have a lot of girls who struggle as well.”

The admin was quick to respond to similar concerns expressed by the faculty. Library personnel immediately lent laptops, pocket wifis, and reference books, ensuring they knew how to navigate Google Classroom. It was to guarantee the observation of teachers’ full supervision during online instruction, and the quality of education was not compromised.

Not long after, the Office of Student Affairs (OSA) sent a survey intended to consolidate feedback regarding the online mode of synchronous classes conducted after receiving individual concerns from both parties.

The survey revealed the students’ struggle to meet their requirements for each subject due to connectivity issues and lack of an environment conducive to learning. Students’ anxieties grew over their welfare, all while stressing over their class standing and academic performance.

According to them, the arrangement did not cater to different learning styles, leaving others on edge to digest the necessary in-

formation essential to their courses. Instances of teachers sending additional work with unreasonable stipulations that were against the guidelines released by the school were also reported, further bringing confusion.

A graduating student mused, “I think the transition impacted my mental health the most [...]. Every day seemed so pointless [...], and it felt like I was just complying with the class requirements for the sake of complying and not really learning.”

Another scholar noted it was hard to concentrate. Not finishing the school year more profoundly due to the insufficient aspects of learning straight out of a screen worried her. She claimed, “It is hard to rest on the notion that we have done all our school work without learning gaps.”

Dr. Maita Ladrido, the Assistant Vice President (AVP) for Learning Innovation of the institution, highlighted the efforts made by the admin to address these concerns. The Academic Council, composed of all Chairpersons, Registrar, Research Desk, Admissions, OSA, and the Associate Deans, convened every week

to closely monitor each concern submitted to update online class guidelines. Aside from the survey, select representatives from the Assumption Student Council (ASC) filed a petition to suspend online classes in response to these grievances, which the Academic Council took into consideration.

An agreed asynchronous structure was decided upon, with lessened online classes and academic require-

ments to be submitted, including the modified letter grading system and the suspension of the 2.5-grade policy – which concerned all scholars previously.

An “Open-Door Policy” of different departments was retained to cater to students’ needs, while teachers closely monitored the progress of their students and gave lenient deadlines. Respective Chairpersons also immediately took action and summoned faculty members who did not follow online instruction guidelines.

The AVP stressed, suspending classes in AC was never an option explored by the Council. “Too much idle time is dangerous for all of us. On the side of the students, we couldn’t leave you and not know how you’re doing – it is not something we remotely considered; it is not part of the equation.”

Furthermore, she stated that the feedback sent by the faculty and the entire student body is being taken into account as they plan for the upcoming school year. “This is really a work in progress. Almost every kind of scenario we can possibly imagine, we’re planning.”

With this, she asks students to be patient and recognize that there will be difficulties along the way, calling them to voice their concerns and feedback as soon as possible.

Currently, students who have yet to finish their final requirements are given until September 1, 2020, to comply and garner a passing grade.



# AC'S GENERAL EDUCATION WEEK CALLS STUDENTS TO BE ENGAGED

By: Breanna Fenella Rain E. Muyco

Assumption College San Lorenzo's (AC) General Education Department (GenEd) celebrated GenEd Week on November 27, 2019, with the theme, "Be EngaGED!" Select accreditors from the Philippine Accrediting Association of School Colleges and Universities (PAASCU) also visited the campus and witnessed the three-day-long event.

Booths and exhibits packed the college atrium with the student's works, both for their finals and the arrival of PAASCU accreditors. The art exhibit showcased multiple paintings, tote bags, and jewelry. They were handcrafted to repre-

sent any artistic model that compressed all three elements of general education subjects: Math in the Modern World, Art Appreciation, and Ethics. First and second-year students also presented their booths and exhibits for Assumption and Women's Spirituality and Theology. The outputs were the students' artistic fruits of their interactive projects conducted for the youth in their chosen schools and parishes.

The second day of the culminating week was the busiest day for students who participated in the Fashion Show and the Spoken Poetry showcases. It also marked the first day when the PAASCU

accreditors visited the campus. The Fashion Show was judged by local designers Michael Joseph Bawer, Kate Marin Villarín, and Kristine Marie Rioflorido. The criteria for judging encouraged the students to maximize their resources to integrate three of their general education subjects and create a casual or formal outfit that resembles indigenous or nature-inspired art. The Spoken Poetry showcase was held in the Therese Emmanuel Building, where students - individually or in-groups - voiced their pieces inspired by social issues raised by their general education subjects.



Janine Quinto (left) of BS Psychology bags first place in the 2019 General Education Fashion Show with her own design modeled by Faith Esguerra (right).

Gen Ed week culminated in a showcase of the freshmen's Global Solution Projects under their Contemporary World subject. Booths and kiosks were set up to feature their self-made countries, including their

policies, history, national flag, and the national dish, which they handed out to the judges and to whoever stopped by their booths. All the while, a colloquium was being held in the Prieto Hall. First-year students presented their Assumption and Women's Spirituality inter-

active projects through a forum that was also webbed with Purposeful Communication.

Efforts and hard work dedicated by the participants and committees were recognized the following Monday. The bar was set entirely for next year's culminating week.

## PASKONG ASSUMPTIONISTA HELPS LIVE OUT ASSUMPTION CORE VALUES IN CHRISTMAS TIME

By: Jellen R. Lesiguez



Children are assisted by their assigned Ate volunteers during Paskong Assumptionista, December 4, 2020, at the college atrium. Image Source: Douille Thiel Pelayo, Assumption College

Assumptionists celebrated Paskong Assumptionista in a spirit of love and kindness among invited communities, Punta Sta. Ana, Sitio Kumunoy, AHA Learning Center, and the Assumption College San Lorenzo (AC) staff at the college atrium last December 4, 2019.

Students organizations spearheaded interac-

tive and educational games for the kids, while the National Service Training Program (NSTP) students served as their "Ate volunteers," or those in charge of taking care of them for the day. The children spent most of their time playing at the different booths set up by AC's own student home organizations and associations. During the program,

some of them confidently showed off their talents and skills while their parents eased off at their annual bingo and raffle portion.

The joint efforts of the Assumption Student Council (ASC), Assumption College Parents Council (ACPC), Center for Social Involvement (CSI), and the NSTP Department warranted the success

of the program. Performing organizations such as Circulo, Voices, and The Assumption Dance Company (TADC) heightened the mood by sharing their God-given talents through various performances.

It was indeed a Merry Christmas for the partner communities when they all took home a Noche Buena package from the ACPC. Their little ones smiled their way home, having received new school supplies.

Paskong A gave life to the core values of AC. It is not merely an annual event, but also a learning experience that commits one Assumptionista to social responsibility.

## AC SAVES LIVES THROUGH ANNUAL BLOOD DONATION DRIVE

By: Kristel Reign B. Nucum

The Center for Social Involvement (CSI) of the Higher Education Division (HED) of Assumption College San Lorenzo (AC), along with Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc., conducted the Annual Blood Donation Drive entitled "A Gift Straight from Your Heart," on November 9, 2019, at the 5th floor of the Therese Emmanuel Building (TEB).

Organizers provided donor's guides to ensure the eligibility of anyone interested to contribute to the drive. They also distributed waivers and preregistration forms to project the possible number of donating participants.

An estimated 100 individuals participated. However, only 48 were eligible to donate blood successfully. A simple token of thanks was given individually to recognize the spirit of volunteerism displayed during the event.

The eight-hour blood donation program was in coordination with the Assumption Student Council (ASC) and the National Service Training Program (NSTP) Office. The overall service providers were the University of the East, Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Medical Center Manila, and Our Lady of Lourdes.





President Rodrigo Duterte gives a televised speech to local government officials concerning quarantine protocols they must fully comply with. Image Source: Inquirer Net

## PRESIDENT DUTERTE WARNS LGUS TO COMPLY WITH NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PROTOCOLS

By: Jellen R. Lesiguez

President Rodrigo Duterte addressed the Local Government Units (LGUs) to follow the quarantine protocols that have been set by the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF). The National Government should "call the shots," and those who do not cooperate fully and take advantage of their power may face administrative cases, or worse, criminal charges.

An increase in Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases led to imposed nationwide lockdowns on March 16, 2020. Mass gatherings such as school, work, public transportation, and other affairs, were suspended under its implementation.

In Pasig City, Mayor Vico Sotto still called for the operation of tricycles for the use of healthcare workers and other emergency purposes. He explained the temporary suspension of transportation could put people at risk, especially those who do not own private vehicles and have no other option but to walk.

Duterte, however, disapproved of the request, and so the Pasig Mayor complied immediately.

The President warned

the LGUs in a televised message on March 20, 2020, stating the national government needs all their help during this time but should note that the LGUs are not separate from the republic nor each other.

He later reiterates the national government should call the shots, warning those who may go beyond standards and abuse their authority. The President may stop operations and issue administrative cases if necessary, to those who do not comply.

Duterte then ordered the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the Department of Justice (DOJ) to strictly supervise the compliance of LGUs and apply necessary charges against those who reprehend. The order given was after Duterte received reports that some have allegedly implemented their course of action in response to the pandemic. Netizens speculated that the President might be referring to, though not mentioned, Vico Sotto.

As of July 23, 2020, the Philippines has already confirmed 74,390 COVID-19 cases and 24,383 recovered patients. Meanwhile, the death count is now at 1,871, with 28 more reported deaths.

## AC PROFESSORS SHOWERED WITH LOVE AND APPRECIATION ON EDUCATORS' DAY

By: Chestene Ysadel M. de Guzman

Assumption College San Lorenzo (AC) commemorated its professors as students flocked together to celebrate Educator's Day on November 13, 2019, at the college atrium.

One of the highlights of the program boosting everyone's morale was the opening speech from AC's College Dean, Dr. Angela Regala. She expressed her thoughts on how AC's educators selflessly work to shape their students into women of faith and action. "Let us continue to celebrate the gift of teaching," she remarked with a smile.

Assumption Voices and The Assumption Dance Company's (TADC) Jazz and Hip-Hop groups showcased their talents through excellent



Assumption College educators are celebrated and honored for their service in honing students amid Educators' Day, November 13, 2019, at the college atrium. Image Source: Jellen Lesiguez

performances for the educators shortly after the speech. Organizers distributed giveaways, teachers took photos at the photo booth set up by the campus small stage, and some participated during the karaoke segment.

Professors, Reuel Ruiz, Pia Sison, and Sr. Myrna Maluyao were some of the musically-gifted educators who sang "Speechless," "The Greatest Love of All,"

and "I Won't Last a Day Without You," as the event came to a close. Dr. Regala concluded the celebration with a final speech.

The entire event served as an inspiration for all to continue sharing their transformative gifts to initiate change within young women of the world. AC's Educator's Day served as a memorable event for all.

This commemoration offers inspiration for all to continue sharing their transformative gifts and initiate change within young women of the world. It is an annual event dedicated exclusively to teachers, professors, deans, and staff of Assumption College, sponsored by the Assumption Student Council (ASC) and the Assumption College Parents Council (ACPC).

## DUTERTE SIGNS SALARY STANDARDIZATION LAW

By: Kristel Reign B. Nucum

President Rodrigo Duterte signed the Salary Standardization Law (SSL) of 2019, granting an annual salary increase to government employees starting January 1, 2020.

Presidential Spokesperson Salvador Panelo confirmed this through a press briefing on January 9 at the Malacañang Palace. Panelo explained the President's desire to upgrade government employees' living conditions, with the measure rationalizing the compensation of all civilian personnel.

With the law's enactment, all government workers' salary schedules will be increased



President Rodrigo Duterte officially signs the Salary Standardization Law of 2019 that will increase government employees' wages. Image Source: King Rodriguez, Presidential Photo

in four tranches every January until 2023. An estimated 1.4 million public servants, including nurses and teachers, are anticipated to benefit from this law.

In Duterte's fourth State of the Nation Address (SONA), he acknowledged the need for salary adjust-

ment and the urgency to grant government workers with Salary Grades (SG) 11-13. Once implemented, the SSL will give a salary increase from 24.1% to 30.1%. Moreover, this law also enforces the increment of the minimum basic salary from P 11,068 to P 13,000, to "remain competitive" with the

minimum daily wage in the National Capital Region.

Panelo also said the hike in salary was to stimulate productivity among government workers by providing a performance-based incentive scheme. Government officials must adhere to the law and dispense employees who have continuously exuded satisfactory service for at least four months their mid-year bonus equivalent to a month's basic salary.

Some lawmakers have opposed the hike, arguing that the increase was too small compared to the funds spent by a Filipino family.



## BAYANIHAN ACT WARRANTING DUTERTE SPECIAL POWERS FOUND QUESTIONABLE; ROUNDS UP CRITICS

By: *Denisse Kyle A. Virtucio*

Public opinion challenges constitutionality of the new Bayanihan Act, questioning the need for a law that grants the President legislative authority other than what is necessary amid a national healthcare crisis.

Congress deems fit that special powers be admitted to President Duterte to address the surging Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak through the Bayanihan To Heal As One Act (RA 11469), signed previously on March 25. The law, however, was subsequently put under scrutiny due to its inclusion of the phrase "other purposes" under the executive branch's authority in dealing with the national policy of combatting the looming pandemic.

Lawyer Jaime Ibañez, a former law dean of Laguna State Polytechnic University (LSPU), petitioned the Supreme Court to repeal the law, stressing this undue delegation of legislative power beyond the prescribed national policy is partly unconstitutional.

Ibañez notes, "The President is merely tasked to execute the law," with legislative power being vested in Congress.

The petition also asked to annul the Inter-Agency Task Force's (IATF) jurisdiction to issue community quarantine guidelines. The petitioner wrote, the IATF has no power over the law on community quarantine set parameters, and restrictions on how these guidelines should be defined and observed, much less invent the Modified Enhanced Community Quarantine according to its "own bizarre definition."

Ibañez's petition is despite the existing Executive Order 168 signed by former President Aquino, mandating the IATF to expedite measures to protect the people from emerging infectious diseases. The E.O. is meant to observe Section 15 of the 1987 Constitution, recognizing the State's role to promote and protect the rights to the health of the people.

Ibañez believes that to keep people in their own homes with a "No Work, No Pay" policy is severely against the Bill of Rights, emphasizing the placement of uninfected people in isolation for quarantine purposes is a violation of Filipinos' right to liberty and work.

He stated, to include Filipinos not covered

by the law and place them under community isolation is beyond the scope of R.A. 11469 and impedes on their rights.

The former law dean is not the first to question the constitutionality of the law. When it was still being passed in Congress, the Act's provisions were first cast dubious looks back in late March, specifically with the inclusion of the special budget powers that permitted the government to "reprogram, reallocate, and realign" any appropriation in the 2020 budget.

The draft also contained a section licensed to "temporarily take over or direct the operation" of private businesses needed during the COVID-19 pandemic, which sparked a frenzy among social media users. Although the former is no longer included in the final passing, the latter remained, with an addendum of the businesses being "subject to fair and reasonable terms."

As of date, the Supreme Court has disapproved of the petition. According to them, it fails to show the "grave abuse of discretion" committed by Health Secretary Francisco Duque III, Cabinet Secretary Karlo Nograles, and the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases.

The Bayanihan Law is only valid for three months after its passing, but talk of its extension is currently in the works.

## DIVORCE BILL APPROVED BY HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

By: *Denise Y. Ventura*

The House Panel has approved House Bill (HB) No. 100, commonly known as the Absolute Divorce Bill, filed back in 2018.

Albay 1st District Representative Edcel Lagman, author and advocate of the bill, will be heading the technical working group (TWG) in charge of consolidating the three measures for this act.

Lagman stated in a discussion, the bill can save people from long-term physical, emotional, and psychological damage due to abusive relationships or situations. He elaborated, saying divorce is not a "monster" that will destroy marriages — but the infidelity, abuse, and inequality present in the relationship.

Conservative members of the Senate against the Absolute Divorce Bill's approval



House OK's Divorce Bill. Image Source: Martin San Diego, Rappler

bring up the Philippines as one of the two remaining countries that do not practice divorce, the other being the Vatican City in Rome. Deputy Speaker Eddie Villanueva expressed that this will not help with meeting ends or addressing issues, such as the high cost of litigation and slow-grinding disposition of cases, which he affirmed were the real problems in disoriented marriages. He added that such would defile the sacrament of marriage, as it is deviance from God.

Concerning his apprehension and others', current Speaker of the

House of Representatives Alan Peter Cayetano, spoke of the same issue back in October 2019. The Speaker stressed that though some may or may not believe divorce is the solution, this does not mean committees are discouraged from discussing the bills. He elaborates that his stand on the matter will not be followed, so he does not see a point in divulging any further.

No matter the oppression evident amongst the senate, House Bill No. 100 is still under consistent progress and will be discussed further in the future.

## LOW INFLATION RATES: WHAT POOR FAMILIES FEEL ABOUT IT

By: *Claire Justine J. Sarria*

Compared to May 2016's inflation rate of 0.9% (referring to the increase in prices of goods), the lowest rate the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) has recorded dates October 2019 with 0.8 percentage. The cool down is off the 2% to 4% target band that the Philippine economy holds. Lower food and non-alcoholic beverages and other costs caused the 0.9% annual drop. Other commodities groups such as housing, electricity, gas, and fuels caused a 0.6% drop; furnishing, household equipment,

and maintenance holding steady at 2.7%; and health, restaurant, and miscellaneous goods and services at a 2.9% index.

For less fortunate Filipino families, this is welcome news as the lower inflation rate affords them some respite from spending higher for day to day living expenses. It also puts extra money for their kids' education and daily "baon" and some additional funds to buy medicines. But the currently ultra-low inflation rate has no other way but to go

up, as there is a minimal chance of it going down any further.

Inflation rates are expected to go up within the following months. Aside from the usual problems concerning resource shortages, increase in epidemic cases, and natural calamities that disrupt production, marginalized Filipinos have yet to face more challenges: trying to cope with the country's rising inflation rates. These families are the ones most brutally hit by this predicament.



The Supreme Court dismisses nine-page petition challenging the constitutionality of the 'Bayanihan to Heal as One Act'; Image Source: Mark Z. Saludes, Rappler



# IN TIMES OF PANDEMIC, WHO IS THE LAZY 'JUAN'?

By: Denisse Kyle A. Virtucio

Disclaimer: The views of the author do not reflect that of the institution, Assumption College San Lorenzo

We heal as one – or we wait as Juan?

In the advent of incompetence, insensitivity, and projective behavior evident among Filipino officials, this retelling of a cautionary tale begs the question, "*Sino nga ba ang tunay na Juan Tamad?*" ("Who is the real Lazy Juan?")

Months after Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) entered the country, President Rodrigo Duterte has been addressing the urgent medical emergency the only way he knows how: reinforcing his brute military. His attempts, from deploying armed forces in the earlier months to man quarantine checkpoints to summoning military tanks in high-risk areas, have been directed to combat an invisible enemy through bloody means, even if it results in the death of innocent civilians.

"I will not hesitate," he said previously without skipping a beat, instructing his troops to shoot quarantine violators dead.

This is despite mass pleas for support and an improved mass testing capacity from the government to aid the country as it enters an economic recession, threatening the livelihoods of thousands. Fined and arrested quarantine violators, branded as "*pasaway*" or bullheaded, questioned the President's directive regarding his choice of aggressive military acts instead of reinforcing the already poor healthcare system the country has. Appeals from overworked frontliners also remain to fall on deaf ears as they



Editorial Cartoon by: Annwen Rose P. Lim

call for concrete plans to arrest the growing number of active cases in the country, with the President urging everyone instead to endure the pandemic until the arrival of a vaccine.

Duterte elaborates, saying residents will "surely lose" should they intimidate or challenge the government any further. He condemned labor groups and low-income workers and asked them to wait for government assistance even though it may be delayed. Ceaselessly interjecting fear-mongering methods, he has since resorted to silencing public opinion and critiques on his regime's efforts.

At the helm of this tirade, Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque, to comment on the immense increase of COVID-19 cases, stated that it is not a source for alarm. Roque stressed the two percent, less than 2,000 death rate of the country as of date brought by this disease is "lower" compared to the world average. Directing his frustration to the masses, he retorts, "*Ano ba naman*

*ang gusto ninyo pa?*" ("What more do you want?")

But with people left starving at the brunt of a nationwide pandemic, what left is there to do? What more do the people want?

*Juan Tamad's* staple has been used as a cautionary tale for all Filipinos, and yet the folklore, which has often been depicted as a boy, or even a young gentleman, has never before been seen seated at the Malacañang Palace.

At the expense of millions, the President stays dormant in combating the disease through concrete measures. Quite alike the folklore, he remains seated at his humble abode, far from the harsh realities of the everyday Juan as he sits, mouth agape, waiting for a solution to bear fruit and fall neatly onto his tongue.

The icon, described as too lazy to the point of doing mindless tasks far from what was initially asked, reflects what continues to plague the Filipino image. The rise of the resiliency movement has escalated this

mindset, conditioning the masses to find reasons to smile and push through regardless of the circumstances in fear of emulating the titular caricature. However, when these circumstances are brought by public servants, those who call this resiliency a form of disobedience and dub the people's situation as a result of their laziness, it posits the question as to whether or not there is a reason for Filipinos to keep smiling.

President Duterte himself, among others, proves to be blind-sighted as he dares to ask his people to wait for social amelioration, a COVID-19 vaccine, and other substantial support from the government without a sense of urgency to those who are suffering. Instead, he focuses his efforts on unnecessary militarization and addressing irrelevant issues, such as the passing of the Anti-Terror Bill and the shutdown of the ABS-CBN Network. As far as medical crises go, the President sure is ready to approach the situation mindlessly, and far from what was initially asked – more

*Juan Tamad* than *Juan Tama*, indeed.

When scrutinized under the public eye, the President instead sees this as backlash and an attempt at slander, asking those who criticized the government to cease their "complaints," for they are not the government. Called out for his mistakes and asked to take accountability, he instead chooses to silence those who speak on behalf of marginalized sectors and disregard the truth of the matter at hand:

His administration is at the brink of disappointment, lauding their less than bare minimum efforts as victories while saying, "it could have been worse."

Enough is enough. It is due to this hypocrisy and lack of accountability that puts the masses at the brink of further suffering. The country is gradually entering the cusp of numerous problems threatening to loom in the foreseeable future, all because of self-serving public servants who barely accomplish the minimum required by their job description. The same

officials who label the people they serve as '*pasaway*,' and '*tamad*' should look at their gaping mouths and realize that this is the reality for the everyday Juan in a desperate plea for food to satiate their hunger. Meanwhile, theirs is a sorry attempt at an excuse for failing millions due to their incompetency. Incompetency, which led to the surge of this national healthcare crisis, leaving the marginalized locked away in their homes under a No Work, No Pay basis – wondering whether they will die first from the disease, or out of hunger.

*Ano pa ba ang gusto ng mamamayang Pilipino?* (What more do the Filipino people want?)

We should not be disillusioned by the romanticized resiliency movement that only seemed to prompt us into settling with the way things usually are. We should acknowledge that our countrymen deserve more. No more looking at ourselves as a mere statistic, no more searching for reasons to smile.

The Filipino people want government leaders who will put the welfare of those they serve first. They want a compassionate administration willing to sacrifice if it means saving their countrymen – and not just among previously convicted officials. They want an end to tyranny, discrimination, and injustice. They want to be heard, recognized, and valued. In a time when it truly matters the most, the Filipino people want to be what it means to show *Bayanihan*.



# ABS-CBN SHUTDOWN: IS HISTORY REPEATING ITSELF UPON THE HANDS OF A DICTATOR?

By: Jellen R. Lesiguez

“Philippine lawmakers on Friday, July 10, formally shut down the country's largest broadcast network, the latest major blow against the news media as President Rodrigo Duterte cracks down on outlets that have been critical of his leadership.” -Jason Gutierrez, The New York Times

It was, and still is, a “dark day” for ABS-CBN employees as a total of 70 members of the Committee on Legislative Franchises voted against the network's franchise renewal. Solicitor General Jose Calida, one of Duterte's campaign managers and a former Justice Undersecretary, filed a quo warranto petition last February 10 to abolish ABS-CBN's franchise. On May 3, he warned the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) for granting the network a provisional authority to operate, despite its pending

franchise renewal in Congress. Subsequently, on May 5, the NTC then issued a cease and desist order halting all the network's television and broadcast productions.

The fact that we are in the middle of a pandemic and losing a job is worse than before, the urgency of Congress to decide regarding this matter is very noticeable. It is as if they are scared not to meet the deadline of who knows, behind all the sabotage. Undoubtedly, the Philippines' democracy and press freedom are at stake in the hands of these officials who do not serve the interest of its people nor hear their laments. The COVID-19 pandemic is unfolding more than the government's incompetency and misplaced priorities, and some Filipinos are still turning a blind eye to their fellowmen's suffering.

Looking back at our history, this is not the first time ABS-CBN was forced off-air upon the hands of a dictator. On September 22, 1972, former President Ferdinand Marcos seized the operation of all independent media outlets in the country and later appeared on national television to declare Martial Law. Today, in the Duterte administration, ABS-CBN is being attacked once again. The President had accused the network of bias after it aired an advertisement in opposition to his 2016 campaign, paid by former Senator Antonio Trillanes IV. It is also facing other accusations that its members denied, such as tax evasion, swindling, contractualization, illegally operating a cable channel, and foreign ownership.

Duterte voiced out numerous threats to the network during his term, and in De-



ABS-CBN supporters and employees, including Angel Locsin and Neil Arce, holds a nationwide solidarity caravan and noise barrage, a week after the House of Representatives denied the network's franchise renewal. Image Source: Jire Carreon, Rappler

ember 2019, he declared publicly, "I will see to it that you're out." One year later, his words came into existence. The downfall of the Philippines' largest TV network was put into action, signifying the start of the government's tyranny. Press freedom is being curtailed by the President, who proclaims his absolute power to be in control, even among big and influential corporations. Consequently, intimidation is seen among other media organizations that hinder them from publishing information and their opinions, in fear of being imprisoned, red-tagged, or worse, killed.

How ironic that in an

interview, Duterte indicated his right to express himself, yet continues to silence those who blatantly expose the truth, especially on his bloody Drug War, such as ABS-CBN. He even insulted different media personnel and called them names, contrary to Presidential Communications Operations Office (PCOO) Secretary, Martin Andanar, who said the current administration continues to respect press freedom.

The President must learn to accept criticisms for the betterment of his governance — instead of harassing journalists, delivering countless rape remarks, admitting crimes of killing, bad-mouth-

ing officials, raising his middle finger, and of course, selling our sovereignty to China. He must also set aside his sentiments for the meantime, as the livelihood of ABS-CBN's 11,000 employees remains in peril.

Media is the voice of the people and not an enemy of the state. Only a dictator himself can be threatened by the power vested in it. To adhere to the truth and nothing but the truth is their responsibility. Let the media be independent and free from political repression. At this time, access to information is what the Filipinos need, not the laws that politicians urgently passed for their benefit.

## MASS PROMOTION AND ACADEMIC FREEZE: STATE OF EDUCATION IN TIMES OF THE PANDEMIC

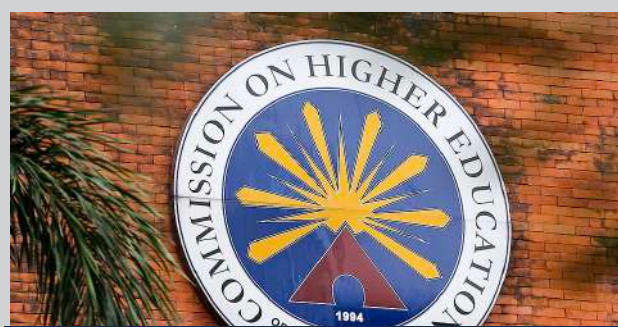
By: Chestene Ysadel M. de Guzman

Anxiety, uncertainty, panic - these are felt by people worldwide as they question the unforeseeable future brought by the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) - sending everyone into a frenzy. Amidst the increase of cases, the recession of the world's economy, and the spread of unemployment, people are forced to adapt and shape their daily lives to cope with this unsettling transition.

The Philippine education sector is among those that have been

most impacted by this drastic shift. As the government's response to impede the growing threat of the virus, sudden lockdown implementations pushed the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) to propose the options of mass-promotion or finish the semester by continuing classes online, to universities and schools.

In April 2020, Ateneo de Manila University (ADMU) and a few other universities decided to halt online classes at the beginning



CHED proposed the “mass promotion” of students to the colleges and universities who have the “academic freedom” to decide. Image Source: ABS-CBN News

of the second semester, and mass-promote students to the next year-level to help them focus on coping with the financial, mental, and health effects of the pandemic. The latter choice of continuing classes online was subject to controversy

and caused an uproar within students. Samahan ng Progresibong Kabataan or SPARK, a youth group, raised concerns in a petition directed to CHED about transitioning to online learning in the middle of the health-care crisis, and how

it affects Filipino students and households.

Ideally, the essence behind mass-promotion is the concept that no learner should be left behind. It gives academically-challenged students a chance to perform better in the following term. However, it undermines recognition among those who strive in academics, such as scholars, or students vying for honors and distinctions.

If mass-promotion is done long-term, the

lack of basis for grades, and the possible decline in academic performance would compromise quality education. Necessary fieldwork and hands-on training among graduates needed in the workforce would not be achieved in the confines of an online classroom. It is not a realistic goal to aim for and should be seen as a temporary intervention or a last resort.

In an Inquirer article dated April 23, 2020, 75 university heads expressed their dis-

Continued to Page 9



**MASS PROMOTION AND ACADEMIC FREEZE... Continued from page 8**

sent on the matter, as it would "fail to uphold academic integrity". To push through with mass promotion during the pandemic would result in more repercussions than benefits. What matters are actions and interventions, educators and administrators are willing to make to cater to each student's learning needs. This is where distance, blended, and other modes of learning come into the equation, for strictly continuing classes online is not a plausible option.

The Department of Education (DepEd) issued a report showing the number of enrollees this year (about 21.7 million, as of July 21, 2020) falls short of the set target (28 million), due to the economic crisis and parent's lack of confidence

in online learning, among other factors. Those without internet and gadget privileges are already placed at a disadvantage. Only 67% of Filipinos have access to a stable internet connection, relying on data, computer shops, or free wifi to access or submit learning materials.

The persisting threat of COVID-19 only intensified the economic division between the privileged and underprivileged, but the main priority should be bridging the gap between both. We may be experiencing a global crisis, but regardless of any student's socio-economic status, learning opportunities shouldn't be compromised. The quest for knowledge does not have to stop there. As shapers of the nation's future, we

have the inherent right to receive quality education. The transition to online classes is not practical for all Filipinos to adapt to, which is why other methods of learning have been proposed.

Local government units (LGUs) and other sectors are currently collaborating to keep the momentum going and shift to distance and flexible learning. As per CHED, radios and television channels would be utilized, being the most accessible technologies to broadcast or air lessons, as well as other manual resources such as print-outs and self-learning modules in an online learning platform known as "DepEd Commons". This is to be used by schools with stable internet access, as clarified by Undersecretary

Alain Pascua in a DepEd press release. Laptops would be provided to students and teachers in some cities like Makati and Manila, to support the online learning endeavor. The Philippines' educational system is in dire need of reform, and this is the first step towards making education accessible and inclusive to everyone.

When to implement these plans come into focus, especially when questions regarding the continuation of the academic year 2020-2021 are floating around. An academic freeze was brought into consideration. It enables institutions to have more flexible calendars and curricula. Senate Majority Leader, Senator Juan Miguel Zubiri, is a firm supporter, believing it is an excellent idea to

postpone the opening of classes to ensure the availability of necessary modules and streaming services to students. On the other hand, Senator Sherwin Gatchalian disagrees, openly declaring his dissent against an academic freeze, stating that learning should be continuous.

The main goal of education is to ensure that all individuals learn and grow to the best of their ability - and I agree. Learning should be unhampered, whether it involves children in their early stages of development or graduates preparing themselves for the corporate world. As we currently face unprecedented times, it would be challenging to achieve continuity. Our only option, for now, is to adapt to the situation. Fully pre-

pared or not, the key is to move forward and conquer obstacles along the way as we conform to the new normal.

Hope, persistence, optimism - these are qualities we all need in these trying times. With the government's support, it is up to educators, school administrations, and the LGUs to exert efforts towards delivering quality education to all. As we strive to rise above current challenges, we ought to unify in continuing education alongside combating the virus and exhibit the Filipino nation's resiliency, resourcefulness, and determination, through our journey of transitioning to the new normal as a nation.

## JEEPNEY PHASEOUT: A THREAT TO THE PHILIPPINES' "KING OF THE ROAD"

By: *Trixie Nicollete N. Villarosa*

On June 19, 2017, the Department of Transportation (DOTr), under the Duterte administration, launched the PUV Modernization Program (PUVMP), which requires the phaseout of jeepney units 15 years or older until June 2020. The program shows great intentions, as it aims to reform the public transportation system and make it efficient and environment-friendly for the safety and convenience of Jeepney drivers and Filipino commuters.

"The PUVMP envisions a restructured, modern, well-managed, and environmentally sustainable transport sector where drivers and operators have stable, sufficient and dignified livelihoods while commuters get to their destinations quickly, safely and



Transport group Piston expressed their utmost disapproval of the government's plan to phase-out traditional jeepneys. The rally happened at the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) office along East Avenue, Quezon City. Image Source: Jonathan Cellona, ABS-CBN News

comfortably." (DOTr, LTFRB)

Two years after its launch, transport groups are still not in favor of the program. Thousands of jeepney drivers have been protesting against it due to difficulties in complying with the terms. An average jeepney driver earns around 500-600 pesos daily, with a minimum of 200 pesos. The modern-

ization of one jeepney vehicle costs about 600,000 to 1.8 Million pesos. Evidently, this is a massive struggle for drivers who do not have that amount of money, even if they worked every day until the set deadline. With their livelihood at stake, they have no idea where to get that sum of money to keep up with modernization when they could barely survive a day's worth

of expenses. As if they haven't been going through enough, the pandemic happened. Jeepney drivers had to stop working for more than three months and, consequently, began to starve. They begged the government for assistance as they cannot fend for their families' needs anymore. Upon going out to the streets to protest, it only resulted in their arrest. I am all for the mod-

ernization of PUVs, as a commuter myself. I see that this program has envisioned a great future for our public transportation system. However, I stand with the jeepney drivers claiming that this program is anti-poor. The conditions given to the drivers are impossible to meet unless the government provides help for all those affected. This phaseout only favors the rich and those

who can afford the modernized vehicles.

I understand that this program will never be successful if it stops whenever someone retaliates, but that's the case - they should consider the struggles of jeepney drivers and operators, and come to terms with them. If only a few can't comply at some point, they should be given an alternative option.

Considering that we are experiencing a pandemic, and our jeepney drivers have been struggling for more than three months because of the enhanced community quarantine, I do not condone the jeepney phaseout execution. It should not be a prime concern, seeing that it does not benefit the drivers or commuters in a healthcare crisis.



# PANELO'S COMMUTE CHALLENGE

By: Kristel Reign B. Nucum

Months ago, Presidential Spokesperson Salvador Panelo disagreed when asked if he thought there was a traffic crisis in the country. "Everybody suffers from that, that is a given, but there is no mass transport paralysis; hence there is no mass transport crisis," he infamously remarked in a press conference. It was the same week when all major train systems in the metro broke down.

In 2015, a Global Driver Satisfaction survey conducted by Waze reported that Metro Manila has the "worst traffic in Southeast Asia." The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) knows that Metro Manila is one of the world's densest cities. With this, people residing in Metro Manila are having a hard time in transportation due to traffic congestion. This may be caused by infrastructure prob-

lems, big volume of private vehicles, high population, and many others.

The public demands the government to plan and implement laws and policies to solve traffic congestion. There was also a breakdown of three mass transit systems. The Filipino people typically identify the presence of a transportation crisis given these situations. But the Malacanang Spokesperson rebutted, "Ano bang ibig nilang sabihin na transportation crisis? Ang nakikita ko lang traffic. May transportation naman, nakakasakay naman tayo lahat." What do they mean by transportation crisis? I only see traffic (jam)[...] There is transportation, we can still get rides.) He further explained that there is no transportation crisis because everyone gets to reach their specific desti-

nations. In his final remarks to the press, he gave the public a challenge: "If you want to arrive early in your destination, then you go there earlier." He told everyone to wake up and leave early.

This particular answer of Panelo made the public angry. It was seen as insensitive by most people, especially in social media. Personally, I also experienced heightened emotions towards the issue, even if I am not a daily commuter. Kongreso ng Mananakay, a commuters' group, and numerous netizens dared Panelo to take public transportation on his journey from his house to the Malacanang Palace for six months. He gradually accepted the commute challenge and said that he would be taking a jeepney and the LRT.

Last October 11, 2019, Panelo finally did the



Presidential Spokesperson Salvador Panelo struggled to find a proper seat at the back of a Jeepney as he takes on the commute Challenge in October 11, 2019. Image Source: Interaksyon.ph

commute challenge. He left his house in Marikina City at exactly 5:15 am, which was technically not rush hour. He took four jeepney rides and one motorcycle ride from a good samaritan to take him to his work. His one-way commute took him 3.5 long hours when it just should be 40 minutes to 1.5 hours. His commute ended at 8:46 in the morning. It was a bit faster due to the free motorcycle ride offer. He was even

marked "late" by the people, and for him, it was "okay lang." With that said, I would like to reiterate that tardiness is permissible just because of traffic congestion and transportation problems, especially if commuters are doing their very best to leave their houses early and make it work on time.

After his challenge, he said that his previous statement of daring everyone to wake up early is a "compliment"

to each individual who does that every day. Panelo's remarks were seen as a cover-up since his commute challenge did not end well. He might have been careful with his words to the public, not as the Presidential Spokesperson, but also as a public figure representing the government, and above all else, a Filipino. He could have said better statements to really "compliment" the Filipino commuters' sacrifices and deeds.

## ARE FILIPINOS NOT SMART ENOUGH?

By: Annwen Rose P. Lim

Being called intelligent or smart can boost one's confidence. Having a high IQ can make anyone seem powerful and intimidating enough. The truth is, intelligence can vary from person to person. People might not prioritize education nor the time to study their environment. Some people prioritize their own families by finding work to pay off bills to feed and support them.

I do not believe that Filipinos are not smart enough not to be included in articles that enlist "smart" Asian countries. Filipinos are smart, just like other countries, because of good schools

that train and enlighten their minds. Philippine educational institutions are quick to correct mistakes and shape students' perspectives on society. Why then do we question if the Philippines is among the smartest countries in the world? Why then do we reference Mario Alvaro Limos' article entitled, "Philippines is Dead Last in the Ranking of Smartest Countries in the ASEAN"? Does this mean that Filipinos are born "dumb" or "stupid"?

Presently, most of the country's population has access to quality education, dedicating most of their time to improving their com-



Philippine flag, along with the other flag of ASEAN countries. Image Source: Wikipedia

munity. The state, rife with poverty, unable to grant Filipinos access to education due to impoverished conditions and lack of financial support. It is just that the Philippines is a poverty-stricken country with a corrupt government. Filipinos most certainly are not "stupid" - some merely do

not have, or have not been granted access to, education. If the government had sought immediate action to resolve most of these problems, half the population would have been receiving quality education in the pursuit of providing service for the nation by now.

Again, these articles showing different rankings of countries should not put us down. It should motivate us to aim for development and growth. Our fellow Filipinos never give up on each other. When one needs assistance, fellow Filipinos immediately

seek action. We should also remember that being smart cannot stand alone without values. To think is to act, but values help us become better people. Putting these values at work, it shows that we are not merely smart, but compassionate and merciful as well.



# POLICE SUPERSEDING JUSTICE BY PLANTING EVIDENCE

By: Claire Justine Sarria

A chunk of my time spent during the quarantine is engrossed in watching true crime investigation shows. What Netflix suggests I continue watching - and to which I oblige - is the long-running true crime series that documents real American heinous cases solved by forensic detection, *Forensic Files*.

For 406 episodes, *Forensic Files* has shown accurate accounts of how horrific incidents occurred, the matter of which a victim died, and demonstrated justice and conviction to actual perpetrators - all with the aid of one-the-scene, authentic, and unaltered forensic evidence.

Out of all the genres I can watch, why can I not simply keep my finger off 'next episode...' of such a theme?

I would say that I am drawn to my aspirations -- not to learn from the miscalculations of these suspects to carry out crime smoothly, but the desire to be content with the operations that the criminal justice system my own country can execute.

Perhaps, there is a more scientific reason for that. A research done by criminologist, and former network television executive, Dr. Scott Bonn, made clear that one of the complex reasons people are allured to true crime TV is the awareness that perpetrators "often blend into society very effectively and for long periods of time." True crime bingers like myself are enticed by the fact that anyone can play out the death of another, and sometimes if one is lucky, there could be



Philippine National Police (PNP) were caught and accused by a human rights watchdog, in which they have reported that they are responsible for manipulating evidence to justify the killings in the drug war. Image Source: The Guardian

one whole government to help conceal it for long periods of time. But what happens when the people we naturally run to for protection and expect to conduct criminal investigations carried out by anybody, are the 'anybody's who have jeopardized what could have been a thorough inquest in the situation?

You see, this is not a *Forensic Files* review, but rather, my perspective on the true crimes that happen around me beyond the screen.

In the Philippines, the trends for resolvable causes of death are illness-related, self-inflicted, or accidental. On the other hand, the PH trends for unresolved crime-based deaths peak just as much. This is partly due to the merciless killings that have been brought by the administration's anti-drug campaign, with the "nanlaban" narrative of reported policemen planting evidence in their operations to slain drug suspects prevailing. These killings, which authorities

have claimed to be less than the actual cases since its 2016 beginnings, have been garnering the United Nations (UN)'s attention. The UN took its efforts to urge an investigation of these potential "crimes against humanity" that bore "perilous normalization" of illegal executions and police abuses, which the country continuously rejects.

Maltreatment of any form must not be the norm, especially on the hands of men who took an oath to uphold justice and ensure national security. Along with the bereaved family of those victims, the rest of the country grieves for this degradation of peace.

The UN finally caved the operations it had wished to be considered by the country's administration. It now seems this vicious cycle has been amplified and will continue to ring on the ears of many. The United Nations Human Rights reported that police planted guns to serve as evidence to their "nanlaban" fronts

against drug suspects they shot down in their operations.

After all, these documents were too substantial to be "rubbish," as the Center for International Law (CenterLaw) would describe it. They just needed to land on the hands of the right people.

"OHCHR identified seven handguns with unique serial numbers. Each handgun appeared in at least two separate crime scenes, while two of them reappeared in five different crime scenes," said the report.

"The pattern suggests planting of evidence by police officers and casts doubt on the self-defense narrative, implying that the victims were likely unarmed at the time of killing," the report added.

This predicament places me on the 'anger' stage of grief. The unfair justification needs to be accounted for. As much as we want to demand due process to occur, the government will fall short in providing us

with the results we desire because the "near impunity" granted to police will take function to further neglect justice. These reports imply anyone's vulnerability to evidence distortions on the off-chance police and other law enforcers side with corruption and misconduct. The slain suspects and their families do not deserve such malpractice, in the same line as losing a loved one for allegedly fighting back when they were unarmed in the first place.

I believe all carry the same burden in the form of mistrust. It has become arduous to live in a systematic society when anyone can fall victim to a contemplative narrative that we have been weakened to correct. Everyone deserves to live in a country where manipulation and death are not the leading solutions for societal reformation, one where people get to trust their national security and officials to carry out legal processes in their work truthfully and ethically.

Now, imagine a Philip-

pine version of *Forensic Files* with episodes sure to run for more than a year's worth of Netflix subscription. Imagine a capitalized depiction of a false narrative. Would you be too engrossed to continuously watch such altered and non-justice serving episodes produced by biased self-interests? Filipino audiences should not be easy to fool now.

I want to continue watching *Forensic Files* with confidence in the reality of my country's justice system. Instead of tapping onto the next episode, I will lend my hand to vote for the people who can truthfully raise theirs upon following through with their promises.

It would seem that even before the sinister spread of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) required us to wear masks, our law enforcers have already been doing so. But we must follow suit in uncovering what needs to be exposed and live with transparency in a society fighting to be unmasked.



# DEVASTATED ECONOMY OF PH CAUSED BY GOVERNMENT'S COVID-19 RESPONSE?

By: *Kristel Reign B. Nucum*

Since the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) was enforced in various parts of the Philippines, its economy has dramatically been affected due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. At hand, COVID-19 cases in the country are surging ahead compared to other Southeast Asian nations. Despite the stay-at-home orders and quarantine policies, the Philippines is facing an economic downturn.

In the first quarter of 2020, the Department of Finance (DOF) revealed the country's gross domestic product (GDP) shrank by two-tenths of one percent for the first time in the last two decades. It is also estimated that in the succeeding economic quarters, there will be a loss between three and four percent in GDP. Governor Benjamin Diokno of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) predicted that if the Philippines' economy continues to take a turn for the worse, it will likely enter a recession. Should the economy fall, the state might face hindrances in achieving its 2020 goal of becoming an upper-middle-income country status by gross national income (GNI) per capita, as its

attention will be towards resolving problems on employment, poverty, establishments, health and safety, and such.

The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) estimated a total of 7.3 million unemployed Filipino adults in their June report, mostly caused by the pandemic. The number added 5 million jobless people reflecting on the effects of the economic shutdown in the labor market. Also, 13 million Filipinos were unable to report to work due to pandemic regulations. The industry of arts, entertainment, and recreation had the most significant drop, with 54% slashed in workers and operations had to stop. Affected as well are the workers in electricity, gas, and steam supply (43.1%), information and communication firms (40.6%), and accommodation and food service activities (35.8). The construction industry also cut employees by a third. The number of Filipinos with jobs at hand is 33.8 million, 82.3 percent of the market, and is lower than the 94.7 percent at the start of the year. This figure now includes thousands of overseas Filipino workers as of who had returned to the country.

Claire Dennis Mapa, Na-

tional Statistician, made a market commentary, "No salary, no consumption. No consumption, no growth." The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) has an estimate that 10 million workers will lose jobs this year because of the COVID-19 crisis. However, known as business process outsourcing, the BPO industry continuously surged over the past two decades, accounting for about 8% of GDP. Its success was why President Duterte allowed BPOs to operate despite the lockdown, as it is another pillar of the country's economy.

As the Filipino people battle against this health-care crisis, they are also in deep grief on how to sustain their everyday needs. Most of them rely on the relief goods provided by public and private individuals and groups. However, those packs containing rice, few canned goods, instant foods, and biscuits, cannot keep on with the Filipino family's needs.

The production and distribution of food also slowed down, particularly in Luzon due to the lack of financial assistance and transportation inaccessibility caused by quarantine policies. Several fast food and restaur-

ant chains suspended their dine-in services and instead opted to offer take-out and delivery services. Following quarantine measures, online food ordering services such as GrabFood and Foodpanda temporarily halted but in time, resumed and catered services to most people.

In the "total retail environment," there is a decline of 30-50 percent, as reported by the Philippine Retailers Association. Despite the decline, most retail stores that provide essential services, including supermarkets, convenience stores, and pharmacies, continued operations while strictly implementing safety measures across the country to sustain consumers while other mall stores were closed. As mall establishments were forced to close down, such as the SM Investments, the country's largest retailer, it greatly affected consumers' consumption and employment. Before and during the quarantine period, panic buying and hoarding were rampant, particularly with essential goods and sanitation products, resulting in a shortage of these. The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) has imposed price freezes on products and

stores were forced to limit the purchase of these goods per person. As the government continues to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, its loans inflate. As of June, the Philippines' national debt has a total of P9.05 trillion, as reported by the Bureau of Treasury. Out of the total outstanding debt, 32% were sourced externally, such as from the Asian Development Bank and World Bank, while 68% came from domestic sources. The decrease in the government's revenues, especially taxes because of COVID-19 pandemic, consequently brought the much-needed government's loans, and the need to spend immediately for financial assistance among the vulnerable sectors. With these, most Filipino people in social media are enraged about carrying the burden of all the debts. At hand, the House panel is planning to push through imposing a 12% VAT on digital services such as Netflix, Facebook, etc. to add on government's revenues to cover up the loans. These loans might take years or even decades to pay, giving Filipinos an immense responsibility aside from their health and life safety.

The government has been implementing safety measures and quarantine policies to fight the pandemic. However, as each sector reports its status, its economy is significantly affected, impacting the Filipinos' survival day-to-day. With COVID-19's effects on public health, safety, life security, and career, the question now lies on whether or not the loan proceeds will actually go to the sectors that need it the most, and not get funneled. The public is now all eyes on the government's economic committee on how they will spend the money. This pandemic, no doubt, tests the Philippines' economic condition and aspirations.



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After weeks of paranoia and several virus outbreaks, the Philippine government has made a response towards the spreading of the recent Coronavirus and how they will be able to eradicate or lessen the problem. Image Source: Jire Carreon, Rappler



# A CARE FOR NATURE

By: *Alainee Yzabelle F. Fabon*

Due to issues we face in today's time, such as global warming and climate change, Assumption College San Lorenzo (AC) released a school policy addressed to the AC community that aims to encourage them to adopt an environmentally-friendly attitude. The school has taken the initiative to be a part of a movement dedicated to reducing waste and addressing climate change. Inspired by Pope Francis's *Laudato Si'* advocacy, AC adapted a more serious approach, with a one-month information campaign and adjustment period before the policy officially took effect in November 2019.

On October 2, 2019, an email from the Higher Education (HED) Office of Student Affairs (OSA) regarding the new policy was circulated within members of the student body. Students were asked to answer the Environmental Literacy Instrument (ELI) to help the administration assess the necessary measures to implement the policy.

Ms. Geraldine Sales, the HED Student Activities Coordinator (SAC), said that one of the policy's main goals is to reduce at least 50% of the school's total waste by October 2020. She mentioned that it is a simple system where everyone is expected to participate voluntarily out of care for nature. It is an individual responsibility and commitment to preserving the earth. The HED SAC stated that *Laudato Si'* had already been implemented in AC since last year. Still, the complete and detailed reinforcement of this policy and its neces-

sary guidelines were formulated and formally carried out starting this academic year.

As part of the guidelines released, the institution starts to practice the "No to Single-Use Plastics Policy," Kitchen City Express staff would ask for IDs if a student or faculty and staff choose to bring utensils and plates outside of the AC commons. Also, food stalls are starting to provide reusable plastic containers. The AC community is expected to bring their own tumblers and lunch boxes if they want to take out their food. Kitchencity Express is no longer providing paper boxes and disposable spoons and forks; all utensils are reusable and environment-friendly. Cobo, a milk tea concessionaire, sells reusable cups for five pesos if you forgot to bring your tumbler. The second time you buy a drink from them, five pesos would be deducted from your bill. They also offer metal straws with a cleaner that really helps to reduce the usage of plastics.

There are also specific schedules and limitations in the number of food deliveries accepted on campus to carefully monitor and manage food packaging waste entering the College. A 15-minute policy of turning off air conditioners and electric utilities before the offices' dismissal hour and last afternoon classes is also implemented.

Students are now required to recycle scratch papers, which would be used for informal printing purposes and lavatories. Dr. Pinky Valdes, the College President, loves practicing this habit.

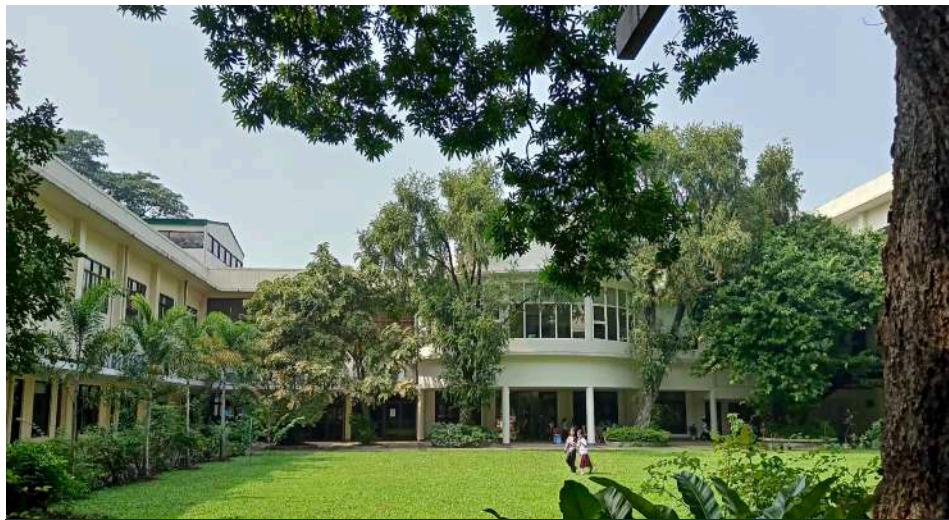
Proper waste disposal is also observed. Trash bins with clearly-printed labels (biodegradable, non-recyclable, and recyclable) are strategically placed around the campus. There are separate bins in the AC Dorm dedicated to the segregation of scratch papers, paper wastes, wipes and napkins, food waste, dry, empty bottles, and plastic wrappers.

"...*Laudato Si'* would not just reduce the waste in Assumption but also help our Mother Earth; it's our home kasi, it's a way of taking care [of it]--so we have to start now and act now [rather] than say sorry in the future," Ms. Geraldine Sales remarked.

She explained the *Laudato Si'* movement is not a common thing for all of us. That is why the campaign is extended until the end of December 2019 to give time for the community's transition and adjustment period.

"[...]We want the students to start it in school [and to] do it as a habit, especially when you are at home and [to] influence your family to do the same. The small actions that we do would give a great effect on the people we are with," she added.

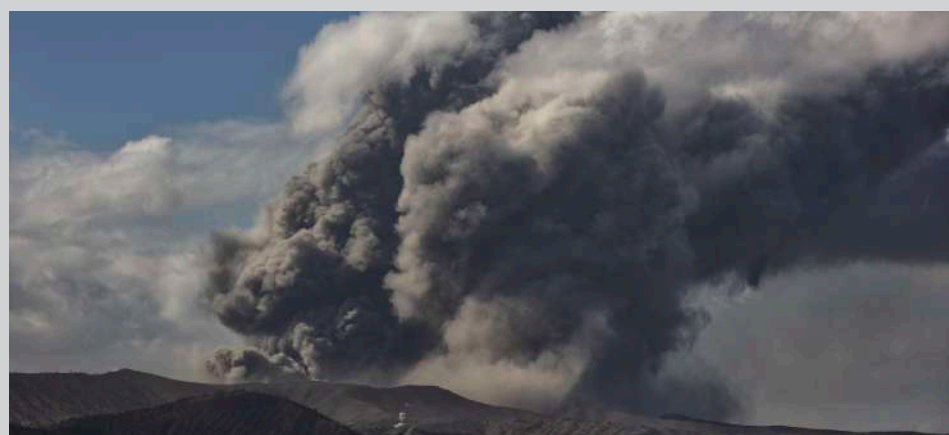
The gist of AC's vision is to form women of faith and action for social transformation, which starts within us. Social change for preserving our Mother Earth would not be possible if we do not act and respond as one. Let us not forget that we are all stewards of God's creation. Let us take *Laudato Si'* seriously because out of our love and concern for nature in AC, we care!



Assumption College decides to move along with this advocacy to lessen the effects of climate change and to help the environment; provides ways to adequately address the issue. Image Source: Alainee Yzabelle Fabon

## DOES THE TAAL VOLCANO EXPLOSION HAVE CLIMATE IMPACT?

By: *Alainee Yzabelle F. Fabon*



Thick smoke covered the sky during The Taal Volcano explosion back in January 2020. Image Source: Getty Images

Shock riveted the Philippines after the Taal volcanic eruption last January 12, 2020. The last time it exploded was in October 1997, and several incidents of its unrest were recorded in 2011, 2012, and 2014. The total number of affected families reached 88,842 while the number of evacuees reached 37,311. The towns within the 14 km radius of the volcano crater, namely Talisay, Agoncillo, Lemery, and San Nicolas, were covered by the ash. Not only were the Taal Volcano Island and Batangas areas affected, but also the neighboring towns and cities in Cavite, Laguna, Quezon, Rizal, Metro Manila, and Central Luzon were heavily impacted by the ashfall.

The most devastating and destructive eruption happened during 1991 when Mount Pinatubo erupted, causing the global temperature systems to temporarily decrease in one degree for the

next two years. The decrease in temperature is the excessive amount of sulfur dioxide released in the stratosphere due to the eruption.

Many must be wondering if Taal Volcano can do the same. Experts say no, although there are no precise predictions yet for a more vigorous eruption in the future. The Mt. Pinatubo eruption in 1991 was far different from Taal Volcano's eruption this year. The former released 20 million tons of sulfur dioxide that reached the stratosphere. Taal volcano's eruption on January 12, 2020, only released 25% of Pinatubo's sulfur dioxide and has not yet reached the stratosphere.

What happens in the climate system after a powerful volcanic eruption like Pinatubo's is that the released sulfur dioxide would turn into aerosol, which is known for its reflection of sun rays.

"The more SO<sub>2</sub> is emitted, the more likely it is that the eruption will impact climate," Simon Carn, a volcanologist at Michigan Technological University, told weather.com. "The SO<sub>2</sub> is critical because it converts over time into sulfate aerosol (small droplets of sulfuric acid and water), and it is these aerosol particles that reflect incoming solar radiation (sunlight) and reduce temperatures."

If Taal's volcanic activity keeps on subsiding, it would have little to no potential for climate impact, unless the severity of its eruptions is as alarming as Mt. Pinatubo's. Every volcano has its own characteristic, severity, intensity, and impact on both living things and the environment. Whatever happens, we should always be alert and ready. As stewards of God's creation, let us do our part and be accountable for our own actions towards the environment.



# A NATURAL WOMAN

By: *Claire Justine J. Sarria*

Part of being a fully-fledged student of Assumption College is living out the core values that have been patterned after the life-giving heart of Saint Marie Eugenie and inspired by the call to be socially responsible. One pressing hindrance that we face is the constant build-up of pollution and the destruction of a sound and healthful environment - this problem is nothing new. Assumption College has come up with ways to battle this and cut the cycle of formidable environmentally-unfriendly practices. At 50%, it hopes to eradicate these practices among its proximity, interwoven with this is the students' full cooperation and integrated formation.

To live an eco-friendly lifestyle is required of us, especially since we are bound in an institution that faithfully fights for an environmental cause. We can accumulate our own 50% if we start with what is most innate - the first social thing we can do is recognize what aggravates the cause and take on roles to become women of action, women of nature.

Although dynamic academic landscapes get selfish with our schedule and attention, shifting to an eco-friendly lifestyle is as possible as it is crucial. With the stacks of paperwork we have to beat the deadline for and our consumption of food, apparel, and accessories to reward ourselves for finishing off this paperwork, in what ways can we glam ourselves up to be women of nature?

Here are five ways to be so:

## **1. Use Ecoasia as your search engine.**

The technological luxury we thrive in allows us to get work done faster and more efficiently due to an array of information we can easily access. For students whose counterpart in studying is the internet, search engine extension Ecoasia has made it possible to search the web while contributing to its tree-planting activities. An alternative, free search engine that kicked-off in Berlin, Ecoasia invests almost

100% of its profits to tree-planting projects in places where it is demanded the most. Since its operations started in

into your womanhood.

The rising notion that women have needs to spend a lot on could

depending on the user's menstrual flow and the cup's size. It is also essential to learn that the reusable characteristics

get recycled every year. Bringing one's reusable water bottle addresses environmental needs so efficiently that investing



*In order to make the world a better and safer place to live in, there are certain precautions and actions that must be taken into consideration. Image Source: Alaine Yzabelle F. Fabon*

2009, Ecoasia has planted 85 million trees in 9000 planting sites worldwide. It has been salvaging countries in need of urgent tree restoration for every 40-45 searches a user makes and has since gained 15 million users. This greener and more sustainable alternative generates income through search ads and proves to be safer to use. Ecoasia does not use 3rd party trackers and does not shell out data to advertisers. Its users feel more secure since it anonymizes and encrypts searches and does not keep them longer than a week.

Ecoasia's global movement to social change also leans on supporting local communities by employing them into their tree-planting projects and pursues full transparency of finances by making available online their monthly financial reports and tree-planting receipts. Ecoasia, an empowering medium, may now be used as a mobile app. The next time you have loads of online research to do, bet on Ecoasia to mold you into a purposeful student who is sensitive to the world's needs!

## **2. Insert the use of eco-friendly and cost-effective Menstrual Cups**

be backed with environmental, health, and economic claims: five to 15 million estimated tampons and pads used by millions of women worldwide become waste in landfills, which can take centuries to decompose. They are made of materials with harsh chemicals that could cause irritation and serious diseases, and they have become too costly for years of use.

This amplifies our need to care for our body and the environment by considering the use of Menstrual Cups as an alternative to the leading menstrual hygiene products. Menstrual Cups are small and flexible cups made of medical-grade silicone and or latex rubber inserted into the vagina. They are reusable and must be sterilized for further use. Their contribution to the environment can be used up to 10 years when proper care is practiced, redirecting waste, and lessening landfills. Toxic Shock Syndrome, bacterial infections, and diseases caused by harsh tampon and pad materials are eliminated in the shift to Menstrual Cups. Unlike pads and tampons that absorb, Menstrual Cups collect and catch more menstrual blood for up to 12 hours,

of Menstrual Cups make them wallet-friendly and cost-effective, saving years worth of purchasing pads and tampons. Since health will always be a concern, it is crucial to consult your Gynecologist before considering the shift; precautions, lifestyle, medical history, and the cup's appropriateness must be taken into account first.

## **3. Strut your own water bottle.**

In college, staying hydrated is one of the things you need to conquer the day fiercely - this means carrying around your own water bottle. But single-use water bottles should not match your ensemble. As revealed in a 2017 US study, reusable water bottles save the Earth from millions of plastic bottles that end up in landfills and oceans worldwide. Non-biodegradable water bottles take thousands of years to decompose and leak dangerous chemicals in the process. Their manufacturing process also requires a ton of energy - about 17 million barrels of fossil fuel per year - proportionate to its products' pollution. When recycling is brought to the picture, it is contradicted by stating that only 12% of 35 billion water bottles

in branded stainless steel water bottles has become a trend. Not only is it wallet-friendly to bring your own, but this becomes an effort to be kind to the environment. Sturdy and durable water bottles could last a year, and they come in types that suit various needs: vacuum-insulated, glass, stainless steel, and the hip collapsible water bottle.

## **4. Shower with bars.**

To combat the tremendous proliferation of plastic pollution, beauty companies owe it to the environment to sell package-free products. Mark Constantine, the co-founder of Lush Cosmetics, says that packaging is rubbish that we have to deal with at an excessive amount and time. He sees that environmental and financial costs cause manufacturers and retailers to "cut the wrap."

Beauty consumption pollutes the planet. We have piles of non-recyclable beauty bottles that must have been growing even before we learned how to wear makeup. As much as we want to maintain this lifestyle,

there rises the demand to avail package-free beauty products. Similar to Lush, companies have diverted to producing shampoo and conditioner in package-free bar forms. They share the same lathering characteristics as liquid shampoo and conditioner but have a shelf life of approximately three times more than bottled products. Shampoo and conditioner bars are starting to emerge in the market, and it is only exemplary that we skip the bottles section and purchase the bars instead. Redirect waste by shopping wisely as well - bring your own Eco Bag and check out with care!

## **5. Patronize eco-friendly companies.**

The world's resources are finite, and businesses grow as resources increase. There is no more alarming time to care for the planet than now. In the age of Globalization, we enjoy products as much as we pollute the Earth, and we are left with a splitting question of whether importation is good or bad. As future women leaders, we have to realize that even if we fend for others' needs, there is still a more urgent call we need to attend to, which is to work towards environmental change. We are taught that social responsibility is crucial in the workforce, and fortunately, now we see this contextualized. Currently, some companies promote sustainable development - tapping on eco-friendly practices at that. The most we can do now, other than taking after their example, is to patronize these companies to the extent that everyone else will conform. The world needs more Greta Thunbergs so that the world will pile up with eco-friendly behavior.





# AC "OLD GIRLS" PASS RPM BOARD EXAM 2019

By: Ellaiza Lu

A degree in Psychology offers a wide variety of career choices, often depending on what you decide to pursue after completing your undergraduate studies. You can pursue a psychologist's career or attend medical school towards the path of becoming a psychiatrist. Some people who do not wish to pursue graduate studies can work in an office setting, specifically in the Human Resource department of any company. Another choice to consider is becoming a psychometrician, which requires a licensure exam. Psychometricians ensure the validity of psychological measurements or tests.

This year, the Raven's

Professional Regulation Commission

## PSYCHOMETRICIAN

### List of Passers: October 2019

#### Psychometrician Board Exam Results

WWW.PRCBOARD.COM TWITTER.COM/PRCBOARD FACEBOOK.COM/PRCBOARD PRCBOARD.COM@GMAIL.COM

The Psychometrician Board Exam Results were released last October wherein a sum of 6,800 examinees out of 10,670 passed.  
Image Source: PRC Board

Progressive Matrices (RPM) board exam occurred in October 2019, with 10,670 exam takers nationwide. The results were released on November 4, 2019, where 6,800 people reportedly passed the exam, amounting to a 63.73% passing rate. This year's passing rate increased in number and is the highest amongst

the rates recorded for the past 5 years. 2018's passing rate was only at 47.73%, while 2017's passing percentage was 56.97%.

Assumption College's (AC) own alumni also passed the exam, warranting their license. Those include the following:

**Batch 2013:**

BS Psychology  
Thalia Marie Gallardo

**Batch 2015:**  
BS Psychology  
Karen Garcia

**Batch 2017:**  
BS Psychology  
Dianne Dimalibot  
Angela Patricia Directo  
Veronica Viernes  
Louella Vizcarra

**Batch 2018:**  
BS Psychology  
Regina Calix  
K Lanuza  
Samantha Salonga

**AB Psychology**  
Paula Robles  
Katrina Valera  
Blessie Villalon

**Batch 2019:**  
BS Psychology  
Mariella Delluta  
Maria Limos

Rebecca Macaraeg  
Jazmin Menor  
Patricia Oxales  
Iana Rabulan  
Emmanuelle Roxas  
Joan Sendico  
Eleri Yatco

**AB Psychology**  
Ann Martha Aguila  
Ma. Charlesmagne  
Kate Alvar  
Ranya Balagot  
Aleksa Litan  
Maria Olegario  
Mariel Jimeno  
Xandra Zavalla

Despite all the hardships, these AC "old girls" proved to be women of faith and action! This certainly will not be the last we hear of their accomplishments and their passionate service in the field.

## PROJECT LORA: AN INITIATIVE THAT BROUGHT SMILES TO MANY

By: Alaine Yzabelle F. Fabon

"Immerse yourself, do it wholeheartedly."

Paulette Martinez, a graduating Psychology student, made an outstanding leadership initiative that brought inspiration to many. Project LORA, known as 'Love for Reading in Action,' was chosen to be partnered with the Assumption Alumnae Association (AAA) Team for this year. Together with the full support of her family, friends, and the Assumption College (AC) community, Paulette successfully launched the project in Malayang Cassanueva Neighborhood Association of Barangay Amaya II in Tanza, Cavite.

Project LORA's goal was to build a small library in the community where children can access different reading materials. The project's title was inspired by Paulette's love of reading and AC's motto:

"women of faith, women of action." She desired to share her passion with children who needed reading materials, which led her to jumpstart the project during the second semester of this academic year. In response to the need of the community, Paulette raised a book donation drive. The AC community participated and donated books in support of the project. Different organizations and associations, such as the Psychological Society of Assumption (PSA), collected books during their general assemblies. Currently, the construction of the library is finished and ready for use. There will still be books to be distributed in the community once the pandemic's situation gets better.

Paulette has been an active member of the Assumption Immediate Responders (AIR), one of the AC's student

organizations. She enjoyed reading books since she was young and loved helping and engaging in any volunteer activity. In her college years, Paulette started to explore more, joining conferences, and participating in volunteer work. When she was a sophomore, she participated in and launched a project with students from other universities, providing solar lamps among remote areas where electricity was a dire need. Past experiences, coupled with an altruistic attitude, drove her to participate in the AAA Team project, where she passed a proposal for Project LORA. Given the opportunity to help, Paulette visited the community and asked about their needs. The district lacked resources and reading materials. Based on the data she collected on the country being one of the leading countries with low reading comprehension skills,

Paulette decided to forgo this endeavor. Given library privileges that private school students enjoy, Paulette was inspired to share the same right to the community through her own means. She used the grant to build a small library, with the community's parents willingly doing the construction. Books collected from generous donors gave life to the library itself. She wanted to instill to children the importance of education by allowing them to explore the world through reading, as she did when she was young.

As a graduating student who has a ton of commitments at home and outside school, it was extra challenging for her to commute back and forth to Tanza, Cavite, and Makati from time to time. She needed to check up on the community and monitor the progress of construction. Together

with the help and support of the AC community, the AAA Team, her family, and friends, Paulette was able to push through the project despite all the struggles and challenges she encountered. She remained positive and determined with the psychology department's help, Dr. Angela Regala,

Mrs. Rhea Agustin, and her AC family, who motivated her and believed in her capabilities.

The smiles and heartfelt gratitude of the parents and children in the community gave her priceless joy and a sense of fulfillment. Her hard work, patience, initiative,

Continued to Page 14



Fourth year BS Psychology student, Paulette Martinez, creates and takes into action her project that helps a community form their love and passion for reading. Image Source: Assumption Student Council, Facebook Page



# WHEREFORE ART THOU, ROMEO: A METTA ROMEO AND JULIET ADAPTATION REVIEW

By: Breanna Fenella Rain E. Muyco

The timeless love story of William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet captured people's hearts in the Blackbox Theater in Assumption College San Lorenzo (AC) last November 11, 2019. The two lovers' story is a classic "you and me against the world," where the conflicting feud between the Montague and Capulet families caused a great hindrance to Romeo and Juliet's romance, ending with a self-induced death by a vial of poison. Despite the gruesome suicide all for love's name, the deep passion shared between the two draws the audience to love their story even more.

Romeo and Juliet has been a staple in Shakespearean literature, which is why The



Metta's cast decides the theme will revolve around a Shakespearean classic and favorite, Romeo and Juliet. Students of Assumption College and those from other schools have come to watch Metta's theatrical performance in November. Image Source: Metta Assumption Theater

Marie Eugenie Theatre of the Assumption's (METTA) production of the play surprised its audience with their contemporary twist in both their choreography and modern musical acts. They strategically inserted modern song covers sung by one of AC's well-known old girls, Leanne Mamonong, perfectly encapsulat-

ing the protagonists' emotions and the essence projected in each act, while serving as an additional source of entertainment.

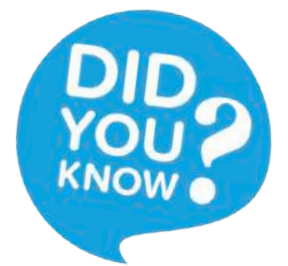
The technical team gave justice into taking the audience out of the Blackbox Theater and placing them in the scene itself. The cast itself was a talented group, and it was

evident with audience impact that each scene was emotionally stimulating. Mercutio's character — played by Paj Pajara — was a smart element in encouraging humor into the play. Romeo and Juliet's characters, played by Txavi Evangelista and Uriel Villar respectively, carried the perfect chemistry in the scenes where

Romeo and Juliet's blooming love story was shown.

The play altogether was a satisfying mixture of everything dramatic, comical, and romantic. Shakespeare's essence was present, especially towards the end of the play when both male characters (Jerome Dawis and Joshua Tayco) portrayed the titular characters' roles. This was a portrayal of Elizabethan tradition, wherein men played both men and women roles, as women in theater at the time was quite unconventional.

The production ran for a week starting from November 11, 2019 and was performed both for the Basic Education Division (BED) and Higher Education Division (HED).



*METTA takes its name from the Pali word for 'loving-kindness' and 'friendliness for all.' In the same essence, the Marie Eugenie Theater of the Assumption, or Metta, combines drama, dance, and music to allow every artistic possibility. ESTABLISHED in 2004, Metta was born at the same time the Mother Rose Auditorium (then known as the Mother Rose Hall) was undergoing major renovations. Named after St. Marie Eugenie of Jesus, Foundress of the Religious of the Assumption, St. Marie Eugenie, who passionately believed in the transformative power of education, encouraged her congregation to "Discover the specific talents and grace of each child." rectors to participate in productions.*

## PROJECT LORA: AN INITIATIVE...

Continued from page 13

ive, and dedication for this project went well beyond measures. She was so grateful for all the people who supported her in every step of the way, especially to two special people who had contributed a lot to the person she was now: Ms. Bhabz Litero, the former head of Center for Social Concern (CSC), who aided her in her mission to serve others and became her source of refuge and good counsel whenever she doubted herself, and her mother, who supported her all throughout the way — the first person who filled her heart with so much love to share, who taught her the art of helping others.

Paulette mentioned in the interview that to achieve one's goal in life, we need to immerse ourselves in the pool of challenges, wholeheartedly invest time working hard, and never

hesitate to ask for help from others. Building connections is also important to explore the realities and opportunities in the world.

To all the aspiring students out there who have the ability and heart to help others, go ahead and explore the opportunities given to you. Help out a troubled friend or support a community by making one of their dreams come true. We shouldn't hesitate to help whenever we can: by lending our ears for those who need someone to listen to, extending our arms to those who need comfort and assistance, by being the voice for those who are unheard, and by seeing the beauty stored in each and every one of us. Let us never close our eyes when we see someone in need and act on it accordingly. With joined hands, we can make a huge difference.

## GREAT PLANS NEED GREAT PLANNERS

By: Andrei Michaela G. Corre

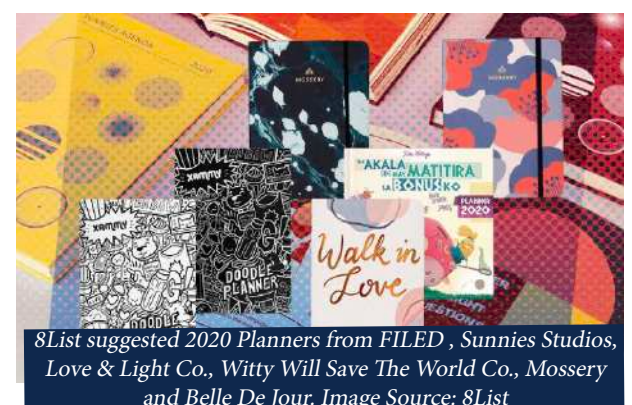
College life sure is full of responsibilities! You can never really track everything when they all seem to happen simultaneously, one after the other. As a student, your greatest challenge is to beat deadlines, overcome your piling workload, and still spend quality time with loved ones and reward yourself with some "me time." Stress and pressure from the environment can surely add up to the pile, urging you to step back, take a deep breath, and plan ahead of time to ensure all duties are fulfilled and, of course, sparing some hours to treat yourselves for a well-deserved break.

Paper planners have always been a staple in bookstores. A few years back, do-it-yourself (DIY) customizable aesthetic planners had become a trend, so this is one of the best options to

give as presents for every occasion.

It is a wise purchase due to its many benefits: it helps you organize your plans and fight the overwhelming temptation to procrastinate. It acts as a guide and lets you know what to do next. These allow an increase in productivity, motivation, and a sense of responsibility.

While there are planner or organizer applications made available in mobile phones, there isn't an app that offers it all. Switching to multiple apps to view your calendar, daily planner sheet, progress tracker, notes, and to-do lists are tedious. Plus, research claims that writing on paper enables information to be retained in the brain longer. Since this process is much slower than tapping on phone screens, writing



8List suggested 2020 Planners from FILED, Sunnies Studios, Love & Light Co., Witty Will Save The World Co., Mossery and Belle De Jour. Image Source: 8List

allows ample time for reflection.

Paper planners allow people to spend some time to think about their priorities and construct better plans to achieve their personal goals! These also promote creativity and individuality because of the wide array these planners cater to various purposes. Some are definitely customizable, allotting sections for pictures of special mementos and spaces for writing short journal entries to document your

day and progress. Finally, nothing feels better than crossing out things you have accomplished — a great job, indeed!

No matter what kind of planner suits your needs, always remember that the captain of the ship is you! You are in control of your life, and you have the choice to make this year your best year yet. To make great plans, you need a great planner to plan ahead and start the new year and the new semester with a bang!





The long-awaited sequel to Pixar's successful hit Frozen has been released, keeping everyone on their toes on what may unfold for them within movie theatres. Image Source: Disney

## “WATER HAS MEMORY”

By: Annwen Rose P. Lim

Frozen 2 is among the most awaited sequels, ever since the release of its predecessor during 2013. The film reportedly acquired a total of eight nominations for the 47th Annie Awards. The story starts off with Elsa following a mysterious voice calling out to her, awakening the Forest elements, destroying most of Arendelle. In the quest for the mysterious voice, the truth of her family's past, and her powers' origin, she embarks with Anna, Kristoff, Sven, and Olaf to find the elusive magical river.

As I plopped down on my seat in the movie theater, armed with popcorn and soda, I felt excited and hyped for Frozen 2. During the whole film, I felt like I was part of the story, singing along with the characters and laughing at funny, memorable scenes, as I empathized with their situation.

Frozen 2 has its ups and downs. The rich, impactful soundtracks amazed me. "Into The Unknown," sung by Elsa, became an instant hit among viewers. The beautifully-designed costumes, scenes, and realistic visuals of each character also deeply awed people, especially during the scene featuring Elsa's striking transformation into a beautiful

platinum-haired ice queen, clad in a gorgeous white gown. The sequel is a significant improvement, particularly in its cinematography elements. Warm and cool colors were liberally used within the settings, representing fall and winter — which also symbolizes Anna and Elsa.

The usage of different camera angles uniquely captured scenes, with the background notably looking more realistic than ever.

Aside from physical changes in their appearance, the characters' personalities significantly developed. Elsa gradually opened up to more people and grew key traits of selflessness shown when she would save others first before herself. Anna grew more independent as a princess, prepared to save her sister, and defended her with all her strength. Olaf's knowledge and communication skills improved, making it easier for him to relate with the world. Lastly, the soundtrack was much better compared to the first movie. The mysterious voice, in particular, kept audiences brimming with curiosity.

However, Frozen 2 is not without its imperfections. With the movie's whole concept mainly focusing on El-

sa's mysterious powers and her adventures in finding the truth, there are still many plot holes that haven't been filled.

The scene where Elsa and Anna come across a scroll written in an unknown language inside their parents' sunken ship needed some clearing up — not one of them understood the language, and until the end of the movie, it hadn't been addressed. Viewers who found the scene intriguing were left with slight disappointment. Another is Anna and Kristoff's relationship quick-paced relationship. We all know the events that transpired in Frozen 1 happened 6 years ago, but we have not seen the couple's dynamic in forever. In the sequel, Kristoff wants to marry Anna and has plans to carry out his proposal. For me, the whole thing happened too fast because we didn't get to witness the relationship bloom from the time they grew close to the time they fell in love.

Next is the Northuldra tribe, the Enchanted Forest, and the Elemental spirits; they needed more backstory. Due to the lack of context, it was confusing who they were and how they came to be. Another thing I noticed is that the plot

## FILIPINOS STAR IN PIXAR ANIMATED FILM: ONE OF THE BEST HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

By: Chestene Ysadel M. de Guzman

Movie industries keep pumping out new and exciting films every year, but this 2019, one movie stands out the most for Filipinos. Finally, Filipino talents get to be under the spotlight in one of Pixar's films, "Float," in their newly released SparkShorts series. SparkShorts is a low-budget experimental program that gives Pixar filmmakers more chances to "stretch their wings," according to a Pixar producer, Krissy Caba-

ba. The series features six inspirational shorts with incredible stories to tell. One of the series' creators is Bobby Rubio, a Filipino-American who worked on famous movies such as Pocahontas, Brave, UP, and the Nickelodeon television series, The Last Airbender. His film, Float, is a heartwarming story about how a father decides to deal with people's discovery about his son's special ability to float.

Rubio admitted in an ABC Action News interview that the short film's inspiration mainly comes from his personal experiences with his son, who was diagnosed with autism. Ideas for Float circulated around Rubio's head for about 8 years, before he decided to pitch the story to SparkShorts' executive producer, Lindsey Collins, who saw his vision's potential.

"Diversity and inclusion are at the heart of SparkShorts," Collins said in a statement. "The program was created to provide opportunities for a wide array of artists—each with something unique to say," she added.

Once his story made it into the final cut, his biggest challenge was to condense all of his feelings, experiences, and insights during his time as a father in just seven minutes. Despite being a short film, Float carries a symbolic impact not only

to Filipinos but also to cultural minorities and audiences worldwide. It highlights issues regarding judgment and discrimination, which viewers really appreciate. As they immerse themselves in the film, they would discover that the story aims to teach people the true value of love, acceptance, and celebrating individual differences.

"I am proud to tell our stories. I know what it means to see our culture represented on screen! #RepresentationMatters," he replied in a Twitter post on January 13, earlier this year.

Having an all-Filipino cast, this Pinoy-made computer-generated imagery (CGI) film is reportedly the first of its kind in Pixar films' history. Float was released during Filipino History Month, which is indeed fitting. The six SparkShorts films that were released are now available for subscribers to stream on the Disney+ mobile app.



Pixar releases a short film trailer featuring Filipino characters. The creator, Bobby Rubio, proudly presents this film to the public. Image Source: Disney

seems rushed. Not a lot was explained especially Anna and Elsa's parents' love story. Maybe focusing on that could have given viewers a background on how the Northuldra tribe came to coexist with the kingdom of Arendelle. There were just so many questions left unanswered. Lastly, there was no such

thing as an "antagonist" in the movie. Yes, there was King Runeard, but only a little information about him was provided, which didn't make him the 'biggest' villain the movie calls for.

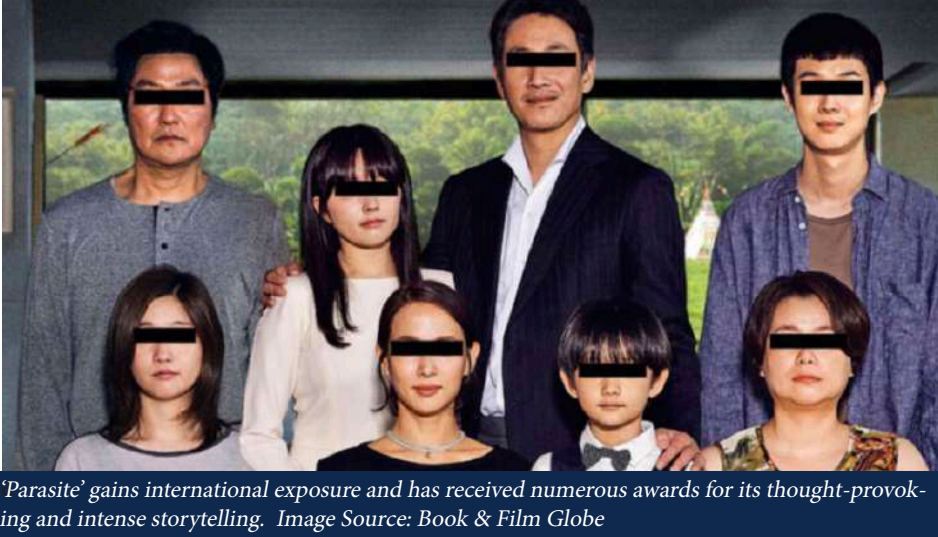
Overall, Frozen 2 was a success — another guaranteed favorite among youngsters and

adults. Its music is becoming everyone's "last song syndrome" (LSS). Disney created another splendid movie packed with more content and improvements than its first counterpart. It indeed emphasized the movie's theme even more: "Family always comes first, and no matter what, never let fear win over you."



# PARASITE: A KOREAN PICTURE WITH AN EXCEPTIONAL PLOT TRENDS INTERNATIONALLY

By: Tisha Jeremie D. Sotingco



'Parasite' gains international exposure and has received numerous awards for its thought-provoking and intense storytelling. Image Source: Book & Film Globe

"Parasite," a Korean film nominated in multiple film award shows, made its entrance known worldwide in its unique and captivating plot revolving around how an underprivileged family gradually invaded a wealthy household. With its thriller and horrifically comedic

characteristics, the movie will leave you at the edge of your seats in anticipation of the next turn of events. It all started when a friend of the lead character, Ki woo, was offered a job to tutor the well-established Park family's daughter. He faked all the papers to prove his credibility as

a tutor since he had not entered college. But then, after being recognized for his efforts, Ki woo recommended his sister to be the art tutor of the family's son. They further let all the family members work under their employment, with their dad as the driver, and their mom as the

housekeeper and cook. As they began to infiltrate the house and live there in secret, it showcased the Kim family's creepy, weird, and unethical characteristics. They strived to benefit from the rich Park family through horrific and murderous means. As you watch the film, it becomes more gruesome, but it also signifies how greedy one can become through money and benefits. This movie was very well made, with the suspense urging you to pay attention to every scene, with burning curiosity on how the story will end. The chronological sequence of events was brilliant, and it can be seen that it has been well-planned and thought of. If you are well aware of the films the country produces, most Korean movies are all very creative and usually feature unique plots that will

pique your curiosity. With its uncommon plot and storyline, this movie gained box office hits not only in Korea but worldwide. The director, Bong Joon Ho, already entered the international film industry a long time ago, through other known films like "The Okja," "The Host," "Snowpiercer," and many more. He is very into dark, thriller-like movies and storylines, as evident in his past work.

The star-studded cast cannot be missed out as well with veteran actors. Song Kang Ho, Jang Hye Jin, Lee Sun Kyun, and Cho Yeon Jeong have all been recognized as exceptional actors in Korea's film industry, including rising actors Park So Dam and Choi Woo Shik, who have excelled in various big screen and small screen shows. The ac-

tors in the film "Parasite" explicitly showcased their capabilities with their astounding acting skills and their very well represented roles that audiences cannot pick another actor to play the part. It gives viewers a glimpse of poor-rich families, and how their parallel lives and contrasting characteristics have some similarities in reality. It showcased many common issues today but depicted it in a different perspective that is very distinctive from any other standard film. This movie is very much recommended for those who want something new and creative to tingle one's curious mind and ignite their critical thinking. This film has shown many characteristics that not every movie can offer.

# INTRODUCTION TO COM 101 CONTEXTUALIZED: THE RISE OF NETFLIX ORIGINALS

By: Claire Justine J. Sarria

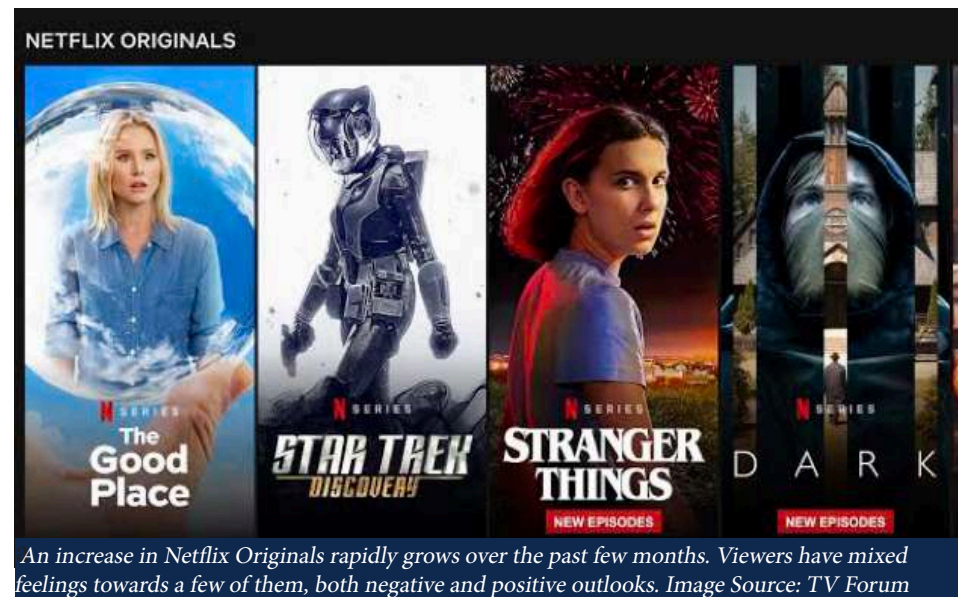
For a freshman taking up Introduction to Communication Media (COM 101), my insights are quickly rendered to a fitting world of technological advancements and their involvement with the business. Instead of ruminating about old yet meaningful theories, the course is easier to understand in a timely sense. It has been constantly reiterated that media forms evolve over time, the same way money flow remains: media has been extensive and expansive due to the constant emergence of advancements. If not social media or mediums that make information-transfer easier and faster, what stands pioneer in the development of media forms is digital proliferation, or as an 'updated' or

'cultured' individual in terms of motion media would say, "Netflix." But a Communications freshman from Accountancy, Business, and Management (ABM) strand in Senior High School sees it more technically: Netflix Originals.

Digital Proliferation in COM 101 allows television to be viewed and accessed on PCs and cell phones in high definition. This has been easier for networks to attain business impact because the winning formula of merging strategies with creativity gets amplified by new media forms. What used to be a 1997 subscription-based DVD rental service that mailed DVDs to homes is now translated into a

digitally-proliferated Netflix generation. The application's streaming service — whose longevity depends upon an individual's degree of membership — provides home-television audiences with quality global content. It dominates over in-home entertainment by a large margin: it's available as long as you have an internet connection. Its wide selection of TV shows and movies and years of academy awards make the service all the more appealing. Netflix diversifies through devices, allowing it to proliferate in the age of New Media. How 'reel' could it now get?

Media Identity E-commerce comes in various forms; a prompt lead is the investments media



networks delve into, specifically Netflix's investments on existing and original content. The nature of a business comes with competition: Netflix's ventures do not boom without exemptions. Amazon Prime and Hulu, similar streaming services, are in constant rivalry with each other. Although prices are either higher or lower than the other, delving into this business gets riskier when licensed titles are put into the picture. This geared Netflix to invest in the production of its own content to sustain its business. Having invested around \$12

billion on original content in 2018, this excellent strategy has gotten households to cut the cord on cable TV. Genres of its original titles vary as well, from dramas to documentaries, to their sought-after stand-up comedy series. This shows a spurt of growth within their industry, with lessening licensing costs and shouldering production served as a game-changer for Netflix. However, business strategies come with specific risks. Aside from the neglect of traditional TV or cinema viewing, Netflix — as a hub of global content — now licenses

fewer titles. The possible drop in viewership and subscription could cost Netflix their viability, cash flow, and investment returns. But its Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Reed Hastings, finds that this innovation is compensated through their flexibility, an ability he counters with efficiency. Similar to the evolution of media forms and systematic business strategies a company exhibits, consumers can adapt as well.

Trends...

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# SWEENEY TODD: A WALK THROUGH A REINVENTED FLEET STREET

By: Claire Justine J. Sarria

Bobby Garcia's Manila run of "Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street" exhibited truth and in-depth longing for revenge, housing 17 shows at The Theatre at Solaire. With Garcia's prolific incorporation of theatrical elements, the Atlantis Theater musical proved his creative intelligence, thus retaining the luxurious and heartfelt impact of live theater. Lea Salonga's groundbreaking portrayal of Mrs. Lovett and the Manila staging of Hugh Wheeler's book were sure to enhance Filipinos' theatrical appreciation.

The arduous life of a barber based in London, Benjamin Baker, was overpowered by the vile Judge Turpin on his own family's expense, sending him off to Australia for a crime he did not commit. After 15 years, he returns to London and meets Mrs. Lovett, a resourceful owner of a failing pie shop, in his course of seeking revenge. With his razor skills intact, Sweeney Todd — his new identity — kills off his customers and sends their bodies down for Mrs. Lovett to make into pies. He does so until he gets Judge Turpin served on a plate.

The unappetizing yet engrossing musical was successfully staged with a great team to back. Inspired by Bobby Garcia's adolescent years of cinematic thrillers and late-night horror story-filled adventures at parking lots, he bore a terrifying atmosphere that one could not forget. David Gallo, the show's set designer, brought the director's vision to life by turning the Solaire stage into an urban decay where a rustic parking

structure with cars to match. The portrayal changed the game for Sondheim adaptations, as it did not remain in the Victorian era where heavy, classical singing was expected. Lea Salonga created a whole new world of theatrical magic atop a car in her Dr. Martens as Jett Pangan exquisitely belted in his blue jeans — how innovative could that get?

Styled by Rajo Laurel's niche on reconstructing the Fleet Street fashion, the cast magnificently embodied the story in their masterclass acting and singing skills, paired with their astounding English accent that would invoke one's attention profoundly. Nyoy Volante (Adolfo Pirelli) proved his own witty approach that may be settled in Sacha Baron Cohen's humorous radar. Andrew Fernando's portrayal of the horrible Judge Turpin provoked distaste towards him — the kind that is indicative of compelling artistry, due to the character's contradicting morals to the nature of his occupation. More notable actors graced the stage with their theatrical charm, contributing to the success of the run. Namely, they are Gerald Santos, whose portrayal of Anthony Hope grew profound admiration for his perseverance in pursuing the woman he hoped to get to know more. Anthony Hope's affections complemented Mikkie Bradshaw-Volante's mighty, yet graceful touch on the hopeful Johanna Baker's afflictions. The most astonishing Sweeney Todd twist of it all was holistically embodied in Ima Castro's phenomenal characterization of the Beggar Woman;



her mounting scene instilled empathy and fear for the characters concerned. History tells us that men ruled the theatre, and Luigi Quesada and Arman Ferrer were pillars that rose up to the claim. Their innocent yet intimidating storylines made sure that Sweeney Todd's identity must be closed off to them, concealing the truth that would lay him bare in the hands of his past.

But what exactly does this killing-spree kind of story tell us? Is it just another Sondheim adaptation that THE Lea

Salonga starred in?

Sweeney Todd teaches us to steer away from violence, away from heinous obsessions, and restricts us from weaving revenge under a different identity. Take out all the bloodshed and the anger, the story blossoms of pursuing what it truly meant for an individual, and the most appropriate means that we should take to attain such rewards. So yes, it is another Lea Salonga-starred musical where kindness, veracity, and sincerity must topple abhorring phonies.

## INTRODUCTION TO COM 101...

Continued from page 18

Producers can cater to consumers effectively when they gain information about their wants and needs. This marketing strategy has been useful, as commodities and necessities are produced continuously. Market targeting allows for trends to arise as people gain satisfaction. Part of Netflix's service and subscriber-retention factor is to incorporate elements of their viewers' interests into their subscriptions. This algorithmic process enables Netflix staff to oversee a subscriber's list of watched content, patterns observed, and operations after it. Upon gathering data, Netflix provides the viewer with content that suits their interests. In terms of viewer retention, this is an excellent means of giving satisfaction and a vessel by which it introduces its original content. One could be watching Peaky Blinders as Netflix queues

Narcos. The system that the streaming service follows deems it flexible because it caters to its millions of users' interests. The penetration of original content becomes more practical, in the hopes of gaining back the money they shelled out.

Finally, sitting through COM 101, a question was raised: "Where is the mass in the media?" One possible answer could be that the mass is at home, binging Netflix licensed and original content. The company makes sure that its originals are digitally proliferated as its identity gets known, and its trends become more flexible. Watching Netflix originals is entertaining as it could get, but when a Communications student translates this type of media into the business industry, who knows how long the queue could go?

# 10 LOCAL MAKEUP BRANDS YOU NEED TO WATCH OUT FOR

By: Chestene Ysadel M. de Guzman

Here are some of the best homegrown beauty brands that the Philippines has to offer. Most of these brands feature products that do not break the bank, and best of all, are paraben and cruelty-free!

## BLK Cosmetics

If you are looking for cute, K-beauty-inspired makeup, then this brand is for you. This Filipino celebrity-owned brand aims to promote effortless uncomplicated beauty; true enough, they offer multi-purpose products that make the purchase worth it. The BLK All-Over Paint (PHP 399) is a cream product that could be applied to the eyes, lips, and cheeks. Its Sweet Lip Duo (PHP 379) features a lip scrub and a lip balm in a travel-friendly container. Lastly, the Two-tone All-Day Intense lipstick (priced at PHP 399)



To support local brands and have easier access to nearby places, there is a list of local beauty brands that may pique beauty product consumers' interests. Image Source: Beauty MNL

gives ombre lips in one effortless swipe! Truly, BLK Cosmetics deserves a fair shot.

## Careline Cosmetics

This cruelty-free brand has been around a long time since anyone could remember, and is known as a staple in Filipino beauty. But during 2017, it had newly-revamped its image, which came as a surprise to fans both old and new. Its tagline, "Better than Basic," reflects the brand's ability to provide both makeup

beginners and beauty enthusiasts with affordable yet high-quality products. Some of my personal favorites are the multi-sticks priced at PHP 199, which are prettily-packaged cream blushes and contour you can pack on the go. The universally-flattering, Play-to-Slay palette (PHP 275) and their liquid matte lipsticks (PHP 99), which have a unique, lightweight formula that always stays put for the rest of the day.

## Colourette Cosmetics

Looking for new makeup to try? Colourette Cosmetics might be your next holy grail. Widely known for their famed Colourtints (PHP 249) and Coloursnaps (cream blushes adorably packaged in travel-sized tins also priced at PHP 249), the brand promises products that keep you looking fresh-faced. Effortlessly rock that dewy, flushed look!

Continued to Page 20



## TOP 10 LOCAL MAKEUP BRANDS...

Continued from page 19

**Detail Makeover**

This brand offers an affordable makeup line, so practical students on a budget love it so much. With their brand tagline being "Beauty in every detail," they aim to highlight and enhance every woman's beauty through the power of makeup. They offer a full range of eye makeup and face makeup, which people rave about in reviews. The Detail Matte Lipsticks, in particular, is one of them. They really deliver to their promise; priced at PHP 225, these lipsticks are indeed long-lasting waterproof, and transfer-proof at the same time!

**Ellana Minerals**

This brand features full-coverage mineral makeup that aims to cater to all skin

tones and types. Not a lot of local, affordable brands feature products for a diverse range of skin tones with a consistent formula, but Ellana Minerals successfully pulls it off — which is why trying out their products is a must! The downside is that their price point leans more

towards luxury. Their creamy, loose powder (PHP 798) melts into the skin and provides medium to full coverage, which works best on normal to combination skin. They also offer bundle deals on their site, such as their Face Base Bundles (priced at PHP 1270), their Waterproof Makeup Kit (exclusively available online for PHP 1678), and their Foundation Travel Kit, which features a mini set of their four loose powder foundations (PHP 699). Go check them out!

**Happy Skin**

Known for its non-comedogenic, summer-proof products, Happy Skin is

a brand that offers versatile, lightweight makeup that cares for the skin. It had multiple collaborations with famous figures such as Heart Evangelista and Kathryn Bernardo, and even has a collection dedicated to one of Disney's favorite princesses, Jasmine. Its sleek, stylish packaging appeals to people of all ages. One of its most-known products is the Shut Up and Kiss Me! Moisturizing lip crayons filled with rich shea butter (priced at PHP 649).

**Pink Sugar**

Pink Sugar offers products high quality yet affordable products with unique formulas, with the most expensive item being priced around PHP 699. Their products smell as sweet as you think they are, especially their Lush Lips liquid lipsticks (PHP 299). One of their products, the Our Lil Secret Concealer, is rumored to be a dupe for a cult favorite: the Makeup For Ever Concealer. It is water-resistant and provides impressive coverage for only PHP 299!

**SkinPotions**

Feast your eyes on SkinPotions' pretty-looking products. Its cute, desert-themed packaging lures curious people in, but don't let appearances fool you! The brand aims to fuse environmentally-friendly beauty and skincare into one. Some of the products they are known for include their smooth, pigmented Dream Cream powder velvet tints (PHP 250), which glide on the lips smoothly due to natural plant oils. Its rejuvenating, highly-coveted Tomato Serum and Snowberry Cream (both priced at PHP 350 and PHP 465, respectively) are among their best-sellers. This brand frequently releases new products every now and then, so make sure to stay in the loop!

**Snoe Beauty**

With its eye-catching, quirky packaging reminiscent of retro pop art styles and products ranging from shampoos to face palettes, Snoe Beauty is a brand that's

hard to forget. One of their most raved-about products is their Rouge Deluxe Exotique lipstick (PHP 499), which gives intense color payoff and a long-lasting finish. Their Matte Maxx Blur Connoisseur cream (priced at PHP 899) blurs wrinkles and imperfections and provides a decent amount of oil control for a shine-free face.

**Vice Cosmetics**

The last celebrity-owned brand to wrap up this list is Vice Cosmetics. The products' packaging features Vice's trademark Fuschia pink color. With a wide selection of products to choose from, ranging from all kinds of lipstick formulas (around PHP 145 – PHP 225) to recently-released two-way cake foundations that are allegedly created for morena skin tones (PHP 245), the brand appeals to a large variety of audiences. The soft, buttery velvet liquid lip formulas (priced at PHP 225) glide on like a dream, but sometimes I forget that they aren't transfer-proof (oops!)

## TOO MUCH MILKTEA IS BAD FOR YOU, AND HERE'S WHY

By: Chloe Shane J. Guiang

If there is one thing that has become a staple for the collective social media strive for relatability, it is the Asian obsession with boba milk tea. Made in the 1980s by Taiwanese woman Lin Hsiu Hui, she decided to mix her fen yuan's tapioca pearls into her iced tea during a dragging staff meeting. Since spread worldwide as a quirky dessert, this concoction has different businesses and flavors springing about throughout the decades.

In the Philippines, milk tea has become a go-to craving for most Filipinos. It is hard to come by a mall in the Metro that does not have a milk tea establishment like Coco, Macao Imperial Tea, or Gong Cha. In addition to that, you would often be hard-pressed

to find a milk tea stall without a daunting line of people waiting to get their fill. The popularity is understandable, of course, milk tea is versatile in the way that it is both a meal and a dessert — it has the sweetness to serve as closure after a rice meal and is filling enough to give one the energy to power through the rest of the day. I personally had my fair share of days when milk tea was a substitute for a proper lunch whenever I was too busy.

Although it is fun to explore different flavors or brands and share memes on Facebook about the milk tea obsession, we have to remember this extremely important saying: everything should be consumed in moderation. We all know someone who drinks

milk tea more than once per day, and I am telling you now: that is a bad idea.

Before we all gasp in horror, let us try to break down what is inside your average milk tea drink. The four main ingredients of milk tea are tea, milk, tapioca pearls, and a whole lot of sweeteners. The tea and the milk are relatively fine by themselves, but the tapioca pearls and the sweeteners are really what make excessive consumption of the beverage bad for you.

First of all, tapioca pearls contribute absolutely zero benefits to your health. According to Readers' Digest (2019), these pearls are starch balls, filled with harmful carbohydrates, also known as refined carbohydrates.



Milktea, over the past few years, has become a hype or a routine where almost everyone should buy and drink. No matter how delectable and addicting it may be, the harmful and negative health concerns that follow will surprise its usual consumers. Image Source: War Espejo

These bad carbs contribute to the occurrence of diabetes and obesity in people. You can commonly find them in food like white rice, powdered juice, and sweetened drinks (case in point: milk tea). Another unpleasant fact about these pearls is that they're fried in a pan filled with sugar, which, as stated by Readers' Digest, "could have nearly 160 calories per ¼ cup serving". Yikes!

Second, the added sweeteners in milk tea like fructose syrup or chocolate syrup are just as bad as the tapioca pearls. According to Zeratsky from Mayo

Clinic (n.d.), consuming these high levels of sugar can not only cause obesity or diabetes but could also increase the chances of getting heart disease.

Lastly, studies have been conducted in recent years regarding the ill-effects of excessive milk tea consumption. Green, Loan, & Min of Pepperdine University (2017) discovered that the calories and sugar found in milk tea drinks increase the risk of obesity, cardiovascular disease, and specific types of cancer for Asian Pacific Islanders. Drinking milk tea more than once a week can, and

will lead, to these illnesses over time.

With all of these considered, let's get the record straight: it is not wrong to drink milk tea. It tastes great, and drinking it brings joy to our lives. However, it is good to also set some boundaries and exert some level of self-control. Do not substitute milk tea for water, and remember to actually eat proper meals. In the end, life is all about balance — do what makes you happy, but make sure it will keep you that way in the long-run.



# AC HOSTS 18TH WCSA: BE THE BEST YOU FOR OTHERS



The Participating Schools line up during the Women's Colleges Sports Association (WCSA) Opening held February 1, 2020, at the campus sports complex. Image Source: Jellen Lesiguez

By: **Trixie Nicollete N. Villarosa**

Assumption College San Lorenzo (AC) hosted the 18th season of Women's Colleges Sports Association (WCSA) Competition with the theme "Be the Best You for Others" on February 1, 2020, at the campus' Sports Complex.

The sports featured in the competition were Badminton, Basketball, Futsal, Pep, Swimming, Table Tennis, Taekwondo, and Volleyball — all of which the Assumption College Athletic Organization (ACAO) participated. The season had six schools pledge participation in the events, namely: Assumption College (AC), Miriam College (MC) Philippine Women's University (PWU), San Beda College Alabang (SBCA), St. Scholastica's College (SSC), and the University of Asia & the Pacific (UA&P).

However, WCSA's Management Board later decided to indefinitely suspend all games and other association events on February 15, 2020, as a precautionary measure against the spread of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). It brought the discontinuation of other scheduled team sports,

leaving Pep and select individual games the only culminated competitions. The final rankings of the varsity teams are as follows:

**AC Badminton Team** - Overall Champion  
MVP: Patricia Sophia Gomez

**AC Swimming Team** - Back-to-Back Champion

**AC Taekwondo Team** - Overall Champion:  
Poomsae Event  
MVP: Ruffie Mae Bondol

**AC Table Tennis Team** - 4th place

**AC Pep Squad Team** - 5th place

AC's Volleyball and Basketball team placed first and fourth respectively overall before its suspension, bringing school pride despite circumstances.

The 18th Season of WCSA resulted to Assumption College (AC) bagging title of OVERALL CHAMPION, with 95 points, landing San Beda College Alabang (SBCA) in second place with a close score of 90 points, and the University of Asia & the Pacific at third place with a score of 73 points.

AC officially joined WCSA in 2014 to practice the spirit of unity and camaraderie with other institutions that promote the excellence of women student-athletes.

## AC VARSITY BRINGS SCHOOL PRIDE AT WNCAA'S GOLDEN SEASON

By: **Denisse Kyle A. Virtucio**



The Swimming Team headed by Coach Ronald Nicdao strikes a pose as the Champion of the 50th WNCAA Swimming Competition-Senior Division. Image Source: ACSL Swimming Team

**Puti, Ginto, Bughaw** - Assumptionista!

Assumption College Athletic Organization (ACAO) brought campus pride as they represented Assumption College San Lorenzo (AC) at the 50th annual Women's National Collegiate Athletic Association (WNCAA) Competition on September 21, 2019, at the Mall of Asia Arena.

The season kicked off with ACAO engaging in all seven sports offered by the Seniors Division, marking a historical moment for the school with

the league in its golden year. They bagged numerous awards with the Swimming Team at the forefront, finishing first place overall. The Taekwondo Poomsae Varsity ranked second overall, with Kyorugi close at third place; both the Volleyball and Badminton Teams landed the third spot for team rankings, and the Futsal and Basketball teams obtained fifth and sixth place respectively.

For special awards, seasoned AC Mermaid, Erriel Lim, led the pack and was awarded Most Valuable Player (MVP) and Outstanding



The Taekwondo Team headed by Sir Andres Bulay IV and Ma'am Jhoan Bernabe strikes a pose as the 2nd Runner-up of the 50th WNCAA Taekwondo Poomsae Event. Image Source: Dannie Agacer

Swimmer, garnering three gold medals and one silver. Meanwhile, newcomer Janelle Abrio scored a spot in the Mythical Six as one of the ideal Outside Hitters in a formidable volleyball team.

The Cheerleading Competition was the only event suspended due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak.

The WNCAA's 50th year was highly-anticipated by all participating schools, resulting in the decision to commemorate the occasion by having all its collegiate affiliates host

its sporting competitions. The pandemic indeed remained to be unprecedented and changed the remaining course of the season. It urged the league to end without the last sporting event and a closing ceremony, as a measure to safeguard the health of all its athletes.

WNCAA is an all-girls tournament that supports, empowers, and hones women in sports and character. AC made its comeback in the league in 2012 and has continued to be a member for the past seven academic years.



# PHILIPPINES MAKES HISTORY IN E-SPORTS 2019

By: Dymple O. Macaraeg

Andreij Hosea "Doujin" Albar and Alexandre Gabrielle "AK" Laverez fought their best to add to the country's silver and bronze medal roster in Tekken 7 on the last day of the Southeast Asian (SEA) Games, December 11, 2019, at the San Juan Arena.

The Philippines and Thailand battled in the upper bracket semi-finals with Doujin winning the first two consecutive sets in a race to five games, earning loud cheers from the Filipino crowd. The audience did not expect the sudden turnout of out-rages and combats from the Thai player, Nopparut Hempamorn, who was losing his wit during the first two rounds. Hempamorn won, leaving Doujin to fight for the silver medal in the lower bracket finals.

The crowd was then rooting for AK in the lower bracket semi-finals, facing another PH versus Thai battle with Tanasontornngoon. Young boy wonder AK won the first

two sets but came to a halt when the Tanasontornngoon executed two perfect victories for the third set despite the hard and infamous "attacks from behind" coming from AK. What the Thai team did not know was that AK came prepared, finishing the fourth set with a win, leaving Tanasontornngoon with one out of four victories in their bracket.

The much-awaited match for Gold took off, and the whole arena was already boosting AK, who will be fighting the seven-time champion from different Tekken competitions, Hempamorn. Both players used Akuma as their character, which earned another set of rambled thoughts and excitement from spectators.

AK Laverez was taking the game seriously, earning himself the upper hand for winning the first set. Hempamorn won the two succeeding sets, giving AK doubts and a shift of character usage. The Filipino wonderboy

bagged the fourth set after shifting from Akuma to Shaheen. The fifth and final set ended with Thai winning.

Laverez was emotional when the game ended, but his countrymen knew that he gave it his all. It did not matter if the game was hand-to-hand or electronic sport; Laverez and his fellow men's support showed the emotions during in-game were the same.

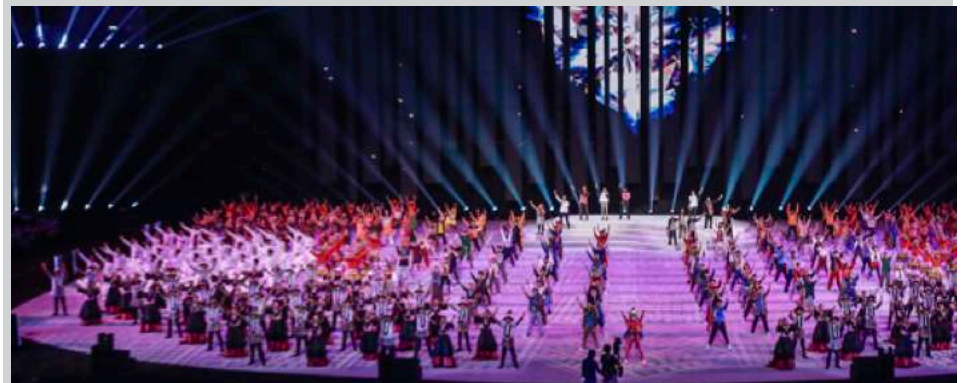
Alan Cayetano, whose presence at the arena was noted, said, "This is the first time in the history to put the E-Sports on medal games," and this will surely not be the last. "The team's name is the Filipino word for 'growth,' It is apt as it signifies not only the rise of E-Sports around the world but also the advancement of E-Sports talent in the Philippines," he added. Sibol made the crowd go loud and wild that will surely go down in history.



The Philippines' very own Alexandre "AK" Laverez (left) and Andreij "Doujin" Albar (right) wins silver and bronze medal in the 2019 Southeast Asian Games Tekken 7 tournament at Filoil Flying V Arena, San Juan City. Image Source: ESPN, TV5

## PH HOSTS 2019 SEA GAMES: WE WIN AS ONE

By: Alaine Yzabelle F. Fabon



The overall stage design and world-class performance of Filipino participants bring success to the Philippines as the host country of the 30th Southeast Asian Games at Philippine Arena, Bulacan. Image Source: Rio Deluvio, Manila Bulletin

Filipinos left an essential mark in the history of sports as it hosted the 30th South East Asian Games 2019 (SEA Games) with the theme, "We Win as One."

The 11-day event began some of its sports meets eight days prior to their official opening on November 30, 2019, at the Philippine Arena, Bulacan, and closed the ceremony at the New Clark City Athletics Stadium. Different competitions were held in various parts of Luzon, Clark and Subic Clusters, and the Metro Manila cluster, to name a few.

The country catered to around 17,000 participants, including team officials, the press and media, the technical teams, family members and supporters from the 11

participating countries, and 9,800 athletes who fought the good fight of sportsmanship.

All South East Asian countries participated actively with lively spirits. These 11 countries include Brunei, Burma (Myanmar), Cambodia, Timor-Leste, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Vietnam, Singapore, Thailand, and the Philippines. Among all those who participated, the Philippines sent the biggest number of delegates, reaching a total of 1,868 people.

An oddity highlighted during the SEA Games was the insufficiency of the PHP 6 billion budget given to the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC) aligned with the 2019 national budget for hosting. More funds were needed to shoul-

der infrastructure and other expenses. Despite this, renovations among select game venues were completed on time, and a partially-finished hall was used as a media center for the football game. It was astonishing to see how Filipinos excelled both in arts and sports fields.

The Philippines successfully hosted the SEA Games for 1981, 1991, 2005, and now, in 2019. This is despite withdrawing from hosting the 2019 SEA Games last July 2017, due to lack of sports facilities, venues, and issues in terrorism in Marawi, Mindanao. In August 2017, President Rodrigo Duterte announced that the Philippines would be hosting for 2019, given a two-year preparation period was completed.

However, last January 26, 2020, Kobe Bryant, 41, died along with Gianna, 13, in a fatal helicopter crash near Calabasas, California. A Brush-fire caused the crash, located about 30 miles northwest of downtown Los Angeles (LA). There were seven other victims, namely John Altobelli, a former assistant baseball coach at the University of Houston, Altobelli's wife, Keri, and daughter Alyssa.

They were expected to arrive at the Mamba Sports Academy in Thousand Oaks for a scheduled basketball game. According to Lady Mavericks' team director, Evelyn Morales, Gianna was expected to play in the game, and Kobe was anticipated to coach. LA County Fire Department Capt. Tony Imbrenda said he did not immediately know whether the Sikorsky S-76B helicopter radioed a distress

signal. Sadly, the world would not live to see the aspirations of Kobe for Gigi come to fruition.

A memorial service was held inside Staples Center to celebrate the lost lives of the crash. It was such a moving scene how thousands of supporters appeared in colors of purple and gold. For many, Black Mamba and Mambacita will forever be in our hearts.

# MAMBA FOREVER!

By: Sophia Cheska Roxas

Number 24 may just be a number to some, but for fans of the National Basketball Association (NBA), it is the jersey number of the basketball legend Kobe Bryant.

Becoming one of the greatest champions in the NBA is an achievement every basketball player has dreamed of. For Bryant, he started playing on the court at a very young age and grew

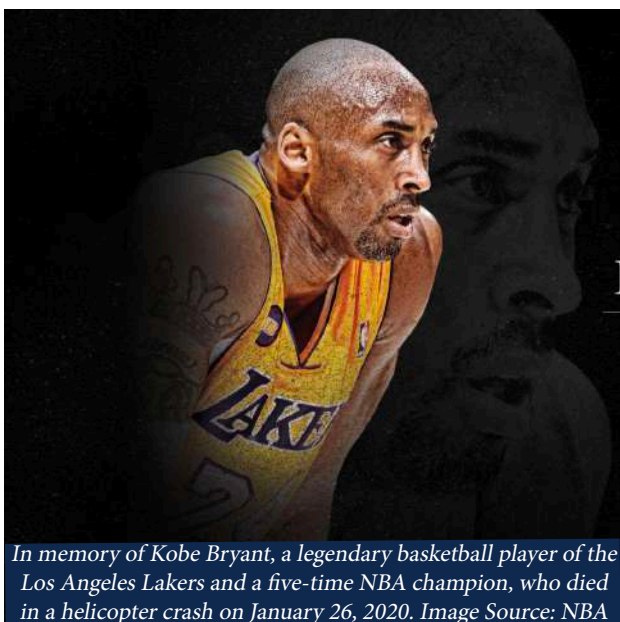
up to be an 18-time All-Star in the well-known basketball league.

During his 20-year career with the Los Angeles Lakers, he won five championships. Retiring at age 37, it meant for Bryant to pass the ball of his legacy to one of his children. He had four daughters, which drew attention on how he will foster an heir. Luckily, his second child named

Gianna Maria Onore Bryant, also known as Gigi, had a heart of passion and potential talent. He shared all his wisdom with Gianna, which led her to follow her father's footsteps and make a name for herself in the basketball industry.

As mentioned in Kobe's interview in Jimmy Kimmel Live, he said that some of his fans suggested that he and his wife have a son in the family to carry on the legacy, but Gigi replied in the same conversation, "I got this! Need no boy for that!"

She carried on the Bryant name well, in the hopes of being drafted to the female counterpart of the league, Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA). She obtained the nickname, Mambacita, which was derived from Kobe's nickname, Black Mamba.



In memory of Kobe Bryant, a legendary basketball player of the Los Angeles Lakers and a five-time NBA champion, who died in a helicopter crash on January 26, 2020. Image Source: NBA



# THE LIFE OF ST. MARIE EUGENIE

Instruction: Highlight the words that match the description found under the box of scrambled words. The descriptions depict the life of Saint Marie Eugenie.

A	R	T	O	J	I	R	G	U	J	N	S	X	Q	I	Q	Y	O	N	A	K	E	A
Y	S	E	U	U	L	A	U	O	K	M	A	W	E	O	E	I	O	O	X	M	D	Z
U	F	S	B	Z	Y	R	E	E	L	G	I	S	F	L	E	P	E	T	C	H	C	X
G	I	X	U	A	E	S	C	R	H	G	N	A	P	U	I	O	D	R	D	F	V	S
J	O	A	Y	M	Q	G	X	A	J	F	T	Z	E	S	U	A	A	E	E	D	E	D
A	J	Z	T	W	P	Y	U	H	I	K	E	G	D	R	O	P	A	D	T	E	B	E
G	Z	A	E	D	P	T	C	V	X	Q	U	F	W	Y	K	B	W	A	R	Q	F	R
Q	W	E	P	R	L	V	I	A	B	N	S	D	I	R	M	T	S	M	T	A	N	T
C	B	O	R	U	C	G	R	O	P	M	T	A	H	R	M	O	E	E	I	I	H	Y
X	N	K	F	U	W	S	Y	O	N	K	A	E	N	F	O	L	G	R	U	Z	Y	P
A	D	R	J	J	F	A	T	U	L	A	C	W	E	C	D	A	E	T	I	F	I	I
F	M	M	H	B	X	L	J	E	H	W	H	D	F	Y	E	B	V	G	T	C	U	P
V	O	C	A	T	I	O	N	V	R	U	E	S	T	T	E	M	H	K	O	B	H	C
I	Q	W	T	E	I	U	I	U	J	U	R	X	F	E	D	O	W	L	C	W	E	H
K	D	S	F	G	J	Y	U	M	H	J	Y	U	A	D	V	C	G	W	O	J	R	R
H	X	C	V	B	K	A	T	N	S	K	U	H	X	S	B	R	S	Z	M	J	D	I
G	O	P	R	L	R	D	F	B	H	I	K	F	Z	R	T	E	W	S	M	K	S	S
S	D	O	P	E	L	E	C	I	A	C	C	O	O	T	G	H	Q	D	U	M	A	T
R	H	I	L	U	R	R	R	O	Q	U	S	I	I	I	F	T	Q	T	N	L	I	M
E	E	O	U	Y	M	T	H	K	W	J	V	I	K	I	E	A	R	T	I	O	O	A
E	H	G	B	T	N	Y	D	M	E	G	B	K	E	C	S	F	D	R	O	K	I	S
C	E	M	B	R	O	I	D	L	R	E	N	J	I	R	N	N	I	R	N	T	U	F
E	Q	Y	C	F	P	K	A	O	F	R	N	M	H	V	P	K	U	G	R	D	F	G
S	F	A	T	H	E	R	L	A	C	O	R	D	A	I	R	E	C	V	E	R	T	O

1. A congregation that Saint Marie Eugenie founded.
2. The cathedral that Saint Marie Eugenie often went to to listen to Abbe Lacordaire's lectures.
3. A place where Father Combalot always preached his ideas and where Saint Marie Eugenie would always go to listen to his sermons.
4. Receiving this sacrament means receiving the body and blood of Jesus Christ. It is also the sacrament that proved life-changing for Saint Marie Eugenie.
5. One of the places where Saint Marie Eugenie grew up in, found north of Paris.

6. A calling or one's mission on earth.
7. The birthday of Jesus, an event that we always celebrate with our friends and family.
8. A priest known as a talented orator who inspired Saint Marie Eugenie to devote her life to God and the church.
9. A priest who saw Saint Marie Eugenie's calling - being the foundress of a congregation.
10. The disease that killed Saint Marie Eugenie's mother.

## PERSIKAT

By: Julia Annika A. De Belen



## THINK BEFORE YOU ACT

By: Julia Annika A. De Belen

