

# UNIVERSITY of the PHILIPPINES ALUMNI ASSOCIATION in AMERICA

ESTABLISHED IN 1981

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## 16<sup>th</sup> UPAAA GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND CONVENTION 2011

Theme: “Renewing the UP Spirit of Excellence to Meet Global Challenges”

The UPAAA General Assembly and Convention is a biennial event designed to bring together UP alumni in North America to work towards the common goal of supporting our beloved Alma Mater pursue its mission in providing excellent and affordable public education to the best and the brightest minds in the Philippines. It is also an occasion for UP alumni to honor their achievers and loyal members, recapture memories of campus life at UP, renew old friendship and forge new ones. As such, the UPAAA exists to explore possibilities of strengthening the relationship between US-based alumni and UP in their mutual quest for academic excellence and national development.

This year’s 16<sup>th</sup> UPAAA General Assembly and Convention was held at the spacious Hyatt Regency Riverfront located at heart of the beautiful city of Jacksonville, Florida on September 2-4, 2011. The three-day convention was hosted by the UPAA Florida Chapter under the leadership of Antonio Fajardo, chapter president.

The convention began with the registration of delegates and participants and then followed by an afternoon reception for past and present alumni awardees, past presidents, the keynote speaker, symposium speakers, and their families. The reception was sponsored by Dr. Eusebio C. Kho (IN) and Dr. Francis Sy (MD).

The Friday night festivity was highlighted by the traditional Fellowship Night “Gabi ng Kuwentuhan at Palabidahan” where President Belinda A. Aquino officially welcomed all convention delegates, participants, and guests. With the assistance of Dr. Melchor Carbonell, she also recognized past UPAAA presidents and convention host chapters. Highly entertaining and hilarious skits and talent shows were presented by various UPAA chapters. Prizes were awarded to all participants by the Fellowship Night committee – Luz Micabalo, Elizabeth Ilagan, Jun Aragon, and Nellie Rocha. After group singing led by Francis Sy of Aragon’s UP Alumnay sa America, Alma Chand led the community singing of “Push On UP”. Thereafter, everybody danced to their heart’s delight until closing time.

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The following day, September 3, the 16<sup>th</sup> UPAAA Convention was officially opened and the General Assembly was called to order by Emmelina Ceguerra, Convention Chair who also gave her welcome remarks. National President Belinda A. Aquino introduced the keynote speaker, Dr. Amado Gabriel M. Esteban, the 20<sup>th</sup> president of Seton Hall University of New Jersey. Dr. Esteban is the first Filipino-American and the first alumnus of the University of the Philippines who became head of a major private institution of higher learning in the United States. His topic, “Role of UP Alumni in a Global Environment” was focused on UP graduates having occupied key positions in various endeavors of professional life because they have that important quality of excellence in knowledge and in critical thinking. He cited instances like *“7 of 15 Philippine presidents have taken courses or graduated from the University of the Philippines; 34 of 35 Philippine National Scientists and 39 of 66 Philippine National Artists have been or are currently affiliated with the university. Our prominent alumni include the late Carlos P. Romulo, arguably one of our most prominent, awarded, and distinguished alumnus, National Artist the late Fernando Amorsolo, Asian fashion czar Jose “Pitoy” Moreno, business leader and former US Woman Business Executive of the year, Loida Nicolas-Levis, and Harvard Foundation Scientist of the year, Dr. Baldomero Olivera. This is just a short list of our numerous fellow alumni, who have been successful in a global environment”*.

There was also a symposium by invited speakers who presented their topics of expertise. This was followed by interesting question and answer session:

- Dr. Teofilo Abrajano, Jr. “Science Meets Reality: A New Paradigm for Sustainable Development”. He presented ways of predicting the coming changes in global warming, radiation fall-out, volcanic eruptions, and related environmental parameters, and how to surmount the changes;
- Dr. Abraham Rasul Jr, “Extending Overseas Medicare in the Philippines”---Why this will help save Medicare and the US Economy;
- Mr. Richard D. Pecson, “Protecting Investments in the Uncertain Global Economy.” He gave a professional perspective of the investment climate at the present tenuous and uncertain times.

A visiting alumnus from the Philippines, Dr. Walter W. Brown, a well-known geologist-scientist, told in an impromptu speech, that the Philippines is still a “gold mine” for investment. He said that the general business climate in our home country is significantly improving and the foreign investors are beginning to come back in force. His charming wife, Annabelle Pizarro-Brown, also a UP alumna, is Chair of “Character Education through Catechism Project” in the Philippines. He paid tribute to the Philippine President Benigno Aquino III for his personal integrity.

After luncheon, the UPAAA Nomination and Elections Committee chaired by Lualhati Villabroza Ferro conducted the election of UPAAA officers for 2011-2013. Romulo F. Aquino from Michigan was elected as the new National President for 2011-2013. After the certification of the newly elected and appointed officers of 2011-2013 UPAAA, everybody prepared for the evening Gala night celebration and induction of new officers.

The gala night celebration was opened by parade of Jubilarians led by Dr. A. Gabriel Esteban. The following jubilarian classes were recognized: Diamond - 1951 & 1952, Emerald - 1956 & 1957, Gold - 1961 & 1962, Sapphire – 1966 & 1967, Ruby – 1971 & 1972, Coral – 1976 & 1977, Pearl – 1981 & 1982, and Silver – 1986 & 1987. After the welcome remarks by the UPAAA General Assembly and Convention chair, Emmelina Ceguerra, there was a community singing of U.S. and Philippine National Anthems led by Maita Belgado and Ruby Leah O. Agnir, respectively; UP Beloved by Alma Ambrosio Chand; and UP Alumna sa Amerika led by UPAAA past president, Dr. Francisco Sy. Lighting of Loyalty Candles was presided over by Delia Hidalgo Rayos (MI) who highlighted words of affirmation as the candles are lighted: *“This candle reaffirms my commitment as a graduate of the University of the Philippines to be a shining light in my community, in the workplace, and wherever I may journey,”*

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National President Belinda A. Aquino (HI) delivered her valedictory address summarizing the accomplishments and challenges of her term. Nelsie Parrado (NJ) introduced the keynote speaker, Dr. Amado Gabriel Esteban who delivered another inspirational speech to the assembled UP alumni and friends.

President Belinda Aquino, assisted by Luz Micabalo, recognized the following 2011 UPAAA Alumni awardees for having excelled and served with distinction in their respective disciplines:

- Antonio E. Alfonso, M.D. - Medicine and Medical Administration;
- Venerando I. Batas, M.D. - Healthcare Leadership;
- Francisca Tolete-Velcek, M.D. - Medicine and Women Empowerment;
- Ruby Leah Ordinario-Agnir - Arts and Culture;
- Teofilo A. Abrajano, Jr., PhD - Environmental and Earth Science;
- Felicitas dela Cruz, PhD.- Nursing Research and Education;
- Eusebio Legarda-Koh, PhD - Science, Engineering and Mathematics;
- Nelsie T. Parrado - Humanitarian Service;
- Richard D. Pecson - Business Entrepreneurship;
- Anna Victoria Agbayani Resurrecion - Food Science and Technology;
- Erlinda Rojas Santos, PhD - Pharmacy;
- Romulo F. Aquino, PhD - Environmental Health and Protection;
- A. Gabriel M. Esteban, PhD - Education and Academic Administration.

In addition, Belinda A. Aquino presented Special Presidential Recognition to those who have shown exemplary leadership and rendered outstanding service to UPAAA. The recipients are:

- Emmelina Ceguerra - Chair of Convention Planning Committee
- Lally Ferro – Parliamentarian and Member of Planning Committee
- Iluminada Aquino Sotelo – Treasurer
- Francis Sy, MD – Immediate past president (2007-2009)

UPAA Michigan Chapter and UPAA of Greater Chicago were given special recognition awards by the Awards Committee for their support of UPAAA and UP by consistently supporting its goals and activities and achieving its mission to maintain relationship of US-based alumni with its alma mater. Musical entertainment was rendered by Ruby Leah Ordinario Agnir who sang a medley from “Echoes from Broadway” and by Esperanza Ebido Vianzon who sang popular Filipino kundiman songs.

The newly elected and appointed officers of UPAAA 2011-2013 were sworn into office by Dr. Amado Gabriel Esteban. Romulo F. Aquino (MI), the newly inducted president, expressed in his inaugural address his priority to launch a campaign to recruit new members to the UPAAA, to reach out to all UPAA chapters, if feasible, and a vision in which UPAAA will be defined by its ability to pursue common grounds in our collective endeavors and to find amicable solutions in resolving our differences. After the ceremonial events, alumni and friends danced the night away to the tune of modern and line dancing music.

The following day, the immediate past Executive Board met with the new Board of Directors in a transition meeting presided by outgoing president Belinda A. Aquino and incoming president Romulo F. Aquino. The immediate past president presented a list of pending business matters for the next administration to consider for follow-up and/or resolution. The new president started negotiation with UPAA-Nevada representatives (Luz Micabalo, Romualdo Aragon, and Elizabeth Ilagan) regarding the 17<sup>th</sup> General Assembly and Convention in 2013. It was agreed in principle to hold the next convention in Las Vegas, Nevada with UPAA-Nevada as host chapter.

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The 16<sup>th</sup> UPAAA General Assembly and Convention officially ended thereafter with a positive note that a successful convention is only made possible with planning, dedication, and efforts of many dedicated alumni, national officers, as well as officers and members of the host chapter, UPAA Florida chapter. We congratulate the new officers, headed by Pres. Romulo F. Aquino and wish them successful and productive years ahead of them.



The Fellowship night was colorful and festive. Alumni are shown here in various international costumes.



Keynote speaker Seton Hall University President Amado Gabriel Esteban, PhD, with his wife Josephine (also a UP alumna) and their daughter, Ysabella.



Parade of 2011 UPAAA Jubilarians



Outgoing UPAAA President Belinda A. Aquino offering a gift of Hawaiian shell lei to the incoming UPAAA President Romulo F. Aquino



2011 UPAAA Alumni Distinguished and Special Presidential Recognition Awardees



Recipients of Special Presidential Recognition Awards from the UPAAA President (2009-2011), Belinda A. Aquino. These individuals have shown exemplary leadership and rendered outstanding service to UPAAA.

Emmelina Ceguerra, Chair of Convention Planning Committee  
Lualhati Villabroza Ferro, Parliamentarian and member, Planning Committee  
Illuminada Aquino Sotelo, Treasurer  
Francis Sy, MD, Immediate Past President





Special Presidential Recognition Awards for their contribution and services to UPAAA over the years:

*Romulo F. Aquino, M.S., PhD  
 Emmelina S. Ceguerra, BSBA  
 Lualhati Villabroza Ferro, LL.B  
 Iluminada Aquino Sotelo, BSBA  
 Francisco S. Sy, MD, DrPH  
 Fe Casimino Nievera, B.A.  
 Carmencita Q. Fulgado, PhD*

*Nelsie T. Parrado, B.S. Hygiene  
 Luzviminda Sapin Micabalo, BSN*

*2011 UPAAA Distinguished Alumnus  
 1999 UPAAA Service Award  
 2003 UPAAA Community Service Award  
 2001 UPAAA Service Award  
 2005 UPAAA Most Distinguished Alumnus  
 2003 UPAAA Service Award  
 1989 UPAAA Most Distinguished Alumna  
 The only 2-Term President 1995-97, 1997-99  
 who initiated this 3-day Convention in 1995  
 Special Recognition in Humanitarian Service  
 1985 UPAAA Service Award and  
 1997 UPAAA Most Outstanding in Community  
 Service*



Seton Hall University President Dr. Amado Gabriel M. Esteban administering the oath of office to the newly elected and appointed UPAAA officers 2011-2013



2011-2013 UPAAA President Romulo F. Aquino delivering his inaugural address



2009-2011 UPAAA President A. Aquino, delivering her farewell presidential address



Keynote speaker, Seton Hall University President, Dr. Amado Gabriel Esteban



UPAAA Florida chapter with their families and newly inducted 2011-2013 UPAAA President Romulo F. Aquino in a souvenir photo



Sunday, September 4, 2011 - Executive Board transition meeting