



# D'BAKAN

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE MSU ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



## TRAIPSING OVER PATTERNS MORPHING INTO SYNERGIES

*Luchi C. Sevidal Castro, MSUAA Former President & Current MSUAA Secretary*

### **Once upon a time,**

there was only an assortment of idiosyncrasies marked by undifferentiated rhythms and tones, flavours and savours, aromas and scents, temperatures and textures, hues and shades.

### **Gradually,**

such auditory, gustatory, olfactory, tactile, and visual articulations of the human senses by the MSU alumni had assumed distinct configurations, most recently refined by the dynamic leadership of the current Board of Directors of the MSU Alumni Association.

### **This dynamism**

rests upon a synergy of values and traits that bond us together, generated over conjunctures of time and space, impacting on communities of alumni and sustained across lands and oceans. Certain of these values and traits are: courage, diligence, excellence, godliness, honesty, humility, kindness, love, respect for and sensitivity to differences.

### **That same synergy**

of values and traits underpins our definition of the policy statement governing MSUAA publication projects and programs. This policy statement firmly establishes the foundation on which to anchor undertakings in the face of undifferentiated senses morphing gradually.

### **The MSUAA policy for publication**

is effective dissemination of pertinent information about programs, activities and accomplishments of the Association and its component chapters through a communication and public relations program that is extensive in breadth. The platforms shall include cyberspace, printed media and such other public information media as are deemed practical and efficient.

### **The objectives of publishing the MSUAA Newsletter are:**

1. provision of a method to enable generating, within one document, information appreciable by the MSU Alumni community and making the same readily available with regularity;
2. encouraging fellow alumni to participate in activities of the Association and in efforts at partnering with our Alma Mater;
3. sharing the collective responsibility of disseminating accurate information about the MSUAA;
4. motivating every component chapter of the MSUAA to sustain own levels of engagement, vigour and commitment.

### **The pursuit of synergizing these values and traits**

and emulating them even as we touch base with and take account of the concretely perilous realities of the pandemic constitute our fervent hope for our readers.

### **Welcome to the maiden issue of D'BAKAN.**

#### **What's inside:**



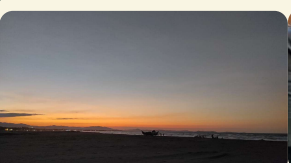
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**trying hard techies . . . becoming "ZOOMbies" to meet the challenges of the times**  
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*What's in a name?*

*D'bakan* (D-BəK'-ən) is a percussion instrument that is played along with other instruments in a *kulintang* ensemble. The term is derived from the word "*dbak*" which means to strike, hit or beat; *d'bakan*, then, is something upon which you hit. Its role in the *kulintang* ensemble is to keep the tempo in check.

In the olden times, bigger *d'bakans* (*dadabuans*) would be hung horizontally in mosques. An *imam* (spiritual leader) would hit the drum repeatedly to signify the beginning of prayer. It has also been said that *datus* or community leaders would use them to call the community's attention for some important announcements.

It is for these reasons that we find it apt to name our newsletter **D'BAKAN**.



**WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!**

Our newsletter has four (4) regular features; **Main Story**, **Creme de la Creme** (about any alumnus who has done superbly well in his/her field), **Hindsight and Insights** (anything about MSU's past and recent accomplishments), and **A Voice from Yonder** (dedicated to fellow alumni who have the passion to write essays, poems, anecdotes, etc). We will be happy to accept your contributions to any of these features. Due to space constraints, however, please limit your article to 300 words, more or less.

The Publication Committee reserves the right to choose which articles to publish and will edit them as it deems fit.

**Please send your materials to [msuaapubcom@yahoo.com](mailto:msuaapubcom@yahoo.com)**

**MSUAA Publication Committee:**  
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 Members:

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Luchi C. Sevidal Castro  
 Babie Lynn C. Visperas



## The President's Corner

Rhodora S. N. Englis, President, MSUAA

My warmest congratulations to the MSUAA Publication Committee for making possible D'BAKAN, digital newsletter of the MSU Alumni Association (MSUAA)! The maiden issue is nothing but phenomenal! A really excellent job.

The need for an effective tool for us to connect with MSU alumni all over the world, especially with our members, and to disseminate pertinent information about the association and its component chapters has, at long last, been filled. With this newsletter, MSUAA's presence shall readily be felt. Everybody who reads D'BAKAN will know that the association is alive and well, because, truly, IT IS!

For those who are not yet in the know, here's an FYI. MSUAA was organized sometime in the middle of 1966 and registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) on November 29 of the same year under Registration No. 31008. The following were the incorporators: Exsuan Dagbusan, Felisa Micubo, Benito Relatado, Carolina Macapili, and Morito Tatel. MSUAA owes big time these 5 brave souls for their foresight, courage, resolution, and daring. Some have already gone ahead of us into the great beyond; may God grant them eternal rest.

With a life of only 50 years, MSUAA's SEC registration expired in 2016. Regrettably, earlier efforts to renew its registration were unsuccessful. Nonetheless, the import of a SEC registration for an association like MSUAA cannot be overemphasized. Without it, MSUAA is bereft of legitimacy as a juridical entity. SEC registration for MSUAA is non-negotiable. Addressing this concern therefore is the present leadership's top priority. We are now undertaking aggressively the process of registration with SEC. We hope to get the certificate before our GA meeting in November.

As proclaimed in the preamble of our Constitution and By-laws, MSUAA came into being so as to unite alumni of the various campuses of the University "for mutual support and benefit, to assist the University accomplish the ends for which it has been established, and to contribute to the development of Southern Philippines, in particular, and the country, in general."

The Board of Directors has always been guided by these goals. In realizing them, there are Standing Committees that are tasked to plan and strategize and to undertake relevant programs and projects. These committees include Revenue Generation, Membership Development, Scholarship Enhancement, Community Programs and Projects, Publication, Job Placement, Socials and

Fellowships, and Constitutional Amendments.

There is a truism which says that an association is good only as its members. Today, MSUAA has 14 component chapters in good standing, 6 campus-based and 8 area-based. Campus-based chapters are from IIT, Naawan, Gen. San., Jolo, MSAT, and LNAC. Area-based are from Cagayan de Oro, Davao, Zamboanga Hermosa, Sulu Province, Manila North, Manila South, North America, and Zamboanga Sibugay, our newest. Applying for accreditation, and are almost there, are Palawan and TCTO Chapters. Applying for re-accreditation is the chapter from MSU-Maguindanao. There used to be more, though.

Yet, easily, MSUAA has a potential membership base of more or less 200,000 alumni who have graduated from the various campuses of the University, scattered all over the world. With only 14 component chapters, MSUAA has to embrace the challenge of stretching further its wings and we are, by all means, accepting the challenge. Membership expansion shall be a priority target. The Membership Development Committee, which I myself chair and counts as members Vice President Al-anwar Anzar, Immediate Past President Bob Lim, President-in-Waiting Renato Boniao, Secretary Luchi C. Sevidal Castro, and Treasurer Zayda Macarambon shall endeavor to facilitate the creation of additional 6-8 new chapters and the revival of 2-3 stagnant chapters before our term ends in December 2022. We resolve not to be deterred by this restricting pandemic. Albeit, we will use it as an opportunity to reach more alumni virtually, riding on the new norm.

Still another target has already been accomplished - the publication of a digital newsletter. Again, hurray for this! D'BAKAN shall be our clarion trumpet announcing to all and sundry the goings on in MSUAA in the President's Corner and Component Chapters' pages in D'BAKAN and with our fellows who excelled in their field of expertise in its Creme de la Creme and the Voice from Yonder sections.

Certainly, there are other platforms that MSUAA is using to "effectively disseminate pertinent information about programs, activities, and accomplishments" of the Association, but D'BAKAN, shall be supreme because in just one click, everything in a single document can be promptly accessed. Indeed, Director Willy Andales, everyone will now know that we are not sitting on our responsibilities and the passion and hard work that we are giving to these responsibilities should not go unnoticed.

"Nothing that is worthwhile is ever easy."

-Nicholas Sparks, Message in a Bottle

But, we are doing it! And, with God's grace, a difference we shall make.

## Creme de la Creme

Wilfredo Y. Andales, Member, MSUAA BOD

**"Things turn out best for those who make the best of how things turn out."**

This propelled him to what he is today - a **Principal Geotechnical Engineer** - the highest level for a geotechnical engineering position in a U.S. consulting firm. On top of that, he is with **Jacobs Engineering Group**, a firm that has been ranked No. 1 in the world by the Engineering News Record in at least 15 categories that include Design, Program Management, Water/ Wastewater Engineering. and Hazardous Waste Management.

As a Geotechnical Eng'g. Expert and Consultant, he has about 27 years of international consulting, design, construction, and management experience on more than 150 civil infrastructure and mining projects across the United States, Canada, and Latin America. Among these are the following award-winning Mega Projects: Panama Canal (considered as one of the greatest Civil Engineering achievements of all time and one of the Seven Wonders of the modern world); Cobre Panama Copper Mine (Latin America); Golden Ears Bridge (Canada); Marquette Interchange (Wisconsin, USA); Whittier Access Bridge (Alaska, USA); Hanford Nuclear Plant (USA); and Sound Transit Link Light Rail (Seattle, USA).



**Golden Ears Bridge Project, British Columbia, Canada**

*This project is a \$1 billion Design-Build project that involved design and construction of bridge approaches and viaducts for a bridge over the Fraser River 30 km east of Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada*

He is currently on an expatriate assignment in Panama as the **Deputy Program Manager and Geotechnical Eng'g. Expert/Advisor for the Panama Canal Expansion Program** - a project that has been listed as one of the World's Top 50 projects in the last 50 years.



**Panama Canal Expansion Program**  
[Photo Courtesy of Canal de Panama]

*The Panama Canal is largely recognized as one of the greatest civil engineering achievements of all time and one of the seven wonders of the modern world.*

### Dr. Casan King Sampaco

obtained his B.S. in Civil Eng'g., **Cum Laude**, at **Mindanao State University**, Philippines (1983); Masters in Geotechnical Eng'g. at **Asian Institute of Technology** in Thailand (1986), and Ph.D. in Geotechnical Eng'g. at **Utah State University** in Logan, Utah, U.S.A (1995).



He is married to Nieva Zorahayda Kalaw, another MSUan, and the couple lives in Bellevue, Washington with their two daughters: Twyla, who worked with Apple, Google and Amazon (the Alexa project) and Starla, 2014 Miss Teen Washington and now a TV News Anchor for KCTS 9, Seattle's PBS Station and founder of Career Survival Guide.

The late Sultan Rashid D. Sampaco, former vice-mayor of Marawi City, could not have been prouder of what his son turned out to be.

*Creme de la Creme features an MSU alumnus/alumna who has made a mark in his/her chosen field thereby giving honor not only to his/her family but to MSU as well.*

## Hindsight and Insights

Rosemin E. Fernando, PRO, MSUAA BOD

### Dr. Antonio S. Isidro, MSU Founding President

by Dr. Datumanong A. Sarangani

I only had intimate contacts with Dr. Isidro when I joined the teaching force of the University after I graduated from college in 1966, having been a member of the first batch of students of MSU in 1962.

As a student up to my early senior years, Dr. Isidro, as I saw him on varied occasions, typifies a person who was hardworking, result-oriented, and like a well-oiled machine, very efficient. I have observed his zealous concern about the infant school and the studentry. He walks out of the Summit house early in the morning to get his exercise or play a round of golf, and inspect buildings, cottages, and other university structures. Even in our unguarded moments, he would appear in our dormitories – there not to snoop, but to observe our living conditions and ask our views on how we can make life in the University more enjoyable. He visited classrooms from time to time and casually joined us in our dining tables in the cafeteria, jokingly reminding us that bulgur wheat and powdered eggs are good for our health.

He was the picture of clean living and good rapport. He was seen as strict in the enforcement of rules, but he was fair to all. And for that impeccable sense of fairness, he earned the respect and adoration of his fellow workers in the University, Muslims, and Christians alike.



Left: Dr. Antonio S. Isidro, First President of MSU

Right: The author, Dr. Datumanong Sarangani, one of the first graduates in 1966. He then joined the faculty and eventually became Chancellor of MSU General Santos (1988-90) and MSU Marawi (1990-91). He retired as Executive Vice-President in 2011.

He was a visionary. Recognizing both the difficulties and discomforts of leaving his prominent job at the University of the Philippines, Dr. Isidro went to Morolandia with a profound belief that a pluralistic society like ours in the Philippines can still grow and prosper as one nation through a common bond. He believed in the role of a distinct national identity as one of the pillars of national development, and such an identity can only be well articulated and adequately pursued through the educational.

Dr. Isidro, in his own calling, played a distinct role in the development and transformation of Mindanao, for braving the odds in pioneering the Mindanao State University as one of the catalyzers of change in our area through its programs, and continuous supply of trained manpower in the region through its graduates. His pioneering efforts of leadership in the University will remain strongly ensconced in the deepest chambers of our hearts.



Left Photo: A Foundation Day Parade which was about a 7-km walk from the heart of Marawi City to the MSU campus. In the photo from L-R are Mr. Macansantos, Dr. Antonio Isidro, Prof. Mamitua Saber, Prof. Henrietta Ele, Dean Alberto Villares, Mr. Bogabong Tawano, & Engr. Jovencio Garces. Partly hidden is Prof. Angelito Flores.

Center Photo: Laying of the cornerstone of the University Library with Former Pres. Ferdinand Marcos and the First Lady, Imelda Marcos together with Dr. Antonio Isidro and wife Louise doing the honors.

Right Photo: Dr. Antonio Isidro with Pres. Ferdinand Marcos during MSU's first commencement exercises in 1966.

(Photographs courtesy of Dr. Datumanong A. Sarangani and Usopay Hamdag Cadar)

## A Voice From Yonder

Babie Lynn C. Visperas, Member, MSUAA BOD

### Symphony No. 1- Ode to the Mindanao State University By Romeo C. Balingcongan, BSME 1973

#### Prelude: Adagio

We all had dreams.

We who came from far north Aparri, the mountains of the Cordillera and the valleys of Nueva Vizcaya, the arid lands of the Ilocos, the vast flatlands of the Central Plain, the cacophonous, dusty and vibrant Metropolitan Manila, the fertile but storm ravaged land where the majestic Mount Mayon rises to pierce the clouds, the pristine island of Palawan, the islands dotting the Visayas, the lanzones filled island of Camiguin, the Caraga region, the highlands of Bukidnon, the provinces straddled by the grand Mount Apo, the marine life rich coastal lands of the Sarangani Bay under the watchful eye of Mt. Matutum, the islands of the brave Tausugs and sea-faring Badjaos, the northern provinces rimming the island of Mindanao to gather in the land of the lake dwellers, the fierce and valiant Meranaos.

We came for varied reasons. We were steeped in our own legends and myths, harboring wild fantasies, dreaming of adventures beyond the borders of our barrios, of stamping our names in rolls of honor in the various fields of human endeavor, or simply of breaking free from the bonds of poverty and change our stars.

We came naïve. We went out wisened.

We came back to our hometowns, ventured into the halls of the academe, broke through the corridors of power and crossed the high seas in search of our futures and, thereby create legends and myths of different kinds

Yet through the years, we never forgot. We always remembered where all these myths and legends began: the hills of Cabingan where our soul mother stands, overlooking the lake under the watchful eye of the lazy mountain range, the Sleeping Lady.

This is an ode to that harbinger of hope to the land of as yet golden but unfulfilled promise.

**Note: This is just the first of four parts (Prelude, 1st Movement, 2nd Movement, and 3rd Movement). The rest of the parts will be featured in our next three succeeding issues.**

### Sleeping Lady

By Arthur P. Casanova, BSE Chem & Filipino, 1969

Ulap, nagsisilbing kumot  
Na nakalatag sa bundok  
Bahaghari'y sumusulpot  
Kinukulayan ang buhok.

O, mutya, ika'y gumising  
Tapusin ang pagkahimbing  
Tagahanga'y naglalambing  
Ibig ka n'yang makapiling.

Tiyak, ika'y aakyatin  
Mag-aalay ng awitin  
Isasayaw ka sa hangin  
Mahigpit kang yayakapin.

### The Stillness of Things

By Harold Henry G. Cabanilla, 1999

Everything seems so peaceful  
No movement, how wonderful  
The wind blows gently  
Giving me peace; completely

Is it a dream or a reality?  
Am I sane, or insane?  
Is it the truth, or a fantasy?  
But it's so sweet, like a sugar cane

If I could live like this forever  
If I could stay like this whenever  
I would, in the stillness of things  
I'm happy with the stillness of things

Where everything is peaceful  
My troubled heart; rest  
Where everything is quiet  
My deft ear; hears

Where everything is still  
My mute tongue; speaks  
So let me live forever  
In the stillness of things

*Prof. Romeo Balingcongan was both a College and University Leadership awardee in 1973 and served as faculty member of MSU COE (1973-2000). He was also a Research & PhD Fellow in MONBUSHO-Japan (1988-92). Dr. Arthur Casanova has been a faculty member, first in MSU and later at Brent International School. He is now the Chairperson of Komisyon ng Wikang Filipino.*

*Harold Henry G. Cabanilla, a BSChem Eng'g. graduate (2007), is a CQI Practitioner & a Certified Lean Sigma Six Black Belt. Both his parents were faculty members of MSU College of Engineering.*

*(Photo of Sleeping Lady courtesy of Prof. Henry Daut)*

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AUDITOR:	JANICE BOLLOZOS ALCOMENDRAS	BEVERLY MIÑOZA	ANTONIO VEGA



# MSUAA Chapter Activities

Bongbong U. Busran, Member, MSUAA BOD

braving the threat to fulfill our mission . . .

## FROM INDUCTION TO PLANNING SESSION:

### MSUAA-IIT CHAPTER TWIN ACTIVITIES IN PANDEMIC TIME



The Induction of the New Set of Officers held on **January 13, 2021** at the Chelina Beach Resort, Sta. Filomena, Iligan City. **Dr. Rhodora S.N. Englis**, the new MSUAA National President and Alumni Regent, was the inducting officer.



**Planning Session** at the newly constructed **Payag Kalinaw** in MSU-IIT on **February 6, 2021**. Payag Kalinaw is a project of the chapter under the leadership of the former president, **Dr. Noel R. Estoperez**.

(Photos and info courtesy of Prof. Renebel O. Labadisos and Prof. Nimfa L. Bracamonte)

from small things come bigger ones . . .

## MSUAA-MSAT CHAPTER LAUNCHES ALUMNI CORNER



Last February 16, 2021, in celebration of the Integration Day of MSU Maigo to the MSU System, the MSU Alumni Association Maigo Campus Chapter launched its revenue generation project dubbed as the Alumni Corner. On sale are souvenir items bearing the MSU Alumni Association Logo.

Life's persistent and most urgent question is, **What are you doing for others?**  
-Martin Luther King Jr.

# MSUAA Chapter Activities

Bongbong U. Busran, Member, MSUAA BOD

giving love to the less fortunate, adopting a community & helping students and teachers in a far-flung school . .

## MSUAA-ZAMBOANGA HERMOSA CHAPTER TRULY CARES



LOVE DRIVE FOR PWD'S



## ADOPTING SAN VICENTE FERRER COMMUNITY

Conducting Waste Management Seminar  
Giving pandemic packs and goodies



## ADOPTING STO. NINO ELEM SCHOOL

A school that can only be reached by foot after a 1.5-hour walk from the highway, crossing a shallow river several times.



heeding the call . . .

**"Take what you need, give what you can"**

A simple phrase posted by a young lady on a bamboo cart filled with canned goods, vegetables, and other necessities - her own way of helping people who were struggling amid the pandemic. **Ana Patricia Non's** initiative went viral, awakening the spirit of *bayanihan* among Filipinos and in a few days, community pantries popped up in Metro Manila, eventually reaching Mindanao. Today, the community pantry phenomenon has inspired other countries, too.



NOBLE & HEARTWARMING



**MSUAA-CDO CHAPTER** responded to the call of the times and lent its support to the community pantry spearheaded by Oro Baptist Church in Cagayan de Oro City.

