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WITNESS

The Official Publication of Adventist Medical Students Network-Philippines

**AMSN-PH 6 YEARS
AND COUNTING**

**DR. GERALD
PELAYO**
HEALTH BITS

FEATURING

Dr. Maricelle Gonzales- Polito
Dr. Evzel Rosqwyn Baldoza
Dr. David Calibuso II
Dr Marie Anthonette-Nañez
Dr. Jibeth Mundaza

WITNESS

By: Nina Ashley G. Franche



From Left to Right: Rowena Famarin, Elwin Sidhabbatula, Elleia Generato, Jewel Cangayda, Ashley Franche, Alexander Ladaran, Shari Flores, Bryl Bacdayan (Medical Students of Adventist University of the Philippines - College of Medicine)

In the field of law, a witness is someone who provides testimonial evidence of what they have seen, known, or have claimed to know. Witnesses are very significant as they take part in resolving a case. Just before they testify, they are asked to raise their hand and take an oath to tell the truth and only the truth. In general, a witness is someone who shares a testimony of what took place to those who do not have knowledge of a certain event. Suppose a vehicular accident happened and you saw how it. Who would the authorities ask to know the sequence of events? They will ask you and as a witness, you will tell them of what you have seen and heard. What makes witnesses different from others? They have seen, heard, and experienced something.

The Bible, in Mark 5, tells a story of the first witnesses Jesus sent to a pagan region. After they have been freed from evil spirit possession, Jesus commissioned them to go home to their own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for them, and how He has had Mercy (v.19).

What does it take to be a witness? Greatness, authority, or fame? No. Willingness. Willingness to share an experience or fact.

Do you know that you are a witness? In Acts 1:8, Jesus, again, gives another special commission. He said to His disciples, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." These people, the disciples, are those who have been with Jesus. They ate, walked, slept, preached, healed, and bonded with Jesus. They have witnessed who Jesus is- His mercy, His compassion, His authority, His Divinity, His grace, and many more; and Jesus is sending them to testify of this. This commission is not just for them but also for you.

The Adventist Medical Student Network's official publication is named WITNESS for this reason. In this issue, read and indulge in various experiences and testimonies of medical students who have seen the mercy, grace, and the love of God throughout their journey. In the same way, behold how God has been faithful to countless Adventist medical students and the AMSN itself. We hope that this will not just inspire you in your medical journey, or in whatever field you are in, but that this will also inspire you to be God's witnesses.



Photo Taken by: Dan Kirk Formentera

AMSN-PH: 6 Years and Counting

By: Dominic John Alburo & Ahlia Demayo

2017 THE BEGINNING

Founded in November 2017 with only 3 regional member organizations, namely Luzon Society of Adventist Medical Students (LSAMS), under which is the Adventist University of the Philippines-Medical Evangelists Dedicated for Service (AUP-MEDS), Cebu Adventist Medical Students Association (CAMSA), and Iloilo Society of Adventist Medical Students (ISAMS)

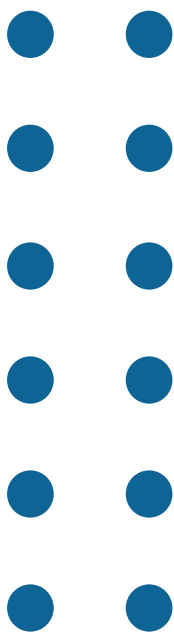


JON SERGEI ACLAN
CO-HEAD OF AMSN-PH



MARTIN PHYL NUNEZ
CO-HEAD OF AMSN-PH

The first three years were under the co-leadership of the then medical students Dr. Jon Sergei Aclan from Southern Luzon, and Dr. Mart Philip Nunez from Cebu.



2018 LAUNCHING

The Adventist Ministry to College and University Students - University of Northern Philippines (AMiCUS-UNP) joined AMSN-PH in July 2018, widening the reach of the national organization in Visayas and Northern Luzon regions.

2020

FOR A CAUSE

The COVID-19 pandemic urged the creation of the Good Samaritan Project which is now a longstanding advocacy of the organization. The project raised funds for hospitals, churches, calamity victims and NGOs.



2021

GROWTH



During the fourth year of AMSN-PH, Davao Society of Adventist Medical Students (DSAMS), another regional member organization was added. DSAMS joined AMSN-PH, under the leadership of Marc Philip Ocoma, now a post graduate intern from Luzon. The society then became the last member organization of AMSN-PH to join, furthermore strengthening the alliance of Adventist medical students from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. In the same year, “A Night of Music” Benefit Concert fundraised for several beneficiaries. The concert was live streamed online through the AMSN-Ph Facebook page.

2022

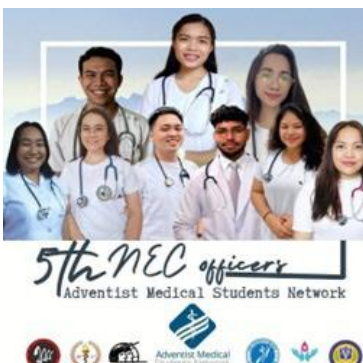
THRIVING

By God’s grace, we are discovering more Adventist medical students from other areas of the Philippines such as Leyte and Cagayan de Oro. In its fifth year, AMSN-PH was led by Dominic John Alburo, now a medical clerk from Ilocos Sur. Through a collaboration with various organizations, the Himig ng Pag-asa Benefit Concert raised funds for Bagyong Agaton Response Operation and the Sil-Angon Jungle Village Mission School.



2023

STEADFAST



Now in the sixth year of AMSN-PH the baton was passed to Anna Liza Fofue, currently third year medical student from Mindoro. A fundraising concert entitled “Harmony of Hope: A Concert of Compassion” was held recently for Philippine Adventist Mission Aviation Services and SULADS Deaf Literacy Center, furthering the mission to spread the light to others.

The organization still aims to continue the following programs that has been done through

01

Bringing medical students closer to Jesus through Weeks of Prayer, regional exchange Sabbath programs and daily morning united prayers



02

Providing spiritual support for our alumni taking the Physician Licensure exam through our PLE dedication Programs and prayer batons; thereby producing 315 passers throughout the past 6 years, 11 of which are topnotchers.

03

Conduct fundraising events for various beneficiaries



04

Inspiring medical students to join medical missions



05

Skills and personality development workshops



06

”And most importantly, spreading the good news of the gospel in Jesus Christ through our social media testimonies and publications such as this newsletter“

The Lord's providence to this organization, the generosity of numerous donors, and the guidance of several mentors enabled the accomplishment of these advocacies. May God continue to bless this ministry and may more Adventist medical students be encouraged to be part of the Lord's mission.

Throwback: A Look Into the Student Life of an Outstanding Medical Doctor

By: Freann Lagahit



When it comes to surviving medical school, we at AMSN Witness, think we should ask no further than Dr. Jerald Pelayo, a UERM-MMCI alumnus, an NLE 2011 & PLE 2018 topnotcher who is now a husband and a father with a thriving medical career in California. According to him, these are some tips to not only survive, but also thrive, in medical school:

#1 Make God your first, best, and last in everything.

Dr. Pelayo said he always sees to it that he reads his Bible and prays before he starts and ends any school day, and that he considers his devotional life to be “the most important part” of his journey. Amidst the rigors of medical school he has been actively serving in a campus ministry in evangelism and discipleship, in addition to his roles in

his local church (Sabbath school teacher, pianist, AY program coordinator, health lecturer etc.). His relationship with the Lord enabled him to overcome difficult times during medical school-moments when he would feel his best was not enough. The Bible recalibrates his thinking and directs him to Jesus in times of doubt and seeming failure, giving it meaning and purpose, turning his necessity as God’s opportunity.

#2 Give time for rest. This may be unpopular among medical students, but would you believe that being the academic achiever that he is, Dr. Pelayo would consistently go to sleep before 10PM and wake up at 6AM during regular school days and still sleep before 10PM and wake up earlier at 3AM or 4AM during exam days? We all consider it a dream but this is the example we need to realize that we can do it too.



#3 Maintain a healthy social life. We probably know already how regularly spending time with family and friends is necessary to boost one's mental health albeit this being often sacrificed among medical students. However, throughout medical school, Dr. Pelayo makes sure to talk with family or friends almost every day, because he believes that "a healthy social life is directly proportional to academic success." The top student has spoken, folks!

#4 A romantic relationship helps, but is not necessary. For those of you who do not know, Dr. Jerald Pelayo has been in a relationship with his now-wife, Dr. Ardys, during their med school days. According to him, it definitely helps to have someone "to share your joys and sorrows with" which made challenging days in medical school bearable as they are facing those together. When asked whether he would advise having a love life in medical school, he counsels to "know yourself and your priorities thoroughly." Furthermore, he explains that each of us has "varying social abilities to cope with stress and pressure" and that "it is very important to consider your psychological

preparedness to engage in relationships while braving the pressure of medical school."

#5 Make the most of every year level. From Year 1 of medical school up to Post-Graduate Internship, Dr. Pelayo has advice for medical studs like you and me:

1st-3rd year - "Start strong! Grab every opportunity to learn. Make the most of your free hours in the morning to study so you can get enough sleep at night. Read in advance and never sleep during lectures. Review your notes the night after the lecture. These will reinforce learning and will enable you to master your concepts. Study as if you are the one making exam questions. If you have the chance, teach your classmate - this is the highest form of learning. Above all, always partner God in everything you do. Make Him your first, best and last in everything."

Clerks - "Make the most of your learning opportunities from your cases/procedures and with your colleagues, seniors and attending physicians. Take time to read your textbooks and review your basic sciences. It is the best time to put into practice all your learnings during the first 3 years of medical school. Despite your busy schedule,

always make time with the Great Physician."

PGI - "This is the best time to teach your juniors. Be a role model. Treat them the way you want to be treated as junior interns. Master your basic and clinical sciences by utilizing simplified review materials. Your next stop will be your licensure exam. Make sure that you've already reviewed for the board exam before formal review season commences."

In conclusion, medical school sure is hard to say the least, but it can be made more bearable by prioritizing our relationship with God, resting properly, making time for family and friends, having someone who supports and understands you, and making the most out of every year level of your medical school journey.

Acknowledgment: We thank Dr. Jerald Pelayo for carving out time in his busy schedule to interview him for this article.

Health Bits

By: Anna Liza Fofue

Medical school is tough and challenging. To survive it, a balance between taking care of one's health and studying must be present in a student's life. It sounds easy but doing so takes effort and discipline. Thankfully, Ellen G. White, in her writings, laid out many health advices that can help, not only students, but everyone in managing health.



Relaxation and Amusement

Those who are engaged in study should have relaxation. The mind must not be constantly confined to close thought, for the delicate mental machinery becomes worn. The body as well as the mind must exercise. But there is great need for temperance in amusements, as in every other pursuit. And the character of these amusements should be carefully and thoroughly considered. Every youth should ask himself, What influence will these amusements have on physical, mental, and moral health? Will my mind become so infatuated as to forget God? Shall I cease to have His glory before me? . CT 333.2

Any amusement in which you can engage asking the blessing of God upon it in faith will not be dangerous. But any amusement which disqualifies you for secret prayer, for devotion at the altar of prayer, or for taking part in the prayer meeting, is not safe, but dangerous. . CT 337.3



Overstudying

The student who desires to put the work of two years into one should not be permitted to have his own way. To undertake to do double work means, with many, overtaxation of the mind and neglect of physical exercise. It is not reasonable to suppose that the mind can assimilate an oversupply of mental food, and it is as great a sin to overload the mind as it is to overload the digestive organs. . CT 296-CT 296.2t



Sleep

In regulating the hours for sleep, there should be no haphazard work. Students should not form the habit of burning the midnight oil and taking the hours of the day for sleep. If they have been accustomed to doing this at home, they should correct the habit, going to bed at a seasonable hour. They will then rise in the morning refreshed for the duties of the day. In our schools the lights should be put out at half past nine. . CT 296.3-CT 297.1



Exercise

Exercise in household labor is of the greatest advantage to young girls. Physical labor will not prevent the cultivation of the intellect: far from it. The advantages gained by physical labor will balance a person and prevent the mind from being overworked. The toil will come upon the muscles and relieve the wearied brain.... A sound body is required for a sound intellect. Physical soundness and a practical knowledge of all the necessary household duties will never be a hindrance to a well-developed intellect; both are highly important.... . CT 287.3

The time spent in physical exercise is not lost. The student who is constantly poring over his books, while he takes but little exercise in the open air, does himself an injury. A proportionate exercise of the various organs and faculties of the body is essential to the best work of each. When the brain is constantly taxed while the other organs are left inactive, there is a loss of physical and mental strength. The physical powers are robbed of their healthy tone, the mind loses its freshness and vigor, and a morbid excitability is the result. . CT 295.2

Diet

The need of carefulness in habits of diet should be impressed on the minds of all students. I have been instructed that those attending our schools are not to be served with flesh foods or with preparations of food that are known to be unwholesome. Nothing that will serve to encourage a desire for stimulants should be placed on the table. I appeal to all to refuse to eat those things that will injure the health. Thus they can serve the Lord by sacrifice. . CT 297.3-CT 298.1



Clothing

In order to secure the most healthful clothing, the needs of every part of the body must be carefully studied. The character of the climate, the surroundings, the condition of the health, the age and occupation, must all be considered. Every article of dress should fit easily, obstructing neither the circulation of the blood nor a free, full, natural respiration. Everything worn should be so loose that when the arms are raised the clothing will be correspondingly lifted. . CT 306.



ROMANS 8:37, “NO, IN ALL THESE THINGS WE ARE MORE
THAN CONQUERORS THROUGH HIM WHO LOVED US.”

THE MAGAZINE **TALKED TO ME**

By: Shelomith Sayson

Under the scorching heat of the sun, I walked towards the plane taking my flight to Manila. While waiting for the plane to take off, my eyes were directed to that one magazine, picked it up and opened it. As I was skimming through the leaves of the magazine, I landed on a page where a food supplement product was advertised. On the bottom part was a bible verse saying, “No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.” Romans 8:37. The moment I read the verse my soul was filled with hope – hope to conquer the board exam.

Review days went so fast until one COVID-19 case was reported in the country. I continued my preparation for the Medical Technology Licensure Exam 2020. March of 2020, the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak was declared as a global pandemic and along with that an advisory came out announcing that the licensure exam will be postponed. I immediately booked a flight to go back to my province before the lockdown.

I then realized that hope that drenched me when I read the verse in the magazine was just a shallow hope - a hope just to pass the board exam, nothing else.

Now that I am in medical school, that account in my life taught me to hope not for the things I desire and to hope not for the things that are transient but to hope for the things God desires for me and the things that are eternal. I could not forget that page of the magazine.



All glory to God for bringing me to where I am now. Romans 8:37 fuels me that I can conquer anything through Christ who loves me and gave Himself for me. As a physician missionary, I learned that I should continually keep an open line to the unquenchable source of wisdom – JESUS. If I keep that line open, then I can conquer anything, I can keep moving forward, not growing weary and will run with strength renewed daily.





Dr. Maricelle Gonzales earned her Doctor of Medicine Degree from the Adventist University of the Philippines. On the day of their commencement exercises, she was awarded with the Physician Missionary and Pastoral Care award, having embodied how it is to be a missionary even in her student years. She finished her post-graduate internship at MAMC and is currently preparing for the physician licensure examination.

Dr. Maricelle Pollito Gonzales

By: Dominic John Alburo & Nina Ashley Franche

1. Looking back to the time before you entered medical school, was becoming a doctor something you have always dreamed about?

Actually, the desire to go into medschool came only to me in 2017, which I believe was from the Lord Himself. I did not have any dreams of becoming a doctor prior to that. It was only when a student friend shared to me his dream of becoming a physician so he can go back to his island town in Palawan to serve afterwards that the Lord placed in my heart a desire to do the same. I don't know why it came to me late but I trust that the Lord's timing is perfect.

2. You were blessed with the Physician Missionary and Pastoral Care Award during your commencement exercises. What does this mean to you and how do you feel about it?

The Physician Missionary aspect is more of a title I must aspire to always embody - not something I have already achieved. The pastoral care aspect - it's a privilege God granted me, being an older student and having been dormitory dean, to do whatever I can and to use what little influence I have to foster spirituality among the students in the AUP College of Medicine and in AMSN (hopefully) by extension. I was not expecting any awards at all because we do not do these things for any earthly gain, but it was humbling and heartwarming to see our COM faculty being happy to give out such an award. It was affirming, encouraging and inspiring to receive such an award. It's motivation to keep a missionary spirit wherever the Lord may call me.

3. You were one of the speakers in the Philippine Youth for Christ conference years ago. Your breakout session topic was 'Jesus is enough' and you also shared that being single in Christ is actually a blessing. To those who are single and still waiting for a partner in life, what message can you give to them?

Oh yes, the burden to share the joy of singleness came to me even back in 2019 but I

was only able to speak on it beginning 2020. The Lord has given me the freedom and joy of being single and yet I was not trying to advocate against marriage. It was more of me wanting to encourage young people to find joy in prioritizing Jesus in their lives and cultivating that relationship with Him more than pursuing a relationship with the opposite sex. I was trying to share that being married is not necessarily better than being single; that the goal of life is not to get married, but that the "will of God is our sanctification" (1 Thessalonians 4:3), our preparation for translation for heaven, which can be accomplished whether we are single or married or in between. What is truly important is our heart attitude towards whatever current status we are in. Now that the Lord brought me into the experience of marriage, I can see the truth for myself that marriage is not necessarily better for the accomplishment of God's purposes for my sanctification if my heart is not right with Him.

So the message I want to give: Matthew 6:33. Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.

God in His infinite wisdom knows what "all these things" may include for us. Let us leave that matter in His hands. Our part is to do the first part faithfully. Amazingly, He transforms our heart's desires so that they become aligned with His and we become at peace with whatever He gives.

4. How do you see yourself as a wife and a doctor, 6 years from now?

The Lord has been teaching me to anticipate how He is orchestrating my future instead of me actively doing it. So far, it has worked wonderfully! Six years ago, I would never have imagined becoming a medical graduate but here I am! So six years from now, I do envision myself being a wife and a doctor actively serving the Lord but I do not know specifically where it will be and in what capacity. I do have things in mind, like doing residency for Family Medicine or OB-GYN but they're not yet set in stone. I only desire to be faithfully doing whatever calling I have at the moment faithfully and I know the Lord will surely lead me to where He wants me to serve Him.



Cebu Adventist Medical Students Association

Dr. EVZEL ROSQWYN BALDOZA

By: Dominic John Alburo & Nina Ashley Franche

DR. BALDOZA, COMMONLY KNOWN AS QWYN, IS A GRADUATE OF THE SOUTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY-PHINMA. SHE HAD RECENTLY FINISHED HER POST-GRADUATE INTERNSHIP AND IS CURRENTLY PREPARING FOR THE LICENSURE EXAM FOR PHYSICIANS. IN HER DAYS AS A MEDICAL STUDENT, IT WAS NOTICEABLE THAT HER HOBBIES WERE DIVERSE, A PERFECT EXAMPLE OF HOW ONE CAN STILL DO OTHER THINGS THEY LOVE WHILE STUDYING.

1. You mentioned in your Facebook account that your family is your “constant”. In what ways have they been the ‘constant’ in your life?

Family is the most important and precious gift of God. They will always be the one source of love we will never have to earn; the place we run to for help and comfort; and the ever-steady constant in the inevitable tides of change. In mathematics, a constant does not change its value over time. And I am blessed enough that in this extremely variable life, I got my family as my constant.

2. CAMSA is known for the ‘fire’ and desire to join medical missions. Can you remember how many medical missions you have joined since your first year in medical school up to your graduation day? What gives you the motivation to do so?

Medical missionary work is the pioneering work of the gospel and God’s people are to be genuine medical missionaries. I believe that this is the purest form of unselfishness. Through this, not only house doors will be open but also access to many hearts. I started joining medical missions when I was still a Medtech student. Since then, my heart was captured by this kind of missionary, dedicated my life to it, and stopped counting the places I’ve been.

4. Music ministry is a very effective way of sharing God’s love with other people. Your FB posts show that you are always so grateful whenever your Choir (SWUcapella) gets the chance to sing in church or at the university. What do you think is/are the benefit(s) of doing music ministry while in med school?

As they say, “Music can heal wounds that medicine cannot touch.” Studies show that music stimulates the brain and boosts the

production of happy hormones like endorphins and dopamine. I strongly believe that music is a total brain workout and that listening to it can reduce anxiety, decrease blood pressure, as well as improve sleep quality, mood, mental alertness, and memory. Thus, for me, music and medicine are like the same piece of art hung in different frames. I play music to praise God and in the same way, I study medicine to glorify Him.

5. It is noticeable that you have been very active in sports. What sports are you especially inclined to? What can you advise those medical students who also want to spend time in sports activities, but are too busy to do so?

My childhood days were spent loving and doing taekwondo but as I grew up, I was also introduced to different sports like volleyball, badminton, and others which I gladly learned and played during my leisure time. My advice to those medical students who also would want to spend time in sports activities, but are too busy to do so is to take a break. Sometimes, a break from your routine is the very thing you need. Physical activities like sports can improve your cognitive health—helping you think, learn, solve problems, and enjoy an emotional balance. It can reduce anxiety or depression and most importantly, it can improve memory. Thus, whenever you feel the need to use that muscles, don’t hesitate to grab your shoes. No time is ever wasted if you are doing what you love.

6. How do you see yourself 3 years from now?

In 3 years, by God’s grace, I could see myself still participating in medical missions. Hopefully, by that time, I will be more equipped with skills and knowledge in treating and handling patients. And at the same time, I could also be doing residency training, although I haven’t finally decided yet on what to specialize, I am confident enough that God will lead my way.

AMiCUS- University of
Northern Philippines

Dr. DAVID CALIBUSO II

By: Dominic John Alburo & Nina Ashley Franche

DR. DAVID CALIBUSO IS A MEMBER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN PHILIPPINES-AMICUS. HE GRADUATED IN JULY 2022 AS THE CLASS SALUTATORIAN. PRESENT, HE FINISHED HIS POST-GRADUATE INTERNSHIP AT THE PHILIPPINE GENERAL HOSPITAL AND IS CURRENTLY PREPARING FOR THE 2024 PHYSICIAN LICENSURE EXAMINATION.

1. Let us look back to the start of your ‘medical journey’. When did you start to realize that you wanted to become a doctor?

To be honest, I took and completed my pre-med course (medtech) with no intention of proceeding to med school. After passing my board exam and receiving my license, I still felt unprepared for work in the profession for the rest of my life. What I was certain of back then was that I wanted to be in school studying. So, when I heard that some of my friends were processing NMAT requirements/payments, I immediately joined them, and it was during that time that I realized I also wanted to be a doctor. Not much, but it’s the only way I can think of to avoid working hahaha.

2. Growing up in a Seventh-day Adventist home, and being an SDA yourself, would you consider these as factors in pursuing a degree in Medicine?

Yes, without a doubt! If you’re an Adventist, you’ll always have to deal with Sabbath, whether for work, appointments, or studying. In fact, it was the deciding factor in my decision to attend medical school. I understand how difficult it is for an Adventist student to attend a school that has classes and exams on Saturdays. It will undoubtedly influence his or her learning. Mahirap maghabol ng lectures and grade if madami kang mamimiss dahil you stood up on your beliefs and umabsent ng Saturdays, lalo pa’t Medicine course per se is extra-challenging. Because Sabbath is a priority for me, I chose a medical school that will allow me to pursue my degree while also allowing religious freedom.

3. Graduating as the Batch Salutatorian and a Silver Medal awardee in the college of medicine of a state university is not an easy feat for everybody. To whom do you attribute this success?

This success is really not mine to celebrate, alone. Taking the road to Medicine alone is really unimaginable. You will always fall short in your financial, emotional, social, and spiritual aspects and will need to seek assistance. I would like to bring back all the GLORY and HONOR to whom it is all due, to our GOD almighty! I praise God for MAKING ALL THINGS POSSIBLE. I thank Him for giving me parents who are willing to support me on my journey and sending friends, mentors and teachers to push me and mold me.

4. Looking back to your very first admission interview for the College of Medicine in UNP, would you say that you have already improved a lot and gone a long way since then?

Yes, as our graduation’s official hashtag says – “Malayo pa pero Malayo na”. True enough, medicine is a life-long learning experience. It may seem like yesterday, but I can proudly say that I have come a long way. Many things have changed for the better in order for me to be a better version of myself. From a mind that only saw med school as an escape from the work life of a medtech, I’ve evolved into one that seeks knowledge and skills in order to be the best physician I can be. From a self-centered heart to a heart that is compassionate and willing to serve. There is still much to be improved, but I’ll take it one day at a time haha.

THESE TWO SOON-TO-BE LICENSED PHYSICIANS WERE GRADUATES OF DAVAO MEDICAL SCHOOL FOUNDATION. THEY COMPLETED THEIR POST-GRADUATE INTERSHIP AT GOVENOR CELESTINO GALLARES MEMORIAL HOSPITAL AND ARE CURENTLY PREPARING FOR THE PHYSICIAN LICENSURE EXAMINATION . KNOWN TO BE BESTFRIENDS, THEY WERE INTERVIEWED TOGETHER TO GET THE BEST OUT OF THEIR EXPERIENCE TOGETHER IN MEDICAL SCHOOL.



Davao Society of Adventist Medical Students

**Dr. Marie Anthonette Mencidor-Nañez,
Dr. Jibeth Mudanza,**

By: Dominic John Alburo & Nina Ashley Franche

1. What can you say about the bond that you share together now, given every trial and challenge you have endured together in the past?

Our journey together has always been a bumpy road. We struggle on how to express our faith as we are placed in a situation where it is the least thing to ponder upon by most of the people surrounding us, but we are grateful and thankful for the Lord openly showed us how we should become. Our hearts rejoice because He gives us enough strength to get by day by day, and reminds us to always think of Him in everything we do.

2. Dr. Anthonette actually was not yet a Seventh-day Adventist upon entering medical school. How was Dr. Jibeth used as God's instrument to get the other to know more of Jesus?

This must be the right time to tell the world how grateful I am for this friendship we have; where God is the center. You have witnessed me back when I still ate pork, cursed a lot, wore very short dresses, sang for the world and many more. I have also seen you at the shaking point of your faith. Until we have finally met at one point in time where both of us got convicted. But when I think of all we have been through, I cannot imagine how the Lord had laid out His plan to let us meet even if it was very impossible for our personalities to even go along. I cannot comprehend how much time He spent to shape us so in the right moment we would testify to others how He truly moves mountains! The song we sang together at the mountain's peak will be one of my favorites. May the Lord continue to use us. Stay strong in faith.

3. Now that you're doing your post-graduate internship, can you share with us a time when praying with your patient seemed the best thing you could do for him?

I went to the ICU this Sabbath afternoon and attended to a patient whose voice could no longer be heard. His eyes were expressive and he mouths his words out. Before I left him, I asked if he already prayed. He looked straight into my eyes and gave a nod. As I was grabbing a thing at the counter, he poked my back. He mouthed a word that puzzled me. I tried to interpret and came up with "kanta" so I asked him "kanta? Gusto ka mukanta ko Sir?" He raised his eyebrows and grabbed my hand. I then started to sing. I sang one of my favorite songs, Amazing Grace. He listened closely and slightly raised his other hand like he was playing a guitar while the other one tapped my hand. I knew right

there he used to be a musician. I finished the song. He asks for more by squeezing my hand so I sang 2 more songs, How great thou art and Blessings. He closed his eyes and tears came out. I asked him if I could pray for him and he continued to close his eyes. I prayed for him and included in my prayer how wonderful, loving and merciful God is. After the short prayer, he mouthed "Amen". It was as if he did not want me to leave and it took longer than I thought before he finally let go of my hand. I promised to come back tomorrow and sing another song to him. And that's really something to look forward to tomorrow. What a beautiful and blessed day I had that day! All praises be unto God. The next day, I failed to visit him because I got so busy. However I visited him right away the next morning and he looked better! I told him "Hi Tay?? Kumusta man ka?" He mouthed a word again to me, "bugnaw" so I placed a linen over him. Since I was in a rush, I was not able to sing for him but I made sure to pray for him, that time with her wife. The sunlight hit us as we prayed as if the heavens were rejoicing.

"That the Lord thy God may shew us the way wherein we may walk, and the thing that we may do." Jeremiah 42:3

4. Dr. Marie Anthonette, what advice can you give to our readers who desire to enter into a relationship?

When you are still dating and haven't started the relationship yet, make sure to start it all right. True love is patient. It does not haste. Intimacy should not be the key to your heart. Respect and gentleness instead be primarily founded. Pray for enlightenment.

When you decide to step up, evaluate all aspects of life. Do not be blinded for what in the world he/she can offer. Be mindful of how the companionship may or may not advance you both on the ladder towards heaven. True love is heaven-bound.

When you are caught in a toxic relationship, remember that true love never makes someone worse. It should not be a burden to one another. Love will bring out the glow in you as it brings forth peace in your heart. Let go if you must and be mindful of your spirituality. Always ask yourself, "Are the heavens rejoicing with how we've become?", if not, choose God and his ways. I am thankful that I have learned so many things along the way. Be it us or not, forever will I be grateful, for I know that the future ahead is an answer to my everyday prayer, "Thy will be done oh God!"

Four years of prayers, gentle reprimands, respect, kindness, joy, and faith. The heavenly citizens are surely celebrating with us.



Iloilo Society of Adventist Medical Students

Denise Jann S. Agum, MD

By: Nobel Gay T. Gomez and Niña Ashley G.

DR. DENISE AGUM EARNED HER DOCTOR OF MEDICINE DEGREE FROM THE CENTRAL PHILIPPINE UNIVERSITY IN 2021 AND GRADUATED AS THE CLASS SALUTATORIAN. SHE PASSED THE PHYSICIAN LICENSURE EXAM IN 2023 AND IS PRESENTLY SERVING AS A MEDICAL OFFICER 3 IN MHARS

1. Graduating as the Batch Salutatorian from the college of medicine of a non-Adventist university is a very special privilege and blessing. To whom or what do you attribute this?

It was all because of God. I did all what a human being can do and laid it all to God. As 2 Corinthians 12:9 says, "But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness'. Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me." Let me tell you the first moment that God stood up for us because we were so weak to speak up.

I attended SDA institutions since elementary through college and so I didn't have any idea as to what it would be like studying in a non-Adventist university. During our first anatomy exam, we were given the privilege to choose a day to take the exam. That time, our classmates weren't aware of our devotion as Adventists. And so, they all voted to have the exam on a Saturday. I panicked but at the same time afraid to speak up since it was the first moment of my life that I had to explain why Saturday is God's Holy Day. But before I could speak up, our Anatomy professor who was silently observing us, stood up and said, "Are there any Adventists here?". Four of us out of almost 90 students slowly raised our hands. Then she added, "Then Saturday is a big NO". I heard the whispers of dismay around us. She closed it with a statement that had stayed with me, "Even if you will threaten these Adventists that they will fail if they don't take the exam, they will still stand for what they believe in." That moment was a great reminder for me to not be afraid to stand because as Romans 8:31 says, "If God is for us, Who can be against us?"

2. Looking at your four years in med school, do you consider keeping the Sabbath an advantage or a disadvantage for you as a medical student?

Keeping the Sabbath was, is and will always be an advantage. I was asked a lot of times during med school if I study on a Friday night until the sundown of Saturday. I firmly said no. One classmate asked me why and I thoroughly explained that it is God's Holy Day. And she then asked, "Do you feel any guilt on not studying during those hours?". I paused for a moment and that was when I realized that Sabbath is indeed a blessing. It was the only time of the week where I don't have to feel guilty because I'm not studying and the others are. And as a medical student, I believe we always need to breathe, pause for a moment and get some rest every week.

3. What message can you give to those SDA medical students who are also aspiring to have their internship at the Philippine General Hospital like you?

Prepare mentally, emotionally and physically. You will meet a lot of cases there, some with outright diagnosis but mostly, cases are complicated. There was a department where we call a code almost every duty. Sometimes you do all the work for your patient, from being their watcher to being the wardman. On top of the work load, duty schedules were draining me personally. I experienced a whole solo-12 hours duty managing more than 6 wards (not all patients though, only those under that department) and guess what, after my duty, I almost can't move my legs. Those were just few of the things that we do there and to be honest, it was tiring yet IT WAS VERY FULFILLING. Despite all those tiring days, I'm still very thankful to my blockmates because they were always ready to extend a hand. I am also thankful to our residents and consultants because they let me feel that I'm a colleague and they are always open to hear my ideas/suggestions and questions/concerns, especially when it comes to our Sabbath.

To those SDA medical students who will be having their internship there, always remember to stand firm in faith because the Lord will always be with you. One of the greatest example of that was when they released the schedule of the final exam of one department together with the comprehensive exam. They were all scheduled on 2 Saturdays. Imagine, there were only 3 of us out of more than 300 interns there. So, when I messaged the chairwoman through the Intern's representative, these were her exact words, "The Exams have no alternate versions to be given for those who want a different day exam. So, for the security of the exam questions, we cannot allow a special day, unless there would be an emergency that a particular student will not be able to take the exam. I believe Board exams are also given and taken on weekends including Saturdays. So, for the Saturday exam exemption/re-sched, I am sorry I cannot allow it. Honestly, after reading that one, I didn't feel afraid because I prayed before applying to PGH and I know that God sent me there with a purpose. My blockmates were already messaging me, worrying on how I will take it. But I just paused for a while, prayed and started writing a letter addressing it to the Intern's Committee. I just went on with my duty and after 2 days, the Committee announced that instead of a Saturday, it will be moved to a Monday. Do you see how powerful our God is? The Adventists were less than 1% of the total intern's population but it was made possible because God is great. As Isaiah 41:10 says, "Do not fear for I am with you".

Thanks be to God—from whom blessings outflow!

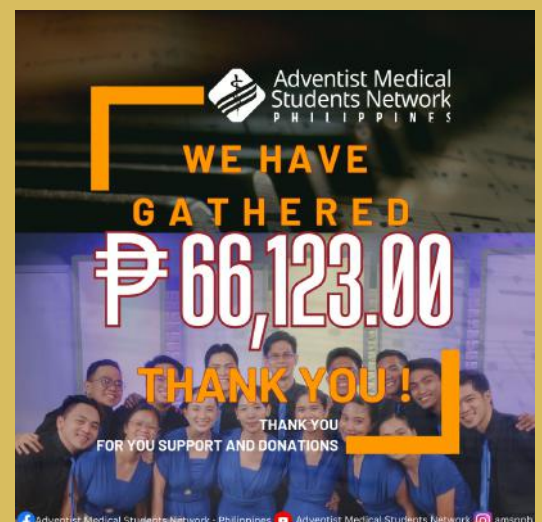
by: Anna Liza Fofue

The Adventist Medical Students Network conducted a donation drive to help three beneficiaries, with the hope to further gospel works, by aiding them financially. Non-profit organizations and faith-based Adventist institutions—the SULADS Deaf Literacy Center, PAMAS Helicopter Project, and PAMAS Jungle School—are managed by dedicated volunteers, who primarily share God's love and encourages passion by doing so through different ministries such as providing education, medical and dental assistance. Donation lines were opened with the help of our partners—The Hope Channel, Adventist Medical Evangelism Network (AMEN), Philippine Youth for Christ (PYC), Adventist Ministry to College and University Students - University of Northern Philippines (AMiCUS - UNP), Cebu Adventist Medical Students Association (CAMSA), DMSF Society of Adventist Medical Students (DSAMS), Iloilo Society of Adventist Medical Students (ISAMS), Luzon Society of Adventist Medical Students (LSAMS), and Adventist University of the Philippines Medical Missionaries for Social Responsibilities (AUP-MMSR)—last May 8, 2023, which rendered more convenience in accumulating donations.

The initial goal for this campaign was only Php 30,000, but during the council meetings in preparation for this campaign, the officers dared to ask for more and doubled the amount to Php 60,000. On May 27, the ISAMS Chorale held a live concert, in partnership with the Hope Channel Western Visayas Studio, which aired in different Facebook pages to reach the initial goal of Php 30,000. Even power sharing and raffle draws were also initiated, but amidst all these efforts, the initial goal seemed impossible to reach. Nevertheless, the AMSN donation drive went on with much prayer, asking the Lord to fulfill and play His part. And so, by the end of the donation campaign on June 12, a surprisingly total of Php. 66,123.00 was raised for the beneficiaries. A loud “Praise be to the God from whom all blessings flow!”. Indeed the Lord is great! He works in miraculous ways. He gave so much more of what was specifically asked.

Looking back through this experience proved us once again that human efforts are really nothing in comparison when God does play His part. The experience, as a whole, can be summed up by the phrase, “only when we are less, that God is more” just like what Gideon and the 300 experienced.

All funds collected had already been sent to the beneficiaries to aid in furthering the Lord's work. The AMSN, SULADS Deaf Literacy Center and the Philippine Adventist Medical Aviation Services wish to extend their gratitude to everyone who contributed to this



Adventist Medical Students Network Thrives in a Year Filled with Unity and Faith Amidst Barriers of Distance, Dialect, and Time

by: Jiemar Bela-Ong



The Adventist Medical Students Network (AMSN) began the year in the Love Month, with this year's activities revolving around the organization's affection for the greatest Doctor of all - Jesus!

In February 2023, the year kicked off with team building and annual planning. Shortly after, the United Prayer and Media Ministry were established. This month also saw the call for AMSN Choir members and Call for testimonies. To end the month on a high note, Music 101 was held on the Sabbath day.



March was a thrilling and fulfilling month as the Physician Licensure Exam (PLE) took place. On the fourth day, the PLE dedication program commenced, and heartfelt prayers were offered as the future doctors took their boards and awaited the final judgment of their journey. The exam day was undoubtedly guided by the Holy Spirit, with medical students from different chapters offering a Prayer Baton, displaying unity in His loving name. March concluded with a week of prayer, with each chapter handling at least one program to offer.



April 7th marked the beginning of Bible study sessions, to continue every fourth Sabbath during AY programs online, along with a Filipino Sign Language Workshop.

On May 27th, the Good Samaritan Fundraising was held and was blessed to raise funds for the SULADS Deaf Literacy Center, PAMAS Jungle School and Helicopter Project.

June was dedicated to the introduction of an exchange program, set to continue on every third Sabbath of the month throughout the year. The following month, July, some AMSN officers attended the AMEN Conference held at Davao City.



AMSN had an exceptional 5 months of unity, accomplishments, and faith. From team building to the Physician Licensure Exam, the organization dedicated itself to serving others. Impactful workshops, conferences, and fundraising projects demonstrated their goodwill and solidarity. Reflecting on their medical school journey with Christ, they celebrate their achievements, grateful for the guidance of Jesus



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