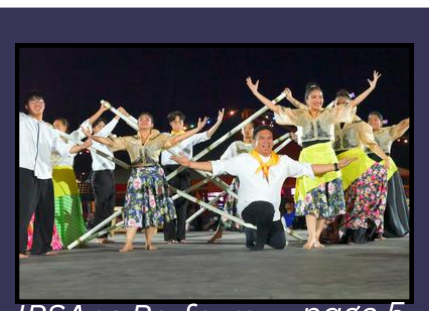
What's Inside?


IPSA Grants... page 2



13th SGB Hands... page 3


IPSA Bags... page 4


IPSAns Perform... page 5


Showcasing... page 6

IPSA Gazette

Volume XXXVI, Issue No. 2
(January - May 2025)

The paper that serves, connects and entertains.

S.Y. 2024-2025

School Honors Achievers in 36th Year-End Ceremonies

Arrieta, Milleza lead 2025 graduates; Cruz tops completers

by: Xyrelle Denise M. Tero & Alexus Mathew P. Arrieta





Alexus Mathew P. Arrieta, Yuan Mikail Jirell DR. Cruz and Naomi Ashley M. Milleza as they deliver their Graduates' Address during the Graduation and Completion Ceremony held in IPSA MPH, March 14-17.

Alexus Mathew P. Arrieta, Grade 12 and Naomi Ashley R. Milleza, Grade 6, receive the highest commendation and Yuan Mikhail Jirell DR. Cruz, tops Grade 10 completers during the 36th Recognition, Completion, and Graduation Ceremonies IPSA held last May 14 – 17 with its theme *Generation of Unity: Partners for the New Philippines.*

"Today is more than a celebration of achievement; it is a recognition of a milestone we've passionately pursued and rightfully earned. It's a tribute to excellence, collaboration, and the power of teamwork, which was now etched into the very walls outside the MPH," Arrieta stressed in his Graduate's Address.

He also expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the school management team, teachers, mentors, and friends who supported the whole batch throughout their academic journey. "The exceptional guidance—both in academics and life—has shaped our character, strengthened our unity, and built the resilience we carry today," Arrieta added.

Meanwhile, Cruz praised the collaboration and camaraderie that defined their batch's experience in his Completer's address.

"Each of us, with wildly differing talents, when we come together as one, we are greater than the sum of our parts," he said.

"By uniting and working together, we learned how to persevere even when life gets too difficult," he continued.

He also believed their achievements were earned through the collective strength, support, and unity of classmates, teachers, and parents. Cruz conveyed that true success comes from standing together, helping one another, and drawing from each other's strengths to overcome adversity.

In Milleza's speech, she tells about her growth as a student. She talks about her academic journey and how far she has gone from where she started.

"It's hard to give your all, especially when you feel tired and you want to give up, but once you try going past the limit, then you will feel happy with the result of your hard work."

Milleza believed that success lies in the power of hard work and perseverance, how without these traits, we would not be able to fully understand the impact of the goals we achieve. She emphasized that it is through struggle and dedication that we learn to value our accomplishments.

During the four-day event, not only speeches of these achievers were witnessed by school administration, faculty and staff, parents and their batchmates. Receiving diplomas and certificates of recognition for a student's outstanding performance became the highlight of the celebration. Loyalty awards were also given to those graduates who studied IPSA from Nursery to SHS.

Welfare Officer, Habib G. Malik, of the Migrant Workers Office Eastern Region Operations was also present and gave his words of inspiration to the graduating class on the 4th day.

"On behalf of our new Ambassador of the Philippine Embassy in Saudi Arabia, Raymond Balatbat, I am honored to be representing him today on this very important occasion. We would like to extend our congratulations to all of the graduates, future leaders, doctors, inventors, scientists, accountants, engineers, teachers, etc".

He also added that graduation is not solely for the graduates alone but also for those people who became part of this milestone.

He stressed that graduation is a collective effort of school administrators, teachers and parents and a summary of students' successes, failures, perseverance and determination.

"Being a Filipino in this foreign land is never easy. Adjusting to the culture of this country and balancing academics is a tough challenge. But because of the guidance of your teachers and parents, you develop your character and become ready to face the challenges ahead of you,", he continued sharing.

After his inspirational message, Mrs. Christen G. Morata, IPSA's Personnel In-Charge was called to announce the awarding of plaques and certificates to employees who rendered dedicated service to IPSA.

Aside from the speeches, singing of the graduation songs and IPSA Hymn was also the highlight of the year-end celebration.

Completion ceremonies were held for Kindergarten 3, Grades 1-5 and Grades 7-9 and 11. The programs included reflections on their school experiences and encouraging messages to help them prepare for the next chapter of their education.



Welfare Officer, Habib G. Malik, of the Migrant Workers Office Eastern Region Operations as he delivers his inspirational message.



Grade Six Graduating Class of 2025 as they recite the Pledge of Loyalty to their Alma Mater, May 16.

Volume XXXVI, Issue No. 2 (January - May 2025)
IPSA Gazette
THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL PHILIPPINE SCHOOL IN AL KHOBAR

IPSA Grants Service Awards to Employees with Dedicated Service

To recognize years of exceptional service to IPSA and the Filipino community in the Eastern Province, a heartfelt ceremony was held during the Senior High School (SHS) Graduation Rites, to honor its most dedicated employees with Plaques and Certificates of Appreciation, May 17.

Mrs. Chrisren G. Morata, Personnel In-Charge, presented the awards to employees who have rendered 25, 20, 16, 12, 8, and 4 years of loyal and outstanding service. The recognition served as a highlight of the graduation event, reminding everyone of the vital role that educators and school personnel play in nurturing students' academic and personal growth.

Among the celebrated awardees who have reached a remarkable 25 years of service: **Mr. Michael C. Adducul,** Head of Student and Community Affairs Office; **Mrs. Evangelina A. Lait,** High School Registrar; and Mr. **Rowel O. Arevalo,** Student Activity Coordinator.



Student and Community Affairs Head, Mr. Michael C. Adducul, HS Registrar, Mrs. Evangelina A. Lait, and Student Activity Coordinator, Mr. Rowel O. Arevalo as they receive their Plaque of Appreciation for 25 years of dedicated service to IPSA during the SHS Commencement Exercises held May 17.

A Legacy of Enrichment and Community Building

Mr. Rowel O. Arevalo, whose leadership has left a lasting mark on student development and school culture, shared his reflections on his 25-year journey with IPSA. With deep pride, he highlighted key milestones that expanded student engagement and built a stronger sense of community:

"*I was able to widen the participation of students in the community in sports and cultural engagement—bringing in our School Rondalla in 2014, the Drum and Lyre in 2016, the creation of EPPSAM (Eastern Province Philippine School Athletic Meet) in 2012, and the Kingdom-wide sports event, PISAM, from 2014 to the present.*"

Beyond activities, Mr. Arevalo also noted and appreciated the improvement of physical facilities and the well-being of faculty and staff:

"Improved physical facilities are now evident. There's a growing sense of concern for equality, not just for the school but also for the welfare of the faculty and staff."

"We've created opportunities for teachers and staff to earn additional income to support their families back home—through programs like Honorarium for Club Moderators of both school-sponsored and weekend clubs, and Overtime pay for roles and responsibilities outside the classroom".

His message to fellow educators and future leaders was simple yet powerful:

"Always love your work. Be mindful and resilient. Hard work always pays off."

Honoring a Shared Mission

Mr. Michael C. Adducul, who currently serves as the Head of the Student and Community Affairs Office (SCAO), has been a steadfast presence in IPSA for the past 25 years. His journey began as a Social Studies classroom teacher, where he spent many years imparting not just academic knowledge but also values and civic responsibility to his students.

His leadership potential and deep understanding of student needs led him to take on higher responsibilities as Academic Supervisor and later as Prefect of Discipline.

When the School Management Team was formed under the leadership of Mrs. Liezel Agtarap Aguilar, former School Principal, Mr. Adducul was appointed as the SCAO Head —a role that broadened his influence across the entire student body. In this capacity, he is primarily responsible for monitoring student behavior and discipline, organizing student-centered programs, and ensuring continuous engagement and collaboration with parents and the wider community. His work fosters a safe, nurturing, and value-driven school environment aligned with IPSA's vision.

Reflecting on his service, he shared:

"The most rewarding part of my 25 years of stay in IPSA is to stand witness to the students' development and success in their academic journey—and see them grow into fine men and women who are productive members of society."

He commended IPSA's consistent adherence to its mission and vision over the years:

"IPSA through the years has been meticulous and thorough in bringing to the fore the best qualities of our students, academically and socially, solely based on the mission and vision of the institution and the men and women whose expertise, commitment, and dedication towards the holistic development of the students has been the foremost inspiration."

His message underscored the shared responsibility of educators and students in preserving IPSA's core values:

"Teachers and students, past and present, shall continue to uphold and adhere to the shared goals and objectives of IPSA as a learning institution anchored on the time-honored values of Integrity, Perseverance, Synergy, and Adaptability".

A Global Perspective with a Personal Touch

Mrs. Evangelina A. Lait, who began her IPSA journey as a Grade 1 Class Adviser for 11 years, 7 years and 1 year as Grade 4 and Grade 6 respectively, has since taken on a broader and more pivotal role as the School Registrar —a position for six years now, she holds with utmost dedication and professionalism.

In this capacity, she oversees critical functions such as student records management, enrollment and admissions processing academic documentation, and coordination with government. regulatory bodies and accrediting agencies.

She also ensures compliance with school policies and international standards, serving as a reliable bridge between administration, faculty, students, and parents.

Reflecting on her 25 years of service, she shared:

"Looking back on my 25 years of service at IPSA, the most rewarding part of my journey has undoubtedly been the opportunity to shape and witness the growth of young minds from all corners of the world." She continued:

"Being part of an international community has given me the privilege to not only teach and serve but to learn every day, from diverse cultures, languages, perspectives, and experiences that our students and staff bring with them."

As a leader in the academic operations of the school, Mrs. Lait emphasized IPSA's steady evolution and enduring mission:

"*Over the years, IPSA has grown from a close-knit international school into a thriving, dynamic community that embraces innovation while holding onto its core values. What hasn't changed is the heart of the school—its dedication to nurturing compassionate, curious, and responsible learners.*"

She sees her role not just as administrative, but deeply connected to the school's educational impact:

"Whether through classroom teaching, mentoring colleagues, developing new programs, or ensuring students' academic records are accurate and secure, I've tried to lead by example."

To educators and students alike, she offered an uplifting reminder:

"To the teachers, remember that your impact goes far beyond the classroom. To the students, know that your voice matters. This school is not just a place to learn facts, but a space to discover who you are and what you stand for. Carry forward the spirit of IPSA—one that values empathy, courage, and global-mindedness."

Aside from them, Grade School Academic Supervisor, Mylene R. Enriquez was also given a Plaque of Appreciation for her 20 years of her dedicated service to IPSA.

Other awardees who have rendered 4, 8, 12 and 16 years of dedicated service have also acknowledged and awarded plaques and certificates.

The School Principal, together with the 13th SGB Members and the guest, Welfare Officer, Habib G. Malik, of the Migrant Workers Office Eastern Region Operations handed in the awards.



Grade School Academic Supervisor, Mrs. Mylene R. Enriquez as she receives her Plaque of Appreciation for her 20 years of her dedicated service to IPSA.

Volume XXXVI, Issue No. 2 (January - May 2025)
IPSA Gazette
THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL PHILIPPINE SCHOOL IN AL KHOBAR

IPSA bags Over-All Champ in Knights of Rizal's 1st Mear-NRYL

by: Daniel Blake Abante



IPSA delegation headed by Mr. Michael C. Adducul, Student and Community Affairs Head and Mr. Rowel O. Arevalo, together with Vice Principal Gerardo L. Barrot , SGB Members, coaches and participants as they receive their medals and trophies after the Awarding Ceremony during the Knights of Rizal's 1st Mear-NRYL Inter-School Academic, Talent & Skills Competition and Leadership Training held last May 31 to April 1, 2025.

IPSA delegates bagged the Over-All Champion Award during the Knights of Rizal's 1st Mear-NRYL Inter-School Academic, Talent & Skills Competition and Leadership Training held last May 31 to April 1, 2025.

Knights of Rizal (KOR) 1st Mear-NRYL Inter-School Academic, Talent & Skills Competition and Leadership Training, a civic, patriotic, cultural, non-sectarian, non-partisan, and non-profit organization that brings together schools from the Middle East and Africa to celebrate student talent and honor the legacy of our national hero, Dr. Jose Rizal. Alissa Camille Gamet, Grade 11, grabbed the gold medal in "On the Spot Filipino Essay Writing", Angelica F. Sharma, Grade 10, 3rd Runner Up in English Essay Writing, Isolde M. Inductivo, Grade 10, won 1st Runner Up of On the Spot Painting Contest, while Alexus Mathew Arrieta, and Harry Gabriel Ilagan both Grade 12, participated in Battle of the Brains, Asma T. Mabol, Grade 10 also joined in On the Spot Painting Contest. Meanwhile, Jan Benedict G. Resurreccion, Grade 10, and awarded 1st Runner Up and Best in Talent in Search For Young Jose Rizal, and Sofia Loraine Calinisan, Grade 12, also received 1st Runner Up award and Best in Talent in the Search for Young Maria Clara. Calinisan shares in an interview that participating in OKOR taught her lifelong lessons—coordination, flexibility, and women's empowerment. She improved her confidence and public speaking, thanks to her supportive coach and school. The experience reinforced that success takes dedication, patience, and passion, while also creating meaningful connections. Mr. Mark Jed Arevalo, a junior coach under Sir Ronald Alvarez' in Battle of the Brains explained that his contributions included content review, tech integration, motivational coaching and drawing inspiration from Pilosopo Tasyo. He also added that the experience was both exhilarating and truly challenging! Having to balance Ramadan commitments and intense training sessions. It was an experience that was bitter sweet yet and still had rewarding outcomes. In a similar way, Mr. Nordell Juan, a coach of the Champion in Essay Writing Filipino, expresses his thoughts as they gain victory in this competition. In an interview he states "Actually, this is not my first time to participate in this kind of competition. I became a coach in different competitions when I was in the Philippines including school paper press conference both public and private schools. But this time, it was on a different level — a competition among different schools overseas in the Middle East." He also expressed that thought when he was asked by his academic supervisor if he could handle the event, "Napakailap ng Filipino Essay Writing para sa IPSA" motivated him to train Camille harder in writing, despite having to adjust to Ramadan's Schedule. He also said that overall, he felt "mixed emotions" during the announcement of winners, but in the end, he felt honored to become a champion coach of the competition in "On-the Spot Essay Writing in Filipino". Other coaches of the participating students were: Ms. Terely Pacis, Mr. Elias Taragua, Mr. Rodelio Tamayo - mentors for Young Maria Clara. Mr. Bernardo Ampiloquio and Mrs. Mary Jane Soriano, for Young Jose Rizal. Cheena Mae Realingo- Coach for English Essay Writing Contest. Mr. Ronaldo Alvarez and Mr. Mark Jed Arevalo - mentors for Battle of the Brains. IPSA delegation was headed by School Community Affairs Head, Michael Adducul and School Activity Coordinator, Rowel Arevalo with the support of the School Management Team led by the School Principal, Mr. Ricky C. Enriquez and SGB's Chairman, Enrique L. Piguing.



Mrs. Mary Jane C. Soriano, Mr. Elias B. Taragua, Jan Benedict G. Resurreccion, Loraine Sofia T. Calinisan, both First Runner Ups, and Mrs. Nancy B. Barrot after the Awarding Ceremony of the recently concluded Search for Young Jose Rizal and Maria.



Angelica Sharma, 3rd Runner-Up in Essay Writing-English, together with Isolde Inductivo, 1st Runner Up, Asma Mabol- participant in On the Spot Painting Contest and Alissa Gamet, Gold Medalist in Essay Writing Filipino.

Volume XXXVI, Issue No. 2 (January - May 2025)

IPSA Gazette

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL PHILIPPINE SCHOOL IN AL KHOBAR

13th SGB hands in IPSA to 14th SGB

First woman to sit new SGB Chair



IPSA 13th SGB Chairman Enrique M. Piguing hands over the School Seal as a symbol of transferring responsibilities to the newly elected Doc. MB Rhona Sonsona, the first ever woman to sit in the 14th SGB Chair.

IPSA marked a significant leadership transition as the 13th School Governing Board (SGB) officially turned over their duties to the newly elected 14th SGB Members in a ceremony held at MPH, May 21.

In a historic moment for the school, Dra. Rhona M. Sonsona was named the new Chair of the Board, becoming the first-ever female to hold the position in IPSA's history.

The Turn Over Ceremony featured messages of gratitude from each outgoing 13th SGB member, who reflected on their term of service with pride and appreciation. Their speeches highlighted the collective accomplishments of the board and extended thanks to the IPSA community for their support.

Meanwhile, the newly installed 14th SGB Members expressed optimism and determination as they outlined their vision for the school.

They appealed for the continued cooperation of the faculty and staff and sought the active support of parents for their upcoming plans and projects aimed at further enhancing the quality of education and student welfare at IPSA.

Mrs. Annelyn G. Mallare, Admin representative thanked the SGB Election Committee headed by its COMELEC Chairman, SP Ricky C. Enriquez, Ethel G. Chavez, PH Embassy Representative, Abdurahman M. Alarfaj, MOE Representative, Carlos J. Casenas Jr. and Mr. Rodolfo P. Germono as Parents Representative, and Mrs. Janice P. Olivera, IPSAFSA President.

Certificates of Appreciation was also awarded to the Board of Election Inspectors and Technical Committee for their incredible efforts for making the SGB Election a success.

"As we welcome the incoming 14th SGB, we look forward with hope and confidence. You step into a vital role that shapes the future of our school community. May you be guided with integrity, collaboration, and a shared vision for excellence", ended Olivera in her welcome remarks.

Candidate No. 5 Christopher Peña tops votes in 14th SGB Election

by: Kristen Nicole C. Maranao



IPSA 13th SGB Chairman Enrique M. Piguing, Rodolfo P. Germono Jr., Carlos J. Casenas Jr., Wesley O. Tan, Khaisar L. Abdulcader, MB Rhona M. Sonsona, Christopher I. Peña, Ricky B. De Belen, Arci B. Fernando, Geraldin G. Suede, SP Ricky C. Enriquez, Ethel G. Chavez, Philippine Embassy Representative, Mrs. Annelyn G. Mallare and Mrs. Janice S. Olivera, COMELEC Members as they raise their hands as a sign of victory to all the candidates.

Seven candidates were officially declared as IPSA's 14th School Governing Board members after an election held at the International Philippine School in Al Khobar, April 11.

Out of nine qualified candidates, Christopher I. Peña got 456 votes, the highest among other candidates, 2nd- Rhona M. Sonsona with 439 votes, 3rd-Ricky B. De Belen got 433 votes,
4th-Wesley O. Tan received 406 votes, 5th- Khaisar L. Abdulcader, 6th- Arci B. Fernando, 2nd timer and Chairman-Committee on Finance and 7th- Geraldin G. Suede with 359, 350, 330 votes respectively.

MB Ma. Abigail C. Trinidad, 13th SGB Member and Chairman on Committee in Human Resources ranked 8 with 310 votes and RV Gem C. Fideles took the 9th spot with 200 votes. .

"*Hindi ko po inakala na ako ang magiging Top 1, kaya sobrang nakakatuwa at nakaka-inspire,*" Peña shared, reflecting on the overwhelming support he received.

He expressed deep gratitude for the increase in parent voter turnout despite their busy schedules. Peña acknowledged the vital role of his family, friends, and fellow volunteers, and promised to serve the IPSA community with dedication, transparency, and heart. "One of my priorities is to support student academics and co-curricular activities, helping our learners grow not just in the classroom but also in other areas of interest and talent" he added.

"I assure the IPSA community that we will continue to advance the motivation we have built hereto ensure our students succeed in a competitive world and grow as leaders—and our teachers, our teachers, professionally, " Sonsona deeply moved by the outcome after the election. She emphasized that developing innovative student programs and investing in teacher leadership will be among her top priorities.

De Belen, on the other hand, extended his appreciation to the IPSA community, emphasizing that the victory was not his alone, but a shared win for students, parents, teachers, and all stakeholders. He expressed his intent to assess the school's overall operations and align his plans with the direction of the 14th SGB.

"This election is a meaningful opportunity to serve", shares Tan. He was grateful to the parents who supported him, he promised to fulfill his responsibilities with dedication.

Abdulcader also added that he acknowledged the collective effort that made the election process more meaningful. His immediate priorities include preparing the school's financial plans and reviewing budget reports with transparency and care.

Fernando, also expressed his excitement for the opportunity to work with the new board. "I am truly grateful for the trust the IPSA community has given me.

My focus will be on ensuring the student body's voice is heard, building stronger connections within our community, and striving to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for all students.

"Together, we will work towards tangible improvements that reflect the values we hold dear," he shared. "*Grateful and humbled. I'd like to thank the IPSA community for the trust and confidence in me.*" Suede shared.

As for her priorities, Suede hopes to focus on open communication between parents and the school, as well as finding meaningful ways to support and empower IPSA's teachers and staff. Out of 1,736 qualified registered voters, 592 parents cast their votes, resulting in a 34.1% voter turnout.

The election was also supervised by Awad Bin Muhammad Al-Malki, Director, Department of Private and Foreign Education Office and Abdurahman M. Alarfaj, MOE Supervisor and Ethel G. Chavez, Philippine Embassy Representative. Student & Community Affairs Head, Michael C. Adducul praised the newly elected board, saying, *"The new set of elected SGB members brings hope to the IPSA community to confront the challenges of the times."*

The election was organized by the members of the Election Committee, led by Chairman Ricky C. Enriquez, School Principal.

Other committee members included Carlos J. Casenas Jr. and Rodolfo P. Germono Jr. as parent representatives, Annelyn G. Mallare and Janice S. Olivera represented the administration and the teachers respectively.

Volume XXXVI, Issue No. 2 (January - May 2025)
IPSA Gazette
THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL PHILIPPINE SCHOOL IN AL KHOBAR

IPSAns perform in Al-Khobar's First-Ever Passport to the World

by: Shaine Leanne Bachiller



IPSA Dance Troupe strikes a stunning pose after their long standing and eye catching performance on the circle stage at Passport to the World.

To highlight the school's commitment in promoting Filipino heritage on an international stage, 35 IPSA students performed in the four-day celebration of Passport to the World, organized by Lumiere Adhwaa Production under the leadership of CEO Mr. Zoriel Gaffud on April 23- 26 in an event commissioned by the General Entertainment Authority (GEA).

Posted on Saudi Arabia's website, *Passport to the World* is a unique journey across nations, which was brought to life through immersive performances, traditional dances, authentic flavors, and unforgettable experiences in Saudi Arabia.

The event featured popular Filipino artists including Julie Anne San Jose, Lyka Gairanod, Daryl Ong, Erik Santos, and Janine Berdin, along with DJ Xiaoyunna providing live music. The program continued with dynamic performances by Jenny Gabriel, Lyka Estrella, and Carmella Collado. All of which have a strong local and international fanbase, bringing on stage the depth and diversity of Filipino music. Folkloric performances were performed by traditional dance troupes. Performers from IPSA composed of 25 folk dancers and 10 *rondalla* members were accompanied by their coaches Mr. Rowel Arevalo and Mr. Rodelio Tamayo.

Mr. Leo Mayo Parco, the head of the delegation also showed a special performance with the students. For their presentation, the GEA assigned IPSAns a 20-minute folk dance performance divided into three sets on the small stage. The first set featured dances accompanied by the Rondalla, while the second set presented the Maria Clara Suites.

The third set highlighted rural folk dances, including *Tinikling* and *Sayaw sa Bangko*, with street dance elements incorporated throughout all three sets.

As both their coach and performer, Mr Leo Mayo Parco, described the first day as challenging due to adjustments requested by the GEA.

However, he later emphasized how the following days became more enjoyable. *"The students immersed themselves fully in the experience, which not only allowed them to showcase Philippine traditions to an international audience but also enabled meaningful connections with fellow Filipino artists".*

"*Performing at Passport to the World made me realize how rich our culture is,"* shared by student performer Ramil Angadol. He admitted the event was physically demanding yet deeply rewarding. *"We had to adapt to the organizers' requests, but everyone's cooperation made the experience truly enjoyable."* For these students, the festival was more than a performance; it was an exchange of culture through dance and music.

As Saudi Arabia's first major Filipino showcase here in Al Khobar, their dances didn't just entertain—they educated, turning movements into lasting impressions of Philippine identity. With this achievement, IPSA sets a new benchmark for student participation on the international stage.



Dance moderator, Leo Mayo Parco and Dance Troupe member Riona Jennica Agagon as they perform the traditional dance of Putritos at Passport to the World.

1st Academic Week Showcases Competitive Spirit of IPSAns

by: Rjae Caparanga & Nimue Angeles

Lady Naveen B. Abdulcader, Grade 7 Righteous, won the Gold Medal award after imitating Galileo Galilei in the Scientist Look-Alike Competition during the First Academic Week held in IPSA MPH last April 6-17.

IPSA celebrated its success through its 1st Academic Week from April 6-17, featuring intense competitions in spelling, science, and mathematics for students from Grades 4 to 12. The event highlighted the various academic abilities of IPSA's young learners The elementary program featured different academic contests including Spelling Bowls, Science, Math, and Social Studies Quiz Bee competitions, followed by a three-day Science Fair exhibition in which the students were awarded Best Presenters and Most Disciplined Class. The fair showcased investigative projects, prototypes, and experiments prepared by students across lower grade levels.

High school events took a more creative approach with Escape Rooms, Rubik's Cube speed competitions, Sudoku, and Damath Checkers that challenged students' problem-solving skills under time pressure.

Teachers commended participants for their "competitive spirit."

In the senior high school level of the Science Olympics, students showcased their application of physics principles through various creative challenges, including the Science Magic Trick contest, which tested their ability to combine scientific concepts with presentation skills in an engaging format.

The Scientist Look-Alike competition added entertainment value while celebrating scientific history. Participants dressed as notable figures such as Galileo Galilei, J. Robert Oppenheimer, and Marie Curie, portraying their contributions through short presentations and creative costumes.

The Ultimate Culinary and Hospitality Challenge also took place, where students tested their marketing strategies, cooking skills, and table designing.The Academic Week concluded with an awards ceremony recognizing all participants' achievements.

The School Principal, Ricky C. Enriquez announced plans to expand the next academic week to hosting more creative and fun activities "full of learning."

"*We are so glad that IPSAns really brought out their competitive spirit",* High School Academic Supervisor Mrs. Nancy Barrot remarked. She commended both students and faculty for making the 2025 Academic Week the most successful yet.

Volume XXXVI, Issue No. 2 (January - May 2025)
IPSA Gazette
THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL PHILIPPINE SCHOOL IN AL KHOBAR

New Paths, New Price

In recent years, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has undergone profound cultural shifts, many of which were once unthinkable in the land known as the birthplace of Islam. For decades, Saudi society was known for its deeply conservative customs shaped by strict interpretations of Islamic law.

Public life was highly gender-segregated. Cinemas were banned, music and public entertainment were rare, and the religious police enforced dress codes and prayer-time closures with firm authority. Daily life operated within a rigid framework, where modern or Western cultural expressions were viewed with suspicion or outright rejection.

As a student and an IPSAn, I see these developments as both bold and inspiring. It's not easy to change traditions that have been in place for generations. But today, the Kingdom paints a different picture. Women now drive freely on the streets. The abaya, once a mandatory symbol of modesty, is no longer strictly enforced. Cinemas have opened, international concerts and sport events, including the FIFA Club and World Cup, have found a stage in Riyadh and Jeddah. Even the once-unquestioned practice of closing shops during prayer times has become optional in some areas.

These changes, part of Vision 2030 led by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, aim to diversify the economy, promote tourism, and present a more progressive, modern identity to the global community. For many, these reforms are not just policies, they are signs of a cultural awakening, especially empowering for women and the youth. It's inspiring to see young Saudis—especially women—experiencing freedoms that were denied to previous generations. That alone opens up so many new opportunities.

As someone who grew up in Saudi Arabia, it's truly heartwarming to see such changes in what was once a very reserved and controlled society. I remember how different life felt just a few years ago, how quiet and restricted public spaces used to be. Now, there's music in the air, cafés filled with laughter, and streets shared by men and women alike. It feels more alive. The positive energy and openness are refreshing. These reforms are making Saudi Arabia more inclusive, more forward-thinking, and more connected with the rest of the world.

Believing in the power of education, growth, and fairness, I believe this is a step forward. However, I also understand that such rapid change can create tension, especially for those who feel that these reforms challenge their values or traditions. As an IPSAn, I believe in respectful dialogue and being open to different views, even while pushing for what's right. It's a reminder that while traditions shape who we are, they need not limit who we can become. The Saudi story today is one of reinvention—and for me, it's a powerful example of how even the most traditional societies can grow when led by vision, courage, and the hope for a better future.



Birds of a Feather Don't Dine Together—Unless You're French



INKBLOTS
Valerie Avrill M. Cariaga

"In the dim flicker of candlelight, a napkin is draped over one's head—not for mess, but to hide shame. Beneath it, the delicate bones of a tiny songbird crunch between teeth. This is not a scene from a medieval drama, but a culinary ritual centered on the ortolan, a rare French delicacy steeped in secrecy, luxury, and moral complexity.

Captured, force-fed, and drowned in Armagnac, the small migratory bird known as the ortolan bunting is then roasted and eaten whole, beak and bones included. It is customary for diners to cover their heads with napkins, supposedly to "trap the aromas," but many people think this is done to protect themselves (and God) from the immorality of such a meal. Despite being outlawed in France since the 1990s due to conservation regulations, ortolan is still consumed in clandestine places. Everything that makes food culture morally problematic is embodied in the ritual: luxury at the price of life, tradition at odds with contemporary ideals, and the fuzziness of the boundaries between cruelty and culture. This dilemma, however, is not specific to France. A parallel ethical battleground can be found in the Philippines and other parts of Southeast Asia: balut, a fertilized duck egg. A partially developed embryo, complete with beak and feathers, is consumed with a dash of vinegar and a pinch of salt after the egg is cracked open while still warm. Like Ortolan, Balut has a rich cultural heritage. It's aphrodisiac, family fare, and street food. However, the shock to outsiders frequently comes from the moral implications as well as the images: Where does indecency end and delicacy begin? The truth is, ethics and appetite rarely sit easily at the same table. Eating is not just a biological act but a moral one, shaped by culture, class, and convenience. Ortolan and balut merely expose what we usually hide beneath napkins: the complex, often uncomfortable intersection of taste and conscience. Why we want to eat these things is ultimately more important than whether we should. Are we celebrating spectacle or upholding tradition? Does the pain justify the pleasure? Eating can either be a celebration of life or a sign of our willingness to put up with suffering in order to indulge in a meal. Perhaps it's time we start asking not just how it tastes, but who paid the price—feathered, fetal, or otherwise.

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Stronger Together: Leading IPSA Through Trials and Transformation



FROM THE CHAIRMAN'S DESK
MB Enrique M. Piguing

As my term as the 13th School Governing Board Chairman comes to an end. I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the entire IPSA community.

To the members of the School Management Team, faculty and staff, thank you for believing in our mission and vision, and for your unwavering cooperation in every decision we made.

To the students, whom we tirelessly work for and mold into future leaders, you have always been at the heart of our efforts. And to the ever supportive parents, thank you for your trust and partnership throughout this journey.

My time as a school governing board, which began in 2018, was truly challenging. We faced multiple crises, from the implementation of the family levy and the introduction of VAT, the global pandemic that drastically reduced our enrollment from 1,800 to just over 1,000 students, while operational costs remained the same. We were forced to make difficult, even painful decisions that impacted our beloved faculty and staff, just to keep IPSA running.

In 2022, we launched a new strategy aimed at reviving IPSA's economic stability. Since then, we have worked to modernize our systems and facilities, uplift the lives of our faculty and staff, and provide our students with an even better environment for learning and growth.

Special thanks to my fellow members of the 13th School Governing Board, for your dedication and your unique contributions:

To MB Dr. Maria Abigail Trinidad, for your thoughtful and thorough revamp of our Human Resources systems. Your efforts have uplifted our educators in meaningful ways.

To MB Noel Arasula, who juggled several roles—from managing parents and community affairs to being our organized and dependable Board Secretary.

To MB Richard De Belen, our Vice Chairman and Head of Physical facilities—your projects transformed our learning spaces, from room renovations to the construction of new laboratories, restrooms, and school entrance improvements.

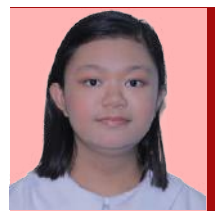
To MB Arci Fernando, who managed our finances with wisdom and balance, ensuring that our resources served both our operations and our people.

To MB Dr. Rhona Sonsona, also a incoming 14th School Governing Board Chairperson for leading our push for academic excellence with passion and vision, working closely with educators to make holistic learning possible for every student.

The road has not been easy. But through unity, shared sacrifice, and a collective will to rise, we turned crisis into opportunity. Together, we made a difference.

Thank you, IPSA, for the privilege of serving you. Your leadership and attention to detail were vital.

Digital Shift in Education



OUTLOOK
Sofia Denise P. Hilario

Technology—the backbone and foundation for development in the modern era. When the COVID-19 pandemic struck in 2019, it forced us to rely on technology to help students continue their learning; lest the students of this age undergo a potential education crisis. Though, this change—which lasted for almost two to three years—has definitely influenced the way we learn, and so a debate arose: has tech made us lazier, or has it opened new departments for improvement? One thing is certain, though, and it's that it has taken a grip on our education, and in more ways than one. When it comes to improvement, technology offers a lot in that department. It allows the teachers to disseminate tasks easily, whether the student is absent, or the professors are: With just typing a few words, and the click of a button, the students are able to get the assignment in a jiffy.

Those who've missed school due to sickness or important events can always come back to the Google Classroom to check what lectures were missed as well. Speaking of tasks, when it comes to research or doing assignments, it provides students with a whole library to accomplish them. You can simply type up what's needed in the Google search bar, and it appears; You can go to forums to look for questions you may have that others have already answered; And when it comes to doing repetitive tasks such as collecting and analyzing data, it's much simpler.

Conducting tests for research became easier, with the seniors turning to Google Forms frequently for such. But, the sad reality is: If there's a good, there's a bad. Such is the case with AI (or artificial intelligence). I've seen numerous cases in which students turn to AI to create their essays, their research, or answer questions, instead of doing it themselves. Some may say it's too quickly free up time in their slots, but this isn't the way to go. We've become too reliant: What was once a tool became a crutch, and if we don't fix this, we might as well have our lawyers and doctors resorting to ChatGPT to handle cases.

Another issue? Technology is negatively affecting human interaction; or at least, our beliefs. The younger students in Saudi Arabia often hope for rain, hoping for one of the two things: Classes being cancelled completely, or moving to online classes. I have a particular issue with the latter-- sure, online classes can be something to fall back to, but because of the pandemic, it's been something that rewired our brains to desire it. Whether it's to cheat better, to doze off unnoticed, or simply chat with friends while lessons are ongoing. The whole point of school is to educate us, and if we desire online class only to seek the distractions it provides, then that negates the purpose of having class in the first place. Can it truly compare to sitting down for hours on end, facing your teacher as they teach you? It's boring on paper, yes, but ultimately, it forces us to "lock in" on the lesson and pay attention, while online class provides us with more distractions, and gives us more excuses to miss out on class.

So, has technology made us lazier, or has it opened doors for improvement? The answer isn't black and white. After all, technology is a tool, something to assist us, but it should never replace work. We must also recognize that education is not just about efficiency—it's about growth. The struggles of research, the effort we put into crafting essays, and the patience required to sit through a class all build discipline and critical thinking in us students. In the end, it's not technology that determines the outcome of our studies, but how we choose to use it—either as a stepping stone, or a crutch that hinders our development.

Academic Dishonesty: A Silent Threat To True Learning



OVER A CUP OF COFFEE
Alexus Mathew P. Arrieta

"If honesty is the best policy, then why has cheating become a common strategy in the pursuit of academic success?" Cheating is considered a serious violation in all educational institutions. It's an offense that can lead to suspension or worse, expulsion. Yet, despite the consequences, many students still resort to it. Why is that?

Many believe cheating makes academic tasks easier. What they don't realize is that this mindset gradually fosters a deep reliance on others, cultivating a habit as damaging and persistent as a malady that might become impossible to shake off in the long run. According to Psychology Today, about 50 to 70 percent of students admit to having cheated during their time in school. This surge indicates a shift in student attitudes, where the pressure to achieve high grades often outweighs the commitment to academic integrity. There's no denying that cheating can lead to high grades with minimal effort.

Copying someone else's answers can be very tempting, especially when students fear the embarrassment of failing. This fear is one of several reasons why learners turn to dishonest means. The advent of modern technology has significantly intensified the issue of academic dishonesty. According to an article by Laura Tierney, 19% of academic content in the Philippines is now generated by AI, while plagiarism rates have climbed to 30%. With the widespread availability of smartphones and AI-driven tools, students can easily access unauthorized materials during exams or rely on artificial intelligence to complete assignments and performance tasks. Although these technologies offer many educational benefits, they have also unintentionally nurtured a culture where dishonesty is not only more convenient but increasingly normalized. Achieving high grades often brings praise and admiration, but what if those accomplishments were earned through dishonesty? Deep down, it's hard to take pride in something that wasn't truly yours. True success comes from effort and perseverance, not shortcuts.

Cheating may offer quick rewards, but it robs us of the chance to grow, learn, and build genuine self-worth. Everyone faces setbacks, but these moments shape our character more than any grade ever will. Failing doesn't define us; it is how we respond that does.

Embracing mistakes with honesty helps us develop resilience, integrity, and confidence. It's far more fulfilling to be respected for our sincerity and courage than to be admired for achievements built on deceit.

When we choose honesty, we not only honor ourselves but also contribute to a culture of trust and fairness in our schools and communities. Our actions influence others, and by setting a good example, we encourage those around us to value hard work and integrity. The journey may be harder, but the rewards are lasting—real knowledge, stronger character, and the respect of peers and mentors.

Letter To The Editor

Dear Editor,

The IPSA Gazette publication is a highly anticipated part of every school year for students like myself. The paper continues to serve as a platform for school updates, creative writing, and student artwork. I would like to start by commending your editorial team for the dedication that goes into creating each issue. Your dedication enables the Gazette to remain a space for students to showcase their talents, express their interests, and share their voices–something clearly reflected in this year's well-organized first issue.

As a reader who roots for the continued growth of this publication, I would like to suggest the addition of a new section: student polls. The publication can hold polls for students on relevant school issues or concerns, offering a way to give the student body a voice and uncover shared perspectives. Your team can also consider collaborating with the SSG to expand the reach of this section. Polls on topics such as the implementation of e-books or the frequency of homework could bring student opinions to the administration and possibly initiate positive change. On a lighter note, fun yet practical polls like the best study method or the best social media platform to find UPCAT reviewers from (as a struggling soon-to-be CET taker myself) could promote both academic support and connection among students.

I encourage your editorial team to consider these suggestions as these may help the paper grow as a voice for the student body. With only one addition, I believe it can become even more inclusive and representative of the whole school community.

Sincerely,
Hannah C. Dela Vega Grade 11 - STEM 1

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Modern Parenting for Modern World



EYE TO EYE
Victoria S. Guinto

Parenting has always been a challenge, but in today's fast-paced, digital-driven world, raising children has become even more complex. With the overwhelming influence of social media and peer pressure, many parents today find themselves struggling to maintain strong and open relationships with their children.

In the past, home was the center of learning, values, and behavior. But now, with just a swipe or a click, young people can access a universe of information—and not all of it is helpful or healthy. Social media can connect us, but it can also confuse us. It can make children feel pressured to look a certain way, act a certain way, or be someone they're not, just to be accepted or noticed.

At the same time, peer pressure has become stronger and more silent. It's not just about fitting in with classmates anymore. It's about keeping up with trends, challenges, and expectations online. And sometimes, this can create a gap between children and parents—one that is filled with misunderstandings and missed opportunities for connection.

But despite these challenges, parenting today is not impossible. What it truly requires is presence—not just physical, but emotional and mental presence. Children need parents who listen without judging, guide without controlling, and understand without comparing. They need to feel safe to open up, make mistakes, and ask questions.

It's important for parents to stay informed about the online world—not to monitor every move, but to understand the environment their children are growing up in. At the same time, children must also learn that their parents but they always care—and they always will.

At the heart of it all, good parenting in this modern world is still about the same things: **love, time, and connection.** The tools may have changed, but the needs remain the same. What children need most is not a perfect parent—but a present one.

Let's continue working together—parents, teachers, and students—to create an environment where communication is open, trust is strong, and relationships are grounded in respect and care. After all, raising a child is never just a family's job; it's a community effort.

In this ever-changing world, the best foundation we can give our children is one built on understanding, compassion,and consistency. When young people know they are supported not just at home but also in school and in the wider community, they are more likely to grow into confident, responsible, and kind individuals.

The Literacy Crisis We Can No Longer Deny



OUTLOOK
Sebastian E. Patiu

The ability to read, understand, and think is the foundation of of any healthy nation. Without them, no nation can ever compete or even exist. The most recent findings of the 2024 Functional Literacy, Education, and Mass Media Survey (FLEMMS) paint a grim picture: 18 million plus Philippine junior high school graduates are functionally illiterate. Despite completing years of formal education, they struggle with the basics of comprehension essential for daily life.

This revelation is not another statistic to quietly be accepted. It is a rebuke to a system that values quantity over quality, certificate over capability. Graduation has been a source of celebration for decades in neighborhoods as a badge of honor. But behind the diplomas and commencement ceremonies is an uncomfortable truth: too many of our students are being rushed through school without ever mastering the skills they need. With the new functional literacy standards, demanding actual comprehension as well as reading, writing, and arithmetic, the illusion has been lost.

The Philippine Statistics Authority's new standards have exposed a massive gap between appearances and reality. The fact that millions are leaving school without the skills necessary for work, life, and citizenship should alarm every policymaker, educator, and parent. It is no longer enough to push students toward a diploma. Competence must be the true goal of education. More troubling is that 21 percent of senior high school graduates cannot read a simple story. These graduates, who ought to be the drivers of this country, are entering adulthood with limited critical thinking skills. It is not only an educational failure but a threat to national growth. If the people of this nation cannot read, write, calculate, and understand the things around them, then this nation cannot develop. The regional statistics are also worrisome. Provinces like Tawi-Tawi, Davao Occidental, and Basilan have over 40 percent functional illiteracy rates, with Tawi-Tawi reaching a staggering 67 percent.

These are the provinces where poverty already reigns. The task then becomes even more daunting.

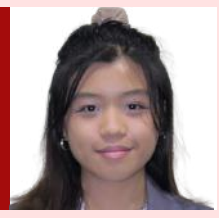
Literacy is a powerful tool against empowerment, employment, and the poverty cycle. Without literacy, these segments are trapped in stagnation. While these statistics paint a disheartening picture of the Philippine education system, they do not capture the full reality.

Complacency is over. Education authorities must realize that graduation and enrollment statistics alone are not success markers. A diploma is useless unless it is supported with functional literacy. Drastic steps must be taken, and promptly at that.

Illiteracy is more than a learning issue. It is a national emergency. All children in the Philippines deserve an education that will prepare them to think, to comprehend, and to thrive. It is our nation's responsibility to ensure that none of them ever graduate without having the skills they need to have a worthy, meaningful life. IPSA shows that quality education is possible, but growth should not stop at simply improving. In this crisis, the goal must be true transformation.

One Close Friend or A Big Circle? A True Friendship Dilemma

TALK OF TODAY
Loraine Sofia T. Calinisan



"DUO FRIENDSHIPS ARE UNSTOPPABLE."
"TRIO FRIENDSHIPS ARE THE BEST."
"QUADRUPLE FRIENDSHIPS WILL NEVER LEAVE EACH OTHER'S SIDE."

Seriously, what kind of friendship is the most compatible? As an ambivert, I've experienced having a massive squad, a quadruple, a trio, a 5-O—you name it! Curiosity aside, having any number of friends is amazing. They make you feel complete. However, for some friendships, the more members increase, the more it seems… lonely. "Being well-liked by a large group of people cannot take the place of forging deep, supportive friendships," mentioned Joseph Allen & Hugh P. Kelly. Research conducted at the University of Virginia has shown that adolescents with extensive social circles have a higher likelihood of experiencing mental health issues in adulthood compared to those who maintain a smaller circle of close friends. A person might experience loneliness within a large social group because of shallow conversation. Envision being part of a circle of seven friends. You struggle to truly understand person 1 because you're consistently accompanied by person 2. At the same time, persons 3 and 4 are perpetually tied up with their studies, while person 5 has strict parental rules that prevent them from hanging out after school. Although person 6 is always around, interactions feel uncomfortable and very awkward. Even with your attempts to connect with everyone, the connection fails to develop — and the harder you try, the more isolated you feel, and the absence of authentic emotional ties can make them feel invisible and misinterpreted. According to Washington Psychological Wellness, a genuine friend is a person who offers unwavering support, faithfulness, and truthfulness, remaining with you during life's difficulties. They are reliable, honest, and compassionate, providing empathy and comprehension in both joyful and tough moments. Although this type of friendship can be found in large groups of friends, it isn't always the case. In reality, some expansive circles eventually drift apart, illustrating that having a bigger group doesn't ensure genuine connections. As noted by Richard Hays, a longitudinal research study published in PubMed revealed that as dyadic friendships progress, the degree of intimacy emerges as an important factor influencing the friendship's strength and lasting nature, surpassing merely the duration of time spent together. This indicates that the quality of exchanges in dyadic relationships is vital for their endurance. I still believe that friendships with either big or small numbers are beautiful. We should be educated about choosing the right friends, the friends that stay by your side and grow with you. Genuine friends are likely to remain present in your life during both challenges and achievements, provided the relationship is healthy. When you are with a true friend, you may experience a sense of comfort and relaxation.

Choose your friends, and choose your circle. Don't waste your time on people who don't contribute to your growth or well-being. At the end of the day, it's still your choice — who you allow into your life, who you share your energy with, and who you walk alongside. Surround yourself with people who uplift you, challenge you to become better, and make you feel genuinely seen and valued. Let go of the pressure to stay in spaces that no longer feel safe or fulfilling. You deserve friendships that feel like peace. You have the power to walk away from the noise and build a circle that fuels your growth.

EDITORIAL LINER

"Without deviation, progress is not possible."

— Frank Zappa

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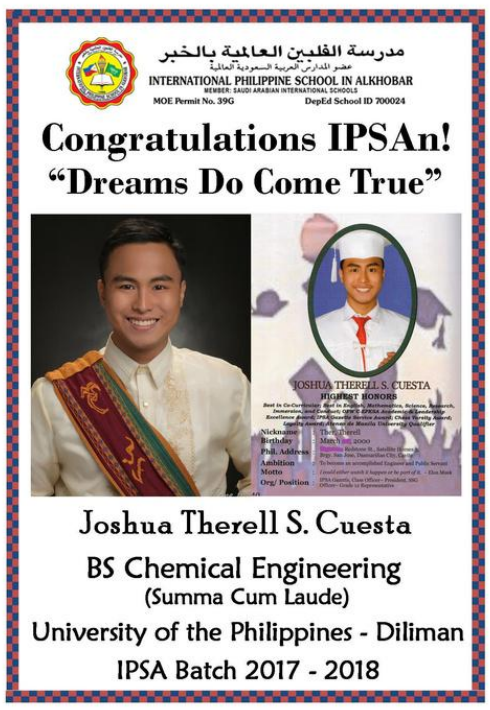
Looking Back, Moving Forward: IPSA's First Batch of Grade 12 Graduates

by: Samantha Ashley Valdez

In 2018, a group of tenacious and hopeful students walked across the stage as the very first batch of Senior High School graduates from the International Philippine School in Al Khobar. It marked a historic moment not just for the school, but also for the implementation of the Senior High School program in IPSA. Now, nearly seven years later, we catch up with some of these pioneering alumni to discover where life has taken them, and how IPSA has helped shape their journey. Six of these trailblazers were interviewed by the IPSA Gazette to find out how their time at SHS equipped them for success outside of IPSA.

Joshua Therell S. Cuesta

University of the Philippines Diliman,
Summa Cum Laude
Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering
Former Strand: **STEM**
Current Role: **Former Process Engineer at Petron; now teaching full-time for Auxesis Review Center, and currently in the process of learning a new career in Data Science.**



Joshua took the STEM strand with a clear goal: to become an engineer. "I've always known that I wanted to be an engineer, so I took up STEM in high school." Not only did the senior high school experience equip him with the foundational knowledge he needed for college, but it also allowed him valuable exposure through research and field trips, which deepened his appreciation for the career he was pursuing.

Beyond academics, his SHS journey also helped Joshua in his chosen path on a personal level. "Having two years of extra high school contributed to my emotional maturity and helped me tackle the bigger personal issues I faced later on in life," he shared. After graduating as Summa Cum Laude in the University of the Philippines Diliman in 2022,

Joshua worked for two years as a Process Engineer at Petron. Now, he teaches full-time at Auxesis Review Center while actively preparing for a new career in Data Science. Here is the advice he wishes to impart to upcoming and current Senior High School students: *"Congratulations on finishing high school! We are proud of you, especially for taking one more step in securing your future! When in college, grab all the opportunities to learn both inside and outside the classroom. Make friends and have fun! And when you feel like you're struggling, always revisit your purpose, whatever it may be."* — Joshua Therell Cuesta

Tracy S. Guinto

Far Eastern University - Diliman,
Summa Cum Laude
Bachelor of Science in Business Administration major in Financial Management and Business Analytics
Former Strand: **ABM**
Current Role: **Corporate Analyst at JPMorganChase**



Tracy selected the ABM strand to build a strong foundation in her career. *"Taking the ABM path accelerated my skills and theoretical understanding in courses that I took on my first 2 years in college,"* she shared. Her time spent in SHS in IPSA wasn't purely about academics, but rather a training ground for real-world application.

"*Theoretical discussions, thesis, immersions, and learning with the group with the same chosen path or college made the experience worthwhile",* she added. As a member of the pioneering batch, Tracy faced challenges that echo the same sentiment of others. *"It was a challenge to keep up to speed with the expected learning outcomes for a SHS student while simultaneously learning and unlearning things to align your knowledge to your chosen path."* Despite these challenges, she remained disciplined in her pursuit of her goal.

After graduating as Summa Cum Laude in Far Eastern University Diliman in 2022, she worked as a Finance Associate at Villgro Philippines in Makati City. After a year, Tracy was accepted in her dream company, JPMorganChase and now, works as Corporate Analyst.

Her advice to current SHS students is grounded in experience:
"Always find the balance between academics and extracurricular activities — while academics enrich our knowledge and skills, extracurricular activities improve the way we build our network and establish our brand; both of which are essential in life after college/university." — Tracy Guinto

Charla U. Delfin

Ateneo de Manila University
Bachelor of Science in Management
Former Strand: ABM
Current Role: Rustan Marketing Corporation as a Brand Associate.



Charla Delfin pursued the ABM strand as she had an eye toward a business or marketing career. In SHS, the subjects she took became the foundation for her college success. "The experience was a good introduction to my chosen college degree/career path. I learned most of the fundamentals and basic principles of business in the activities we did back she shared. Projects and collaborative activities were especially impactful to her, as it gave her opportunities and practice to apply lessons outside of the classroom that would prove essential later on. A challenge faced by this trailblazer was that she recalled feeling that their opportunities were limited since they lived in KSA. With the introduction of career-based strands, there was a need for first-hand experience with companies or fieldwork that was related to their strand. However, due to their circumstances, they had limited opportunities, which left them with less first-hand experience than they had hoped for.

Jerilyn Shaine R. Camila

University of the Philippines Diliman,
Cum Laude
Bachelor of Science in Business Administration
Former Strand: **ABM**
Current Role: Accounting Specialist at Health Plan Philippines Inc.



Choosing against the popular choice, Jerilyn chose the ABM strand as opposed to the stable choice made by many of her peers by choosing STEM. By forging her own path in ABM, she went beyond her comfort zone and challenged herself continuously. From the get-go, she initially wanted to b that laid the groundwork for her future academic and professional success as an accountant, which was a decision.

For Jerilyn, SHS was a mind-opening experience.

"I learned the importance of teamwork and camaraderie, and how it contributes to overall success and satisfaction in finishing group projects."She considered everything she learned to be vital. However, the most important takeaway that she learned was not about academics, but rather it was about building discipline. "Through building my discipline with my studies, I was fortunate to pass the UPCAT and got accepted into my dream college (College of Business Administration / Virata School of Business), and eventually graduate as cum laude four years later."

As a member of the pioneering SHS batch, she recalls the unique challenges they faced. "We had to rely on ourselves on difficult projects such as research writing. During that time, we had very limited access to research articles. Aside from that, we didn't have opportunities for immersion, unlike other SHS graduates in the Philippines." Despite these limitations, Jerilyn says that they were able to make it.

The same discipline she had in Senior High School continues to serve her well in both her academic and career success. After graduating in 2022 from the University of the Philippines Diliman as Cum Laude, she now works as an Accounting Specialist at Health Plan Philippines, Inc., which is one of the oldest HMO companies in the country, and now under Hive Health group.

Here is her words of wisdom for upcoming/current SHS students: *"It's okay for things not to go our way from the get-go. Life has a funny way of redirecting us to things that are truly meant for us."* — Jerilyn Camila

To be continued on page 10 ...

Volume XXXVI, Issue No. 2 (January - May 2025)
IPSA Gazette
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Looking Back, Moving Forward: IPSA's First Batch of Grade 12 Graduates



Jonathan Marquez
De La Salle University Dasmariñas
Bachelor of Science
in Hospitality Management
Former Strand: ABM
Current Role: Corporate events and customer service operations

For Jonathan, he chose the ABM strands as it aligned best with his interests among the four strands offered in IPSA. "Out of the 4 options IPSA offered, this was the closest strand, so I preferred this one," he explained.

What stood out to him most during his experience in Senior High School was the mental preparation it offered. "Having specific subjects helped me during college and up till now," he shared. Jonathan explained that the SHS curriculum was helpful in real-life applications, especially in the aspect of projects and work immersion. "In my line of work specifically, I gained a lot of practical knowledge and some skills from those."

As part of the trailblazers SHS batch, Jonathan also faced lingering uncertainty. "The most challenging was answering the question, if 'our' batch was actually ready after SHS," he recalled. However, these experiences equipped him with the knowledge and determination that he needed as he progressed through his academic and professional career.

After graduating from De La Salle University Dasmariñas in 2022, Jonathan Marquez now works in corporate events and customer service operations.

His advice to students is simple, yet profound: "Just do what you love and love what you do." — *Jonathan Marquez*

Kent Michael Handumon
Central Philippine University
Bachelor of Science in Software Engineering
Former Strand: STEM
Current Role: Software Engineer in a Software Solutions Company

Kent chose the STEM strand with a clear goal in his mind: to pursue engineering in college. " I chose STEM because I wanted to take engineering courses in college," he explained. This decision laid the groundwork for him to achieve his current role as a Software Engineer in a Software Solutions Company.

For Kent, he acknowledges that the transition into SHS was the biggest challenge. "Some subjects are not that familiar, and some of them are unnecessary," he noted. However, for him, STEM was not just about academics, but rather about fostering personal growth through developing a disciplined mindset and critical thinking. These skills proved to be vital not only as he journeyed through his university's demands, but also in his professional career as a Software Engineer. Kent explained that mastering Math and Science subjects in SHS was especially essential as "The applications that we develop require complex processes and algorithms for it to achieve the quality that the client needs."

Kent acknowledges that the transition into SHS was the biggest challenge. "Some subjects are not that familiar, and some of them are unnecessary," he noted.

The advice he wants to part: *"Trust the process." — Kent Handumon*

The Aesthetic Experience of Nostalgia

by: Denise Mari Sejera

There is an unsettling pang that occurs when listening to the crackling joy of a vinyl record, or when viewing a photograph of someone's summer in the warm light of those old 80's color filters. It is a deep longing: not for something that we lost or are in a state of grief over—but something we never had. A summer we never lived, a love letter never received, a neighborhood we have never walked down, under street lights that no longer exist. So, why do we miss a time we never touched?

The aesthetic experience of nostalgia is not just some aesthetic shopworn experience. It is an echo of psychological depth. In a world where everything is changing so fast, nostalgia presents itself as a soft rebellion and longing for permanence during a time where things are disposable. There is nothing wrong with longing for vintage aesthetics, the old-school brand of romance, or the typed letter that you once might have received, but you certainly are not rejecting the here and now.

A girl born in 2006 can cry happy tears listening to a love ballad from 1975. A teen can fill their room with Polaroids and fairy lights; not because they lived that, but believe they are living it in their minds. The smell of an old book, the way sunlight filtering through dust looks, the dulled vibration of pop from a VHS screen; all evoke meaning and emotion, not memory. They represent an emotional projection of a gentler world in which things were slower, and full of kindness. Our nostalgia is not if time was perfect, but because it offers us permission to hope.

And maybe that is the point.

Nostalgia does not exist to take back time. It exists to ground us to what feels real. It exists as a transfer of longing in a deleted world, even if that somewhere never existed. Because sometimes, the soul remembers what the body never lived. In missing what never happened, we are not lost; we are simply hungry to feel whole.

Beauty in the Past: Handwritten Letters in the Digital Age

by: Bethany Grace M. Daguno

"*My Dearest, Angelica,*" — have you ever felt the joy when opening a handwritten letter from someone? An actual completely crafted handwritten letter asking how you're feeling and why they are writing to you. Doesn't that just sound so romantic? Giving handwritten letters to people offers us the thoughtfulness and effort that isn't usually seen in the Digital Age anymore. During the 18th century, telephones and other digital forms of communication were not as advanced. That is why handwritten letters became the common method for communicating. They'd wait for a couple of days, weeks, or even years just to get a reply back. However, now with one click of the "*send*" button, our message will be received in no time! Once we open a letter, we can see the beautiful art that lives inside it. The dark dried ink that flows in every letter stroke, the chosen crisp texture of the paper that gives us a calm feeling, and the usual brown tinted color of the paper. A complete letter includes: the writer's address, the receiver's address, a greeting, the body paragraphs, and lastly, the conclusion. In contrast to today's messages, we usually just get a simple: *"yo wassup"*, nothing more, probably less.

Handwritten letters are usually seen as valuable now in the Digital Age. This is because of its tangibleness and how we can keep it with us anywhere— as a memory or souvenir. On the other hand, living in the Digital Age means our messages exist in digital form, fleeting words on a glowing screen, unable to be held, tucked away, or treasured in the same way as something handwritten. Whether it's behind a screen or behind a letter, there is always a writer. Just like how an artist is behind their masterpieces, writers are behind their wonderfully crafted letters. One of the most beautiful things about handwritten letters is the way they carry a piece of the writer's soul. Every curve and slant of their handwriting whispers something personal—an unspoken reflection of who they are. In the gentle choice of words, we glimpse their thoughts, their emotions, and the depth of their heart. And perhaps most touching of all is the time they took to write it. Each line patiently written, not rushed, but lovingly poured out, because the message, and the person receiving it, is what truly matters. If we compare it to the people today, there is a really big difference. We are surrounded by people that adopt the *'nonchalant'* mentality. This is when the person doesn't want to show emotion, often giving the "I don't really care" mindset. This is why many people today still cherish handwritten, thoughtfully crafted letters, they hold a kind of warmth that digital messages often lack. Each detail reflects creativity and care, gently reminding the receiver that they are truly valued and deeply important to the writer. We all should come to realize that it doesn't matter what type of method we use for communication. All that matters is that we get our message through with clarity and sincerity. However, it wouldn't hurt to bring back the letters from the past. If you have someone you care about, tell them how much they mean to you in the form of a letter. Wait for it, they might write you one back!

How True Crime Became the Internet's Newest Obsession

by: Ziva Aliyah Panopio

Whether in podcasts, documentaries, or viral videos, true crime has enthralled people all around with its compelling, unsettling, and sometimes heart-wrenching stories. True crime is not something ideal, like romance. It's not something humorous either, like a comedy. Sometimes, we can't even relate to what the victims go through, or how the criminals think. So, what exactly is it about these dark tales that draws so many of us in, despite the horrifying things they show us?

A key reason is the allure of mystery. Suspenseful books or films have always captivated people, but true crime provides a distinctive view. It gives them the chance to follow a real-life puzzle unfold. The fact that the events are real makes the story feel even more impactful. It could happen to you, or to me. In fact, many see it as a means of finding hope despite horror. More specifically, evolutionary psychologists think that our interest in these tales stems from our past. Crimes have existed in human society since the beginning of time, and we have become extremely conscious of wrongdoing. We can protect ourselves and those around us by using this instinct to understand what motivates criminals.

According to a 2010 study from the University of Illinois, from the Illinois News Bureau, researchers found that women are more drawn to true crime than men. They are especially interested in stories that reveal the killer's motives, show how victims escaped, or feature female victims.

Unfortunately, countless cases of stalking, harassment, and even assault happen on a daily basis, around the world. So to learn how to protect themselves better, these women are more drawn to true crime than the men. This research study showed that sometimes, people are drawn to stories that teach them how to stay safe and allow them to identify with the victim.

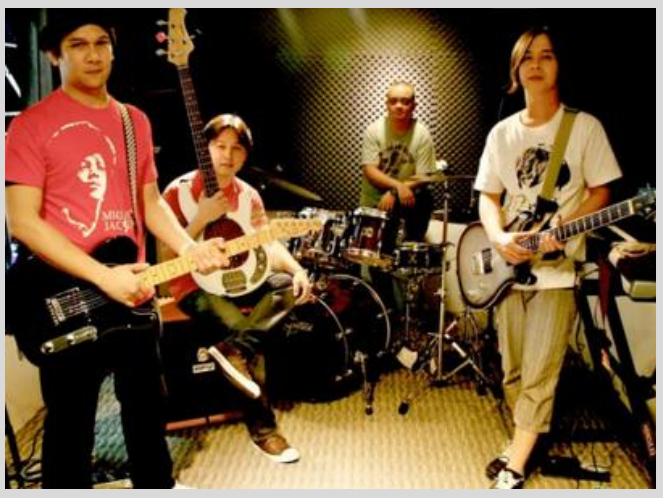
So, true crime is popular because it satisfies our curiosity about real-life mysteries and helps us understand crime and its causes. Not only that, we are drawn to these stories because as humans, we need something that sparks our excitement. And while true crime entertains, it also teaches us important lessons about safety and the criminal mind. These tales remind us that, in order to protect our hope, we must also learn about what drives others to despair. To know the darkness, in order to safeguard the light.

Volume XXXVI, Issue No. 2 (January - May 2025)
IPSA Gazette
THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL PHILIPPINE SCHOOL IN AL KHOBAR

Filipino Rock Bands of the '90s: Why Gen Z is Falling in Love with Eraserheads and Rivermaya

by: Denise Mari T. Sejera





"Pre, ang corny ng OPM ngayon." Admit it: some of us have thought that while scrolling through TikTok, a select number of recycled beats and cheesy lyrics rule the algorithm. But amidst all that noise, a rather interesting phenomenon is taking place: Gen Z is turning back the hands of time, and in doing so, they shun trends in favor of evergreen tunes. At the center of this revival? The classic sounds of '90s Filipino rock *bands like Eraserheads and Rivermaya.*

Yes, Gen Z, the generation brought up on Spotify and short-form content, now finds out about the magic of *Huling El Bimbo* and *214*. What's even wilder is they're not just listeners but vibers, memers, and even makers of playlist titles such as "[OPM] Songs To Listen On a Late Night Drive" But what is it in these bands that hits differently for a generation with infinite options?

Let's face it, today, few of the music sometimes feels, (what's the right word…) shallow. Enter the Eraserheads: the band that had turned your everyday heartbreaks into poetry. "*Magkahawak ang ating kamay, at walang kamalay-malay.*" Those few words from Ang Huling El Bimbo contain enough emotional weight to make your angsty breakup playlist cover with shame. And Rivermaya? Their anthem 214 ("Am I real?") resonates in a way that's almost existential, like indie movie dialogue you didn't know you needed.

The bands didn't just write songs but told stories: from the flirtatious charm of Ligaya to the hopeful rebellion in the voice of *Awit ng Kabataan*, their music speaks of raw, unfiltered emotions Gen Z has found so relatable—nostalgic about the pandemic and heavy with global crises.

Perhaps, it's the authenticity, the grit, and the absence of Autotune that make it feel so refreshing in this hyper-polished world. Nostalgia is a potent drug that hits just as hard whether it's for a childhood you had or one you never did. For Gen Z, '90s OPM is a portal to a simpler time when lyrics were hand-written in notebooks and band posters were passed around like sacred artefacts. The analogue imperfections of those tracks, whether gritty guitar riffs or Ely Buendia's unpolished falsetto, seemed to rebel against the algorithm-led drum of today's perceived perfection.

Let us not forget the cultural context: listening to *Eraserheads* or *Rivermaya* is like leafing through a scrapbook of the '90s Philippines—sounds of jeepney rides, cheap soda, and *tambay* moments under streetlights—a world Gen Z may never have lived in but is falling in love with one music stream at a time.

Surprisingly, it's platforms like TikTok that are bridging the gap between generations. A 15-second clip of *Pare Ko* becomes the soundtrack for "What I'd Wear in the '90s" videos. Meanwhile, vinyl records of Cutterpillow are becoming prized possessions for young collectors. The irony? The same generation obsessed with fast-paced content is seeking comfort in albums meant to be played from start to finish. *Eraserheads* and *Rivermaya* are more than just bands; they are cultural touchstones, the golden era of OPM that Gen Z, in all its contradictions, is now reclaiming with pride. Who would have thought that the same kids brought up on K-pop *fancams* would find themselves humming. Overdrive while Googling "*How to drive a Vios?"*

So, to all the *titos* and *titas* of the '90s who are worried about the state of today's music. Relax, Your kids and their friends? They're falling in love with the classics. And to us Gen Z, welcome to the club. Go ahead and blast Spoliarium through your headphones, and let Ely Buendia and Rico Blanco remind you of a world that's both old school and timeless.

"*Ang gusto ko sa buhay ay…*" Well, you know how it goes.

Fashion: Then, Now, and Again

by: Ashley Janelle Almario

Fashion has always been cyclical, it's always on and off. Every season shows new trends or a resurgence of past styles that have already been in the limelight before and before you know it,Y2K fashion is showing a full blown comeback, Gen Z, in particular shows signs in diving early 2000's aesthetics, with the low flare jeans and cropped tops. Even 90's minimalism or so called "clean girl" aesthetic appears to create a modern style rooted in simplicity, elegance and effortless beauty. Characterized by sleek silhouettes, neutral tones, and luxurious polished looks.

Fashion has not always been about the past, it isn't just the revival of aesthetics. As concerns over fast fashion and environmental impact grow, many consumers are returning vintage shopping and upcycling as alternatives.

Social media platforms are the biggest beneficiaries of fashion's reinvention, as they served as a catalyst for this time. People find it appealing when well-known producers display fresh styles, aesthetics, or vintage or reused apparel. People are taking out their old clothing from the 2000s and beyond because of its originality and inventiveness.

Nowadays, it's easy to notice how trends fade and return faster than ever. Fashion is a statement,and the revival of trends are heavily influenced by the world around us—particularly through instagram opinions and prominent personalities who heavily persuade fashion trends.

When an influential figure embraces a look, it usually goes viral,quickly making it to the mainstream of fashion. This just proves that fashion is a form of art, each era of style shows that it can be revived again and again. As there are no limits to the resurgence of fashion, only endless ways to interpret it.

Gen Z vs. Gen Alpha: Is Gen Z the New Millennials?

by: Ma. Elena G. Ladra

As time and years go by, so do the generations being passed on and developed with new values, habits, and ways of thinking. From the earliest humans— Homo Sapiens— to today's digital natives and socially aware youth, generational shifts have changed the whole world.

As generation Alpha begins to arise, questions revolve around Generation Z: are they becoming the "new Millennials" to the new generation? You might ponder with questions like: Who exactly are Generation Z and Generation Alpha, and why are they named as such? Gen Z are people who were born between 1997 and 2012. They grew when technology was being studied, developed, and introduced to the whole world. They have been exposed to the world of smartphones, social media, and the internet, making them experts in technology, socially aware, and always value individuality and inclusivity.

Whilst the Gen Alpha includes people who are born from 2013 and onward. Being introduced to the world of AI, tablets, and digital learning at a very young age.

Now, the reason why the generations' names are somehow strange is because naming each generation is a mix of cultural influences, historical events, as well as catchy labels.

Gen Z is named for their digital fluency, growing up with technology and social awareness.

Gen Alpha, is the first generation raised with advanced technology from birth. While the two generations share similarities, they differ in their experiences. Gen Alpha is sometimes called "Zoomers" due to the pandemic's impact and "iPad kids" because of their early exposure to tablets and digital devices.

As Gen Z teens are slowly developing and growing up, so are the "ways" of how they used to do things in their times.

By times, it means how their time is way different than today's generation and their "new" ways. Gen Z teens' childhood revolves around the sweet memories of watching Cartoon network or Disney channel, playing and clashing their own toys, doing random things that every Gen Z teen has universally done in their life like making Musical videos in their room before it turned into TikTok, but never showing anyone.

Whilst the Gen Alpha kids' childhood will revolve around technology around them, having their own tablet, socializing in the online world like Roblox and Minecraft, having a huge amount of screen time, and being introduced to the new advanced technology: AI. The distinction between two generations— Gen Z and Gen Alpha— highlights the rapid societal and technological changes.

Whilst Gen Z grew up, exploring the early stages of the digital age, Gen Alpha is shaped in which technology is part of their everyday lives from the moment they are born.

So are Gen Z the New Millennial? In some ways, yes. Just as Millennials were once seen as the trendsetters and were often criticized for being "too emotional" or "too online," Gen Z is now viewed through a similar lens by Gen Alpha.

From nostalgia-driven media habits to being labeled "too sensitive" or "too woke," Gen Z reflects many of the cultural experiences that once defined Millennials. As Gen Alpha grows, Gen Z may take the same role Millennials once held—as a generation both admired and misunderstood by the next.

Volume XXXVI, Issue No. 2 (January - May 2025)

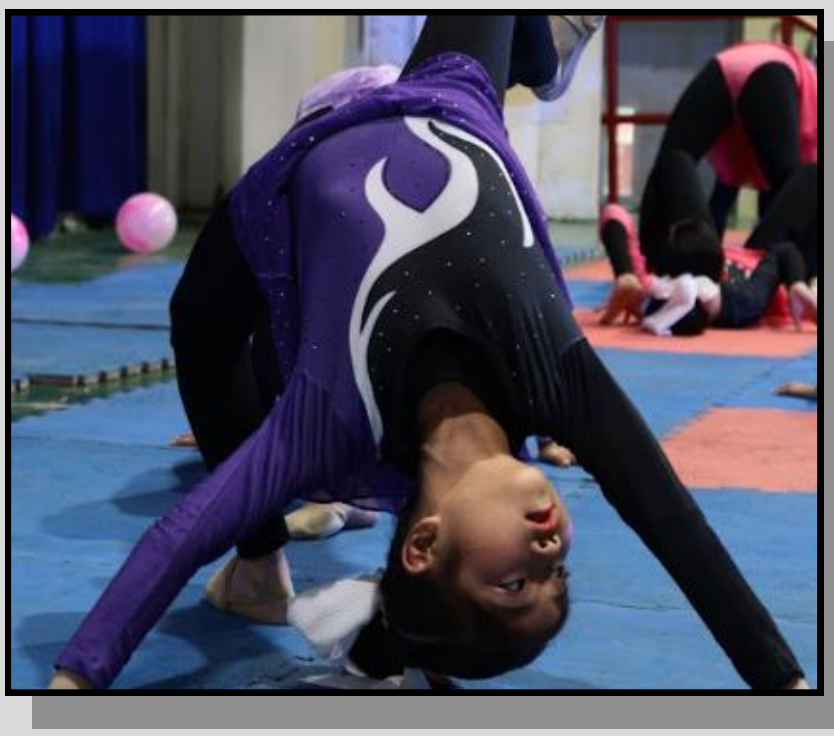
IPSA Gazette

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL PHILIPPINE SCHOOL IN AL KHOBAR

Showcasing Brilliance: IPSA's Culminating Activity 2025



Eunice Fayluga and Ron Delos Santos of the Dance Troupe showcase their hip-hop performance



Martha Milleza in a powerful gymnastic routine, captivating the audience with her backbend pose.

A Joyful Finale of IPSAns Shine in Year-End Culminating Activity

by: Vincent Era M. Aguilar



Sir Darwin S. Majid , alongside the Robotics Club members sparking innovation and inspiring the future with their dynamic robotics presentation.

With just a few days left before the end of the school year, IPSA held its much-anticipated culminating activity—a final celebration of learning, talent, and achievement. After months of hard work and growth, students took the stage to showcase the skills and knowledge they had gained throughout the year.

The two-day event featured a vibrant array of presentations. From the Robotics Club unveiling their projects—complete with coding demonstrations and student-built machines—to lively cultural performances like traditional Filipino dances, the showcase was a true reflection of the diverse talents within the IPSA community. Each performance highlighted creativity, discipline, and a deep sense of pride in their accomplishments.

The event would not have been complete without the support of a lively and proud audience. Parents, teachers, and fellow students filled the venue with excitement. Beaming parents captured memories with their cameras while cheering on their children, and classmates applauded loudly, turning the space into one of celebration and connection.

Talented singers, graceful dancers, confident speakers, and innovative creators all gave their best for this final performance of the school year. From heart-stirring solo ballads to high-energy group dances, every act was filled with passion and enthusiasm. Behind the scenes were hours of rehearsals, teamwork, and determination—all culminating in moments that lit up the stage.



Vince Tanciano and Jamilla Fideles from Grade 12 - AHA Enthralling the audience with a vibrant display of Filipino tradition and artistic performance.



Kyrie Morada and Ethan Borromeo together with the rest of the Drum and Lyre Club performing beats with their lyre xylophone



Sean Octubre opening the event with his performance



Eril Arbis leading the majorettes in their opening performance

Volume XXXVI, Issue No. 2 (January - May 2025)
IPSA Gazette
THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL PHILIPPINE SCHOOL IN AL KHOBAR

Showcasing Brilliance: IPSA's Culminating Activity 2025



Ludy Arbis captivates the crowd as she opens Day 2 with a performance.



From Left to Right: Precious Manipon, Ayesha Placido, Yonah Agagon, Khaimira Castro, and Rubee Anne Siron light up the stage with laughter and energy in a traditional Filipino dance.



Cindy Bugagon beaming with pride as she performs a traditional dance called Binasuan.



Euan Sean sings mid-performance, engaging the audience with his live number.



From Left to Right: Margaux Surreda, Cayleigh Munar, and Therese Julaton from dance troup elementary performing Ba Ingles another traditional Filipino Dance



Jannah Labrador, Regeena Suede, – Ayesha Castillo, and Caitlin Casenas energize the stage with a hip-hop number.



Ashleen Fronda of the Rondalla Club plays bass guitar during a traditional performance



Aislinn Nolasco performs a vocal piece during the culminating program.



Aliah Araola leads a ribbon dance routine with fellow performers.

Volume Volume XXXVI, Issue No. 2 (January - May 2025)

IPSA Gazette

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL PHILIPPINE SCHOOL IN AL KHOBAR

UNPACKING THE LAYERS OF ANG HULING EL BIMBO: *A Musical Theatre Analysis*

by: Kristen Maranao



Ang Huling El Bimbo is more than just a nostalgic tribute to the Eraserheads' timeless music; it is a powerful theatrical production that explores memory, friendship, trauma, and redemption. This musical has captured the hearts of audiences and established itself as a milestone in modern Philippine theater. The story follows the journey of four college friends—Hector, Emman, Anthony, and their childhood companion, Joy. It begins in the present, as the friends are summoned to a police station where they learn of Joy's tragic fate. From there, the musical jumps back and forth in time, revealing the characters' pasts and how their once-promising friendships unraveled. As the story unfolds, the darkness lurking in their past is revealed.

The use of Eraserheads' songs such as "Ligaya," "With a Smile," "Alapaap," and "Pare Ko" is nothing short of genius. Each track was perfectly woven into the plot, with each one giving an emotional weight to the lyrics. The choreography and stage direction also elevated the production. Dance is used not just for entertainment, but as a form of expression joyous, chaotic, and heartbreaking all at once. The cast exceptionally delivered emotionally raw performances, portraying perfect contrast between their time when they were at college, enjoying their youth and their time as adults with a built career and a family. What struck me the most was Joy's story. She was a kind-hearted girl, full of dreams, and was always smiling despite her hardships. But the world was not kind to her; she was raped and silenced while the people she once called friends turned away, paralyzed by fear, guilt, and helplessness. It left me speechless, because I realized how often stories like Joy's happen in real life. That's what made Ang Huling El Bimbo so powerful, it didn't sugarcoat the harsh realities of life in the Philippines. It portrayed poverty, abuse, broken dreams, and the silence that enables injustice, but it also showed love, hope, and the difficult road to forgiveness. This musical didn't just entertain me, it changed me. It showed me the beauty and pain of Filipino life, the strength of women like Joy, and the importance of confronting the past. With its unforgettable music, layered storytelling, and bold production, the musical leaves a lasting impact, one that lingers long after the final bow.

"Porcelain Mornings"

by: Rana Cossette C. Patricio

The curtains sway in the morning breeze, soft as sighs, but she doesn't move. Elbows resting on cool marble, chin in hand, she watches clouds drift like distant thoughts—graceful, untouchable.

Eighteen. She feels caught between youth and something else. The world hums with opportunity, yet she aches with a still, persistent longing. Not sadness. Not quite. Just an elegant ache behind her ribs, like a second heartbeat she can't explain.

She longs for mornings that don't ask questions. For a mind that doesn't chase quiet. For peace that doesn't feel so far off. She wants to stop measuring herself in almosts—almost content, almost enough, almost there.

She drinks chamomile tea, which she doesn't enjoy, hoping calm will steep into her bones. She lights candles in the afternoon, and slips into satin robes, mimicking the motions of a woman who feels whole. But beneath the lavender smoke and soft-spoken routines, there is still a girl—arms outstretched toward something invisible, fingertips brushing only air.

Sometimes the longing hums like a string quartet. Other times, it lodges in her throat behind a practiced "I'm fine." She's learning that contentment isn't a destination but a brief hush between storms—a stillness so soft, it almost escapes notice.

So she sits by the window, letting the longing linger. Not fighting it. Not feeding it. Just folding it into the rhythm of her morning, like porcelain—fragile, poised, and quietly waiting for the sun to settle on her skin.



Words That Grow, Words That Wound

by: Jia Carl M. Dimasangal



Words are seeds that hearts will sow,
They take deep roots and grow, and grow.
A whispered hope, a kind refrain,
Can lift a soul from grief and pain.

But sharpened tongues, like blades, can slice,
Leave wounds unseen yet paid in strife

A careless phrase, a thoughtless sound,
Can tear what trust had built so strong.

For words can raise a palace high,
Or shatter worlds with just one sigh.
They forge the chains or set on free
The choice is yours, so speak with care.

So let your voice be light, be true,
A balm for those worn down and blue.
For once they're flung, they cannot fade
Words build or break the worlds we've made.

Volume XXXVI, Issue No. 2 (January - May 2025)
IPSA Gazette
THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL PHILIPPINE SCHOOL IN AL KHOBAR

Where You Left Me

by: Dexie Nette M. Degay

You stood before me again today.
Older.
But not unfamiliar.

The light hit your face
just like it used to-
the same angle,
the same softness,
only now
your eyes have stories
you never said out loud.

I don't speak.
I only reflect.
That was always our quiet agreement.

But I remember.

The masks of courage you wore,
the tears you wiped away too quickly.
The dance routines, the nervous pacing,
the moments when you looked at yourself
and asked silently, "Who am I turning into?"

You never spoke the answers,
but I saw the shifts–
the days when you started hiding less,
even if you still didn't show everything.

I don't hold judgement.
I don't hold pain.
Just light,
and shadow,
and every flicker of truth
you once tried to fold away.

Now, you're here.
A teenager standing where a child once played.
You pause.
You breathe.
You see yourself.

Not just the surface.
Something deeper.
Like maybe…
you're learning to meet your own gaze with gentleness.

And though I still show
only what's in front of me,
I know–

What's behind you matters too.

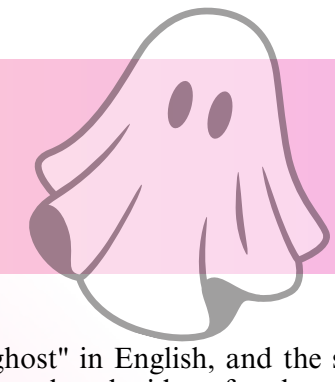
Every emotion was real.
Every struggle had weight.
Mental health is not a weakness.
And healing,
even when quiet,
leaves light behind.

So go–
not because you're done,
but because you've grown.

You never needed me to tell you that.
You just needed to see it for yourself.

Minumulto na 'ko ng damdamin ko

by: Jia Carl Dimasangal



"Multo" is a Tagalog song by the band Cup of Joe. The word "Multo" translates to "ghost" in English, and the song delves into themes of lingering memories, lost love, and emotional hauntings. While the title evokes the idea of a ghost, the song is not just about a past romance; it's a deep reflection on the shadows of past mistakes, faded friendships, and the emotional baggage we carry, even as we strive to move forward.

"Binaon naman na ang lahat
Tinakpan naman na 'king sugat
Ngunit ba't ba andito pa rin?"
(I've buried everything already
I've covered my wounds
So why is it still here?)

This part of the song captures the frustration of trying—and failing—to escape the past. No matter how much we try to suppress old regrets, forgotten dreams, or relationships that have faded, they resurface like ghosts, refusing to stay buried.

"Hindi na makalaya
Dinadalaw mo 'ko bawat gabi
Wala mang nakikita
Haplos mo'y ramdam pa rin sa dilim"
(I can't escape anymore
You visit me every night
Even though I can't see you
I still feel your touch in the dark)

This part of the song further emphasizes this haunting. The "ghost" here isn't necessarily a person—it could be an old version of ourselves, a past mistake, or a friendship that dissolved without closure. The imagery of an invisible yet palpable presence suggests that some emotional scars remain long after the events that caused them.

"Minumulto na 'ko ng damdamin ko"
(My own emotions are haunting me)

The most striking part is the chorus which reveals that the real ghost isn't an external force but the unresolved feelings we carry within. This introspective turn makes the song even more powerful—it's not just about missing someone else, but about confronting the parts of ourselves we've tried to forget. "Multo" masterfully captures the bittersweet truth that our past never truly leaves us. Whether it's love, regret, or forgotten dreams, these ghosts linger in the corners of our minds, reminding us of who we were—and perhaps, who we still could be. Cup of Joe doesn't just give us a song about heartbreak; they give us a mirror to our own lingering ghosts, making "Multo" a hauntingly beautiful anthem for anyone who has ever struggled to let go.



A Requiem for Seven-Year-Olds Throughout History

by: Faith Jamilla F. Alpuente

You are seven, feet cradled by the soil,
Lungs blooming with the flowing azure air
That nourished your fathers and forefathers—
The land is free, and you are seven.

You are seven, your world all swallowed up
By looming ships that lacerated seas,
Dismembered villages, and set fire
To a people's hopes and dreams and wishes.

You are seven, a rosary in hand,
Throat raw from screaming through the laboring;
The sacred beads smite your calloused fingers—
White-hot, merciless, and indifferent.

You are seven, eyes squinting against sights:
The grime of struggle under fingernails,
The blood of fighters drenching stolen earth,
And the last gasp of air between stained lips.

You are seven, feet roughened by rubble,
Lungs thronging with the foreigner-owned air
That failed to keep its mother tongue alive—
The land is free, and you are seven.

MADE OF WHAT I MADE

by: Rana Patricio

I dipped my hands in colorless dreams,
flicked stardust on blank, breathless scenes.
Each stroke, a whisper from some place deep—
a truth too raw, too wide to keep.

The paint bled red, then violet-blue,
a silent echo of things I knew.
I thought I built a world apart,
but every shape… was shaped by heart.

I carved in silence, danced with clay,
lost track of night, mistook it for day.
And when the sculpture cracked its smile,
it wore my grief—my grace, my style.

The brush began to paint alone,
my thoughts not mine, my skin not bone.
A mirror formed in every part—
the artist drowned inside the art.

Canvas wept with my regrets,
chalk traced paths I can't forget.
Ink knew secrets I never said,
sculpted ghosts I thought were dead.

Until the day I saw it clear:
I was the muse I chased for years.
The lines, the light, the shadowed hue
—
were just reflections, bleeding through.

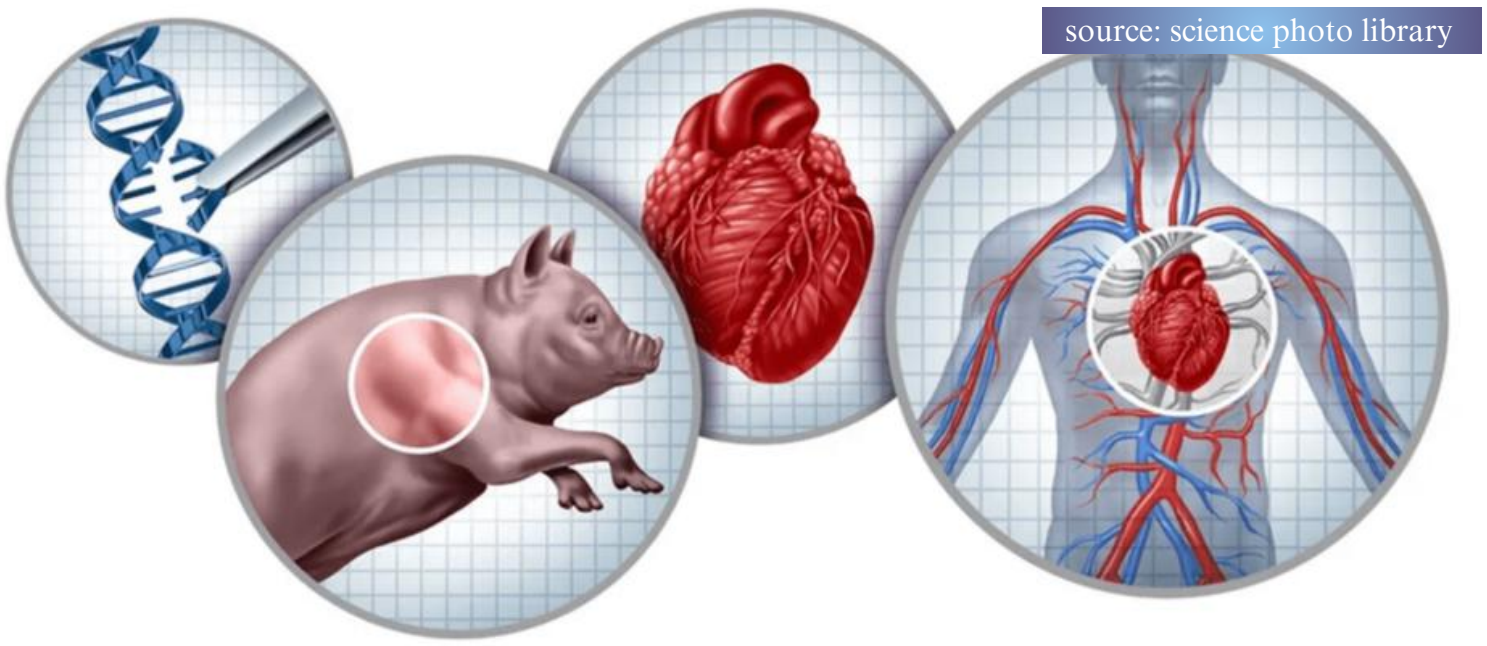
Not maker now, nor made by hand—
but something more I understand:
The art is me, as I am it,
in every flaw, in every split.

So when they ask, "What did you make?"
I smile and let the silence shake.
Because the masterpiece I sought to start…
was always me, becoming art.

Volume XXXVI, Issue No. 2 (January - May 2025)
IPSA Gazette
THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL PHILIPPINE SCHOOL IN AL KHOBAR

Pig Organs, Human Lives: The Future of Xenotransplantation

by: Sebastian E. Patiu



source: science photo library

The global shortage of viable human organs for transplantation continues to present a significant public health challenge. Thousands of patients worldwide die each year while awaiting suitable donor organs. Most never get the call that could save their lives. The World Health Organization estimates that the world's need for organ transplants is many times greater than its supply, with a person dying every ten minutes while searching for a matching donor. Traditional alternatives, such as living or cadaver donors, are simply not enough.

One emerging field that seeks to address this issue is xenotransplantation, the transplantation of living cells, tissues, or organs from one species into another. In particular, pig organs have become a primary focus due to their anatomical and physiological similarities to those of humans. (U.S. Food and Drug Administration, n.d.).

In 2022, this technology made a historic step. A pig heart that was genetically engineered was transplanted into a 57-year-old man with end-stage heart failure. Although he died two months later, the operation marked the first time that a human lived with a pig heart pumping inside his chest, a development that broke previous barriers and introduced new ones.

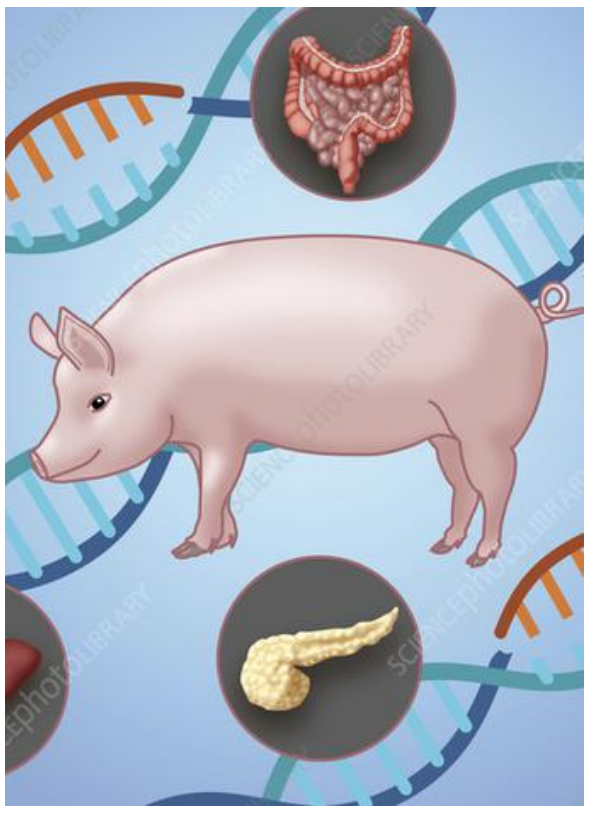
However, despite its promise, xenotransplantation remains contentious. It raises fundamental ethical, scientific, and philosophical questions. Should creatures be bred to be killed for the sake of preserving human lives? How can we guarantee that animal-to-human organ transplants will not transmit new diseases? Can we scale such a solution responsibly?

Animal rights groups argue that breeding pigs for their organs commercializes life in a disturbing and dehumanizing manner. Scientists counter that using animals in medicine, when done ethically and humanely, is a necessary cost in the effort to save human lives. The debate, by all appearances, is far from over and will likely evolve in step with scientific progress.

Governments around the world are proceeding with caution. Strict regulations on gene editing, animal welfare, and patient monitoring are being established and continuously revised to manage the emergence of this new medical frontier. Transparency, accountability, and respect for both human and animal dignity will be essential foundations for building and maintaining public trust.

The consequences of successful xenotransplantation are profound. If perfected, this science could effectively end the global shortage of donor organs. Patients who once faced years of uncertainty might receive life-saving organs in time. Hospitals could respond more effectively to emergencies. Healthcare systems might reduce costs related to chronic conditions caused by organ failure.

In an increasingly science-driven world where once-unthinkable breakthroughs are becoming routine, the boundary between what is natural and what is possible grows ever thinner. One day, perhaps sooner than we think, the phrase “pig-to-human transplant” may be spoken in hospital corridors as routinely as “blood transfusion.” When that day comes, countless human lives, once thought unreachable, may be saved by the heart of a pig.





source: medium.com

Lights Out: The Science of Sleep and Why Teens Need More of It

by: Kristen Maranao

Have you ever pulled an all-nighter for school, stayed up chatting with friends, or scrolled through your phone until 2 a.m.—only to regret it the next morning? You're not alone. As students, we often sacrifice sleep to keep up with school, social life, and personal time. But science shows that this habit might be hurting us more than we think.

According to the National Sleep Foundation, teens need 8 to 10 hours of sleep each night. But most of us barely hit 6 or 7. This isn’t just about feeling tired. Sleep helps our brains store information, manage emotions, and even fight off sickness. During sleep, the body repairs itself, and the brain strengthens memories. Without enough of it, we struggle to focus, feel moody, and become more vulnerable to getting sick.



What’s worse, it’s not entirely our fault. Studies show that during adolescence, our body clock shifts. Melatonin, the hormone that makes us sleepy, is released later at night. That’s why it’s harder for teens to fall asleep early—even if we’re already exhausted. The American Academy of Sleep Medicine (2016) says this shift is natural, but it clashes with early school start times, making it difficult for teens to get enough rest during weekdays.

Lack of sleep doesn’t just make us yawn in class. It affects our performance. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that students who sleep more tend to have better grades. It also links sleep deprivation to higher stress, poor mental health, and even accidents due to drowsiness.

So what can we do? Even with school and responsibilities, we have to start treating sleep as a priority, not a bonus. Avoiding screens before bed, managing our time wisely, and sticking to a regular sleep schedule can help. It's not easy, but it’s worth it.

Sleep isn't a waste of time. It’s one of the best things we can do for our brain, body, and mood. So tonight, instead of reaching for your phone at midnight, maybe it’s time to switch off the lights—for real.

Volume XXXVI, Issue No. 2 (January - May 2025)
IPSA Gazette
THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL PHILIPPINE SCHOOL IN AL KHOBAR

Editors: Sebastian E. Patiu & Rubee Anne D. Siron

Understanding the Root of SADness

by: Alexus Mathew P. Arrieta



source: adaa.org

"Have you ever felt that familiar wave of sadness creeping in — low energy, a gloomy mood, and trouble focusing?"What's even more frustrating is not being able to identify the reason behind it whenever it strikes year after year. Some actually consider these as random laziness episodes but in reality this unique behavioral shift might be a precursor to a phenomenon called Seasonal Affective Disorder also known as SAD.

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders identified SAD as a major depressive disorder with a seasonal pattern. It has two types, namely winter SAD and summer SAD. Experts are still exploring the exact causes of Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). Still, clinical psychologist Perry Adler shared that one prominent theory links it to disruptions in the body's internal clock. According to Adler, melatonin, the hormone responsible for sleep, typically decreases with morning light to help us wake up. However, during winter, longer nights and reduced sunlight cause melatonin to linger in the body, leading to increased drowsiness and fatigue.

On the other hand, individuals affected by summer-pattern Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) may produce less melatonin, as extended daylight hours, shorter nights, and increased temperatures can disrupt sleep cycles and trigger depressive symptoms. According to the American Medical Association (AMA) SAD usually has a seasonal cycle for around four to five months duration with accompanying mood swings that often appears during the shorter periods of autumn and winter.

Winter-pattern SAD is often associated with excessive sleeping, increased appetite, and social withdrawal. On the other hand, reknown psychiatrist Dr. Adrian Ambrose noted that summer-pattern SAD as a more serious type of depresssive form characterized by increased anxiety, irritability, trouble sleeping, and a diminished appetite that can lead to weight loss. Winter-pattern Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is often managed with light therapy and vitamin D supplementation, while psychotherapy and antidepressants are widely used for both seasonal variations. Although there are no treatments designed specifically for summer-pattern SAD, managing symptoms by staying cool such as using air conditioning or taking cold showers may offer relief.

Although the Philippines doesn't experience winter, the rainy season and "ber-months" can trigger symptoms similar to winter-pattern Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) due to reduced sunlight, persistent rain, and overcast skies. Conversely, tropical climates like the Philippines may also face the less-recognized summer-pattern SAD, which stems from high temperatures, humidity, and allergens such as pollen. Rising global temperatures have become a growing concern for Filipinos' mental health. PAGASA has warned that the heat index in the country could reach 42°C to 51°C level categorized as "extremely dangerous." Maria Teresa Gustilo-Villasor, MD, a Clinical Psychologist at Makati Medical Center (MakatiMed), suggested a possible biological connection between temperature regulation and emotional well-being.

Awareness is key to addressing SAD. Recognizing the condition allows individuals to better understand and manage their emotional health. Moreover, it's essential to show compassion toward those dealing with mental illnesses. As Seasonal Affective Disorder argues, mental health issues have causes and origins, and one cannot hold nature responsible for its effects on its people.

A Pint and a Chat: ChatGPT's Energy Consumption

by: Valerie Avrill M. Cariaga

You may be hungry for knowledge, but your chatbot is thirsty for the world's water supplies. According to some claims, ChatGPT's massive computer clusters require four times as much water to provide answers as previously believed. According to experts from the University of California, Riverside, using the chatbot for ten to fifty queries uses roughly two liters of water.

The researchers have now found that their preprint study, published last year, underestimated the issue by estimating that one 500ml bottle was used for this volume of queries. Water is used in chip manufacturing, power generation, and cooling by tech companies creating powerful artificial intelligence.According to Riverside electrical and computer engineering professor Shaolei Ren, the initial water footprint estimate was derived from a 2020 figure from OpenAI, the company that created ChatGPT. According to new data published in a Microsoft paper in September, "GPT-3's energy consumption will be at least four times higher than the amount we used." This implies a four-fold increase in the water footprint.

Since computers are essentially radiators that convert the majority of their energy into heat, data centers have always required cooling. On the other hand, AI-built servers process massive volumes of data and have higher cooling requirements and power densities. Nvidia's most recent AI server racks are producing 120kW of power. The heat is unbearably high. According to David Craig, CEO of Iceotope, a British company that assists in cooling data centers, "it's human-meltingly hot."

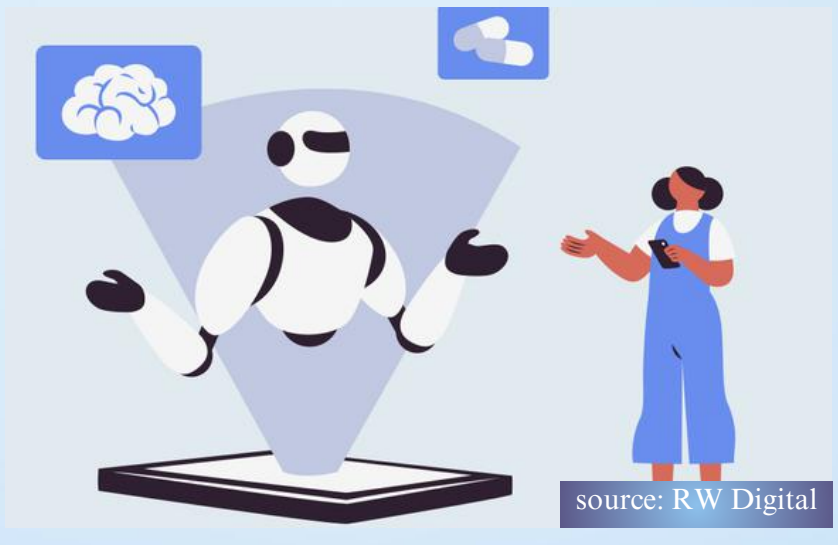
According to him, 1kW is comparable to an outdated three-bar heater. It is 100 to 120 percent of your grandmother's fire. within a square meter. It is one meter square and two meters tall. It's really hot. "And in a data center, there are thousands of them," Craig continued. Water is lost in many data centers' water-based cooling systems, which use towers to evaporate heat. This system is similar to a massive perspiration system. Additionally, it must be of drinking quality because contaminants can harm servers. With over 5,000 data centers, the US has more data centers than any other country in the world, while the UK has roughly 600. According to estimates from the water industry, new data centers constructed in Britain over the next five years may need as much water as a city the size of Liverpool. According to the most recent Big Tech sustainability reports, Google (17%), Microsoft (22.5%), and Meta (17%) have all seen double-digit increases in their water usage.

Google stated that the growth of AI services and products is increasing the workloads in data centers and the amount of water needed to effectively cool them. Amazon has not disclosed its overall water usage statistics because it considers them to be inaccurate. Ren stated that Amazon was "very secretive" in comparison to other tech companies and that "I think it probably consumes more water than Microsoft."

These businesses all have plans to restore water to the environment through projects that improve river flow, collect rainfall, replenish aquifers, and alter dams. By 2030, they all aim to be "water positive," meaning they return more water than they use. However, where is the water being replaced? It is frequently not in the same location where it was removed, which may be in "water stress" areas. According to Microsoft, 41 percent of the 7,844 ML it used, or 3,100 Olympic-sized swimming pools, were located in water-stressed areas.

There has been opposition as American tech firms have begun to open data centers abroad. There is currently a conflict in Santiago, Chile, between the government's aim to use the centers to boost economic growth and the residents' worries about the effects on the environment.

A representative for OpenAI stated: "We are always trying to increase efficiency because AI can be energy-intensive. We carefully evaluate how to best utilize our computing resources and assist our partners in achieving their sustainability objectives.



source: RW Digital

Volume XXXVI, Issue No. 2 (January - May 2025)
IPSA Gazette
THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL PHILIPPINE SCHOOL IN AL KHOBAR

Preschool shows off World of Dance

by: Shaine Leanne Bachiller

Preschool Department proudly hosted World of Dance, a culminating activity that celebrated the rich cultures and traditions of various countries through the expressive movements of its youngest learners. The event served as a testament to the school's commitment to fostering global citizenship from an early age, using the universal language of dance to connect and inspire.

Held at the IPSA Multi-Purpose Hall, the celebration began with an atmosphere of excitement and anticipation. Preschool students and teachers opened the program with an invocation and the singing of the national anthem, setting a tone of unity and celebration.

Vice Principal Gerardo L. Barrot welcomed the audience with heartfelt remarks, paving the way for a cultural showcase that brought the world to the stage. Each kindergarten class represented a different country through vibrant and thoughtfully choreographed dance performances.

Kinder 1 – Joy delighted the audience with a tropical Hawaiian dance, Kinder 2 – Charity energized the crowd with lively Brazilian moves, Kinder 2 – Love presented an elegant traditional Japanese dance.

The cultural journey continued with equally dynamic and engaging presentations: Kinder 3 – Faith embraced the global K-pop phenomenon with a spirited Korean performance, Kinder 3 – Hope captivated with a powerful and rhythmic African dance, Kinder 3 – Peace brought the program to a dazzling close with a colorful Bollywood-inspired number from India, featuring expressive choreography, festive music, and vibrant costumes that reflected the richness of Indian culture.



Kinder 2 - Charity with their traditional Brazilian costumes



Kinder 3 - Faith with their traditional Korean costumes



Kinder 3 - Hope with their traditional Mexican costumes

Each performance celebrated cultural diversity and showcased the young learners' confidence, creativity, and coordination on stage—earning enthusiastic applause from the audience.

To honor their efforts, all student performers received certificates of participation, awarded by School Principal Ricky C. Enriquez, Vice Principal Gerardo L. Barrot, Preschool Academic Supervisor Annelyn G. Mallare, and SCA Head Michael C. Adducul.

The program concluded with closing remarks and acknowledgments, ending on a high note of pride and unity.

The World of Dance left a lasting impression on everyone present. More than just a performance, the event was a meaningful celebration of diversity, creativity, and cultural appreciation—reminding all that dance truly transcends language and connects hearts across the world.

Mrs. Annelyn Mallare, Preschool Academic Supervisor, thanked parents and teachers for their assistance, without which this event would not have been successful.



Kinder 1 - Joy with their traditional Hawaiian costumes

Volume XXXVI, Issue No. 2 (January - May 2025)
IPSA Gazette
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Yugto Grabs Championship Trophy in Battle of the Bands 2025

by: Jaemee Valerie M. Razon

The IPSA Supreme Student Government successfully staged the highly anticipated Battle of the Bands on February 20, 2025, where six talented bands competed for the championship title. Emerging victorious was *Yugto*, who impressed the judges and the crowd with their heartfelt performances of Rob Deniel's "*Miss Miss*" *and Magnus Haven's* "*Imahe.*"

Yugto's lineup featured Nikki Ogot on vocals, Mikael Balag on bass, Joseph Cabrera as lead guitarist, Reuben Pasaporte on rhythm guitar, Chana Naz on piano, and Gabriel Angelo Naz on drums. Their synergy and musical precision captured the spirit of the competition, earning them the title of Battle of the Bands Champion for School Year 2024–2025.

Drummer Gabriel Naz, speaking on behalf of the band, shared insights into their preparation: *"The process of preparing for our performance took a lot of time. Planning started early, especially when it came to choosing the right songs. Overall, it was all about practice."*

Naz also expressed how the event's atmosphere pushed the to give their best. *"With the constant cheers, it was what enabled us to do our absolute best in delivering our music. It felt like our dedication paid off in the end."*



SSG Officers Davynne Diones and Aljun Nolasco together with Yugto members, Joseph, Cabrera, Reuben Pasaporte, Mikael Balag, Nikki Ogot, Chana Naz , and Gabriel Naz together with Ma'am Nancy Barrot and Sir Ricky Enriquez as they receive their championship title.

While Yugto claimed the top spot, other bands also delivered memorable performances and were recognized for their talent:

- 7th Harmony was named 1st Runner-Up, performing stirring renditions of "Akin Ka Na Lang" and "Heart Attack."
- Haraya took 2nd Runner-Up with a powerful combination of "Iris" and "Bring Me to Life."

The event was a celebration of musical talent, passion, and school spirit. With an energetic audience and strong performances from all participating bands—Muskillah, Red Swans, and Bella Luna included—the night was truly one to remember.

As the crowd cheered and the stage lights dimmed, Battle of the Bands 2025 ended not just with winners, but with a renewed appreciation for the power of music in bringing the IPSA community together.

Youth Leaders culminate in CLT Grand Finale

by: Ranee Ramos







YL Marriam T. Argarin won First Place; YL Johann Christian P. Laxa got the First-Runner Up; and YL K O. Gorero ranked 4th Runner-Up in Batch 1 Character Portrayal Contest held Feb. 7.

The Communication and Leadership Training (CLT) program for School Year 2024–2025 concluded with two culminating events that celebrated the transformation and achievements of IPSA's budding communicators. Held under the theme "Future Leaders, Present Communicators," the grand finales were staged at the Multi-Purpose Hall, with Batch 1 (Grades 7–8) competing on February 7 and Batch 2 (Grades 9–12) on February 27.

Each batch showcased the students' skills across multiple communication disciplines: Prepared Speech, Table Topics, Debate, and Character Portrayal.

The CLT events were judged by esteemed professionals across both batches.

Batch 1 was evaluated by TM Ricardo J. Chuidian Jr., DTM Gerardo D. Flores, and Ms. Kimberly C. Buella, while Batch 2 was overseen by DTM Omer Farroq Malik, Mr. Alicarl L. Apolinaria, and Ms. Kristina Nicole D. Imperial.

Among the winners in Table Topics was Abbey Ojascastro, who reflected on her experience:

"My experience during the grand finale was like a rollercoaster ride. It wasn't perfect, but I still enjoyed it."

Honrave Kalel Vega, a Debate participant, emphasized the program's impact:

"In CLT, our English teachers have given us frameworks to master communication disciplines—Prepared Speech, Table Topics, Debating, and Character Portrayal. They've provided the structure—all designed for one purpose: to help students grow confident through public speaking."

According to the CLT's Team Captain, Mrs. Victoria S. Guinto, *"IPSA has been offering this six-session training program for free in order to develop students' public speaking and leadership skills. For almost 17 years, IPSA is committed in its mission to produce globally competitive graduates."*

Both batches were also led by the members of Executive Committee who helped the English teachers/moderators in the conduct of the said training.

CLT President, YL Loraine Sofia T. Calinisan, monitored the preparation, opened and closed the meeting with her welcome and closing messages; Vice President-Education, YL Julia C. Tambauan, prepared the agenda, Vice President- Membership, YL Esther Joy R. Valeros took charge of the speaker's assignment; VP Public Relations, YL Abbey N. Ojascastro prepared all the digital poster for sharing. CLT Secretary, YL Kris Laurenz N. Abarquez took charged in writing and reading all the minutes of the meeting and Sergeant-At-Arms, YL Johann Christian P. Laxa opened the meeting by hitting the gavel twice as a sign of silence and order.

Aside from Guinto, she was also accompanied by High School English teachers Mrs. Mary Jane C. Soriano, Ms. Cheena A. Realingo, and Mr. Elias T. Taragua.

Mr. Rowel O. Arevalo, Mr. Darwin S. Majid and with the assistance of Mr. Rodelio Tamayo took charged in the technical support and documentation of the said training.

Volume XXXVI, Issue No. 2 (January - May 2025)
IPSA Gazette
THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL PHILIPPINE SCHOOL IN AL KHOBAR

Juniors and Seniors Prom 2025

Sonsona, Angeles crowned Prom Queen & King

by: Rjae Caparanga and Shaine Bachillier

Nimue Mina Angeles and Ahron Sonsona, both Grade 12 students, were crowned Prom Queen and King during the High School Promenade Batch 2025, held in Holiday Inn Hotel, February 14.

Nimue expressed how shocked she was for the unexpected results but later showed gratitude for the title she was given. *"I know that some people were surprised when I was chosen as prom queen, but I'm grateful that the judges saw something in me and I congratulate this year's chosen winners"*. She further hopes that the next batch would experience the same fun seniors experienced.

Other winners such as; Ayesha Cayenne Placido won Ms. Senior, while Mohammad Umda awarded Mr. Senior.

On the other hand, Cindy Bugagon and Zackery Quario, both Grade 10 students, were awarded Mr. and Ms. Junior, respectively.

The evening's program honored cherished traditions, beginning with the turn over of the Seal—a symbolic passing of the school seal from seniors to juniors.

This was followed by the Book of Wisdom ceremony, representing the transfer of knowledge, and the Lighting of Candles, where students formed a 'JS' formation.

The Exchange of Mementos and Chain of Friendship segments deepened bonds between seniors and juniors, while juniors shared prophetic visions of their seniors' futures.

The ceremony culminated in the Raising of the Toast, offering a reflective moment to celebrate their shared journey.

One of the highlights of the event was the batch dances where Grade 10 and Grade 12 displayed outstanding performances.

Grade 10 performed a dance routine centered on themes of vitality and youthfulness, incorporating songs like "Starships" by Nicki Minaj and "The Very First Night" by Taylor Swift.

Grade 12 students demonstrated individuality in their dances by exchanging partners during the song.

Together with the hype of the audience, both batches unveiled their true selves in the spotlight.

By the end of the night, everyone had realized that prom is more than simply costumes and slow dances; it's also about having fun. The ceremony also recognized outstanding dancers from each set, including Julia Pascual and John Andrei Nagar in Set One and Jamilla Nicole Fideles and her partner Micael Ver Rendon in Set Two.

Along with Ezekiel Josh Tolosa, his partner, and Regeena Rinnah Suede for set three, and finally Lance Gabriel Yamat and Riona Jennica Agagon for set four. All winning partners were given Best Dancing trophies for their performances. Similarly, awards for Junior and Senior Trendsetters were presented:

Female Senior Trendsetters included Shaine Leanne Bachiller, Rjae Caparanga, Riona Jennica Agagon, Rubee Anne Siron, Alzaira Vheralaine Saulog, Jia Carl Dimasangal, Khaimira Castro, Lorraine Sofia Calinisan, Kristine Tambaun, and Meri Sophia Piguing.



From L to R: Mr. and Ms. Senior, Mohammad Umda and Ayesha Placido, Prom King and Queen, Ahron Sonson and Nimue Mina Angeles, and Mr. and Ms. Junior, Zackery Quario and Cindy Bugagon after receiving their respective Prom titles.



From L to R: Esther Valeros, Rafael Osias, Avril Chaves, and Sebastian Patiu walk in formation before the program proper of Juniors and Seniors Promenade.



Angel Chloe Dayandante and Julienne Maguliano leading the rest of the girls from Grade 10 as they perform their batch dance.



Davynne Diones and Alexus Arrieta join fellow juniors and seniors on the dance floor during a formal dance number.

Volume XXXVI, Issue No. 2 (January - May 2025)
IPSA Gazette
THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL PHILIPPINE SCHOOL IN AL KHOBAR

NEWS

Shaine Leanne Bachiller & Daniel Blake Abante
News Editor



L to R: Rjae Caparanga, Shaine Leanne Bachiller, Jia Carl Dimasangal, Alzaira Vheralaine Saulog, Loraine Sofia Calinisan, Riona Jennica Agagon, Khaimira Castro, Kristine Tambaun, Meri Sophia Piguing and Rubee Anne Siron as they receive their trophies as Female Senior Trendsetters.



L to R: Alexus Arrieta, Laurence Asica, Gerald Payumo, Edilberto Gutierrez, Sebastian Patiu, Kody Maderazo, Arshan Abdurahman, Ramil Angadol, Charles Name, and Josiah Santos after receiving their trophies as Male Senior Trendsetters.



Davynne Diones, Shaun Satsatin, Kristen Maranao, Garij Antonio and Margaret Mallare during the parade of the lighting of the candles.

Male Senior Trendsetters include Alexus Mathew Arrieta, Laurence Nathaniel Asica, Gerald Jhune Payumo, Edilberto Gutierrez, Sebastian Patiu, Kody Maderazo, Arshan Abdurahman, Ramil Angadol, Charles Name, and Josiah Santos.

Continuing the history, the Junior Trendsetters female category includes Davynne Archilyn Diones, Kassandra Anika Maderazo, Xyrelle Denise Tero, Joanna Marie Ibanez, Asma Mabol, Kyle Celyrose Andal, Angel Jelyn Camagong, Angel Chloe Dayandante, Faith Angela Libiternos, Francine Name.

Male Junior Trendsetters include Joakin Angelo Dulo, Emanuel Fayluga, Lancelot Alistair Surreda, Jan Benedict Resurreccion, Lucas Nathan Casumbal, Dwayne Justin Valencia, Michael Aaron Evangelista, Francis Carl Recto, Jean Xyrem Reyes, and Kurt Izeiah Fernando.

Michael Aaron Evangelista and Angel Faith A. Tongol received the Early Bird award for Junior High School, while John Sherwin and Moira Kym Sanchez received it for Senior High School.

Following that, Diezel V. Leprozo and Cindy A. Bugagon were crowned Mr. and Ms. Congeniality in the Junior High, while Rayyan Arshan E. Abdurahman and Loraine Sofia T. Calinisan were awarded from the Seniors.

Meanwhile, Lancelot Alistair Surreda and Harry G. Ilagan were given with the Most Behaved Award, which recognizes student's excellent good conduct.

This event is regarded as more than just a dance; it is a celebration of friendship and the passing on of legacy.



L to R: Female Trendsetter Awardees from the Juniors: Davynne Diones, Anika Maderazo, Xyrelle Tero, Joanna Ibanez, Asma Mabol, Kyle Andal, Angel Camagong, Angel Chloe Dayandante, Faith Libeternos, and Francine Name.



Prom King Ahron Sonsona and Prom Queen Nimue Angeles beam as they are crowned at JS Prom 2025.



L to R: Jan Benedict Resurrection, Lancelot Surreda, Emanuel Fayluga, Lucas Casumbal, Dwayne Valencia, Michael Evangelista, Francis Recto, Joakin Dulo, Xyrem Reyes, and Kurt Fernando awarded as Junior trendsetters of the night.

Volume XXXVI, Issue No. 2 (January - May 2025)

IPSA Gazette

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL PHILIPPINE SCHOOL IN AL KHOBAR



IPSA small group participants at the start of their performance, instantly captivating the audience.



Jamilla Fideles, Sir Leo Parco, the group's trainer, Cindy Bugagon, Yonah Agagon, and Ramil Angadol receiving their Champion trophy during the awarding ceremony of the 9th PISAM.

Grace in Motion: IPSA Dancers Triumph at PISAM

by: Ma. Jamella O. Dulay

Our small group—or rather, our strong group—proudly represented our school and brought home one of our greatest victories: winning the championship in the Small Group Dance Competition category at PISAM. This achievement was a true reflection of IPSANs' passion, dedication, and unwavering commitment in everything we do.

"From the very beginning of our daily training, we sacrificed our time—even during holidays—just to perfect our routine," shared Jamilla Fideles, the group's dance master and president of IPSA's dance troupe. *"We often hear comments like, 'It's just dancing; it's not that hard.' But they don't know the reality behind every drop of sweat, every aching muscle, and the sleepless nights. Being a dancer takes more than making a good impression—it demands full devotion."*

One of the team's greatest challenges was maintaining perfect synchronization, especially while battling nerves from the start of training to the final performance day. They overcame this by practicing tirelessly every morning and night, refining every step, and executing each movement with precision. More than anything, they supported one another like family. When someone felt down, the group lifted spirits with jokes and laughter, keeping the atmosphere light yet united. Their daily training was always filled with harmony and teamwork—qualities that strengthened them day by day and ultimately led them to triumph.

According to Sebastian Dela Cruz, one of the team's dance masters, the most valuable lesson he learned throughout their journey was *"to just be myself and express who I am."* This powerful insight not only boosted his confidence, but also helped him discover his unique color and identity as a dancer.

He once struggled with self-doubt and feelings of inadequacy, but with the encouragement of his fellow dancers and the constant support of their moderator, Sir Leo, he slowly recognized his talent for expressing music through movement. Typical practice sessions were serious and focused, but they often turned lighthearted thanks to the seniors' fun, extroverted, and quirky personalities. Even as the pressure mounted during the PISAM season, their energy helped keep everyone's spirits high.

Special thanks must go to their dedicated moderator, Sir Leo Parco, who molded the dancers into the best versions of themselves. With his guidance, the team was able to showcase their skills, share their love for dance, and ultimately, achieve victory.

The Balancing Act of a Student-Athlete

by: Francheska Margarette L. Peña

At IPSA, what sets its athletes apart isn't just their love for the game—it's their remarkable ability to manage time and responsibilities. Being a student-athlete means walking a tightrope between academics and athletic commitments, and while the path is far from easy, many of IPSA's athletes prove that with discipline and dedication, it's more than possible.

One such athlete is Johannah Mathea B. Morales, whose commitment both on and off the court has earned her accolades and admiration. Despite the demands of her dual roles, she played a key part in helping the Lady Scions secure 1st Runner-Up at the 9th PISAM and landed a coveted spot in the Mythical 6—clear evidence of her hard work and perseverance.

But what does a typical day look like for Johannah?

Her mornings start at 6:00 AM, with a quick routine—just washing her face since she showers the night before. She prefers a light breakfast, usually cereal, as she doesn't like starting the day with a heavy stomach. Before her own classes begin, she makes time to accompany her younger brother to his room, showing her nurturing side even in the middle of a busy schedule.

Classes run from 7:45 AM to 2:55 PM. On training days, Johannah often heads to a friend's house for a simple meal, usually pasta, and a bit of relaxation before the grind continues.

Currently, since there's no in-school varsity training, Johannah trains at *The One Team Skills Factory,* an external volleyball club. She arrives by 5:50 PM, never risking lateness. *"We can't afford to be late because it's part of being a disciplined athlete,"* she says, echoing the values instilled by her coach.

Training typically runs from 6:20 PM to 8:30 PM and includes stretching, jogging, and calisthenics, with drills that vary depending on Coach Chris's program. *"Some drills can be exhausting,"* Johannah admits, *"but doing them with my teammates and knowing I'm improving makes it the best part of my day."*

After training, she heads home for a well-deserved dinner and a refreshing shower—but the day isn't over yet. Schoolwork still awaits. *"It's tough,"* she confesses, *"but I have to do my part as a student. I want a bright future."* Often, her evenings stretch late into the night, and it's not until midnight that she finally gets to rest.

Johannah's story is a powerful reminder that success doesn't come easy—but with discipline, time management, and a passion for what you do, it's within reach. Her journey proves that balancing academics and athletics is more than possible—it's inspiring.



Johannah Morales ready to serve in a volleyball match during the 9th PISAM.

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Hard Work Defeats Natural Talent in School Sports



People always discuss talent like it's some kind of superpower. They say things like, "He's just a natural" or "She was born to play that sport." But the REAL truth is, talent isn't everything-not — not even close. In fact, hard work should matter way more, especially in school sports where real character is built. Sure, some students may be naturally faster, taller, or stronger. That might help them in the beginning, but it doesn't guarantee success. Raw talent can only take you so far. If they don't train or try to improve, they could easily get passed by someone who's been working hard every day. It's a simple fact: Consistent effort beats lazy genius every time.

One of the best things about hard work is that it is accessible to anyone . You don't need to be born with anything special. You just need the determination to show up, practice, listen to your coach, and never give up. That kind of effort demonstrates true dedication and heart, which are just as important as skill, if not more so. In our opinion, heart beats talent all day long. Hard-working athletes learn how to keep going when things get tough, how to be part of a team, and how to accept failure and keep trying. These lessons aren't just for the field or court — they stick with you for life. Hard work in sports builds people who know how to fight for what they want, no matter what the world throws at them. Let's be honest, talent is impressive, but it diminishes over time if not cultivated. Hard work, however, compounds and strengthens with each passing day. Every drop of sweat, every practice, every time you don't quit, it adds up. You may not see the results right away, but eventually, you'll get stronger, faster, and better. Success is a slow grind, not an instant result — and that's what makes it worth it. If we were to compare a naturally born athlete to a hardworking and independent athlete, you could see the difference. Someone who really values sports as a part of their life and puts in the work to make it to the top will forever reach higher than a person who believes that they can end up on the top with JUST their talent. So next time you feel like you're not "naturally good" at something, don't give up. Keep working. Because in the long run, hard work outperforms talent when talent fails to put in the effort.

The Ongoing Battle for Women's Recognition in Sports



SPOTLIGHT
Kristen Maranao

"Babae ka lang. Hindi mo kaya yan."—a phrase that still follows many women every time they step into the court, the field, or even just try to join a team. That mindset is the very root of the problem. People still see us as less capable, less competitive, and less serious in sports simply because we are "just" girls.

Girls are often dismissed with the assumption that we can't handle the pressure, that we're not competitive enough, or that we're just not "built" for certain sports. And when we do perform well, it's almost as if it's a surprise, like we've defied some unspoken expectation. In school, girls are now allowed to join almost any sport and we're seeing more opportunities than ever before, recognizing the importance of encouraging female athletes and providing them with platforms to showcase their skills.

For example, the recent addition of girl's basketball in the school's Intramurals Sport event. At a professional level, women's sports are making strides with increasing viewership and sponsorships. Female athletes like Serena Williams, Simone Biles, and Megan Rapinoe have become household names, not just for their athleticism but for their advocacy. Their achievements have paved the way for younger generations of girls to feel empowered. However, despite these advances, the recognition and support we receive often fall short of the effort we put into sports. We train. We compete. We give everything we have. Yet, the treatment we get doesn't always reflect that dedication. There's still the silent judgment, offhand comments, and a lack of genuine support. This isn't just an issue for the players on the field, it affects everyone in the school community, reinforcing the idea that sports are more for boys, and girls are just an afterthought.

No, I don't think gender equality in sports is a full-blown battle today—but that doesn't mean the fight is over. We're no longer shouting to be seen, but we're still waiting to be truly treated the same. Because even when the world seems open, it doesn't always feel that way for us girls on the court, on the field, or on the track.

Athletes in the Age of Social Media



BULL'S EYE
Zia Amaris O. Condes

On game day—and every day—today's athletes are under constant public scrutiny, thanks to the ever-watchful eye of social media. But is this new level of transparency helping or hurting their image?

In today's world, the spotlight doesn't fade when the game ends. Athletes no longer appear solely in highlight reels; they're part of our daily social media scrolls. Through shared glimpses of their routines, beliefs, and personalities, they've become more than just competitors—they've become content creators, role models, and public figures in real time.

Platforms like Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), and TikTok have transformed athletes into brands, influencers, and activists. Gone are the days when athletes were seen only during games, interviews, or the occasional commercial. Before the rise of social media, fame was tied purely to performance. What you did on the field or court mattered most.

Today, the story is different. While social media has created a space for athletes like LeBron James and Serena Williams to inspire and lead beyond their sport, it has also opened the door to criticism and controversy. Personal opinions, off-field behavior, and even innocent posts are subject to instant judgment by a global audience. One misstep online can overshadow a lifetime of hard work.

Yet, there's undeniable power in this connection. Social media allows fans to see the human side of athletes —celebrating victories, overcoming losses, and standing up for what they believe in. This transparency can build empathy and loyalty, but it also demands that we as fans practice compassion.

In the end, while social media brings athletes closer to their followers, it's essential to remember that they, too, are human—deserving of privacy, respect, and understanding beyond the screen.

The Rise of Saudi Arabia as a Global Sports Hub



ON POINT
Charles P. Name

Saudi Arabia is making waves in the sports world. And it's not by any chance. The rise of the Saudi Pro League has turned heads across the football world, as clubs continue to attract top-tier talent.

Through billion-dollar investments, the Kingdom is transforming itself from a spectator to a major global player. With headline-making signings like Cristiano Ronaldo in the Saudi Pro League also known as (Roshn Saudi League), the hosting of the Formula 1 Grands Prix, LIV Golf events, heavyweight boxing matches, and global esports tournaments, Saudi Arabia is redefining it's identity in front of the world.

This is more than just a passion project. It's a powerful move to reshape the country's global image, diversify the economy beyond oil, and ignite national pride especially among the youth. For many young Saudi's, seeing international stars perform on home soil isn't just exciting , it's empowering. It shows them that the global stage is within reach.

Critics, however, argue that this sports revolution is a form of "sportswashing", using athletic achievements to enhance its global image. But regardless of the motives, one fact remains clear: the impact on local communities and aspiring athletes is real. Young talents now have access to better facilities, training, programs, and global role models. The dream of becoming a pro athlete doesn't seem so far-fetched anymore.

Meanwhile, the Kingdom's success in hosting events like the Dakar Rally and major boxing title fights has shown that Saudi Arabia can handle sports at the highest level. As the Kingdom pushes forward with Vision 2030, sports is becoming a major pillar of national development. The investment isn't just in facilities and athletes, it's in the belief that sports can unite, inspire, and build a stronger, more connected society.

Saudi Arabia isn't just stepping into global sports science, it's doing it with ambition, purpose, and a game plan that's hard to ignore.

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High School Intramurals

Green Team Clinches Volleyball Crown in Four-Set Thriller

by: Francheska Margarette L. Peña



Julia Tambuan locks in, ready to take on the opponent's serve for their Intramural Championship Game.

The Junior High School Girls Volleyball Championship Game, held on January 8, 2025, was a heart-pounding showdown between the Green Team and the Red Team that kept spectators on the edge of their seats. After four hard-fought sets, the Green Team emerged victorious, claiming the championship title in this year's school intramurals.

From the opening whistle, the Green Team wasted no time asserting dominance. Anchored by the defensive trio of Lorraine Pangan, Chaniel Julio, and Julia Tambuan, they showcased superb floor defense. Their seamless receptions and accurate digs neutralized the Red Team's early attacks, allowing the Green Team to build momentum. With quick transitions and excellent communication, the Green Team took the first set convincingly.

But the Red Team was not about to go down without a fight.

In the second set, Madeleine Summer Tan turned the tide with a series of explosive service aces. Her aggressive serving rattled the Green Team's reception line and created scoring opportunities that the Red Team capitalized on. Riding Tan's service run and boosted by their front-row attackers, the Red Team snatched the second set to level the match at one set apiece.

The third set saw a resilient Green Team return to form. Regrouping quickly, Pangan, Julio, and Tambuan once again led the charge on defense, digging out powerful spikes and keeping rallies alive. Their poise under pressure and pinpoint serve receives set up smooth offensive plays that broke through the Red Team's blockers. As the intensity escalated, the Green Team held their ground and captured the third set, inching closer to the title.

With the championship hanging in the balance, both teams entered the fourth set with unmatched determination. The Red Team came out swinging, hoping to push the match to a decider.

But the Green Team remained composed. Their defense held firm, their sets were sharp, and their attacks relentless.

In a dramatic finish, Julia Tambuan stepped up to the service line with match point in sight. With nerves of steel, she delivered a stunning service ace, sealing the win and erupting a wave of celebration from the Green Team bench and supporters.

The final whistle confirmed the Green Team's triumph, capping off an unforgettable match filled with grit, heart, and championship spirit.



All smiles from the Green Team after sealing their win.

Green Team Triumphs in Basketball Finale, Secures Intramural Crown with 68–52 Victory

by: Rayyan Arshan E. Abdurahman

In a high-octane clash that thrilled the crowd from the opening tip to the final buzzer, the Green Team emerged as champions of the Junior High School Intramural Basketball Boys Championship, outlasting the Yellow Team with a decisive 68–52 win on January 8, 2025.

The game opened with both squads trading baskets in a fast-paced first quarter. The Yellow Team struck first, capitalizing on early opportunities to edge ahead, 18–15. Xyrem Reyes dazzled fans with a slick behind-the-back pass that set up a smooth finish, while Carlo Paragoso dished out a highlight-reel no-look assist that energized their bench.

But just when the Yellow Team seemed to be gaining momentum, the Green Team flipped the script. Down by three, the Green Team erupted with three consecutive three-pointers,



Carlo Paragoso at the center as he drives the ball after his quick assist during the Championship round against the Yellow Team.

shifting the momentum and electrifying the crowd. At the heart of this surge was Uwaimir "Eboy" Ambug, whose poise and consistent scoring anchored the Green Team's offense. He was backed by stellar contributions from Faisal Aliuddin, Jairus Laxamana, and the rest of the roster, whose unselfish ball movement and hustle plays began to overwhelm the Yellow Team.

The second half saw tensions rise, particularly in the growing rivalry between Reyes and Ambug.

Known for his emotional play, Xyrem Reyes once again lost his composure during a crucial stretch, leading to miscommunication and missed opportunities for the Yellow Team. This brief collapse allowed the Green team to extend their lead, maintaining their composure even as the game grew more physical. As the final quarter unfolded, it became clear that the Green Team's chemistry and discipline were the defining factors. They out-rebounded, out-ran, and ultimately out-shot their opponents. Ambug's calm leadership on the court set the tone, and the crowd responded with thunderous support. Every pass, every screen, and every shot reflected a team locked in on one goal — victory. When the final buzzer sounded, the Green Team celebrated not just a 16-point win, but a hard-earned championship forged through teamwork, strategy, and heart.

The 2025 Junior High School Intramural Basketball Boys Championship will be remembered as a display of resilience, rivalry, and rising stars — and in the end, it was the Green Team who stood tallest.