

## Topping off ceremony marks completion of NIH 19th level

The remaining portion of the 19th floor of the new National Institutes of Health building was topped off with cement to celebrate the construction milestone of the first high-rise laboratory in the country. Two 20-peso coins and one peso coin were placed inside the hole to signify the year 2021. The 19-storey 35,800-square meter infrastructure is the first big-budgeted project of the UP System designed to be an iconic structure that will house 14 research institutes and four upcoming centers and facilities.

NIH Building Committee Chair **Dr. Leo Cubillan** mentioned that the 19-floor facility is actually a 25- to 30-storey building in height. “This is because the 8th to 17th floors are 5.3 meters high to accommodate the necessary laboratory mechanical, electrical, and ventilation systems.”

According to NIH Executive Director **Dr. Eva Cutiongco-Dela Paz**, the act of shoveling



NIH Deputy Director for Research Operations **Dr. Carmela Lapitan**, VC **Michael Tee**, NIH PERI Director and NIH Building Committee Chair **Leo Cubillan**, BF Corporation Chairman **María Lourdes Fernando**, Chancellor **Padilla**, NIH Exec Director **Eva Cutiongco Dela Paz**, NIH Deputy Director for Admin and Finance **Dr. Jose Tecson** at the 19th floor of the new NIH building during the topping off ceremony on 9 December 2021.

the last cement on the 19th floor is a symbol of galvanizing the intellectual might of this institution around a truly global ambition. “This new building will continue to remind us of our commitment to respond

to the healthcare challenges of our country through research; and prepare researchers who will eventually have this as their new home.”

In his message read by Chancellor **Carmencita Padilla**, **UP President Danilo Concepcion** said that as a result of over a decade of planning, the first high-rise laboratory in the country is nearing its completion which will be utilized to benefit the Filipino people.

With the groundbreaking and time capsule laying done in 2016, **Chancellor Padilla** recounted the history

of the project that was started by then Chancellor **Perla Santos Ocampo**. “We need the NIH family to continue the dream. *Hindi pa po tapos ang pangarap*, we are in the middle of the dream and we hope to make sure that this becomes the hub of health research in the country,” she said.

In a video message, **UP Vice President for Development Elvira Zamora** shared how handling a project as big and ambitious as NIH “gives me a keen sense of pride seeing the realization that both ambitions [are] slowly unfolding before my eyes. It is truly blood, sweat, and tears that we have finally reached this stage of this project.”

“When we started discussing this building in 2015, it took us about three years to finalize the design-build plan. When we are constructing our building, every milestone we overcome, we celebrate,” **Chairman of BF Corporation Ms. María Lourdes Carlos Fernando** said.

Moving forward, the timeline for the completion of Phase 1 or the structure and facade will be on March 2022;

**TURN TO PAGE 2...**

### Message from the Chancellor:

## Pasko ng Pag-ibig

Sa pagtatapos ng taong ito, nais kong ipahatid ang lubos na pasasalamat sa mga bumubuo ng ating pamilyang UP Manila. Napakaraming pagsubok na ang ating napagdaanan at napagtagumpayan dahil sa pagkalinga at pakikipagkaisa ng lahat ngayong “new normal”.

Isinilang ang Sanggol dahil sa pag-ibig ng Maykapal. Layunin Niya ang ating kaligtasan kahit ang kapalit ay ang Kanyang buhay. Manalig tayo na ang *Pag-ibig* ring ito ang magbibigay sa atin ng higit pang karunungan, lakas, at sigla upang harapin ang anumang unos na darating. Dasal ko ang kalusugan at kapayapaan ng bawat isa ngayong Kapaskuhan at sa darating na 2022.



Maligaya at Puno ng *Pag-ibig* na Pasko at Mabiyayang Bagong Taon sa ating lahat!

*Carmencita D. Padilla*  
Tsanselor

Disyembre 2021





## PGH director, spokesperson win CSC Outstanding Govt Workers awards

PGH Director **Dr. Gerardo Legaspi** and Public Affairs Coordinator and spokesperson **Dr. Jose Jonas Del Rosario** were among the public servants conferred the **2021 Outstanding Government Workers Award** by the Civil Service Commission in virtual ceremonies held on Nov. 15.

Dr. Legaspi was one of the seven individual recipients of the **Presidential Lingkod Bayan Award** for 2021 while Dr. Del Rosario was among the 10 bestowed the **Dangal ng Bayan Award** for 2021.

The PGH director was recognized “for charting and carrying out a visionary course for the PGH as a premier institution for medical service, training, and research and his unparalleled leadership and response to the pandemic. He remained in the frontlines with the PGH Crisis Team in protecting the welfare of the medical and non-medical staff, delivering the highest level of service to reassure the public and the hospital’s unwavering commitment to quality care and to increase public confidence in vaccines”.

He introduced innovations and implemented advancements to fulfill the mandate of UP-PGH as the national university hospital through a stronger computerization of hospital data and services; a governance with inclusive participation and authenticity; infrastructure development conducive for healing, training, and working; prioritizing research through generating and allocating more funds; developing policies and programs that advocate a community-oriented medical education; and leading the way to an integrated, comprehensive health network and referral system with local government units and community hospitals.

As an esteemed neurosurgeon, Dr. Legaspi espoused innovative lifesaving neurosurgical techniques and promoted scientific advances such as the minimally invasive “keyhole” neurosurgery, introduced microvascular decompression, and modified skull base approaches in the Philippines. He is among the first to perform auditory brainstem implantation in Southeast Asia.

**TOPPING OFF FROM PAGE 1...** with the parking floors turned over early on February 2022. Phase II or the mechanical and electrical works shall be completed by the third quarter of 2022, and Phase III or the laboratory and offices fit-out in 2022-2023. The building turnover is expected by February 2023. **ANNE MARIE D. ALTO**

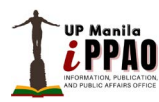

Dr. Del Rosario was cited for being “a quintessential servant leader, cardiologist, researcher, and teacher who revolutionized the practice and training of pediatric cardiology with pioneering interventional cardiac procedures that became a standard of care in the country”.

He introduced ingenious and life-saving interventions such as transcatheter closure techniques as alternative options to repair certain types of congenital heart defects which are safe and can be done with low mortality and morbidity results.

The renowned pediatric cardiologist served as a volunteer physician for Rotary International’s Operation Braveheart funded by the University of the Philippines Medical Alumni Society. The project aimed to repair congenital heart defects of children from poor families with over 140 children of market vendors, fishermen, janitors, messengers, clerks, and unemployed parents as its beneficiaries.

The ceremony was streamed via Malacañan’s Radio Television and [Facebook page](#) and [YouTube channel](#) and the Civil Service Commission’s [Facebook page](#) and [YouTube channel](#). The annual Search for Outstanding Government Workers is administered by the CSC’s Honor Awards Program. **CYNTHIA M. VILLAMOR**

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## Zuellig family donates \$4.8M for a new UP Manila building

“On behalf of the family of the late Dr. Stephen Zuellig, it is my honor to turn over this gift to the University of the Philippines Manila, his last personal gift to an institution,” David Zuellig said during the turnover ceremony held on Dec. 20, 2021.

The gift was a US\$4.8 million donation to the UP Manila College of Public Health (CPH) for the construction of a new 10-story Dr. Stephen Zuellig Hall next to the existing 94-year-old CPH Lara Hall.

“Those knowledgeable about public health know that the improvement of the health indicators in the Philippines has been incremental. My family and I sincerely hope that this gift will leave an indelible mark in the country’s public health landscape through the University of the Philippines. May this gift produce meaningful changes in the health outcomes of our fellowmen,” David stated.

The ceremonial turnover was a remarkable and moving event for UP Manila as it commemorated the legacy and philanthropy of the late Dr. Stephen Zuellig.

As an advocate of good governance and health equity, Dr. Stephen Zuellig chose to support CPH’s vision to lead in public health education, research, and public service. The donation also included the establishment of



Seated (L-R): Dr. Carmencita D. Padilla, President Danilo L. Concepcion, Mr. David Zuellig, Dr. Hazel P. Zuellig. Standing (L-R): Dr. Emerito Jose A. Faraon, Dean Vicente Y. Belizario, Jr., Vice Chancellor Michael L. Tee, Mr. Ernesto D. Garilao, Mr. Austere A. Panadero, Dr. Fernando B. Garcia, Jr.

the Dr. Stephen Zuellig Program for Health Leadership and Governance and the Dr. Stephen Zuellig Program for Health Equity.

“The only way we can create sustainable, equitable, and inclusive solutions to persistent societal ills, including ensuring healthy lives and well-being, is through a partnership among the different sectors, from universities to industry to national and transnational institutions. Through this donation and future research and health programs, the University will help carry on Dr. Zuellig’s advocacy and legacy, UP Pres. Danilo Concepcion said.

It was on November 29, 2016 that the groundbreaking ceremony for the building was held. In attendance were Mr. David Zuellig, then UP President Alfredo Pascual, former CPH Dean Romeo Quizon (who together with National Scientist Ernesto Domingo proposed this building to house projects being coordinated with the Zuellig Family Foundation), UP Manila officials, faculty and staff, and Dr. Stephen Zuellig himself witnessed the event remotely from his home in Switzerland.

UP Manila Chancellor Carmencita Padilla recalled that the plans, design, and

specifications of the building were being prepared that time for construction to begin in May 2017 which is the birth month of Dr. Stephen Zuellig. It was planned that Dr. Zuellig will visit the country and personally jumpstart the construction to coincide with his 100th birthday celebration.

His demise in January 2017 put on hold all the activities related to this project but were resumed in late 2020.

“We are grateful to the Zuellig family for its recognition and appreciation of the role and impact of the College of Public Health in the country’s progress and development. This building will likewise greatly contribute to UP Manila’s fulfillment of its lofty mandate towards education, research, and service. But equally important, this edifice will rise as a fitting tribute and a lasting legacy of the great man that was Dr. Stephen Zuellig,” the UP Manila Chancellor stated.

She thanked the Zuellig family, on behalf of the university and the Filipino people who will ultimately benefit from this worthy endeavor.

**FRANCIS NICOLE G. MAGA**

The Philippine General Hospital Silahis ng Kalusugan School for the Chronically Ill (SNK) received a P100,000 pledge from a group of alumni from the College of Holy Spirit Manila. This donation will assist children living with chronic conditions, allowing them to continue prioritizing their health while also completing their education.

“We wanted to give back to the community in celebration of our 50th jubilee. We want this to be just the start of a beautiful friendship and we intend to continue this collaboration. *Sa mga magulang at estudyante, huwag kayong*



## Funds raised for PGH Silahis ng Kalusugan School for the Chronically-ill

*mawawalan ng pag-asa. Kailangan lang laging lumingon sa Panginoon at mag-dasal,”* said Ma. Theresa

Ableda-Llave who represented the batch. **TURN TO PAGE 6...**

# PH's 1st Division of Sexual Health launched in PGH

The PGH Dept of Obstetrics and Gynecology launched its new unit, the first of its kind in the country, the Division of Sexual Health (DSH) on Nov. 29 to promote wellness and address pathologic conditions on sexual and reproductive health.

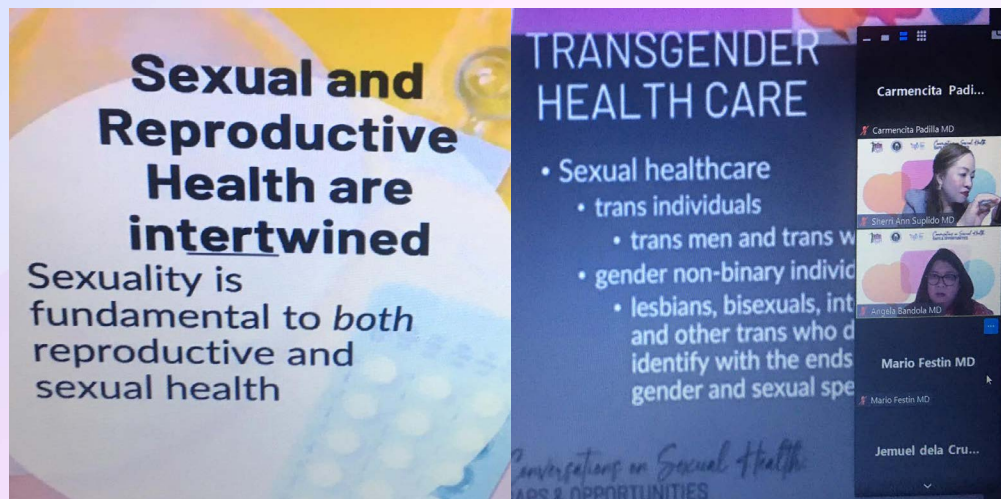
Sexual health, as defined by the World Health Organization, refers to a state of physical, emotional, mental, and social well-being in relation to sexuality and requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships. It also entails the possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination, and violence. Sexuality is fundamental to both reproductive and sexual health.

In her brief message during the launch, UP Manila Chancellor Carmencita Padilla stated that the growing concern on reproductive and sexual health morbidity clearly shows that sexual health across all genders is an important health issue. This has contributed to a rise and worsening in cases of morbidity.

She quoted figures from the United Nations showing that sexual and reproductive health accounts for at least 20 per cent of the burden of global ill health for women of reproductive age, and 14 per cent for men. Worldwide, more than 140 million women aged 15 to 49 who are married or in a union have an unmet need for family planning.

For his part, PGH Director Gerardo Legaspi said the new unit signifies that the PGH Dept of Obstetrics and Gynecology offers a complete service. He expressed hope that this initiative will be followed by other institutions to usher in more awareness of gender issues that may affect how patients are treated.

The DSH hopes to break the barriers to health care by providing a safe, welcoming, and culturally appropriate clinical environment where physicians are able to care for all gender categories with compassion and competence.



This includes the cisgender women and their partners and the sexual minorities who may avoid seeking health care due to fear of discrimination and disrespect in the clinic setting.

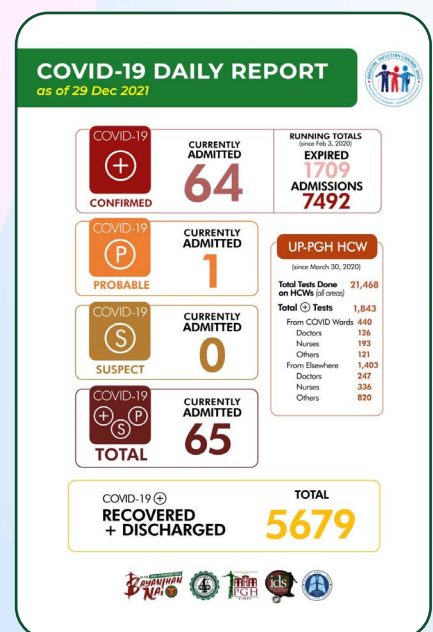
Among the services that will be offered are: information and counseling on the human sexual response on sexual dysfunction, counseling and support for sexual relationship problems, sexual health education for the adolescent, addressing sexual dysfunction for all age groups, and management of morbidities related to the side effects of patients who underwent gender-affirming treatments.

Also part of the Division's services are dealing with issues and counselling victims of sexual violence and harmful practices, such as female genital mutilation; addressing concerns of the sexual and gender minorities; managing mental health issues related to sexual health; counselling and education on the impact of physical disabilities and chronic illnesses on sexual well-being; and promotion of safe and satisfying sexual experiences.

The services will be rendered through a collaboration of multi-disciplinary and multi sub-specialty services whose goal is to advocate for the sexual and reproductive well-being of cis-gender women and sexual gender minorities (lesbians, bisexuals, intersex or persons with ambiguous genitalia,

queer) and promote trans health care (transwomen and transmen) of all age groups from adolescents to the post-menopausal period.

The team that will provide the services is led by **Dr. Efren Domingo**, PGH Ob-Gyne Chair, as Overall Project Chair with the following members: **Dr. Sherri Ann Suplido**, Chief; **Dr. Angela Aguilar**, Vice-chief; **Dr. Mario Festin**, Adviser and Coordinator for Research; **Dr. Bernabe Marinduque**, Adviser; **Dr. Enrique Gil Oblepias**, Co-coordinator for Research; **Dr. Lisa Teresa Jabson**, Coordinator for Training for Residents and Fellows; **Dr. Ma. Angela Bandola**, Coordinator for Training for Undergraduate Affairs; and **Dr. Ame Lopez**, External Expert on Transgender Health. **CYNTHIA M. VILLAMOR**





# Ending abuse towards children

Recognizing the different forms of abuse and knowing where and how to seek help and support is crucial in keeping children safe.

The UP Manila Center for Gender and Women Studies (CGWS) and Ugnayan ng Pahinungod Manila, in collaboration with the Kaibigan Ermita Outreach Foundation, Inc., conducted a forum entitled “Proteksyon ng Bata Laban sa Abuso” on Dec. 9 as part of the 18-day Campaign to End Violence Against Women and Children.

The first speaker, **Dr. Marianne Joy Naria-Martina**, PGH Child Protection Unit Consultant and TeleCPU Project Officer showed data on increased Violence against Children (VAC) and Violence against Women (VAW) during the implementation of lockdowns in the country. She defined child abuse as an act of maltreatment, habitual or not, of the child. Child abuses consist of domestic violence, negligence, child sexual abuse, sexual abuse of an adult, physical abuse, emotional or psychological abuse, exploitation, and online abuse/exploitation.

## What to do next

Dr. Naria-Martina highlighted that the first and most important thing to do is to **make sure that the child is safe**, then bring the child to the nearest barangay Violence Against Women and their Children (VAWC) or Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC) desk or call the Child helpline or emergency hotline for emergency cases.

She introduced the PGH CPU and showed the processes in availing of its services that involve interview with the guardian and child, medico-legal examination, post-evaluation debriefing, and management (diagnostics, medications, and referral to other services). She also presented its recent project, the TeleCPU Centers sa Barangay that utilizes telemedicine and teleconsultation to enable delivery and access to health care and child protection services despite the challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic, disasters, and others.

## Handling Disclosures

The next speaker, **Ms. Annaliza Macababbad**, PGH CPU Social Worker, discussed the proper ways of handling disclosures of abuse and how to properly respond when a child who disclosed an abuse is scared and not comfortable.

She stated that during the disclosure, it is important to give the children or young persons full attention, to remain calm and tell them that they did the right thing in letting their parents/guardians know. Reassure them that they are not to be blamed and let them know what is the next action. She further explained that children may not disclose everything at once as they also tend to forget some unfortunate things that happened to them.

She advised to let children take their time and to use their own words when confirming their statement. She also warned not to make promises that cannot be kept and avoid saying that “everything will be fine now.” She stressed not to confront the perpetrator, interrogate the child, and investigate the abuse for these tasks should be done by authorities and trained professionals.

If there is a suspicion that a child has been abused, Ms. Macababbad urge carers to give the children extra attention, ask if they have a problem, and assure them of help. She added that anytime and anyone who has a reason to suspect that abuse is happening is already a reason to report, which is a request for assessment of the condition of the child. Proving abuse has happened is not necessary prior to reporting.

She mentioned that there is immunity for reporting child abuse based on RA 7610 Section 7. She ended her talk by showing the facilities and activities of the CPU.

## Handling Crimes Against Children

The last speaker, **Patrolwoman Jemina Joyce G. Daquioag**, Women and Children Protection Center-Anti-Violence against Women and Children Division and PGH-CPU Investigator, discussed the legislative framework, role of law



enforcers in handling child abuse, and the investigation of complaints. She identified children as persons below 18 years of age. She explained that abuse can be reported to the PNP-Women and Children Protection Center through the local WCPDs, DSWD, other local government social welfare and department, or through the barangay by the following: the victims themselves, parents or guardians, relatives within third degree of consanguinity, social workers of DSWD and accredited NGOs, police offices, local education agencies, barangay chairpersons, teachers or school administrators, or at least three concerned and responsible citizens of the locality where the violation occurred. She also stressed that child abuse **MUST** be reported by involved medical personnel and government workers.

On the investigation of complaints, Patrolwoman Daquioag explained that they offer assistance and receive reports from the complainant or referral from other offices and agencies. They conduct initial interviews and take sworn statements or judicial affidavits, record the incident in the pink blotter, and aid in referring the victim to PNP crime laboratory or government hospital for medico-legal examination and treatment if necessary. They also refer the victim to DSWD/NCMH/CPU/NGOs for psychological assessment and intervention, and prepare a case folder for submission to the Prosecutor's office/DOJ and present the victim before the Prosecutor's office. **LUZ D. EMANO**

## Forum tackles effect of misinformation on Research Integrity

The COVID-19 pandemic has heightened the problem of misinformation affecting the integrity of research. To spread awareness on this issue, the UP Manila Committee on Research Integrity (CRI) conducted a webinar entitled “Research Integrity and Misinformation” on Dec. 3 as part of the Science and Technology Week celebration.

From the perspective of an administrator and educator, **UP Diliman Chancellor Fidel Nemenzo** talked about predatory journals and conferences. Predatory Journals are fake journals whose primary goal is financial gain, not academic scholarship. Predatory Conferences are bogus conferences with poor (or non-existent) paper review procedures. Both are money-making scams that prey on academics under pressure to boost their curriculum vitae for hiring, promotion, and tenure purposes. He presented examples and shared tips on how to spot and avoid probable predatory publishers and conferences.

Chancellor Nemenzo emphasized that while building research programs and increasing output, researchers need to be vigilant in protecting the integrity of research, scholarship, and academic standards.

UP Manila College of Medicine professor and Journal of Clinical Epidemiology (JCE) Editor **Dr. Leonila Dans** presented the usual business model (producer-retailer-consumer and vice-versa) and related it to scientific research (researcher-publisher-researcher and vice-versa). Recounting the history of Open Access Journals and predatory journal, she explained how the JCE introduced policies and strategies to increase publication of articles coming from lower- to middle-income economy countries and emphasized the roles of researchers, publisher, and institution leaders on countering predatory journals and conferences.

**Dr. Jacinto Blas Mantaring III**, CRI member and UPM Research Ethics Board Chair, reiterated the importance of research integrity during the COVID-19

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pandemic. He discussed the role, advantages, and disadvantages of preprints during COVID-19 pandemic; preprints having transparent process, screening, and retractions. But he said that they can also be a source of misleading

information. He underscored the importance of peer review and scientific scrutiny to ensure quality of information.

**Dr. Iris Isip-Tan**, UPM Interactive Learning Center Director and UPM TeleHealth Committee Chair defined infodemic as an overabundance of information that makes it hard for people to find trustworthy and reliable sources. Differentiating misinformation from disinformation in the context of fake news, she described the former as misleading information that is shared without the intention to harm while the latter is a deliberate, orchestrated, and malicious information that is meant to manipulate or deceive others.

To fight mis/disinformation, Dr. Isip-Tan discussed how to introduce science to the public and the use of social media as a tool for wider and faster dissemination, but also stressed the importance of eHealth literacy and assessment. **LUZ EMANO**

**We'd love some feedback!  
Tell us what you think about this issue.**



### SILAHIS FROM PAGE 3...

Under their legacy project “*Agapay sa Kalusugan at Pag-aaral*,” the Class of ‘73 has chosen to support the SNK given the latter’s laudable program for the health and education of the youth.

Linking the SNK and the donors together is **UP Manila Chancellor Carmencita Padilla**. “*Nagpapasalamat kami sa PGH at hindi nito binitawan ang SNK. Sa ating donors, ang Class 1973 na mga kaklase ko noong high school, thank you for considering PGH as a beneficiary and for starting this fundraising.*”

More than 50 years ago, the late National Scientist, UP Manila Chancellor and pediatrician Dr. Perla Santos Ocampo initiated the SNK as a small program of the Department of Pediatrics. Since then, it has been providing the educational needs of children and adolescents who are recurrently admitted to the PGH wards because of chronic illnesses such as cancer, renal diseases, cardiac diseases, and congenital conditions.

With SNK, these children have the means to catch up with their healthy counterparts

in terms of primary and secondary education. SNK provides support to these children and their families allowing them to keep their dreams of a brighter future alive.

During the event, **PGH Director Gerardo Legaspi** thanked the donors and made a personal pledge of P50,000 to the SNK. “Every time I go to PGH and the school is open, I see the determination of the family to send their children to school. These children have fought all their lives against the disease and now they are fighting to pursue education through this program. They are really inspiring. This is a very laudable project that no director will have the heart to stop,” he said.

With the Child Health in Life and Development Foundation (C.H.I.L.D.) as partner, the success of the SNK is the outcome of the hard work and dedication of the SNK faculty and the donations that support the continuous learning of the students. For donation and fundraising inquiries, please contact CHILD Foundation through Ms. Rashene Lim at 09178044453. **ANNE MARIE ALTO**