

# UPDate Magazine

A large, bright fire burns in a metal bowl at night. The fire is intense and yellow-orange, with a large plume of smoke rising from it. In the foreground, a crowd of people is visible, some looking towards the fire. The background is dark, with some distant lights.

JANUARY-JUNE 2018 • Volume 5 • Number 1

**“Pride in people, in the context of universities, comes with pride in our work, in serving our iskolar ng bayan.”**

**—Prof. Michael L. Tan, Chancellor, UP Diliman**

## WHAT'S INSIDE

---

*Introduksiyon*  
Jem R. Javier 3

*Pride in people*  
Michael L. Tan 4

*Pantasa, pag-ibig at pag-asa*  
Haidee C. Pineda 9

*For crying OUTLAWed!*  
Kevin Brandon E. Saure 12

*Unassuming guy to look up to*  
Bino C. Gamba 16

*The last glassblower*  
Anna Regidor 20

*BLKD laban sa mga balakid*  
Benito V. Sanvictores Jr. 24



*Bonfire detail*

**On the cover:** Bonfire celebrates Men's Basketball win in 2014 at the UAAP 77<sup>th</sup> Season.



EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Sir Anril Pineda Tiatco ASSOCIATE EDITOR Jem Roque Javier MANAGING EDITOR Mariamme D. Jadloc COPY EDITOR Chi A. Ibay ART DIRECTOR Denes V. Dasco  
ISSUE WRITER Bino C. Gamba, Haidee C. Pineda, Anna Regidor, Benito V. Sanvictores Jr., Kevin Brandon E. Saure PHOTOGRAPHERS Leonardo A. Reyes, Jefferson Villacruz ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER Shirley S. Arandia CIRCULATION OFFICERS Narciso S. Achico Jr., Pia Ysabel C. Cala, Raul R. Camba, Evangeline C. Valenzuela

The *UPDate Magazine* is UP Diliman's platform for discussion and a biannual publication of the UP Diliman Information Office under the Office of the Chancellor, UP Diliman, Quezon City. Its editorial office is located at the 2/F Villamor Hall, Osmeña Avenue, UP Diliman, Quezon City, with telephone numbers (+632) 981-8500 locals 3982 and 3983, email address: [updio@upd.edu.ph](mailto:updio@upd.edu.ph). The opinions expressed in this news magazine do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the University of the Philippines Diliman unless otherwise specified in the story.

# INTRODUKSIYON

## Maligayang pagbuklat sa huling isyu ng UPDate Magazine!

Ang isyung ito ay nakasentro sa ikatlong bahagi ng haraya ng kasalukuyang administrasyon ng UP Diliman (UPD), ang “Pride in People,” na ayon kay Tsanselor Michael L. Tan ay sumasalamin sa mapagkalingang komunidad ng UPD na siya ring nagpapalakas dito bilang isang constituent university. Tayo ay natututong makinig sa bawat isa, buksan ang ating kampus, at higit na mahalaga, ang ating puso, sa mas malawak pang mga komunidad na ating kinabibilangan at sa sambayanan. Haraya nating ang UPD, bilang isang mapaglangkap na Unibersidad, ay sumulong nang may pagkakaisa, habang binibigyang-halaga ang ating pagkakaiba-iba.

Tampok sa isyung ito ang anim na artikulong nagbibigay-pugay sa mga kasapi ng ating Unibersidad na kinakitaan ng walang-maliw na pag-ibig sa kapwa, kahanga-hangang pagharap at pananaig sa mga hamon ng buhay, at di-matatawarang pagsisilbi sa bayan. Tampok sa isyung ito ang artikulong sinulat ni Tsanselor Tan na pinamagatang “Pride in People,” kung saan sinariwa niya ang kahalagahan ng dangal sa anumang uri ng paggawa — pagtuturo, pananaliksik, pagganap sa mga tungkulin sa tanggapan, pag-aaral at pagseserbisyo-publiko — ng lahat ng kasapi ng Unibersidad, na lahat ay palagi at dapat na nakaukol sa pagsisilbi sa mga Iskolar ng Bayan.

Sa artikulong “Pantasa, pag-ibig at pag-asa” ni Haidee C. Pineda, bibigyang-pugay ang isang dakilang proyektong pangkawanggawa na isinilang at hinubog ng pagmamahalan ng dalawang taong may iisang layuning mapabuti ang kalagayan ng kabataang mag-aaral sa iba’t ibang bahagi ng bansa. Isinulat naman ni Kevin Brandon E. Saure ang “For crying outlawed!” na umuugit sa kasaysayan ng isang organisasyong ang adbokasiya ay tuluyang magapi ang diskriminasyon sa isang marhinalisadong sektor ng lipunan, ang pamayanang LGBT+, sa pamamagitan ng pagdaraos ng mga gawaing pinapanday ng kanilang kakayanan bilang kasapi ng Kolehiyo ng Batas. Tampok naman sa artikulong “Unassuming guy to look up to” ni Bino C. Gamba ang isang premyadong visual artist at bantog sa larangan ng komiks at kulturang popular sa Pilipinas, subalit walang-maliw na naglilingkod din bilang kawani ng Unibersidad. Ang “The last glassblower” ni Anna Regidor ay gumuguhit sa talambuhay ng itinuturing na huling scientific glassblower ng Unibersidad, at ang kaniyang di-matatawarang ambag sa surian na kaniyang pinaglingkuran. Ang artikulo naman ni Benito V. Sanvictores Jr. na “BLKD laban sa mga balakid” ay naglalahad ng mga naging karanasan ng isang bantog na rapper at hiphop artist na nagtapos at sa kasalukuyan ay nagsisilbi sa Unibersidad bilang kawani; gayundin ang mga mithiin niyang lampas sa apat na sulok ng kampus at lumalagos sa mga pamayanan at sektor na nais niyang paglingkuran.

Tila humantong na nang full circle ang UPDate Magazine, sapagkat nililingon ng tema nito ang haraya sa Unibersidad na “Dangal ng Lunan, Tayog ng Haraya, at Dangal sa Kasapi ng Unibersidad.” Tunghayan ang pagbabagong-bihis ng magasin ng ating Unibersidad na pinamagatang “Ugnayan.” Nananatili ang layunin nitong maging lunan ng malaya at masiglang talakayan hinggil sa mga isyung kinakaharap ng UPD at ng sambayanan. Ang paglalathala ng kalendaryo ng mga gawain sa ating Unibersidad ay magpapatuloy sa pamamagitan ng muling-pagsasabuhay at pagpapaigting pa ng “What’s UP?” na naglalayon namang maiparating sa publiko ang mga aktibidad ng mga tanggapan at unit sa UPD.

Inaasahan namin ang patuloy ninyong pagtangkilik sa mga lathalain ng UPD, at sa maalab na pakikiisa sa mga gawaing magpapatingkad sa ating mga dakilang layunin bilang pambansang unibersidad ng ating bansa.

Jem R. Javier  
*Issue Editor*



# Pride in people

MICHAEL L. TAN

This was a difficult piece to write because there are just so many people to be proud of in UP Diliman (UPD). To give specific names here would risk missing out on many more so this article will be nameless, to honor all.

There's pride that comes with the way UP Diliman's researchers work so hard to unlock the many mysteries and miracles of the world around us from the depths of our seas to our terrestrial world and, soaring high, to outer space. Lupa, laot, langit.

In this age of fast foods, fast everything, we tend to think of our academic achievements as eureka-type discoveries, quick and easy, when in fact it's the "slow" achievements that count the most, the long hours of labor of behind the scenes researchers—often graduate students and non-faculty researchers—working day to day on minute details. I think of the micro-satellite Diwata-1 launched into space in 2016 and the nano-satellite Maya that followed in August 2018, products of Filipino graduate students and faculty, with the Japanese. The work of UPD's researchers are forming the germinal core for the country's future space program.

UPD's researchers are plumbing, too, the deep sea to unlock its many mysteries, for example, medicines that can be obtained from marine organisms, from powerful painkillers to anti-cancer agents.

Maya-1



There's much down-to-earth down on earth research that matters. Like the first Philippine reports of adorable micro animals called tardigrades, also called water bears and moss piglets, discovered right here in UPD. They're ubiquitous, surviving in the most extreme of environments, just like UP students, faculty and staff. Maybe, I've thought, the tardigrades should be our official mascots.

We are so fortunate to be in UPD with the most comprehensive course and degree offerings in the country, all sources of pride in people. I jog, mentally, around the campus, thinking of how each academic unit has its knowledge warriors and imagineers, working not just on the natural world around us but in the cosmos that is the mind. Musicians and athletes and artists and poets and mathematicians share much here, again long hours of work, of listening to inner rhythms and cadences and transforming them into masterpieces of performance.

And just as engineers figure out and design the mechanics of things, including the Internet of Things, we have armies of social scientists—I think of them not just in terms of the College of Social Sciences and Philosophy but also of education, law, mass communications, urban and regional planning—figuring out how

societies and cultures work . . . and how to make them work better. There's pride too in our social scientists being the *konsiyensiya ng bayan*, the nation's conscience.

We must find pride too in the people that allow the university to move toward academic excellence. Day in, day out, they serve, with total dedication. Teaching and mentoring form the core of the university, ensuring that we pass on the torch, the thirst for knowledge.

Every year, too, I look forward to the Gawad Paglilingkod, honoring staff who have devoted their lives to UP, some for more than 40 years. When these long-timers (I prefer that to old-timers) come up to the stage, I whisper to ask how old they were when they started working with UP. Some started as early as 18, in another era when some high school education was enough to land a job. For many, UP gave them their first job and they have never left since.

I have learned more about their work, sometimes by accident, as I go around the offices. Some of them are artisans, such as a glassblower for laboratory equipment and bookbinders and bakers. I have seen too, ingenuity and innovation, for example, dilapidated vehicles restored. I smile remembering a mechanic shouting out in exasperation as he

worked on a stubbornly comatose van: *pasmado yata*.

I think of one of our staff who had worked all his life in the cashier's office and when I asked if his work was counting money all through the years, recalling an era when salaries were given in cash, down to the last centavo, he laughed and corrected me: "Yes po, counting other people's money."

When one of our carpenters retired I worried that he might be the last of his breed in UP. I yearn for the fine wooden furniture we used to have in offices and classrooms and laboratories, especially when I see our monobloc tables and chairs.

The University Health Service, too, has seen many of UPD's finest, gently comforting patients, from children with small but painful injuries, reassuring them, "*Malayo sa bituka,*" to elderly professors and staff confused and frightened by serious attacks of hypertension, diabetes, even asthma. Gifted are those, not necessarily health professionals, who minister to those with long-term needs: I think especially of once brilliant faculty now fading because of dementia.

I am proud of the courage of UPD, to speak up when needed, to be *konsiyensiya ng bayan*, a nation's conscience. But more than speaking up, we walk the talk with compassion. Every day I see, or hear, of students, faculty, staff and let's not forget our communities, including the urban poor, walking the extra mile to help those in need: faculty giving extra time to mentor a student who has fallen behind, our psychological services staff rushing in for someone with a clinical depression crisis, staff and even the vendors adopting students in need, feeding them, lending them money, sometimes even passing the hat so the student need not pay anything back.

Let's not confuse pride with hubris. Pride in people, in the context of universities, comes with pride in our work, in serving our *iskolar ng bayan*. ♦



Tardigrade

Marc Mapalo





DO NOT  
HANDLE WITH CARE  
MAXIMUM STACKING  
5 CASES  
FIESTA  
Fiesta Big Spaghetti  
8 bundles  
24 NOV 18 02  
24 NOV 18 02  
FIESTA  
Fiesta Big Spaghetti  
KOPIT



# Pantasá, pag-ibig at pag-asa

HAIDEE C. PINEDA

*Mula sa isang kaswal na pagtatagpo, sila ay nagkuwentuhan; nagtugma ang mga gusto at hilig, nauwi sa pag-ibig, hanggang humantong sa isang malalim na relasyon. Sino ang mag-aakalang ang dalawang taong magkaiba ng personalidad ngunit iisa ang adbokasiya ay magbubunga ng makabuluhang proyektong bayanihan para sa edukasyon at para sa bayan?*

Si Schedar ay Katuwang na Propesor ng UP Diliman (UPD) Departamento ng Filipino at Panitikan ng Pilipinas (DFPP) samantalang si Barry naman ay sibilyan na empleyado ng Armed Forces of the Philippines-Educational Benefits System Office (AFP-EBSO).

Bunsod ng kagustuhang tumulong sa mga nangangailangan sa pamamagitan ng simpleng pagpapamudmod ng mga nalikom na gamit pang-eskuwela, unti-unting lumawig ang Pantasá at kalaunan ay naging napakalaking bahagi ng buhay at relasyon nina Schedar at Barry.

## Ang simula

Una itong tinawag na “Tabang na para sa Mag-aaral” (Tabang), galing sa salitang Cebuano na tabang o tulong sa Tagalog.

“Ang napili naming tulongan ay iskul. Nagkolekta kami ng school supplies mula sa DFPP at sa opisina niya (Barry) sa EBSO ng AFP,” ani Schedar.

Inilunsad ang Tabang bilang tugon at tulong sa pangangailangan ng mga nasalanta ng Bagyong Yolanda (Haiyan) na tumama sa Pilipinas noong Nobyembre 2013.

Ayon kay Schedar, nasa Bangkok, Thailand siya noong tumama ang Bagyong Yolanda sa bansa. Pagbalik niya sa Pilipinas makalipas ng ilang araw, naghanap sila ni Barry ng mga relief operation sa Maynila upang magbigay ng donasyon.

Ang mga nalikom nilang gamit pang-eskuwela ay ipinadala sa iba’t ibang paaralan sa pamamagitan ng PLAN International Philippines, isang internasyunal na non-governmental organization (NGO).

Naulit ito noong Disyembre 2013 nang hilingin ni Prop. Aura Abiera, dating tagapangulo ng DFPP, sa mga guro at kawani ng departamento na sa halip magbigayan ng mga regalo sa kanilang Christmas party ay magambagan na lang ulit sila ng gamit pang-eskuwela.

Matagumpay nilang naipadala muli sa napiling paaralan ang kanilang mga nalikom. Doon nila napagtanto na ipagpatuloy ang proyekto.

Marso 2014 ng nagdesisyon sina Schedar at Barry na tawagin itong “Project Pantasá.”

“Pantasá is to sharpen a pencil. It’s also a way to sharpen the mind. Iyong ‘tasá’ naman is to analyze. Iyon ang naging main

Si Schedar bilang punong-abala sa isang outreach program.



Mga mag-aaral ng E.W. De Vela Elementary School ng Brgy. Amuyong, Mabitac, Laguna habang tumatanggap ng pamaskong regalo mula sa Project Pantasa.

thrust namin. May tatlong [siyang] branches iyong organization. Iyong una siyempre is the school supplies drive. Pangalawa ay teacher training at iyong pangatlo ay teaching materials development,” paliwanag ni Schar.

## Pagkasa

Ang unang bugso ng Pantasá ay naganap noong Mayo 30, 2014 sa Antipolo, Rizal.

Sinabi ni Schar na ang pinuntahan nilang ito ang pinakadulong baryo ng Antipolo. Doon ay walang cell site, walang kuryente, walang tubig o walang access sa potable water.

Kuwento niya, “Ang akala ng principal ay joke time kami kasi nasira iyong [gamit naming] sasakyan so, na-delay kami nang mga 30 minutes. Tapos natakot siya. Noong dumating kami, humingi siya ng ID para lang malaman na kami ‘yon kasi wala pa talagang mukha noon ang Pantasá.”

Matapos ang matagumpay nilang aktibidad sa Antipolo, ikinasang muli ang Pantasá noong 2015. Isa sa mga paaralang

pampubliko sa Mabitac, Laguna ang kanilang napiling lugar para sa ikalawang taon ng proyekto.

Pinili nila ang Hunyo 12 para sa kanilang aktibidad upang gunitain ang Araw ng Kalayaan. “Gusto naming one way or the other ay ma-instill namin sa mga bata iyong halaga o sense ng Bayanihan,” ayon kay Schar.

Matapos ang pamimigay ng mga gamit pang-eskuwela noong Hunyo 12, 2015, sinimulan din nila ang ikalawang sangay ng proyekto, ang teacher training.

Sinimulan ito noong Agosto 2015 kung saan naglaan sila ng kalahating araw ng libreng pagsasanay sa mga guro ng Mabitac. Si Schar ang tumayong lektiyurer. Tinalakay niya ang paksang Filipino bilang pagdiriwang sa Buwan ng Wika.

Nasundan pa ito noong Disyembre 2016 bilang paggunita sa diwa ng Pasko. Ani Schar, napansin nilang may mga natatanggap din silang donasyon na shampoo at iba’t ibang mga gamit pang-hygiene.

Napagpasyahan nila na gawing Hunyo at Disyembre ang aktibidad ng Pantasá. Tuwing Hunyo ay mga gamit pang-eskuwela ang kanilang ipinamimigay at hygiene kits naman tuwing Disyembre.

Sa simula ay sina Schar at Barry pa lang ang kumikilos para sa Pantasá sa pagkalap ng mga donasyon. Ani Schar, ang mga naging katuwang nila sa pagrepack ng mga nakolektang gamit pang-eskuwela at iba pang mga gawain ay ang kapatid niya, ang kaniyang yaya at isa sa mga kaibigan ni Barry.

Habang lumalawak ang proyekto, unti-unti ring dumarami ang tumutulong kina Schar at Barry. Naging kaagapay nila ang social media, partikular ang Facebook, upang makalikom ng sapat na donasyon para sa Pantasá.

“Iyong inisyal na ginawa namin ay ang school supplies

drive. Kasi para sa akin, iyon ang pinakamadali. The power of social media, we capitalized on it. Nag-post kami sa Facebook tapos eventually ay nag-create ng page tapos nakahanap kami ng volunteers,” pagbabahagi ni Schar.

Sa pamamagitan ng social media, dumami rin ang tumulong at nagbigay ng donasyon lalong-lalo na noong naglaan ng espasyo si Barry sa kanilang Facebook page ng mensaheng pasasalamat sa bawat taong tumulong o nag-donate para sa Pantasá.

Mula sa tatlong boluntaryo ay naging walong katao na ang tumulong sa kanila ni Barry.

Sa pagdaan ng taon, naragdangang muli ang mga nagboluntaryo sa Pantasá na karamihan ay mga kabataang propesyunal. Ngayong 2018, umabot na sa 30 boluntaryo ang sumali sa proyekto at kalahati sa mga ito ay aktibong tumutulong dito.

Mula sa 200 mag-aaral ay umabot na sa 300 ang natulungan ng Pantasá.

Pinipili ng Pantasá ang mga tinutulungang paaralan batay sa taunang badyet ng Department of Education (DepEd).

“Siyempre, primary consideration namin iyong bilang ng mga estudyante. Dahil nagsisimulang organisasyon lang kami noon, ang kaya lang namin ay maximum of 200 students ng buong school. Ayaw naming Grade 1 o Grade 2 lang, kasi unfair iyon. Wala naman dapat pinipili ang pagtulong,” ani Schar.

Bukod sa populasyon ng mga mag-aaral, isa rin sa isinasaalang-alang nila ang laki o liit ng Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE) ng paaralan at kung saan ito nabibilang na munisipalidad.

## Pag-ibig

Taong 2013 ay nagkakilala sina Schar at Barry sa tulong ng

mga kaibigan at natagpuan ang kanilang mga sariling magkasundo sa maraming bagay at paniniwala. Kabilang na rito ang pagtulong sa kapwa lalung-lalo na sa mga kapus-palad at magboluntaryo sa relief operations tuwing may sakuna o kalamidad.

Ayon kay Schedar, lumaki siyang mulat sa problema ng lipunan samantalang pinalaki naman si Barry ng tiyahin na madre at namulat sa gawaing pangkomunidad kung kaya't pamilyar na sa kanilang dalawa ang pagboboluntaryo sa mga gawaing pangkawanggawa.

Dumalas ang paglabas nila hanggang sa noong Setyembre 2013 ay nauwi ang kanilang pagkakaibigan sa isang seryosong relasyon.

"Para kaming sina Batman at Robin. Basta nagko-complement kasi kaming dalawa. Ako iyong mainitin ang ulo. Siya iyong kalmado. Ako 'yong magpaplano, siya ang mag-e-execute. Ako 'yong maraming gustong gawin, siya 'yong magpopokus sa akin," ani Schedar.

Ayon din kay Schedar, mas tumibay at lumalim ang kanilang relasyon dahil na rin mismo sa Pantasá.

Pero may mga oras pa rin daw na nagkakatampuhan sila. "Actually, may mga moments na iyong Pantasá ang cause ng tampuhan, hindi away. Tampuhan lang. Iyong parang, 'Bahala ka! Bahala ka!' pero gagawin din naman namin. Pero 'pag pagod na kami, kunyari, nakabili na kami ng school supplies, iyong lumamig na ang ulo, okay naman kami," ani Schedar.

Sa loob ng mahigit apat na taong relasyon ay magkasama nilang itinaguyod ang Pantasá hanggang sa noong Disyembre 2017, hindi sukat akalain ni Schedar na iyon na rin pala ang huling aktibidad na makakasama niya si Barry.

## Paalam

Ang masayang kuwento ng kanilang pag-ibig ay sinubok ng pagkakataon nang magkasakit si Barry noong Mayo 2018.

At noong ika-31 ng Mayo, ibinahagi ni Schedar sa kanyang personal na Facebook account ang balita na pumanaw na ang kaniyang pinakamamahal na partner na si Barry.

Labis na naapektuhan si Schedar sa pagkawala ni Barry at dumating siya sa punto na nahirapan siyang ipagpatuloy ang pag-aasikaso sa Pantasá.

Ngunit, hanggang sa huling sandali ay nasa isip at puso ni Barry ang kapakanan ng proyektong nagpatibay sa kanilang pagmamahalan.

Ayon kay Schedar, "Apparently, before he died, he wrote letters addressed to me and his family. Sulat iyon on what to do if I die. Isang bilin at doon sa mismong lamay binasa. Doon sa parehong letter, sinabi niya na 'Continue Project Pantasá.' E di siyempre, sabi ko, paano ko mako-continue e nagluluksa ako noong June 12?"

Sa kabutihang palad, natupad ang habiling ito ni Barry at natuloy ang aktibidad ng Pantasá noong Hunyo 12 sa tulong ng mga kaibigan at pawang mga boluntaryo na sina Zarina Eliserio, Ronel Laranjo at Mitch Ramirez.

Marami pa sanang planong proyekto sina Schedar at Barry para sa Pantasá. Sa ngayon, sa tulong ng mga boluntaryo ay naipagpapatuloy ang mga proyekto ng Pantasá. Sa taong ito sasama ang Pantasá sa Brigada Eskwela.

"Lalabas ang Pantasá para tumulong maglinis, mag-ayos," ani Schedar. ♦ —*Mga larawan ni Prop. Schedar Jocson*

*Ang mga masisipag na boluntaryo ng Project Pantasa, kasama sina Barry (kanan) at Schedar (pangalawa mula sa kanan).*



# For crying OUTLAWed!

KEVIN BRANDON E. SAURE

## How can an outlaw change the law?

**T**he discrimination against lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgenders or transsexuals and those with so-called “non-traditional” genders and sexualities (LGBT+) is an age-old dilemma. Even today, some people consider being an LGBT+ community member an illness. Although the same people think it could be “healed,” this view consequently renders LGBT+ people “diseased” and their identities, “contagious.”

The social and legal conditions that put LGBT+ at a disadvantage in terms of opportunities, recognition and treatment have given birth to an organization aimed primarily at “healing” the systems rather than identities.

### **The UP OUTLaws**

The UP OUTLaws (OUTLaws) is a group consisting of members and allies of the LGBT+ community. It was founded on Mar. 5, 2016 by UP

College of Law (UP Law) students who believed that gender equality in the Philippines is attainable through legal and societal reforms. Among the founders were Atty. Carlos S. Hernandez, valedictorian of UP Law Class of 2017, and Dr. Lee Yarcia, a 2018 Gawad Tsanselor sa Natatanging Mag-aaral awardee.

“As LGBT+ issues are coming into the fore in Philippine society, the founding members recognized that the law is one of the most important institutions where the LGBT+ community face the greatest discrimination and where their rights are severely limited,” said Mike Natividad, OUTLaws president.

### **The Out and the Law**

Social stigma is not the only demon the LGBT+ community has to confront every day. The legal realm is another battlefield for the LGBT+ community as oppression can

sometimes be enshrined in the laws of the land.

In some countries, being “out” does not sit well with being lawful. Ergo, being out is being an outlaw.

Until today, there are countries with laws curtailing the expression of certain genders and sexualities. The International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA) recently published a research study revealing a total of 74 countries where same-sex sexual contact is a criminal offense.

Several nations enforce laws that explicitly ban gay expression, thereby silencing LGBT+ people and keeping them in the “closet.” Others implement a later age of consent for gay men and women. As if it is not alarming enough, there are also nations that punish being gay with imprisonment or even death.

### **Strength in diversity**

Natividad said what sets OUTLaws apart from other law organizations is that its advocacies “are essentially not ‘accepted’ by the law.” He mentions that while other groups promote upholding the law, OUTLaws seeks to change the



*OutLaws actively participates in the annual UP Pride March.*

law to reflect true social justice, particularly the welfare of the LGBT+ community.

Moreover, OUTLaws' potential in effecting change lies in its members' access to legal tools and expertise that are not available to most gender-based organizations. This enables the group to address its identified problems in the political and legislative arena. For Natividad, those who have the privilege of studying the law could themselves be the frontliners in reforming the system.

One does not have to be an LGBT+ to join OUTLaws. Currently, the organization's only constitutional requirement is for one to be a UP Law student and that he or she must believe in OUTLaws' core principles and advocacies. In fact, a significant number of its members identify themselves as heterosexuals.

From 15 founding students, the organization now has 69 members.

### **The legal battle for LGBT+ rights**

Despite the lack of legal provisions that safeguard LGBT+ rights, especially in the Philippines, OUTLaws believes that the law itself can be the tool for true societal reform in favor of the marginalized community.

OUTLaws' various causes are lumped together into three encompassing advocacies— anti-discrimination; same-sex marriage; and socio-political and legal reforms.

In terms of crossing swords with discrimination, the organization renounces all forms of prejudice and denial of rights to the LGBT+ people. It pushes for the creation and adoption of policies that protect LGBT+ people from

discriminatory acts in all settings that include homes, schools, workplaces, and public and private spaces.

By 1989, Filipino women had already obtained security against employment discrimination by virtue of Republic Act 6725. Meanwhile, a national law that protects LGBT+ people from discriminatory acts is still in the pipeline, although localized efforts have been done.

Most recently, Mandaluyong City passed Ordinance 698, S-2018, which "prohibits such discriminatory acts as denying or limiting employment-related access; denying access to public programs or services; refusing admission, expelling or dismissing a person from educational institutions due to their SOGIE (sexual orientation, gender identity and expression)." The ordinance also prohibits



HIV education and free testing.

“verbal or written abuse; unjust detention/involuntary confinement; denying access to facilities. It also illegalizes formation of groups that incite SOGIE-related discrimination.”

Same-sex marriage, a right of the LGBT+ people already in place in several countries, is also an objective for OUTLaws. Pew Research Center reported that as of December 2017, 26 nations have legalized same-sex unions, beginning with The Netherlands in 2000 and Australia on Dec. 7, 2017. So far, no Asian country has adopted this law.

Natividad said “the right to marry is a fundamental human right, which must not be limited to a union between a man and a woman.” As with other LGBT+ organizations, it is believed that the right to choose whom to marry is inherent in individual autonomy and constitutes an intimate choice between two committed individuals regardless of gender or sexual orientation. It should be noted, however, that marriage in this sense is a legal matter.

Furthermore, OUTLaws is committed to raising awareness on gender rights that results in a fairer treatment of the LGBT+

community and a heightened sensitivity to its members’ welfare, interests and concerns. These can be achieved by virtue of lobbying socio-political and legal reforms in appropriate institutions and avenues.

For public access, OUTLaws also translates its advocacies to various events and activities.

### 3-fold advocacy

Although the organization is only three years old, it is already successful in launching activities in-line with its 3-fold advocacy.

In academic year 2017-2018,

the flagship activities were: OUTLaws Week, a 7-day showcase which included an info-gallery set up in Malcolm Hall containing the organization profile and gender-discriminatory Philippines laws, an HIV awareness seminar and a screening of LGBT+-themed movies; OUTLaws Kapihan, a forum on the theme “Self-Expression, Advocacy and Being LGBT+ in the Legal Profession” with members of the bar as speakers; OUTLaws HIV Testing, a confidential test and consultation held in Malcolm Hall in partnership with The Library Foundation Sexuality, Health and Rights Educators Collective or TLF Share, a non-profit membership organization advocating for gender, sexuality and sexual health awareness. OUTLaws also manages the Philippine Journal of Law and Gender, a journal dedicated to Philippine legal literature related to gender and gender equality.

### Towards a loving and accepting society

As evoked by its preamble, OUTLaws aspires for “a nation that upholds the principles of gender equality and social justice...a country that is imbued with love, compassion and respect for the LGBT+ community.”

The organization affirms that “human dignity encompasses the inherent worth of an individual,



Gender Sensitivity and SOGIE workshop.



*Natividad (second from left), OUTLaws president A.Y. 2018-2019, with OUTLaws members .*

and it must be protected and respected regardless of one's sexual orientation and gender identity and expression."

And while the battle for complete acceptance is still far from over, OUTLaws and the whole LGBT+ community remain steadfast in breaking the laws and norms— in

specie, those laws and norms that reek of spite and hate for gay men and women all over the world. Illicit as the endeavor may sound, OUTLaws maintains legality as its weapon and the law, the battlegrounds.

Despite all the legal and social hurdles, OUTLaws sees a future

when the society has completely broken free from the shackles of discrimination—a time when the proverbial rainbow of love of the LGBT+ community truly shines over every human. ♦—*Images from UP OUTLaws*

# Unassuming guy to look up to

BINO C. GAMBA

Daniel Coquilla is a technician. His official designation is Movie Equipment Technician III, a movie projection operator at the UP Film Center's Cinema and Videotheque. Dansoy is a multi-awarded visual artist known for his comic top view representations of Philippine popular culture. Daniel Coquilla and Dansoy are one and the same person. He is one of UP Diliman's pride.

**T**his 48 year-old man from Panabo City, Davao del Norte, loved to draw as a grade schooler. His subjects would be komiks characters, particularly Zuma and Varga, whose stories he'd faithfully read out of the komiks he would rent at the city public market.

"Sa likod ng shoe boxes ako nagdo-drawing, iyon ang sketchpad ko noon," said Dansoy.

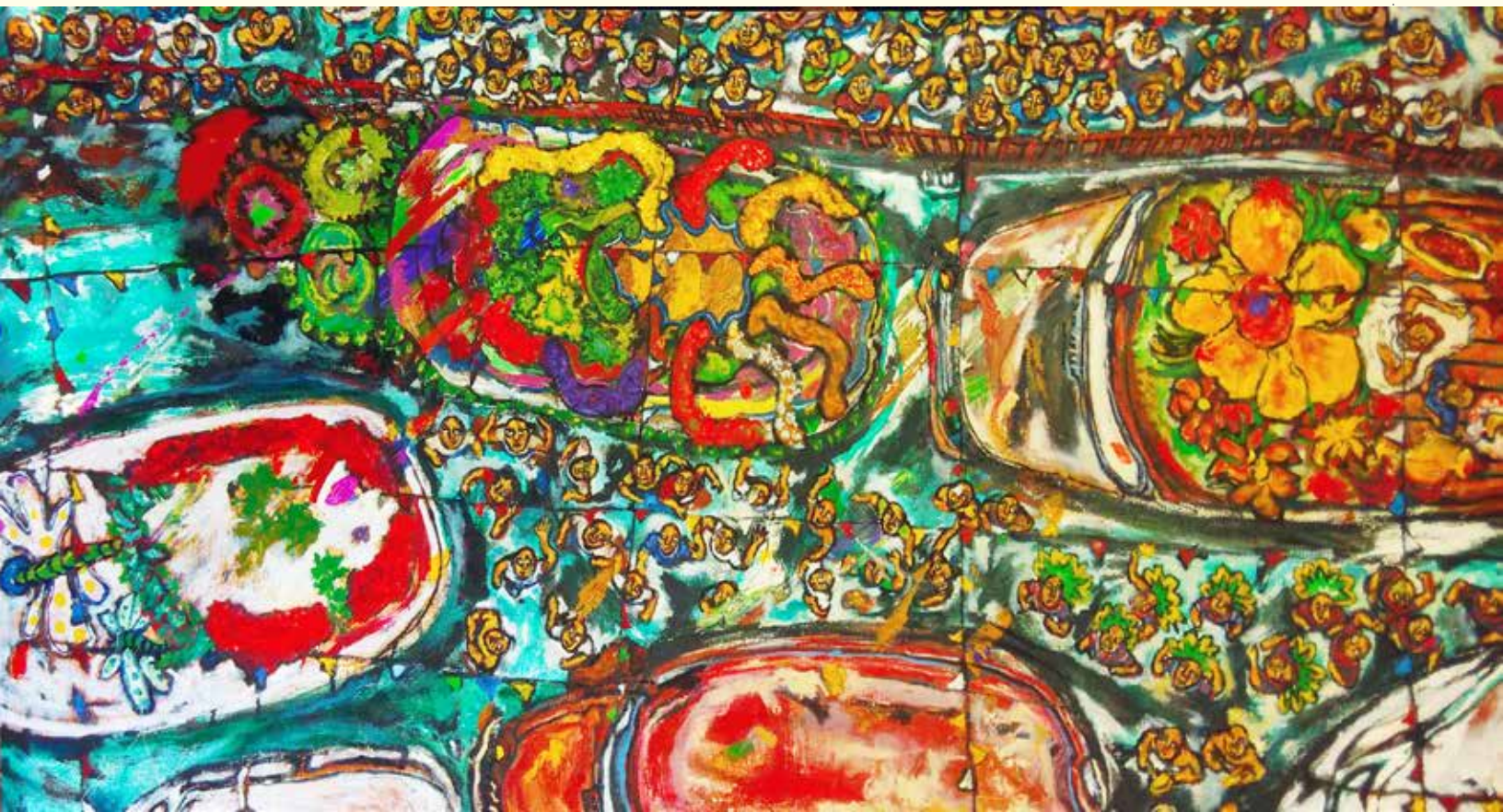
In March 1989, Dansoy came to Manila to attend a komiks illustration workshop. This workshop was conducted by Vincent Kua Jr, one of the country's popular komiks authors best known for his series 'Pokwang: Ang Maarteng Anak ni Aling Kikay' (Cecilia's Lullaby). The komiks illustration workshop was for four Sundays. A newbie in Manila, he initially stayed at the boarding house of his childhood friend who was studying in one of the universities along the University Belt area. To earn his keep and support his daily expenses, Dansoy worked as a softdrink delivery boy of his friend's landlord.

Among those who attended Kua's workshop was Fred Liongoren,





*Dansoy at his work station at the UPFI.*



*Panagbenga, oil on canvas, 61 x 122 cm, 2016*

an established visual artist and gallery owner. He was there to learn the "komiks style of drawing" because of his involvement in a commissioned project that needed that kind of drawing.

Liongoren and Dansoy struck a friendship that changed Dansoy's life.

"Naka-two sessions pa lang yata kami noon nang ipinakilala s'ya (Liongoren) ni Vincent (Kua) at pinagsalita sa workshop. A day after the workshop, pinapunta na niya ako sa kaniyang shop. Doon ko nakita na hindi ito shop kundi gallery pala. Ininterview ako. After ng interview, pumasok na ako sa kaniya kinabukasan," Dansoy said.

Dansoy worked as a gallery assistant at the Liongoren Art Gallery in Cubao, Quezon City and at the Art Walk in SM Megamall. He was in-charge of the lay-out and setting up of exhibits. He also assisted Liongoren in his studio works.

It was Dansoy's exposure to the Philippine contemporary arts that made him want to pursue a degree in fine arts.

"Noong na-expose ako sa mga works nila Dalena, Olmedo, Austria at ni Liongoren mismo, naiba ang aking inspirasyon. Fred (Liongoren) encouraged and helped me enter the UP College of Fine Arts (CFA)."

### UP Life

It was Liongoren who requested Prof. Nestor Vinluan, then CFA dean, to allow Dansoy to attend his class (while doing komiks illustration as a sideline) for two semesters of Academic Year (AY) 1989-1990. This served as Dansoy's preparation for the CFA Talent Determination Test (TDT). The TDT is a practical examination to showcase or determine the student-applicant's talent or proficiency in drawing.

In 1990, Dansoy took the CFA-TDT and passed. He stayed in the then Narra Residence Hall, where the UP Integrated School (UPIS) is now located. As a CFA student, Dansoy earned honors. He was recognized as a College Scholar in the second semester of his first year in CFA and won an Award of Excellence at the 24<sup>th</sup> Shell National Art

Student Competition in 1991.

### Signature drawing

His signature drawing (top view perspective) started in a class exhibit in 1992.

Artist Roberto Chabet, who was a faculty at the CFA and was one of Dansoy's professors asked Dansoy's class to submit 100 drawing studies. In one of the plates he submitted, he sketched a man looking upward while tending/handling his barbecue or grill stand.

Dansoy's top view perspective was inspired by the prevalent cooking show "Wok with Yan." Chef Stephen Yan would cook in front of a live audience. To capture the cooking demonstration, the camera man would shoot at the top of Yan's wok giving the audience a top view perspective. Dansoy's subjects would always look up so viewers would see their facial expressions.

"Yung artwork ko ngayon started with Mang Larry's isawan, doon sa tapat ng Kalayaan (Residence Hall). Iyon kasi ang meal ko noong student days ko. Noong nakita ni Prof.

Roberto Chabet 'yong drawing ko sinabi nya, 'Ito na ang i-paint mo.' From then on, iyon na ang naging signature ng drawings or artworks ko. 'Di ko nabalikan iyong usual na pagdo-drawing," explained Dansoy.

### Hardships and persistence

Dansoy's life as a UP student was not a walk in the park. Dansoy had a hard time acquiring the materials needed for his class plates, a requirement at the CFA. Added to that were his daily needs.

"Kahit beneficiary ako ng STFAP (Socialized Tuition and Financial Assistance Program), kulang pa rin para sa araw-araw na pangangailangan ko," Dansoy said.

The STFAP is the former financial assistance program UP set for its students.

In the summer of 1992, a classmate recommended Dansoy as an artist-illustrator at the National Institute for Science and Mathematics Education Development (NISMED). Luckily, the NISMED Publication Group immediately hired him on a contractual basis.



Dansoy's family

"Dahil wala pang gaanong computers that time, mostly manual ang paggawa namin ng illustrations sa books na pina-publish ng NISMED. Nagdo-drawing muna, then it is scanned," Dansoy explained.

While working at NISMED, he was allowed to enroll at CFA. His immediate supervisor was very supportive. In 1993, however, Dansoy had to stop attending CFA to focus on his work at NISMED.

"I decided to drop school dahil naramdaman ko na hindi ko na kayang matustusan ang mga materyales sa mga plates sa paghahanda sa thesis," Dansoy said.

In 1995, Dansoy was transferred to the NISMED Audio Visual Group to do animation for the Science and Mathematics video lessons for grade school and high school teachers. There, he learned or acquired the know-how of the non-linear video editing without formal training. He also became a UP contractual employee.

"Yong time na ginagamit na ang non-linear editing, ako na ang humahawak ng animation, kasi 'yong mga kasama ko sa audio-visual section ay hindi pa sanay or knowledgeable sa computer. Natutunan ko 'yong video editing through time kasi very interesting siya. Multitasking din ako. Minsan, ako ang audio technician kapag may function sa auditorium. Of course, pinamumunuan ko ang paggawa ng mga floats or parol para sa Lantern Parade."

His NISMED co-workers attest to his creativity and commitment to work.

"He can work beyond office hours without additional compensation just to meet the deadline and to have a very good output. That's his biggest contribution to us," said Ma. Lourdes S. Agad, Dansoy's immediate supervisor at the NISMED Audio Visual Group.

His dedicated service and hard work were not left unnoticed. In 1996, UP Diliman (UPD) awarded Dansoy the Gawad Chancellor Para sa Sining Biswal for winning the grand prize of the Art Association of the Philippines (AAP) Painting Competition.

Dansoy did not fully turn his back on his passion that is painting. He was

able to paint without sacrificing his work at NISMED.

"Hindi related 'yong work ko sa NISMED sa pagiging artist ko. Ang kagandahan naman ay marami akong natutunan na ibang gawain (sa NISMED). Kapag medyo stressful na 'yong trabaho sa opisina, ang stress reliever ko ay 'yong naghihintay na canvas para pagpinta ko. Natutuwa at ginaganahan ako kasi lumalabas 'yong creativity ko," Dansoy said.

### Art and accolades

A year after winning the grand prize at the 1996 AAP Painting Competition, Dansoy held his first solo show at the Liongoren Art Gallery. He proceeded to win two juror's choice (top 5 awards) at the 1997 Philip Morris Philippine and ASEAN Art Awards.

In 2006, Dansoy received the coveted Cultural Center of the Philippines' Thirteen Artists Award.

To date, he has more than 20 solo exhibitions, two of which were held in Singapore. Some of his works are in the collections of Emmanuel Torres, BenCab, Paulino Que, Charlie Cojuangco, the Singapore Art Museum and the Ateneo Art Gallery.

### Grateful

Multi-awarded Dansoy is still in UPD and is part of its workforce. Early this year, Dansoy left NISMED and transferred to UP Film Institute (UPFI). Dansoy is an asset to UPFI with his extensive background in technical work and in operating different kinds of equipment.

"Priority ko ang job ko dito sa UP lalo na ngayon na bago ang nature of work ko sa UPFI," Dansoy said.

All his awards he considers as achievements. However, being a tenured UP personnel is one he is most proud of.

He said working and living in UPD for more than 20 years is the best part of his life.

"Andito na lahat, work-life balance, free housing and education for my daughters. Kapag stressed ka, maglakad-lakad ka lang makikita mo 'yong greeneries at mga puno. May suporta din sa akin ang opisina in

making artworks, kaya tuloy pa rin ang aking pagiging pintor," said Dansoy.

Three of Dansoy's four daughters are studying at UPD. His eldest is a fourth year BA Philippine Studies major at the College of Arts and Letters, while his third and youngest daughters, are in Grades 11 and 4 at the UPIS, respectively. In 2006, UPD awarded him a housing unit.

"All this accomplishments would not be possible without UP. Mula noon hanggang ngayon tinitingala ko ang dangal at kagalingan ng UP," Dansoy said. ♦



*Imbayah, oil on canvas, 91 x 30.5 cm, 2016*

# THE LAST GLASSBLOWER

ANNA REGIDOR



Montenegro

Stepping into the Glass Laboratory of the Institute of Chemistry (IC) feels like traveling through a portal. One goes from the smooth cream colored ceramic tiles and open air of the hall into a small room that is more machine shop than laboratory.

**T**o the left is a granite-topped counter that stretches to the back, filled with plastic bins containing various sorted glass instruments, smelling faintly of grease and cleaning chemicals.

This is the domain of Nicolas Montenegro, known to friends and colleagues as "Mang Nick," UP Diliman's only scientific glassblower, who retired on Sept. 11, 2017 with no replacement.

### Scientific glassblowing

Part science and part art, scientific glassblowing is a specialty field where the end products are used in industry and scientific research.

According to the American Glassblowing Society, the craft has its roots in ancient Egypt where glass bottles and flasks for distillation were used to process and store medicine.

Through skill and the use of heat, scientific glassblowers can shape raw cylinders of glass tubing to create highly specialized, custom pieces of laboratory glassware or repair expensive or difficult-to-replace equipment.

It takes about two years of

study plus four to six years of apprenticeship to become skilled, and requires even more years of work to become a master at the craft.

A native of Surigao del Sur, Mang Nick got his start on glassblowing when he apprenticed at older brother Carlito's company B.E. Scientific Instruments at Novaliches, Quezon City.

"Kaya ako naengganyo dahil 'yong kapatid ko nga ay pursigido na matuto ako. Parang gusto niya rin ipasa sa kapatid niya 'yong kanyang talent para hindi na mapupunta sa ibang tao. At the same time naman mahilig din akong magbutingting. Ang pagkatao ko ay hindi pang-episina," Mang Nick said.

When Carlito retired early from the University in 1987 to focus on his company, he convinced the then 30-year-old Mang Nick, who had reservations about entering, to take his place. At the time, he was already working part-time at the Ateneo de Manila University, also as a glassblower.

"Siyempre 'pag pumasok ka sa UP kailangan handa ka. 'Yong may alam talaga. May talino ka,

mayroon kang abilidad. UP 'yan, hindi 'yan basta-basta. 'Yon ang pinaghandaan ko na kahit hirap sa gamit pero kailangan pagbutihin ko talaga ang mga gawain para hindi ko sila mabigo," Mang Nick said.

Mang Nick began working as a glassblower at salary grade 9 in the first floor of the Pavilion II of Palma Hall, known colloquially as "Chemistry Pavilion."

### Working in UP

Back at the Glass Laboratory, the far right of the room is dominated by several large pieces of machinery: the glassblowing lathe, a workbench with burners and two tall pressurized gas tanks containing acetylene and oxygen. The large lathe lies still, rust rendering it inoperative.

According to Mang Nick, when he first began working at the University he had to scrounge around for proper equipment as the ones he inherited from his brother were limited.

"Kasi kulang-kulang ako sa gamit na pang-execute. Maraming kulang ang [Institute of] Chemistry. Matagal na naming order mula sa kapatid ko 'yan, in-order niya na kailangan namin ng mga equipment, tools," he said.

Still, he made do with what he had and built a reputation as a hardworking, friendly employee. Manuel Zamora Dela Paz, a Laboratory Technician at the IC, recalls Mang Nick's generosity back when he first joined the IC.

"Noong dumating ako parang naging Kuya ko na siya [ang turing e]. Kasi noong dumating ako dito nang 1993, ako ang pinakabata. Sila ang mga tumulong sa akin gumabay para magawa ko nang tama 'yong trabaho ko. Lagi kaming libre. Siya ang medyo nakakaangat-angat e. Kasi marami siyang sideline 'ika nga noong panahon na 'yon,'" he said.

Dela Paz recalls that every Chemistry Month, Mang Nick would make a chemical garden for the



*Mang Nick demonstrating his glassblowing skills at a IC 1986 Alumni Homecoming.*

high school students who would visit the institute.

A chemical garden is an experiment in chemistry normally performed by adding metal salts such as copper sulfate or cobalt(II) chloride to a sodium silicate solution (aka waterglass). This results in growth of plant-like forms. Mang Nick would grow his in large glass jars.

According to IC Administrative Officer Mateo Sebastian, a rise in the price of chemicals and materials in 2005 forced the IC to begin reducing the scales of their experiments, lessening the need for large complicated glassware setups like the ones Mang Nick makes.

And in the evening of June 10, 2010, just as the College of Science was gearing up to transfer to their new home at the National Science Complex along Katipunan Avenue, tragedy struck as a blaze erupted in the Chemistry Pavilion, affecting portions of the second floor.

To reach the affected areas firefighters had to break through the first floor, including Mang Nick's laboratory and damaging the delicate equipment. The damage to the second floor also allowed rainwater to flood through, causing further destruction.

"Ang sumira talaga tubig-ulan. Kasi noong nasunog na, wala nang bubong, ang natira na lang second floor, bumababa na lahat ng tubig," he said.

The glass lathe, an important tool found in every scientific glassblowing shop, was one of the casualties of the incident. Its loss limited the range of glassware pieces he could produce.

The fire had also caused the IC administration to limit the use of gas tanks, replacing them with electric hot plates.

By the time they had settled into the National Science Complex, the glass laboratory could do little more than repair, store and

issue glassware to the students. Despite these setbacks, Mang Nick continued with his work as much as he could.

### Passing the torch

In 2015, Mang Nick began thinking about who would take his place. He approached then Department Head Prof. Titos Anacleto Quibuyen, PhD, about training several possible replacements.

The man agreed and the two began making preparations, listing down the equipment and materials they would need and scheduling training sessions every Monday.

Mang Nick wanted to make sure that his replacement would be up to the task, saying that he was looking for someone he could trust his skills set with.

"Kailangan standard apparatus ang gagawin natin hindi 'yong gagawa ka ng sarili mong design na hindi magagamit sa laboratory, pansarili lang. Palagay ko, isa sa

mga dapat na katangian ay ang maging mahigpit ka. Hindi ka makakaperwisyo ng mga tao sa labas,” he said.

The training stopped when Quibuyen retired in 2016 and no one approached Mang Nick about continuing the training.

He waited until orders come down from the new IC administration to continue the training, but his retirement arrived first.

According to Sebastian, it would be difficult to find and hire another glassblower because of the low pay.

“Wala ka talagang makukuha dito na glassblower dahil sa liit ng suweldo, walang tatanggap. Kasi noong nag-invite kami na mag-apply, walang lumapit e. Kasi hindi naman sila graduate ng college, salary grade 9 lang,” he said.

Not one of Mang Nick’s four children expressed an interest in following their father’s footsteps, something that he admits is one of his big regrets: “Nanghihinayang ako na wala akong mapagpapasahan ng gagawa.”

Sebastian estimates that with Mang Nick around, the IC saved about 50 to 70 percent in their

research budget just for the repairs he could do on expensive equipment like glass distillation setups.

“Pag nasira ito o nabasag ito, kayang-kayang i-restore ng glassblower. Mare-repair niya ‘yan kaysa bibili pa uli ng bago. Nandoon ‘yong savings. Bibili ka ng [distillation setup] mga P50,000; pag ni-repair mo ang cost niyan flame lang. Wala kang ibang material [instead of buying a whole setup],” he said.

Even with everyday glassware Mang Nick’s skills can extend the life of a single glass instrument that normally costs about P4,000.

### Impact

Even though he left his post with no one to continue his craft, Mang Nick is thankful for all that UP has given him.

“Alam mo mula nang ako’y pumasok sa UP, parang nabuksan ‘yong isip ko. Parang walang direksyon [ako] noong araw: kailangan mong maghanap ng trabaho, sideline-sideline para kumita. Pero noong ako ay napasok sa UP tumibay din ang pagkatao ko. Kaya mong magpamilya dito sa UP. Dito ko natutunan sa UP ‘yong [maging] disiplina. Kasi lahat nandito ‘yong mga teachers. Iyan

ang humuhubog ng pagkatao mo siyempre, pinaglilingkuran mo institusyon,” he said.

He and his wife Nimfa were also able to raise their four children in relative comfort and decency. All of them graduated from college, with two now living and working in Australia as an elementary school teacher and an employee for an energy firm.

“Alam ko kung hindi ako napunta sa UP hindi ko alam kung kaya kong pag-aralin ‘yong mga anak ko nang sabay sabay. Kaya maginhawa ang pakiramdam ko kapag nakikita ko ‘yong mga anak ko. Nagpasasalamat ako sa UP dahil kung walang UP, siguro hindi mapapagsabay-sabay sa pag-aaral ang mga ‘yan sa isang taon, paisa-isa lang muna,” he said.

Nowadays, Mang Nick keeps himself busy by attending to a small plot of land that his parents had left behind in Surigao del Sur and eagerly hoping for the arrival of his first grandchild.

“Baka ‘pag hindi ka gumawa, tatanda ka naman o kaya manghihina ang katawan kung hindi ka kikilos. Kaya kahit papaano kikilos ka para ma-extend pa ‘yong buhay mo lalo na’t wala pa akong apo. ‘yon lang naman ang hinahangad ko ngayon,” he said. ♦



Glass flasks stored in the laboratory.



Some of Mang Nick’s old glassblowing equipment, now in storage.

# BLKD

## laban sa mga balakid

BENITO V. SANVICTORES JR

*Nang makita ang mga idolo sa  
kanilang pagra-rap  
Nagsikap siyang maabot matagal  
nang pangarap  
Sa kanyang kaisipan 'di niya  
agad naapuhap  
Na ang tatahaking landas ay  
ang pagra-rap.*

**N**ahilig si Allen sa rap noong nasa high school siya dahil iyon ang uso sa mainstream. “Bandang 2000s iyon. Nagra-rap ako pero pangkatuwaan lang,” sabi ni Allen.

Mula 2006, nanood na siya ng rap battles sa Internet hanggang sa naging masugid na siyang tagahanga. Pebrero 2010 nang magkaroon ng FlipTop Battle League, ang liga ng paligsahan sa pagra-rap sa Pilipinas sa pangunguna ni Alaric Yuson, o kilala sa taguring Anygma. “Una akong lumaban sa FlipTop noong Hunyo 2010,” kuwento ni Allen. Nag-aaral pa siya ng kursong BS Community Development (BSCD) sa UP Diliman (UPD) nang taong iyon.

Naging impluwensiya niya sa pagsali ang mga iniidolong rapper sa mga liga sa US, UK at Canada. “Bagama’t fan ako ng rappers tulad nina Gloc-9 at Eminem, hindi nila ako naitulak na maging rapper din. Pero noong nahilig ako sa rap battle, the battle rappers made rapping look like a game, a sport. Naengganyo nila akong sumubok,” sabi niya.



“Walang malalim na kahulugan ang palayaw kong BLKD. Naglista lang ako ng mga salitang para sa ‘kin ay may dating, nag-eliminate, hanggang sa natira ang BLKD. Ganoon ang baybay kasi kung ang gagamitin ko ay ‘Balakid,’ mahirap akong i-search sa Internet kasi pangkaraniwang salita ito.”

### Ang rap battle

Sa loob ng tatlong rounds ay maglalaman ang dalawang rapper at ang time limit kada round ay pinagkakasunduan ng liga at mga kalahok. Sa simula ay Filipino at English lang ang mga wikang gamit sa FlipTop pero kalaunan ay puwede na ring gumamit ng ibang wika tulad ng Bisaya.

May mga laban na rin sa FlipTop na ang nagtapat ay dalawang rapper laban sa dalawang rapper at may nangyari na ring limang rapper laban sa limang rapper. May iilan na ring Royal Rumble battles kung saan limang rappers ang magkakalaban.

“Parang ang naging name of the game ay laitan or wasakan. Pero nililinaaw namin na bagamat iyon ang surface level, na entertainment factor niya talaga, at the very core, iyong husay sa pag-rap ang sinusukat namin, hindi lang iyong may nasabing nakakatawa o nakakasakit, panalo na.”

May tatlong elemento ang rap. “Una ay ang ‘content’, iyong nilalaman ng piyesa. Sunod ay ‘flow’ o daloy, ang elemento ng musika o iyong tugmaan at ritmo. Ang huli ay ‘delivery’ o kung paano mo itinanghal o in-execute ang piyesa mo,” paliwanag ni Allen. Ang tatlong elementong ito, pati ang audience impact, ang batayan ng mga hurado kung sino ang mananalo.

### Ang format

May dalawang ‘formats’ ang rap battle – ‘old school’ at ‘modern format’ o ‘new school.’ Ang ‘old school’ ay may ‘beats.’ “May nagpapatugtog na disc jockey, tapos freestyle or improvised ang pag-rap.



So kung ano ang naisip mo sa oras na iyon, iyon ang sasabihin mo," ani Allen. Ito ang unang format ng rap battle.

Ang 'modern format' ay kung saan wala na ang beat at handa na ang rapper pagsalang niya sa laban. Nagsimula ito noong mga huling taon ng 2000s. "Ito ang format na ginagamit ng FlipTop. Usually, one month before the battle, alam mo na kung sino ang kalaban mo para mapaghandaan mo siya. Kung gusto mong sumalang sa entablado nang wala kang baon, talagang freestyle, wala namang nagbabawal noon."

Tinanggal ang 'beats' dahil nagkakaroon ng "advantage" o "disadvantage" depende sa kung ano iyong 'beat.' "Some rappers sound better on certain styles and some rappers do bad on some styles."

*Taong 2012 nang nagtapos siya sa kolehiyo  
Community Development ang natapos na kurso  
Mga natutunang aral ginamit niyang konsepto  
Sa mga mensaheng pinarating sa mga tao.*

Nagtapos siya ng BSCD mula sa UPD College of Social Work and Community Development noong 2012. Dulot ng edukasyong UP, kursong tinapos, at Sinagbayan, isang organisasyong sinalihan sa UP, karaniwang tema ng kaniyang mga piyesa ay "iba't ibang isyung panlipunan – tanong sa kahirapan, batikos sa katiwalian, panawagan para sa katarungan, at mensahe ng pag-asa."

Ang Sinagbayan ay isang kultural na pang masang organisasyong nag-aalay ng sining para sa bayan sa pamamagitan ng mga dulang tumatalakay sa mga isyung panlipunan, partikular ng mga magsasaka.

Bukas ang kanyang kamalayan sa mga isyu ng mga magsasaka dahil "mula ako sa angkan ng mga magsasaka sa Naic, Cavite. Bagaman galing na ako sa henerasyong middle class at nakapag-aral, marami pa rin sa aming bayan ang nasa payak na estado ng buhay bilang mga magbubukid," saad ni Allen.

Matapos ang kolehiyo, nagtrabaho si Allen bilang Community Development Officer sa

UPD Office of Community Relations. Matapos ang dalawang anim na buwang kontrata, nagpasya siyang mag-full-time artist upang subukang gawing karera ang pagrap.

"Naglaan ako ng mga panukat at time frame para malaman kung tutuloy akong full-time artist, at nang hindi ako pumasa doon sa inaasahan ko, bumalik ako sa serbisyo sa UPD noong 2017," sabi ni Allen. Sa ngayon, nagtrabaho siya sa Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Development bilang isang Publication Circulation Officer.

### **Mga tagumpay**

Marami nang naipanalong rap battle si BLKD. "Hindi na ako updated sa record ko mula nang lumampas ako sa 10 laban," ani Allen. Ayon sa versetracker.com, isang website ukol sa rap battles statistics sa buong mundo, si BLKD ay mayroon nang 19 na laban sa kasalukuyan at napanood na nang 36,079,890 beses.

Nagsimula rin siyang magsulat ng mga kantang rap noong 2012. Sa tulong ng UPRISING, isang underground artist management and record label na binuo rin ni



TabaKK sa isang rali ng mga pesante sa Mendiola.

TabaKK TV Youtube Channel

Anygma, nakapaglunsad si Allen ng isang album noong Setyembre 18, 2015. "Gatilyo" ang pamagat ng unang album ni BLKD kasama si DJ UMPH, ang nagsilbing beat producer at arranger ng album, at ito ay naglalaman ng siyam na kanta. Ayon kay Allen, kinilala ang "Gatilyo" bilang Best Local Album noong 2015 ng "Vandals On The Wall," isang respetadong independent local music blog/online magazine.

Sa kasalukuyan, ang "Gatilyo" ay mapapakingan at puwedeng ma-download sa iTunes, Spotify at Bandcamp.

"Plano ko ring makagawa ng pangalawang album at magsulat ng mga kanta ngayong taon. Naghanap talaga ako ng administrative position na hindi kasing creative iyong hinihinging outputs para may oras ako sa pagsulat ng kanta," kuwento ni Allen. Sinikap niya rin sa UPD magtrabaho dahil sa Krus na Ligas sila nakatira ng asawa niya na isang librarian sa UP College of Law. "At saka andito na rin talaga ang sense of belongingness ko," dagdag niya.

*Nang makita ang ganda ng sining na nagustuhan  
Ninaiis niyang ibahagi ito sa ibang kabataan*

*Pagdating ng panahon nagtatag ng samahan  
"Tanghalan Bayan ng Kulturang Kalye" ang ngalan.*

## TaBaKK

Noong nag-uumpisa nang magkapangalan bilang BLKD, itinatag nina Allen at kaniyang mga kaibigan ang TaBaKK o Tanghalang Bayan ng Kulturang Kalye noong 2012. Ang TaBaKK ay "kolektibo ng mga street artist na nag-aalay ng kanilang sining para sa pagsusulong ng makatarungang panlipunang pagbabago," ani Allen.

Sa ngayon ay mayroong limang core member ang TaBaKK at humigit-kumulang 200 kasapi sa iba't ibang komunidad ng National



Ang mga bumubuo ng Bagsakang Bayan, isang dokumentaryo ng TaBaKK.

Capital Region.

Ang kanilang grupo ay nagbibigay ng mga libreng palihan ukol sa hiphop o rap sa mga maralitang komunidad. "Naiimbiba kami ng mga non-governmental organization o people's organization at naisip nila na puwedeng maging bahagi ng kanilang mga gawain ang adbokasiya at sining ng TaBaKK."

"Naniniwala kaming ang hiphop ay isang progresibong kultura at ang mga art form nito ay mabisang instrumento sa paglalabas ng mga saloobin, mga hinaing. Layon naming kasangkapanin ito sa pagsusulong ng makatarungang panlipunang pagbabago, be it in the community level or national level," ani Allen.

*Kaniyang hangaring kulturang kalye ay lumaganap  
Mas marami pang tao rito ay tumanggap  
Matutunan ang sining at maiaambag na ganap  
Sa panlipunang pag-unlad na ating pangarap.*

## Kulturang kalye

Sa pamamagitan ng TaBaKK, layon ni Allen at ng grupo niya na maipakilala ang mas malawak na mundo ng mga kulturang nabuo sa kalye o 'street culture.'

"Dahil may mga debate ngayon kung ano ang matuturing na hiphop, nilawakan na namin ang sakop ng aming collective. Hindi na lang hiphop kundi pati ibang porma

ng sining na nabuo sa kalye na hindi kinikilala ang sarili nila na hiphop," sabi ni Allen.

"Halimbawa ay iyong graffiti artists gamit ang spray cans. Mayroong street artists na hindi nakikita ang sarili nila as graffiti artists kasi iba ang medium nila tulad ng manila paper o stencil. Pero para sa amin, they are still part of the street culture. Ang dami na ring mga nasa gitna-gitna na hindi mo na rin ma-qualify. 'Singer naman iyon, hindi rapper.' Pero hiphop iyong style niya. 'Filmmaker ito at hindi naman hiphop art form ang film.' Pero iyong actual style niya ay hiphop-influenced. So may mga gray areas."

## Malalim na pag-aaral

"Sana ay magkaroon ng mas malalim na pag-aaral ukol sa hiphop ang mga nasa mundo ng hiphop. Maraming mga thesis at pag-aaral tungkol sa hiphop pero bihira iyong, sa aming pamantayan, ay lumubog talaga doon sa mismong kultura. Madalas, mukhang gawa lang ng akademikong parang nakatingin lang sa isang aquarium tapos nagde-describe. Hindi naman necessarily mali iyong sinasabi, pero hindi buo," paliwanag ni Allen.

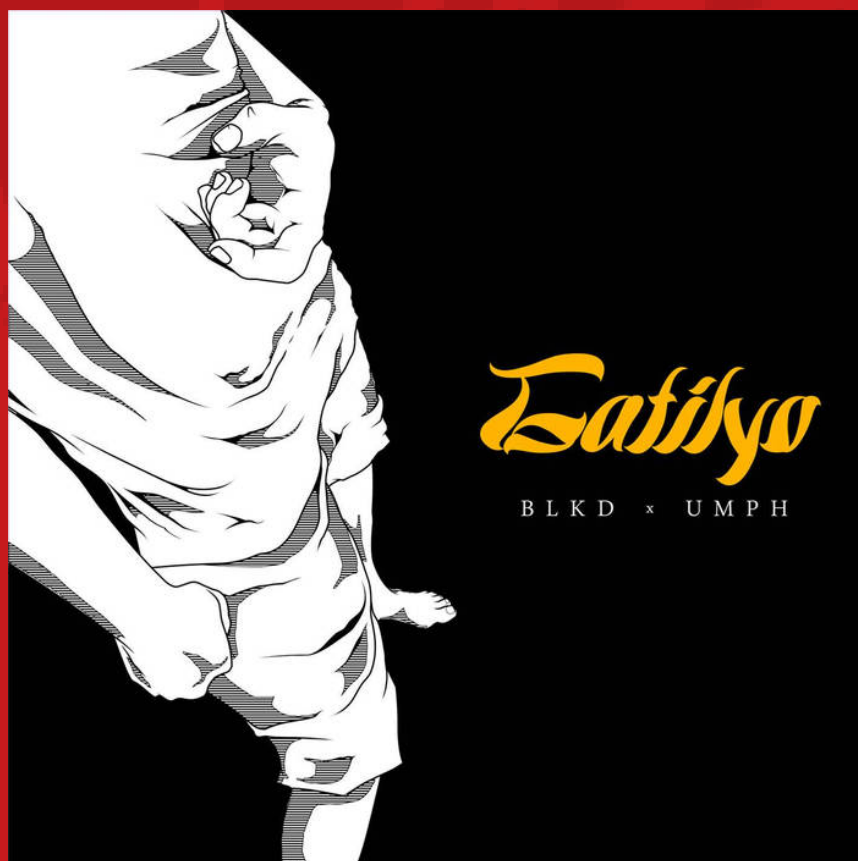
"Kung hindi man kami mismo iyong makapag-aral ay maiugnay man lang namin ang mga gustong mag-aral sa mga dapat kausapin at mga komunidad na puwedeng puntahan at maaral. Layon naming ma-historicize man lang ang local hiphop, ma-document kung ano ang mga nangyayari." ♦

# Gatilyo

ni BLKD

Luwal sa panahon ng nakapaniping kalayaan  
Nakakahon sa makasariling kabanalan  
Bulag sa paghahari-harian  
Tamad manindigan, tamad mangatwiran  
Tayo ang henerasyong nilululong sa luho  
Isip ay pilit kinukulong sa turo  
Ng kulturang kanya-kanya  
Upang mabusog sa pag-unlad na barya-barya  
Tayo ay inaaliw upang maging abala  
At nang hwag mag-alala sa pagsasamantala  
Hanggang malasakit ay masaid  
Tayo'y minamanhid sa sakit ng ating mga kapatid  
Lunod na lunod sa mga tsismis at balitang  
Luhod na luhod sa iilang pinapanigan  
Lugod na lugod silang nagbabait-baitan  
Pagka't maledukado, maledukado tayo

Pagmasdan ang bayan, kayamanan ang nasasakupan  
Nasaan ang katarungan? Panay sakahan, may kagutuman?  
Sa lawak ng lupa ba't may mga walang matirhan?  
Kahit magtyaga, walang mapala, natanikala na sa hirap na 'di maibsan  
Hungkag ang pag-unlad na sa sambayanan ay humahati  
At pag dahilang ng pag-angat ng iilan ay pagtapak sa nakararami  
Pagka't sa daing ay dahas ang cariño  
Pagmulat ay pagkasa, tayo ang Gatilyo



Cover ng album na "Gatilyo"

BLKD's Facebook page



I-scan ang QR code para  
mapakinggan ang kanta.