



## PEARL'S GOT TALENT REVEALS PATIENTS' HIDDEN TALENTS

By Rodeo V. Navarroza

A unique People Empowerment for Arthritis and Lupus (PEARL) program was held on a bright Sunday of October 7, 2018. Instead of the quarterly lay fora, a show entitled PEARL'S GOT TALENT was held as a venue for patients to showcase their unique talents. The four corners of the Cathedral Hall Building Auditorium of St. Luke's Medical Center in Quezon City was filled with chilling echoes and wonderful melodies.

Three esteemed judges evaluated the performers. These were: Drs. Leonid Zamora, Sheila Reyes, and Gerald Natanauan. Although doctors by profession, they are nonetheless veterans and gurus in the performing arts (in their own special way). Dr. Nicolo Badillo was the master of ceremonies.



PEARL's Got Talents Master of ceremonies, Dr. Nicolo Badillo, with the panel of judges, (left to right) Drs. Gerald Natanauan, Sheila Reyes, and Leonid Zamora.

First to showcase his singing talent was Mr. Virgilio Ganigan, who sang Celeste Legaspi's *Ikaw Lamang ang aking Ibigin*, a song that brought the millennials giggling. Ms. Mirna Guerra screamed at the top of her lungs while showing us some of her signature movements while she performs *Dancing Queen* by Abba.

The mother and daughter tandem of Ms Karen and Juliana Mercado sang *Never Enough*, because indeed Loren Allred's performance in the *Greatest Showman* was never enough for them. Ms. Zeny Estrada gave us another round of all-original rap song, this time accompanied by beat boxing. Arjhay Tejares brought us back from antiquity by singing a very good rendition of *Without You* by AJ Rafael.



Ms. Zeny Estrada (left) hears comments from judges after performing her rap song while Arjhay Tejares (right) sings a hit RnB music.

Khandis Kheanna Dy, despite being a little girl, sang with a very powerful voice that sent shivers down on everyone's spine with her version of *Bituing Walang Ningning* by Sharon Cuneta. Ms. Janet Leabres sang Carpenter's *Need to be in Love*, which made our Sunday more relaxing.



Khandis sings Sharon Cuneta's Bituing Walang Ningning, while Mr. Virgilio Ganigan performs Celeste Legaspi's Ikaw Lamang ang Ilbigin.

Despite strong associations with violence and misfortunes in karaoke bars, Mr. Ricardo Michael Ong did not hesitate to sing Frank Sinatra's *My Way*. Thankfully, no one was harmed after his performance. This might have been mitigated when Ms. Regilyn Palana expressed her strong faith when she sang *Jesus sa Buhay Ko*. Ms. Raven Rivera confidently sang Alicia Keys' *If I ain't got you* with her soft and sweet voice. Also confidently showcasing her singing talent was Ms. Daisy Cabugao, who outperformed Melissa Manchester with her own rendition of *Looking through the Eyes of Love*. Last but not the least, Ms. Ronalyn Cadiva beautifully sang Little Mermaid's soundtrack *Part of your world*.



Mother and daughter Karen and Juliana Mercado sings Never Enough, while Ms. Mirna Guerra sings and dances with Dancing Queen.

The Queen Bee Dancers showcase their dancing talents to the tune of *Give Love* which made the talent show more diverse. Although not part of the competition, some patients performed intermissions to fill the gap in between segments of the show.



The competition was definitely tight, but winners have to be chosen. After intensive scrutiny by our esteemed judges, those who made it to the Grand Finals were: Arjhay Tejares, Karen and Juliana Mercado, Daisy Cabugao, and Reggie Palana.



Contestants, judges and the master of ceremonies of PEARL'S GOT TALENT gather onstage for a picture-taking.

More than 60 patients and companions attended the event. PEARL activities are organized through Lupus-Inspired Advocacy (LUISA) of the Rheumatology Educational Trust Foundation, Inc. This was made possible through the combined efforts of Rheumatology fellows, consultants and staff of University of Santo Tomas and St. Luke's Medical Center.