

# PRA ANNUAL CONVENTION GOES TO CEBU!

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Finally, after two years of virtual convention, the Philippine Rheumatology Association-Cebu Chapter took the challenge of hosting a hybrid convention. Last June 8-11, 2022 was a remarkable event for the Rheumatologists as they came together virtually and physically to celebrate the most anticipated time of the year. The Rheumatology fellows from different training institutions were given the privilege to attend this year's convention in Seda Hotel, Cebu City. The theme "Bridging the New Normal" was very appropriate as we transitioned to the new normal in the health care industry.



On the first day of the convention (8 June 2022), the first participants wore their finest barong and filipiniana attires beaming with pride as the opening ceremonies commenced. An inspirational message was addressed by Dr. Diana Payawal, PCP President followed by the opening remarks of Dr. Juan Javier Lichauco, PRA President. The induction of the new PRA members and awarding of Certificate of Accreditation to the different training institutions came after.



"Promoting Resilience on the Road to the New Normal" was the topic for this year's Dr. Lourdes Manahan Memorial Lecture with Mr. Adrian Ding as the keynote speaker. His talk was very light, engaging and motivational. Other topics on the first day of convention include the Updates on Diagnosis and Management of Connective Tissue Disease Associated ILD by Prof. Oliver Distler of Germany, Updates from Global Rheumatology Alliance: COVID-19 Philippine Data by Dr. Geraldine Zamora, and lastly, Treat to Target Axial Spondyloarthritis Spectrum: A Clinical case discussion by Dr. Lai-Shan Tam of Hong Kong.

On the second day (9 June 2022), topics revolved around Bridging to New Technologies. Lectures included were Practical Imaging for Vasculitides, Real World Experience with JAK-inhibitors for RA Management, Challenges with Assessment in Tele-rheumatology, Preventing Bad Outcomes in Non-radiographic Axial Spondyloarthritis, Philippine Map of Axial Spondyloarthritis, and Practical Applications of Musculoskeletal Ultrasound for the Young and the Young Ones. Expert lecturers for the day were Dr. Aileen Agbanlog-Dimatulac, Prof. Andrea Rubbert-Roth of Germany, Dr. Liza Traboco, Prof. Atul Deodhar of the United States, Dr. Heizel Reyes and PRA president himself, Dr. Juan Javier Lichauco. A comprehensive lecture on Glucocorticoid Induced Osteoporosis was likewise given by Dr. Millicent Tan-Ong. Ending the 2nd day of convention was the Introduction of Dance Medicine in the Philippines by Dr. Sandra Tankeh-Torres as she highlighted their journey in this new and promising field.

The theme of the third day of the convention (10 June 2022) was Bridging to New Therapeutics. Topics include New for Old in Gout: New Drugs for an Old Disease, New Indications for an Old Disease as discussed by Dr. Julie Li-Yu, A Multi-Modal Approach in the Management of Osteoarthritis in the New Normal by Dr. Geraldine Zamora, Second Life: DMARDs Repurposed by Dr. Evan Vista, Optimizing Management of Spondyloarthropathies with Extra-articular Manifestations by Prof. Fariz Yahya of Malaysia, Multitargeted Treatment for Lupus Nephritis: Is it Time? by Dr. Leonid D. Zamora and Management of Myalgias, Arthralgias, and Pain in COVID-19 Infections, Long Covid, and Post Vaccinations by Dr. Eric Jason Amante.





On the 3rd day was also the very much awaited “Mask-querade” fellowship night where the delegates were entertained by the world class performances of our dear kababayans from Cebu. And of course, not to mention, the much more anticipated big raffle prizes. The main event was the tribute to Cebu’s Rheumatology icon, Dr. Merle Y. Barba and the big reveal of the different training institution’s TikTok entries. UP-PGH was awarded grand winner for the TikTok contest taking home Php 20,000 while other training institutions including UST Hospital took home a consolation price of Php 10,000. More importantly, fellows were able to bond and be inspired with the biggest names in Philippine Rheumatology who were physically present in Cebu including Dr. Merle Y. Barba and Dr. Ester G. Penserga of Manila.



The theme on the last day of the convention (11 July 2022) was Bridging to Life in the New Normal. The Annual Research Forum kicked off the day with the presentation of the fellows' most interesting cases and original research papers. Of course, COVID-19 concerns will always be the bread and butter of the new normal. Topics on COVID-19 included Dealing with the Vulnerable: Treating Kids with Rheumatic Disease during the Pandemic by Dr. Leonila F. Dans and guest IDS speaker Dr. Mitzi Marie M. Chua tackled on COVID-19 Variants and Vaccines. Health and wellness topics were also discussed by Dr. Mary Karen V. Woolbright: Nutrition for Patients with Rheumatic Disease, Dr. Ester G. Penserga: Muscle and Bone Health, and Dr. Glenda Basubas: Mental Health. The event's last lecture was on the Evolution in the Treatment of Psoriatic Arthritis by Dr. Evan Vista. Formally closing this year's PRA Annual Convention was Dr. Josephine Abao-Lim, Scientific Committee Chair.

Right after the event, fellows from the different training institutions had post-convention get to know activities at Tambuli Beach Resort. Through this event, we, fellows got to strengthen bonds for the purpose of more efficiently achieving harmony, common goals, and a successful career. Through this activity, we got to know our co-fellows better and collaboration rather than competition was reinforced. We got to build a firm foundation of purpose in rheumatology and build trust and rapport amongst each other.



Two years after the wrath of COVID-19, we see ourselves emerging and adapting to the “new normal”. The 28th Annual PRA Convention with its theme Bridging to the New Normal was the perfect tool for us to tackle the complex problems of COVID-19 and Rheumatology, highlighting recovery and resilience. Through this continuous medical education, no one gets to be left behind.

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