



# CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE AND CAMARADERIE: HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 30TH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE PHILIPPINE RHEUMATOLOGY ASSOCIATION

By: Marjorie Faye Nierra, MD

From February 28 to March 02, 2024, the halls of EDSA Shangri-la, Manila echoed with the vibrant exchange of knowledge, camaraderie, and celebration as the Philippine Rheumatology Association (PRA) hosted its 30th Annual Convention. Themed "PRO Rheum: Past, PREsent, and PROspects in Rheumatology," the convention brought together esteemed professionals, budding rheumatologists, and passionate advocates in the field of rheumatology.

The convention commenced with a dynamic showcase of intelligence and innovation, as Rheumatology fellows presented their compelling case studies and researches. Topics ranged from lupus nephritis, calcium pyrophosphate deposition to dermatomyositis, setting the stage for an intellectually stimulating experience.



The opening ceremonies unfolded with the incumbent PRA president, Dr. Emmanuel C. Perez's inspiring remarks. The induction of new fellows in Rheumatology and the accreditation of two training institutions, University of Santo Tomas Hospital and Philippine General Hospital, marked significant milestones in the association's journey.

The Dr. Lourdes Manahan Memorial Lecture, delivered by Dr. Minerva P. Calimag, delved into the complexities of Universal Health Care, sparking thought-provoking discussions on its accomplishments and challenges. The session, titled "5 Years Since, What Now UHC," left participants pondering the future of healthcare in the Philippines.



The subsequent days were filled with enriching sessions, including meet-the-expert sessions led by Dr. Jemima Albayda, symposiums on gout, osteoporosis, non-pharmacologic interventions, lectures on biologics, AI in healthcare, and innovations in rheumatologic disease management.



As the convention progressed, attendees were treated to an unforgettable Alumni Night, where UST Rheumatology graduates and trainees gathered to reminisce and celebrate their shared journey. The event was graced by the presence of Dr. Tito P. Torralba, adding a touch of nostalgia and solidarity to the evening.



The convention culminated in the PRA Business Meeting, where new leaders, including PRA President Dr. Auxencio Lucero and Pediatric PRA President Dr. Christine Bernal, were inaugurated. The meeting also saw the recognition of outstanding oral and poster presentations, highlighting the talent and dedication of young rheumatologists.

As the curtains drew to a close, the Rheumatology family came together to dance the night away at the Fellowship Night. Amidst laughter and joy, fellows and consultants showcased their talents, proving that Rheumies are not only dedicated professionals but also vibrant individuals who know how to have fun.

The 30th Annual Convention of the Philippine Rheumatology Association was a testament to the dedication, passion, and camaraderie that define the field of rheumatology. As professionals continue to collaborate, innovate, and celebrate achievements, the future of rheumatology in the Philippines shines bright with promise and possibility

