

APLAR 2025
Fukuoka, Japan
3-7 September 2025



BREAKING LIMITS, BUILDING BRIDGES: ADVANCING RHEUMATOLOGY TOGETHER

by: Dr. Sephora Matilos and Dr. Norwin Philip Bation

Science, innovation, and equity at the heart of APLAR 2025

With rheumatic diseases affecting millions across Asia-Pacific, **APLAR 2025** proved to be an **important platform where science, innovation, and collaboration came together** to tackle this challenge. Held from **September 3 to 7 in Fukuoka, Japan**, with the **theme “Go Beyond Harmony”**, this global gathering embodied APLAR’s mission to unite diverse voices in the fight against rheumatic diseases and its vision of a future where innovation, collaboration, and equity transform patient care. By fostering cross-border partnerships and sharing knowledge without boundaries, the congress reaffirmed that the challenges of rheumatology are universal and that the solutions must be pursued collectively. At this international congress, the **Philippine Rheumatology Association (PRA) stood in solidarity with APLAR**, reaffirming their shared mission and vision for elevating rheumatology.



27th Asia-Pacific League of Associations for Rheumatology Congress

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Thomasians on the Go at APLAR 2025

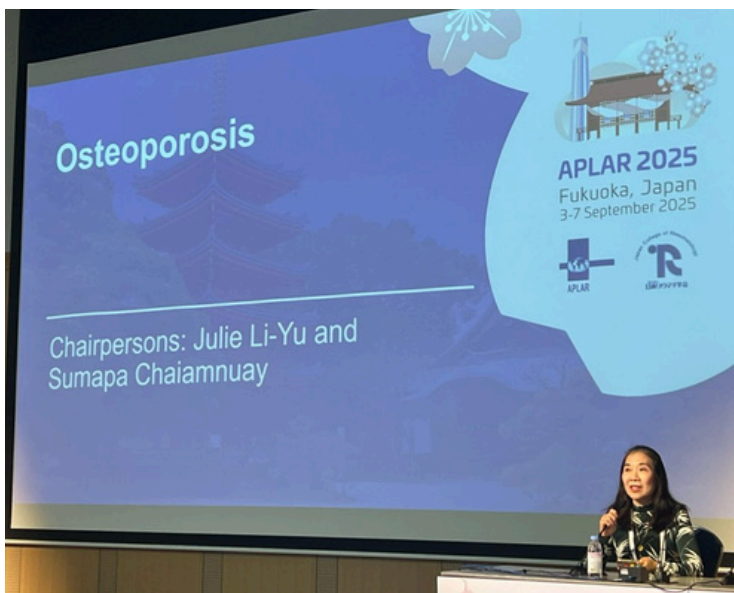
APLAR 2025
PRE-CONGRESS WORKSHOP

Updates and Case Studies in SLE

1330 – 1610H Thursday 04 September 2025, Rm 411-412 FICC



Thomasians made their mark at APLAR 2025, taking part in sessions that spotlighted groundbreaking research and practical advances in rheumatology. **Dr. Sandra Navarra** led the session on Updates and Case Studies in SLE, with **Dr. Sephora Matilos** and **Dr. Norwin Philip Bation** presenting two complex cases. In the following days, **Dr. Julie Li-Yu** spearheaded a key discussion on osteoporosis, while **Dr. Christine Bernal** delivered a presentation on Redefining Treatment: Multitarget Approaches for Difficult-to-Treat Pediatric Lupus Nephritis.

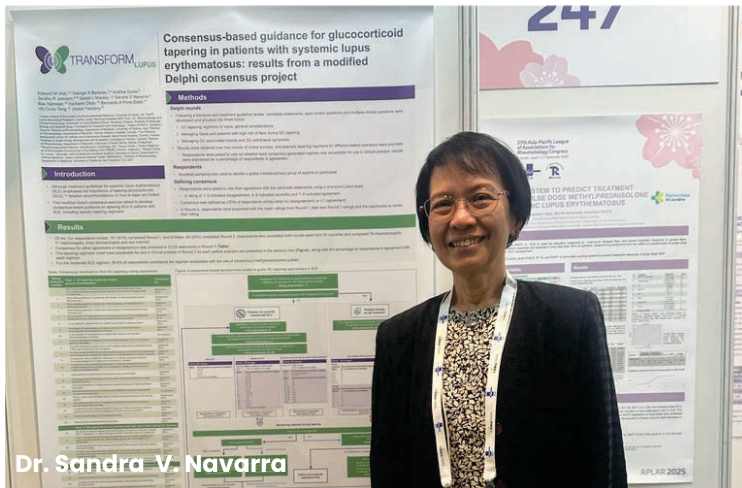


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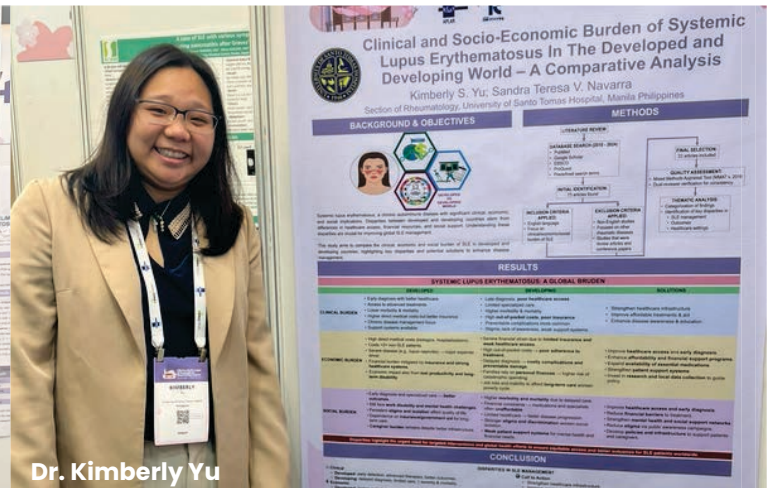
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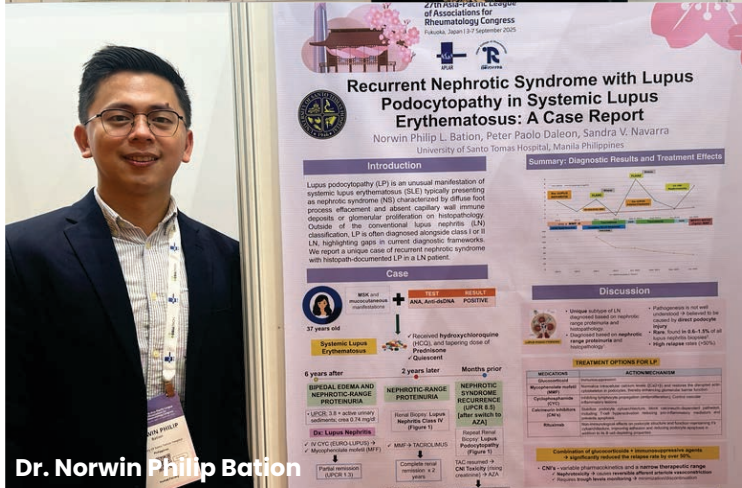
Beyond their oral case presentations, **Thomasian rheumatologists and fellows-in-training showcased valuable contributions through the poster sessions**, where they presented noteworthy clinical cases and significant research findings. Their work reflected the strong commitment of the Philippine delegation to shaping rheumatology through research, innovation, and collaboration at APLAR 2025.



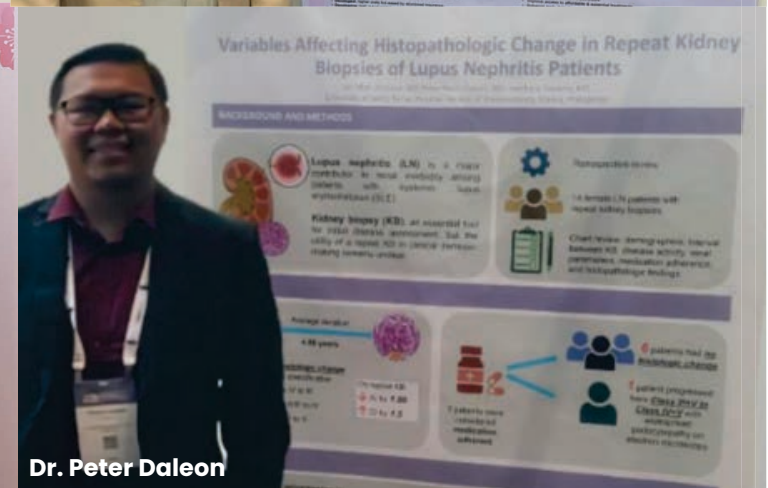
Dr. Sandra V. Navarra



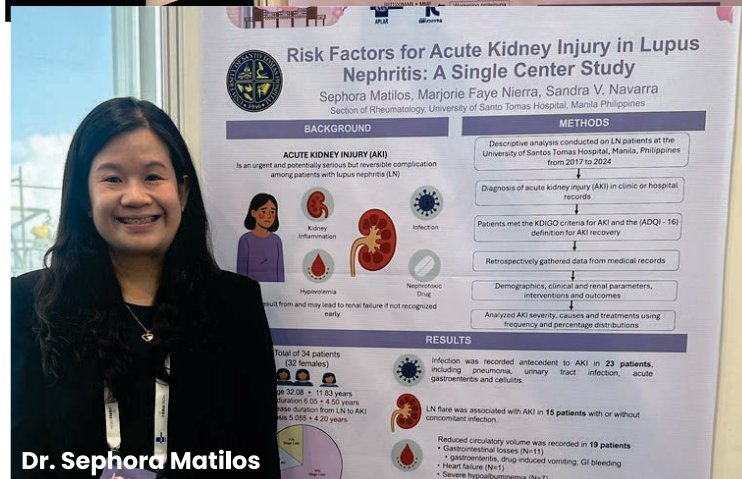
Dr. Kimberly Yu



Dr. Norwin Philip Bation



Dr. Peter Daleon



Dr. Sephora Matilos



Dr. Adrienne Katrin Guiang-Valerio

Dr. Christine Bernal
Dr. Ma. Theresa Collante



Thomasian at the Forefront of SLE Discussions



In its concluding sessions, the congress featured a scientific discussion on **“SLE: Comorbidities and Less Common Manifestations”** which highlighted difficult but often overlooked aspects of lupus. Chaired by Dr. Chi Chiu Mok (Hong Kong) and Dr. Kenji Oku (Japan), the session featured experts tackling bone health, neuropsychiatric disease, and antiphospholipid syndrome (APS) in SLE.

Dr. Sandra Navarra (University of Santo Tomas, Philippines) opened with a lecture on osteoporosis and avascular necrosis, stressing prevention and vigilant monitoring in patients on long-term glucocorticoids. **Dr. Alberta Hoi (Australia)** followed with updates on neuropsychiatric lupus, underscoring its complexity and the value of multidisciplinary care. The session closed with **Dr. Kenji Oku (Japan)** on thrombotic and obstetric APS, presenting current anticoagulation and pregnancy management strategies.



The discussions reinforced the importance of early recognition, comprehensive care, and international collaboration. **Dr. Navarra’s participation once again placed Thomasians at the forefront of advancing lupus care in the Asia-Pacific.**



Passing the Torch: Closing Ceremony of APLAR 2025

The Asia Pacific League of Associations for Rheumatology (APLAR) Congress 2025 came to a memorable close on September 7, 2025, in Fukuoka, Japan. The **turnover of leadership** from the **APLAR President 2024 (Professor Tsutomu Takeuchi)** to the **APLAR President 2025 (Dr. Jose Paulo Lorenzo)** was a highlight of the closing ceremony in Fukuoka, symbolizing both continuity and renewal within the organization.



Continuing Legacy

A symbolic handover to the **next host country (Korea)** was one of the most anticipated moments of the ceremony. With a spirit of continuity and anticipation, the baton was passed, inviting delegates to reconvene at **APLAR 2026**, where the mission of advancing rheumatology will continue to grow.

