



PHILIPPINE PSYCHIATRISTS IN AMERICA

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE PPA

PPA OFFICERS 2005-2006

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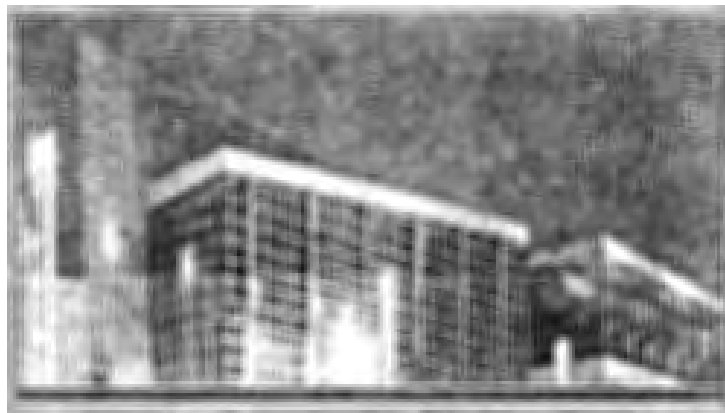
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Melanie Akalal, MD

Advisers:
Norma Panahon, MD
Albert Gaw, MD
Rena Nora, MD

ATLANTA 2005 ANNUAL MEETING A SUCCESS!

In the evening of May 24th 2005 at the Embassy Suites Centennial Legacy Ballroom in Atlanta, GA. members of the Philippine Psychiatrists in America once again gathered as an organization for our annual meeting. It was a great pleasure seeing everyone's enthusiasm and experiencing the camaraderie we've come to expect every year. We were particularly delighted with the arrival of new members who are either early career psychiatrists or in residency training. Our efforts to reach out to fellow Filipino psychiatrists have paid off! We hope others who were unable to come this year will make it in the next annual meeting.

The evening's program began with a review of the past year by outgoing president Dr. Francis Sanchez. The year's highlight was the creation of the PPA website, which was given a well-deserved applause. The membership directory has been updated using modern technology. We are once again opening our mailboxes to find latest issue of the PPA newsletter.



Georgia World Congress Center-APA 2005

We are recognized as a component society of the American Psychiatric Association and an active member of the Caucus of Asian American Psychiatry. We are networking with the Philippine Psychiatric Association, whose president, Dr. Sonia Casiro-Rodriguez, took time to join us that evening. Lastly, our advisers, Drs. Albert Gaw, Norma Panahon, and Rena Nora, were given recognition for devoting their time, effort, and resources to make the past year a success.

The keynote lecture by Dr. Albert Gaw followed. Entitled "The Role of GABA in Schizophrenia", it was highly informative and relevant in this era of

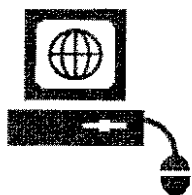
modern psychiatry.

Then came the all-important election of officers. This year's election was unusual because the incoming president was elected another term, hence the title "President-elect-elect". This was decided only after a lively and spirited discussion, which at one point even called for updating our by-laws.

Dr. Castro-Rodriguez, president of "the other PPA", personally delivered her message to us, calling for "...exchanging ideas for the advancement of Philippine mental health." She also invited us to their upcoming annual convention to be held in Palawan, Philippines.

As in the past years, Drs. Jack McIntyre, past president of the APA, and Jeffrey Akaka, APA Assembly's deputy representative of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian Psychiatrists, graced the occasion with

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www.PPA-online.org

Visit our website to see more photos of the meeting!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

2005 Institute on
Psychiatric Services
October 5-9, 2005
San Diego, CA

2006 APA Annual
Meeting
May 20-25, 2006
Toronto, Canada

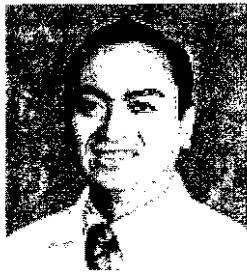


Keynote Speaker Dr. Albert Gaw

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

ATLANTA 2005...

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As I look back at our successful annual meeting last May, two things came to my attention that set goals for my term as president. First, we must be more represented in discussions of issues in psychiatry. Second, we need to update our constitution to adapt to changes in the way our organization has been running in recent years.

As Filipino psychiatrists, we have our unique take on issues affecting our profession. It is therefore important that we actively take part in discussion of such issues. Is there legislation allowing psychologists to prescribe in the state where you practice? What can you say about Tom Cruise's anti-psychiatry comments? Are those running for office in the APA supportive of our interests? How do the recent FDA changes in medication labels affect your practice? I would like PPA members to have an open discussion on these and other relevant issues in psychiatry. Feel free to send your comments through our website. Hopefully at some point we can create online discussions or email groups.

By being better organized and structured, we can create and maintain open lines of communication

among our members. This brings me to my next topic.

In the past few years I've been with the PPA, we have not strictly followed the procedure in electing our officers (but we've always ended up with very capable officers). Whether we should go back to following the constitution by the letter (election by ballot) or come up with an alternative may be up for discussion. During our last meeting, we had a lively exchange of ideas regarding the tenure of the president and the rules of succession. As for other

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constitution matters, did you know that in the current version, there are proposed amendments that have neither been approved or disapproved? Did you know that the secretary should succeed the President-Elect? Did you know that the tenure of the Treasurer should be 2 years? I would encourage reviewing (click on "Constitution and By-Laws" in our website) and discussing these matters, so hopefully as our next meeting approaches, we will come up with some resolution.

Not to get lost in every single detail of our constitution, my approach is to move forward with the goals and objectives of our organization while putting into effect gradual changes so that eventually our constitution will truly reflect our activities.

To ensure continuity in our organization, we must have a Board of Governors. This is composed of current and past officers who will govern the affairs of the organization and help make the transition smooth during turnover of officers every year.

I also would like to form committees to give our members an opportunity to contribute to the organization in activities that best suit their interests. These would be in the areas of membership, publication, website development, political action, special projects, etc.

There is obviously a lot of work ahead, but I remain very grateful to the officers in the past few years who already started the work by reaching out to our members and increasing the interest and support in our organization. ■

(Write your comments to: PPA, 2861 Compton Place, Tracy, CA 95377)

their presence. They both pointed out that Filipinos are underrepresented in APA affairs and challenged us to play a more active role and let our voices be heard as an organization.

The program concluded with remarks by incoming president Dr. Nestor Riel, who aims to continue the great progress made in the past year in re-energizing the organization and promoting professional growth and camaraderie among our members. In his words, "...my job is to listen to you, my fellow members, and to act accordingly to see to it that PPA becomes the organization we want it to be."

Thank you to those who attended and helped make this event a success. To those who could not be with us, we hope to hear from you soon. Thank you to those who paid their annual dues and contributions. Thank you to our sponsors. To all current and future PPA members, we hope to see you in Toronto in 2006! ■



Induction of officers ▲

Former PPA president Dr. Norma Panahon with Drs. Jack McIntyre and Jeffrey Akaka of the APA ▼



