

Official Newsletter of
Rotary Club of Manila

balita

ISSUE NO. 3979 | SEPTEMBER 14, 2023

GUEST OF HONOR AND SPEAKER



HON. ERNESTO V. PEREZ

Director General (Secretary)
Anti-Red Tape Authority
Office of the President

Kabalita

The Constitution expressly recognizes the indispensable role of the private sector in advancing national economic development. It behooves the government, therefore, to ensure that rational and efficient processes are adopted and strictly implemented to enable the private sector to conduct business with facility and ease. Based on the country's ranking in the World Bank's latest Doing Business (DB) Report, there is still much to be done and improved. Statutorily tasked to lead the charge in this regard is the Anti-Red Tape Authority (ARTA), which must unrelentingly pursue its mandate and mission "to transform the way government services are delivered through whole-of-nation approach, innovation, and good regulatory practices towards bureaucratic efficiency."



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PROGRAM TIMETABLE

11th Weekly Membership Meeting Rotary Year 2023-2024

Thursday, September 14, 2023 12:30PM
MANILA POLO CLUB

Moderator: RTN. SEBASTIAN ARSENIO R. "Basti" LACSON

PART I

12:00 PM	Registration	
12:30 PM	Call to Order	PRES. RAFAEL M. "Raffy" ALUNAN III
	Invocation	STAR RTN. PHILIP B. WOMBWELL
	Philippine National Anthem	AVP of RCM Members
	Rotary Club of Manila Hymn	RCM WF Music Chorale
	The Four (4) Way Test	ABLA TEODORO Y. "Teddy" KALAW
	Acknowledgment of Guests	
	Welcome Song	RCM WF Music Chorale
	<i>RC Manila Birthday Celebrants</i>	
	Sept. 09 Rtn. Claver Ramos Rtn. Bollie Bolton Rtn. Randy Del Valle	
	Sept. 11 PD Art Lopez	
	Sept. 13 Rtn. Che Soler Rtn. Rami Chahwan	
	<i>Maligayang Bati / Happy Birthday Song</i>	RCM WF Music Chorale



PROGRAM TIMETABLE

PART II

1:00 PM	President's Time	PRES. RAFAEL M. "Raffy" ALUNAN III
1:05 PM	Introduction of the Guest of Honor and Speaker	RTN. FRANCISO D. "Paco" MAGSAYSAY
Guest of Honor and Speaker		
Address		
HON. ERNESTO V. PEREZ		
Director General Anti-Red Tape Authority		
1:30 PM	Open Forum / Q&A	
1:50 PM	Presentation of Certificate of Appreciation	PRES. RAFAEL M. "Raffy" ALUNAN III DGE JOAQUIN C. "Jackie" RODRIGUEZ, SR. Programs Committee Chairman
2:00 PM	Adjournment	PRES. RAFAEL M. "Raffy" ALUNAN III

GUEST OF HONOR AND SPEAKER



ATTY. ERNESTO V. PEREZ, CPA

Director General (Secretary)
Anti-Red Tape Authority
Office of the President

Atty. Ernesto V. Perez, CPA is the Director General, with the rank of Secretary, of the Anti-Red Tape Authority (ARTA), an agency attached to the Office of the President created by Republic Act (RA) No. 11032 or the *Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act of 2018*, which amended RA 9485 or the Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007.

Director General Perez took his oath of office and assumed as head of ARTA on 14 November 2022. He was also the first appointed official (Deputy Director General) of ARTA in 2018 and spearheaded the operationalization of the agency and the development of its major initiatives.

Prior to ARTA, he was the Assistant Secretary of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) – Consumer Protection Group. He served in a concurrent capacity as OIC-Director of the Bureau of Philippine Standards where he promulgated the development of 108 new standards and revision of 151 Philippine National Standards aligned with the international standards of ISO/IEC and good regulatory practices of the World Trade Organization. He likewise served as Chairperson of the DTI-Steel Task Force where he led the investigation of the biggest steel importation in the country.

Director General Perez was a litigation lawyer for almost thirty (30) years prior to joining government service. He obtained his law degree from the Ateneo Law School and was among the top 15 in the 1986 bar exams. He acquired his bachelor's degree in Business Administration Major in Accountancy from the University of the Philippines–Visayas in 1980 and passed the Certified Public Accountant (CPA) Board examination in the same year.

EDITOR'S NOTE

EASE OF DOING BUSINESS. There is no doubt that the country needs to improve its business climate and attract foreign investments to be able to propel its economy. For instance, one important driver of economic growth is foreign direct investments, which is a “category of cross-border investment wherein an investor resident in one economy establishes a lasting interest in and a significant degree of influence over an enterprise resident in another economy.” To attract FDIs, and also to encourage local business enterprises to expand their businesses here, there is, among others, the need to stage a healthy environment for them to flourish. When there is gridlock in government processes, when regulators change the rules in the middle of the game, and when the climate is not made conducive for commercial growth, there is no way the country will be able to attract businesses. Ensuring the ease and facility of doing business in our country (among many others) is, therefore, an imperative.



Raoul C. Creencia
Editor-in-Chief, balita

Truth be told, there is still a lot of work to be done in this regard.

Fortunately, the Anti-Red Tape Authority (ARTA) was created, which is clearly an answer to the call of the times. The private sector has been aching and wanting to have a more consistent, coordinated, efficient and expedient manner of government response and action to its various requests and requirements; and the creation of ARTA is an answered prayer. For business entities which heavily depend and rely on prompt government approval and action to pursue its various goals and undertakings, the creation of an agency mandated to ensure the ease of dealing with the various government offices is absolutely a welcome development.

Red tape of 18th century England, the tape that was used to bind official documents, has long been a despised symbol of government inefficiency. Although the physical red cloth tape has long been disused, and government files are no longer bound by these tapes, the hated conditions and practices they represent continue, keeping the symbol alive. Pursuant to its mandate, ARTA must constitute and maintain an army of public servants to combat inefficiency, and look into bureaucratic rules that pile up without rhyme or reason. It is hoped that, through ARTA's intervention, the bureaucracy will move more like a well-oiled machine and perfect rotary wheel, and no longer be a quagmire of red tape.

But this is not an easy task. ARTA, therefore, needs the support of a vigilant citizenry, and civic organizations like the Rotary Club of Manila.

10th WEEKLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING: A RECAP

September 7, 2023

PROGRAM MODERATOR

The Program Moderator,
PP Archit Bartolome,
invited **Pres. Raffy Alunan**
to call the meeting to order.



CALL TO ORDER

Pres. Raffy Alunan sounded the bell to commence the Weekly Meeting.



10th WEEKLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING: A RECAP

September 7, 2023

INVOCATION



PDG Rudy Bediones led the invocation, seeking blessing for the good health of **Past Pres. Bert Romulo**, the membership, and all Manila Rotarians who are experiencing difficulties. The beautiful prayer is quoted below:

Heavenly Father, we thank you for gathering us today in fellowship to meet with friends, some of whom we have not seen or heard from for many years. We are glad for this opportunity to break bread with them and to delightfully engage them in friendly discourse.

Lord, we thank the Chair of the Sunshine Committee, Ricky Guevara for his thoughtful, unique, and exceptional initiative of gathering the distinguished leaders of this fine club, and to recognize their enormous contributions in steering the Rotary Club of Manila club to what it is today.

Allow me, at this point, to digress from my prayer and ask that we applaud Chair Ricky Guevara for this brilliant way of showing our appreciation for our leaders.

Lord, we pray for the good health of our guest of honor and speaker Past President Bert Romulo who has for decades devotedly and outstandingly served our country in numerous elected and appointed positions. We likewise pray for the continued good health of all Rotarians gathered in this hall as well as those who are not able to attend our meetings.

Guide us Lord and instill in our minds the need not only to look out for each other as brother-Rotarians but to generously lend a hand to our fellowmen who are in desperate need of our assistance.

Lord, we lift up all our problems, difficulties, and concerns to you and as a fitting statement of faith and praise we all say Amen.

10th WEEKLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING: A RECAP

September 7, 2023

PHILIPPINE NATIONAL ANTHEM



Rotary Members and guests took a position of respect as they sang the Philippine National Anthem, led by the WF RCM Music Chorale.

FOUR-WAY TEST



The recitation of the Four-Way Test was led by **Rtn. Tong Payumo**, which was meaningfully verbalized by the members of the Rotary Club of Manila and guest Rotarians.

10th WEEKLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING: A RECAP

September 7, 2023

RC MANILA ROTARY HYMN

RCM members sang *acapella* the Rotary Club of Manila Hymn, which was followed by the singing of the birthday song to serenade **PP Albert Romulo**, who celebrated his 90th birthday.



PRESIDENT'S TIME



Pres. Raffy Alunan shared with the membership the club's activities of the week, as well as the on-going projects and initiatives.

10th WEEKLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING: A RECAP

September 7, 2023



The Past Presidents of Rotary Club of Manila graced the stage, which was set in a light and relaxed mode, as the Club honored a well-respected Past President and public servant extra ordinaire, PP Bert Romulo.



The past and the present: **Past Pres. Bert Romulo** and **Pres. Raffy Alunan**

10th WEEKLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING: A RECAP

September 7, 2023



Pres. Raffy Alunan formally welcomes back **PP Alberto "Bert" G. Romulo** as an esteemed RCM Honorary Member.



Past Pres. Santiago "Santi" F. Dumlao shared some personal and endearing traits, as well as the many notable and outstanding undertakings of **PP Bert Romulo**.

10th WEEKLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING: A RECAP

September 7, 2023

A Tribute by Past Pres. Domingo “Boy” S. Guevara, Jr.’s for PP Alberto “Bert” G. Romulo

Our guest of honor and speaker has many false and inaccurate allegations! Firstly, his CV says he is already 90 years old. But look at him! He really looks like he is only of the same age or at worst a few days older than our incumbent president Raffy Alunan.

Former Secretary and PP Bert Romulo has the following alleged accomplishments and contributions to the alleged improvement of nation-building of the Philippines, starting from 1984 to 2022:



SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

SECRETARY OF FINANCE

SECRETARY OF BUDGET AND MANAGEMENT

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

SENATOR FOR TWO TERMS FROM 1987-1998

CHAIRMAN OF THE LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES AND HIS CURRENT POST IS THAT OF CHAIRMAN OF THE BOD OF DEVELOPMENT BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES

But truth be told, the biggest contribution of PP Bert to the country and to the Rotary movement was when he was elected and served as president of the Rotary Club of Manila for the Rotary year 1978-1979. I was just a 2-year-old Rotarian at the time when PP Bert was elected president. It was PP Bert who really showed me by example what a **true Manila Rotarian is!** I wish to share a little bit of trivia about PP Bert’s election as RCM President. The 70’s, if some of you will recall, was a decade of martial law and in the mid-late 70’s, the Philippines (including RCM) was facing insurmountable economic challenges. Interest rates were going as high as 48% p.a., and Peso/\$ exchange rates were going over the roof. RCM was similarly facing challenges. The unrecorded history of RCM was the members needed to find a good president to lead us in the tumultuous and very challenging times. The members decided to elect a top-notch entrepreneur-businessman in the person of Mr. Fil Reyes in 1975-1976. A one-year tenure of a top-notch businessman was not enough! We then elected Dr. Benny Angtuaco, again a top-notch physician/surgeon to see if the problem of RCM was a medical issue. Finally, in “desperation”, we elected the late Fr. Frank Reyes (parish priest of Santuario de San Antonio). The joke was: RCM was so desperate that it needed a priest to exorcise it. Then came Atty. Alberto Romulo, a lawyer/accountant with a doctor

10th WEEKLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING: A RECAP

September 7, 2023

of laws and a CPA certificate to boot. PP Bert was elected RCM President during its diamond anniversary. PP Bert's set of officers consisted of Manila Top 400 at that time. VP was the late Nick Jimenez (President/GM of PNR), the BOD consisted of PDs Liloy Balatbat (former Sec of Finance), Santi Dumlaog (top business executive), Ben Jalbuena (*haciendero* from the Visayas), JJ Calero (Pres. of J. Walter Thompson, a top advertising company), Osky Gonzales (real estate broker), and PD Titong Mendoza (former solicitor general and par excellence lawyer). The treasurer was Archib Bartolome (who was the VP of RCBC), and Sgt. at Arms was John Courtney.



Some of the major achievements (and they are not allegations, mind you), is PP Bert is the father of the RCM Manila Foundation, the precursor of RCMFI.

PP Bert has this unique ability to pick and mentor a scion of a well-known super-rich family. His name was Francisco Ortigas III, who later became a RCM President. PP Bert was able to tap and mentor Paqui Ortigas as Club Secretary. Imagine a scion of a super-rich family in the likes of Paqui Ortigas who was born with a silver spoon and was selected to be the club secretary. The result of this powerful tandem was the organization of the proper recordings and systematic filing of RCM records which today stands as one of the legacies of PP Bert and PP Paqui.

There were numerous projects that PP Bert started and finished during his short one-year presidency. But there is one aspect of PP Bert's presidential valedictory address that I dare say is the true and outstanding legacy that touched me the most. Please allow me to share this short but most important part of PP Bert Romulo's valedictory, and I quote. *"Once upon a time, it was the civic obligation of all roman citizens to carry the backpack of soldiers for one mile each day. And so it came to pass that one tired soldier asked an old man to carry his pack. At the end of one mile, the old man continued to carry the pack. "You have carried the pack for one mile, said the soldier. Why do you continue to carry it?"*

"It is simple", replied the old man. "The first mile constituted my legal duty to the country. So I want to carry it a second mile so that I can render more services to my country."

Fellow Rotarians: like the old roman citizen, let us walk that extra mile.... for every step that brings us closer to a world free of hunger, disease and in-humanity to a world where children are healthy and fully clothed, where men and women have decent jobs and decent homes, to a world where nations are at peace and there is goodwill and understanding amongst people of all races, religion and creed. Such a world is worthy of the highest aspirations of every **true Rotarian**.

10th WEEKLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING: A RECAP

September 7, 2023

A Tribute by PDG Vicente "Vince" J. Carlos for PP Alberto "Bert" G. Romulo

When I requested Rtn. Ricky Guevara to give me the latest bio of our Guest Speaker, I received this one-page bio of his public service and experiences from 1984-2022 which reads as follows:

But as Rotarians, we all know of the public service of our Guest Speaker. He was extremely qualified as he holds a degree of Doctor of Laws and is a CPA. Let me just mention that in all the positions that he has held, there was not a hint of any controversy whatsoever. He held all these positions with honor and integrity.

But let me talk about his Rotary life. Like Archib and I, our Guest Speaker joined in 1975 during the incumbency of President Chester Babst. Because of his very active involvement in Rotary, he was appointed Club Secretary by President Benny Angtuaco in 1976. I was likewise appointed by President Benny as Club Treasurer.

During the club elections in 1976, there was a parish priest from San Antonio who decided to run for director of our club. To everyone's surprise, he ended up with the most number of votes and was elected club president for the year 1977-1978. At first, he wanted to withdraw as he claimed that he had no administrative experience to run the club. But he was prevailed upon to accept the position when he learned that no one has declined the position after being elected. He then re-appointed Bert to be as club secretary and I as club treasurer.

During the term of Fr. Frank, it was President Bert who practically run the affairs of the club.



And so during the next club election, when Bert decided to run for director, he ended up being elected our president for the year 1978-1979.

Bert launched many outstanding projects such as "Operation Paglilinis ng Palengke", "Kalinisan Awards 78" and the construction of the multi-purpose "Tulungan Center" in Barangay 704 in Malate. But his most outstanding project was the launching of the TOWER Awards, which our club has continued up to the present day. It was also during his term that our club celebrated our diamond anniversary.

On his personal life, Bert and Lovely have recently celebrated their diamond wedding anniversary. They are blessed with five children, two of whom have joined government service. Roman is the Honorable Congressman from Pasig and Berna was the Tourism Secretary during the term of Pres. Duterte.

Fellow Rotarians, it is my pleasure to welcome back to Manila Rotary our Past President, Senator Alberto "Bert" G. Romulo.

10th WEEKLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING: A RECAP

September 7, 2023

A Tribute by PDG Roberto “Obet” M. Pagdanganan for PP Alberto “Bert” G. Romulo



President Raffy and other officers and members of the Rotary Club Of Manila, Past President Bert Romulo and his lovely spouse Lovely and their family members here present including former DOT Secretary Berna, distinguished guests and friends,

GOOD AFTERNOON!

Not a lot of people get the opportunity to meet, much less work with their idols in life, and learn from them.

Even fewer, most certainly, get to personally greet their idols on their 90th birth anniversary!

I am very lucky and am so grateful to be so blessed today with that special privilege.

And so I say:

HAPPY 90TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY TO MY IDOL, PAST PRESIDENT BERT ROMULO OF RC MANILA AND ALSO ONE OF THE MOST OUTSTANDING PUBLIC SERVANT LEADERS IN PHILIPPINE CONTEMPORARY HISTORY!!!

I first met then Minister Bert Romulo of Budget and Management under President Cory C. Aquino when I was OIC Governor of Bulacan after the EDSA Revolution. My interaction with him continued when he was elected Senator for two terms and eventually held various cabinet and other senior positions in government.



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What strikes me most about Past President Bert Romulo is his dignified demeanor which commands respect without demanding it! His well-modulated voice while articulating erudite views on every issue or topic, never fails to impress. He is always prim and proper, conservatively attired in every occasion. Despite his high station in life, he remains humble and approachable. PP Bert was COOL, long before that word became fashionable.

On top of all these exceptional traits, Past President Bert has maintained the Romulo family legacy of integrity, dedication and competence in public service. In his almost four decades of government service, he was never involved in corruption or questionable transactions. PP Bert Romulo is an epitome of a Public Servant Leader living Rotary's Core Values and Four Way Test! Values that he and his beloved spouse Lovely, have evidently passed on to their offspring, who are very successful in their own right.

Ladies and gentlemen, Please allow me to share a vignette with my idol, when he was Foreign Affairs Secretary and I was Tourism Secretary in 2004.

At that time, tourism arrival from China was a measly 30,000 per year. We did not have yet a Tourism Office in China, due to budget constraints. We therefore decided to close the Tourism Attache's Office in Paris and transferred it to Beijing. We also negotiated to have a Memorandum of Understanding for Tourism promotion between the Philippines and China to be signed during the State Visit to China by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in the first week of September.

One week earlier, I had already been designated to head the Administration's campaign for every Filipino's access to cheaper quality medicines. But Secretary Romulo insisted that having initiated the project, I should be the one to sign the MOU on behalf of the Philippines. And so I did, in the presence of the President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo and President Hu Jintao and senior officials from both countries.

Thank you PP Bert Romulo for giving me that honor and privilege.

China incidentally, has become one of the biggest contributors of foreign tourists to our country, reaching more than one million arrivals before the Covid Pandemic struck, thanks to the efforts of our successors including Secretary Berna and their Teams.

My esteemed friends:

I said earlier that, not so many people get to have the opportunity to work with their idols and learn from them.

Even fewer get to greet their role models on their 90th birthday.

Now and in the days to come, my fervent prayer is for the good Lord to continue blessing us with excellent health and long happy life, so that ten years from now, we will all gather once more to celebrate the centenary of our beloved Past President, BERT ROMULO, my idol!!!

MABUHAY SI PAST PRESIDENT BERT ROMULO!!!

MABUHAY ANG ROTARY CLUB OF MANILA!!!

MARAMING SALAMAT PO!!!

10th WEEKLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING: A RECAP

September 7, 2023

Rotary's "Service Above Self"

PP Alberto "Bert" Romulo



Today I am truly overwhelmed and overjoyed.

With this extraordinary outpouring of bonhomie, goodwill and fellowship, my cup is full and overflowing.

This happy occasion reminds me of Charlie Chaplin who lived up to his late 80s.

Asked how he managed to reach his late 80's.

Charlie Chaplin reportedly said that his best doctors were – laughter, family and friends.

This noon as I celebrate with you **my 90th birthday** all this three are present here in abundance – laughter, family and friends.

First and foremost, I wish to thank President Raffy for the honor and privilege

of the best birthday gathering we have received in a long long time.

I want to thank each of you in this assembly for your gracious and warm welcome to me and my wife from the moment we arrived.

I'm truly proud to be a Rotarian.

And I am grateful beyond words to Rotary.

Rotary introduced me to its 4 Way Test and to the wonderful world of service – **"of service above self."**

Service to our fellow men, service to our communities and service to our country.

Rotary's 4-way test is biblical – Do unto others as you would have them do unto you:

Rotary's Test no. 1

I will always uphold the truth,

Rotary's Test no. 2

I will always strive to be fair in all my dealings with my fellow men,

Rotary's Test no. 3

I will always endeavor to build good will and understanding in my community among my countrymen and among people of all nations,

Rotary's Test no. 4

I will always seek to promote the greatest good for the greatest number of people in the spirit of rotary service.

"Service above self" and Rotary's 4 Way Test have been my lodestar throughout my career in government and in public service – in the **Senate, Foreign Affairs, Finance** and as **Executive Secretary**.

Forty-five years ago in 1978 I was elected by you RCM's 59th President.

1978 also coincided with Rotary's **DIAMOND ANNIVERSARY** in Asia and in the Philippines.

For RCM was Rotary's first club not only in the Philippines but in all Asia as well.

During my presidency in 1978, I met and was friends with many RCM presidents.

The careers of these RCM Presidents stood out as inspiration to me in the public positions I later held and occupied.

Among these RCM Presidents are:

Senate President Gil Puyat who was RCM's 23rd President in 1940 and then 25th 1945.

Foreign Affairs Secretary Carlos P. Romulo who was Rotary's RCM President in 1935.

Finance Secretary Eduardo Romualdez who was RCM President in 1953-1954.

And

Executive Secretary Emilio Abello who was RCM President in 1961-1962.

Little did I know then that one day in my lifetime I would be holding positions in the legislative and executive departments that RCM's Presidents Senator Gil Puyat, General Romulo, Secretaries Romualdez and Abello had held with great distinction, fame and honor.

During my RCM presidency in 1978 all of them –Presidents Gil Puyat, Carlos Romulo, Eduardo Romualdez, and Emilio Abello were still active in Rotary.

Indeed during our Diamond anniversary celebration in 1978 they were generous with their time, and they would attend, join and grace our functions and meetings.

In the spirit of fellowship, I visited each of our Past Presidents in their offices and homes. In turn they would invite me to join them, their families and friends.

When he met with his fellow senators, Senator Puyat usually included me among his guests either at his home or in his office.



General Romulo invited me and my wife to dinners he tendered for visiting foreign ministers and dignitaries a number of whom I later met when I was Foreign Secretary.

On occasions Secretary Abello would ask me to join him in his office for meetings, conferences or personal talks.

The same with Secretary Romualdez who would call me to join him from time to time.

Later the time came when I finally occupied the positions they had held –

- in the Senate where I was **Majority Leader**
- in the DFA as **Foreign Secretary**
- in the DOF as **Finance Secretary**
- and in Malacañang as **Executive Secretary**.

Even when they were gone and no longer with us, I continued to remember each of them as model, inspiration, and lodestar.

Before I conclude let me mention a major event during my Presidency in 1978.

As President I initiated and launched the **TOWER Awards** to honor the **TEN OUTSTANDING WORKERS** of our country. Since 1978, the TOWER AWARDS has been RCM's annual presentation to our country and our people.

Fellow Rotarians,

Those who started Rotary here and abroad were all dreamers and visionaries.

They built with vision an enduring and international edifice of understanding, humanitarianism, fellowship, and goodwill.

They dared to dream that through the ideal of service, they could lift the burdens, improve the lot and enrich the lives of men and nations and thereby built a better life and a better world for all of us.

Today let us again dedicate ourselves to the ideals of Rotary –to the 4 way test and to **"SERVICE ABOVE SELF."**

Let us continue to pursue this vision.

Let us continue to pursue this dream.

Until we prevail.

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OPEN FORUM

PP Bert Romulo gamely engaged in an interactive conversation with Pres. Raffy Alunan, PD Oscar del Rosario, Sr., Rtn. Basti Lacson, and PE/Dir. Jujut Enriquez.



PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION



Pres. Raffy Alunan together with PDG Vince Carlos, PP Santi Dumlaog, IPP Hermie Esguerra, PDG Obet Pagdanganan presented the Certificate of Appreciation to honoree - Hon./PP Alberto "Bert" G. Romulo.

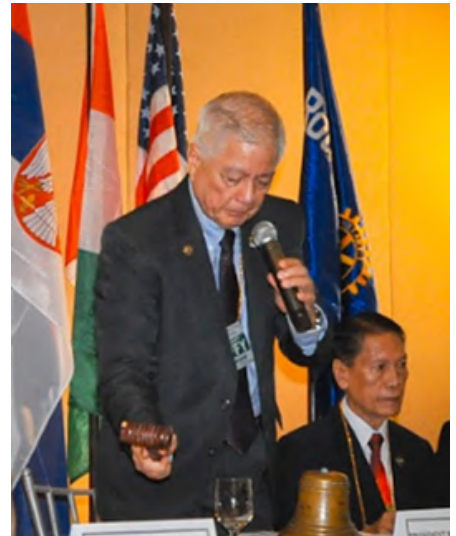
10th WEEKLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING: A RECAP

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ADJOURNMENT



RCM Music Committee, "World Famous" Chorale, serenaded **PP Bert** and spouse **Lovely Romulo**.



Pres. Raffy Alunan sounded the bell to signify adjournment to the 10th weekly meeting.

ELECTION OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR ROTARY YEAR 2024-2025



IPP Hermie Esguerra, Chairman, Committee on Election, presented to **Pres. Raffy Alunan** the results of the electronic election for Board of Directors for RY 2024-2025. IPP Esguerra presented the members of the Committee on Election. From left: **PD John Cutter**, **Rtn. Caloy Serapio**, **PP Teddy Ocampo**, **PDG Alex Cureg** (Vice-Chairman), **SAA Jason Bogovich**, **Rtn. Toby Rast** (Technical Head) and **Internal Auditor Nick Locsin**.

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IPP Hermie Esguerra, Chairman of Committee on Election, reading the result of the election.

Option	Votes	
ENRIQUEZ, EDUARDO "Jujut" V III	11%	81
VALDES, JOEL V.	10%	78
ALBAÑA, MICHAEL "Mike" JAEY C.	10%	73
KALAW, TEODORO ALEJANDRO Y. IV	10%	72
GO, HENRY S	9%	70
ZEITOUNI, NAGI	9%	67
VALENCIA, RODOLFO "Rod" G.	9%	64
ALDAY, ALBERT S.	8%	56
TALUSAN, FERDINAND "Inov"	7%	51
PALACIOS, ALBERT "Hans" C.	7%	50
ARAGON, JOSHUA RUBEN	7%	49
MACATOMAN, ABDULGANI "Gani"	5%	35

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The Directors-Elect for RY 2024-2025 were congratulated individually by **Pres. Raffy Alunan**. Standing from left: **VPE Joel Valdes**, **DE/Dir. Albert Alday**, **DE Rod Valencia**, **DE/SAA Nagi Zeitouni**, **DE Henry Go**, and **DE/Dir. Mike Albaña**.



PE/Dir. Eduardo "Jujut" V. Enriquez, expressed his thanks the membership for their trust and confidence in voting for him and the incoming directors.

10th WEEKLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING: A RECAP

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Committee on Election at work: At the Committee Room of the Manila Polo Club, the Committee on Election ascertain the quorum and identifies members who are qualified to participate in the election. Present were (left photo, clockwise) **SAA Jason Bogovich**, **Rtn. Toby Rast** (Technical Head), **PDG Alex Cureg** (Vice Chairman), **Rtn. Caloy Serapio**, **PP Teddy Ocampo**, **IPP Hermie Esguerra** (Chairman), **Ms. Mareth Batoto** (Fund Coordinator), **Anna Kun Toledo** (Executive Secretary), and **PD John Cutter**.

MEETING FELLOWSHIP



10th WEEKLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING: A RECAP

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CLUB ADMINISTRATION

RCM Members' Attendance Report RY 2023-2024

SEPTEMBER 2023	September 07, 2023
	PP ALBERTO "BERT" ROMULO/ELECTION OF THE BOARD
MEMBERS PRESENT	65
MAKE UP ATTENDIES	0
EXEMPTED FROM ATTENDANCE	4
ON LEAVE	0
Total Active Members	61
Total # of Members	242
TOTAL ATTENDANCE %:	25%
ROTARACTORS	3
MEDIA	9
EMBASSIES / DIPLOMATIC CORPS	0
DG, DGE, DGN, PDG	4
GOHS / GS	3
Visiting Rotarians	0
Guests of RCM MEMBERS	16
TOTAL ATTENDIES	87

CLUB ADMINISTRATION

List of Members Who Have Paid Their Annual Dues for RY 2023-2024

(As of September 8, 2023, 1:00 PM)

FULLY PAID

1	Aboy, Valentino "Val" G.
2	Abriam, Ariel
3	Acosta, Crispiniano "Cris" G.
4	Albaña, Michael Jaey "Mike"
5	Alberto, Raymund Arnold S.
6	Alcantara, Isidro "Butch"
7	Alday, Albert S.
8	Alingog, Aldous "Rex" A.
9	Alunan, Rafael "Raffy" M.
10	Aragon, Joshua
11	Arguelles, Pablo
12	Aventura, Avenilo, Jr. "Jun" L.
13	Balanay, Aries
14	Bartolome, Arsenio III "Archit" M.
15	Batur, Sinan
16	Bautista, John
17	Bediones, Rodolfo "Rudy" P.
18	Bella, Geronimo, Jr. "Jun" Dela Paz
19	Benedicto, Sixto "Noy" T.
20	Bertelsen, Bertel Ingmar
21	Blanco, Manuel "Manny" M.
22	Bogovich, Jason M.
23	Bolton, Wilhelm "Bollie"
24	Cabangon, Edgard
25	Camat, Nathaniel
26	Campos, Joselito, Jr. "Butch" D.
27	Camus, Fernando "Nando"
28	Canon, Raul
29	Carlos, Vicente "Vince" J.
30	Carranceja, Arvin Arik
31	Castro, Karlo Eugene Josef "Karlo"
32	Catalan, Rodillo "Teng"
33	Chahwan, Rami
34	Coyiuto, Robert, Jr. "Jun" G.
35	Creencia, Raoul
36	Cureg, Alexander "Alex" P.
37	Cutter, John Michael "Michael"
38	Davis, Raymond "Rey" N.
39	De Castro, Johnny
40	Del Rosario, Oscar
41	Dominguez, III, Carlos "Sonny" G.
42	Dy, Manuel "Manny" C.
43	Egan, Brendan "Bren" W.L.
44	Eldebs, Issam "Sam"
45	Enriquez, Eduardo III "Jujut" V.

46	Esguerra, Herminio "Hermie" S.
47	Esquivias, Joaquin Pablo "Jop" A.
48	Eugenio, John Emyl "Emyl" G.
49	Fajardo, Beda G.
50	Fernandez, Antonio Jaime Jose V. "JJ"
51	Flameno, Franco Martell S.
52	Follosco, Ceferino, Jr. "Jun" G.
53	Garcia, Herbert Joey "Joey" D.
54	Garcia, Paul Joseph "PJ"
55	Garcia, Theodore
56	Garcia, Victor
57	Go, Daniel "Danny" C.
58	Go, Henry Sy
59	Goco, Raoul
60	Guarin, Michael Arcatomy "Mike" H.
61	Guevara, Domingo, Jr. "Boy" S.
62	Guevara, Ricardo "Ricky" S.
63	Hallare, Delfin, Jr. "Jun" T.
64	Hallare, Nicolo "Nic" S.
65	Hallerbach, Mathias
66	Hernandez, Edwin
67	Hortaleza, Rolando
68	Ibuyan, Benedict Julius "Ben"
69	Jucaban, Jeric J.
70	Kalaw, Teodoro Alejandro IV "Teddy" A. Y.
71	Katigbak, Alfonso Leonor
72	Klebs, David
73	Koh, Paul Anthony
74	Lacambacal, Alvin D.
75	Lacson, Sebastian "Basty"
76	La'o, Emilio Gonzalez
77	Laurel, Ricardo "Ricky" P.
78	Laya, Jaime "Jimmy" C.
79	Ledda, Jaime Victor "Jet" B.
80	Lazaro, Juan Miguel "Miguel"
81	Lee, Richard "Dick" L.
82	Liamzon, Romeo Thaddeus "Thad" R.
83	Lim, David Eduardo Ty
84	Lim, Richard
85	Locsin, Arsenio "Nick" Z.
86	Locsin, Roberto R.
87	Lonzaga, Reinerio "Ner" C.
88	Lopez, Antonio "Tony"
89	Lopez, Arthur "Art" M.
90	Magbanua, Gerry

CLUB ADMINISTRATION

List of Members Who Have Paid Their Annual Dues for RY 2023-2024

91	Macapagal, Michael "Mac"
92	Macatoman, Abdulgani "Gani"
93	Magsaysay, Francisco "Paco" D.
94	Manalaysay, Cesar P "Citos"
95	Mangalile, Senen
96	Martinez, Ronald
97	Mauricio, Antonilo "Anton"
98	Matschuck, Guenter "Gunter" G.
99	Mendoza, Estelito "Titong" P.
100	Mendoza, Miguel
101	Mendoza, Raymund Joseph Ian "Raji" O.
102	Montel, Juan Manuel C.
103	Nones, Romeo "Romy" C.
104	Nunez, Jose, Jr. "Pepo" A.
105	Obrado, Daniel C.
106	Ocampo, Teodoro "Teddy" J.
107	Ong, Phillip "Phil" L.
108	Pagdanganan, Roberto "Obet" M.
109	Pallasigue, John Brian "JB"
110	Palacios, Albert "Hans" C.
111	Pañares, Ben Thomas "Toby" P.
112	Pascual, Abraham "Abe" F.
113	Patterson, Colin David
114	Peliño, Wilfredo "Willie" M.
115	Pineda, Jr., Patricio "Bebot" F.
116	Pineda, Jr., Jesus "Susing" M.
117	Pizarra, Jordan M.
118	Preysler, Fausto, Jr. R.
119	Quisumbing, Ramon "Mon" J.
120	Ramos, Claver P.
121	Rast, Tobias "Tobi"
122	Recto, Philip H.
123	Reynolds, David John "Dave"
124	Rodriguez, Joaquin "Jack" H.
125	Rodriguez, Joaquin "Jackie" C.
126	Romualdez, Jose Manuel "Babe" G.

127	Rono, Marlon
128	Roxas, Michael
129	Sarasola, II, Jose Ma. "Joey" I.
130	Schneider, Bernd
131	Schimitz, Stefan
132	Sevilla, Luis Angelo "L.A." L.
133	Shimoda, Shigeru
134	Sibayan, Joselito "Lito" H.
135	So, Warren
136	Soler, Jose Antonio Andaya
137	Souvlakis, Nicolas
138	Stranathan, Ike
139	Syjuco, Jose, Jr. "Joey" A.
140	Tagaysay, Hector "Chito"
141	Talampas, Jose Angel "Joel"
142	Talusan, Ferdinand "Inov"
143	Tamano, Shalimar "Shah" H.
144	Tamayo, Victor "Butch" L.
145	Tan, Eusebio "Ebot" V.
146	Tan, John
147	Tanglao, Noel V.
148	Tee, Jr., Teddy B.
149	Tejuma, Michael "Mike"
150	Tillmann, Hansel Joseph Michael "Hansel"
151	Valdes, Joel C.
152	Valdez, Amado "Amading" D.
153	Valencia, John Nico "Nico" P.
154	Valencia, Rodolfo "Rod" G.
155	Vasquez, Evaristo "Junjie"
156	Villarica, Henry R.
157	Yap, Enrique, Jr. "Rickie" Y.
158	Yu, Reginald "Reggie" T.
159	Zaldarriaga, Felix Francisco "Chito" S.
160	Zeitouni, Nagi
161	Zheng, Zhihao "Jerry"
162	Zialcita, Xavier "Xavy" Y.

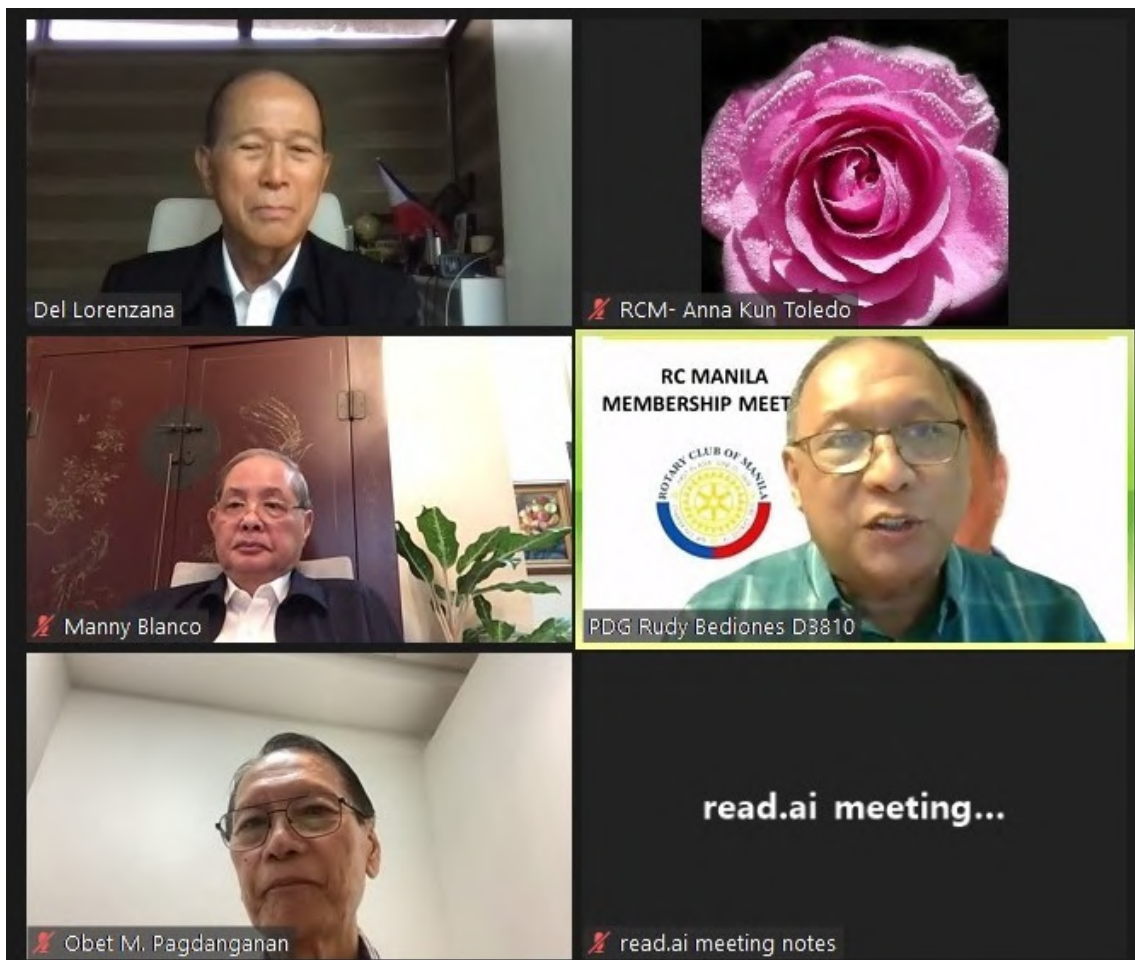
PARTIALLY PAID

1	Serapio, Carlos G. "Caloy"
2	Dayang, Juan, Jr. "Jed" E.
3	Andal, Avelino "Billy"
4	Dela Cruz, Emmanuel
5	Tan, Lawrence "Lance" L.

6	Valdez, Jason
7	Dela Cruz, Artemio "Art"
8	Chotrani, Johnny N.
9	Agnes, Jerry A.

CLUB ADMINISTRATION

Rotary Briefing Information



A Rotary Briefing Information session was held for General Delfin N. Lorenzana, Chairman - Bases Conversion and Development Authority. Present to provide a glimpse of Rotary and Rotary Club of Manila were Chairman/PDG Obet Pagdanganan, Co-Chairman PDG Rudy Bediones and Rtn. Manny Blanco.

Press Conference on the Art Exhibit of Kids with Disability

September 9, 2023
Hospicio De San Jose, Manila



Angels of Rendu Art Club of the Hospicio De San Jose, before the start of the press conference which was conducted and sponsored by RCFMI.

Expanding Horizons

An art exhibit for the benefit of
Hospicio de San Jose Rendu Ward

LRI Design Plaza Exhibit Hall
210 Nicanor Garcia, Makati City, Metro Manila
September 15 - October 1, 2023

Curated by Celestino M. Palma III



RCFMI Officers (from left): STAR Rtn. Billy Andal, Dir. Mike Albaña, Rtn. Paco Magsaysay, IPP Hermie Esguerra, VP Reggie Yu, and PD Phillip Ong

Press Conference on the Art Exhibit of Kids with Disability



Invited media personnel (from left): Kathryn Jose (Daily Tribune), Christlaine Dimalanta (Aliw 23/DWIZ), Eunice Oelario (Pilipino Mirror), Angela Javate (Mla. Bulletin), Pauline Joyce Pascual (Daily Tribune), Angelica Villanueva (Manila Standard), and Glaiza Lee (Manila Standard)



From left: Rtn. Ray Davis, IPP Hermie Esguerra, Ms. Maya Banawa (Art Therapist), Sr. Martha Gamolo (Daughter of Charity of St. Vincent De Paul), and PD Phil Ong

Press Conference on the Art Exhibit of Kids with Disability



IPP Hermie Esguerra delivering his inspirational message



Rtn. Ray Davis delivering his message



From left: Mr. Spencer Ozo (invited guest artist from Conrad Manila), VP Reggie Yu, STAR Rtn. Billy Andal, Rtn. Paco Magsaysay, Mr. Dafort Villaseran (The Manila Times), and Dir. Mike Albaña

Press Conference on the Art Exhibit of Kids with Disability



Sr. Martha Gamolo delivering her welcome remarks



Mr. Spencer Ozo, an invited guest, shares a short message by recounting his good experience with the orphans or members of Angels of Rendu Art Club.



PD Phil Ong delivering his message



Ms. Maya Banawa delivering her message

Press Conference on the Art Exhibit of Kids with Disability



RCMFI Officers together with the Angels of Rendu Art Club members and Ms. Maya Banawa

Press Conference on the Art Exhibit of Kids with Disability



IPP Hermie Esguerra, Dir. Mike Albaña, and Rtn. Ray Davis inspecting the newly constructed Rendu Dormitory, a project of RCFMI, together with the invited press personnel



RCM Art Exhibit Presscon Enhances Public Awareness

By Balita Vice Chair Billy Andal

The Rotary Club of Manila under the leadership of President Raffy Alunan III, thru STAR Rtn. Billy Andal, its PIO, proudly revealed that the press conference it conducted last September 9, successfully generated better awareness among the populace particularly the art enthusiasts who want to support a good cause.

All major newspapers, radio and tv networks came in to cover the well attended press conference held at the premises of the Hospicio de San Jose, under Sister Martha Gamolo who is the partner of RCM in the project called Expanding Horizons. This socio-civic undertaking seeks to promote the art works of the Angels of Rendu Art Club (ARAC), a painter group composed of the abandoned, abused and persons with disability who are housed at the Hospicio.

While Pres. Alunan sent his congratulatory message via online, RCM Immediate Past President Hermie Esguerra delivered an inspiring narration of why he was emotionally touched after the painters conversation with him. That the artworks they do are concrete expression of how their heart and soul feels.

Meanwhile, in active attendance were VP Reggie Yu, Director Mike Albana, Rtns. Phillip Ong and Paco Magsaysay who assisted in the conduct of the press activity.

The presscon was initiated by RCM in preparation for the art exhibit scheduled at LRI showroom along 210 N. Garcia St. Makati City on Sept 14, 2023.

All the generated funds or the sale proceeds from the artworks will be used for the complete renovation of the Rendu Ward inside the Hospicio compound, an assurance made by Pres. Alunan.



COMIC RELIEF



Source: Rotary Club of St. Lucia

YOUTH SERVICE

Forging Your Path: Empowering Tomorrow's Businesses

by Russel Palubon

Mandaluyong City - September 9, 2023



The **Rotaract Club of Manila** and the **Rotaract Club of Adamson University** joined forces in collaboration with the **Rotary Club of Manila** as a knowledge partner to organize a series of professional development talks entitled **KICKSTART: Forging Your Path: Empowering Tomorrow's Businesses**. Under the capable stewardship of Rotaract Club of Manila's **Professional Service Director Andrea Cuevas** and **President-Elect Stephanie Bernardo**, KICKSTART Sessions will feature top-caliber speakers from different industries to inspire students and young professionals to "kickstart" the passion for innovating and creating entrepreneurial endeavors.

YOUTH SERVICE

Forging Your Path: Empowering Tomorrow's Businesses

The inaugural session was held last September 9, 2023, at the Penthouse of the Eastgate Center in Mandaluyong City, with over 60 students and young professionals from various schools and community organizations in Metro Manila. The event saw two very prominent businessmen and members of the Rotary Club of Manila, namely **Mr. Francisco "Paco" Magsaysay, founder and creator of artisanal ice cream brand "Carmen's Best Ince Cream" and currently President and CEO of Asian Vision Enterprise**, a leading content and cable provider in Luzon and **Mr. Joshua Aragon, Founder and CEO of Zagana, Inc.**, a leading online source of Farm-to-Kitchen harvested directly from our local farmers here in the Philippines and local online grocery shopping platform **Pushkart.ph**.

The event proceedings commenced with a joint call to order by **Rotaract Club of Manila President Arvin Christopher Reyes** and **Rotaract Club of Adamson University President Grizel Lorenz Dela Cruz**. President Arvin Christopher Reyes extended a gracious welcome to all attendees during his opening remarks, emphasizing the objectives and significance of the event.



YOUTH SERVICE

Forging Your Path: Empowering Tomorrow's Businesses

In the first session, Rotarian Paco Magsaysay recounted his remarkable journey in establishing a thriving ice cream enterprise, underlining the importance of pursuing ventures that resonate with one's passions and interests. He underscored the pivotal role of a "Unique Selling Proposition" (USP) in setting a business apart from competitors, exemplifying Carmen's Best unwavering commitment to utilizing the finest, freshest ingredients sourced directly from their family's dairy farm. Mr. Magsaysay's dedication even spurred him to keep learning by attending an Ice Cream Short Course at the Pennsylvania State University in the United States. Notably, Carmen's Best ice cream garnered international acclaim, finding its way onto the menus of the nation's flag carrier, Philippine Airlines, and was even served during Pope Francis's return flight to Rome after his papal visit to the Philippines in 2015 and is one of the top favorite ice cream brands of His Holiness. Mr. Magsaysay concluded his address with an inspiring message: *"Everything comes to you at the right time. Be patient and trust the process."*



YOUTH SERVICE

Forging Your Path: Empowering Tomorrow's Businesses

The event's second speaker, **Rotarian Joshua Aragon**, emphasized aligning corporate objectives with personal aspirations and unwavering determination. He underscored the significance of performance indicators to monitor progress, the importance of a well-defined mission and vision, and the role of core values in shaping a company's identity. For Zagana.com, the mission revolves around connecting consumers with fresh produce suppliers through technology, facilitating the direct delivery of farm-fresh produce and frozen goods from local farmers at equitable market prices. Mr. Aragon exemplified the transformative potential of technology in shaping lives and fostering purpose-driven communities.



YOUTH SERVICE

Forging Your Path: Empowering Tomorrow's Businesses

The event also featured insightful addresses by distinguished Manila Rotarians, including **District Governor-Elect Jackie Rodriguez, Hans Palacios**, and **Past Director Nick Locsin**, whose contributions added depth and wisdom to the event, reinforcing the prevailing theme of empowerment and community engagement.



In a concluding segment, **President Arvin** shared a glimpse into Rotaract Manila's forthcoming initiatives about Project WASHed, Project CREATE, and the highly anticipated 2023 Mooncake Festival, igniting anticipation for the upcoming projects.

President Grizel expressed her profound gratitude to all participants and esteemed guests, culminating in the resounding success of an event dedicated to nurturing the entrepreneurial spirit and fortifying the businesses of tomorrow. The day bore testament to the immense potential unlocked when like-minded individuals unite with a shared purpose, forging unique paths toward a brighter, more empowered future.

The **Rotaract Clubs of Chinatown-Manila, Makati, and San Antonio de Padua** co-hosted the event.

PUBLIC IMAGE

The Manila Times®

Romulo re-inducted honorary RCM member

By Ed Paolo Salting 🕒 September 8, 2023 👁 100

FORMER senator, executive secretary and Rotary Club of Manila president Alberto Romulo said on Thursday that he was honored to be re-inducted as honorary member of the RCM.

"I stand by the ideals of the Rotary Club of Manila, which is service above self, and in fact during my entire public service career, I have always been guided by its 4-way test. I am grateful to be a Rotarian and I am grateful beyond words to be an honorary member again of the Rotary Club of Manila," Romulo said.



"Forty-five years ago, I was elected president by you, the members, and here I am again going back to Rotary by the cheers that you have given me. Overall, I am very thankful," he added.

The RCM has announced its new board of directors for the fiscal year 2024 will be headed by Union Bank of the Philippines SME Banking head Eduardo "Jujut" Enriquez.

"If I choose one that is close to my heart, it would be to help out the MSMEs of the country, because I have been involved with them for almost 25 years, while working in a bank. I have seen how difficult it is for MSMEs to get capital and because of that, it is difficult for many of them to grow and to compete. Down the line, I plan to implement this together with the RCM," Enriquez said.

Former senator Alberto Romulo (right) was re-inducted as honorary member of the Rotary Club of Manila on Thursday, Sept. 7, 2023. PHOTO BY ISMAEL DE JUAN

RECOGNITION CORNER

MoneySense Q3 2023 Business & Investing Issue Features the National Development Company

MoneySense September 8, 2023 0 Comments



DTI and NDC: Empowering Startups and MSMEs for Sustainable Growth

By EXCEL DYQUIANGCO

In the ever-evolving landscape of entrepreneurship, the synergy between government agencies plays a crucial role in fostering innovation, supporting startups, and nurturing Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the National Development Corporation (NDC) are prime examples of how collaborative efforts can lead to transformative outcomes. Their partnership and collective efforts have not only led to the empowerment of startups and MSMEs but have also set the stage for economic growth and sustainability.

DTI, the primary government agency responsible for promoting trade, industry, and investments, has been a catalyst in promoting the growth of startups and MSMEs in the Philippines. Secretary Alfredo E. Pascual of the DTI has underscored the agency's commitment to supporting these entities, noting, "We recognize the immense potential of startups and MSMEs in driving economic growth and innovation. To this end, DTI has initiated various aid programs to provide grants, seed funding, and assistance to these enterprises."

RECOGNITION CORNER

Funding Initiatives

One of the key initiatives spearheaded by DTI is the provision of grants and seed funding to startups through a range of aid programs. This support helps emerging businesses navigate the challenging early stages of development, ensuring that promising ideas are given the chance to flourish. Additionally, the Startup Grant Fund (SGF) Program, a collaboration between DTI, the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), and the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), serve as a lifeline for early-stage startups, providing them with essential funding.

Complementing these efforts is the Small Business Corporation (SBCorp), an agency under DTI that focuses on lending to MSMEs, including startups. The SBCorp's involvement highlights the commitment to nurturing businesses at various stages of growth. The convergence of DTI's support for startups and MSMEs through grants and funding, along with SBCorp's lending initiatives, creates a comprehensive ecosystem that addresses the financial needs of these enterprises.

To further accelerate the growth of startups with the potential for becoming unicorns, DTI collaborates with the NDC through the Startup Venture Fund (SVF). Secretary Pascual emphasizes, "NDC, in partnership with private sector venture capital, invests in post-seed potential unicorn startups. This initiative not only demonstrates the government's confidence in the startup ecosystem but also brings together public and private resources to fuel growth."

Beyond supporting individual businesses, DTI, NDC, and the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) are working in tandem to expand MSMEs through a cooperative network that spans the nation. This effort reinforces the importance of collaboration among government agencies to create a robust environment for business growth and development for cooperatives.

DTI's Vision for NDC

Secretary Pascual envisions the NDC as an investment magnet that not only provides stability through government support but also offers access to government buyer markets and facilitates collaboration with other government entities. The NDC's investment philosophy focuses on projects that fill gaps not addressed by the national government or agencies, aligning with themes of pioneering, developmental, sustainable, inclusive, and innovative endeavors.

Moreover, NDC invests in projects that require alternative sources of funding, providing a unique avenue for initiatives that may not traditionally receive funding from the General Appropriations Act (GAA). This approach not only encourages innovation but also promotes the diversification of funding sources.

The impact of DTI's initiatives and programs for MSMEs and startups, including the SVF, is tangible and far-reaching. The collaborative efforts have led to the seeding and funding of early stage startups, setting them on a trajectory of growth. SBCorp's lending support has provided a lifeline to countless MSMEs, aiding them in overcoming financial challenges and pursuing their entrepreneurial dreams.

As Secretary Pascual notes, "Within this year, MSMEs will be supported by the very first Philippines-owned e-commerce platform." This platform, intricately linked to the DICT's e-governance super-app, holds the promise of transforming the landscape of online business for MSMEs. By providing a cost-effective, swift, and efficient solution, this initiative empowers MSMEs to thrive in the digital marketplace.

The collaboration between DTI and NDC showcases the power of partnership in fostering a thriving ecosystem for startups and MSMEs. By providing funding, resources, and support, these agencies empower businesses to grow, innovate, and contribute to economic development. Secretary Pascual's vision for NDC as an "investment magnet" aligns with the overarching goal of promoting sustainable growth, both at a local and global level. As the government and private sector work hand in hand, the Philippine entrepreneurial landscape is poised to achieve new heights of success and innovation.



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Assistant Internal Auditor

ANNA KUN TOLEDO
Executive Secretary



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Executive Secretary

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