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UP MANILA: TOWARDS EXCELLENCE IN ACADEMICS, RESEARCH, AND PUBLIC SERVICE

In my past bids for the position of Chancellor, I have stated that my vision is for UP Manila to be recognized as the **National Center of Health Research and Development** for the Filipino people. This is anchored on UP's mandate to perform its unique and distinctive leadership role in higher education and development as stated in the UP Charter of 2008 or Republic Act 9500. I can say with pride and humility that in the past 6 years, UP Manila has achieved this distinction. As the **National Center of Health Research and Development**, UP Manila is making a greater impact to the Philippine society having positioned itself as a partner of the Department of Health, Department of Science and Technology, Commission on Higher Education, Department of the Interior and Local Government, and the World Health Organization.

UP Manila maintains this position because its 9 degree-granting units (**College of Allied Medical Professions [CAMP]**, **College of Arts and Sciences [CAS]**, **College of Dentistry [CD]**, **College of Medicine [CM]**, **College of Nursing [CN]**, **College of Pharmacy [CP]**, **College of Public Health [CPH]**, **National Teacher Training Center for the Health Professions [NTTCHP]**, and **School for Health Sciences [SHS]**) and 2 non-degree-granting units (**Philippine General Hospital** and **National Institutes of Health**) have collaborated closely to elevate the University to the forefront of educational excellence and burgeoning relevant research.

Under my continued leadership, UP Manila will continue its quest for leadership in academic excellence in the fields of health, natural sciences, social and behavioral sciences, and arts and the humanities. With a nurturing environment for accelerated change and innovation, UP Manila will continue to advance academically and maintain its competitive advantage. UP Manila will be known for its **Distinctive Excellence in Academics and Scholarship, Research and Discovery for National Relevance and Global Competitiveness, Empowering and Protecting the Assets for Operational Excellence and Efficiency, Heightened Individual and Institutional Public Service, Collegial and Environment-friendly Campus, and Repository of Heritage and Culture.**

DISTINCTIVE EXCELLENCE IN ACADEMICS AND SCHOLARSHIP

With excellence and relevance as the cornerstones, UP Manila is mandated to enhance academic performance; lead in setting the academic standards for education of professionals and specialists; and produce the health leaders of the next generation. Using a framework of Outcome-Based-Education (OBE) and the new GE program, colleges **finalized revision of 20 undergraduate programs**. UP Manila will complete its **ongoing revision of 21 graduate degree programs**. **In addition to the 3 new graduate programs, i.e. PhD in Health Sciences by Research, PhD in Health Sciences by Publication, and Doctor of Health Professions Education**, is the development of **23 MS/MA degree programs**. Starting in 2019, UP Manila offered a Master in Public Health (MPH), a joint program of CPH, CM, and CAS, to 160 scholars in the Doctors to the Barrios Program of the Department of Health (DOH).

The **School for Health Sciences** that offers the only ladderized program in the country (midwifery, nursing, and medicine) will open its **4th campus in Tarlac** in the school year 2021-22 in collaboration with the provincial government. The SHS' unique admission requirement (endorsement by the student's Local Government Unit [LGU]) is responsible for the 85% retention rate of its graduates in the Philippines.

As the various Colleges aim for external accreditation of their courses, an **Academic Assessment and Development Office** will be established to provide guidance in QA-related activities.

Flexible learning has been facilitated using 2 learning management systems (**VLE and Canvas**). The sudden shift from face-to-face teaching/learning to remote learning has posed challenges for both the faculty and the students. Hardware and connectivity support will be provided.

RESEARCH AND DISCOVERY FOR NATIONAL RELEVANCE AND GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS

The research infrastructure in UP Manila has been enhanced by the provision of resources and services to its community of scholars to foster innovation and enrich the conduct of research. From 2018-20, Times Higher Education has listed UP in the top 10 for citation score on pre-clinical, clinical, and health; besting other universities like Harvard, Stanford, and Yale of which UP Manila had a major contribution.

To maintain this position, the support systems (**Research Ethics Board [REB]** and **Research Grants Administration Office [RGAO]**) will be strengthened to better assist and enhance the research capacity of faculty, REPS, and students. The 6,000+ registered researches in the past 6 years will be assessed for their impact in influencing policies and translation to products. As research in UP Manila continues to mature, an **Office of Research Integrity** will be established to promote integrity in research and to aid in preventing misconduct. It will have an integrated and coordinated program of activities to orient, educate, and oversee all UP Manila research stakeholders on the policies, principles, guidelines, rules, and regulations related to research. The **Technology Transfer and Business Development Office (TTBDO)**, which was established in 2016, will continue to expand business development opportunities for research discoveries and to provide assistance in product licensing, Intellectual Property (IP) awareness, disclosures, IP protection, IP capability building, and patent searching, among others.

The **Philippine General Hospital (PGH)** will be a major player in pursuing the research mandate of UP Manila. With its 600 000+ patients and its huge clinical workforce (consultants, residents, fellows, and nurses) and support staff, the next 3 years will yield major breakthroughs from its engagements with several local and international researches on COVID-19 and, its collaborative projects with NIH and Philippine Genome Center. It will participate in the Precision Medicine Initiatives on the top causes of morbidity and mortality in the country, i.e. cancer, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease.

The **completion of the 19-storey National Institutes of Health (NIH)** by 2021 will provide a permanent home to the 14 NIH Research Institutes and Centers and 19 study groups. It will also be home to 4 upcoming new facilities:

1. The creation of a **National Institutes of Health - Clinical Research Center (NIH-CRC)** is considered to be a necessary support for encouraging the pharmaceutical, biotechnology, and traditional medicine sectors to bring their research to the country. The NIH-CRC is envisioned as a center for excellence for the conduct of clinical trials in the Philippines.
2. The **Animal Research Facility** for small-sized laboratory animals is committed to the highest standards of animal care as it promotes evidence-based research with animal experiments seeking novel treatments and vaccines for various diseases.
3. The **UP Manila Disaster Risk Reduction and Management in Health (DRRM-H) Simulation Center** will expand the implementation of disaster simulation training through coordination with different LGUs and the national government. The UP DRRM-H Simulation Center aims to serve as the hub of disaster research, and capacity building training center on disaster response specializing in health; initially for the National Capital Region, then eventually for the entire Philippines through the establishment of university-led regional centers.

4. The **NIH Center for Liver Research** is envisioned to promote multi-disciplinary research by fostering team science and collaborations in the study of liver health and disease. The development of novel treatment approaches for the management of chronic and acute liver diseases will be a major thrust of the Center.

The COVID-19 pandemic became a stimulus for research. There have been 216 registered studies in the past 5 months at the RGAO research dashboard with 82% of projects initiated by researchers from PGH and College of Medicine.

S.I.B.O.L. (Surgical Innovation and Biotechnology) is a UPM-CM spearheaded program which aims for innovation, design and creation, of health care equipment and devices, using locally-sourced material to ensure availability and affordability for Filipino patients. It brings together UP Manila clinicians and allied medical personnel with UP Diliman's engineers, basic scientists, and artists. Its off-shoot, the S.I.B.O.L.-COVID Task Force, is now involved in 11 projects with outputs for use during the COVID pandemic. Indeed, S.I.B.O.L. has the potential of becoming a **Discovery and Innovation Hub**. It will operate according to a hub-and-spoke model in which the NIH serves as a hub while the Colleges and Units of UP Manila are spokes with the co-discoverers and co-creators of innovations as the drivers.

The **Precision Medicine Initiatives** is a project of the NIH together with the Philippine Genome Center (PGC) and PGH as they spearhead research, capacity building, and institutional linkages for the development of genome-based applications in our country. The goal is to achieve a better understanding of how a person's genetics, environment, and lifestyle can help determine the best approach to disease prevention or treatment. Among its priority programs is the **Cancer Genomics Program** which will have two components: hereditary cancer gene testing and tumor profiling for targeted therapy which allow a more personalized and precise treatment for better health outcomes and survival.

As faculty, researchers, and students work on inventions and innovations, we will ensure a tighter **Academe-Industry-Government Partnership**. TTBD0 will continue assisting researchers by hosting **TeknoLusugan** where our researchers are given the opportunity to pitch their IPs to potential industry partners. TTBD0 is prioritizing the 103 disclosures for patenting, commercialization, utilization through licensing, creation of spin-offs and start-up companies, and other possible partnerships.

The NIH Institute of Health Policy Development Studies will continue crafting **UP Manila Position Papers and Policy Statements** using datasets from researchers for transmission to relevant government agencies, the Senate, and the House of Representatives.

The next years are exciting and stimulating as UP Manila embarks on **Future Thinking Initiatives on Health Care** which includes cutting edge research on artificial intelligence; vaccine and drug discovery and development; genomics, proteomics, and metabolomics as well as biomedical device research closely linked to patient care services and clinical trials. Health sciences education in the future will integrate translational research and innovation in the delivery of health services.

EMPOWERING AND PROTECTING THE ASSETS FOR OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE AND EFFICIENCY

Our commitment to protect our assets (community of faculty, students, REPS, and staff) will include activities such as **preparation and protection from the hazards of the COVID-19 pandemic in the 'New Normal'**. Aside from the Guidelines for Self- Protection and Work From Home arrangements, the administration has taken great care to assist any member of our community who turns positive with COVID-19 either from exposure

at work or from the community. Webinars are being conducted to connect with our faculty, students, REPS and staff to ensure our resilience as an institution.

To protect our students and faculty, the **University Library** has updated its guidelines for remote access and on-site visits to the college libraries. It has taken steps to expand and enrich the online library resources.

Even before the COVID-19 crisis, the **UP Manila Mental Health Program** has been a priority program. UP Manila will work to complete the elements of a healthy university according to the AUN Framework. Two thematic areas are in place (zero tolerance areas and health promotion areas).

Psychosocial Wellness Network, established in 2016, will now also include services to faculty, staff, residents, and fellows. A drug-free workplace initiative was already implemented in PGH and will also be implemented in the whole UP Manila academic community. We will continue with free health consultations, physical fitness programs, discounted immunizations, and counseling and psychosocial services. We will also continue health promotion research (NIH directed research on screening); capacity building (Awakening Seminars for faculty, REPS, and administrative personnel); and environmental and physical planning (urban planning of UP Manila to become a clean, green, and walking campus).

Presently, PGH and 2 units of the NIH (Institute of Human Genetics and Newborn Screening Reference Center) have **ISO 9001-2015 certification**. Last year, UP Manila embarked on a quality assurance journey towards **ISO 9001-2015 certification** for the whole university.

HEIGHTENED INDIVIDUAL AND INSTITUTIONAL PUBLIC SERVICE

Since the opening of **PGH** to the public in 1910, public service has been its mandate. The activities of **Ugnayan ng Pahinungod** in response to medical/surgical mission requests and disasters have been traditions. The active engagement of the faculty in the preparation of **RA 11223, or the Universal Health Care Act of 2019**, is a significant contribution to health care delivery. The tradition of engagement will continue.

UP Manila is a major player during national emergencies, the COVID-19 pandemic being the most recent. The COVID-19 pandemic has opened new opportunities for public service: participation of NIH in the development of a COVID-19 testing kit; hosting of 2 COVID-19 testing laboratories (NIH and PGH); conduct of the Biosafety training seminars by NIH National Training Center for Biosafety & Biosecurity; designation of PGH as a COVID Referral Center; and the setting up of the Bayanihan Na! Operation Center.

The **Bayanihan Na! Operations Center with hotline 155-200** was launched on 30 March 2020 and this has provided opportunities to faculty, students, staff, and alumni to volunteer either at the call center or at the donation hub. While COVID-19 is here, hotline 155-200 will continue to be an avenue for voluntarism. With the closure of outpatient clinics at the PGH, new patient-oriented services will be provided by UP Manila — telemedicine, telenursing, teledentistry, teletherapy, telepublichealth, and telepharmacy. A **UP Manila Committee on TeleHealth Services** will be created to prepare guidelines that will be implemented by UP Manila and can be shared as models with other health groups and communities.

In response to the drug problem in the country, the College of Pharmacy, the College of Medicine, and the National Poison Management and Control Center will establish the **UP Drug Abuse Research and Testing Services (UP DARTS) Laboratory**, a facility that will utilize the LC-QTOF/MS technology to test urine samples for toxicologic substances and unknown substances i.e. commonly used illicit drugs and new psychoactive substances.

COLLEGIAL AND ENVIRONMENT-FRIENDLY CAMPUS

When I ran for chancellorship in 2014, one of the missions I articulated emphasized the need for us to “Work in a Collegial and Supportive Environment”. We committed to a campus administration that is collegial, creative, innovative, participative, transparent, and accountable. Additionally, we wanted an enhanced and progressive physical environment. During the past 6 years, we worked on 155 projects that included the rebuilding of Typhoon Yolanda-hit SHS Palo and, completion of 7 new stand-alone buildings (UP Manila Student Center, UP Manila Gym, SHS Koronadal Dormitory, SHS Koronadal Gym, SHS Baler Administrative Building, PGH Satellite for Sports Medicine and Wellness Polyclinic, and UP Manila Student Dormitory). In addition, the construction of the **National Institutes of Health**, the **University Library**, and the **Medical Sciences Building** started with projected completion by 2021. The plans for the **Stephen Zuellig Building** will be finalized soon.

The **Urban Planning & Design of the UP Manila Campus** will create a world-class learning environment that is accessible and safe; with basic utilities that are reliable and sustainable; and with avenues for meaningful community connections. This masterplan will guide future developments to sustainably cater to the continuing growth and demands of our community of scholars.

REPOSITORY OF HERITAGE AND CULTURE

Situated in the middle of our metropolis, inside the UP Manila campus, are architectural marvels that have endured the passing of more than a hundred years. They are not just stately buildings. They are the chronicles of our storied past, even antedating the University of the Philippines. The Medical School in 1905 was the first college formed and became the Philippine Medical School in 1907. It was only the following year, 1908, that the University of the Philippines was established. During the next 3 decades, several new buildings were built with the expansion of the University of the Philippines. This was the setting where the youth's intelligent minds at that time were nurtured and molded into the leaders and brains of the nation. But more than that, these scarred edifices witnessed the heroism and selfless sacrifices of the health science constituents during World War II and when they struggled against diseases such as smallpox and cholera.

The original Oblation, UP's iconic monument depicting the Filipino's selfless offering of self to the country, was erected at the Padre Faura campus in 1935 and later transferred to Diliman campus. Another work of art, the lady on top of a skull, is a copy of Jose Rizal's sculpture, "The Triumph of Science over Death". It stands in front of the Calderon Hall occupied by the College of Medicine.

These are just a few of the highlights of our enviably rich culture; but mostly unknown to UP Manila constituents. Before they are completely lost to the future generations, these treasures need to be preserved to serve as inspiration and added motivation as we battle past the vicissitudes of this pandemic. This history of selfless nationalism and excellent education within these tenacious buildings is our heritage that I pledge to memorialize. The Historical Buildings Committee was created to chronicle our prodigious and priceless past and to create an appropriate repository. **The Chronicles of Heritage and Culture** will be a priority project. It will be a 12-volume book collection that will document and highlight our glorious heritage. While we look back to our past and preserve our heritage, we look forward to a future that is relevant and resilient.

In closing, I envision UP Manila to be a haven of **Excellence, Scholarship, Collegiality, and Service**. My administration will be known for **Protecting** the rights of the students, faculty, REPS, and administrative personnel. It will be known for **Partnerships** and **Professionalized** Services. It will be an administration that puts premium on **People** because they remain our greatest asset and beneficiary of everything that we are doing. UP Manila will be a main force in **Nation Building!**