

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Maritess M. Pineda

On this the first biennium of my second term as President of Zonta Club of Makati and Environs, I hope to be able to lead the club to become a more dynamic, innovative, collaborative, and inclusive organization that is engaged in the empowerment of women and girls through service and advocacy. I am particularly privileged that I happen to be club president during ZI's centennial!

The needs and ways of our future women in the next century call for us to address, communicate, and implement our goals of empowering women in innovative ways.

Since 1971, when our club was organized, our members have seen and experienced many of these changes - from ways of thinking to technology.

It is now the era of the digital world, which, if properly employed, can grant us greater access to our community and to the rest of the world, and learn from their experience.

Being a mature organization, we have to be a guiding voice to the young in the same manner that we

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## Bravo Awards 2019 Honors Empowered Women

by ADA L. MABILANGAN  
CHAIRMAN, BRAVO AWARDS COMMITTEE



Makati Zontians join the Bravo awardees on stage following the awarding ceremonies. Seated from left to right are: Margarita Ochoa (sports), Dr. Rosario Oreta-Lapus (education), Waya Araos-Wijangco (culinary arts), Mona Magno Veluz (social services), Lourdes R. Montinola (lifetime achievement), Ma. Rhodora Fresnedi (business/entrepreneur), Bae Arlyne Salazar (arts, culture, & heritage), Magnolia Yrasuegui (media, public affairs), Rachel Tan (science & technology)

*The 8 BRAVO Empowered Women Awards is a nationwide search for unsung heroes, great achievers, and advocates of social change. It is a partnership between Security Bank and Zonta Club of Makati & Environs Foundation, Inc., which was established in 2015 under the leadership and initiative of ZCME past president Armita Rufino (now Area 5 Director).*

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In photo are (from left to right): ZCME President Maritess Pineda, Ann Ong, nominee for Arts, Culture, and Heritage; Arlyne D. Salazar, Bravo winner for Arts, Culture, and Heritage; PIP Olivia A. Ferry, and Zarah Jane D. Juan, Bravo awardee for Business in 2017.



The judging for the Bravo awards for empowered women for this biennium took place in Cora Tan's Brasserie Restaurant in the Security Bank building on June 6, 13, and 25 2018. The judges are shown in photo, seated: Olivia M. Villafuerte, Cherrie Atilano, former Ombudsman/SC Justice Conchita Carpio Morales, and civic leader Maribel G. Ongpin. The other judges were Dr. Jikyeong Kang, Nicole "Suyin" Liu, and Anne-Marie Corominas. The latter two are shown standing on either side of Makati Zontians Maritess Pineda, Ada L. Mabilangan, and Chona M. Lopez.

listen and apply the wisdom that we have learned throughout our years of commitment and service by our approach and actions.

I encourage everyone to be open and to support the pursuit of new ideas, allowing the young to inspire, influence, and teach us new ways of thinking and doing things.

Leveraging on the goals presented by International President Susanne von Bassewitz, we should focus on 3 goals :

Goal 1

We maximize our impact through service and advocacy initiatives and educational programs that empower women and girls

Goal 2

We strengthen our resources to support our mission

Goal 3

We enhance our profile around the world through our Centennial Anniversary activities."

With this in mind, it is my fervent wish that everyone should attend events such as the District 17 Conference led by Governor Teresa Lin in Hong Kong, from October 4-6, 2019, as well as the 2020 Convention in Chicago, where Zonta has its headquarters, as this can serve as a great opportunity to connect with other Zontians all over the world.

To work together in harmony is to build

strong foundations. Collaboration within our close community, whether within the club or with people who support the organization, should be our top priority. The trust that we have established in relationships with the people and organizations we are engaged with, both the younger and older generations, can help us create a dynamic and positive culture that can eventually inspire and open a bigger network and platform. Thus we have to be proactive in seeking like-minded people with whom to associate and unite.

It is time to ACT, now! With teamwork and tenacity, we can bring our club to greater heights as we empower women and girls through service and advocacy.

*The 8 BRAVO Empowered Women Awards was created to recognize Filipino women who demonstrate an unwavering commitment to leadership and service, enabling themselves and others toward economic and social progress. It is awarded every biennium, this year marking its third anniversary. The 2019 Awardees are:*

- Ma. Rhodora P. Fresnedi** - *Business/Entrepreneur*
- Rachel Marjorie Tan** - *Science & Technology*
- Margarita Ochoa** - *Sports*
- Dr. Rosario Oreta-Lapus** - *Education*
- Magnolia F. Yrasuegui** - *Media/ Public Affairs*
- Bae Arlyne D. Salazar** - *Arts, Culture & Heritage*
- Mona Magno Veluz** - *Social Services*
- Wayra Araos-Wijangco** - *Culinary Arts*

*Special Life-time Achievement Award: **Dr. Lourdes Reyes Montinola***

*The Board of Judges was composed of:*

- Justice Conchita Carpio-Morales – Chairman
- Dr. Jikeong Kang
- Mrs. Olivia Celeste M. Villafuerte
- Mrs. Maria Isabel Ongpin
- Ms. Cherrie Atilano

*This project has proved to be one of the most visible and successful partnerships of our Club and deserves its continued support. It has recognized women whose work has touched and uplifted so many lives. It truly lives up to Zonta's objects and mission.*

Editor's Note: The Bravo awards project is the Club's way of implementing International President Susanne von Bassewitz's biennium theme of "Honor and Empower" (Women)

# Believe – Invest – Empower Give NOW for the Future

by OLIVIA A. FERRY

PAST INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

MEMBER, ZIF CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY ENDOWMENT CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

It is not often that we are able to give a donation to Zonta that will last a lifetime. As we approach our Centennial Anniversary, we have the unparalleled opportunity of supporting Zonta's Endowment Fund through a gift that will serve as a stable financial base for uninterrupted action in support of future generations of women and girls.

Our projects of the past 100 years, both local and international, speak to our commitment and focus to Zonta's mission and vision of women empowerment through service and advocacy. For nearly 10 decades, we have provided through our international projects alone, more than US\$40 million to empower women and girls and expand their access to education, health care, economic opportunities and safe living conditions. But we must be able to continue our work in any economic climate and despite uncertainties in membership growth and the threats of competition for funds. Zonta's Endowment Fund provides the answer to this potential future predicament. By building a healthy Endowment Fund, we create the financial base we need to meet these uncertainties. With an Endowment Fund, which is an investment fund, the principal amount is kept intact and the investment income is available for use to support projects, thus ensuring that our service and advocacy programs are carried forward.

If you wish to offer a gift that is significant to you, there are options available to our Zonta members:

- a one-time gift
- recurring payments made monthly, quarterly or semi-annually
- a 3-year gift plan (although the Centennial Anniversary Endowment Campaign is current for the centennial celebrations, support for the Endowment Fund will continue during Zonta's next 100 years)
- planned giving such as a bequest, gifts of stock, retirement plans and life insurance, as your legacy to Zonta

## Why do we give to the Endowment Fund?

### We give because:

- millions of women and girls need our help, not only now, but in the future
- this Fund enables us to empower them
- this Fund is the fund that keeps on giving (your gift of \$5000, for example, remains intact forever, and will serve as the corpus that will bear interest earnings of approximately \$500 every biennium)
- this Fund gives us the ability to ensure a better world for women and girls in perpetuity.

**BELIEVE**

*in our cause*

**INVEST**

*in the future*

**EMPOWER**

*many more millions*

*of women and*

*girls, and through*

*them improve*

*the quality of life*

*in communities*

*around the world for*

*generations to come.*

**GIVE NOW**

**FOR THE**

**FUTURE.**

*Contribute to*

*the Endowment*

*Fund. Join the*

**CENTENNIAL**

**ANNIVERSARY**

**ENDOWMENT**

**CAMPAIGN (CAEC)**

# EWSP: Championing women empowerment through education

by VICKY WIENEKE  
CHAIRMAN, EMPOWERING WOMEN SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM



It is common knowledge that education should be a right for all citizens, but the sad reality in a developing country like ours is that many of our countrymen see it as a privilege only attainable if one has the means.

A tertiary science education is an even further-off dream if you don't have the financial stability to back it up. And as a woman, there's also the added layer of society's norms that dictate gendered career paths.

With these concerns in mind, the

Zonta Club of Makati & Environs established the Empowering Women Scholarship Program (EWSP) in 2009. Club members hope to improve the educational status of women and girls through service and advocacy. Thus, each year, the Club commits to sponsor the education of a batch of bright young women from marginalized families. The chosen girls are enrolled in science and engineering courses at ZCME's partner institution, the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP), where they enjoy financial assistance as well as mentoring and exposure to activities and seminars outside academics.

As a multi-sectoral program, EWSP draws support from many like-minded organizations who contribute to Zonta's vision of helping marginalized, bright young women hurdle the demands of a career in a male-dominated field like

Engineering. The spouses of diplomats, who stage the International Bazaar each year, donated PhP200,000 to support five students. Olga S. Martel and her JSSP will donate a further PhP150,000. Olga and Celia Angeles will personally sponsor one student each.

## EWSP Today

Currently, 15 scholars from PUP are graduating this year in Industrial, Electrical, and Mechanical Engineering courses. Almost a decade after its establishment, our EWSP scholarship program has helped 163 young women, who have passed the Board Licensure exams, and are now employed or pursuing further studies. As a result, many of them have significantly levelled up their family's financial situation. These girls will be included in the 100 scholars committed by the club for the Area 5 project to support 100 scholars for Zonta's centennial year.

## New ZCME Member



Carissa Angela "Iyay" David-Aquino was inducted as member during the Club's May 28, 2019 meeting at the Milky Way building. She was sponsored by Pam Banlaoi. Following tradition, president Maritess M. Pineda handed her a yellow rose after pinning the Zonta pin on her lapel. Each Club member welcomed her warmly with a "beso-beso."



Cara Wilson, the Club's June 2019 speaker, is an experienced Marketing Consultant with a demonstrated history of working in the education

management industry. Skilled in Nonprofit Organizations, Strategic Planning, Marketing Strategy, and Asset Management, she is a marketing professional with a Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.) from SDA Bocconi and a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)

in History from Harvard College. Incidentally, she is the daughter of one of our charter members and past presidents, Isabel Caro Wilson.

Cara told her audience of Makati Zontians that in the age of Artificial Intelligence, not all upskilling is the same. Jeff Bezos, the billionaire who heads Amazon, makes money by selling data. She said that any company that has software can be upscaled. The "For the Women" (FTW) organization, of which Cara is a vital part, has a big executive presence, and wants the Philippines to be the data

capital of the world. She adds that we need data scientists. Data Science is a Master of Science degree course in the University of the Philippines and in Mapua Institute of Technology.

"For the Women" had 473 applicants with a background in Math and/or Science. All are now earning PhP43,000 to 60,000 monthly. FTW is building a community of women helping other women. In fact, these women are exceptional communicators, have resilience and grit, and are able to seize opportunities.

# Makati Zontians Mark AE Day



To celebrate Amelia Earhart Day, the club had as guest speaker on January 29 Engr. Aileen Cortes, a pilot by profession. Aileen teaches Aeronautical Engineering at the FEATI, a college known for specializing in the education and training of pilots. She said that there's more to life than being a passenger on a plane. She had always dared to do things that only boys did. She became fascinated with flying on her first flight as a passenger, and became obsessed by it. As passionate as she is about flying, she rues that it is still dominated by males, with only 10% of women serving as pilots. Apart from teaching aviation, Aileen flies private planes. Flying, she says, makes you see the world from a different perspective. Aileen is truly an exemplar of an empowered woman.

## "Grace to be Born"

"Grace To Be Born" is a half-way house for young pregnant and unwed women caught in dysfunctional relationships or are victims of abuse.

Grace To Be Born was established to provide a temporary shelter for pregnant women in crisis, those who are seeking shelter and a second chance at life. It includes a child-caring agency as a haven for their children to be born there.

Through the service of social welfare and health care professionals, the women receive counselling, medical care, livelihood training and, most importantly, spiritual nourishment through a pastoral program to prepare them for a life of dignity after their ordeal.



Standing from left to right are Zontians Olivia M. Villafuerte, president Maritess Pineda, Zontian Martina Santos, past president Monica Aveo, a staff member of the halfway house, and Melissa S. Romualdez.

Writer & Editor: ERLINDA E. PANLILIO  
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# Woman Today features Zonta's advocacy on preventing teenage pregnancy

Reprinted from Woman Today



Ester V. Palacio, executive director, Grace To Be Born

## EXTENDING GRACE Women in Crises

Grace To Be Born and Zonta Club of Makati and Environs (ZCME) Foundation, Inc. join hands in supporting teenage mothers and saving their babies—all victims of unplanned pregnancies.

BY CYNTHIA U. SANTIAGO  
PHOTOS BY NAN LLANETA

**F**irst, a sharing by a teenager whose identity is concealed in the name Lizzie . . .

*I am 15 years old. Last February, I gave birth to a baby boy. I don't know who the father of the child is.*

*It happened a year ago. I was only in Grade 10. Every day, at 7 a.m., I usually walked from our house to my school, and after school, at 5 p.m., I would also walk back home.*

*One afternoon, I took a shortcut, turning from the busy road I used to traverse to an isolated dirt road flanked by tall trees and wild grass.*

*Before I knew it, someone had pulled me and pushed me against a tree . . . and raped me. Then, two or three more men—I could no longer tell how many—took turns in raping me, too.*

*I kept mum about it, my horrifying experience. I couldn't even tell my own family. But in time, my mother noticed my tummy getting big. My parents asked questions. I lied. I told them I had a boyfriend but he was nowhere to be found.*

*An aunt happened to know about Grace To Be Born. So, my parents brought me here.*

*One day, I related everything to Sis. Ester Palacio, Grace To Be Born's executive director. She kindly prayed over me, that I may be healed of this trauma that struck me at such a young age. I have somehow learned to accept this baby as truly my own.*

How could a troubled teenage girl confide in Sis. Ester when she could not even tell her own parents?

Sis. Ester is well equipped to deal with cases such as Lizzie's. She holds a Bachelor of Science diploma, major in Social Work, from Miriam College, and she is now a licensed social worker, serving as executive director for Grace To Be Born, a shelter for women in crises.

### Zonta Advocacy

Using her extensive experience in serving women in crises, Sis. Ester presented insights on teenage pregnancy at a forum on *Early Marriage and Early Pregnancy*, an event recently held by the Zonta Club of Makati and Environs Foundation Inc. at the Club's center in Bicutan, Taguig City.

Zonta derives its name from the Lakhota language of the native American Sioux people, which means *honest and trustworthy*—virtues on which the organization anchors its inspiration and advocacy of working for service and world understanding.

Founded in 1919, the nonsectarian, nonpartisan global organization is composed of members who band together into clubs, clubs into districts, and districts into the Zonta International.

Some 1,200 Zonta Clubs in 63 countries count some 30,000 members who volunteer their time, talents, and treasure to support local and international service projects, and especially to advance the status of women worldwide.

The Zonta Club of Makati and Environs Foundation Inc. is part of Zonta's District 17, which is composed of the Philippines, Hong Kong,

through the District's strategy dubbed A.C.T.—Alignment, Communications, Teamwork.

"We are learning from you how to empower women," Lin told members of Zonta Makati.

### Teenage Pregnancy in the Philippines

Lin intently listened to Sis. Ester, visibly touched as the latter presented the issues on teenage pregnancy in the Philippines, particularly disturbing statistics related to it. The average birth rate among adolescents in Southeast Asia: 47 births per 1,000 females aged 15 to 19, higher than the average of 35 in South Asia and close to the global average of 50.

In the Philippines, according to the most recent National Demographic and Health Survey in 2017, from the Department of Health: some 9 percent of women from age 15 to 19 have already started childbearing. An average 7 percent of teenage girls have already given birth at least once.

### Grace To Be Born

Sis. Ester presented what the faith community, the Light of Jesus Family, has been doing to minister to women beset with unplanned pregnancies at LOJ's Grace To Be Born shelter.

Sis. Ester gave to Pineda, a letter of Bro. Bo Sanchez, founder of the Light of Jesus, thanking the Club for welcoming Grace To Be Born through Sis. Ester, and providing a comprehensive description of Grace and its services.

In his letter, Bro. Bo quoted the Biblical promise on which Grace is anchored, 1 Peter 5:10: *After you have suffered a little while, the God of All Grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, shall himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.*

A brainchild of Bro. Rey Ortega, a longtime member of LOJ, Grace To Be Born, which is located at 53 Dr. Sixto Antonio Avenue, Barangay Kapasigan, Pasig City, maintains a home for unwed mothers donated by generous supporters like Basti and Betty Roxas-Chua. Bro. Rey was ably supported by his wife, Sis. Myrna, until she succumbed to a stroke on March 16, 2013. Barely four years after, Bro. Rey passed away on July 1, 2017, after a brave battle with cancer. He was 70 years-old.

### Supporting Mothers

Grace has been taking care of women in crises, providing them with shelter, food, and healthcare, throughout the nine months that they carry their baby.

Aside from the stigma of unwanted pregnancy, a woman resorts to abortion when she simply cannot afford to raise her child.

Thus, Grace conducts livelihood skills and training sessions so that when a teen mom goes out of the shelter, she may be able to earn income to support her child—or establish a small-scale business that would enable her to fend for her baby.

Most important, Grace guides the women to a spiritual renewal so that they may have deep faith and hope in God.

### Saving Babies

If a mother cannot raise her baby, Grace helps her find foster parents for the child. After giving birth to their baby, some women surrender the child for adoption or simply leave Grace, never coming back for the baby. Following the government's adoption

Singapore, Thailand, and Malaysia, and with Teresa Lin as governor.

Zonta Makati, led by its president Maritess Pineda, warmly welcomed Lin with a special program highlighted with the forum on *Early Marriage and Early Pregnancy*. Lin lauded Zonta Makati's initiatives in fulfilling the Zonta goal to empower women, which, she noted, the Club pursues by enhancing the quality of delivery of its service,



Gov. Teresa Lin of Hongkong (3rd from left) with Zonta Makati ladies: Melissa Romualdez; Maritess Pineda, President; Mita Rufino, director, District 17 and Monica Aveo, former President of Zonta Makati.



The Zonta Makati ladies with Gov. Lin and other guests.

program as managed by the Department of Social Welfare Development, Grace looks for families here or abroad who would kindly adopt the surrendered or abandoned children.

Grace's social workers counsel the new parent/Two Grace babies are now with their new parents in Canada, while another one is with parents in Finland—all ready and able to raise these kids to be the persons God intended them to be.

Babies who cannot be adopted are usually turned over to the Tahanan ng Pagmamahal, another shelter sustained by L.O.J, which takes care of abandoned children.

#### Behind Grace

Behind Grace are kind souls who helped build the shelter and sustains it to this day. They came to celebrate the 8th Anniversary of Grace To Be Born on May 5, 2017. The Agri Party List Rep. Orestes 'Otis' Salon graced the event with his wife, Charice. The board members were there—Marietta Reyes, Rosalind Wee, Rissa Singson-Kawpeng, Dories Monsie David, Concepcion Brosas, Geraldine Ocier, Julie Go, and Betty Roxas Chua, vice chairman of Grace To Be Born.

#### Causes of Unplanned Pregnancy

In her talk, Sis. Ester pointed out the causes of unplanned pregnancies:

- Unplanned sexual encounter/ sexual abuse—a record 7,037 cases of incest in 2011-2016.
- Peer pressure. To fit into a group, a teenager, fearing rejection or ridicule, succumbs to the influence of friends to have sex, usually with a teenage boy who himself is not ready to raise a family.
- Misinformation. Teenagers fall into the sex trap mainly because they lack the knowledge and understanding of the biological and emotional aspects about the issue.
- Breakdown of family life. In a broken family, children have limited guidance or none at all, so they turn to friends and consequently, receive misinformation.
- Media hype. Sex scenes portrayed on television and the movies, easy access to sex topics especially on social media, and glamorized sex hardly present the ill effects of casual encounters.

#### Effects of Teenage Pregnancy

Sis. Ester pointed out the dire effects of teenage pregnancy as follows:

- Critical health risk. Afraid to tell parents or authorities about her predicament, the teenager misses out on pre-natal care. Statistics show 25 percent of social welfare clients are nutritionally at risk. A high percentage of a pregnant teenager's nutrients go to her baby. Lacking such nutrients, especially vitamins, the teenager is susceptible to anemia or eclampsia—suffering convulsions from high blood pressure, often followed by coma, and posing a threat to the health of the mother and her baby.

Additional symptoms are difficulty bonding with the baby, overwhelming fatigue, feelings of worthlessness, panic attacks, thinking of harming one's self or her baby, difficulty enjoying activities she once enjoyed.

- Depression. A teen mom is likely to suffer severe postpartum depression or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)— a mood disorder the symptoms of which are extreme sadness, low energy, anxiety, crying episodes, irritability, and changes in sleeping and eating patterns.

- Family hostilities. A teenage girl living with parents may find it even more difficult to cope with pregnancy for she will be drawn by the guilt of letting her parents down. Humiliated and shamed, teen moms suffer from low self-esteem.

- Social consequences. Teen moms are most likely to quit school. Without proper education, they cannot find well-paying jobs and 80 percent eventually rely on welfare. Living in poverty, they are also at risk of domestic violence.

Teenage pregnancy is also associated with an increased rate of delinquent behavior, including alcohol and drug abuse.

#### United Action

The government maintains shelters for impoverished teens such as the Marillac Hills, a rehabilitation center for young women well supported by Zonta Makati. It serves abused, exploited women or those in conflict with the law.

Sis. Ester said that after a fifteen-year battle in Congress, the national government passed the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act in 2012. The law mandates that the government must provide universal access to all kinds of family planning, improve maternal health, reduce the rate of sexually transmitted diseases, and include sex education in schools.

The government also supports training of workers, construction of facilities and including family planning in the national health insurance coverage.

One intervention measure is the hospital-based centers for teens. Each center refers adolescents for pregnancy-related services such as antenatal care and delivery within the hospital. The centers also offer the services of trained healthcare providers who discuss postpartum and newborn care, including family planning options, breastfeeding, and immunization services for the babies.

Another important measure is making sex education a part of the school curriculum. The teenagers can be taught through learning trips and exposing them to the real world of teen pregnancy. Sis. Ester, however, added, "Instead of discussing the dangers and consequences of teenage pregnancy, why not teach them the advantages of not having a baby when they are not gravely impacted by pregnancy?"

Bottom line, teens must first be taught in the family, Sis. Ester asserts. "To make this work, teens must have a strong bond with their parents. With a strong relationship with their children, parents can well influence their children's decisions and direct such decisions to the right way." **WT**



A Grace mother with Sis. Ester



A mother-to-be at the Grace shelter talks with Zontians, Vicky Wieneke and Monica Abo.



A Grace baby gets a much-needed hug





# A Female Fundraising with Flair

The club's FilipinaZ Fair was a unique art, jewelry, and fashion fair that showcased beautiful creations by women entrepreneurs and artists. Held on November 9-11, 2018 at the 8 Rockwell Hall, it is the club's premiere fundraising effort for all its projects and advocacies. Now on its 5th year, the fair was made even more special with the Valera exhibit, a tribute to Ramon Valera, the first National Artist for fashion. On display was a re-creation of his atelier along with photos of his muses and original wedding gowns, which were once worn by some of our very own Zontians.

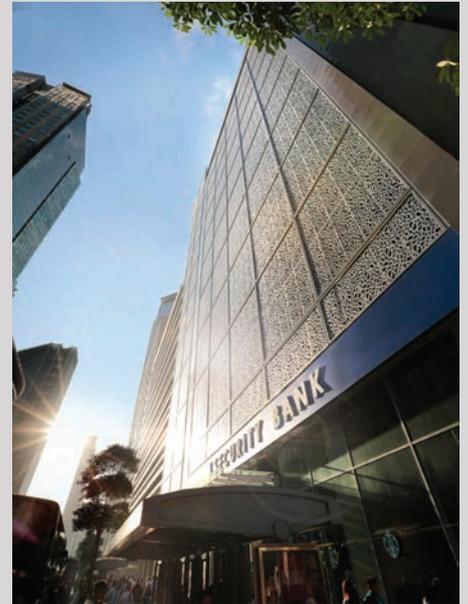
This year's FilipinaZ will take place on October 11 - 13 at the 5th floor of The Events Place in Rockwell.

## VALERA UNEARTHED





Makati Zontians pose for photo in Rockwell 8 during the well-attended FilipinaZ Fair



## 4 years with Security Bank

**Recognizing the contributions of our most active sponsor**

As advocates for women empowerment, the Zonta Club of Makati and Environs always welcomes allies willing to support its many causes and projects. This is why we are ever grateful for the support that our major sponsor, the Security Bank Corporation, has given us since we mounted the first ever FilipinaZ bazaar in 2014.

The partnership began when Security Bank (SBC) sought to create an environment where the women in their workforce would be respected and well-cared for. As women have come to occupy 61% of the senior and middle management positions, and 68% of the Bank's entire workforce, SBC began asking: how do we continue to empower women?

After starting the partnership in 2014, SBC went on to support Zonta's advocacies for the "8 Bravo Empowered Women Awards." Conceptualized in 2015, the Awards are meant to be an avenue to inspire Filipino women-- to lead them to create a lasting impact on Philippine society. Four years later, the partnership is still going strong with the holding of this year's FilipinaZ Fair, hopefully at 8 Rockwell again.

**"Our future is not where we are heading, but what we are creating."**

*by Past ZI Director Jane O'Brien  
(in The Zontian 1998-2000  
Biennial Issue Six, p.9)*



Standing from left to right are president Maritess Pineda, Jae Eun Chung, Zontian Charming Baldemor, and Ambassador Sung Kim



Makati Zontians led by pres. Maritess M. Pineda and Area 5 Director Mita Rufino at the Zonta-Makati Bazaar, held in Rockwell in October 2018 to raise funds for the empowerment of women and girls

# Update on Marillac Hills

by JOANNE ZAPANTA ANDRADA  
CHAIRMAN, ZCME PSYCHOLOGICAL CENTER FOR SEXUALLY ABUSED CHILDREN

Since 1997, when the club's Psychological Center for the Empowerment of Women was established, it has served as a safe haven for sexually abused girls aged six to 17. Some 500 girls have "graduated" or have since been able to be free of their abusers, usually an uncle or foster father. Most of them had been left in the care of a male relative when their mothers left for abroad to work as OFWs (overseas workers). As much as 90% of the girls, having overcome their trauma, are now gainfully employed and staying elsewhere.

The International Bazaar has donated PhP100,000 to Marillac Hills. In addition, Olga S. Martel and her JSSP will donate a total of PhP150,000 to help pay for the psychological rehabilitation of the girls. (A psychologist and especially trained nurses attend to the needs of the girls.)



A young resident narrates her group's depiction of the physical manifestations of puberty.

Joanne Zapanta-Andrada, who handles our Psychological Center at Marillac Hills, a haven for sexually abused girls aged 6 to 17, recovering from their trauma, reports that Marillac wards received

free voice lessons consisting of ten (10) sessions from a benefactor, the Dimitri Project. The teenage girls were thrilled to be coached by Ms. Airen B. Parba, and looked forward to more lessons.

Early this year, the Zonta Club of Makati and Environs' Psychological Center for Sexually Abused Children embarked on an ambitious project. We recognised that there were girls in our center who were already of adult age but had no place to go home to. Their cases had long been resolved but, for many of the girls, their families were not willing to bring them back into the fold.

Young women such as these face a very uncertain future. The only alternative that is left is for them to be moved from institution to institution for the rest of their lives. Because of this, our Center decided to find ways to ensure that they could live independently.

Through our LEVEL-UP program, we are able to sponsor an exclusive TESDA Training program for 20 of our girls who were in the above-mentioned circumstance. The girls were given two months' worth of intensive classroom and lab skills

training (Good Housekeeping NC-II), at Lakewood School of Alabang (TESDA-accredited vocational school). Through our project partner Bellevue Manila, the girls were able to complete over 200 hours of on-the-job-training (OJT).

We are pleased to report that Bellevue Manila HR personnel have informed us that as a whole, our girls performed better than the OJT students from posh, private colleges. As a result, they will soon be working in Bellevue Manila as part of the hotel's Housekeeping staff.

Encouraged by the success of this project, we in ZCME would like to repeat this project by August of this year. We would like to reach out not only to our sexually abused clients but to young women in our community who are experiencing great disadvantages because of abject poverty, physical disabilities and/or lack of higher education. In order to make the training even

more holistic, we will be including soft skills training (proper work-ethics, time management, social graces, money management etc...) to our curriculum.

We are targeting between 20-30 young women to join this 2nd batch of trainees. We are hoping that the Spouses of Heads of Mission (SHOM) would be our partner in empowering these young women through their financial support to cover the training, materials and miscellaneous expenses of our girls.

It is important to add that our club has reached out to the Human Resources heads of the hotels in the Muntinlupa area. They have all signified interest in being part of our program and will happily hire our girls provided they meet the required standards. Should we be successful in raising enough funds, we will be able to start training in August in time for the girls to be employed during the holiday season.



The chair of the Club's Marillac Hills project, Joanne Zapanta Andrada, reports that the feedback from the voice lessons for the girls in Marillac Hills from May 9, 2019 to July 8, 2019, has been good. Following was submitted to her by a member of the Psychological Staff of Marillac Hills:

The voice lessons consisted of ten (10) sessions which were coached by Ms. Airen B. Parba and sponsored by the Dimitri Project. Fourteen (14) residents initially joined the

lessons, but two (2) girls dropped and one (1) was discharged before the culminating activity. The girls were ecstatic and excited to learn throughout their sessions. During their culminating activity on July 8, 2019, eleven (11) girls showed great improvement in terms of their confidence and stage presence. The girls performed solo and group songs; they were all nervous and excited to show their coach and the sponsors their performance. Dimitri Project's Founder, Ms. Anya

Lagman, performed some songs along with two of her friends, and also sang with the eleven (11) girls. Afterwards, the coach and sponsors presented the girls' certificates, while Ms. Anya gave them small gift bags, which were endorsed to their house parents. Dimitri Project also gifted them with tee shirts. Before the activity ended, the girls sang one last song for their coach and sponsors, thanking them for the voice lessons. Some of the girls were crying because they thought they would never see their coach again, but Ms. Anya's mother assured them that Coach Aira would be back to teach another batch of girls. In this connection, Dimitri Project has plans of sponsoring another batch of girls for voice and guitar lessons in the near future.

By: JOIE ZELAH O. CAYOBIT  
Zonta-Makati Psychological Staff

# UN Day Celebration

by **OLGA SEVERINO MARTEL**  
CHAIRMAN, UN COMMITTEE

Area 1 and Area 5 of District 17 teamed up in a joint celebration of United Nations Day on October 24, 2018 at the Henry Sy, Sr. Hall, Assumption College in San Lorenzo Village, Makati. Celebrating UN Day is one of the mandates of Zonta International which has been closely linked with the United Nations since the latter was founded in 1945.

The centerpiece of the celebration was a Forum with two speakers: Ms. Cristina Concepcion, President and CEO of BPO International, Inc., who spoke on Gender Equality in the Workplace, and Former Secretary of Health Dr. Esperanza Cabral, who talked about the Empowerment of Women & Girls in the Community. PIP Olivia Ferry introduced Congresswoman of La Union, Mary Jane Ortega, who was the Moderator of the Forum.

Ms. Concepcion elucidated on four of the seven Women Empowerment Principles, namely: Establish high-

level corporate agenda for gender equality with no discrimination of women by offering equal opportunities to men and women; hiring as many women as possible with a policy of equal pay for equal work; promote education, training and professional development of women through seminars and workshops; ensure health, safety & wellbeing of all women workers; respect human rights; and the strict enforcement of no sexual harassment.

Dr. Cabral emphasized the need to improve services for women's health in various barangays through health centers and lying-in centers; education for family planning and nutrition; community vigilance for the elimination of violence against women through education, and the involvement of men in this agenda; and prevention of teen-age pregnancy.

A musical interlude followed with a

ballet number performed by young students of Danspace Ballet School.

The highly successful event was chaired by District 17 UN Committee Chair Chona M. Lopez assisted by Area 1 UN Committee Vice Chair Lolita Sy, and Area 5 UN Committee Vice Chair Olga Severino Martel in cooperation with Area 1 Director Isabel Cu & Area 5 Director Mita Rufino. Over 200 empowered Zontians were present attired in various international costumes, for which prizes were awarded.

It was another meaningful celebration of United Nations Day that called the attention of everyone to the importance of empowering women and their role in the pursuit of the sustainable goals established by the United Nations, particularly Goal No. 5, which calls for the advancement of the status of women, gender equality, and the elimination of violence against women.



Photo at left of the joint UN Day celebration by Areas 1 and 5, held in Assumption College, shows: UN Committee Vice-Chair Lolita Sy of Area 1, and Area 5 Vice-Chair Olga Severino Martel; one of the speakers--Cristina Concepcion; the Forum Moderator, Mary Jane Ortega; the other speaker--former Health Secretary, Dr. Esperanza Cabral; and UN Committee Chair for District 17, Chona M. Lopez.



# Philippine Women's University Golden Z Club



The Philippine Women's University Golden Z Club was chartered last August 25, 2018 and the Installation of officers followed. Showing support from our club was President Maritess Pineda, Vice President Melissa Romualdez, Area 5 Director Armita Rufino, Chairman of Golden Z and Z Club Maritoni Tordesillas and Zontians Charlotte Benitez, wife of PWU President Francisco Benitez and new member Anne Corominas. We are lucky to have our very own Olive Villafuerte as the adviser for PWU Golden Z club.

The proactive Golden Z officers headed by their President Odiraa Aghanya proceeded with a recruitment day and after which, organized a forum last November 13 for Senior High school students on the "Importance of Quality Education to Career Opportunities." Their speakers were Atty. Chito Chavez and Broadcast Journalist Annalisa Burgos. Coming from different fields, both speakers inspired the students by sharing their expertise and experience.

***"If you want something said, ask a man; if you want something done, ask a woman."***

*-- Margaret Thatcher*



## Past ZCME Presidents at the June GMM

It was a reunion of sorts when ZCME past presidents got together at their June 25, 2019 general membership meeting (GMM) held at the Milky Way building where the Club usually holds its monthly meetings. Photo shows from left to right: Menchu Esteban, Linda E. Panlilio, Chona Lopez, Livie Ferry (who went on to become ZI President from 2006-2008), Maritess Pineda, Isabel Caro Wilson, Bella Angara Castillo, Carol Llanillo, and Rosie Go.

The Kalaw-Ledesma Foundation is partnering with Zonta Club of Makati and Environs and Marillac Hills to give painting lessons to the girls in Marillac. K-L Found. provides the art teacher, Gilda Garbanzos, and the art materials. Lessons are every Friday 9:30-11:30 am.



## MESSAGE FROM THE AREA DIRECTOR



ARMITA B. RUFINO

At the end of biennium 2016-2018, the turning of a new leaf immediately followed. This shows that Zonta International does not waste a minute to continue its advocacy of empowering women and girls.

Zonta International will be celebrating its Centennial Year on November 8, 2019. Our Centennial Officers and Board under the leadership of President Maritess Pineda have a big challenge in making sure that Zonta International service and advocacy are placed in the hearts and minds of our fellow Makati Zontians, especially since we will be celebrating our 50th year of founding in 2021.

Zonta is a service organization whose principal purpose is to empower women and girls, thus it needs the dedication of its members to be able to achieve the objectives and goals of Zonta.

To the Officers and Board of the Zonta Club of Makati & Environs on Zonta International's Centennial in 2019, good luck and more power!