



Photos: Gokongwei Brothers Foundation



DLSU Laguna redefines spaces for learning, research

DE LA SALLE UNIVERSITY LAGUNA CAMPUS
UNDERScoreD THE PURSUIT OF IMPACTFUL AND
SUSTAINABLE PROGRAMS for the future with various campus
developments, including the relaunch of the John Gokongwei, Jr.
Innovation Center (JGIC) last June 30.

During the blessing of the facility, DLSU President Br. Bernard
Oca FSC said “the revitalized space is all about unlocking new
opportunities and wider solutions to serve our community and
support national development.”

Continue on Page 2 >

What’s inside

Leading with Openness: One Leader’s Journey	2
Br. Bernie discusses PHL digitalization in intl confab	3
CLA faculty receives UMPIL Lifetime Achievement Award in Literary Education	4
Communication Department marks 50th year with a major contemporary art showcase	5

In partnership with the Gokongwei Brothers Foundation (GBF), the Laguna campus hosted the relaunch of JGIC, which is envisioned to serve as a dynamic hub for research, innovation, and industry collaboration.

JGIC was named after one of its esteemed alumni, John Gokongwei, Jr., who advocated the advancement of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) for national development.

Boosting accessibility and EV use

To further its commitment to sustainable development and enhanced campus accessibility, the DLSU Laguna Campus also inaugurated its new Gate 2 along Br. Andrew Road and a state-of-the-art Electric Vehicle (EV) Parking and Charging Station last June 26.

The project was led by Laguna Campus Vice President Dr. Jonathan Dungca as well as Engr. Emilia Sevilla and the Campus Development team, in partnership with Leandro V. Locsin Partners, RSN Trading and Construction Services, and 110 Consultants, Inc.

A blessing ceremony was officiated by Fr. Dean Bongat and graced by Br. Bernie and Senior Vice President Kai Shan Fernandez.

New research pods

To expand the University's research capacity, the Laguna Campus likewise unveiled the DLSU Research Pods—repurposed container vans transformed into cutting-edge research laboratories. Dungca described the new facilities as “a fusion of science, sustainability, and innovation.”

These modular research units offer flexible, efficient, and eco-friendly spaces that will serve as dynamic hubs for various research initiatives across disciplines, he said.

Each pod features innovative ventilation, insulated interiors, and provisions for low-impact operations in harmony with the campus' green environment.

University Strategy Brief

In May 2024, the University launched the Jubilee Strategy and Performance Management Program, which provides training and coaching as part of a University-wide initiative to improve unit-level performance. Under the guidance of Gagement, a Melbourne based consultancy, unit heads and their leadership teams are equipped with tools, routines, and skills to formulate structured actionable plans and deploy them to ensure the University delivers on its A.Y. 2023-2027 Jubilee Strategy.

LEADING WITH OPENNESS:
ONE LEADER’S JOURNEY

AS HER DEPARTMENT PREPARES TO IMPLEMENT ITS STRATEGY IN THE COMING YEAR, one leader reflects on the personal growth that has already begun. “The biggest shift has been in our team dynamics,” she shared. “We tend to gravitate toward colleagues we’re comfortable with—but this program challenged that.” She intentionally included someone she hadn’t worked closely with before. “That experience helped me grow, and I’ve seen how it’s helped the team, too.”

Through the program, she’s learned to prioritise team needs over personal preferences: “This is something the university needs, not just me. That means I have to work with different people.” She’s also seen changes in how work gets done. “The clarity is there now. Strategy Team leaders define the next steps, they speak up, and they connect what we’re doing to our department’s goals. The ideas aren’t just floating anymore—they’re being implemented.”

To support this shift, she initiated regular coaching sessions, giving team members space to reflect and adjust. “Not every department



took advantage of the coaching program, but I made it a priority. It’s helped with consistency and engagement.”

Looking ahead, she sees opportunity. “We want to bring the rest of the department into the process next term. There’s a lot of empowerment now. If people take the lead, and we support them, we can reach the goals we’ve set—together.”

Her advice to others? “By including a range of people, you might be surprised by what you learn—and what you can achieve.”



BR. BERNIE DISCUSSES PHL DIGITALIZATION IN INTL CONFAB

**DE LA SALLE UNIVERSITY
PRESIDENT BR. BERNARD OCA FSC
DISCUSSED THE COUNTRY’S STATE
OF DIGITALIZATION IN HIGHER**

EDUCATION including its challenges and prospects at The Association of Southeast Asian Institutions of Higher Learning (ASAIHL) Conference 2025.

Held at Beltei International University, Phnom Penh, Cambodia from July 6 to 8, the event gathered academics, researchers, administrators, and students from across the Southeast Asian region and beyond to discuss the digitalization of higher education

and related topics such as AI, digital divide, social media, and digital transformation, among others.

Br. Bernie, who concurrently sits as ASAIHL board member and National Council of the Philippines president, highlighted the state of internet penetration and use in the Philippine schools, key digitalization initiatives of HEIs and DLSU, and long-term recommendations towards a transformative digital strategy.

According to him, there is a need for public investment in digital infrastructure, redesigning of rules and procedures

for implementing digital education, and continued discussions on what learning quality looks like under hybrid modalities. He ended by saying “As one of the world’s leading users of the internet in general and social media in particular, there is no shortage of appetite for change. We welcome every opportunity to work with like-minded institutions to create a more digitally literate and equitable ASEAN.”

Established in 1955, ASAIHL is one of the oldest regional organizations in Southeast Asia. It has 246 member institutions from 25 countries.



DLSU launches sustainability forum

AS PART OF THE UNIVERSITY VISION MISSION WEEK, THE UNIVERSITY SUSTAINABILITY OFFICE (USO) inaugurated the *We Live Green Forum* last June 23 at The Verdure.

Themed, “DLSU Sustainability Journey of Caring for Our Common Home”, the forum is an USO initiative highlighting the University’s efforts on sustainability from the past, the present, and the future.

USO Executive Director Antonio Carlos Maralit kicked off the event with a briefing on the University’s current sustainable practices and priorities for both the Manila and Laguna campuses.

The University gives priority to five of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals, namely: Good Health and Wellbeing (SDG 3), Quality Education (SGD 4), Sustainable Cities and Communities (SDG 11), Climate Action (SDG 13), and Partnership for the Goals (SDG 17).

With these focus points, various clusters were formed within the DLSU community. A panel on governance to grassroots for these

priority SDGs was participated by Maralit, Presidential Adviser on Sustainability Dr. Anthony SF Chiu, Sustainability Hub - Laguna Director Karen Hebron, and Sustainability Hub - Manila Director Joseph Rosal.

The multi-sectoral subcommittees of the University were divided into four clusters: Operations; Social and Community Engagement; Academic; and Research. Each cluster presented its SDG objectives and plans.

Jesse Robredo Institute of Governance Director Dr. Francisco Magno also shared the activities of The SDG City Project and UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network Philippines, where DLSU is currently serving as secretariat.

The *We Live Green* Forum coincided with the 10th anniversaries of Pope Francis’ encyclical *Laudato si’* and the UN SDGs, highlighting the milestones, challenges, and vision of DLSU related to sustainable development.

CLA FACULTY RECEIVES UMPIL LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD IN LITERARY EDUCATION

DLSU COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR DR. SHIRLEY
LUA RECEIVED THE GAWAD PAZ
MARQUEZ BENITEZ, a lifetime achievement
award for educators in Philippine literature
conferred by the *Unyon ng mga Manunulat sa
Pilipinas* (UMPIL) last April 26 at University of
the Philippines Diliman.

UMPIL, the Writers' Union of the Philippines,
is the country's largest organization
of creative writers. They honored nine
distinguished literary individuals and a
literary organization at the 38th *Gawad
Pambansang Alagad ni Balagtas* during its
51st National Writers Congress.

The annual awarding ceremony gives
distinctions to literary luminaries for various
categories including for poetry, screenplay,
fiction, essay, play, and literary criticism.

Lua was recognized for her dedication and
passion as a literary educator in shaping the
younger generation as critical thinkers and
creative writers.

A full-time professor of literature and cultural
studies, she concurrently sits on the board
of the Filipino Critics Circle (formerly, the
Manila Critics Circle), which hands out the
National Book Awards annually to the best
books published in the Philippines. She also
heads the *Manunuri ng Pelikulang Pilipino*,
the premier Filipino film critics group that
confers the annual Gawad Urian on the best
Philippine movies.

She served as the coordinator for the
Philippine PEN Civil Society Programme
(2010-2019), managing projects such as
“For Love of the Word: Workshops on
Teaching Philippine Literature.”



Lua

Lua was the associate editor of *Direk: Essays
on Filipino Filmmakers* (DLSU Publishing
House and Sussex Academic Press, 2018).
Her essays, articles, and creative works
have appeared in anthologies, magazines,
newspapers and journals. She is a former
director of DLSU Bienvenido N. Santos
Creative Writing Center (2011-2017).

SHORE-managed Kayreyna Marine Protected Area shortlisted for 2025 Para El Mar Awards



THROUGH THE COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS OF THE LIAN
MARINE PROTECTED AREA COUNCIL (LIMPAC) MEMBERS-
DLSU BR. ALFRED SHIELDS FSC OCEAN RESEARCH
(SHORE) / BR. ALFRED SHIELDS FSC MARINE STATION,
CENTER FOR SOCIAL CONCERN AND ACTION (COSCA),
AND MATUOD HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION-the Kayreyna
Marine Protected Area (MPA) in Lian, Batangas has been shortlisted
for the 2025 Para El Mar Search for Outstanding MPAs, a national
recognition program for exemplary marine conservation efforts.

The management of the Kayreyna MPA is primarily undertaken by
the Lian Fisherfolks' Association (LFA) under the strategic guidance
of Lian-Municipal Environment and Natural Resource Office (MENRO)
and LIMPAC.

Last June 26, an on-site validation and evaluation of the Kayreyna
MPA was conducted in Sitio Kayreyna, Brgy. Lumaniag.

The validation was led by MENRO's Alvin Jonson. Facilitation
involved collaboration with other municipal agencies, including
the Municipal Agricultural Office, represented by Ofelia Rodil,
the Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office,
Municipal Treasurer's Office, Municipal Social Welfare and
Development Office, Philippines Coast Guard-Sub Station, and
Philippine National Police-Lian. Municipal Administrator Jon Michael
Austria was also present.

Participants included Lian teachers and students who are
beneficiaries of DLSU-SHORE's Marine Biodiversity Monitoring
Citizen Science Training. Representatives from people's
organizations within Lian's coastal communities, specifically LFA
and the Samahan ng mga Maliit na Mangingisda ng Binubusa, also
contributed to the activity.

COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT MARKS 50TH YEAR WITH A MAJOR CONTEMPORARY ART SHOWCASE



THE MUSEUM AT DE LA SALLE UNIVERSITY PROUDLY PRESENTS “WAWI NAVARROZA: SELF AND SURROUNDING,” a solo exhibition by internationally acclaimed visual artist and DLSU alumna Wawi Navarroza, on view this term until September 26, 2025.

Mounted in celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the DLSU Department of Communication, the exhibition brings together Navarroza’s self-portraits and landscape photographs in a deeply personal yet globally resonant exploration of identity, environment, and representation. Her works are curated alongside select pieces from Filipino National Artists and Philippine Modernists from The

Museum’s permanent collections, including the Willi and Doreen Fernandez Collection.

“It’s a homecoming, but also a reckoning,” says Navarroza. “DLSU was where I first found my voice. To return with this body of work is like completing a circle—while starting a new one.”

The exhibition reflects Navarroza’s distinct visual language—where photography meets performance, and femininity, memory, and postcolonial geographies converge. Through elaborate staging, symbolic materials, and self-inscription, Navarroza interrogates how the self is shaped by cultural and ecological surroundings.

A Filipino contemporary artist working in photography and expanded media, Navarroza also attended Central Saint Martins London and was a grantee of the International Center of Photography (ICP) in New York. Her work has been exhibited widely in Asia, Europe, and the US, and she is represented by Silverlens Gallery.

“Wawi Navarroza: Self and Surrounding” is co-presented by the DLSU Department of Communication in collaboration with Silverlens Gallery. Admission is free and open to the public. For updates, visit The Museum on Facebook.

ChE team bags multiple awards in Brunei Innovation Awards



A TEAM FROM THE GOKONGWEI COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING RECEIVED THE GOLD MEDAL AWARD, THE 2ND PRIZE FOR THE ASEAN NEW INVENTION AND INNOVATION CATEGORY, AND SPECIAL AWARD FOR SUSTAINABLE ENERGY at the Crown Prince Creative, Innovative Product and Technological Advancement (CIPTA) Awards 2025 held last July 2 at the International Convention Centre (ICC) in Berakas, Brunei.

Chemical Engineering students Jean Armel Delima and Mikaela Beatrice Sy, together with their mentor, Dr. Michael Angelo Promentilla, developed ECO-BRICKS, a sustainable substitute to traditional concrete blocks by use of inorganic polymers and

recycling waste materials to create low-carbon building materials.

Organized by the Universiti Teknologi Brunei, the awarding ceremony was graced by His Royal Highness Crown Prince (Dr.) Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, Pro-Chancellor of Universiti Teknologi Brunei, and attended by Minister and Consul Bernadette A. Mendoza on behalf of the Philippine Embassy.

The competition covers all areas of Science, Engineering and Technology with a focus on “Green Innovations,” participated by schools and government institutions from all-over the Southeast Asian region.

“How long has Jesus been knocking at the door of your heart, waiting to enter?”

De La Salle

—Med 85.1

IN FOCUS: NAST ACADEMICIAN DR. WILFREDO Y. LICUANAN BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES DIVISION (2025)



Excellence in research, innovation, and science outreach

FOR EXEMPLIFYING EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH, INNOVATION, AND SCIENCE OUTREACH, UNIVERSITY FELLOW AND DISTINGUISHED FULL PROFESSOR FROM THE DLSU DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY, DR. WILFREDO LICUANAN, was inducted into the National Academy of Science and Technology (NAST) as Academician on July 9-10 at the Manila Hotel. NAST is the highest recognition and scientific advisory body of the Philippines. Founded in 1976, NAST provides expert advice to the Philippine government, recognizes the achievements of Philippine researchers, and promotes linkages with counterpart science academies of other countries.

The Academy honored Dr. Licuanan for his pioneering and significant contributions to marine scientific research and conservation in the Philippines, citing his leading the development of innovative tools such as FISH-BE (a participatory bio-economic model to guide marine protected area design and management), I-C-SEA-Change (a participatory tool for the assessment of the vulnerability of coastal communities to climate change impacts), and “Reef Mo” (a still evolving package of protocols for the assessment and monitoring of coral assemblages and reefs, including the “Alwan” citizen science methods) to support marine conservation and climate adaptation.

“As one of the early researchers assessing reef condition in the Philippines, his highly cited studies have guided national marine policy. He also led the nationwide reassessment of Philippine reefs and remains active in research on coral reefs and box jellyfish,” the citation read.

It further noted: “He champions citizen science through low-cost monitoring methods and public training, encouraging community participation in reef conservation. His efforts have earned multiple national and international awards and was named a Hope Spot Champion by Mission Blue for his work in the Verde Island Passage.”

Among his latest projects is the ExPERT Project, which is short for “Examination of the Impacts of Possible Eutrophication on the Reefs of Tubbataha. The Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park is a UNESCO World Heritage Site in the Sulu Sea. The ExPERT Project undertook a detailed examination of the changes in coral cover, the results of which are used to support conservation efforts and policy-making decisions on the improvement and long-term resilience of the coral reefs.

Another project is the “Capacity-Building on Reef Assessment and Coral Taxonomy Phase 2 (CBRACT 2).” Through this project, a set of simplified survey protocols called Alwan methods was developed. CBRACT 2 highlighted citizen science, which involved the capacity-building of ordinary citizens as well as the staff of regional HEIs and government agencies for rapid coral reef monitoring, yielding high-quality data.

Licuanan also led the “Jellyfish Ecology and Envenomations Project (JEEP),” which aims to better understand the biology and ecology of harmful box jellyfish species, particularly *Chironex yamaguchii*, toward creating predictive models for nationwide jellyfish monitoring. Now in its second phase, the project continues to foster partnerships with local governments and trained citizen scientists for the development of community-based management strategies.



Photos: NAST FB page



2401 (twen'te fôr'o, wun) is a landmark number along Taft Avenue. It is the location ID of De La Salle University, home to outstanding faculty and students, and birthplace of luminaries in business, public service, education, the arts, and science. And 2401 is the name of the official newsletter of DLSU, featuring developments and stories of interest about the University.

2401 is published bi-weekly by the Strategic Communications Office (AH-21F, intercom 144). Editorial deadline is 3 p.m. Tuesdays. Contributions should include the name, office and signature of the sender. Materials may be edited for clarity or space.

2401 may be accessed online through the URL: <http://www.dlsu.edu.ph>.

Executive Director | Johannes Leo Badillo

Editorial Supervisor | Ruby Carlos
(ruby.carlos@dlsu.edu.ph)

2401 Vol. 56 No. 17 Artist-in-charge | Carmen Dela Cerna

Vol. 56 No. 17 Writers | Ameurfina Koc,
Giorla Pauline Negre, Karen Escamillas,
Roy Sy, Trisha Jeriss Basaca

Editorial support | Alaric Lopez de Leon

Creative Director | Peter Varona

Art Director | Mark Louie Esteves

Secretary | Virginia Umacob-Gases

Office Assistant | Raymond Menor