THE USPWAVELENGTH

Official Newsletter of the Ultrasound Society of the Philippines

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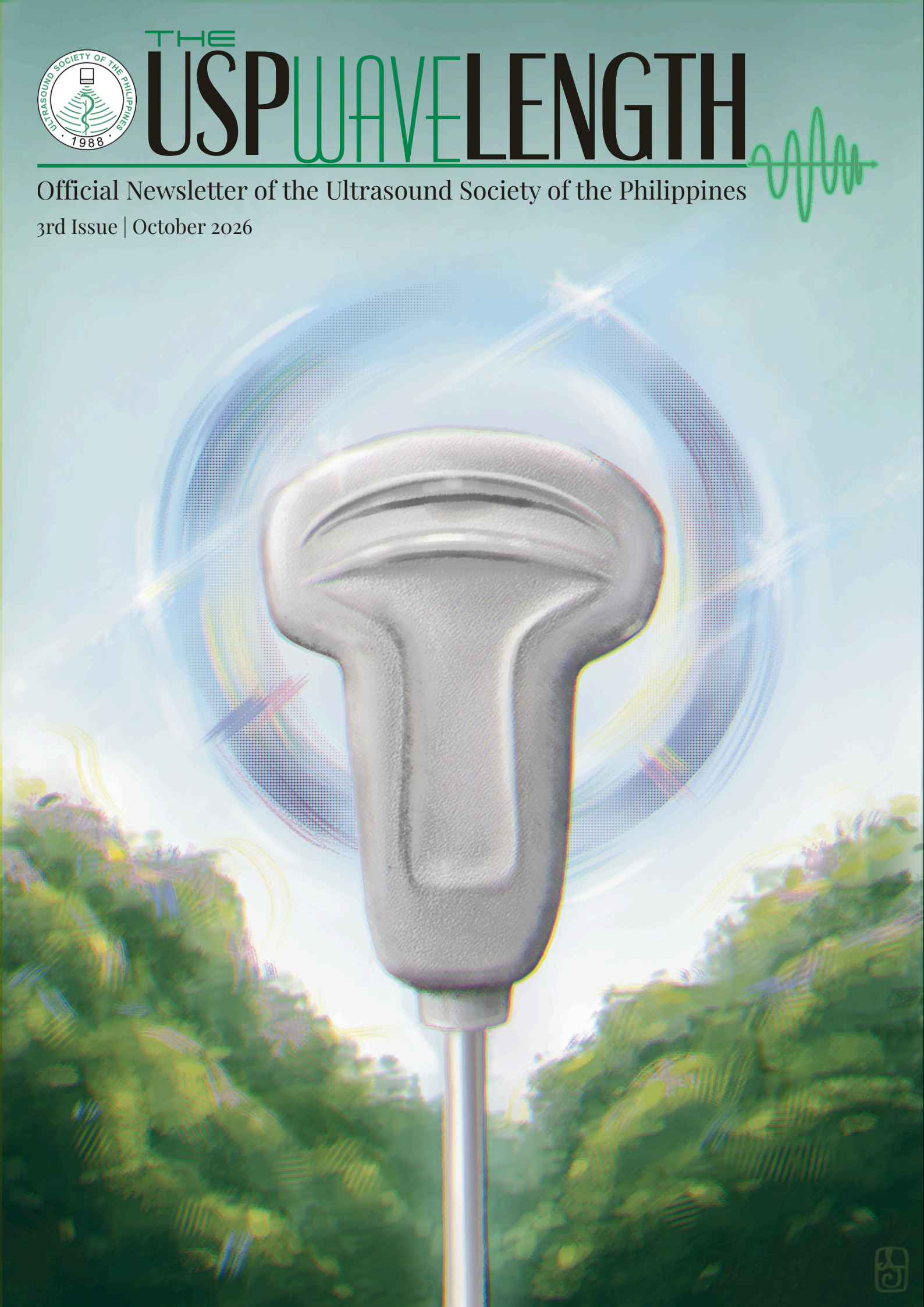


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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT: THE LAST DAY



Dr. Maria Trisha S. Lapus
USP President (2025–2026)

By the time you read this, I may no longer be the USP President. Or this could be my last day.

Last days evoke deadlines and a procedure I underwent in December 2000 as a newly licensed physician. Right before a Gamma Knife surgery to target three brain tumors, I was informed of the worst possible outcome: total deafness. For seven hours, classical music played while I lay fully awake on the MRI table, wondering when that music would end.

Living with Neurofibromatosis type 2 for 25 years has taught me not merely to cope but to thrive, even as certain abilities slipped away. I shared seven of those years (five as a member and two as an officer) with the USP Board of Trustees, one of the most patient, brilliant, and dedicated teams one could hope to find. Through my personal experiences and our collective endeavors, I discovered meaning in survival, in service, and in the lessons that both bring.

Growth is nurtured in the dark as in the light.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, isolation gave us time to harness online technology. With it, the USP launched a record number of scientific meetings, explaining fundamentals and updates to the farthest reaches of the Philippines. Together with the fellowship training officers, we framed the USP Fellowship Training Manual, the first of its kind among Radiology subspecialties and a milestone in standardizing ultrasound education nationwide.

The last day of something is the first of another.

As the pandemic ended, hospitals fully reopened, and so too did our hands-on training. The USP Lecture and Workshop Caravan traveled across seven regions of the country, leaving a legacy of knowledge, skills, friendships, and goodwill. We likewise reached out through medical missions, first as participants and later as organizers, delivering free services to those who needed them most.

Acclaim often hides just behind the walls of doubt.

Encroachment on our ultrasound practice and disregard from certain quarters made us reflect, recognize our shortcomings, and aim higher. The Comprehensive Board Review Series honed our trainees' leadership and presentation skills. The USP Midyear Convention provided a unique platform for intensive, specialized learning, while The USP Wavelength made our presence and perspectives known. Through relentless effort, collaboration, and pioneering

projects, the USP was honored on February 19, 2026, as the Philippine College of Radiology's first Most Outstanding Subspecialty Society.

Nightbirde, a breast cancer patient and golden buzzer recipient on America's Got Talent, once said: "You can't wait until life isn't hard anymore before you decide to be happy." She was right. It could be the very conditions holding us back and the deadlines limiting our time that propel us forward with urgency, courage, camaraderie, and joy. Happiness, perhaps, isn't meant to be pursued; rather, found and cherished – here and now.

And so, as Ralph Waldo Emerson said: "Write it on your heart that every day is the best day of the year."

My wish for you, both as individuals and as a subspecialty society, is that your path be brighter still: rich in compassion, clear in vision, and unyielding in spirit. May the seasons ahead bring not only success, but pride in your work and delight in the difference you make.

Thank you for the privilege of serving alongside you.

Warmly yours,
Doc Trish
On the best day of the year.



EDITOR'S NOTE:

BUILDING THE FUTURE WE ENVISION



Dr. Melani F. Mapalad-Manio
2nd Vice President (2025–2026)

The future of the Ultrasound Society of the Philippines is not something we wait for, it is something we actively shape. Our society stands at a pivotal moment, where hope transforms into vision, and vision into action.

Hope is more than a sentiment—it is the spark that ignites progress. As the Ultrasound Society of the Philippines looks ahead, we envision a future that is not only brighter but bolder, built upon by the foundation of excellence, compassion, and innovation that have long defined our community.

This issue will show you, our members and readers, how we have continued to grow further as a society, how we have withstood trials and emerged through them, how we have painstakingly dedicated our time and effort to continue teaching our future colleagues to be the best in our field and how we are continuing building bridges across the nation and the world, marking and putting our society in the map.

Each milestone we have achieved stands as proof that when we unite with purpose, we can overcome barriers and set new standards in subspecialty practice, education, and service.

A brighter society is one that fosters collaboration and empowers its members to lead with integrity. A bolder society is one that dares to innovate, to reimagine possibilities, and to champion the role of ultrasound, performed by radiologists, in transforming healthcare across the Philippines. As I mentioned in our earlier issue, we are continuing standing our ground and claiming what is rightfully ours.

The future is not something distant, it is something we create each day. With hope in our hearts, we will continue to shape a society that is worthy of your trust and make you beam with pride for being a part of it.

FEATURED ARTICLES: USP MILESTONES

EMPOWERING ULTRASOUND EXCELLENCE: STRATEGIC PLANNING 2026 FOR UNIFIED IMPACT



Dr. Maribel M. Paguio
USP Board Member (2025-2026)

The Ultrasound Society of the Philippines (USP) conducted a four-hour strategic planning workshop last January 17, 2026 at Sequoia Hotel, Q.C, facilitated by Alfredo V. Primicias III (MIR, AFPM, CSHRBPCTRS, CRSP). The activity was attended by all the members of the USP Board of Trustees headed by Dr. Maria Trisha S. Lapus (President).

At its core, the planning seeks first to redefine the Mission, Vision and Values of the society, second to resolve the society's "crisis of identity" and third to establish USP as the national leader in ultrasound excellence, equity and innovation. The renewed clarity will ensure the society's growth not only organizational, but to be deeply aligned to the national health priorities, technology advancement and achievable global standards.



Through TOWS matrix (Threats/ Opportunities/ Weakness/ Strengths), a strategic management tool analysis to generate actionable strategies, the existing internal strengths of the society such as rigorous accreditation, structured fellowship programs and ethical-scientific stand-ards were leveraged to seize external opportunities like the rising demand for healthcare services under the Universal Health Care Law, the need for diagnostic fairness in underserved regions and the adoption of emerging technologies like AI and robotics.

Hereafter, the scheme acknowledged the previous internal weakness of the society such as limited member participation, spatial inequities and fellow-dependent for leadership continuity. These challenges are continuously addressed through expanding accredited training institutions and leadership from component societies. However, external threats such as brain drain, inconsistent government policies and technology barriers are encountered.



As a result, the USP's strategic priorities are now anchored in the pillars of leadership growth, technology integration, ethical-scientific advancement and healthcare and market adaptability. With these pillars, increasing member participation by 30% through recognized programs, developing training hubs, e-learning platforms, AI-enabled modules and aligning with ESG (environment, social and governance) standards are expected. These initiatives ensure that USP is and will be future-proof and responsive to both national and global demands.

The strategic plan clearly outlines the milestones for 2026, including finalized Vision-Mission-Values for Q1, strategic map with SMART (specific/measurable/attainable/relevant/timely) goals for Q2, launching training e-platform and updated fellowship manual for Q3 and AI/robotics integration and establishing regional hubs in Q4.

Eventually, this strategic plan will position the USP not only as the premier organization in the ultrasound imaging in the Philippines but also as a GLOBALLY recognized society with achievable **VISION: To be a globally recognized society that practices ultrasound in medicine** at par with international standards and **MISSION: to lead the advancement of ultrasound practice by empowering members through standardization, research, continuing education and collaboration, aligned with national health priorities, and again at par with international standards.**



CEBU HOSTS THE FINAL LEG OF THE 1ST BATCH OF THE USP CARAVAN



Dr. Michael Rico B. Mesina
USP 1st Vice President (2025-2026)

MANDAUE CITY, Cebu, Philippines — With its goal to bring specialized ultrasound teaching activities, didactic and practical, from Luzon to Mindanao, the Ultrasound Society of the Philippines (USP), under the leadership of USP President Dr. Maria Trisha S. Lapus, successfully rolled out the highly anticipated Cebu leg of its caravan, its yearly decentralized technical ultrasound learning series.



This Cebu leg is done in collaboration with the PCR Cebu Chapter under the leadership of its President Dr. Luel Yukoya and with the Vicente Sotto Memorial Medical Center under its chairman, Dr. Jose Jay M. Abrigonda.

This single-day event, officially the 7th Leg (and last leg of the 1st tour of duty) of the USP Lecture and Hands-on Workshop Series, took place on May 16, 2026, in the Bai Hotel in Mandaue City, Cebu. This whole day activity ran from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM, gathering an impressive number of radiologists and ultrasound technologists from Cebu and the neighboring areas. A few of the attendees even came from as far as Cagayan Valley and Zamboanga to take part in this activity.



As in the previous stagings of the caravan, lectures and hands-on workshops on Musculo-skeletal, Vascular and Obstetric Ultrasound was done, providing its attendees with a unique theoretical and practical learning experience. Dr. Celeste B. Baldonado and Dr. Abigail M. Milo handled the OB ultrasound course, Dr. Tito M. Vinluan Jr. and Dr. Angeli G. Kong took care of the Vascular ultrasound part, and while Dr. Irene S. Bandong and Dr. Ephraim Emmanuel A. Maniego were in charge of the MSK ultrasound portion.

Also, as in the previous stagings, this leg is likewise formally accredited by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC), its attendees earning Continuing Professional Development (CPD) units required for license renewals.

Providing much needed support and logistics for the activity are industry partners Siemens

Healthineers, Fujifilm, GE Healthcare/IDSMed, Wayzonmed Marketing, Elan Vita and Berovan.

In addition, USP 1st Vice President Dr. Michael Rico Mesina and Immediate Past President Dr. Filipinas Rojo paved the way for the main USP contingent, bringing mini-workshops on MSK and Vascular Ultrasound to Vicente Sotto Memorial Medical Center, Cebu Doctor's University Hospital and Chong Hua Hospital, for the benefit of its Radiology consultants and residents.



This Cebu leg brings to a close the 1st batch of the USP Caravan, an ambitious multi-year initiative of the Ultrasound Society of the Philippines to bring quality, relevant trainings from North to South. The USP looks forward to re-launch its new and improved batch in the coming year or so.





BUILDING EXPERTISE IN CRITICAL CARE ULTRASOUND: A RECAP OF THE 2ND USP MIDYEAR CONVENTION



Dr. Maynard Y. Redor
USP PRO (2025-2026)

The Ultrasound Society of the Philippines (USP), a subspecialty society of the Philippine College of Radiology, successfully conducted the 2nd Ultrasound Society of the Philippines Midyear Convention with the theme, **"Critical Care Ultrasound: Visualizing and Guiding Life-Saving Solutions."** This two-day scientific event brought together radiologists, fellows-in-training, and ultrasound practitioners to strengthen their knowledge and skills in the rapidly evolving field of critical care ultrasound.

The convention commenced with opening ceremonies and messages from the leadership of the Ultrasound Society of the Philippines and the Philippine College of Radiology, emphasizing the importance of continuing medical education, innovation, and collaboration in improving patient care. The scientific program was designed to provide a balanced combination of lectures, practical workshops, assessments, and interactive activities.



The first day featured lectures on Extended Focused Assessment with Sonography in Trauma (E-FAST) and lung ultrasound, both essential applications in the evaluation and management of critically ill patients. These sessions were followed by written examinations, demonstrations, and hands-on workshops, providing participants with valuable practical experience under expert guidance.



On the second day, participants explored advanced topics, including ultrasound of the diaphragm and the Venous Excess Ultrasound (VExUS) protocol, highlighting their expanding role in critical care assessment and management. Inter-

-active workshops further reinforced these concepts and enhanced participants' technical competencies.

A major highlight of the convention was the UFTC Quiz Contest, which showcased the knowledge, critical thinking, and academic excellence of the fellows-in-training. The event provided a platform for participants to demonstrate their mastery of ultrasound principles and applications.



The convention also recognized excellence through the awarding of the Most Outstanding Fellow-in-Training. In addition, the Ultrasound Society of the Philippines awarded accreditation certificates to newly accredited hospitals and reaccreditation certificates to previously accredited institutions, reaffirming its commitment to maintaining high standards in ultrasound training and practice nationwide.



The convention concluded with a closing ceremony recognizing the invaluable contributions of the speakers, facilitators, sponsors, and participants, further reaffirming USP's commitment to advancing ultrasound education and improving patient care through excellence and collaboration.



UFTC: BEYOND THE PROBE

Dr. Sarah Victoria Zampaga
USP Secretary (2025-2026)
UFTC Chair



Fellowship is a journey—of learning and discovery, challenges and opportunities, finding one's voice, and discovering one's potential.

This year, the Ultrasound Fellowship Training Council (UFTC) witnessed that journey unfold. Our Fellows-in-Training (FITs) stepped beyond the ultrasound room, embracing opportunities to teach, serve, create, compete, and contribute. They showed that fellowship is not simply about becoming better sonologists, but becoming better professionals and stewards of our specialty.

BRIDGING CARE THROUGH IMAGING

A meaningful milestone was the first USP Medical Mission, conducted with NPK Medical Trading in celebration of National Women's Month.

At the Bukluran Headstart Day Care Center in Bagong Silangan, Quezon City, 26 FITs from 13



hospitals, guided by seven Ultrasound Fellowship Training Officer and FUSP consultants, provided OB-Gyne ultrasound services to 49 patients.



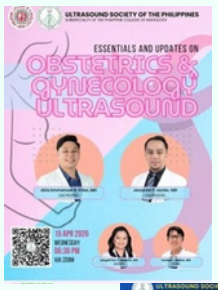
More than numbers, the mission fostered shared learning, collaboration, and camaraderie while reminding our fellows of the heart of their training: to serve and make a difference.

LEARNING LED BY FELLOWS

From April 15 to June 10, FITs took ownership of the Board Review Series, a five-part program covering OB-Gyne and Breast, Pediatrics, Genitourinary Tract, Gastrointestinal /Hepatobiliary Tract and Small Parts.

Organized from start to finish by the fellows, they selected cases, prepared presentations, coordinated sessions, and invited guest lecturers.

They were not simply preparing for an examination. They were learning to teach. In the process, they gained confidence and discovered the value of sharing knowledge.











CELEBRATING THE FELLOWS

The USP 2nd Midyear Convention gave our FITs a special afternoon to learn, connect, enjoy, and celebrate. It was also an opportunity to recognize their achievements and celebrate the people behind them.

Creativity took center stage through the UFTC Tote Bag Design Competition, inspired by "Ultrasound in Motion: Precision. Compassion. Innovation." The winning design by Dr. Maria Salma Bondoc captured the spirit of learning, growth, service, and Filipino excellence in ultrasound.

The inaugural Probe Masters – UFTC Edition brought together eleven FITs, accompanied by their Training Officers or representatives, in a spirited competition of ultrasound knowledge and scanning skills. Spearheaded and hosted by Dr. Anna Lyn Egwolf, the competition was won by Dr. Maria Simplicia Lavares of Quirino Memorial Medical Center.

More than a competition, Probe Masters celebrated sportsmanship and the friendships formed along the way.



Probe Masters Contestants

GOING BEYOND

This year also marked the introduction of the UFTC Point System, created to encourage fellows to participate, contribute, maximize opportunities, and strive for excellence.

Dr. Abigail Pornobi of St. Luke's Medical Center – Quezon City, recognized as Most Outstanding



USP Fellows-in-Training with BOT

Fellow-in-Training, exemplified this spirit through her dedication, commitment, and outstanding performance.

Her achievement reminds us: Excellence is choosing to go beyond.

THE JOURNEY CONTINUES

The true accomplishments of the UFTC cannot be measured by numbers alone. They are found in the courage to speak, the hands that serve, the creativity that inspires, and the friendships that make the journey meaningful.

Through fellowship, we are not only training sonologists. We are nurturing physicians who are knowledgeable, compassionate, confident, and ready to contribute to the future of ultrasound.

Their journey continues, guided by those who came before them and inspired by those who will follow.

The future of ultrasound is already here.

And it is in the hands of the next generation.

FROM DA NANG TO SEATTLE: LEARNING, FRIENDSHIP, AND NEW PERSPECTIVES



Dr. Celeste B. Baldonado
USP Treasurer (2025-2026)

Some journeys take us to new places. Others take us to new perspectives. In 2026, we were fortunate to experience both.

Our first journey brought us to the beautiful coastal city of **Da Nang, Vietnam**, from March 12–14, for the **17th Asian Federation of Societies for Ultrasound in Medicine and Biology (AFSUMB) Congress**, themed "New Sound for Life, New Sight for Mind." It was three days filled with stimulating lectures, fascinating cases, new ideas, and meaningful conversations with colleagues from across Asia and beyond. Between scientific sessions, there was also time to enjoy Da Nang's warm hospitality, beautiful scenery, and vibrant culture. These moments made the congress not simply an academic meeting, but a truly memorable experience shared with friends and colleagues.



Barely a month later, we found ourselves on another exciting journey—this time to **Seattle, Washington**, for the **2026 Society of Breast Imaging (SBI) Breast Imaging Symposium**, held April 16–19 under the theme "Where Insight Meets Impact." For those passionate about breast imaging, the meeting was an inspiring gathering of expertise and innovation. We immersed ourselves in discussions on the latest developments in mammography, ultrasound, MRI, contrast-enhanced imaging, screening, and diagnosis, while reconnecting with old friends and meeting new colleagues along the way.



Looking back, what stands out most is not simply the information we gained, but the experience of learning together. Conferences such as these remind us that medicine is a constantly evolving journey—and that some of the best learning happens not only inside lecture halls, but also in conversations over coffee, shared meals, unexpected encounters, and laughter after a long day.

From **Da Nang to Seattle**, these journeys gave us more than new knowledge. They gave us new perspectives, renewed enthusiasm, lasting friendships, and memories that we will carry with us long after the conference badges have been put away.



Most importantly, they reminded us why we continue to learn: **to bring home new knowledge, to share it with others, and to make a difference in the care of our patients.**

A HOME FOR THE ULTRASOUND SOCIETY OF THE PHILIPPINES: A DREAM WE BUILT TOGETHER



Dr. Marie Jo S. Lawig
USP Board Member (2025-2026)

Every great journey begins with a dream.

At first, it was simply an idea. A home where USP could grow, where officers could work, where members could gather, and where future generations could continue the legacy we started.

From that dream, the journey began.

The Beginning of a Dream

On October 11, 2025, during the USP Business Meeting, a proposal was put forth to the members. This proposal would eventually lead to one of the society's most memorable endeavors: the acquisition of two condominium units at Future Point Plaza, Panay Avenue, Quezon City, intended to function as both the office and residence for the Ultrasound Society of the Philippines.

Over the course of many years, the growth of the USP was fueled by the commitment of its members and officers. Our organization organized various educational initiatives, caravans, scientific gatherings, workshops, and conferences, while fostering professional bonds and friendships throughout the nation. Nevertheless, a single element remained missing: **a space to truly call our own**. This realization highlighted the most profound aspect of the proposal; the objective extended beyond the mere purchase of real estate. The goal was to establish a lasting sanctuary for the Society to which we are so deeply devoted.



From an Idea to a Commitment

During the Philippine College of Radiology Annual Convention at SMX Convention Center last February 20-22, 2026, the USP officers brought the vision to life through a booth showcasing the model of the proposed USP headquarters.



Turnover and Acceptance signing of the new Home of USP



Home of USP bare unit





Home of USP unit turn over

Members viewed the future USP headquarters design and joined the **signature campaign**. Each signature symbolized a commitment to this shared vision. It delivered a clear message: **"I believe in USP and its future, and I want to be part of this journey."**

The Dream Becomes a Reality

In March 2026, with the support of its officers and members, USP acquired **two condominium units at Future Point Plaza**. This milestone turned the dream of a permanent home into reality. Through collective leadership and teamwork, the officers navigated challenges and uncertainties, driven by the shared conviction that **USP deserved its own home**.

Building the Home

On August 25, 2026, USP met with contractors to begin transforming the acquired units into its functional headquarters. The new home will serve as a hub for **administrative activities, fel-lowship, and the training of Ultrasound Fellows**. It represents a dedicated space where current leaders can create opportunities for the next generation.

A Joint Achievement

The walls will tell the story.
A story of a group of people who believed that together, we could build something that would outlast our terms and become a legacy for the next generation.

Perhaps that is the most beautiful part of this journey:
We did not build this home only for ourselves.
We built it for those who will come after us.

And this home will forever remind us:
One vision.
Many hands.
One USP.
One lasting legacy.

PHILIPPINE RADIOLOGY REPRESENTED AT RADCON 2026 AND THE INAUGURAL BIMSTEC RADIOLOGY CONFERENCE IN KATHMANDU, NEPAL



Dr. Filipinas R. Rojo
USP Immediate Past President (2025-2026)

The Nepal Radiologists' Association (NRA) held its 8th Annual Conference, NRA–RADCON 2026, in collaboration with the Nepalese Society of Vascular and Interventional Radiology, in the historic city of Kathmandu, Nepal, from April 9–11, 2026. With the theme *"The Radiologist as the Clinical Navigator: Breaking Cross-border Imaging Barriers,"* the conference brought together radiologists and allied professionals from across the region.

A landmark feature of this year's gathering was the inaugural BIMSTEC-level Radiology Conference, held in conjunction with RADCON 2026. BIMSTEC, the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation, comprises seven member states: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. This historic event provided a valuable platform for sharing knowledge, strengthening professional ties, and fostering regional collaboration in radiology.



Through the invitation of NRA President Dr. Tejendra Karki, extended to the Philippine College of Radiology (PCR) through PCR President Dr. Marc James Delos Santos, I was honored to represent the PCR and the Ultrasound Society of the Philippines (USP) as an international faculty member. I was invited to lecture on Liver Elastography and facilitate hands-on workshops on Liver Elastography and Liver Fat Quantification.



The scientific program was extensive, covering neuroradiology, head and neck imaging, gastrointestinal and genitourinary imaging, cardiovascular and interventional radiology, pediatric radiology, artificial intelligence, breast imaging, obstetrics, oncology, and musculoskeletal imaging. Special sessions on BIMSTEC Radiology and Radiology Education further enriched the program.

I was particularly grateful for the opportunity to share our knowledge and experience in liver elastography and liver fat quantification—technologies that are still developing in Nepal. The lecture was well attended, and the hands-on workshop was met with enthusiastic participation, making the experience both rewarding and memorable.



Beyond the scientific sessions, the conference offered meaningful opportunities to connect with radiologists, medical physicists, and technologists from different countries and subspecialties. These exchanges highlighted both the similarities and differences in radiology practice, education, technology, and healthcare delivery across the region.

Although I was the only Filipino participant, it was heartwarming to meet Nepalese radiologists who had undergone part of their training in the Philippines. Their fond memories of their Filipino training experiences served as a wonderful reminder of the longstanding profes-

-sional and educational ties between our two countries.

Most importantly, RADCON 2026 was more than a scientific gathering. It was an opportunity to build friendships, strengthen professional relationships, and promote collaboration across borders.

And, of course, Nepal itself made the journey unforgettable. Its breathtaking landscapes, rich history, vibrant culture, and the warmth of its people added a special dimension to the experience.

I return from Kathmandu deeply grateful for the opportunity to represent the PCR and USP, proud to have been part of this historic gathering, and inspired by the spirit of friendship, learning, and cooperation that truly brought the theme of RADCON 2026 to life.

TRANSFORMING A STATUS INTO A COMMITMENT: USP ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE REPORT



Dr. Gaudencio Leon C. Espino
Member, USP Accreditation Committee (2025-2026)

The rhythmic metallic sound of an alarm clock pierced the stillness of the early morning. While much of the country remained asleep, two teams of dedicated radiologists were already preparing for journeys that would help shape the future of the ultrasound specialty in the Philippines. It was a familiar sound—one they welcomed over sleep. It marked the beginning of another day devoted to service, stewardship, and advancing excellence in training the next generation of specialists.

For the Ultrasound Society of the Philippines (USP), this was more than just another accreditation visit. It stood as a testament to resilience, collaboration, and a shared mission to elevate ultrasound education and patient care nationwide. As healthcare challenges grow more complex, the demand for rigorous fellowship training becomes ever more vital. Every accredited program represents an investment in future specialists whose expertise will touch countless lives, strengthen institutions, and drive better clinical outcomes.

The accreditation of the Western Visayas Medical Center (WVMC) Ultrasound Fellowship training program was originally set for February 6, 2026. Nature, however, had other plans. The onslaught of Typhoon Basyang forced the postponement of the visit, disrupting the meticulous preparations of the WVMC Department of Radiology and upending travel plans for the Cebu-based member of the USP Accreditation Committee. Yet, rather than dampening spirits, the storm only strengthened the resolve of everyone involved.



Accreditation at Western Visayas Medical Center

Hundreds of kilometers away in Luzon, another critical accreditation mission was unfolding. USP Accreditation Chairman and 1st Vice President Dr. Michael Rico Mesina, alongside USP Accreditation Vice Chairman and 2nd Vice President Dr. Melani Mapalad-Manio, embarked on a long journey to the City of Pines for the re-accreditation of the Baguio General Hospital and Medical Center. Along the way, they made an initial stopover in Dagupan to evaluate Region 1 Medical Center's very first USP Fellowship Training Program.

Though separated by distance and regional geography, both accreditation teams shared the single goal of upholding the highest standards of ultrasound education. Behind each site visit lie countless hours of preparation and collabora-

-tion. Beyond evaluating physical facilities, consultants, and curriculum guidelines, these site visits honor the institutions investing heavily in sonologist development. They reaffirm the USP's commitment to nurturing competent, compassionate, and globally competitive specialists.

Following a thorough evaluation, the USP Accreditation Committee officially granted accreditation to the ultrasound fellowship training programs of the following institutions:

- Armed Forces of the Philippines - Veterans Memorial Medical Center
- Amang Rodriguez Medical Center
- Healthway Fairview Medical Center
- Region 1 Medical Center
- Western Visayas Medical Center
- Jose R. Reyes Memorial Medical Center
- Baguio General Hospital and Medical Center
- Las Piñas General Hospital and Satellite Trauma Center

These accredited institutions stand as essential pillars advancing ultrasound training nationwide. For the accreditation teams, the early morning alarms, long travel routes, and rigorous evaluations were all in service of one ultimate goal: ensuring future generations of Filipino patients receive the highest standard of diagnostic ultrasound care.



Accreditation at Baguio General Hospital and Medical Center



Accreditation at Region 1 Medical Center



Accreditation at Jose R. Reyes Memorial Medical Center



Accreditation at Las Piñas General Hospital and Satellite Trauma Center



Accreditation at Armed Forces of the Philippines Medical Center


Accreditation at Healthway Fairview Medical Center

REFLECTIONS & NARRATIVES: PROFESSIONAL JOURNEY

A JOURNEY OF GRATITUDE, GRIT, AND GRACE



Dr. Angeli P. Garcia- Kong
1st Placer, Philippine
Board of Ultrasound 2025

When I received the announcement that I ranked first in the 2025 sub-specialty examination conducted by the Philippine Board of Ultrasound, I found myself in a moment of stillness. It felt as though time slowed to honor the years of hardship that preceded this triumph. Every late-night study session, every grueling shift, every tear shed in exhaustion, and every prayer whispered in surrender suddenly converged into one humbling reality: *this was all grace*.

The road to this moment was far from easy. My residency and fellowship training were filled with challenges. I will never forget performing chest ultrasounds and assisting with ultrasound-guided internal jugular catheter insertions on COVID-positive patients struggling to breathe. Beneath layers of PPE and fogged face shields, fear quietly lingered, yet duty demanded courage.

Those experiences taught me that being a radiologist is not only about interpreting images—it is about compassion, presence, and humanity in moments of uncertainty. In the midst of fear and exhaustion, I learned to pray not only for healing, but also for strength, endurance, and courage.

Beyond the pandemic, the daily demands of hospital work became another battlefield. The Radiology Department never slept—patients came continuously, deadlines loomed, and turnaround times had to be met with both speed and accuracy. Amid these responsibilities, I prepared for the specialty board examination, studying late into the night after long hours of duty. Fatigue became a constant companion, but so did faith. During moments of exhaustion and doubt, a quiet reminder always remained in my heart: *keep going, you are doing this for a greater purpose.*

Becoming a radiologist requires sacrifice, humility, and perseverance. There were moments when I questioned my strength, but grace always carried me through. I am deeply grateful to my mentors, colleagues, co-trainees, and my training institution, “Amang” Rodriguez Memorial Medical Center, for guiding and supporting me throughout residency and fellowship training. Their wisdom, patience, and encouragement shaped not only my clinical judgment and technical skills, but also my character as a physician.

To my parents, husband, family, friends, and loved ones—thank you for your unwavering love, prayers, and support. This achievement is as much yours as it is mine.



Top 3 Examinees of the 2025 PBU Examinations



Top 1 2025 PBU Examinations: Dr. Angeli P. Garcia-Kong

Most of all, I dedicate this achievement to the patients who trusted me to be part of their journey. In the quiet, dimmed ultrasound rooms, I have been given a privilege that few are entrusted with: the privilege of seeing life, illness, hope, and humanity through the lens of sound waves. Every scan I perform and every diagnosis I make is not just a clinical task—it is a sacred partnership in the pursuit of healing. Through ultrasound, I am reminded that technology is only as powerful as the heart that wields it, and it is our compassion that breathes meaning into every image we capture.

MY LIST

Dr. Abigail Pornobi
UFTC's first Most Outstanding Fellow-in-Training



Hi there, dearest Echo Reader!

There are many tales that echo through our rooms each day,
Revealing hidden clues along the way.

Some are hypo, some are hyper,
But every new finding makes us wiser.

Many waves travel steady and strong—
Some are short, while others are long.

Let me share a short list of the lessons I know
About the things we learn as we grow.

What does it mean to be an Ultrasound Fellow-in-Training?

Let me be candid and share my list.
Someday, perhaps, you'll share yours—with your own personal twist!'

It means:

1. To feel a little more pressure to master the must-knows—which is exactly why you should attend the Board Review Series.
2. To be part of our Fellows' Viber group, so you will always be informed and updated. Get to know all our FUSP mentors and Ma'am Len too.
3. To know all the **-RADS** classification systems applicable to ultrasound—and yes, there are quite a lot!
4. To give yourself a moment to sigh when the common bile duct is particularly tricky to find and measure in a bloated patient.
5. To press the correct knob to set the measurement—and remember that **Update** takes you to the other screen!
6. To remember to tell your patient to breathe again after asking them to hold their breath.
7. To understand that some things are beyond your control. Keep calm and keep scanning—*marami pang pasyente!*
8. To attend PCR and FUSP conventions—and international conventions, too—so you might even get the chance to take a selfie with Dr. Resnick!
9. To apply the techniques and lessons your mentors have patiently taught you. Also, to be patient with yourself because you won't always get it in the first scan.
10. To understand that your silent patient can also be your greatest teacher. To remain grateful to the people who place their trust in your hands.
11. To strive to understand every topic deeply, so that one day, you may be the one teaching it.
12. To give back to your community by participating in medical missions.
13. To remember and prioritize your family. Fellowship is a season, family is forever.
14. To become actively involved in your society because participation opens more opportunities for learning and growth. Join the group report, submit an article, and even create a training manual design! 😊
15. To recognize that asking for help during a difficult or critical scan is never a sign of weakness.
16. To take the leap when your mentor asks for volunteers—even when you still feel hesitant or afraid.
17. To accept that we are human: we have limitations, and we will inevitably make mistakes. What matters is that we learn from them.



18. To pause sometimes—especially when you are tired—and ask yourself, *"Why did I want to do this again?"* You'll be surprised at your answers during the different seasons in your fellowship.

19. To realize that never in my wildest dreams did I imagine that I would become the first.
20. Above all, to accept that everything unfolds according to **God's perfect timing and plan.** You are exactly where you are meant to be.

He who began a good work in you will be faithful to complete it.
So, that's part of my list, dear Echo Reader.

Next time, it may be your turn
To write your own story and share what you have learned.

All the very best!



—The First, ALP

THE INAUGURAL PROBE MASTERS



Dr. Maria Simplicia Lavares
Champion, first UFTC Probe Masters Competition

I have had my fair share of joining quiz bees—or at least, I thought I had. The last time I actually won one was during my fourth year of secondary school. Throughout my residency, I was one of my institution's representatives in quiz competitions. Over time, I became quite familiar with a very specific kind of disappointment: doing well enough to come close, but somehow never quite making it into the finals. After enough "almosts," I had learned to accept that quiz bees were probably no longer for me.

So, when the announcement for the Probe Masters Ultrasound came, I had no plans of volunteering. In fact, my co-fellows and I did what any group of responsible adults would do when faced with an important decision—we used an electronic randomizer. I somehow still ended up being the representative.

When the day of the competition arrived, I had one very simple goal: do not be the lowest scorer. That goal became even more important after I saw who the other participants were. At that point, winning was not even part of the plan. Survival seemed much more realistic.

As the mechanics were being explained, I remember being genuinely impressed by how elaborate and creative the competition was. It had multiple layers and different types of challenges. Unfortunately, I was also too excited and too nervous to absorb everything being said. It probably did not help that I had never played Jeopardy in my life.

The first part of the competition followed the more familiar quiz-bee format, with easy, moderate, and difficult rounds.

The final round had two parts. The first was a game of Jeopardy, with questions from different categories and varying levels of difficulty. The second was a game of "Show Me," where a body structure was randomly selected and the participant had to demonstrate it using an actual ultrasound machine and patient.

My performance during Jeopardy can perhaps best be described as humbling. To say I did poorly would be an understatement. By the end of the game, I was the only participant with a negative score.
Then came the "Show Me" portion. Participants were allowed to steal if another contestant could not demonstrate the assigned structure. Since I was already at the bottom of the scoreboard, I figured I had absolutely nothing left to lose. My strategy became very simple: if there was an opportunity to steal, I was going to take it.

As it turned out, I only had one chance because the other participants successfully demonstrated their assigned structures. So, when the final scores were being computed, I was not exactly preparing myself for good news.

Then came the surprise. Somehow, I ended up as the top scorer. I was genuinely stunned. Even more unexpectedly, I had to go into a sudden-

death tie-breaker with a friend of mine.

Looking back, what stayed with me most about the Probe Masters was not simply the fact that I won. The competition tested my knowledge and skills, certainly, but it also reminded me of something I had probably forgotten after years of almost making it, almost reaching the finals, and almost winning.

Sometimes, you simply have to keep going.

The entire experience left me deeply grateful—to USP for its generosity, to the organizers and sponsors, and to everyone who devoted their creativity, effort, time, and resources to making the event so fun and exciting.



In a way, winning the Probe Masters felt like a small redemption for all those years of nearly—but never quite—winning quiz bees.



FIRSTS, FINDINGS, AND FELLOWSHIP: A MIDYEAR MILESTONE



Dr. Maria Salma P. Bondoc
Winner of tote bag design competition,
2nd Midyear Convention



Demo and Return-Demo

A fellow-in-training (FIT) attending her first midyear convention, taking chances in a tote bag design competition, witnessing the first ever quiz bee for FITs, yes, that's me, the fellow-in-concern. Last June 26-27, 2026, I attended the Ultrasound Society of the Philippines' 2nd midyear convention with the theme "Critical care ultrasound: Visualizing and guiding life-saving solutions" with topics involving E-FAST, ultrasound of the diaphragm, lung ultrasound, and venous excess ultrasound protocol; topics which proved useful for furthering my practice. There was also a live demo-return demo of the topics discussed with the lecturers, volunteer consultants, and trainees leading and instructing the participants.

Another one for the books is the first ever quiz bee for FITs from different institutions, which was both fun and exciting to watch as the contestants battle their way to first place, with Quirino Memorial Medical Center coming out as the champion, and Quezon City General Hospital (our institution!) coming in second place.





Presenting the USP Tote Bag. Dr. Sarah Zampaga and me

A personal highlight for me during this convention is the USP tote bag design competition with the theme: “Ultrasound in Motion: Precision. Compassion. Innovation.”, which I entered, and by God’s grace, won first place. It was an experience to remember and I am thankful that my design reached the judges, with the interpretation of the ultrasound probe and waves in the design symbolizing the continuous journey of learning and growth in fellowship training, as well as the background of global network which reflects the vision of USP expanding its reach beyond borders. May the Ultrasound Society of the Philippines continue its progress in teaching and innovation, as more and more trainees come and develop their practices for the future and advancement of Radiology.



With Dr. Trisha Lapus and Dr. Sarah Zampaga

BRIDGING THE GAP: A REFLECTION ON THE 1ST USP MEDICAL MISSION

Dr. Kenny Ng



The 1st Ultrasound Society of the Philippines (USP) Medical Mission, held last March 28 in Barangay Bagong Silangan, Quezon City, served as a profound milestone not only for the society but also for my own personal and professional journey as a fellow. Operating under the deeply resonant theme, "Bridging Care Through Imaging," we ventured into the community with a clear directive: to provide free OB-GYN ultrasound services to those who need them most.

Stepping into Headstart Bukluran Day Care Cen-ter, the stark realities of healthcare disparity in our country became immediately apparent. To learn about the limited access to adequate healthcare in certain communities is one thing; to encounter the human impact of those statistics is an entirely different experience. We arrived equipped and scheduled strictly for transvaginal ultrasounds (TVUS).

However, throughout the day, we were frequently approached by patients requesting that we examine other symptomatic areas of their bodies.

This earnest, albeit outside-of-protocol, request from the community was an eye-opener. It highlighted a quiet desperation and served as a sobering realization that for many individuals in grassroots communities, healthcare is a luxury rather than a given right. These patients, despite the hot and humid weather, chose to wait for the seemingly basic ultrasound examination that we offered. It reinforced the absolute necessity of community outreach; medical missions do not merely supplement the healthcare system, because for many of these marginalized patients, they are the sole point of access. It reminded me that our skills as radiologists must always be tethered to a sense of social responsibility.

Beyond the profound socioeconomic reflections, the mission proved to be an invaluable crucible for professional development and fellowship.

From a clinical standpoint, navigating a high-volume, real-world environment scenario allowed me to significantly refine my skill in performing transvaginal ultrasounds. The dynamic nature of the mission pushed me to adapt and practice with both efficiency and deep empathy.

Equally important was the remarkable camaraderie forged outside the conventional walls of our respective training hospitals. The medical mission served as an exceptional platform to interact with co-trainees and esteemed senior members of the USP from diverse institutions. Working shoulder-to-shoulder in a demanding yet highly rewarding environment cultivated a sense of unity and shared purpose. It fostered professional relationships and a spirit of collaboration that formal conferences often struggle to achieve organically. While we fellows in training taught and assisted one another, the senior members

were there, graciously guiding us through their experience. It felt like a genuine society, where members are free to engage, learn, and communicate with the more senior members without fear of being ridiculed. It made me feel excited to be an active member of this society in the future.

Ultimately, the 1st USP Medical Mission was an astounding success, as it spearheaded a new advocacy to hopefully continue and organize more Medical Missions in the future. I emerged from this activity feeling that I had extracted the utmost value from the experience. It was a rare and beautiful convergence of hands-on clinical practice, meaningful community service, and professional networking. As we continue to bridge care through imaging, I carry with me the humbling reminder that our profession is not merely about interpreting echoes on a monitor, but about answering the very real needs of the communities we serve.

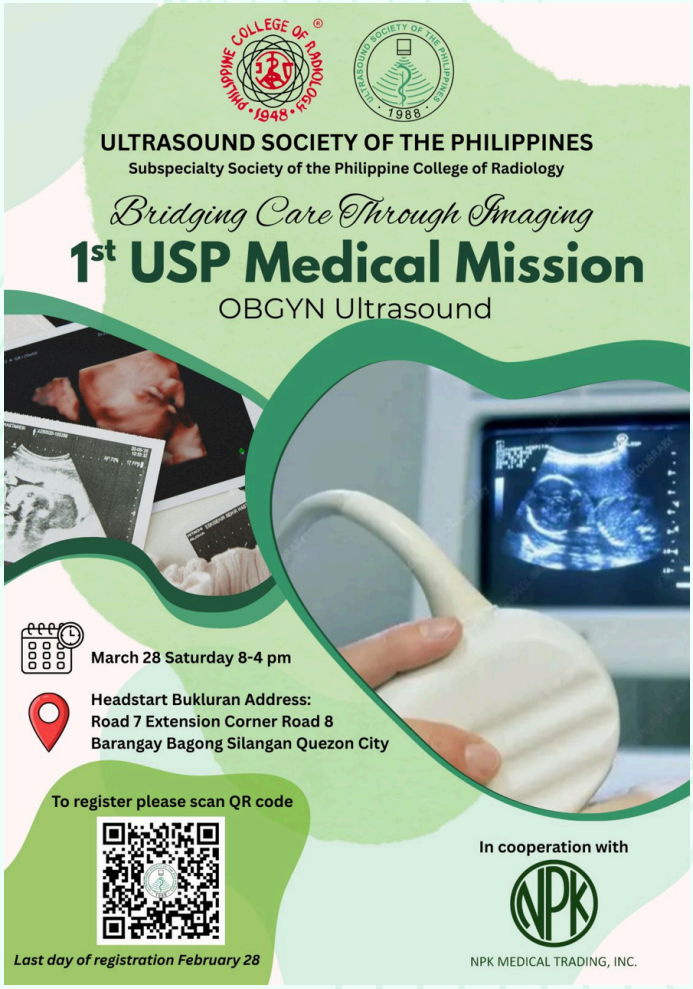












REFLECTIONS & NARRATIVES: ECHOES OF EXPERIENCE

THE GREAT PLACEBO PROBE



Dr. Ma. Milagros S. Ligot

A middle aged female patient presented with flank pain but as soon as she lay down, she began pointing to every quadrant of her abdomen like a human game of Tetris while insisting each spot was equally agonizing.

I was seven years in my Angeles City practice at that time, I have learned to humor a patient by scanning every area she pointed to during the abdominal ultrasound while having a lovely chat with her.

We were happily conversing while I dutifully glided the transducer over every aching spot she indicated, recalculating a route through “pain town”.

When I finally finished the exhaustive exam, with a warm smile she sprang up and declared with absolute sincerity that she is cured because all her aches are gone. With an air of satisfaction she declared ultrasound is very effective.

In summary, the patient came for an ultrasound scan and walked out completely sound!

SEEING BEYOND THE IMAGE: EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION THROUGH ULTRASOUND



Dr. Neil Michael Sese

Every radiologist remembers what it felt like to begin. We remember holding the ultrasound transducer with equal parts excitement and uncertainty, searching for the right acoustic window, and hoping the image on the screen would finally make sense. Every examination felt like a challenge, every correction became a lesson, and every successful diagnosis was a small victory. Looking back, we realize those moments were never just about learning ultrasound—they were shaping the kind of physicians we would become.

Ultrasound is more than an imaging modality; it is a teacher. It teaches us to slow down, observe carefully, and appreciate that every patient is unique. It reminds us that confidence is built through patience, practice, and the humility to keep learning. Sometimes, the most valuable lesson comes from taking one more look or asking one more question.

For young members and trainees, this is an exciting time to be in radiology. Technology continues to transform our specialty, creating opportunities that previous generations could only imagine. Yet despite these advances, one thing remains unchanged: the strength of our profession will always depend on people. Curiosity, compassion, sound judgment, and integrity are qualities that no machine can replace.

Youth empowerment begins with believing that every young radiologist has something meaningful to contribute. It is not defined by experience alone but by the willingness to learn, to ask questions, and to embrace every opportunity for growth. Every interesting case we present, every discussion we share with colleagues, and every patient we care for helps shape the future of our profession.

None of us makes this journey alone. Every radiologist can remember a mentor who patiently shared knowledge, offered encouragement after a difficult case, or inspired confidence when we doubted ourselves. Their guidance reminds us that growth is never a solitary journey. As we progress in our own careers, we also have the privilege of encouraging those who will follow.

Never let achievement become the finish line. Let it become the starting point for new possibilities. There will always be another skill to refine, another perspective to understand, another mentor to learn from, and another challenge that helps us grow. The most accomplished radiologists are not those who believe they have learned enough, but those who remain curious throughout their careers. Every opportunity to learn is an opportunity to become a better physician, a better colleague, and a better radiologist to our patients.

Perhaps that is ultrasound's greatest lesson. Before it teaches us to recognize disease, it teaches us to observe. Before it teaches us confidence, it teaches us humility. Before it allows us to guide others, it reminds us what it means to learn.

The ultrasound probe allows us to see beneath the surface. May it also remind us to see the potential within every young radiologist who is just beginning this journey. Because when we empower every young radiologist to learn, to grow, and to serve, we are shaping not only the future of ultrasound, but also the future of Philippine radiology.

SLOW IS SMOOTH. SMOOTH IS FAST: LESSONS BEYOND THE WORKSTATION



Dr. Hasmin Maria O. De Vera-Diaz

When I was a radiology resident, I believed that becoming a better radiologist meant becoming a faster one. Completing a long work list felt like an accomplishment, and I equated speed with competence. Looking back, experience has taught me a different lesson: speed is not something we pursue—it is something we earn.

One principle has stayed with me throughout my years in ultrasound: *"Slow is smooth, and smooth is fast."* In a specialty where every image depends on the examiner's eyes, hands, and judgment, there is no substitute for a deliberate and systematic approach. Taking an extra moment to optimize an image, scan in another plane, or pause before finalizing an impression may seem inefficient, but those moments often prevent missed diagnoses. True efficiency comes from consistency and discipline, not haste. Our goal is not simply to finish more examinations, but to provide every patient with the most thoughtful and accurate interpretation possible.

Over the years, I have also learned that supervision is not a reflection of distrust but an expression of responsibility. I continue to review the work of residents and radiologic technologists—not because I doubt their abilities, but because every examination represents a patient who deserves our collective vigilance. A second look is not about finding fault; it is about ensuring that nothing important is missed while creating opportunities for all of us to learn.

Like many radiologists, I still remember a few cases—not because they were rare, but because they taught me lessons I have never forgotten. Those experiences reminded me that medicine is not about never making mistakes; it is about having the humility to learn from them. Discrepancy conferences and peer review are valuable because they help us become better physicians for the next patient.

After more than a decade in radiology, one lesson continues to surprise me: the more I learn, the more I realize how much there is still to learn. Some of my greatest lessons have come from journals, national and international conventions, scientific conferences, multidisciplinary discussions, and conversations with colleagues. Ironically, some of the most meaningful lessons have also come from residents. Their questions challenge me to revisit what I know and remind me that teaching is never a one-way process. The best teachers, I have found, never stop being students.

Another lesson took me years to appreciate: we must also care for the person behind the workstation. Long hours, overnight duties, and the constant responsibility of making diagnostic decisions can quietly lead to fatigue and burnout. Rest, exercise, time with family, meaningful hobbies, and moments away from medicine are not distractions from our profession—they help us return with clearer minds and better judgment. A healthy radiologist is ultimately a better physician.

As I reflect on my journey, I am reminded that none of us reaches this point alone. Every scan I

perform today carries a little of every teacher who patiently stood beside me. From my residency and fellowship years at Manila Doctors Hospital to my early years of practice in Dagupan City, I was blessed with mentors who shared not only their knowledge but also their discipline, professionalism, and compassion. Modesty aside, I would not have the skills or confidence I have today were it not for their guidance. Whatever I now pass on to residents and younger colleagues is simply a continuation of the lessons they first entrusted to me, for which I will always remain deeply grateful.

Ultimately, the greatest reward of teaching is knowing that the lessons we share will continue beyond us. May those who come after us carry forward the skills, values, and practices they find meaningful, adapt them to their own journey, and continue to advance the practice of radiology for generations to come.

"It's what you learn after you know it all that counts." — John Wooden

AN UNFORGETTABLE LEARNING EXPERIENCE NARRATED IN TWO PERSPECTIVES

IMPERATIVE RENAL DOPPLER ASSESSMENT IN RENAL TRANSPLANTATION: A CASE OF HYPERACUTE REJECTION



Dr. Czerhina Rose L. Gomez

My first experience assisting with an intraoperative renal Doppler assessment during a renal transplant in my training institution was both challenging and deeply impactful.

During the operation, I had the opportunity to assist in the assessment of the transplanted kidney using Doppler ultrasonography. This allowed the surgical team to evaluate renal perfusion and vascular flow following transplantation. Observing the kidney being assessed in real time helped me appreciate the important role of imaging in determining graft perfusion and identifying potential complications.

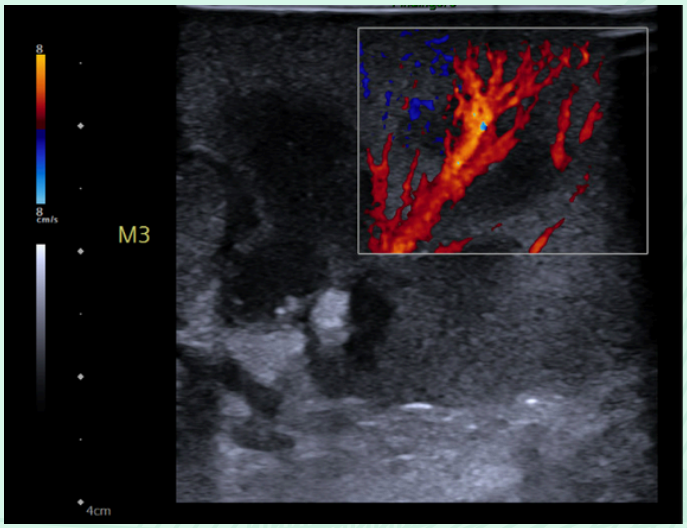
What made this experience particularly significant was the development of hyperacute renal transplant rejection, a rare and severe complication that can occur shortly after transplantation. The intraoperative findings and Doppler assessment emphasized the importance of prompt recognition and intervention when graft viability is threatened. Despite the efforts of the multidisciplinary team, the patient's condition deteriorated. Witnessing this outcome made the experience particularly emotional and reinforced for me the unpredictable nature of complex surgical procedures and transplantation.

This case gave me a deeper appreciation of the collaboration between surgeons, radiologists, anesthesiologists, nephrologists, pathologists and other members of the healthcare team.

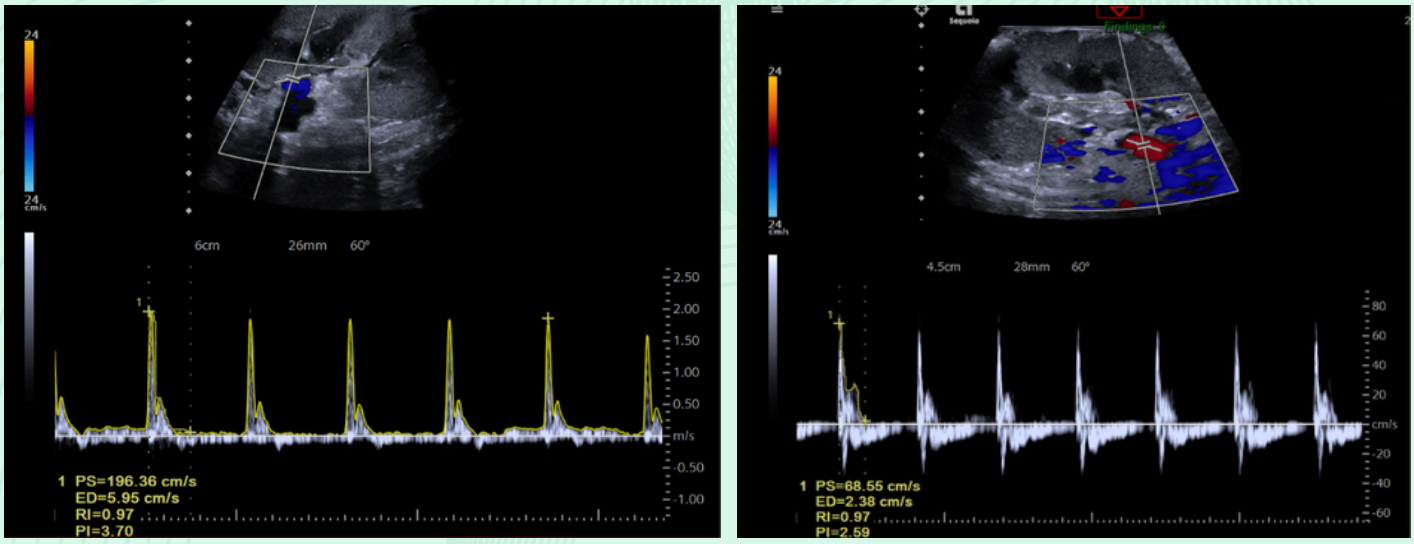
Overall, this experience was a profound learning opportunity. It strengthened my understanding of renal transplantation, vascular assessment, and the importance of Doppler imaging in the operating room. More importantly, it taught me the value of teamwork, vigilance, adaptability, and compassion, especially when faced with unexpected and tragic outcomes.



Radiologists in action during the intraoperative renal doppler assessment of the allograft



Intraoperative: Color and power doppler shows sparse renal allograft cortical perfusion.



Intraoperative: Persistently abnormal spectral doppler waveforms characterized by absent to reversed end diastolic flow of the main renal and intrarenal arteries There is also significantly elevated resistive and pulsatility indices.

THE IMAGES WE NEVER FORGET



Dr. Abigail Flor Rosario

What was meant to be another ordinary day of fellowship training became one of the most unforgettable experiences of my life.

That day began like many others. The incoming ultrasound fellow, our radiologic technologist, and I arrived at the operating room ahead of schedule. Our training officer was still on her way, as it was not her scheduled day at our institution.

Like every operative case, we looked forward to another opportunity to learn. We were scheduled to perform an intraoperative Doppler ultrasound during a kidney transplant. The routine was familiar—we would wait while the surgeons performed the transplant, observe from the sidelines, and once the vascular anastomoses were completed and the patient was closed, perform the ultrasound assessment of the allograft.

So, we waited.

Minutes turned into hours. When our training officer finally arrived, the operation was still far from over. Seeing there was still time before our usual role, she stepped into the nurse's station to catch up on a few teleradiology cases and asked us to remain inside the operating room and observe.

The operating room was unusually quiet, but beneath the silence was unmistakable tension. The anesthesiologist was making constant adjustments while the surgeons discussed graft perfusion. Even the nurses, who had been moving with their usual rhythm, were now noticeably busier. No one needed to explain what was happening. We simply knew something was wrong.

A few moments later, we were called to assist.

Our training officer was still at the nurse's station, so we immediately called her back. She arrived within moments but had not yet scrubbed in. To

avoid losing valuable time, she instructed one of the surgeons to manipulate the sterile ultrasound probe while she operated the ultrasound machine.

As the first Doppler images appeared on the screen, conversation in the room faded.

The renal allograft demonstrated minimal to absent cortical perfusion.

After the vascular anastomosis was revised, we scanned again. This time, our training officer had scrubbed into the sterile field herself, one hand holding the probe while the other adjusted the ultrasound machine.

We all hoped the images would tell a different story.

They did not.

Cortical perfusion remained markedly reduced. Diastolic flow was minimal to absent, with intermittent reversal of flow. The Doppler wave-

-form reflected a kidney that was still struggling to perfuse.

As the minutes passed, the lead transplant surgeon stepped out to speak with the patient's family while our training officer continued scanning, searching for the slightest sign of recovery.

Then, almost imperceptibly, the images began to change.

There was a slight increase in cortical perfusion. Hope quietly returned to the room. Vasospasm became a possible explanation, and for a brief moment, it seemed the graft might still recover. Yet our consultant remained vigilant. Although perfusion had improved, the Doppler waveforms were still far from reassuring. The surgeon gently palpated the allograft and remarked that it remained soft. It should have become firm with adequate reperfusion—but it had not.

We left the operating room carrying unanswered questions, hoping we had witnessed severe vasospasm rather than hyperacute rejection.

The clinical course confirmed what the intraoperative Doppler findings had been suggesting all along: hyperacute rejection.

That day changed the way I view ultrasound. In the operating room, it is far more than an imaging modality—it provides real-time information that guides critical decisions. More importantly, it reminded me that behind every image is a patient, behind every decision is a team, and behind every outcome is a lesson that we will never forget.

HOW ADVANCED ULTRASOUND IS RESHAPING CANCER CARE IN THE PHILIPPINES



Dr. Julius Yves Bagacay

For a long time, clinical ultrasound had a bit of an identity crisis. In the collective medical consciousness, it was the reliable workhorse—great for checking a gallbladder, essential for obstetric scans, but rarely considered the go-to modality for complex cancer workups.

Studying and working in the field of oncologic imaging, I have watched that perception flip completely. Ultrasound has quietly undergone a massive technical evolution, transforming into a sharp, dynamic instrument that is fundamentally changing how we hunt down and characterize tumors.

We aren't just looking at fuzzy grayscale blurs anymore. The real game-changer has been the rise of multiparametric ultrasound—tools that let us look at tissue function and biology, not just its anatomy.

Take shear-wave elastography, for instance. By measuring the speed of sound waves bouncing through an organ, it gives us a quantifiable map of tissue stiffness. Malignant tumors love to crowd out normal architecture, creating stiff, unforgiving masses. Elastography puts a numeric value on that rigidity, helping us separate a benign, sleepy nodule from a suspicious one in real time.

Add Contrast-Enhanced Ultrasound (CEUS) into the mix, and things get even sharper. Using tiny, inert microbubble agents that light up the vascular bed, we can watch how a lesion absorbs blood flow. Because cancers build chaotic, leaky new blood vessels to feed their growth, CEUS lets us spot those telltale chaotic patterns instantly. And with machine learning algorithms now baked into newer machines, the system can flag subtle architectural distortions that might slip past a tired pair of eyes at the end of a long shift.

These aren't just neat gadgets to talk about at international conferences; they carry very real-world weight here in the Philippines. We face unique hurdles in local healthcare. Our archipelagic geography means specialized care is often concentrated in major urban centers, and the high cost of advanced cross-sectional imaging can put timely diagnostics out of reach for many patients. This is where advanced ultrasound shines. It is inherently more accessible, portable, and entirely free of ionizing radiation.

Modern, high-end cart systems and AI-assisted handheld units are beginning to bridge those gaps. They allow regional clinics and community hospitals to punch above their weight class. In daily practice, having elastography right at the bedside means we can confidently rule out malignancy in certain lesions without forcing a patient to undergo a stressful, expensive biopsy or wait weeks for an MRI slot. It shortens the agonizing runway between "we found something" and "here is our next step."

We still have work to do when it comes to standardizing training and expanding equipment access across the provinces. But the trajectory is clear. By pairing clinical experience with these intelligent, high-resolution sound waves, we are giving Filipino patients a fighting chance at early, precise detection right where they are.

How has your own experience been with utilizing or accessing these newer ultrasound tools in local clinical settings?

REMEMBERING DR. CECILIA A. VILLAMOR: A QUIET STRENGTH, A LASTING LEGACY

Dr. Ma. Cartrini O. Cruz
USP Past President (2022-2023)



Dr. Villamor was one of the most soft-spoken and kind-hearted persons I have ever had the privilege of knowing.

I was fortunate to know her in many different roles. She was my Chair in the Department of Radiology, UST Faculty of Medicine and Surgery, where I had the privilege of serving as her Secretary. She was also my President in the Ultrasound Society of the Philippines, where I served as her Vice President. But beyond these professional roles, she became my mentor, my adviser, and a friend whose wisdom and guidance I will always treasure.



What made her special was the quiet strength behind her gentle nature. She did not need to be loud to make her presence felt. She carried herself with grace and humility, yet when something truly mattered, she stood firm. She was principled in her decisions and steadfast in doing what was legally, ethically, and morally right. When it came to protecting the group and the people she cared about, she would stand her ground and never easily give up.



At the same time, she remained warm, approachable, and generous with her time. She was always willing to listen, especially to her mentees. She made people feel that their concerns mattered and that there was always someone they could turn to for guidance and understanding.

I will also remember her beyond the offices, meetings, and responsibilities—the woman who loved music and was gifted with it. She played the piano beautifully and could sing. These were glimpses of the gentle, creative, and beautiful spirit that she carried with her.

As I look back, I realize how fortunate I was to have shared different chapters of my professional journey with her. I learned from her leadership, her principles, and her quiet courage.



But perhaps more than anything, I learned from the way she cared for people—quietly, sincerely, and without asking for anything in return.

Dr. Villamor was truly one of a kind.

Her passing leaves a space that will be difficult to fill, but the memories she created will remain with us.

Thank you Dr. Villamor for knowing you, working beside you, learning from you, and calling you my mentor and friend. Thank you for the quiet strength you showed, the wisdom you shared, and the kindness you gave so freely.





"Well done, good and faithful servant."
-Matthew 25:23

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