



Mascariñas, Bounty's top man to speak before UPLB Class of 2021

Ronald Daniel Mascariñas, distinguished UPLB alumnus, is guest speaker at the 49th UPLB Commencement Exercises, the second one in a row to be held online due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Mascariñas is the president of Bounty Agro Ventures, Inc. (BAVI).

Mascariñas is an exemplar of the power of hard work, dedication, and determination. From humble beginnings in his hometown of Butuan, Mascariñas, a graduate of BS Agriculture in 1982, began his career working for Purefoods, Inc.

After a 19-year run in the company, during which time he rose to become the youngest ever senior vice president and

gained a Master's in Management from the Asian Institute of Management in 1991, Purefoods was bought out by San Miguel Corporation.

In 2002, he took the helm as president and general manager of Tyson Agro Ventures or what would eventually become BAVI.

BAVI is a leader in the nation's poultry industry, providing groceries, supermarkets, and wet markets with dressed chicken, and selling cooked chicken under brands such as Chooks-to-Go, Uling Roasters, Adobo Connection, and HeiHei. With around 1,700 stores, 16,000 partner resellers, a daily average

of 100,000 roasted chicken sold, and providing employment for more than 800 Filipinos, BAVI is undoubtedly a business success.

His primary role in it has not gone unnoticed, as Mascariñas has been the recipient of multiple awards and accolades. In 2018, he was given the Circle of Excellence as a Global Filipino Executive by the Asia CEO Awards and the Outstanding Leader in Asia by the Asia Corporate Excellence and Sustainability Awards in Singapore. He was also awarded Man of the Year in the Poultry Industry, both in 2019 and 2020 by the Asia Leaders Awards, which also recognized him as the 2019 Mentor of the Year.

He was recognized with the Distinguished Alumnus in Entrepreneurship Award, twice by the UPLB Alumni Association in 2004 and 2019; and by the UP Alumni Association in 2019.

Aside from his business savvy, Mascariñas is also a sports enthusiast. A patron of basketball, he founded the Chooks-to-Go Pilipinas 3x3 basketball team and has been very vocal about his support and advocacy of strengthening the country's sports leagues.

But perhaps what Mascariñas can be best known for is his generosity and how he lives up to the values of public service.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, his company was one of the first to adapt and implement changes in his business practices that helped BAVI and its employees survive during the rough first months of what would become the world's longest quarantine.

Even as they went through their own difficulties, Mascariñas was aware of the difficulties experienced by others and generously gave aid and donations to organizations and institutions around the Philippines.

UPLB counted among those institutions as Mascariñas delivered donations of Chooks-to-Go meals to the students stranded on campus by the sudden 2020 lockdown. Having learned lessons of the past, his generosity could have only come from compassion and solidarity.

UPLB looks forward to hearing the wisdom and advice from one of its most successful and amiable alumni. *(Albert Geoffred B. Peralta)*



UPLB Class 2021 Valedictorian to fellow graduates: "hold the torch and brave through this crisis"

Kassel Clarisse Kraft, BS Development Communication (BSDC), is Class 2021's valedictorian.

It is a distinction Kassel never thought she would receive on graduation day because

she has had her share of false starts and self-doubt as a student in UPLB.

Graduating from high school with flying colors, Kassel felt confident entering the University alright. But soon, she found out it was not going to be a walk in the park.

She experienced difficulties that she thought were insurmountable, so much so that her self-doubt and loss of confidence threatened to get the better of her.

Kassel really thought that she would end up disappointing not only herself and her family but also her high school teacher who had encouraged her to pursue BSDC after she "showed promise" as a writer for their school paper.

She remembers trying hard to get a hold of herself, determined to use the people who believed in her capabilities as inspiration and anchors to persevere.

This helped her tremendously to keep things on an even keel and to keep steady on the course until the global pandemic happened and upended life as it were.

The struggles from the remote learning setup became too much for her at one point such that she now considers overcoming the difficulties and being part of the graduating class as "her biggest achievement during her 4-year stay in the university."

"Finishing college in the traditional setup is hard enough, what more during this time of a pandemic," Kassel said.

Kassel's love for development communication not only as a course that brings out the best in her academically but also for how it provides a medium through which she can truly serve people inspires her to lend meaning to being an "iska" not only an honor but also as a privilege and a responsibility.

It reminds her that as an Iskolar ng Bayan Para sa Bayan, she is responsible to use all the skills and experiences she learned from the university to serve and help improve the quality of life of her fellow Filipinos.

Development communication, to Kassel, is a point of convergence in which her love

for writing and desire for public service meet.

It fuels her through her current involvement in the Kabataang Lingkod Bayan ng Pilipinas project, "Kabataang Ligtas Boto 2022: National Campaign on Voters' Education and Empowerment." She serves as segment producer to encourage and inform voters about the 2022 elections.

Kassel will be the second valedictorian from CDC finishing as a magna cum laude graduate. This, for her, is an overwhelming experience, and one that appoints her with a huge responsibility of showcasing what development communication is.

"Until now, people still wonder what it is and I need to help them understand how development communication adapts to the new needs and challenges in order to achieve a better society," Kassel said.

Studying BS Development Communication took her to communities and people who have struggled at the periphery of society. They inspire her to strive hard and become better so that in her own way, she would be able to contribute to the pursuit of equality and accessible education.

Kassel keeps in mind, as she prepares for life beyond the walls of the university, the values of honor and excellence as one of the "new torchbearers in service to the people especially during this time of pandemic." *(Juan Paolo A. Aquino)*



Chancellor Abansi is UPLB Hooding Ceremony speaker

UP Baguio Chancellor Corazon Lumbea-Abansi is going to be the guest speaker at the UPLB Graduate School (GS) Hooding Ceremony that will be held virtually on Aug. 6.

Dr. Abansi is herself a product of the UPLB-GS, having finished MS Agricultural Economics in 1989 and PhD in Agricultural Economics in 1997. She also finished MA Economics at UP Diliman in 1994.

She is newly minted to the chancellorship, having been appointed on March 25, 2021. She had only joined UP Baguio in 2010 after over a decade of teaching at De La Salle University Lipa and serving as its vice chancellor for academics and research from 2005 to 2010.

Soon after joining UP Baguio, she held various leadership positions, the most recent of which was as vice chancellor for academic affairs from May 2015 until her appointment as chancellor.

She also held the student affairs portfolio from June 2012 to May 2015 and directorship of the Institute of Management during which UP Baguio offered BS Management Economics beginning in 2011.

According to her, the program continues to produce more than 90 percent graduates per batch, a significant number of whom finish with honors.

She initiated a review of the Master of Management program to make it more relevant to the needs of the region.

She was vice chancellor when the University adjusted to the changes brought about by the shift to the K to 12 Basic Education Program, and thus, supervised the revision of the General Education Program and the curricular revisions.

It was also under Dr. Abansi's watch when UP Baguio institutionalized the Academic Assessment and

Development System; offered the PhD Mathematics; strengthened the Graduate Program Office; and implemented internationalization, multidisciplinary research projects, library and museum services upgrades, and organized the gender office. She also chaired the committee that steered UP Baguio's shift to remote learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Dr. Abansi specializes in managerial economics, natural resources economics and management, development economics and management, and agricultural economics. She teaches in these areas at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, and conducts research in them, as well.

She is an assessor of the ASEAN University Network Quality Assurance (AUN-QA) and uses her knowledge in this regard in helping UP constituent units by serving as resource person in quality assurance. She serves as an expert of the UP Resilience Institute and a mentor of the Commission on Higher Education-Graduate Education Mentoring for Scholars.

Her passion for service benefits the education sector to which she contributes in terms of reforms in public education, education governance and strategic management of schools, management of education funds sourced from real estate taxes, climate change and disaster risk reduction and management. She has fully embraced being a child of the Cordillera region despite having hailed from Lipa in Batangas, through her active involvement in service to Cordillera and Northern Luzon regions.

Dr. Abansi brings honor to UPLB as one of three current chancellors in the UP System to have graduated from the College of Economics and Management (BS Ag Econ, 1980), the two others being UPLB Chancellor Jose V. Camacho, Jr. and UP Mindanao Chancellor Larry N. Digal. (*Josephine M. Bo*)



de Gula-Barrion



Landoy

223 to receive their graduate degrees from UPLB

The Graduate School (GS) is going to graduate 223 at the 49th Commencement Exercises of UPLB on Aug. 7, 51 of whom will receive their doctoral and 172, their master's degrees.

At the master's level, the degree programs with the most number of graduates are MS in Environmental Science, followed by the Master of Management in Business Management.

The Master of Development Management and Governance and Master in Public Affairs ranked third among the master's degree programs with the highest number of graduates.

Three programs under the Doctor of Philosophy have produced the most number of graduates: Animal Science, Development Communication, and Development Studies.

Two academic excellence awardees will be recognized this year.

Under the MS program, the top academic excellence awardee is Rona Joyce Banaag-Landoy, MS Chemical Engineering. Landoy studied "Life Cycle Assessment in Terms of Carbon Footprint and Energetics Studies of a 25-kW Waste-to-Energy Facility using a Direct Combustion Process for Municipal Solid Waste" for her MS thesis.

The four academic achievement awardees at the master's level are: Eros Paul Valera Estante, MS Chemical Engineering; Kathleen Tacipit Dizon, MS Entomology; Nodelop Ortiz Bantillo, MS Statistics; Pee-Jay Almonte Rejuso, MS Entomology; and Roselle Estera Madaya, MS Soil Science.

Roxanne Gregorio de Gula-Barrion is the top doctoral graduate this year. Her dissertation is on "Nutrient Requirements of Broilers Fed Low Crude Protein, Amino Acid Supplemented Diets."

The four academic achievement awardees under the PhD program are: Ernesto Leyson Bastida, Jr., PhD in Development Studies; Angelie Rose Leyes Lumba, PhD in Agronomy; Diana Panaguiton Paguntalan, PhD in Botany; and Florence Roy Paclibar Salvaña, PhD in Botany.

On Aug. 6 or the day prior to the UPLB Commencement Program, GS will hold its virtual Hooding and Recognition Ceremony to be streamed on the UPLB Graduate School Facebook Page.

At the pre-pandemic hooding ceremony, the doctoral degree graduates are honored on stage with their faculty advisers, the latter donned in full academic regalia.

Once on stage, the faculty adviser will then place the doctoral hood over the shoulders of the graduate to symbolize success in completing the PhD program.

The UPLB graduation will also be streamed on UPLB's Facebook and YouTube channels (@UPLBOfficial). (*Kristine E. Araguas*)

UC adopts safe haven resolution for UPLB

A meeting of the minds among the university administration, faculty union leaders, and student movers firmed up UPLB's commitment to keep the campus a safe haven for its constituents.

By signing the "Resolution to Make UPLB a Safe Haven of Free and Critical Thinking" on March 22, the UPLB administration, the All UP Academic Employees Union-Los Baños (AUPAEU-LB), the University Student Council (USC), and the Youth Advocates for Peace with Justice (YAPJUST) articulated their commitment to keep the campus a free and democratic zone of peace.

In a matter of one week after its signing, the UPLB University Council (UC) adopted the resolution at its 145th meeting on March 29.

Chancellor Jose V. Camacho, Jr. called this milestone "historic" because of the cooperation and collaboration that the parties exhibited in their common pursuit of maintaining and preserving freedom, human rights, critical thinking, and public service in the university.

Chancellor Camacho, together with Vice Chancellor (VC) for Administration Rolando Bello, VC for Community Affairs Roberto Cereno, VC for Student Affairs Janette Malata-Silva, Assistant to the Chancellor and Alumni Relations Director Eileen Lorena Mamino, Assistant to

the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Roselle Collado, and College of Economics and Management Dean Agham Cuevas signed the resolution on the side of the university administration.

AUPAEU-LB was represented by Vice President for Faculty Liberty Notarte-Balanquit and Director-at-Large Emmanuel V. Dumlao. Both are faculty members at the Department of Humanities-College of Arts and Sciences (CAS).

USC had Chairperson Siegfred R. Severino and former chairperson Jainno C. Bongon sign the resolution, while YAPJUST was represented by John Peter Angelo B. Garcia and Seth Alfred D. Pagulayan.

After UC's adoption of the resolution, the signatories conducted another set of meetings to chart the next steps toward realizing the ideals of the safe haven resolution. This led them to propose the creation of the UC Committee on National Issues (CNI).

The UC CNI is tasked to advise the UC on national issues and to propose policies that will ensure the university's continued exercise of academic freedom and uphold UPLB as a safe haven for freedom, human rights, critical thinking, and public service.



The signatories in the safe haven resolution shall serve as the committee's consultative body.

The UC CNI members were presented at the 145th UC Meeting on July 26, each representing the university's 11 colleges and schools.

They are Dr. Celia DR. Medina of the College of Agriculture and Food Science; Dr. Gilbert E. Macarandang of CAS; Asst. Prof. Romel A. Daya of the College of Development Communication; Asst. Prof. Luisito C. Abueg of the College of Economics and Management; Dr. Arthur L. Fajardo of the College of Engineering and Agro-industrial Technology; and Dr. Diomedes A. Racelis of the College of Forestry and Natural Resources.

Completing the UC CNI membership are Assoc. Prof. Maria Emilinda T. Mendoza of the College of Human Ecology; Dr. Aileen V. Lapitan of the College of Public Affairs and Development; Dr. Joseph F. dela Cruz of the College of Veterinary Medicine; Dr. Hildie Maria E. Nacorda of the School of Environmental Science and Management; and Dr. Ronilo Jose D. Flores of the Graduate School.

A series of meetings that AUPAEU-LB, USC, and YAPJUST initiated with the UPLB administration paved the way to making the resolution and to finalize the terms of reference of the UC CNI. (Mark Jayson E. Gloria)

Dean Marc Bolima's bagful of dreams, or when a series of unfortunate events cultivate a hopeful future



College life has its expected ups and downs: juggling academic requirements with social life, pulling an all-nighter for an exam, writing and defending one's thesis, among others. But all too often, life throws in an extra spice that makes things go the unexpected route.

Dean Marc Bolima, BS Agribusiness Management (BSABM), knows this all too well after what he went through before getting his degree.

When his parents lost their jobs in 2017, it fell to him as the eldest child to keep their family afloat. With his pursuit of a degree taking a temporary backseat to ensure their survival, Bolima left his life in UPLB indefinitely to work at an outsourcing company.

His might have turned out to be a different story, if not for his dreams. Fast forward to four years later and Bolima is finally marching virtually with the UPLB Class of 2021.

The road back to university was by no means a smooth one for Bolima. Hard decisions had to be made along the way and circumstances often tested his resolve.

"It felt like hell leaving the University for four years just to work and to be a corporate slave in the real world. It was a very different

jungle as they say," said Bolima of his experience.

Despite being pulled away from his relatively comfortable life as a full-time student, Bolima continued to demonstrate UP's excellence in his place of work as a consistent top performer. He used his bonuses to save up for a small farm in their hometown of Samar for his father to put up a swine and poultry business. In a way, it accomplished his dream of creating a farm-based business which he had envisioned as a high school student when he chose BSABM in his UPCAT application. Today, their farm produces 150 piglets a year.

With the constant stream of income and the recognition he achieved at work, Bolima was tempted to leave behind his pursuit of a degree.

"There was a point when I decided not to go back to UPLB to finish my degree since I was already earning a good amount of money to support my family," said Bolima.

With things looking up, Bolima took the opportunity to scale up the corporate ladder and apply for a managerial position. With his experience and gleaming track record, he easily aced his panel interview, however he was still stopped short of his goal.

"I got a rejection from the HR Department stating that my application was invalid for

the position since I was still not a college graduate... it was the minimum requirement for the job," he shared.

The rejection he experienced became a tipping point that solidified his decision to finish his degree, after much encouragement from his family and loved ones, especially his mother and partner.

In the second semester of AY 2019-2020, Bolima enrolled himself back in UPLB. By January 2020, he was a bona fide working student, and was navigating in yet another new setup that tested his commitment and grit in juggling two responsibilities.

His work required him to be in Taguig from 9PM to 6AM, after which he would head out immediately to the UPLB campus in Los Baños, Laguna through a long commute to attend his classes from 10AM to 4PM.

As soon as his classes ended in the afternoon, he would take another bus back to Taguig. If he had a few hours to spare before his shift, he did his assignments and academic requirements then.

"It was very arduous in a sense that I had to create lab reports, cases, and case presentations. Literally, the office in Taguig became my second home, it was where I took my bath and ate every day," said Bolima.

In this very busy schedule, his bus commute going to and from UPLB served as brief spaces where he could rest and sleep. His constant companion for his 4-day "adventure" every week was his trusty backpack which contained his laptop, tumbler, extra clothes, hygiene kit and food, and served as a pillow during transit.

This routine would go on for about two months, before the COVID-19 pandemic put the country on a lockdown and classes reverted online.

"The adjustment to working full-time, then becoming a working student and later doing it in the middle of the pandemic was very difficult at first but I was able to adapt and perform very well... I have to give credit to my student organizations, the UP Agribusiness Society and UP Ranchers' Club, for teaching me and

embarking with me to tackle and adapt to such changes," Bolima said.

In the past one and a half years, Bolima has continued to persevere toward his undergraduate degree. Now that he is about to reap the hard-earned fruits of his labor, he is also holding on to the hope of cultivating greener pastures not only for his family, but also for his hometown in Samar.

Bolima takes the knowledge that he learns in the classroom to heart and envisions how he can use them to help their community after seeing their hardships and poverty despite the rich lands and resources available to them. He hopes to help them by someday becoming a registered agriculturist and becoming the municipal agriculturist of Samar.

"They do not have enough technical knowledge regarding good agricultural practices. They also mentioned that they were not receiving enough support to continue farming or even livestock raising. So to earn cash, they will just sell their lands to those who have money," he shared about the plight of Samar farmers.

"I think one of the solutions I can do as an Agribusiness Management graduate is to help the farmers realize their entrepreneurial skill through agripreneurship. For us to help the farmers, we need to go back to our roots in agriculture. From there, we can strengthen our foundation as a country and we will be able to transform into something unimaginable," he adds.

Soon after graduating, Bolima hopes to begin the realization of this dream at their farm in Samar.

"My next goal is to improve our farm practices so that we can be consistent in the production of piglets and fatteners so that we can move forward to meat processing. If all goes well, I will proceed with the idea of putting up a cooperative in our province to help our community have additional income and increase their technical skills in hog raising and animal production, in general," said Bolima.

With his persistence bringing him thus far after braving obstacles as he had, accomplishing these dreams are not far behind. (Jessa Jael S. Arana)



UPLB vaccine drive brings vaccinated personnel to 3,328

The 2-day COVID-19 vaccine roll-out in UPLB brought the number of its vaccinated personnel from 1,460 on July 23 to 3,328 on July 28.

This number includes the 1,460 who availed themselves of vaccine shots from their local government units and 1,868 personnel who availed themselves of Janssen's single-dose vaccine allocated to UPLB by the Department of Health Region 4A COVAX facility.

Aside from those who registered for the vaccination using the UPLB Online

Health Monitoring System (OHMS), some were also able to avail themselves of the vaccine by registering through a Google form created for those who had not yet registered themselves in the OHMS.

UPLB OHMS is a home-grown contact tracing tool that aims to protect the UPLB community from COVID-19.

The vaccination program was exclusive to UPLB personnel regardless of their place of residence and status of employment, whether they be permanent, temporary, contractual, casual, or hired under

Individual Contract of Service or Job Order. It also included those whose services UPLB contracted through agencies.

According to Vice Chancellor (VC) for Community Affairs Roberto Cereno, the vaccination drive is part of efforts of UPLB to ensure that its staff are working in a safe and healthy environment, which he said is needed in order to future-proof the University.

In a bid to contribute to the vaccination efforts at the local government unit (LGU)

level, UPLB, according to VC Cereno, had provided assistance to the Los Baños (LB) municipal government by converting the Copeland Gym into the UPLB Vaccination Hub where some constituents of LB LGU had their vaccine shots administered.

The UPLB Vaccination Hub was manned by healthcare workers of the University Health Service and crew members from the University Police Force, University Housing Office, University Planning and Maintenance Office, and the Department of Human Kinetics. *(Josephine M. Bo)*



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