



# ACUCA NEWS



ASSOCIATION OF CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES IN ASIA

*"Committed to the mission of Christian higher education of uniting all people in the community of service and fellowship"*

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Asia-Pacific International University  
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Assumption University  
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Parahyangan Catholic University, Indonesia

## 2016 ACUCA Biennial Conference and 21st General Assembly

After successfully organising the 2016 ACUCA Student Camp, a one week programme held on August 22-26, in Ciwidey, West Java, Indonesia, Parahyangan Catholic University ("Unpar") held the 2016 ACUCA Biennial Conference and the 21st General Assembly in Bali, Indonesia.

As reported by Bali Post (10/17), at this conference, the University of Dhyana Pura ("Undhira"), Bali, has served as the co-host in collaboration with Unpar, holder of ACUCA presidency during the 2014-2016 period. The theme of this year's conference was "Local Spiritualities and Everydayness: Promoting Religious Conversation in Christian Higher Education".

In his welcoming speech, the Rector of Undhira, Dr. dr. Made Nyandra, Sp.K.J., M.Repro., FIAS., expressed his hope that this conference will have a positive impact for all participants and can be a means for greater networking and cooperation among Christian universities internationally.

A total of 72 delegates from 35 universities in 10 countries participated in the conference which took place from October 13 (Thursday) to October 16 (Sunday) 2016, at the Undhira campus. The countries represented in this Biennial Conference were the Philippines, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Indonesia, and also from the United States and Australia.

During the conference, the two main speakers, Fr. Prof. Dr. Peter C. Phan of Georgetown University, USA and Prof. Dr. Bernard Adeney-Risakotta of the Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies (ICRS), Yogyakarta, Indonesia, encouraged the university leaders who were present there to learn more about local spiritualities, dialogue among religious communities, character development, and values emerging from faith and culture in the society wherein each university exists and lives.

On the second day, in addition to the keynote speeches, there were parallel sessions with 11 call-papers presented by participants from ACUCA member institutions with a variety of topics related to the conference's major theme. Moreover, on this day the ACUCA General Assembly was also held as part of the whole agenda of the conference.

Mangadar Situmorang Ph.D., Rector of Unpar, who has served ex officio as the ACUCA President (2015-2016), revealed that having the trust and responsibility as the president has been a great honour and a tremendous opportunity, and especially for Parahyangan Catholic University in performing its duties as the ACUCA Secretariate for 2014-2016 period. On behalf of Unpar, he thanked the former Rector of Unpar, Prof. Robertus W. Triweko, Ph.D., who had made great efforts in leading ACUCA. He also expressed his gratitude for the support of the Executive Committee members and the entire staffs of the ACUCA Secretariate at Unpar during his presidency.

The 2016 ACUCA General Assembly marked the end of the period served by Parahyangan Catholic University over the past two years. The General Assembly was closed with a handover session from Parahyangan Catholic University to Payap University, Thailand, as the new Secretariate of ACUCA for 2016-2018 period. Assist. Prof. Dr. Sompan Wongdee, the President of Payap University, Thailand, now the ACUCA President, gave her first speech in the General Assembly. *Conference proceedings* can be ordered from UNPAR Press ([unparpress@unpar.ac.id](mailto:unparpress@unpar.ac.id)).

Source: [www.unpar.ac.id](http://www.unpar.ac.id)





Welcoming Dinner at Undhira Garden



Keynote speech by Fr. Prof. Dr. Peter C. Phan on "Local Spiritualities, Popular Religiosity, and Christian Higher Education"



The participants were attending the opening service



Keynote speech by Prof. Dr. Bernard Adeney-Risakotta on "Reconciling a Sacred Cosmos with Theology and Science"



The performance of Undhira's students during the opening ceremony





Registration for Parallel Sessions



Country Meeting - Representatives from Taiwan



The participants from Thailand were doing the presentation during Parallel Sessions



General Assembly held on the last day of the conference



Optional Tours to Tanah Lot, Bali



Two participants were having a discussion with Fr. Peter

## Areté Construction Progresses With Arts Wing Topping-Off Ceremony

The growing influence of secularization continually brings challenges as well as opportunities to the Christian higher education. For example, many Christian schools are governed by government, thus, due to its nature of being “public”, they are required to be more open to students and faculty staff with diverse religious and cultural backgrounds. Also, in order to respond to the influence of market economy and to prepare students well for future employment, the curriculum of Christian schools and even their visions have been adjusted to be more too “practical” or “rational”. Specifically, they tend to forget the Christian rationale behind its establishment, and they start to pay less attention to Christian-related subjects and activities in campus, instead shift their focus to studies such as engineering, business, and natural science etc.

Encountered with all these challenges from the increasing secularization, we may ask: How could we keep the Christian values and spirits alive in campus? How could we promote religious conversation in the everydayness, and how could Christian higher education apply to the Christian spirits to respond to the constant changes of the world, to serve the society for solving problems, and to encourage the active participation of students in making a better world?

To seek for the answers for these questions, I would like to reflect on my experience of studying in Hong Kong. Firstly, because Hong Kong is a cultural pot, universities in Hong Kong have students and staff with diverse religious and cultural backgrounds. The growing influence of pluralism in the society and the campus challenges the Christian faith in the campus. In response, my university, Lingnan University is always dedicated on organizing regular Christian activities among students, such as prayer in campus church and community service. This is beneficial for promoting the sharing of religious faith, and providing students with rich opportunities for religious practice in the everydayness. Secondly, despite the activities organized by school, Christian society in Lingnan is also very active in organizing activities aiming for promoting religious conversation in campus. For example, during the graduation season, the Christian society always distributes some cheer-up notes among students, in order to encourage them to believe in god, to be more confident and grateful. Thirdly, as an international financial center, there is no doubt that the higher education in Hong Kong is more or less affected by the pressure from market economy and the employment-oriented education concept. For example, almost in every college, business-related programs are invariably the most popular programs among students and parents. In order to balance the pressure from

market economy and the duty of enlivening Christian faith, as one of the requirement for graduation, every student in Lingnan university are required to participate in at least one civic engagement program. As a philosophy student, I volunteered as a paralegal assistant in Missions for Migrant Workers, which is a church-founded NGO dedicated on assisting foreign domestic workers in Hong Kong with legal consultation and legal help. This sort of civic engagement programs does not only actualize the Christian character of being socially relevant, but also helps students to get a deeper understanding of the Christian spirits, such as benevolence, freedom, love, charity and justice. Meanwhile, students get to know more about how Christian faith can be applied to understanding and solving modern world issues, and also, these civic engagement programs foster students’ skills of contributing to the society.

Facing the challenges from the increasingly growing influence of pluralism and secularization, Christian higher education institutions are expected to respond to these rapid changes actively and try to work out efficient approach to transform challenges into opportunities. To promote religious conversation in the everydayness in the campus, it is important that school, students and also society can work closely together to build up spiritual atmosphere, to offer spacious chances for sharing religious experience, to enrich students’ and staff’s own spiritual life, and to help students to develop Christian moralities, faith, confidence and skills for contributing to the society through socially related programs.



## Study Sheds Light on the Impact of Disasters on Foreign Investments



In the aftermath of disasters, foreign direct investments (FDIs) in the manufacturing sector take a dip but post positive growth in the long run. A study conducted by Dr. Nadia Doytch, assistant professor of economics at the City University of New York-Brooklyn College found that investments in services continue to be losing propositions for extended periods. Doytch presented the results in a talk organized by the Ateneo School of Government on November 12, 2016.

Speaking before an audience at the Hurtado Hall in the Ateneo de Manila University’s Loyola Heights campus in Quezon City, Doytch tackled the impact of disasters on foreign investments. Disasters, whether they are meteorological (weather-related), climate-related, hydrological (water-related) or geophysical (earth-related) in nature, can have an impact on a country’s FDI, she argued.

Applying the concepts of consumer choice theory, Doytch said that disasters may affect income: domestic assets lose value post-disaster thereby making them cheaper for foreign investors. It is also possible, she said, that capital damage and displacement of workers may result in the loss of capital, putting off foreign investors in the process. She added that the effect is dependent on the nature of the sector- manufacturing or services



Doytch merged data culled from the database of the Center for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters with FDI sector data for 69 countries during the period 1980- 2011. Data was analyzed based on output growth, quality of institutions, and natural resource abundance.

Results showed that manufacturing FDI has a negative pattern immediately after a disaster. However, the sector starts to pick up in the long run, a finding Doytch said, is consistent with the creative destruction growth theory—innovation and growth ensue following market loss or destruction.

Services FDI are unaffected by meteorological disasters like storms, and wave surges. However, climate and water-related disasters like avalanches, floods, wildfire and extreme temperature lead to long-term negative effects on services FDI, Doytch said.

Doytch added that in terms of geophysical hazards like earthquakes, landslides and volcanic activity, both manufacturing and services FDI have a positive impact.

The study used data from several geophysical regions with different economic viability: Western Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, South and East Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean.



## From Marikina to Switzerland, Ateneo Alumna Takes a Trip of a Lifetime

Ten years ago, studying at the Ateneo de Manila University was never an option for Marie Gene Cruz. Financial resources were stretched thinly for the Cruz family, especially after her father suffered a heart attack and had to undergo a heart bypass surgery. Fortunately, in her second year at Marikina Science High School Marie Gene learned about Pathways to Higher Education, a program providing assistance to academically gifted but financially disadvantaged students.

"I was very fortunate because out of 200 students in our high school batch, I was included in the list of students recommended for scholarship," she said. Through Pathways' Trailblazers program—a comprehensive academic formation curriculum that helps equip students with skills and competence—Marie Gene was able to study at Ateneo.

Ten years later, Marie Gene not only earned an Ateneo diploma but went to Europe, again thanks to the program that paved the way for her: Pathways.

Staying in the Trailblazers program was not easy, she admits. There were classes and workshops that she had to attend on a regular basis, on top of her regular academic load.

"Oftentimes, once a participant has already been granted a scholarship [courtesy through Pathways], he or she no longer attends the required leadership workshops and classes because the scholar feels the program (is) unnecessary," she added.

Marie Gene, however, soldiered on. "I chose to stay not just because of debt of gratitude (for helping me with my college scholarship) but because I knew even from the beginning that Pathways would help me become a better person," she explained.

In 2012, she graduated magna cum laude in Life Sciences. Marie Gene's dream of becoming a doctor was starting to shape up. She had already applied with several medical schools and with her academic record — she also graduated salutatorian in high school — Marie Gene was accepted at the University of the Philippines' College of Medicine. Seeing Marie Gene's potential, Pathways decided to help by looking for donors who would support Marie Gene's school fees. To date, she is the only Pathways participant who has been given a post-graduate scholarship through the Pathways Advanced Studies Fund.

"Pathways is helping me reach my childhood dream of becoming a doctor for the underprivileged. It has not only helped me financially and academically, but most importantly, it has helped me realize my potential as an outstanding student, a socially-aware doctor, and a future responsible leader," she said.

In October 2016, Pathways opened another door of opportunity for Marie Gene through an internship program in Switzerland.

Aiducation International, a partner organization of Pathways, had an opening for a brief student internship in a Swiss hospital. Pathways recommended Marie Gene to Aiducation.

Marie Gene spent 2 weeks of hospital internship at Gesundheitszentrum Fricktal (Fricktal Health Center) in Rheinfelden where she saw first-hand the difference between a Philippine and Swiss hospital.

"I saw how the Swiss doctors and medical staff took time to talk and listen to their patients. I also saw how the patients' faces changed from a frown of anxiety to a smile of gratitude. In the Philippines, especially in a public or government hospitals, we barely spend more than 10 minutes per patient because of the overflowing number of patients we need to attend to," she said. The experience made her realize the importance of treating patients kindly.

"It was a life changing experience. If only every government health worker realized that treating patients humanely would make a difference in patients' recovery - even just that few minutes of talking and listening to them - then our patients could have probably been as satisfied and happy as those in Switzerland."

Marie Gene also attended various meetings facilitated by Aiducation. At the Aiducation Impact Dinner, Marie Gene was asked to share her experiences.

"I talked about my family, how we struggled financially; how education, despite being a right, only seemed to be a privilege in the Philippines; how our public schools lacked the resources, manpower, and good quality of education," she said. She also spoke of how Pathways changed her life as a student and as a Filipino.

"Pathways is not just the organization that gave and is still giving me a scholarship. It is a family which keeps on bringing out the best in me; a family which encourages me to become a better version of myself, not just for myself but for the Philippines."

The Switzerland trip has further cemented Marie Gene's dream to finish her medical studies and make a difference in the society "It's a much needed reminder of why I am studying medicine: to serve the underprivileged."



## Yao Ming shares inspirational stories with SCU students

Basketball megastar Yao Ming, the first Asian player ever in the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame, brought his professional basketball team Shanghai Sharks to Taiwan for the 2016 Cross-Strait Cup Basketball Invitational in Taipei this October to play SBL Yulon Luxgen. On October 11th Soochow University organized a Yao Ming's meet-and-greet at SCU for him to share his career stories with students and have lunch in student canteen.

SCU President Wei-Ta Pan explained that Soochow University is keen on promoting physical education and competitions as a way of enhancing life experience for our students, and that's why we have been holding Soochow University International Ultra-Marathon for 16 consecutive years. SCU is privileged to host the basketball megastar's arrival and everyone thinks it a great honor to listen to his life stories about how he pursued a career as a professional basketball player.

Dean of Physical Education Department Chieh-Te Tung Fang, a former national player in Yulon Luxgen basketball team, said that SCU's fervor in promoting cross-strait sports exchange and his previous working relationship with Wen-Ting Tseng, a Shark in Shanghai basketball team, were the keys to Yao's visit to SCU.

The drizzling weather outside never one bit dampened students' enthusiasm. The canteen was crowded with young faces excited to see the celebrity in person. Yao later said, this visit reminded him of his campus life, because it was more than 20 years since he last had a meal at school canteen. When the basketball legend stepped into the gymnasium, he was greeted with long-lasting applause and screaming before sharing his upbeat inspirational stories. During the Q&A, students grasped the chance to ask questions face-to-face with Yao. A basketball fan asked who his greatest opponent was in his career as a professional basketball player. Yao said it was Shaquille O'Neal, and added that strong opponents were often the ones who helped him grow fast. Another student planning to play football abroad, asked for advice on adjusting to new life, got the response; "Young generations today are so adaptable to changes that getting used to new life abroad is never a problem. More importantly, we need to value the goal we pursue as a team more than as individuals." Yao took a photograph with a philosophy major senior Ying-Hsiu Chen, a wheelchair user and a fan wishing to see Yao in person.

The end of the visit was marked by Yao Ming and President Pan exchanging jerseys from Shanghai Sharks and SCU basketball team.





## Former President Ma Lectures on Law at Soochow University

Overwhelming response to sign up for the very first lecture entitled “Taiwan’s Status under International Law” by former President Ma Ying-Jeou at Soochow University jammed the online registration system. In less than one minute, the 240 seats available had all been booked. Accepting the non-paying honorary Chair Professor position at SCU for 2016-2017 academic year, Ma started his first monthly “Yen Chia-Kan Law Lecture Series” available only to SCU faculty members, students, exchange students and scholars on 26 September 2016 in Puren Lecture Hall.

SCU President Wei-Ta Pan introduced the former President as a faculty member of SCU since 1997. Ma’s SCU faculty ID card was numbered 86000032, meaning he was the 32nd member joining SCU in the 86th year of the ROC. “Starting now, this ID card is activated again,” said Pan, praising Ma’s talk on public international law as rich, insightful and interesting, a comment fully agreed upon by students and faculty members present. Pan expressed his appreciation to Ma’s returning to Soochow because Ma brought new horizons to SCU campus with his experience in the field of law and politics.

Ma elaborated on the development of international law against the historical background of Taiwan since Dutch colonial rule 392 years ago. Ma cited important cases by presenting multimedia video clips and quotes from the past, while the audience listened attentively. The 3-hour lecture ended with photo ops with Ma when lots of students and faculty members

waited in long queue until 5 p.m. Many students spoke highly of Ma’s lecture and said they could not wait for his second lecture next month.

President Pan said it was a great honor for Soochow University to have the former President coming back to SCU campus as Chair Professor. Students all expected Ma would be able to help broaden their horizons in each of the monthly theme lecture. As Cai Yuanpei, a renowned Chinese educator back in the early years of R.O.C., once remarked that a university is a place to embrace academic freedom with an open mind, Ma’s talk and the interaction with SCU students this day was the embodiment of this ideal.



Sanata Dharma University, Indonesia

## Sanata Dharma International Charity Concert 2016: Giving, Serving, and Sharing, We Earn the True Identity as Human Beings

Music is a universal language to express our feelings. This International Charity Concert 2016 was a collaboration of three universities in enhancing the donation for the needy students through music.

Held in Driyarkara Auditorium of Sanata Dharma University, International Charity Concert 2016 was successfully conducted. This concert was one of the events that were the part of the celebration of the 61st Dies Natalis of Sanata Dharma University. In preparing the event, the committee expected a good participation of the audience by watching the concert. Fortunately, the enthusiasm was quite well. It was proven by the number of the audience involved in the event, which was almost six hundred people.

Taking place on November 19, 2016, this International Charity Concert was a collaboration project of three universities, that is, Sanata Dharma University, Elizabeth University of Music, and Indonesia Institute of Art. As an opening performance, Cantus Firmus, the students’ choir of Sanata Dharma University, presented five songs and they successfully created great atmosphere of

the International Charity Concert 2016. After the choir performance, it was time for the students of Elizabeth University of Music, Japan, to perform. The performers of Elizabeth University of Music were piano major student Shiori Nakashima, vocal major student De Guzman Cipriano Jr. Mercado, and marimba major student Maho Ishida. They performed ten songs. The closing performance was given by the students’ symphonic of Indonesia Institute of Art Yogyakarta, Studsy Band, conducted by Budhi Ngurah and played five instrumental songs.

This International Charity Concert was aimed to help students who have financial limitations by supporting their study fee at Sanata Dharma University. It was managed by Lembaga Kesejahteraan Mahasiswa (Student Welfare Unit). Sanata Dharma University, the host of this International Charity Concert, hopes that the first charity concert will provide valuable experiences to each of those involved to develop better similar programs and also that it may attract more people and agencies to collaborate with Sanata Dharma University in the future.

De La Salle University Dasmariñas, The Philippines

## DLSU-D hosts ASEAN Youth Summit



With the Philippines' chairmanship of the ASEAN Summit in 2017, DLSU-D (De La Salle University-Dasmariñas) hosted this year's AUYS (ASEAN University Youth Summit) at Ugnayang La Salle on January 9-13. Themed "ASEAN Youth: Advocate of Environmental Sustainability," the summit, attended by more than 130 students from different parts of the country as well as from the ASEAN countries, focused on the current plight of the environment among ASEAN member states, its biodiversity, the issues and challenges presented by climate change, and environment education and the strengthening of youth involvement.

The four-day summit featured parallel sessions and workshops all aiming to highlight the role of ASEAN students as stewards of environment sustainability, utilizing their capacity to do what they think they ought to do. The delegates also had a chance to network with their ASEAN counterparts and shared with one another the notable environmental practices of their home country.

Mr. Raffy Magno, representing the Office of the Vice President of the Philippines, delivered Vice President Maria Leonor Robredo's keynote address, urging the delegates to give back to nature.

Presenters at the summit were Dr. Filiber-to Pollisco Jr., programme specialist for Conservation Policy and Research, ASEAN Center for Biodiversity, who discussed the state of the ASEAN region when it comes to environment and biodiversity, and emphasized the role of the youth in raising awareness of biodiversity in Southeast Asia; Mr. Tobit Cruz, president and co-founder of Angat Kabataan, who enjoined the delegates to keep on track and aim for their goals regardless of other people's intolerance; Masbate Vice Governor Atty. Kaye Revil, who emphasized the significance of promoting environmental protection and conservation in expanding the tourism industry for every nation's economy; Ms. Shruti Mehta, youth project designer of Asian Development Bank, who shared further actions the youth can contribute to accelerate positive change; and Engr. Ludwig Federigan, executive director of Young Environment Forum, who discoursed on how young people can respond to the challenges of climate change.

In one parallel session, Mr. Mickey Eva, regional campaigns communication officer for Asia Climate Action Network-International, urged the delegates to create an effective environmental communication plan and strategy to raise environmental concerns to a higher level. On the other hand, Jocelyn Luyon, representative of DLSU-D's ERMAC (Environmental Resource Management Center), proudly shared DLSU-D's Sustainable Green Campus project which involved members of the community through teaching by example.

The ASEAN University Youth Summit, as a gathering of ASEAN students, young professionals and other youth representatives, serves as an avenue to exchange ideas, plan collaborative action, linkage and establish a common understanding about the ASEAN Community.



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- Payap University, Thailand, serves as the ACUCA Secretariat for 2016 to 2018. For contacts, you can address your e-mails to [secretariat@acuca.net](mailto:secretariat@acuca.net).
- Four issues of the newsletter "ACUCA News" are published each year. For the next issue, please send articles together with print quality photos by e-mail to the ACUCA Secretariat ([secretariat@acuca.net](mailto:secretariat@acuca.net)) no later than **March 31, 2017**.