

April to June 2015

Bridges

News for and about P&A alumni

2015 ASEAN Integration:

Is the Philippines ready?



Dear P&A alumni,

“Thinking globally, prospering regionally” —this is the main agenda of the regional integration of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The Integration has been a recurring topic in most fora and seminars, as it presents a wide array of opportunities, particularly in finance and economics, for the countries involved.

In this issue of Bridges, we interviewed some of our alumni to hear their thoughts on the 2015 ASEAN Integration—on how ready our country is for the Integration and how this may affect the public practice, accountancy curriculum, and the Philippines in general.

We hope you will find this issue informative and entertaining.

Boyet Murcia

Partner, Audit & Assurance



Making P&A proud: Erick Paragua



Erick Paragua

A graduate of the De La Salle University — Manila, former Audit & Assurance Senior Manager Erick Paragua joined P&A in 2002 and was also one of the lucky few who was sent to Grant Thornton Los Angeles for the secondment program in 2006. Currently, he is the Assistant Vice President for Finance of ADEC Group.

Aside from busying himself with work,

Erick said he also kills time reading articles and blogs about watches. In fact, he has been collecting watches since 2010. “I am fascinated by how the mechanism of different watch brands and how much time and effort are being put in the development and design.” Erick also has grown fond of reading and watching basketball (NBA) and boxing. “In 2007, I actually watched

Manny’s [Pacquiao] fight at the Mandalay Bay Hotel in Las Vegas.”

Besides watches and sports, the ASEAN Integration would probably join the list of topics the P&A alumnus will be reading. In connection to the much anticipated ASEAN Integration, Erick commented on the regional project which has been a favorite in most forums. “*Whether we like it or not,*

Making P&A proud: Erick Paragua

ready or not, the integration is upon us now.”

The principal goal of the Integration is the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), which envisions a single market and production base, a highly economic region, a region of equitable economic development, and a region fully integrated into the global economy.

“Obviously, the Integration will have a positive impact on our economy, as it provides an opportunity and raises the bar for both Philippine industries and professionals to be world class, be competitive, and shine in the global market.”

But is the Philippines ready for this move? The former P&Aer answered straightforwardly, “Frankly, I don’t think

we are 100% ready. Although we might not be fully prepared now, we are still in good shape as I think out of all the ASEAN countries, only Singapore is 100% ready.” Unknown to others, a lot of preparations have already been done by the government, but Erick thinks there are still far more matters that need to be attended to, particularly on the dissemination of information and passage of laws.

In spite of the lack of preparation for the Philippines, Erick said Filipinos can still expect good results on our country’s economy after the Integration has been realized. “The ASEAN Integration will enable the member-countries to be part of one of the largest economies in the world. We can expect a free flow of goods, services, and skilled labor and the economy will open

up for new investments and capital.” However, the P&A alumnus advises policy makers, industries, and professionals to step up and adjust their strategies and to take advantage of the opportunities and cope with the threats associated with the Integration. He also reminded individuals not to look at the industries and professionals from other countries as competitors, but instead tap them to become “collaborators.”

What could be the implications of the ASEAN Integration to professional practice? “I think we [CPAs] are in good shape, especially since the Philippines has been “IFRS-ready” since 2005 and auditing firms have been exposing its personnel to international practice through secondments and participation in international

Making P&A proud: Erick Paragua

conferences.” Anyhow, professionals must still remember to be competitive, “Because if we are not at par with other professionals from the region, we will definitely be left behind.”

Same as the professional practice, the Integration will likely affect our country’s educational paradigm. Erick mentioned the K12 program — this covers Kindergarten and 12 years of basic education (six years of primary education, four years of Junior High School, and two years of Senior High School). According to Erick, the implementation of the K12 program is *a step to the right direction*. Nonetheless, he thinks that the accountancy curriculum would not be significantly affected since the Philippines is already “IFRS-ready.”

Erick also gave his suggestion to the government on how we can prepare for the Integration. *“Use it as leverage and take advantage of the integration to boost opportunities for Philippine industries and professionals. It is already upon us now, so we really have to bite a bullet and get our acts together.”*

Today, the bubbly P&A alumnus said he is living a “balanced” life — having ample time for his work, family, and friends. Erick also proudly shared his biggest success in life so far, *“Having two beautiful and intelligent kids perhaps is my biggest success, aside from surviving 12 fruitful busy seasons with P&A and Grant Thornton as a secondee!”*

Making P&A proud: Lei Marcelo



Lei Marcelo

There's nothing more fulfilling than having a perfectly balanced life, which is what P&A alumna Ligaya "Lei" Marcelo is most grateful for. *"My life is blessed – blessed with a wonderful husband and adorable kids, and with a good career on the side."*

At present, Lei works as a Comptroller at Goldilocks Bakeshop, Inc. She has been with the company since 2005.

In an interview with Lei, we asked for her opinion on the ASEAN Integration and the possible significant impact it may bring to the Philippines.

"We need to be ready, especially for intense competition." According to the former P&Aer, with the Integration nearing, we must expect the playing field among industries to become more competitive.

"Philippine companies should therefore raise their bar for innovation, quality, and productivity for them to compete head on with their ASEAN counterparts," she added.

Although Lei finds the regional project as a probable door for intense competition, she also sees it as a conduit for Filipinos to obtain better job opportunities within the

Making P&A proud: Lei Marcelo

region. “The [ASEAN] Integration allows its member-countries, and the citizens of those countries, to join in the free flow of capital, labor, services, goods, and foreign investments. It is also expected to boost investments, job creation, and incomes in the region.”

Aside from the implications it may bring to the country’s economic and financial growth, Lei also shared the possible impact the Integration could have to professional practice. “Broader market,” in addition the P&A alumna said that for us, the Filipinos, to better compete with other ASEAN nationals, we must first enhance our skills and competencies to stand out.

Lei concluded the interview with her

suggestions to the government on how to prepare the Philippines from the much anticipated Integration. For Lei, the government has made continuous and convincing efforts to prepare the country, as a whole, for the regional project but firmly believes that there are still a lot to be done.

She cites two things which she thinks the government must prioritize above others: “First, *the automation of business procedures in national government agencies, streamline procedures and make them more consistent.*” Lei said that with reduced human interface, we could manage the agencies’ vulnerability to corrupt practices and also substantially lessen transaction time and costs.

“Second, *the improvement of our country’s*

gateways.” The alumna is not only referring to both airports and seaports, and its infrastructures, but she also thinks that a more stringent implementation of policies and regulations in our gateways is much needed.

Making P&A proud: Jun Saplاد



Jun Saplاد

Going for a run, watching movies, and reading a book are just a few things our next P&A alumnus does during his free time.

Dominador Saplاد, Jr., or “Jun” to his friends and colleagues, is the current President for the Scent & Care Division at Symrise in Asia Pacific. He says, “Being promoted to Regional President at Symrise is one of my biggest successes in life,

especially as I am the *youngest*, the *only Asian*, and the *shortest* regional president in the company,” he quipped.

Apart from work, Jun considers his family as his greatest success. He gladly shares how blessed he is, “In addition to hard work, I am where I am today because of a higher being looking after me and my family, as well as, people who supported me all these

years.”

The regional integration has been widely anticipated and received positive feedback from participating countries. In the interview with the P&A alumnus, he shared with us his personal views on the forthcoming ASEAN Integration. Jun believes that a firm and unified ASEAN community will have a stronger voice at the

Making P&A proud: Jun Saplad

negotiating table against significantly larger economies.

“Based on some studies, two-thirds of the global middle class will be residing in Asia, and China’s and India’s middle class could reach 1 billion and 0.5 billion, respectively, by 2030. With this, the ASEAN community must be prepared to compete and seize opportunities ahead. Learning from the time it took for the European Union (EU) to integrate, the decision to fast-track the establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) by 2015 instead of 2020 makes a lot of sense.”

Jun, who is now based in Singapore, admits that he is not up-to-date on where the Philippines is at on the three pillars of the

ASEAN Integration. However, he says, “No matter what the papers say, I don’t think the Philippines and many other participating states are ready for the Integration.” In addition, Jun finds it ironic that some ASEAN governments are imposing protectionist policies and regulations which go against the spirit of the Integration.

What about the pros and cons of the Integration? How could this affect the Philippines and the Filipinos?

Well, according to Jun, “some sectors will benefit, some will struggle and some will hardly be affected at all,” but overall he thinks that the Philippines and the Filipinos will benefit from the Integration. “The

Philippine economy is more reliant on domestic demand and enjoys a steady support from OFW remittances and booming BPO industry. From the Filipino consumers’ perspective, the AEC could be a boon with the availability of more competitive choices.”

However, Jun said that for Filipino businesses, especially small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), they will have to take it up a notch to compete with foreign competitors setting up and/or importing goods into the country. “Take the food and beverage industry as an example, I have seen imported brands such as *Kopiko coffee* taking root there [Philippines] despite not having local manufacturing set up. I have also seen Filipino companies’ offshoring or

Making P&A proud: Jun Saplad

nearshoring manufacturing.”

When asked about the possible impact of the Integration on the accountancy education, Jun shares two (2) possible challenges. *“The two biggest challenges I see are in the areas of standardization and alignment of accounting and finance syllabi; and professional recognition by other participating states.”*

P&A Spotlight: P&A alumna ranked 4th in the 2014 Philippine Bar Examination. Nine P&A alumni passed the bar exams

Congratulations to former P&A Cebu Audit Senior **Michelle Liao** for placing 4th in the 2014 Philippine Bar Examination!

Aside from Michelle, nine (9) P&A alumni also passed the bar exam with flying colors. Congratulations to **Eunice Carmela Ariate, Joan Rouella Corrales, Krystle Ritz Cu, Jamie Escoto, Jessrey Estella, Karen Fortaleza, Pierre Albert Salva, Joseph Tan** and **Jecylene Tantoco-Briones!**

Your P&A family is very proud you!



Look who was here

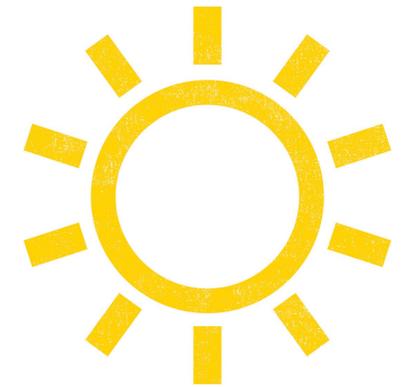


Former Audit & Assurance Seniors **Katherine Palacios** and **Charles Bryan Tan** visited the Firm early this year. The two P&A alumni pose for a picture with Audit & Assurance Partner Mabel Comedia.

NOTE: If you think we missed your birthday on our list or your birthday on our list is incorrect, send us an e-mail at alumni.relations@ph.gt.com or message us on Facebook to help us update our database.

Happy birthday to our alumni!

April



1
Gayle Christine Sang
Mary Grace Teves
Mark Stephen Yee

Rizza Dimaculangan
Jayson Manalo
Rosalie Santos
Judith Tulagan

Mark Adrian Resuello
Fe Perpetua Tafalla

Darwin Mesina
Nerissa Redmond
Ian Tan

2
Greggy Bueno
Angel Dan Cabidog
Maria Dina Ferrer

5
Vincent Bedia
Lorie Joy De Guzman
Christopher Ryan Ordonio

8
Maria Pamela Manzano
Reinier Rizalino Prudente
Allan Tripon

13
Bryan Atlas Bautista

3
Marinell Argete
Isagani Laguisma
Monica Maminta
Reynold Mata II

6
Analyn Abo
Mark Angelo Sanchez
Ronald Suñiga

10
Dorothy Camille Detabali

14
Angelita Cruz
Enrico Pizarro
Robert Don Sale
Christian Soriano

4
Milanie April Baricuatro

7
Maria Angelica Francisco
Ariel Gonzales

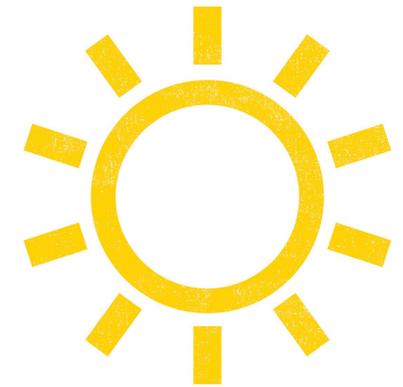
11
Robin Babaan
Mara Lourdes Galban

15
Joselito Buenviaje
Ma. Sophia Vivienne Bustamante
Winkle Manzano
Jason Radam

12
Wryckhoff Cortes
Jolly lopez

Happy birthday to our alumni!

April



16

Emerald Ann David
Jason Lois Jordan
Joanne Lazo
Maricel Madrid
Maria Rosario Magnayon

17

Lawrence Anthony Anenias
Bien Richard Arilla
Jessica Lacson

18

April Aduana
Rojelito Aguilar
Raymond Del Rosario
Jiza Jimera

19

Heherson Asiddao
Maria Teresa Carbo
Xiela Marie Dacyon
Edwin Garcia

20

Maria Rosario Fidelis Demigillo
Joanne Feliciano
Maria Gracia Morfe

21

Alvin Go
Mutya Joseph
Maria Laura Elena Suan

22

Rachelle Ann Baod

Vanessa Jacob

23

Shiela Yap

24

Brian Concepcion
Maria Cristina De Vera
Angelo Geronimo
Avigail Torres
Katherine Mae Vencer

25

Aldrin Dennis Dulig
Alejandro Limon
Victorino Mamalateo
Flaviano Varquez, Jr.
Cicero Villanueva

26

Antonette Cano
Romeo De Leon
Katherine Venturina

27

Nikko Don Bandoquillo
Marinelle Casillan
Rojie Dancel
Alfonso Naguit
Maria Lena Pascual
April Utrera

28

Arnol Aquino
Mark Difuntorum
Melissa Hernandez

Happy birthday to our alumni!

April

29

Edward Diaz
Janet Salazar

30

Ian Amiel Arada
Graciela Marie Cardines
Diendo Dupal
Richard Martin Parungao
Noreen Joy Romero



Happy birthday to our alumni!

May



1
Leonides Teofilo De Lumen II
Ian Dominic Pua

3
Ronald Almera
Maria Vanessa Katrina Sibal
Joseph Silang

4
Veraly Balagot
Grace May Cua
Jay-Ar De Guzman
Rose Ann Perez

5
Mark Vincent Carillo
Claire Marie Justo

Emelita Ligan
Jennilyn Yu

6
Arvin Frank Daquioag
Crisben Sevidal

7
Paulo Oscar Briones
Warren Andrew Lim
Michelle Madayan
Love Torrecampo

8
Rea Esponilla
Lea Mae Roa
Mariano Miguel Trinidad

9
Jhoanna May Buganan
Ron Carlo Cabais
Richard Co
Mark Ryan Pineda

10
Lawrence Formilleza
Barbara-Marie Ortega

11
Reginald Borda
Ritchelle Basco
Eileen Grace Tan
Hannielynn Tucay

12
Dennis Faustino

Ivee Rachel Gervasio
Diana Sotto

13
Jennylyn Sabado
Frix Salumbides

14
Gracy Cellacay
Jerone Tabanera

15
Annabeth Bernardo
Roxanne Kyle Jover
Vincent Paolo Kabigting

16
Aileen Magrimbao

Happy birthday to our alumni!

May



Hexilon Manabat
Perfecto Mirador, Jr.
Audelyn Pilar

17

Nelson Cabatuan

18

Francis Cinco

19

Marielle Borlongan
Gil Cacha
Bryan Paul Durano
Sarah Stephanie Torio

20

Maria Cherry Chaze Borganio

Beryl Dela Cruz
Cherry Lyn Garcia
Antonio Herbosa
Karissa Noelle Ilagan
Jamaica Cybill Lazaro

21

Francis Bartolata
Darius Cruz
Kenneth Jhim Infante
Renz Marasigan
Toni Michelle Patol
Maria Charina Quilantang

22

Roger Conanan, Jr.
Alfredo Torres
Alvin Tria

23

Naruamol Carla Angela Arnanta
Joan May Ejem
Fabiana Macalalad
Waldo Pagunsan

24

Danilo Cañizares
Godofredo Cualteros, Jr.
Joseph Andrew Dalao
Alvin Lasquetey
Jacqueline Ong
Kathy Red
Joseph Conrad Silvederio

25

Lawrence Cantos
Jeffrey Gregor Obmina

26

Ana Murey Gali
Charles Gavino

27

Crystal Andrea Cheng
Christian Domingo
Jeruel Lobien

28

Dianne Kristine Gan
Maria Angela Gatmaitan
Florian Vincent Neri, Jr.

29

Ronaldo Avelino
Ruby Monday
Trixie Lenny Yu

Happy birthday to our alumni!

May

30

Frederick Acop
Juanito Angelo Alonzo
Maria Cristina Chavoso
Van Anthony Dagapioso
Ronna Dimaano
Babyllinda Priela

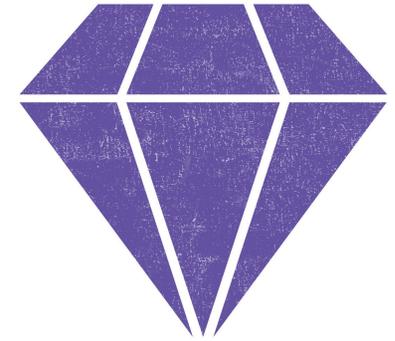
31

Rodulfo Taneo, Jr.
Dennis Villamin



Happy birthday to our alumni!

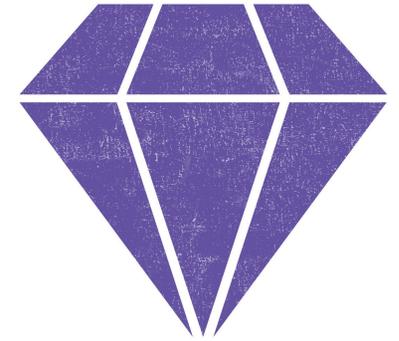
June



- | | | | | | | |
|---|---------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|----|----------------------|
| 1 | Jonavi Gustilo | Wimple Yao | 8 | Irene Borro | 11 | Katherin Mae Bariso |
| | | | | Marius Lucas Cañete | | Cherry Eusebio |
| 2 | Federico Abrigo, Jr. | 4 | Self Hamac | | 12 | Chelmarie Collado |
| | Venus Cua | | Marie Franchette Kuan Ken | | | Rahnne Shane Cruz |
| | Elaine Doctora | | Duchess Marie Munsayac | | | Ailene Dy |
| | Rowena Manzano | | Edsel Pia Parrocha | | | Shirley Go |
| | Lea Marie Sta. Ana | 5 | 9 | Marvin Camino | | Carmille Marie Golez |
| | Rochier Yao | | | Sandra Caroline Del Rosario | | Francisca Mejia |
| 3 | Jonathan Cruz | 6 | Richard Lapres | 10 | 13 | Meljorie Cruz |
| | Karenn Foronda | | John Lord Layaoen | | | |
| | Jocelyn Marianne Guerrero | 7 | | | 14 | Bryan Cemanía |
| | Christine Guillen | | Jerome Kerr Pagalilauan | | | Maris Cistina Damian |
| | Dominic Liwanes | | | | | |
| | Irwin Nidea | | | | | |

Happy birthday to our alumni!

June



Allan Lanzuela

15

Eliezer Gomez
Melany Guibone
Januari Agatha Mari Martin

16

Astrid Aurea Aguirre
Joseph Cedric Calica
Jeni Theresse Ignacio
Edwin Latoza
Arlynn Ruiz

17

Marivic Bathan
Jennifer Rita Bernardo
Donna Mae Frondoza

Michael Macalintal
Maria Teresa Teologo

18

Maria Elena Elizaga
Maria Bechelle Leoparte
Ariel Nacion
Katherine Resulta

19

Rocinante Cervantes
German Constantino, Jr.
Vivienne Cruz

20

Marie Faye Calonce
Angelita Orchanon

21

Jean Khristy Binag
Maria Estela Ann Cabahug
Nica Calma
Maria Cristina Duronio
Tristan John Kabigting

22

Mark Habla
Remedios Santos
Arjay Uy

23

Luzviminda Aguila
Editha Castro
Joanne Cobunpue
Katrina Ricaña
Conchita Valena

24

Toni Rose Abejo
Kelanie Cabiltes
Marijoan Estolano
Emily Naz

25

Gerino Batallones

26

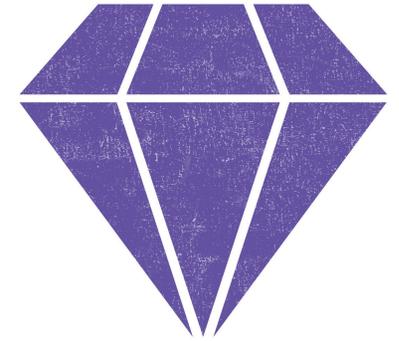
Maria Isabel Asi
Rose Anne Batinga
Mary Ann Cangas
Michael Fulla
Brazil Taduran

27

Angel Aguilar, Jr.

Happy birthday to our alumni!

June



Winston Pacifico Marquez

Rhodora Pantillo

Erick Paragua

Maria Terese Ira Kzel Valdellon

28

Hazel Ann Hapin

Ann Rosario Perez

Laarni-Ann Tansingco

Marlon Velasco

Geraldine Yumping

Paul Anthony Yap

30

Zeus Aboy

Raidis June Flores

Kathleen Guinevere Gan

Cherry Legara

Patrick Wynne Ruiz

Vanessa Yapan

29

Maclar Ampanas

Maria Theresa Antonio

Jingle Chu

Maria Diana Padilla

Nerina Pecson



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