

UPTIME

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE
UPLB OFFICE OF STUDENT AFFAIRS
n. /'əp,tīm/
www.uplbosa.org

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Over 60,000 minutes saved in processing SLB applications

About 4,000 UPLB students use the automated Student Loan Board (SLB) system each semester since June 2013. With this system, it takes only about two minutes to process a loan application whereas it takes about ten minutes to process an application manually. The service upgrade resulted to shorter and faster queues at the Office of Student Affairs.

In the past two semesters, there are about 8,000 applications processed using the automated system. Saving about eight minutes per application, the total time saved is approximately 64,000 minutes.

The automated SLB system was developed in-house under the Communications and Information Technology (COMMIT) unit. The system did not only remain costless but has also helped minimize overall expenses through paperless practices and increased work efficiency.

Scholarships portal launched

Starting December 2, 2013, the Scholarships and Financial Assistance Division will regularly post available scholarship slots at www.osam.tk/aid.

As of December 2013, OSA has 39 scholarships aside from regular financial assistance provided to students like SLB, STFAP, SA, and SUPSA. The 39 scholarships are from private and government institutions. Some of



Seating SLB applicants. Students no longer stand in line at the First Floor because of the fast and short queues at OSA.

The system, nationally known as LINK APP: Linked Independent Kiosks for Application Processing, was presented in the National Conference on Information Technology Education (NCITE) in October 25, 2013. It also won the Best Paper Award for Information Systems.

Being branded as “offline is okay,” LINK APP processes loan applica-

tions even if power is unstable or Internet connection is intermittent. The award-winning system will continue to serve UPLB students in the succeeding semesters with its architecture gradually being implemented to other OSA systems. *MVASantos*

What do you think about UPTIME?

Please let us know by texting UPTIME <message> to 09176923500.

the scholarships are Vicente B. Bello Scholarship Program, Sugar Regulatory Administration Scholarship Study Grant, and the UP Presidential Scholarship.

Scholarship benefits include monthly or semestral stipends, reduced or free matriculation fees, and other forms of allowances.

While OSA encourages students to always aim for 1.0 grades, OSA understands that most students have to go the extra mile to get high grades. Thus, OSA worked hard to convince donors that a lot of UP students are successful even if they did not graduate with honors. As a result, OSA has scholarships even for students not running for honors. *MVASantos*

SA processes upgraded

In December 2013, the Communications and Information Technology (COMMIT) unit launched the new DTR system that caters to all student assistants, including those that work outside regular office hours. OSA also revived the use of Landbank accounts to receive SA salaries.

In October 2013, OSA automated the SA requests. Some offices had a hard time adapting to the new process but the minor change is important to OSA because of its desire to fully modernize its operations. One of the benefits of this move is the online publication of vacant SA positions at www.uplbosa.org/jobs.

OSA has been upgrading the student assistantship (SA) services for the past year. The initial automation in the DTR processing was implemented in November 2012. This catered to SAs from offices with regular work hours (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.). The system can check the DTRs of the SAs in a day whereas manual checking takes three weeks.

When salaries of SAs are deposited to their Landbank accounts, they will receive their salaries faster than those who opted to be paid by cash through the Cashier's Office. The delay in the manual process is caused by SAs not claiming their salaries on time, causing a domino effect in the government cash advances and dis-



Director Afuang orients students about SFAD services. Bulk of the discussions is about the upgrading of the Student Assistantship processes.

bursement policies. OSA has constantly reminded these students to seemingly no avail. Thus, the Landbank payment option was introduced in January 2014.

Few policy changes were made in 2013 to expedite processing of SA documents at OSA level. The policy changes are listed below:

1. Offices must submit DTRs of its SAs on the fifth working day of the succeeding month. SAs are no longer allowed to submit their DTRs individually.
2. Late DTRs will be accepted the following month provided a letter with valid explanation is attached. The letter must be signed by the SA and the immediate supervisor.

3. SAs must attend the SFAD Services orientation once every two years or whenever there are major policy or system changes.

4. SAs must claim their salaries within five (5) working days if they opted to be paid by cash through the Cashier's Office.

According to SA Coordinator Noemi B. Nuñez, UPLB students can open a Landbank account with only one valid ID. They just need to present their validated UPLB ID and Form 5 in the New Accounts section of Landbank UPLB Branch. More information about the use of Landbank accounts is available online at www.osam.tk/atm. *MVASantos*

STFAP appointment system minimizes lengthy queues

In February 2013, OSA implemented the STFAP Appointment System to assure applicants that they are accommodated during their reserved schedule. This means students and parents no longer need to line up as early as 4 a.m. just to ensure that they meet the day's application quota.

Setting of appointments is done online through the OSAM System at

www.uplbosa.org. Students just need to login and select their desired appointment schedule.

During their appointment date, students can come a few minutes before their scheduled appointment. They are called through the AVP system that displays reminders, announcements, and the appointment queue.

With OSA's desire to hasten the processing of applications, more interviewers were also deployed that resulted to more applications being processed in a day.

With the approval of the new Socialized Tuition System (STS), OSA projects a faster processing of the applications in the succeeding semesters. *MVASantos*

CRVOC approves SOAD proposal to reward student organizations



Member of LABAY '57 assisting in the dental mission at Putho, Tuntungin. Student organizations will now earn points when they get recognition or conduct meaningful activities such as community service. (Photo courtesy of LABAY '57)

On December 4, 2013, Chancellor Rex Victor O. Cruz approved the SOAD Students' Hard-Earned Rewards System (SHARES) as per OC Memorandum No. 177.

SOAD SHARES is a rewards program designed to motivate student organizations by rewarding points for certain activities that they conduct or participate in. The points can be exchanged for "rewards" from the rewards catalog subject to availability. One of the rewards in the catalog is the free or discounted use of facilities.

Venue administrators will treat redeemed SOAD SHARES points as cash payments. Redeemed points may be used in accordance with the guidelines attached to the memorandum.

The following are some highlights from the guidelines:

1. SHARES is only applicable to recognized student organizations.
2. SHARES points may be shared with other student organizations once. When an organization shares its earned points, the sharing organization will be rewarded 20% of the shared points. The rebate points may not be shared anymore.
3. Points earned are not convertible to cash and may not be used as payment to people such as technicians and utility workers.
4. Points in an academic year will expire on the day after the last day of holding of activities in the following semester. Sharing of points will not extend the validity of points.
5. Based on the memorandum, organizations that participate in the Loyalty Day Parade will earn 500 points. For each University Scholar of the organization in a semester, the organization will earn 400 points. A student organization member who gradu-

SOAD to beta test text lines to student orgs

As the year ends, SOAD wants to know what organizations think about organization text lines. The text lines will be automated. Through SMS keywords, organizations can receive text messages from students through OrgsUP.

Students just need to text SOAD's mobile number using the organization's registered keyword and their text messages will appear in the OrgsUP account of the organization.

Only organizations that will participate in the online discussion at <http://osam.tk/textlines> will be able to beta test the system upon implementation.

ates as a Summa Cum Laude will leave 2000 points to his/her organization. The complete list of activities/accomplishments and corresponding points is attached to OC Memorandum No. 177.

SOAD SHARES is retroactively applicable to all organization activities starting June 2013. SOAD is now updating OrgsUP to support the rewards system. Point persons and heads of student organizations will be notified as soon as they can start redeeming rewards from the points they collected. In the meantime, the organizations are continually earning points as indicated in the guidelines. *MVASantos*

As of December 18, 2013, SOAD saved a total of

52,178

sheets of paper (and counting) because of its paperless practices since 2011. Details at osam.tk/card.

Afuang, Holt attend 11th ASEAN Student Leaders Forum

OSA Director Leticia Afuang and USC Chairperson Arthur Holt attended the 11th ASEAN Student Leaders Forum (ASLF) held on June 21-25, 2013 at the Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, Thailand. The forum aims to encourage students' readiness for the youth driven and youth embracing community awareness especially towards the expected 2015 ASEAN Integration. The theme of the forum is Towards the ASEAN Dream.

ASLF is based on a conviction that the youth is the power of the future and a strong cooperation among them will lead to a stronger ASEAN community. The role of the youth is the key to achieving the successful establishment of the ASEAN region. The close cooperation of the ASEAN nations is essential in the sustainability of the peaceful agreement among the ASEAN member countries.

The ASEAN DREAM

The ASEAN DREAM is a hope to bring together,
The youth today who will be tomorrow's leaders,
Sharing their ideas, learning from each other,
Serving the Region as friends, valuing their partners.

The ASEAN family should share the value of their dreams
The ten are Singapore, Malaysia, Laos and the Philippines,
Together with Cambodia, Myanmar, Indonesia and Vietnam
Brunei prepares for twenty fourteen, this year's host is Thailand.

They will be moving forward, united with one vision,
They will hold their hands together to achieve their mission,
They will lead their peers for a better future generation,
The ASEAN community, diverse but UNITED in serving the nations.

Leticia E. Afuang, PhD (2013)
OSA Director

Three other UP campuses were represented in the forum: UP Baguio by Imogen De Jesus and Dr. Cora Abansi, UP Mindanao by Dr. Evelina Ayson; UP Manila by Maryliz Zubiri and Dr. Honey Libertine Labor. The De La Salle University (DLSU) was represented by Dr. Fritzie Ian De Vera, Jose Miguel Gamboa, Jose Miguel Moreno, and Beatrice Anne Liu.

Only three universities in the country are AUN members: University of the Philippines, De La Salle University, and Ateneo de Manila University.

Dr. Afuang recited her original poem in the culminating activity. The project proposed by Holt's team was declared as the best project in this year's forum. *LEAfuang*

FSRO program to strengthen college-level counseling

On June 17, 2013, the FSRO Level 1 Workshop was conducted to officially jumpstart the program with 68 college representatives and faculty members. They discussed the qualities of an FSRO, how to recognize the psychological concerns of students, sexual harassment cases in UPLB, and concrete intervention management for students at risk.

Since many students live far from home, the guidance counselors act as their second parents, guiding them and making sure that they are equipped with the emotional stability that they need in facing their problems. With only five guidance counselors in the university, it is difficult to reach the 13,000 UPLB students.

In response to this situation, the Task Force on Empowering for Effective Student Support Services in coordination with OSA launched the Facul-

ty Student Relation Officers (FSRO) program which aims to equip volunteer faculty members who would like to attend to student concerns at the college level.

The participants selected the FSRO coordinators who are assigned to work closely with the other FSROs in their colleges: Dr. Cynthia Oliveros (CA), Prof. Faith Maranan (CAS), Dr. Richelle Zafra (CEAT), Prof. Ma. Eden Piadozo (CEM), Dr. Benjamina Paula Flor (CDC), Mr. Nephtaly Joel Botor (CHE), Prof. Mutya Ma. Manalo (CFNR), and Dr. Ronnie Domingo (CVM).

The faculty volunteers underwent training that will help them better understand the experiences of the students in the university. Students are still very much welcome to drop by the Counseling and Testing Division at Room 9, 2/F SU Building if

they want to speak with the guidance services specialists. *KS Alelojo and JADolor*

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CTD volunteers help students release stress. The guidance services specialists prepared relaxation exercises to comfort the students.

‘Makulay, tuloy-tuloy ang buhay’

On December 9, 2013, the Counseling and Testing Division (CTD) facilitated a creative stress busters workshop for the students affected by the Yolanda typhoon. The workshop aimed to help the students financially, socially, physically, spiritually, and psycho-emotionally. As CTD aims to provide a glimmer of hope in these kinds of situations, CTD responded to help mend deep scars especially in the psycho-social aspect.

Most of the affected students experienced trauma due to loss of properties and even loved ones. This may

form barriers preventing the students from realizing a normal life. The recent workshop helped radiate joy amidst their situation.

The students immersed themselves in music and dance movement therapy, tai-chi, progressive relaxation techniques, organizational games, laughter therapy, and art therapy. The activities helped them release their anxieties and stress which also help them find relief, inspire them to move on, and continue to face life challenges.

The UP Rural High School distributed meal tickets that the students which they can use as payment for food at certain eateries. *ZSLoberiza*

Life coaching workshops conducted

OSA staff, student volunteers, student housing staff, and parents participated in the Life Coaching workshops conducted by the Counseling and Testing Division (CTD). The workshop aims to help them deal with multifaceted problems of students. The workshop molds the participants to become more equipped “pseudo” parents in the university.

The following are the Life Coaching workshops conducted:

1. OSA Personnel
February 11 & 18, 2013
2. Student Volunteers
March 15 & 16, 2013
3. Parents
April 22 & 30, 2013
4. Student Housing Personnel
December 4 & 6, 2013

A total of 1,065 people participated in the workshops. They learned how to enhance their skills in understanding students at risks, the “I” generation, communication strategies, facilitation techniques, and stress management. *ZSLoberiza*

‘Off the streets, on to school’ outreach program now on its 8th year

The Counseling and Testing Division (CTD) conducted the *Off the streets, On to School* outreach program on December 11, 2013 at the Student Union Building. The GABAY Volunteer Corps and the KAIROS Band volunteers assisted CTD in the outreach program. The program aims to help financially challenged children to continue their education by providing them school supplies and engaging them in development activities. More

than 300 children, parents, and teachers participated in the outreach activity.

Various psycho-social activities such as dance competition, gift giving, jewelry making, values education, feeding and hygiene workshop, and livelihood training were conducted.

The outreach program is conducted by CTD annually as part of the *Off the*

Streets, On To School and *Tulong-Dunong* program which aim to help and educate the underprivileged. *EVYDy*

The Student Organizations and Activities Division (SOAD) regularly sends university announcements and promotions through the SOAD-OSA mailing list.

To subscribe to the list, just visit www.soadosa.org/mailling-list.

OSA Hymn debuts at UPLB flag raising ceremony

On November 25, 2013, OSA hosted the flag raising ceremony in front of the Executive Offices Building. The ceremony started at 7:45 a.m. with an opening prayer led by Elisa Navarrete.

The national anthem was led by Gonzalo Amante Jr. During the program, OSA Director Leticia Afuang announced the approval of OSA Meal Now, Pay Later program and the initiatives of OSA to raise support for the calamity victims. OSA System Administrator Mr. Francis Contemplacion rendered an early Christmas carol. CTD Head Zenaida Loberiza and Ms. Janett Dolor led the recitation of the *Panunumpa ng Kawani ng Gobyerno* and *Panatang Makapalay*, respectively.

Motivated by serving the students, an original composition transcribed in the mind of Director Afuang. Known as *Awit ng OSA*, the hymn was first sung in public during the flag raising ceremony. *GHAmanante Jr*

AWIT NG OSA

Leticia E. Afuang

Ipagpatuloy mong buksan
ang puso sa pagmamahal
Kamay mo ay huwag hihintong
maglingkod sa mag-aaral
Paa'y gamitin maghanap
ng mga nangangailangan
Lagi kang mag-isip ng paraan
upang sila ay matulungan

OSA OSA katungkulan mong
alagaan ang Iskolor ng Bayan
Sa pagtaguyod mo't suporta may pag-asa at sigla
Ipagpatuloy mong patatagin si Isko at si Iska

Kapag sila'y umiyyak ikaw ang siyang pupuntahan
Kapag nanghihina naman balik at mo'y sasandalan
Kakulangan sa pagtustos may tulong kang nilalaan
Sapat silang humaharap
sa buhay at paligsahan

The Office of Student Affairs Management (OSAM) System is an ongoing modernization project at OSA which started in 2012. It aims to keep OSA up to date with industry standards through information technology. Details at www.uplbosa.org/osam.



Caring Father you might be
As from your children's eyes I see
You shared joy, comfort and security
Only a father can give so lavishly.

Always have I seen your smile
So sweet encouraging and nice,
Your greetings make every morning bright,
Craft everyday a lovely phase on sight.

Loving Husband you have been
I've heard from your colleagues and friends
A happy family they say you have sustained
Such a great and awesome man's achievement

Outstanding you are in cooperation
No complaints have I heard for your function
You are an asset with your contribution
We love you Mang Caloy, and will miss you soon.

You've done so many roles aside from your daily job
Supportive team member, a friend and more to add
Kuya, buyer, messenger and whatever has been asked,
We THANK YOU so much for all you gave and served

By Leticia E. Afuang
10 October 2013

"How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called Children of God"

1 John 3:1

For the 34 years in service of Mr. Carlos Aquino as the sole Buyer and Purchasing Officer of the Office of Student Affairs (OSA), the staff members conducted a simple thanksgiving party for his retirement on October 10, 2013. OSA staff members prepared presentations as a tribute to Mr. Aquino. OSA Director Leticia Afuang wrote a special poem for him. *LEAfuang and SBPosadas*

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UPLB special performers get P2000 financial support

Effective First Semester 2013-2014, varsity members, Harmony, and UPLB Choral Ensemble receive a monthly allowance through the Special University Performers – Student Assistantship (SUPSA) program under the Student Assistantship program of the Scholarships and Financial Assistance Division.

The members of the said groups may apply to receive up to P2000 depending on the hours they spend on rehearsals and performances. Their respective conductors or trainers will certify their work hours which must be submitted to SFAD monthly. *SBPosadas*



Aspiring Choral Ensemble members auditioning to join the group. After getting through the auditions, members are trained to develop their excellence in choral music. (Photo by UPLB Choral Ensemble)

OSA peer tutorial program launched

The Counseling and Testing Division (CTD) launched a tutoring program in July 2013. The program aims to extend help to other students who are having academic challenges. CTD offers them free tutoring.

Students with good academic standing facilitate the tutorial sessions. Ms. Ordina S. Carlos, a guidance services specialist, coordinates the program.

In the first semester AY 2013-2014, there are 14 student tutors who have taught 174 students. These student tutors are all recipients of the different scholarships administered by OSA. As of second semester, there are 50 tutors that teach students in subjects like MATH, ECON, CHEM, STAT, ENSC, CMSC, and

various GE courses. The volunteer tutors were given certificates of recognition for their service to the *Iskolar para sa Bayan*.

CTD invites university scholars, college scholars, and students in the honor roll to join the tutoring program. Students who are interested to volunteer as tutors and students who need tutorial assistance can inquire at Room 9, 2/F SU Building or email oscarlos@uplbosa.org. *MAMejia*

New ISA officers elected

The International Students' Association has elected a new set of officers for 2014. The election was conducted from November 18 to 22, 2013. The canvassing of votes was held on November 25 at the SEARCA Residence

Hotel Conference Room. The newly elected officers are as follows:

President: Micael S.D. Martin (Timor Leste). Vice President: Kyaw Min Htut (Myanmar). General Secretary: Sive Thea (Cambodia). Public Secretary: Onike Tali Lailogo (Indonesia). Join Secretary: Ittirit Suwannakam (Thailand). Treasurer: Khe Longkeat (Cambodia). Auditor: Kyaw Myo Oo (Myanmar). Sports Secretary: Nguyen Xuan Huu (Vietnam). Cultural Secretary: Sith Jaisong (Thailand).

The oath taking of the newly elected officers took place on December 12, 2013. Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Oscar B. Zamora led the oath taking. The outgoing officers were awarded UP Oblation Statuettes for their dedicated service as officers of the association in the past year. *EVYDy and SBPosadas*

One stop clearance system launched

Initially conceptualized by Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Oscar B. Zamora, the One Stop Clearance System was implemented in April 2013 to facilitate the clearing process of students. Before the system, students have to go to the University Housing Office, Main Library,

and University Health Service. With the One Stop Clearance system, students only need one signature for the three offices and OSA.

A machine-readable label is printed on the form which is scanned at OSA to determine if the student has any deficiency. When the system con-

firms that the student has no deficiency, the OSA Director will sign the clearance form.

The clearance database is updated periodically by the three offices. Students will also see their deficiencies online when they login to their OSAM accounts. *MVASantos*

OSA implements Meal Now Pay Later program

Thou shall not skip meals.

UPLB OSA implemented the Meal Now Pay Later (MNPL) program starting Second Semester AY 2013-2014. The program will help students with problems in finances by allowing a student to avail a meal card which can be presented to accredited food service providers.

At the end of the month, students who availed of the program must pay for the meal card balance which can also be paid through scholarship/STFAP stipend or student assistantship salary deduction. A meal card allows a student to use a maximum of P100 per day and up to P3000 per month. To avail of the program, stu-

dents must apply personally at Room 6, 2/F SU Building.

With available cash loans, student loan board, STFAP stipends, scholarships, and the MNPL program, OSA hopes that there would no longer be students who skip meals because of financial reasons. *JAVDelosReyes*

ISS organizes the First Investiture and Commissioning Rites of UPLB Ambassadors

In support of the University's goal to promote internationalization, the International Students Section (ISS) has organized the first Investiture and Commissioning Rites for UPLB Ambassadors on April 26, 2013 at Room 9, 2/F Student Union Building. The 16 ambassadors of goodwill who were selected from the graduating class of 2013 are:

Phin Sopheap (Cambodia), Eun Kyoung Choi (Korea), Jincheol Choi (Korea), Yoon Kyung Lee (Korea),

Chansanook Senthavong (Laos), Arie Sukma (Indonesia), Lenny Widjyanthi (Indonesia), Hanike Monim (Indonesia), Zin Mar Lwin (Myanmar), Aye Min (Myanmar), Swe Sin Myint Thein (Myanmar), Le Tin (Vietnam), Ho Ngoc Ninh (Vietnam), Nguyen Van Huong (Vietnam), Quyen Din Ha (Vietnam), and Vu Hoang Lan (Vietnam).

During the program, OSA Director Leticia E. Afuang emphasized the importance of the role of the ambas-

sadors in promoting UPLB, and in sustaining linkages among UPLB and their universities even after the students return to their home countries. *EVYDy and SBPosadas*

UPLBOSA.ORG ("OSAM") is the official website of the Office of Student Affairs. SOADOSA.ORG ("OrgsUP") is the official website of the Student Organizations and Activities Division. OSAM.TK is a URL shortener used to disseminate easy-to-remember links like osam.tk/diff.

Public Service Announcement Guidelines

All UPLB students and student organization advisers that have OSAM profiles regularly receive messages that are of public interest from the Office of Student Affairs. From time to time, OSA also disseminates university announcements that concern the majority of the students such as but not limited to class suspension announcements, registration instructions, public service initiatives of the university, open forum, and consultations.

OSA would like to emphasize that receiving SMS from OSA is a privilege and disseminating information through SMS is not a mandate of the office. OSA uses the SMS service to support its operations. OSA helps disseminate information through the following: Facebook (www.facebook.com/uplbosa), Twitter (www.twitter.com/uplbosa), Email, bulletin boards, announcements at www.uplbosa.org and www.soadosa.org, and issuance of memorandum. In special cases and when SMS credits are available, OSA may also disseminate the information through SMS as it deems necessary.

OSA is a service unit utilizing various information and communication technology tools to provide an efficient and effective student service but OSA is not an advertising agency. Thus, it does not simply send out announcements when requested.

As of December 2013, a system for the staff, REPS, and faculty members is still being tested by the Communications and Information Technology (COMMIT). Thus, they cannot subscribe yet to the information service provided by the office. Students who are not receiving announcements via SMS should ensure that they have undergone Student Number Encoding and have a complete OSAM profile. OSA can only send SMS to Globe and Smart subscribers at this time.