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THE BUSINESS DIGEST
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OF COMMERCE OF THE PHILIPPINES

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Exploring opportunities in MEDICAL TOURISM

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Head office:
19/F Philippine AXA Life Centre
corner Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. Tindalo St.,
Makati City, Philippines
Tel: (02) 845 1324; 759 6680
Fax: (02) 845 1395; 759 6690
E-mail: info@eccp.com

Visayas Office:
DOST 7 Banilad S&T Complex
Gov. M. Cuenco Ave., Banilad
6000 Cebu City, Philippines
Tel: (032) 253 3389; 254 3765; 254 3767
Fax: (032) 253 3389
E-mail: visayas@eccp.com

Mindanao Office:
2 F. DCCCII Bldg., J.P. Laurel Avenue,
Davao City, Philippines
Tel: (6382) 271 0635
Fax: (6382) 226 4433; 221 4148
E-mail: mindanao@eccp.com

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Michael McCullough
Managing Director
+63 917 584 0491
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Yves Luethi
Executive Director
Marketing & LLR
+63 917 869 2798
yves.luethi@kmcgroup.com



Rosario Carbonell
Executive Director
Tenant Representation
+63 917 584 0465
rosario@kmcgroup.com



Gerold Fernando
Executive Director
Tenant Representation
+63 917 598 4453
gerold@kmcgroup.com



Melo Porciuncula
Executive Director
Investments
+63 917 599 2726
melo@kmcgroup.com



Antton Nordberg
Executive Director
Research & Consultancy
+63 917 599 4430
antton.nordberg@kmcgroup.com



Editorial



FLORIAN GOTTEIN
ECCP EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
FLORIAN.GOTTEIN@ECCP.COM

The past few months have been very busy here at the chamber and we truly couldn't have done it without your support.

One of the recent highlights was the ASEAN-EU Business Summit last March 10. During the summit, we were able to welcome over 350 delegates from around the region and talk about important industry and trade issues while highlighting opportunities in the country and the ASEAN. The day was filled with rousing discussion and important steps were identified in order to move the Philippines, along with our regional partners, forward. We also welcomed EU Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmström at the summit and we're very happy to report that she was impressed by the work that, not only the government, but also the Chamber and the European business community has been doing to propel EU-ASEAN and EU-Philippine cooperation forward. Commissioner Malmström encouraged us to keep further strengthen relations, within the country, between private and public sectors, within the ASEAN region, and with the European Union. We might also see EU-ASEAN FTA talks resumed in 2018.

Other highlights were the sold out membership luncheons with key members of the government, including NEDA Secretary Pernia and DICT Secretary Salalima. With the success of these luncheons, we are looking towards creating more avenues for dialogue between the private and public sectors in the coming months on topics such as customs, government procurement, retail, foreign ownership, professional services, and agri-food.

Our Coffee Mornings, breakfast meetings that brought our members together to discuss timely business issues, have also been a big hit. These past few months, we've hosted breakfast meetings which discuss topics such as "Investing in a Global Economy" and the Data Privacy Act and how it affects our your company. Look out for our next newsletter blast announcing the next Coffee Morning session later this month and the next advocacy forum in late June.

If you haven't subscribed to our newsletters yet, make sure to subscribe via our website or Facebook page, to keep yourself in the loop. This is where we announce important upcoming events and activities as well as keep you updated on the work that the Chamber is doing for you.

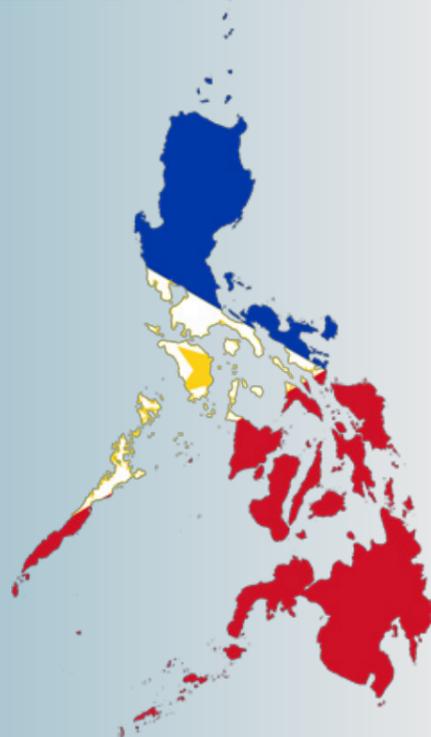
“This month's issue of the Euro-PH Connect delves into medical tourism, an exciting opportunity for Philippine industry. With interest in travelling to the Philippines increasing, whether for business or pleasure, and the rising tourism statistics, the medical tourism industry has a bright future in the Philippines.”

This month's issue of the Euro-PH Connect delves into medical tourism, an exciting opportunity for Philippine industry. With interest in travelling to the Philippines increasing, whether for business or pleasure, and the rising tourism statistics, the medical tourism industry has a bright future in the Philippines. However, both the public and the private sector must work together to fully take advantage of this opportunity. To succeed in establishing the country as a medical tourism destination, we must make sure that it is supported by the necessary infrastructure and medical emergency services, especially in the beautiful but far flung destinations, that are needed to support such an industry. More on this in our cover story.

I hope you enjoy this month's issue of the Euro-PH Connect, and once again, thank you for your continued support to our Chamber. We hope to keep learning and growing with you by our side. ■

Notes from the IPR SME Helpdesk

IP Protection in the Philippines for the Tourism Industry



Underpinned by the intensive governmental investments in marketing and infrastructure to support the tourism industry, the Philippines' tourism industry is rapidly growing. The industry contributes around 11% to the annual GDP of the Philippines, bringing in about EUR 30 billion in 2014. As the country is promoting foreign investments in special economic zones of tourism development like Metro Manila, Cebu City and Mactan Island, there will be many lucrative future business opportunities for European SMEs in the tourism industry in the Philippines.

SMEs engaged in tourism industry need to pay special attention to protecting their intellectual property (IP) rights, because IP infringements are still relatively common in the Philippines. IP rights are a key factor for business success and neglecting to register these rights in the Philippines could easily end SMEs' business endeavor in the country. Thus, a robust IPR strategy is needed, when entering the promising market of the Philippines.

MAKE SURE YOUR BRAND IS PROTECTED

Branding is especially crucial for the tourism sector, as it allows companies to differentiate themselves from the rest, creating a niche market and an individual appeal that will translate into more tourist arrivals. Thus, it could have devastating consequences for a European SME if another company started to use similar or identical brand to promote their services. In tourism sector 'destination branding' is equally important to company branding. Destination branding often relies on a logo and a tagline, the examples being the Swiss resort St. Moritz using the tagline 'Top of the World', the Tourism Malaysia campaign of 'Malaysia, Truly Asia' or the slogan 'it's more fun in the Philippines' that the Philippines Department of Tourism uses to promote the country internationally.

SMEs are strongly advised to register their logo and tagline as a trade mark in the Philippines in order to protect their brand because IP rights are territorial and European trade marks

do not enjoy automatic protection in the Philippines. Trade mark registration should be done well in advance before even starting business in the country because the Philippines applies the 'first-to-file' trade mark registration system, meaning that the first person to register a trade mark owns that mark, regardless of the first use. Registering in advance is important because trade mark piracy due to 'bad-faith' registration is still a problem in the Philippines. Bad-faith registrations means that a third party (not the legitimate owner of the mark) first registers the mark in the Philippines, thereby preventing the legitimate owner from registering it in the country. These unscrupulous companies would normally try to resell the trade mark back to its legitimate owner at an inflated price.

At the same time, owners of well-known marks may benefit from the Philippines membership to the Paris Convention. Foreign companies can request the refusal or cancellation of a registration of a trade mark which constitutes a reproduction, imitation or translation of a well-known mark in

another country that is also a member of the Convention. On the other hand, SMEs' brand names rarely enjoy the status of a well-known trade mark and thus it is not advisable to rely on the well-known trade mark status, but to register trade mark in the Philippines.

European SMEs should also keep in mind that according to the Trade Mark Law of the Philippines, In order to maintain the registration of a trade mark, a Declaration of Actual Use of the mark together with the proof of use of the mark must be filed after 3 years from the application date of the mark and then again within one 1 year from the 5th anniversary of the registration. Actual use of the mark in commerce is very important because if an SME is not using the mark in its business, its mark will be removed from the trade marks register.

PROTECT YOUR BRAND ALSO BY REGISTERING YOUR INTERNET DOMAIN NAME

Most companies engaged in tourism rely on their websites to attract customers and thus protecting online domain name is very important for the SMEs. It is advisable to register internet domain name in the Philippines because problems like 'cybersquatting' and typosquatting are a serious concern in the country. Cybersquatting is similar to bad-faith trade mark registration and it means that a third party registers a domain name that is identical to European company's product or trade mark

name, with the purpose of selling the domain names back to the rightful owner at a premium price.

Typosquatting refers to registering a domain name with misspellings, or typos of famous brands, or company names. Typosquatters target Internet users who incorrectly type a website address into their web browser (e.g. www.euroap.eu instead of www.europa.eu). When users make such an error, they can be led to an alternative website owned by a hacker. This may lead to consumer confusion or lost web traffic, as internet users may be directed to either fraudulent websites or competitor's websites.

Internet domain names can be registered with the Internet Domain Name Registry of the Philippines (dotPH). Registrations should be done as soon as the company envisages doing business in the Philippines because internet domain name registration also functions under the 'first-to-file' system. Indicatively, it costs around EUR 34 per year to register internet domain names in the Philippines.

Cybersquatting and typosquatting are illegal under the intellectual property laws of the Philippines and European SMEs should keep in mind that the Philippines Internet Domain Name Registry has a domain name dispute resolution system that can help to enforce IP rights. Thus, companies should monitor similar domain names and actively enforce their domain

name rights in case of confusion or cybersquatting.

ADVERTISING MATERIALS CAN BE PROTECTED BY COPYRIGHTS

Besides websites, tourism sector also relies a lot on physical advertising materials such as information booklets, leaflets or tourist guide books. All these advertising materials can be protected by copyrights. Even though, in the Philippines works are protected by copyright from the moment of their creation, it is still advisable for foreign SMEs to voluntarily register their copyright in the Philippines, because it is common practice for the authorities in the country to require copyright certificate in order to initiate copyright infringement proceedings.

Copyrights could be registered either at the Copyright Division of the National Library or at the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines and costs about EUR 380 to record copyrights in the Philippines (including official costs of PHP 625.00 approximately EUR 12). The IP Code defines "author" as the person who has created the work. SMEs can apply for the recordal by submitting the required documents including a copy of their business registration certificate and a certified copy of the notarized assignment document from the author in person.

The IP Law also states that, if the work is created during the course of the employment as part of employee's regular assignment, then



the employer will be the owner of the copyright. If employers wishes to register copyright in the Philippines, they need to provide supporting documents evidencing ownership of the copyright, the manner of its acquisition if they are not the authors of the work and information on where and in what establishment the work was made.

ALWAYS ENFORCE YOUR RIGHTS

IP enforcement is very important and if companies manage to build a reputation of always enforcing their rights then unscrupulous companies are more likely to move on to harass less litigious companies. Thus, strategic enforcement of IP rights is the key to a successful and comprehensive business strategy. When European SMEs identify infringement, they should actively enforce their rights in the Philippines through the various avenues available.

In the Philippines, there are 3 avenues available to enforce intellectual property rights: administrative actions, civil litigation and criminal prosecution. As civil litigation and criminal prosecution tend to take very long time and be quite costly, administrative actions are often the preferred means of enforcement. Administrative authorities have



the power to impose preliminary injunctions, preliminary attachments (a provisional remedy wherein the court/administrative body is asked to take custody of the property of the adverse party as security for satisfaction of any judgment) as well as damages and administrative fines.

Recently, the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines has opened an Arbitration and Mediation Centre

(ACM) that has the jurisdiction to resolve trade mark and copyright infringements as well as IP licensing disputes. The ACM has reported many successfully mediated cases in 2015 and can thus be a viable alternative to resorting to civil or criminal proceedings. ■

Helika Jurgenson
South-East Asia IPR SME Helpdesk

SOUTH-EAST ASIA 
IPR SME HELPDESK

The South-East Asia IPR SME Helpdesk supports small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) from European Union (EU) member states to protect and enforce their Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) in or relating to South-East Asian countries, through the provision of free information and services. The Helpdesk provides jargon-free, first-line, confidential advice on intellectual property and related issues, along with training events, materials and online resources. Individual SMEs and SME intermediaries can submit their IPR queries via email (question@southeastasia-iprhelpdesk.eu) and gain access to a panel of experts, in order to receive free and confidential first-line advice within 3 working days.

The South-East Asia IPR SME Helpdesk is co-funded by the European Union.

To learn more about the South-East Asia IPR SME Helpdesk and any aspect of intellectual property rights in South-East Asia, please visit our online portal at <http://www.ipr-hub.eu/>

Connecting the EU and the Philippines

Upping our trade & values agenda with the ASEAN:

EU Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmström visits Manila

BY WALTER VAN HATTUM, HEAD OF TRADE AND ECONOMICS SECTION, EU DELEGATION TO THE PHILIPPINES

ASEAN is a key priority in EU's "Trade for All" Policy and for good reasons: ASEAN is growing over 5% per year, and integrating at greater speeds: Since the ASEAN Free Trade Area was established, trade increased six fold to US\$2.5 trillion; whilst intra-ASEAN trade grew from 19% to 25%. The region is attracting five times as much Foreign Direct Investment, and being a preferred destination for EU companies, the majority from the EU (€23.3 billion or 57% growth). Integration between our two blocs has strengthened too: In 2016, ASEAN-EU trade stood at €288 billion. EU imports from ASEAN doubled since 2009, while our trade in services tripled.



So good reasons for EU Trade Commissioner Malmström to visit Manila, host of the Fifteenth AEM-EU Trade Commissioner Consultations on 10 March. But what did she achieve concretely?

1. Ministers agreed on the next steps towards the resumption of the ASEAN-EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations; and to develop a framework encompassing the parameters of a future ASEAN-EU FTA. Negotiations on an EU-ASEAN trade agreement started in 2007 but were continued from 2009 on a bilateral basis leading to successful deals with Vietnam and Singapore already.
2. Ministers reaffirmed commitment to work towards a successful outcome of the 11th WTO Ministerial Conference in Buenos Aires in December, with a strong focus on E-Commerce. The last major deal of the WTO was the Trade Facilitation Agreement, with strong impact on (SME) trade. The next big thing is e-commerce and an agreement in WTO will greatly support SMEs in ASEAN and EU alike, not the least in the Philippines with its strong BPO sector. It will help increase productivity; create new business opportunities; expand international trade; and enable enterprises to reach remote markets.
3. The Commissioner introduced successfully the idea of another multilateral initiative - a Multilateral Investment Court, and ASEAN colleagues welcomed the discussion. Key features of domestic and international courts would be introduced to

investment adjudication. The Court would have a first instance tribunal; an appeal tribunal; have tenured, highly qualified judges, obliged to adhere to the strictest ethical standards and a dedicated secretariat. Moreover, the Court would be a permanent body; and work transparently. It would prevent disputing parties from choosing which judges ruled on their case; provide for effective enforcement of its decisions; and be open to all interested countries to join. This is a game-changer and a major departure from the system of investor-to-State dispute settlement (ISDS).

4. In discussions on future cooperation, Ministers agreed on a Trade and Investment Work Programme for 2017-2018 that will focus on issues that matter for an eventual regional deal including

rules of origin; e-commerce; trade facilitation; SMEs development; standards, technical regulations and conformity assessment; procurement; energy and raw materials; and investment.

5. Moreover, the meeting provided for a substantial platform for the EU ASEAN Business Council to voice concerns and ideas regarding ASEAN: Industry spoke to the ASEAN ministers about the urgency to put in place an enabling regional financial infrastructure for MSMEs; to accelerate removal of non-tariff barriers; to simplify customs procedures to facilitate MSMEs to participate in regional supply chains; to expedite work on harmonization of standards; and to enhance enforcement of intellectual property to facilitate transfer of technology and know-how to the region.

6. The 5th ASEAN - EU Business Summit was a first in bringing values to the discussion, driven by business. Besides discussing sectors of relevance to EU and ASEAN, a number of companies discussed openly about the role of human rights for their business plans, continuity and sustainability; and or more opportunistic, the respect for those rights in being able to market products effectively.

7. The changed positions of some countries on trade policy has clearly an impact on ASEAN's interest to integrate more resulting in a warm welcome for Commissioner Malmström and EU's forthcoming and long-standing trade agenda. Being a pleasant interlocutors, also on sensitive – values – issues, helped as well! ■



INNOVATION IN SWEDEN

A century ago, Sweden was among the poorest nations in Europe. It's a small country, home to just 0.13 per cent of the global population. Yet today, it is a world leader in innovation.

Millions of hearts around the world beat with the help of a pacemaker. Candles are lit with the help of safety matches. And innumerable lives have been saved with the help of the three-point seatbelt. These are just a few examples of Swedish innovations that have made a difference.



Swedish research concerning cardiovascular diseases and the care and treatment for patients with cardiovascular problems are among the best in the world. Swedish scientists and researchers have contributed to the change and development of treatment protocols that have become international standard. Credits: Melker Dahlstrand/imagebank.sweden.se

The Innovation Union Scoreboard 2016, an index published by the European Commission, ranks Sweden as the leading country for innovation among EU member states. Reasons for this include a historic tradition of inventors, a commitment to gender equality, and a strong belief in the individual. Close collaboration between research institutes and the private and public sectors is another key factor, setting the foundation for global Swedish companies like AstraZeneca, Ericsson, and Volvo.

Innovation is closely linked to research and development. Sweden is one of Europe's top three spenders in this area, investing 3.6 per cent of GDP in R&D in 2009. Compare this with the EU-wide target of 3 per cent GDP investment by 2020, and it's clear that Sweden is ahead of the game.

INSEAD Business School's Global Innovation Index 2015 ranks Sweden among global leaders. The index measures the degree to which countries have an infrastructure that enhances a creative environment and allows for innovation, as well as actual output. Sweden has strengths in terms of both output and input. Strong output is demonstrated in many new published research and technical papers, and many registered patents. Sweden is also seen to have a good input basis, with a stable political climate and relevant, high-quality education.

The Swedish government has chosen to focus strategic investments on three key areas: medicine and bioscience, technology, and climate.

Sweden is particularly strong in biotechnology. Pharmaceuticals are a key export, and Swedish medical innovations include the asthma medicines Bricanyl and Pulmicort; the growth hormone Genotropin; and the stomach ulcer drug Losec, one of the world's best-selling drugs.

Research is not confined to giants such as AstraZeneca and Pfizer-Pharmacia; many small biotechnology companies conduct their own research. A key area of interest is healthcare. Rapidly growing markets include medical devices such as imaging equipment, orthopaedic implants, dialysis equipment, heart-lung machines, and ECG equipment, as well as laboratory studies of medicines.

Microelectronics is another growth market. Sweden is at the forefront of research into silicon-based components, high-speed electronics, organic electronics, photonics and systems design. ■



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A SITUATIONER ON THE

**PHILIPPINE
MEDICAL
TOURISM
INDUSTRY**

As of 2016, the medical tourism industry is a \$45 - \$72 Billion market expected to grow at a rate of 25% year on year for the next 10 years. Each year, over 14 million medical tourists move around the world, accounting for 3-4% of the world's population. There are many reasons why people choose to seek medical treatment outside of their home country, the four main reasons being higher quality care and services, reduced costs, treatments that may not be approved in the home country, and finally some medical tourists seek to combine seeking medical treatment with a little vacation that includes visiting tourist destinations. According to the International Healthcare Research Center (IHRC), majority of medical tourists are married female caucasians who fall within the 45 – 54 age group.

The Philippines ranks 19th on the Medical Tourism Index, an index developed by the IHRC, as a country-based performance measure to assess

the attractiveness of a country as a medical tourism destination. It ranks 6th among its 8 Asian counterparts, followed only by Taiwan and China. The Medical Tourism Index ranks each country according to 3 categories: Destination Environment, Medical Tourism Industry, and Quality of Services and Facilities. In these three criteria, the Philippines ranks 19th, 16th, and 19th respectively out of a total of 41 surveyed destinations. Given these rankings, the Philippines is still considered as a developing destination, when compared to its regional peers, averaging at a total 100,000 medical tourists a year as of 2010, with this number expected to grow at a rate of 9% annually from 2012 – 2015. Thailand is ranked 19 and welcomes over 2 million medical tourists a year with an average economic contribution of US\$700 million.

According to a medical tourism study done by Visa entitled Mapping the Future of Global Travel and Tourism, “by 2025,

travelers aged 65+ will more than double their international travel to 180 million trips, accounting for one in right trips globally.” This is largely due to the increased spending power of older travelers, who are more focused on comfort and health than savings, opting to combine medical treatments with vacations. There is no doubt that there is demand and that this demand for medical tourism will only continue to grow. The real question now is that if the Philippines is truly ready to fully take advantage of this opportunity.

According to Ms. Jo Aguilar, Senior Vice President and Head of the Marketing Group and Industry Relations and Special Projects of St. Luke's Medical Center (SLMC), there are several key reasons why the Philippines is a prime medical tourism destination. Aside from the cost of medical procedures being lower than the United States by 30%-80%, and being a fraction of the amount that a patient would spend in Europe, the Philippines has highly competent, English-

speaking physicians and medical staff who are well-informed on the latest in medical technologies, techniques, and expertise. Patients also experience a shorter waiting time to receive medical care. These foundations produce good clinical outcomes and quality patient safety that ultimately makes the Philippines one of the better choices. St. Luke's is one of the leading Philippine hospitals that use state-of-the-art equipment and has done over 700 successful cases of robotic surgery. Its cathlab is also one of the best in the world. It is also the 3rd highest in Asia on transcatheter aortic valve replacement.

As one of the leading hospitals in providing medical tourism services in the Philippines, SLMC aims to provide a great patient experience at every step of the way: from when the patient comes in from the airport, to the transfer to the hospital, to the patient's trip back home. Combine all of this with the fact that Philippine Healthcare is known all over the world, with doctors not only observing and benchmarking with the best protocols, but also that Filipino medical care has a unique global brand as being compassionate and very caring thanks to OFWs in the medical field.

Although efforts are being made by the leading Philippine hospitals such as St. Luke's, the country continues to lag behind its regional peers when it comes to medical tourism. One reason is perhaps because of the fact that there hasn't been a consistently strong marketing push and government support until

relatively recently. The preparation and implementation of the Central Luzon Medical Tourism Roadmap & Strategic Development Plan was only scheduled for 2007 – 2027.

In the private sector, hospitals such as St. Luke's continue to innovate in providing medical tourists services that propel the Philippine medical tourism industry forward. This is evident in initiatives such as the establishment of the Philippine Medical and Dental office located in Guam, which connects St. Luke's to other hospitals around the Pacific region like Saipan, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Hawaii, and other U.S. territory islands. The Global Patient Management System of St. Luke's Medical Center is another initiative that was as put in place to facilitate the international patients' health care requirements. This system takes care of the patient from out-patient consult, to elective surgery, and facilitates their entire experience from admission to discharge from the hospital. This includes travel arrangements and hotel accommodations. Its International Patients Business Development is a dedicated group facilitating the medical tourists' healthcare needs for self-pay or insured individuals.

At Makati Medical Center (MMC), initiatives such as the MMM HealthHub Premier and an Executive Liaison Officer are available to tailor each experience to the patient's unique needs and to personally guide the patient through every step of the pre-planned medical itinerary. When asked regarding how they see

the future of medical tourism in the Philippines, Ms. Eliza Victoria, Communications Officer of MMC shares that "The ASEAN Integration presents challenges to the medical industry, but it also presents opportunities to further enhance our medical services to be competitive with our more medically advanced neighbors, but maintain the low cost of medical care. (Ultimately) increasing the Philippines' market share will have significant positive impact on our economy and the economic welfare of Filipinos."

Ms. Aguilar of St. Luke's shares, "We expect that the medical tourism industry in the Philippines will grow as our government strives to further the development of infrastructure. We are excited to put the Philippines on the map as one of the best medical tourism destinations in the world known for expertise and quality service, at par with the best hospitals from other countries."

In conclusion, while there is a wealth of opportunity in the medical tourism industry in the Philippines, there remains the challenge of bringing these medical tourism services closer to the country's tourist attractions, which are often away from major cities where major hospitals that have the capacity to provide world-class medical services are located. A stronger government push and coordinated and centralized efforts to propel the medical tourism industry forward is crucial if the Philippines truly intends to be a top medical tourism contender among its ASEAN peers. ■



The Medical Travel and Wellness Tourism Program (MTWTP; formerly known as the Philippine Medical Tourism Program) of the Department of Health is the focal office that represents the DOH in the TWG for Medical Travel and Wellness Tourism together with the DTI-BOI and the DOT, DFA and other partners concerned with promoting the Philippines as a medical tourism/medical travel and wellness tourism destination. Together with the Bureau of International Health Cooperation (BIHC), it has been identified as a key office for Trade in Health (Mode 2: Consumption Abroad) and has been a significant component of bilateral agreements with other countries.

The MTWTP is a multiagency, multisectoral initiative with the common goal of working towards making the Philippines a favored destination for medical travelers and wellness tourists who are seeking health care and/or wellness services. In 2016, Administrative Order 2016-0023 or the "National Policy Framework for the Implementation of the Medical Travel and Wellness Tourism" is the legal anchor to which the Program is basing its mandate to develop this sector. The DOH having the greatest stake in this area should take into account the overall impact of promoting this industry to have a healthy balance between the interests

of the private sector and not forgetting its commitment of attaining "All for Health towards Health for All" without prejudice to the poor. It is the dream of the program, to someday be able to utilize the benefits being gained by the private sector from this industry for the welfare of all Filipinos without bias towards the less privileged of our countrymen. This social equity issue has been the prime motivator to guide the program forward.

With the help of the Department of Tourism and the Board of Investments, a roadmap has been developed by a short term expert to guide the Technical Working Group on Medical Travel and Wellness Tourism into the next several years up to 2030.

The recommendations given by STE include 1. Creation of a governance/ leadership council that will be private sector-led with government fully supportive, 2. Development of a Country Brand uniquely Filipino and distinct from our regional competitors and 3. Data collection system which is real time and evidence based for improved policy formulation.

The Department of Health MTWTP differs from other tourism programs in the country primarily because of its focus on the improvement of the health care delivery system, ensuring that partner facilities are implementing quality care standards at all times and health regulation which is part of its mandate is a key component of this.



The DOH should continually develop its capabilities to guide, monitor and assess the integration of medical travel and wellness tourism into the Philippine Health System.

Since 10 years ago, the country has been slowly moving forward in its attempt to attain its vision of making the country a global leader in quality health care delivery for domestic and international patients. The JCI Hospitals (Asian Hospital, Makati Medical Center, St Lukes' Medical Center and The Medical City) and those health care facilities with international accreditation (Manila Doctors and the Heart Center) admitting or providing services to their local and foreign clientele has been doing their business mainly on their own volition with little or no guidance from government.

In 2014, with the combined efforts of the informal technical working group on MTWT, these hospitals were

provided technical assistance to get their act together and be part of a larger group in the spirit of "coopetition" (cooperative competition) to be able to show to the global community that the country is gradually but more judiciously laying out the framework to move this industry forward. Efforts were made to identify membership from stakeholders in working clusters that would look into the three pressing issues of branding, data and governance.

After the issuance of the DOH AO, the Program together with the Knowledge Management Information and Technology Service of this department has developed an International Medical Travel Reporting System for possible pilot testing with participating facilities. The country branding recently being addressed by the proposed hiring of an international consultant and the health promotions and marketing teams of the both public and private market

development group. The private sector led leadership council is still being formed out very thoughtfully to be sensitive to the needs of those who would eventually lead and be part of it in the long term.

Next steps and ways forward would be to pursue further engagements with industry players to address insurance portability, medical malpractice, niche market development, value chain of enhancing the patient experience and improved health outcomes and the availment of government incentives that could help advance the industry further. It is only through the combined efforts of all stakeholders can we reach the goal of "All for Health towards Health for All, ACHIEVE!" ■

EMMANUEL A. TIONGSON, MD, MPH
Program Manager
Medical Travel and Wellness Tourism Program



A young man from England, Jack Ellis, disembarks from a motorized outrigger boat that ferried him to this remote tropical island hideaway, over 6700 miles away from London's hectic, urban life.

Jack finds himself in the mouth of the pristine blue lagoon known to the locals as the Enchanted River and, as he is engulfed by its breath-taking view, came a tap on his shoulder from a total stranger with the brightest smile he had ever seen.

"The fish are eating and so should you, anak," exclaims the mother of two, handing him a delicacy. She spoke flawless English but the backpacker is intrigued by repeatedly being addressed, "anak." Jack just can't help asking the fisherman what it means. "Anak means, my child," the fisherman tells Jack, who is overcome by his discovery – When you're with Filipinos, you're with family.

This poignant scene is dramatized in the new television advertisement

by the Philippines' Department of Tourism (DOT) that premiered during the 65th Miss Universe held in Manila back in January this year. The 60-second ad spotlights on the world renowned Filipino hospitality that turns strangers into friends, and friends into families.

Asked about the DOT's choice of a British tourist to top bill the Philippines' latest tourism ad campaign, Tourism Secretary Wanda Corazon Tulfo-Teo pointed out the immense potential of

Europe as a 'high growth' source travel market of the country.

"Not everyone in Europe knows about the Philippines. Admittedly, there are still some who has very little idea where our country is or who the Filipinos are. But still we get a good volume of visitors from that side of the world. And here is one Brit backpacker who traveled all the way to Surigao del Sur in search of a paradise. His a-ha moment was very telling and worth the share. He found the Philippines not only for its natural beauty but for its people's characteristic charm as well," the tourism chief said.

According to Teo, the DOT is upbeat on European travel market, citing it will likely post continued and more resilient compounded annual growth rate in arrivals to the Philippines of 11 percent from 2016 through 2022. She likewise disclosed the DOT's plan to come out with more travel stories highlighting the Filipino's unique warm welcome.

"Our sights have long been set on the likes of Ellis, our European travel market. For one, arrivals from our source markets in greater part of Europe are looking rosy lately, with countries like Spain with 32,097 arrivals in 2016 or 32.94% from 24,144 visitors in 2015; France with 55,384

arrivals (21.71 percent); Germany with 86,363 chalking up 14.62 percent; and the UK, where our British bloke backpacker comes from, topping the chart with 173,299 visitors generated and all figuring prominently in our tourist radar," the tourism chief was quoted as saying.

Teo recalled some of the biggest Philippine contingents ever that she led of late, composed of top travel and tour operators, destination managers, and hotel and resort executives to make rounds at the International French Travel Mart (IFTM) Top Resa show held in Paris, France, the World Travel Mart (WTM) in Excel, London, and at the recently concluded International Tourismus Borse (ITB) in Berlin, Germany.

"If these figures were any indication, we are bloody gung ho in courting the European travel trade and business, one Brit, French or German at a time, to bring more arrivals and investments to the Philippines. And we are confident that in continuously establishing our presence in these travel trade events more and more tourists from this side of the world would consider the Philippines as their choice destination," Teo likewise referred to the continued support the DOT is getting from prime movers and stakeholders of the industry.

She added that the DOT also continues to push travel from Europe to the Philippines. "There is no reason not to choose the Philippines, as coming to the country has now become much easier with daily direct flights between London and Manila via our flag carrier Philippine Airlines," insinuating on the department's route development plans to strengthen the country's European connection through other gateways like the U.A.E., Hong Kong, Singapore, Doha, China, and other major hubs in Asia.

The former travel and tour guru concluded that Philippine tourism is at its most exciting times.

"Today, the country's tourism is a bustling business. The likes of Ellis now find the Philippines all too fun a place, and the Filipinos all too familiar a people. Tourism, hence, is now considered one of the most crucial propellers of the country's GDP. Foreign guests are staying longer; buying more and generating more than Php306 billion receipts; hence, generating more job opportunities to almost five million Filipinos or 12.5% of the total employment in the country, and creating business ventures as well." ■



Screengrab from DOT Philippines Facebook

PHILIPPINE HEALTHCARE AT A GLANCE

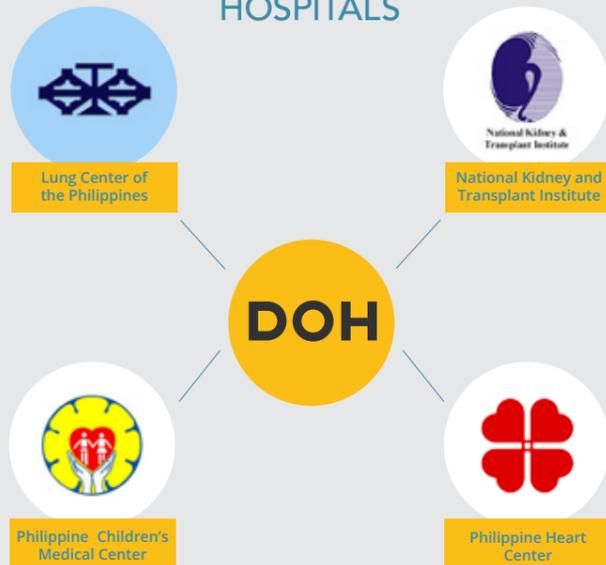


NUMBER OF HEALTH FACILITIES BY REGION



Private Hospital	Region	Public Hospital
249	NCR	569
18	CAR	931
118	Region I	1383
77	Region II	1569
290	Region III	2257
461	Region IV-A	2802
29	Region IV-B	1224
197	Region V	1386
35	Region VI	1404
50	Region VII	1771
34	Region VIII	1224
50	Region IX	965
120	Region X	1495
193	Region XI	1219
102	Region XII	1195
53	ARMM	738
23	Region XIII	816
20	NIR	1178

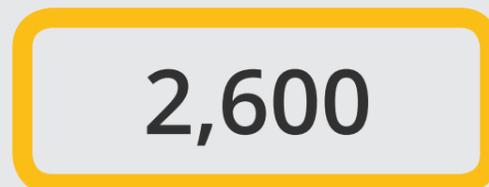
DOH ACCREDITED SPECIALTY HOSPITALS



RATIO OF DOCTOR TO PATIENT



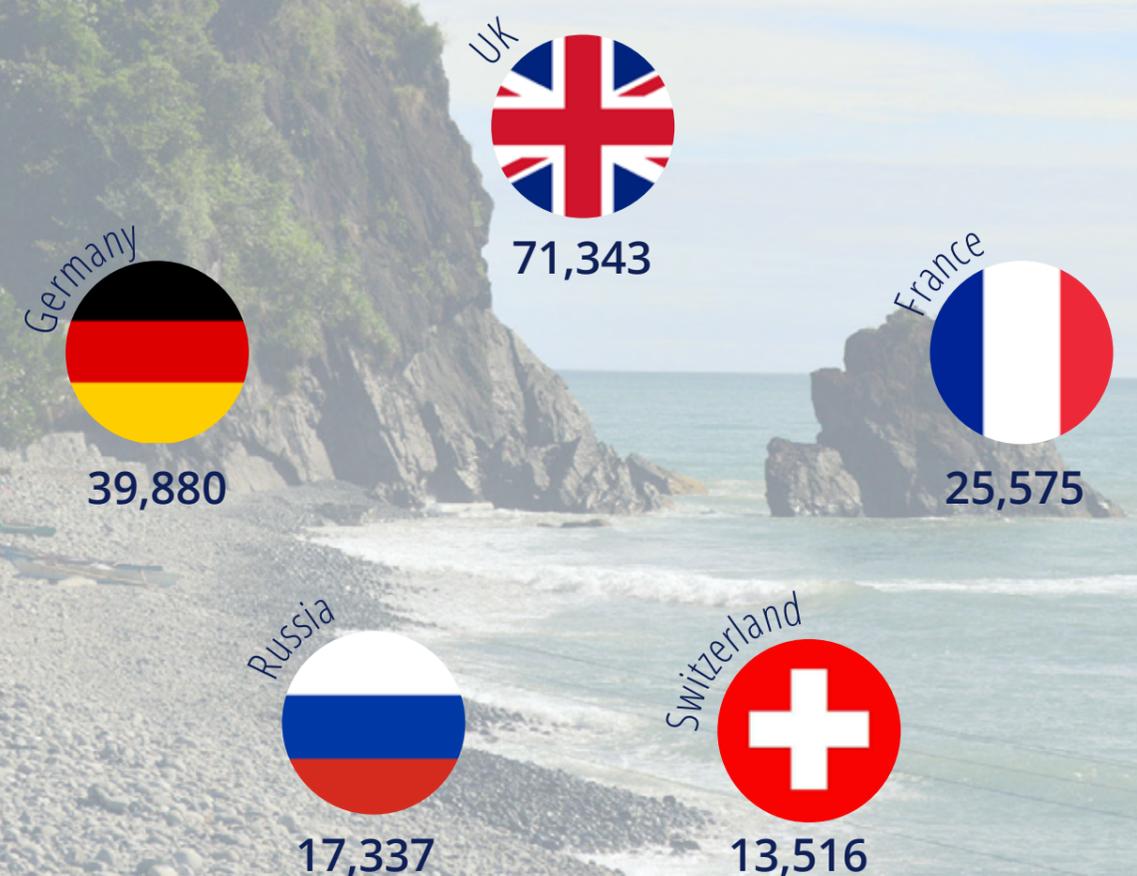
NUMBER OF NEW DOCTORS PER YEAR



PHILIPPINE TOURISM IN NUMBERS

Residence	January 2017	January 2016	January 2015
Asia	373,476	316,709	271,619
America	125,702	100,012	95,833
Europe	71,846	64,575	55,582
Australasia/Pacific	34,030	30,340	27,927
Middle East	7,802	6,919	6,624
Africa	742	598	431
Overseas Filipinos Workers	11,518	16,426	16,263
Others	6,523	6,679	4,870

TOP 5 EUROPEAN COUNTRIES THAT VISIT THE PHILIPPINES



ASEAN-EU Business Summit 2017 Roundup



This past 9th of March 2017, the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP), in cooperation with the EU-ASEAN Business Council (EUABC) and ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ASEAN BAC), hosted the 5th ASEAN-EU Business Summit at the Conrad Hotel in Pasay City, Philippines. This one-day summit was a hugely successful coming together of the European business community from Philippines as well as from around the region, to discuss pressing EU-ASEAN trade issues as well as further avenues for stronger cooperation.

First held in 2011 in Indonesia, the summit is designed to be a platform for business leaders, thought-leaders, and policymakers to interact and debate the key business and trade issues of the day. This year's summit was in celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the ASEAN and the 40th Anniversary of official EU-ASEAN relations and dialogue, making it a strategically important year, especially for the Philippines, who is currently negotiating its own Free Trade Agreement with the EU.

The day kicked off with welcome remarks from ECCP President Guenter Taus, who opened the day's program by highlighting that the year 2017 is a year of celebration and opportunities for the ASEAN. He was followed up EU Ambassador to the Philippines Franz Jessen who remarked that, aside from celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the ASEAN and the 40th Anniversary of official EU-ASEAN relations, that this year was also the 60th Anniversary of the



European Union. He also stressed that the ASEAN's agenda proved relevant for the day's discussions on the promotion of inclusive growth, integration of MSMEs, improving the ease of doing business, and supporting the integration of two economic blocs. Central Bank of the Philippines Governor Amado Tetangco Jr. followed the Ambassador and identified the three measures that are essential to the ASEAN's growth: the development of MSMEs, development of the digital economy, and advancing human resource development. Governor Tetangco stated that 80-90% of total establishments in the Philippines fall under the MSMEs category and that to create dynamic business environment, integration of the MSMEs into supply and value chains is needed as well as improving their access to financial support. Governor Tetangco was followed by Pru Life UK President & CEO Antonio De Rosas who stressed the need for a strong financial system and emphasized Pru Life UK's commitment to strengthen the industry through deepened cooperation with the public and private sector.

Attorney Tony Abad, CEO of law firm TradeAdvisors and anchor on Bloomberg TV Philippines, hosted the day's program. Throughout the day, five plenary sessions were held on various topics that revolved around issues, challenges, and opportunities surrounding the ASEAN.

The first panel, entitled Financing the ASEAN's Prosperity: Sustaining Economic Development and Protecting It, examined the financial structures in the ASEAN and how it might need to be amended in order to boost foreign investment, ease cross border money flows and transactions, and develop sustainable long term investment. This panel was immediately followed by a keynote address from Robert Bosch SEA President Martin Hayes on "Paving the way towards safe mobility in ASEAN", in which he underlined the need for sustainable solutions for road safety. Mr. Hayes then joined the second panel discussion for the day, which followed his keynote address, on "Developing a World Class Automotive Industry in ASEAN & Enhancing Road Safety". This panel focused on debating issues preventing the ASEAN from making advances in the automotive sector and the means of improving road safety.



The afternoon sessions of the summit began with a panel discussion on "CSR & the Role of Business in Achieving Sustainable Development" immediately followed by another panel on "Making the ASEAN More Competitive - Tackling NTBs and Boosting Regional Trade." After a brief coffee break, the highlight of the day was when European Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmström joined the summit.

During her keynote address, Commissioner Malmström shared her vision for deepening EU-ASEAN economic ties and stated that the EU is ready to build on its bilateral trade deals and to intensify work towards stronger EU-ASEAN ties through the establishment of a region-to-region free trade area. The Commissioner also stated that she finds the need to launch intensified talks to set parameters for future talks and that there should be joint expression for leaders. The Commissioner also went on to state that trade should be effective, transparent, and should always aim for a win-win situation which has already been proven in other agreements to be possible. Commissioner Malmström's address was followed by a speech from Philippine Trade Secretary Ramon Lopez, which highlighted the need for

government to formulate forward-thinking trade policies and encouraged business to actively participate in public consultations and dialogues. After both speeches, Commissioner Malmström and Secretary Lopez joined in a Q&A with the attendees of the summit. After the summit's conclusion, Commissioner Malmström gave her congratulations and relayed that she was very happy to see the involvement of, not only the government, but also of the business sectors in contributing to the success of EU-ASEAN relations.

This portion of the program was followed by one final panel discussion on "The AEC - How can Governments & Businesses Work Better Together - Bringing Economic Prosperity to All - Selling the AEC". The last discussion of the day was special one-on-one discussion and Q&A with Indonesian Trade Minister Enggartiasto Lukita, moderated by Attorney Tony Abad. Following this, the day's discussions ended with a closing keynote address from EU Ambassador to the ASEAN Francisco Fontan and closing remarks from EU-ABC Chairman Donald Kanak.

Overall, the ASEAN-EU Business Summit was a great success, receiving positive feedback from members of both the government and business community, and most importantly left a good impression on guest of honor Commissioner Malmström. Over 350 delegates joined in the day's discussion and the summit received significant media attention throughout the day.

The ASEAN-EU Business Summit was supported by Pru-Life, Turkish Airlines, JTI, SWIFT Financial Services, Bosch, DHL, Invest KL Malaysia with media partners ABS-CBN News Channel, Bloomberg TV Philippines, and Business Mirror. ■

ECCP, AMCHAM, KCCP, AND CAMCHAM HOST A JOINT MEMBERSHIP LUNCHEON MEETING WITH DICT SEC. SALALIMA

Last April 4, 2017, a Joint Membership Luncheon was held at the new World Makati Ballroom, organized by the European Chambers of Commerce, American Chambers of Commerce, Canadian Chambers of Commerce, and the Korean Chambers of Commerce. Companies from the private sector came together to hear from Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) Secretary Rodolfo Salalima.

Secretary Salalima discussed the need for improvement of infrastructure and plans regarding the ASEAN ICT Masterplan of 2015. These include the setting up of a cloud facility for government agencies, and improving and opening the broadband network services, considering the financial, technical, and legal conditions in providing these. The National Broadband Plan will be facilitating and institutionalizing public and telco services, in the goal of getting ASEAN to be recognized as an ICT hub. With all these, Salalima promises these developments will improve employment and increase productivity. ■



UPCOMING EVENTS



MAY 1-31, 2017

The European Food Festival is designed to promote European life style, cuisines and products coming from diverse European regions. This will give Philippine consumers the opportunity to savour the authentic cuisines of Europe that will be presented by selected European restaurants.



JUNE 14, 2017

The Water Challenge Forum highlights the challenges that the Philippines is facing as far as managing its water resources is concerned. It will water stakeholders to exchange information, discuss the priorities of the water sector and provide recommendations on how to address the water challenges.



JUNE 24, 2017

A fun event rather than a competitive tournament, the ECCP Football Cup gathers over 35 teams with 600 participants playing a two-division format - Mixed and Men's Division.



SEPTEMBER 22, 2017

Smart Agriculture Forum 2016 convenes a multi-sectoral dialogue among stakeholders of the agricultural sector in addressing food security concerns and possible market shocks of ASEAN integration by improving government programs and the use of innovative agricultural products, solutions, and systems highlighted at the exhibition.



OCTOBER 2017

In the midst of known issues and problems under infrastructure, the Congress intends to highlight the known available innovative solutions and products from the private sector

**FOR MORE DETAILS, CONTACT JRUNEZ@ECCP.COM
OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE WWW.ECCP.COM/EVENTLIST**

INSIDE THE ECCP MANILA: YOUNG PROFESSIONALS COMMITTEE



2017 is shaping up to be an exciting year for the ECCP Young Professionals Committee. This year, you'll see us materializing the initiatives that we set to build last year.

The YPC is proud to announce that we have partnered with Acceler8 CoWorking as a venue partner in bringing you some of our trademark events throughout the year. Anna Bigornia, YPC Chairwoman, comments that "We're very excited to partner with YPC this year on a more formal basis. We've been working together for a while and we're very grateful for this opportunity to host some of our events in partnership with them and to introduce our members to this amazing space."

Some of the events we'll be holding at Acceler8 will include our networking nights and revamped learnings sessions. The Jumpstart Learning Sessions is a set of 5 learning sessions which will include topics like Building Your Personal Brand, Crystalizing Your Business Idea, Pitching & Branding for Startups, Transitioning from Launch to Growth, and Networking for Dummies 2.0: Expanding Your Network.

You might recall the Mt. Pulag Climb we had late last year. First and foremost, we want to thank you for your overwhelming support for this initiative and we're happy to announce that we're looking to hold a follow-up climb within the first half of the year. However, we also wanted to make sure that we didn't just go up there to have a good time but also to create a long-term impact in terms of our support to the community. This year, the YPC has formalized this commitment to contribute to the community by signing a MOA signed with Klasrum ng Pag-asa. The partnership will work on providing long-term support by the way of providing school supplies, infrastructure support, and educational support to more than 500 students in the Mountain Province. Do expect more climbs and more initiatives with our partners in Mt. Pulag.

In the spirit of getting moving, the YPC also hosted its 2017 Kickoff & Networking Night this past March 29, 2017 at Acceler8. Close to 100 young professionals attended the event and connected over food and drinks provided by Don Papa Rum, Diageo, Bayani Brew, and Kuppa Roastery & Café and raffle prizes from Gouache and Bambike Ecotours. The event was great fun and provided us a chance to give members a sneak into what they can expect this year.

We hope to see you at our upcoming events. Here's what our year looks like so far:

- YPC Learning Session Jumpstart Track: Crystalizing Your Business Idea in June
- YPC Mount Pulag Climb in July
- Inter-Chamber Young Professionals Networking Night in July
- YPC Learning Session Jumpstart Track: Pitching & Branding for Startups in July
- YPC Learning Session Jumpstart Track: Transitioning from Launch to Growth in August
- YPC Learning Session Jumpstart Track: Networking for Dummies 2.0: Expanding Your Network in October
- ECCP YPC Member's Night in November

Should you be interested in any of the activities above or in signing up to become a member of the ECCP Young Professionals Committee, e-mail ypc@eccp.com.

See you soon! ■



INSIDE THE ECCP CEBU

MBM: PREPARING CEBU FOR MEDICAL TOURISM

BY CHARITY OH

In 2010, the Department of Tourism (DOT) projected that the Philippine Medical Tourism Industry will become a P3 billion industry by 2015. Executive Order 372 issued by then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo on 2005 identified the development of four key industries: specialty clinics; hospital services; spas and wellness centers; and retirement estates and services.

In its March 2017 monthly business meeting (MBM), ECCP partnered with Regus and gathered these four biggest sectors imperative for a cohesive Medical Tourism chain including the tour agencies, hospitality sector & Cebu's Health and Wellness Council (CHWC).

The 2-hour business meeting yielded that Cebu city is a melting pot of tourist destinations, world-class resorts and spas, internationally accredited medical institutions, and the warmth of multi-lingual locals. Conde Nast Traveler's Reader's Choice awarded Cebu as Asia's Top Island Destination in 2015. And it also ranked Cebu as 5th World's Best Island in 2016.

Vice Chairperson of CHWC Dr. Clarissa Pe is the resource person. She reiterated that the biggest hindrance to date is the lack of national infrastructure as far as travelling



is concerned. A deficit in direct flights, the state of the airports and high cost of refueling discourage many tourists from making Philippines their first choice. But new players in the horizon, such as University of Cebu Medical, Maayo Hospital, Manila-based ACE Medical, Qualimed from Ayala Group and retirement haven Medical City, the city is establishing its position in preparing for the emerging global medical landscape.

At the heart of Asia, and the gateway from the West to East—and vice versa—the Philippines is at a cusp of a potential big bang industry. And ECCP is advancing this sector forward. ■

WHEN LESS IS REALLY MORE

BY CHARITY OH

ECCP's Lean Management: When Less Is More seminar has been growing in popularity. It merited a successful second run last March 24.

There have been many business models that successfully launched empires but in the era of cradle-to-cradle consciousness, Lean Management assures in providing perfect value to the customer through a zero waste value creation process while striking the balance between profit and customer satisfaction.

As Maki Balali, the resource speaker, expounded, "Value is defined by the customer's needs for a specific product."

Balali has over 20 years of experience in the business sector practicing human resource and operations management and consultancy. He is also an MBA professor on operations and strategic management. He harnessed his expertise through the half-day seminar that included identifying the inventory, motion, transportation



and processing wastage in their companies.

The seminar was attended by top and middle managers, as well as fresh graduates as they launched into the corporate world.

As the Philippines ready itself to compete in the manufacturing supply chain, the lean management strategy will surely make more with less resources. ■



WATTS UP!

BY CHARITY OH

Energy Management Systems (EnMS) can sound like a foreign language to the uninitiated. ECCP, in support of its members and the local SMSE, conducted a whole-day workshop last March 17 on uncovering hidden savings and battling the rising expenditures by managing energy requirements.

Aptly named WATTS Up: A Primer on Energy Management, the workshop participants designed their own energy plans that can be implemented in institutions, as well as their individual homes.

Unsustainable practices and wasted energy create an unsustainable industry. But as the resource person, Engr. Jose Mari Bigornia an AEMAS (ASEAN Energy Management Scheme) Certified Energy Manager emphasized, "Energy is a controllable resource. Using it efficiently helps to increase performance and profits by reducing costs."

With Cebu and Manila having one of the highest electricity costs in Asia, ECCP has been advocating competitive Energy infrastructure, policies and systems that can drive inclusive growth in the country, as well as clean energy. ■



BAMBOO SERIES ON ITS FIFTH EDITION!

BY CHARITY OH

ECCP Visayas partnered with Green Architect Joy Onozawa in a mind shifting campaign for sustainable and green architecture through the Bamboo 101 & 102 workshops—already in its 5th run!

In line with the challenge of Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in their bamboo roadmap, ECCP held the 2-day workshop last March 2 to 3. The participants came as far as Davao del Sur, and even Nepal to take advantage of the bamboo solution offered by the training.

DTI, on its Philippine bamboo roadmap, is set to expand up to 80,000 hectares of bamboo plantations by 2040 to take advantage of this significant industry affecting not only the pulp and furniture sector but recently in construction as timber substitute, in architecture, textile and even medical corporations.

But Bamboo needs to shed its reputation in our country as a "poor man's timber" and an "inferior material" before it can be seen for all its potentials.

Arch. Onozawa laments: The trouble with working with bamboo is that we think we can design it like concrete...but bamboo is good at bending. The problems encountered by people working with bamboo is not the bamboo but with the design."

This is the mindset that ECCP is continuing to transform in the fertile Visayas and Mindanao regions.

The Bamboo Series is a part of the Design and Technology Fusion through Materials Innovation Project supported by the Department of Science and Technology Region 7 (DOST 7). ■

INSIDE THE ECCP DAVAO

ECCP SUPPORTS WOMEN SUMMIT IN DAVAO

Some of the country's powerful women business leaders gathered in Marco Polo Hotel, Davao last February 28, 2018 for the Women Summit.

ECCP's Women in Business Chair Sheila Lobien was one of the inspiring speakers during the whole-day event that aimed to inspire women to be successful in climbing the corporate ladder while staying top-notch in their personal life. ■



ECCP ATTENDS STAKEHOLDERS WORKSHOP FOR DAVAO CITY INFRA DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Why do we develop our infrastructure? One is to boost investment opportunities in the City, said one of the participants to the first Stakeholders Workshop for the Davao City Infrastructure Development Plan and Capacity Building Project last February 20, 2017 at National Economic and Development Authority Regional Office XI (NEDA RO XI), Davao City. Also, to come up with sector-specific development priorities, the local industry and business players including the European Chamber of Commerce, represented by the Mindanao Branch Officer, Ivy Rufin, were invited to the workshop. The stakeholders' workshop is first of the four in an 18-month period.

Spearheaded by NEDA with technical assistance from Japan International Cooperation Agency, one of the goals of the project is to develop an urban infrastructure development plan for Davao City with a priority project list, which will ultimately improve the city's competitiveness, safety from disasters, and general urban conditions of Davao City. The project list include Davao City Bypass Construction, Coastal Bypass Road, Public Transport Modernization, Mindanao Railway Project that would connect Tagum to Davao and Davao to Digos, Sasa Port Modernization, development, operations, and maintenance of Davao Airport, and the Davao-Samal Bridge Project among others.

In a local newspaper, JICA Philippines Project Team Leader Ken Kumazawa clarified that the project implementation, after all the feasibility studies and planning conducted, will be open to other foreign investors and will not be exclusive for Japan investors only. ■



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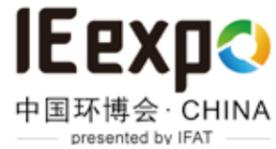
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INSIDE THE ECCP CALENDAR OF FAIRS



May 4 - 6, 2017
IE Expo China
Munich, Germany



May 9 - 12, 2017
Transport Logistic
Munich, Germany



May 16 - 19, 2017
Interzum
Cologne, Germany



May 22 - 26, 2017
Ligna
Hannover, Germany



May 31 - June 4 2017
Thaifex
Bangkok, Thailand



June 8 - 10, 2017
Interschutz
Hannover, Germany

July 6 - 8, 2017
ISPO Shanghai
Munich, Germany



August 22 - 26, 2017
Gamescom
Cologne, Germany



September 3 - 5, 2017
Spoga Gafa
Cologne, Germany



September 11 - 15, 2017
Drinktec
Munich, Germany



September 11 - 15, 2017
Oils + Fats
Munich, Germany



September 12 - 15, 2017
Furniture China
Shanghai, China



September 14 - 17, 2017
Kind+Jugend
Cologne, Germany



September 14 - 17, 2017
Expo Real
Munich, Germany



October 7 - 11, 2017
Anuga
Cologne, Germany



November 14 - 17, 2017
Productronica Munich
Munich, Germany



February 21 - 25, 2018
F.R.E.E.
Munich, Germany

WORKPLACE HEALTH TIPS

BY TRICIA ROJAS

For most of us, 8 hours of desk work leads to the inability to stay fit. But studies say, the less physical activities you engage in, the lesser health and calorie-burning benefits, and the more prone to diseases. So what's to squeeze a few minutes of physical activities to your 8-hour, 5-day work? If you want to keep moving towards a healthier lifestyle, here are four things to try out:



Perform desk exercises such as limb stretches, clenches, crunches, lunges, and leg lifts to release your body from stiff state and strengthen your core.



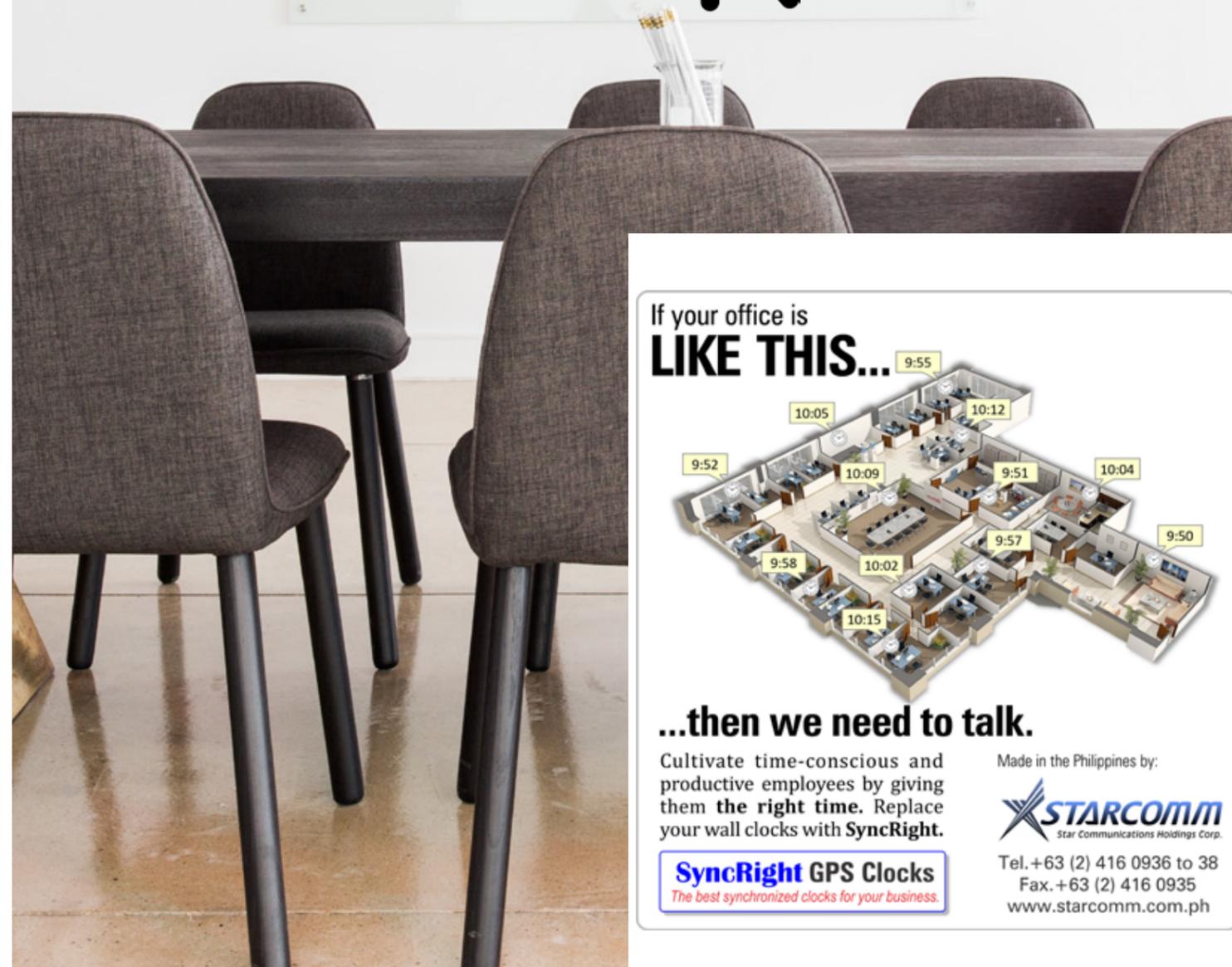
Take active breaks through spending a few minutes of your lunch time for a quick walk.



Be an active commuter by walking to work or biking, if your office is within the vicinity. If not, walk as much as you can on your way to work and on your way home.



Look for more creative ways to keep moving such as making visits to other employees' cubicles, organizing after-work physical activities, or even drastic ones like replacing your desk chair for an exercise ball.



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Negros Occidental:

Land of Sweet Surprises

MT. KANLAON

Negros Occidental has a diverse range of ecosystems ranging from tropical rainforests and coastal shores to wetlands, each one having something unique to offer. Mt Kanlaon dominates the landscape of Negros Island with its summit measuring 2,435 meters above sea level.



FLAME-TEMPLED BABBLER

Kieron Tan

Mambukal Resort, a provincial government-owned facility, serves as a gateway to Mt. Kanlaon Natural Park. It has cottages for overnight stay and day trips, warm sulfur dipping pools, recreational facilities, and a spa. Because of the combined efforts of the government and the private sector in protecting the roosting colony of endemic Golden-crowned flying foxes in the resort area, it was declared as a Bat Sanctuary in 2015.

Being part of the Sulu Sulawesi Seascape, the province's natural wonders include white sand beaches and diving sites teeming with marine life located in the network of protected areas in Cauayan, Sipalay, and Hinobaan.

Designated as the 7th Ramsar Site in the Philippines, the Negros Occidental Coastal Wetlands Conservation Area lies along 110 kilometers of coastline covering seven municipalities, namely Pulupandan, Valladolid, San Enrique, Pontevedra, Hinigaran, Binalbagan and Ilog. It hosts three globally threatened marine turtles, the critically endangered Hawksbill turtle, and the vulnerable Olive ridley turtle; the globally endangered Great Knot, Far Eastern Curlew, and Spotted Greenshank; and two vulnerable species including the Philippine duck and Chinese egret.

Leading the way in green technology, Negros Occidental is harnessing its renewable energy sources ranging from solar to hydro power. It has an existing bio-ethanol plant in San Carlos and solar power plants in the cities of Silay, San Carlos, Manapla, and Cadiz.

The province's diversification efforts and its priority agenda are focused on Food Security and Agricultural Productivity. It is seriously developing its rice and corn industries and positioning livestock as its second major industry, next to sugar. It is also targeting to be a major player in the world market for organic agriculture. It is also the top producing province of blue swimming crab in the country.



PUNTA BALLO BEACH, SIPALAY CITY

Also referred to as a major culinary destination, one can feast on fresh seafood and vegetable delicacies, local sweets such as piaya and napoleones, and much more. Several dishes are interestingly curated in the well-preserved ancestral houses in Silay, Manapla, and Talisay.

Negrenses with their endearing lilting accent are warm and friendly, its lush green fields of sugarcane and its sustainable diversification program, its rich culture and gustatory delight, and its endemic flora and fauna are sure to make a sweet surprise.



▲ Negrense Cuisine (clockwise)-Laswa, a healthy vegetable soup; Kinilaw or Ceviche; Kansi, a soup/stew of beef bones, meat and vegetables; and Chicken Inasal



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▲ Bacolod, the capital city of Negros Occidental, can be reached via an hour flight either from Manila, Davao, Cagayan de Oro, or Clark and 30 minutes from Cebu.



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Negros Occidental Tourism Division



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Summer signals the start of many out-of-town trips and well-deserved breaks with family and friends, often to bask under the sun while in pristine beaches or to chill out in cooler spots. With their refreshing vibes and relaxing environment, these go-to locations are sure to provide everyone momentary relief from the daily grind and busy streets of the metro.

With summer just around the corner, destination planning is underway and along with it, the best pit-stops for that essential stop-over. Pilipinas Shell ushers in the summer season by welcoming motorists to stop by at any station and make their trip more enjoyable through delightful customer offers.

Fueling up becomes more fun as customers get a Summer Journey Card and collect stamps for exciting prizes with every purchase of Shell V-Power Nitro+ fuels worth Php 1,000. Up for grabs are cool summer treats and discounted premium items with every visit, including a chance to win fuel and Shell Select vouchers, refreshments, or a trip for two to top luxury resorts in the country – Lagen Island El Nido, Shangri-la's Boracay, or Siargao Bleu.

Summer journeys are also made special when customers visit participating Shell Helix Service Centres & Shell Helix Oil Change+ outlets. For every oil change using Shell Helix Ultra, Shell Helix HX7, Shell Helix Diesel HX7, or Shell High Mileage, customers can avail of a foldable director's chair or a dry bag to complete their summer gear.

Motorcycle riders can also join in the fun with the exciting prizes that come with every purchase of Shell Advance products. Customers can get a free Shell Select or Shop Beverage Voucher for

every 2L purchase of Shell Advance Ultra or Shell Advance AX7.

Moreover, SM Advantage, SM Prestige, and BDO Rewards members can also earn points while Shell Citi Visa cardholders will get rebates with every purchase at Shell service stations.

To further enhance their summer getaway, refreshing and delicious snacks, beverages and meals await customers in Shell Select and Deli2Go outlets.

"Shell has been a partner of every Filipino's summer journey over the years. This time, we want to fuel their excitement during this season and create something that they can look forward to every time they visit Shell. We always want our customers to make the most out of their stops at our stations. This is why we're really excited to recharge their journeys through our different summer offers," says Anthony Yam, Pilipinas Shell's Vice President for Retail.

By providing quality fuel products and services to motorists around the world, Shell gained its foothold as a global leader in power and energy that pioneers next generation technology in developing new energy sources for a reliable energy mix, producing smarter products as well as promoting its smarter use, building smarter infrastructure and providing energy efficient engineering solutions that ultimately promote clean & efficient transport, sustainable mobility, energy efficiency and a new energy future to address the energy challenge.

This special summer offer is valid from March 1 to May 31, 2017 at participating Shell stations nationwide. Customers can visit the nearest Shell station or log on to shell.com.ph/rechargehissummer to know more about this offer. ■

INSIDE THE ECCP ADVOCACY UPDATES

Automotive Committee – 3 March

1. Excise Tax on Automotives and Petroleum products (HB 4774)

In the last congressional hearing for the proposed increase in excise tax for automotive products in 13 February, the Committee reported that the body called for submission of counterproposals. With this, CAMPI submitted their counterproposal presenting a 7-tier pricing for automotives.

In moving forward, the committee agreed to come up with a position paper that expresses support to CAMPI's counterproposal, and in addition, provide comparative rates with ASEAN countries in this regard, and highlight the industry's contribution in the country in terms of employment and GDP, among others. It was also agreed that the committee elevate and push for the fast tracking of the EU-PH Free Trade Agreement to lessen the excise tax burden.

2. European Lifestyle and Motor Show

With the success of the 2016 Euro Motor Show, the ECCP is organizing a European Lifestyle and Motor Show to take place on 5-7 May, which aims to further showcase the European culture and lifestyle. Preparations and next steps, and collaborations with European brands for this were discussed in this meeting.

3. Tax and Financial Services Committee Round Table Discussion – 17 March

The Committee received a presentation from Quisumbing Torres on Foreign Investments and Taxes, with a focus on the Bureau of Internal Revenue's Revenue Regulation 1-2017.

- Revenue Regulation 1-2017 was issued in January 2017, which calls for deemed denied provision of the previous issuance – Revenue Memorandum Circular (RMC) 54-2014
- RMC 54-2014 provided that if the VAT refund of credit claim is not acted upon by the Commissioner within 120 days upon submission of requirements, such application shall be automatically denied
- Under Section 112 (A) of the Tax Code, as amended, supporting files in claiming for tax credit or refund must be completed between a two-year period, and the Commissioner of his duly authorized representative, within 120 days from the date of submission of complete documents, or from the date of the filing of the application, should have decided on the claim.
- Under RR 1-2017, the following claims, even if filed before and pending upon the effectivity of RMC 54-2014, shall not be covered:
 - those filed beyond the two-year prescriptive period;
 - those denied in writing by the BIR;
 - those approved or granted fully or partially by the BIR; and
 - those already appealed to and pending with the Court of Tax Appeals (CTA), unless there is proof of withdrawal of the case filed before it

Discussions on Tax Implications of Foreign Sales Activities, and Tax Structuring of Investments were also made in this meeting. ■



ICT-BPM-KPM-Creative Industries Committee – 14 March

Mr. Erik Nielsen of Magsaysay Global Process Manager Inc. was elected chairperson and Mr. Cesar Tolentino as the co-chair respectively.

1. Data Privacy Act.

The committee urged the government to strictly implement and enforce the law to ensure that sensitive data is adequately protected. As the industry is data-intensive, it becomes vital to set up a strong data protection framework in the country. Furthermore, the committee will coordinately closely with the DICT and NPC officials to maintain and increase competitiveness and reputation of the industry which heavily relies on data protection.

2. National Cybersecurity Plan.

NordCham reported that they recently met with DICT Secretary Salima. He admitted that the project is huge contemplating the inadequate funding the department received. In addition to the discussion, a member advised that Philippine companies must expand their technological know-how on data security and business continuity. Another member suggested that local telcos should adopt EU standards on data security and business continuity.

3. National Broadband Plan.

The country suffers from existing anti-competitive practices such as duopoly, lack of interconnection and inadequate infrastructure. Telcos won't build infrastructure because it's

not profitable thus, the government plans to spend up to 200-billion pesos in putting up infrastructures to serve government and people in unserved or underserved areas. The committee recommended to promote competition instead by opening the market to foreign players which are financially capable in building infrastructure.

4. PH Creative Industries.

A productive dialogue on Philippine Creative Industry was led by Mr. Paolo Mercado and Game Developers Association of the Philippines (GDAP) representatives Mr. Alvin Juban and JD Abenaza highlighting the potential of the industry in the growth of the economy with the available pool of talents in the country. Mr. Mercado is currently spearheading the formation of the Creative Economy Council of the Philippines – a formal, unified and legal association which represents industries of Art Crafts, Audio Visuals, Design New Media, Performing Arts, Publishing, and Visual Arts. The vision of the council is for the Philippines to become number 5 in the region by 2030. The committee lauded his efforts and expressed support.

5. Complex Skills Development.

It is reported that according to a study, only 10 percent of the total number of graduates in Information Technology (IT) could write a descent code that could pass international standards. DICT representative reported that the agency is building a pool of prominent IT professionals to address related issues. ■

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Passi City, Iloilo

Convention Center Project
Legazpi City, Albay

Reclamation Project
Legazpi City, Albay

**Retirement Village cum
Business Resort**
Legazpi City, Albay

**Redevelopment of Gen San City
Central Public Market**
General Santos City

**Integrated Food Terminal
with Abattoirs**
General Santos City

Designs and Innovation Center
Freeport Area of Bataan
Bataan Province



**Construction / Operation of a
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Subic Bay Freeport Zone,
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Zambales

**Manufacturing, Electronics /
Semiconductor, ICT/BPO**
Clark Development Corporation
Clarkfield, Pampanga

**Coconut Water Production
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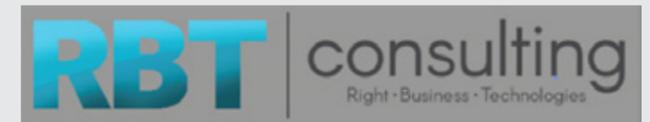


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Mundo Design + Build work from the ground-up. They transform lifeless spaces into iconic structures that are intelligently designed and cost-efficiently constructed.



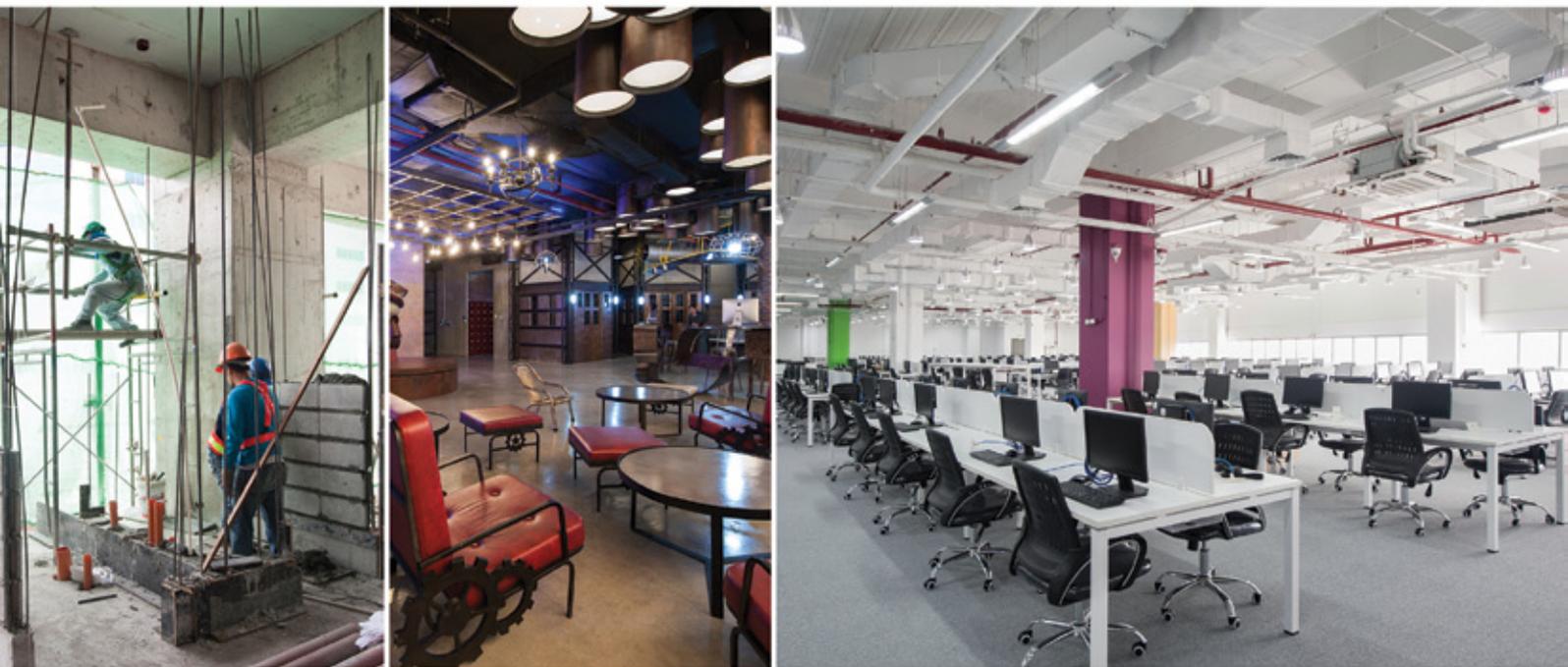
RBT Consulting is a Filipino company focused on Human Capital services.



The University of Cebu is an educational institution in Cebu City, Philippines founded in 1964, offering preschool, grade school, junior & senior high school, undergraduate degrees, and post-graduate degrees.

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