

# Philippine Rotary

THE MAGAZINE OF CHOICE

MAY 2020



**WE ARE  
ONE**

# WE ARE ONE

by the ROTARY CLUB OF MAKATI PREMIER DISTRICT

**S**uddenly the world stopped. Everyone had to stay at home to be safe. In the meantime, a brutal battle ensued in our hospitals as more people were getting sick with COVID-19. Our hospital frontliners not only had to save lives, but they also had to protect their own from this contagious virus.

Those who stayed home fought their own battles of lives disrupted. At the

onset of the quarantine, people needed information on what they can do. Will their children ever go back to school? As they stayed longer at home, how could they remain emotionally grounded and balanced?

For us at the Rotary Club of Makati Premier District, we asked ourselves: what does "People of Action" mean when we are all sitting at home? How can we help?

## A CRISIS BRINGS US TOGETHER

Driven only by the common desire to serve, we quickly mobilized ourselves as soon as the lockdown happened. We started by putting our funds together. We posted an appeal in our Viber group, and members responded immediately. Within two days, we had Php 400K of committed contributions. After that, what ensued was more members and their families giving in cash and kind joined in. Encouraged by the club's energy and enthusiasm to help frontliners, club member Dr. Hazel Zuellig and her family (husband David and sisters-in-law Susan and Joan) stepped up to contribute another PHP11.8M significantly. By the end of two weeks, we had close to Php 13.5M in cash and kind.

## HELPING THE FRONTLINERS

Club Membership Committee Head Dr. Jonathan Dizon initiated the drive for medical frontliner needs. Working with their medical colleagues in three COVID designated hospitals, he and Dr. Hazel Zuellig quickly identified the most critical PPEs and medical supplies needed and provided the right product specifications. Hazel and Jonathan also identified the hospitals that were most critical to serve. We added key regional and provincial hospitals that had sought assistance from ABS-CBN Foundation and a list of hospitals that Negros Occidental Governor Lacson, a batchmate of

**THANK YOU DONORS!**

over **115,000** PPE and medical supplies donated to **80** hospitals

**Donors:**  
 KatLim-Lleander, CarolMercadoTinReyes, HazelZuellig, ChariluPuno, JoyEjercito, StanleyTan, NikkiTang, IvySantos, LudethCruz, JoanZuellig, SusanZuellig, DavidZuellig, DeeChan, MerciPadolina, RobinaTan, JoseMariYupangco, MarissaBarreraSycip, RachelKellyDavis, RaviDaryanani, JoseAgcaoili, CorinaKalaw, LeahQuesada, MikeAdvani, JoniDizon, BabyCheng, ToniUrrutia, EricQuiason, SonieAguilar, MayMunoz, RickyTrinidad, PattiManuel-Go, RinaLopez-Bautista, RaissaHechanova-Posadas

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 #ListenTheCurve #EndCovid19

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many club members, provided. Altogether, we have 80 hospitals to serve.

Then came the task of sourcing and buying. Club President Nikki Tang and Service Committee Vice-Chair Baby Cheng sourced and urged suppliers to give us the best terms. At the same time, members Ravi Daryanani and Mukesh Advani helped us tap suppliers from the Filipino-Indian business chamber. Club Admin Chair Corina Kalaw, Community Service Head Patti Manuel-Go, members Dee Jalandoni-Chan and Rachel Kelly Davis also buckled down to do the work. Without a staff to help, they researched and contacted different suppliers. They ordered after they validated the right product specifications coming only from legitimate suppliers locally and abroad.

With the world demand far exceeding the supply of goods, the heart pulse-raising activities of virtual auctions ensued. Weighing the balance between risks and opportunities, the team made quick, informed decisions. The risks involved transacting with less known suppliers, requirements for larger volumes of products, and upfront full or partial payments. But the great opportunity was to secure much-needed PPEs and medical supplies to the hospitals urgently!

Just when we thought we had managed this hurdle, the next challenges began. With identified suppliers on hand and pre-payment checks ready to be issued, suppliers sometimes backed down in favor of more significant buyers. We had an order for 3,000 hazmat coveralls worth Php 3M but lost out to another buyer who came in with an order of 80,000 hazmat coveralls. We started at square one again!

This time with ingenuity and creativity, Patti tapped on a colleague in the garment industry who had transformed into manufacturing PPEs and hazmat coveralls. Dee found herself not just sourcing, but storing temporarily more than 100 gallons of flammable, rubbing alcohol at her house. Other challenges ensued. When the bank payment system was constrained, and suppliers needed payment, we stepped up to make personal payments and reconciled the differences later with our club bank account.

IPP and Club Trainer Raissa Hechanova-Posadas managed all aspects related to finance, budgeting, supplier payments, PPE allocations to the hospitals (in consultation with Dr. Hazel),

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80 hospitals served



Philippine Heart Center receives their aerosol boxes, protection for intubations



Rodriguez hospital staffers receive the mattresses for health care workers.

and logistics. If only you could see her excel spreadsheets and everyone's messages in the PPE suppliers Viber chat! The details and logic are impressive!

Service Committee Head Rina Lopez-Bautista focused her efforts on the importation of donations in kind. 2,000 PPEs were donated by Singapore-based Asia Philanthropy Circle Co-Chair Stanley Tan in conjunction with ABS-CBN Foundation. Her cost-benefit analysis in importing PPEs vs. local sourcing amidst shifting government regulations informed our decisions.

In the beginning, we had considered merely donating money to the hospitals. Now we understand why hospitals preferred for us to do this work, so they can concentrate on saving lives.

Our corporate experiences, business connections, and philanthropy partners helped us source and buy PPEs, work with banks, map delivery logistics, negotiate pricing, and collect more funds.

#### AN EARTH ANGEL

As goods started arriving from China and other local suppliers, Ivy Santos, our club's executive secretary, stepped up in a big way! Ivy volunteered her home as the delivery, packing, and distribution center. She counted, unpacked, sorted, and repacked more than 115,000 items into individual boxes for the 80 hospitals. Ivy made sure everything was disinfected and labeled them by hand. She had bought so much packing tape that she jokingly feared the store might think she was a kidnapper!

When asked why such generous gesture, she humbly said, "It's my contribution to the club's kind deeds. I'm doing it for the frontliners and my country."

She has a new nickname. We call her "Earth Angel."

#### 24/7 OPERATION

We delivered over 115,000 PPEs and medical supplies to 80 hospitals. There were four rounds of hospital deliveries since the items arrived on a staggered basis. We found another angel in Play360, one of our suppliers. They agreed to deliver all our supplies for free. It did not matter whether the goods were sourced from them or not. This kind deed has saved us

## PGH, we are one!



Thank you very much! We really need these ventilator tubes and ambu bag masks for our COVID positive patients as we as much as possible would love to assign one set to one patient only to avoid further transmission of the virus. Thank you! God bless you!



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Club of Makati Premier District

Philippine General Hospital receives their manual resuscitators and ventilator tubings

at least 320 Lalamove car trips! They also documented the deliveries with well-labeled photos that we used for social media communications.

In addition to the thousands of basic PPEs like masks and gowns, we brainstormed how else we could help. Dr. Hazel reported on the dire circumstances at critical care units. Immediately, we sourced and purchased medical supplies like ventilator tubings, ambu bags, suction machines, and closed suction catheters. We decided to also donate mattresses for health personnel who had to quarantine themselves after a 2-week duty.

We also collaborated with the Rotary Club of Makati to provide 3,800 face masks to 67 hospitals.

Our Public Image team accompanied all this work. Club PI Head Charilu Puno and PI committee members Leah Quesada, Toni Urrutia, and Rachel Kelly Davis tied all our communications under one theme, "We Are One," which Leah had conceptualized and articulated so well. Our communications embodied the collective spirit we all felt in our hearts.

Our club worked as a team 24/7. With members located in Manila, Los Angeles, and Monaco, we worked round the clock sourcing, buying, distributing, and communicating!

### HELPING THOSE WHO STAY AT HOME

In addition to helping frontliners, how can we help the people quarantined at home? How about the health care workers themselves and their families? How are they taking care of themselves? How can their children be in school while sitting in their "sala"? How can they mentally and emotionally cope with this disruption?

We harnessed the professional expertise of club members in medicine, mental wellness, and children online education, to name a few, to create videos to help people navigate their lives better during the lockdown. Through social media, these videos are shared and amplified to the general public. You will find two videos so far at our club YouTube channel:

1. What is COVID-19 and What You Can Do, by Dr. Hazel Zuellig, neurologist
2. 5 Ways to Stay Grounded in Uncertain Times, by Patti Manuel-Go, former family therapist

There are more in the hopper, which you will see in the next coming weeks.



*Ang pamumuan, healthcare workers at frontliners ng Ospital ng Paranaque - District II ay labos na nagpapasalamat sa inyong kabutihang-loob at donasyon. Dama po namin ang inyong suporta at malasakit. Sama-sama nating labanan ang COVID - 19 Pandemic. Pagpalain nawa tayo ng Poong Maykapal! Maraming maraming salamat po!*

Ospital ng Paranaque receives their face masks and aerosol boxes

**In Support of the Heroic Efforts of our Medical Frontliners**

**3,800 face shields for 67 hospitals donated**

**RC of Makati and RC of Makati Premier District stand as one, helping those who save lives.**

**We Are One.**  
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**Rotary** Club of Makati Premier District **Rotary** Club of Makati

Our Public Image team accompanied all this work. Charilu Puno, Leah Quesada, Toni Urrutia, and Rachel Kelly Davis tied all our communications under one theme, "We are One." Our communications embodied the common spirit we all felt in our hearts.



Governor Bubong Lacson of Negros Occidental receives RCMPD donations for his province's hospital

A CRISIS HAS BROUGHT US TOGETHER

# We are One.

COVID-19 HAS PHYSICALLY SEPARATED US BUT HAS UNITED US IN SPIRIT. WE STAY HOME TO SAVE LIVES. WE HELP TO PROTECT THOSE THAT SAVE LIVES. JOIN IN THE CIRCLE BY DONATING OR VOLUNTEERING.

WE ARE MORE CONNECTED THAN EVER. WE ARE ONE.



Take part by donating  
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- Filipino children's education can continue even while in quarantine. Our Service Committee Chairman and President of Knowledge Channel Foundation, Rina Lopez-Bautista, will guide you through Knowledge Channel's multimedia learning resources and their distribution points on-air, online, and offline. These videos and games have been developed and tailored according to the Department of Education curriculum competencies.

- How can leaders lead effectively in these uncertain times? Nikki Tang, Club President, will explain how the "3Cs: Communication, Collaboration, and Compromise" model works in everyday life.

## PEOPLE OF ACTION

The last few weeks have proven that even in physical isolation, we can be effective People of Action. The internet has enabled global collaborations amongst our club members, regardless of where they are. We utilize every time in 3 time zones. Our club's COVID activities resulted in this Rotary Year's highest member engagement, at 81%, with members giving time, effort, money, and in kind.

Collaborative efforts with organizations such as Play360 and ABS CBN Foundation allowed us to scale by extending our efforts to more hospitals and deliver with greater agility.

Being physically apart has not hindered any fellowship activities, either. We threw a surprise zoom party for Raissa's birthday. We all wore green, her favorite color. To add fun, we wore wigs and hats!

## MORE CONNECTED THAN EVER

The pandemic crisis has physically separated us. Ironically, it has connected us more than ever. Joined by a shared passion for serving others, we did what it took to help protect those who are saving other people's lives. As nations, we are as strong as the weakest link. And so, we also support those who are at home safely to stay informed and remain grounded.

Like most things in life, this too shall pass. One day, we will look back to this time and reminisce about the small victories we have won. But what will remain is the feeling of gratitude that we have been of service. In this fight against COVID, we are one!

The RCMPD team worked 24/7. With members located in Manila, Los Angeles, and Monaco, we worked round the clock sourcing, buying, distributing, and communicating!

# A frontliner from Monaco

by HAZEL ZUELLIG, MD

**W**hat do you call a frontliner who is a thousand miles away from the battlefield? I struggled with this thought from the very first day of this Covid-19 pandemic. I knew I was going to be stuck in Europe, minutes away from two of the most critical epicentres, Italy and

France. I knew returning home was not an option.

Yet from the social media posts of my medical school classmates, my colleagues in the clinic and in the hospital, I felt restless. While I was safely ensconced where I was, my fellow doctors were fighting a brutal, unseen enemy.

Many of them exposed and quarantined, like boxers badly beaten. But they would get up again after two weeks of quarantine and go charging back to the action. My teachers were dying, esteemed consultants who taught me while I was in training. Friends were begging for help and all I could offer were prayers and words of comfort.

The news reports brought back memories of my nearly ten years in the Philippine General Hospital. Seventy-two-hour duties, barely eating and sleeping. We would eat out of a cellophane bag using tongue depressors in place of spoons. And we would lie comfortably for short naps on top of three monoblock plastic chairs put together. We were battle-tested and prepared to save lives in emergency rooms and ICUs. Especially the poorest of the poor who could only pay us back with appreciative smiles.

I was ready for the fight with Covid. But it was physically impossible for me to be there where the action was.

Thankfully, my friends in the Rotary Club of Makati Premier gave me a recalibrated sense of purpose. We started to put together our personal funds and formulated our own battle plan. It helped that many of us had the corporate experience and the business connections to find PPE suppliers, deal with banks, negotiate deliveries, source more funds, haggle for discounts and put together quite an impressive operation to deliver much needed support for hospitals and healthcare workers all over the country. No one had to designate roles. It was as if we knew where



David and Hazel Zuellig are a strong tandem in planning and conducting medical missions, with David taking the blood pressure, and Dr. Hazel treating 300 patients a day. Free medicines are provided by the generous couple.

each one of us had to position ourselves, making use of our talents, working together virtually day and night to make things happen.

Pretty soon we were delivering thousands of masks and gowns, gloves and face shields, ventilator tubings and resuscitation bags. Boxes and boxes of precious medical aid for at least 70 hospitals. Even mattresses and paper towels for health personnel who were forced to sleep in the hospitals during the crisis. Ideas were flowing, each one encouraging everyone else with prayers and good words.

It is true that we are a small club.

And a young one at that. But who would have thought a medical crisis would define what we could do together. We had the biggest of hearts and we knew we were going to do what it took to help those who were putting their lives on the line to save the sick and the dying.

My patients with dementia always talk about the war and it is amusing to listen to their stories. But someday, when we all could be physically closer again, when we could snuggle and enjoy our glasses of wine, we would look back at what we did during the days of the Covid lockdown. And we, as RC-MPD members, would definitely look

back with fondness and pride of what we had accomplished.

I may be a soldier far, far away from the battlefield. But Rotary gave me the spirit to be part of it all.

This, definitely, will make for good memories someday.

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*When the Rotary Club of Makati Premier District gathered the members' resources to help the Philippine hospitals in the battle against Covid 19, Hazel Zuellig, her husband David, and her sisters-in-law based in Europe, contributed their personal funds totalling Euro 200,000 or P11.8 million to the club's fundraising efforts.*



## ODE TO COVID

Suddenly the world stopped.  
Everyone had to stay home,  
Away from other people.  
We learned how to cook  
We learned how to pray  
We learned how to be with ourselves  
To slow down and calm our thoughts.

We cried for the sick  
We mourned for the dead  
We quickly realized that our sole job was to stay healthy  
We practiced patience and kindness to ourselves  
Gratitude for the simple things we have  
We realized all the clichés that life is truly short  
And must be lived fully every minute.

We practiced letting go of desired outcomes  
We trusted not knowing  
We became hopeful.  
Life unfolded every day  
We felt a sense of renewal  
That amidst uncertain times, life could be good  
If we chose it to be so.

Love, grace, peace and happiness to everyone.

LEAH QUESADA

*Leah Quesada is a member of the Rotary Club of Makati Premier District. She lives in Los Angeles, California, and travels to the Philippines frequently. People worldwide are experiencing the lockdown. Leah wrote these reflections, trying to make sense of it all. Leah practices yoga and meditation daily. This photo was taken in Lobo, Batangas, on a weekend outing with other club member friends.*

## Hazel Zuellig, MD: A passion for helping others

IN HER younger days, Hazel Zuellig, MD, had already stood out from among her peers. She graduated valedictorian from the Manila Science High School, then breezed through college and medical school at the University of the Philippines (UP) and the Philippine General Hospital (PGH) through scholarships. While in school, she worked on the side by tutoring younger students in mathematics, chemistry and physics. Since UP-PGH caters to "the poorest of the poor," Dr. Hazel often used her personal baon (pocket money) to buy medicines for the indigent patients.

She is an accomplished neurologist and an expert in epilepsy. Her added areas of expertise are healthcare management and, lately, public health. Dr. Hazel was president of the Philippine League Against Epilepsy, training rural doctors and encouraging them to establish epilepsy clinics in far-flung areas. She is frequently invited to lecture in local and international medical conferences. She held clinic at the Cardinal Santos Medical Center for 17 years, during which she established a foundation which financially supported the operation and treatment of brain and spine tumors of underprivileged patients. She is a professor in Public Health at the University of the Philippines and is also engaged in the Duke-NUS Medical School in Singapore. With an MBA degree, she used to lecture at the Asian Institute of Management (AIM) at which the Stephen Zuellig Graduate School of Development Management in 2014, named in honor of her husband David's father in 2014.

Some 15 years ago, an expatriate insurance executive from the Zuellig Group arranged a blind date between David Zuellig and Dr. Hazel Paragua, thinking they would make a good pair since he was "too serious" and she "worked too much." Over an elegant dinner at Le Soufflé, the two conversed until the restaurant closed. She was impressed that David, unlike other men of affluence, held a deep interest in helping the poor and improving health conditions in the Philippines.

David, who was born in Manila, was based in Singapore and would visit his family's Philippine businesses once every month, and so he and Dr. Hazel would meet during these rare Philippine visits. Their conversations centered on their advocacies

and philanthropic activities – which kept the interest strong. After ten years of such conversations, they decided to get married. In 2014, the marriage took place in a small, private ceremony in Singapore. The bride wore an elegant lace gown, and the groom wore barong tagalog designed by Filipino couturiers. A few days later, they celebrated with family, friends and colleagues at The Peninsula Manila, at which the late Washington SyCip offered a toast, and Lea Salonga sang accompanied by the ABS-CBN Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of Gerard Salonga.

In 2017, David and Dr. Hazel established the Centre Médicale Internationale (CMI), the country's first and only VIP concierge medical clinic. Located at the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Bonifacio Global City, the facility's beautiful lobby with floor-to-ceiling glass windows welcomes patients – who do not wait in line, are served snacks, and given access to medical experts from a wide range of specializations. She says, "It's the healthcare equivalent of a premium private Swiss bank."

Dr. Hazel is a relatively new Rotarian. She was invited to join the Rotary Club of Makati Premier District (RCMPD) by the club's Charter President, Carol Mercado, with whom she walks the runway as one of the Philippines' Best Dressed Women. Within the same week, RCMPD's President-elect Rina Lopez, a co-member in the Singapore-based Asia Philanthropy Circle, also invited her. She likes RCMPD because, although it is a small club, it is composed of hard-working members who truly respond to the call of service.

Dr. Hazel is presently prevented from leaving her home in Monaco by the spread of COVID 19. The couple moved there last December because David has always wanted to live again in Europe where he spent part of his childhood. His family spent many memorable years in the south of France and his father, Dr. Stephen Zuellig, held the position of Honorary Consul General of the Philippines to Monaco for more than three decades. Now, it is David's turn to be nominated to the position. Had they been caught by COVID 19 in the Philippines, Dr. Hazel would certainly be among the front-liners in the hospitals.

From Monaco, Dr. Hazel closely coordinates with her former colleagues in UP-PGH



Top: David and Hazel Zuellig personally conduct medical missions in Vigan, Ilocos Sur. Above: David and Hazel Zuellig own Centre Medicale Internationale, the country's first VIP medical clinic in Bonifacio Global City, providing specialized preventive care and personalized medical services that suit individual needs.

to inquire what hospitals need in the fight against COVID 19. She relays these information to her club, and together, she and the club members source these PPEs and vital medical supplies and distributes them to more than 80 hospitals all over the country. In this manner, her club is able to deliver the hospitals' genuine needs.

David and Dr. Hazel shuttle between their three homes – in Monaco, Singapore and the Philippines. She says, "We are not drinking people. We are not party people. We work." Between David's business activities and Dr. Hazel's professional commitments, the couple continues to enjoy a common passion for helping others.

– SUE STA. MARIA