The Biology Teachers Association (BIOTA) of the Philippines holds its 47th Annual National Convention and Scientific Sessions on April 12-14, 2012 at the Ateneo de Naga University, Camarines Sur. This year’s convention theme is “21st CENTURY BIOLOGY: PEDAGOGY AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH”, which aims to focus on recent innovations in the teaching–learning process, and the science inquiry approach method, i.e., learning biology the way scientists do. Convention activities include plenary sessions, seminars, workshops, demonstrations, hands-on activities, poster discussions, educational trip to Consocep Mountain Resort and exhibits of local and commercial products. Aside from the formal convention, a fellowship night and testimonial dinner have been planned. These activities are designed to: a) Provide opportunities for participants to identify relevant and effective content and teaching strategies that reflect current trends in the biology teaching-learning and research processes; b) Identify effective ways by which contemporary teaching approaches and practical research methods can be integrated into the Biology course at the different educational levels; c) Stress the responsibility of biology teachers and researchers in promoting interest, understanding, and appreciation of the biological sciences; and d) Provide a venue for teachers to share experiences and to enhance their knowledge on research works, teaching innovations, and other creative activities that may help achieve excellence in Biology education and research in the country.

Invited speakers include Dr. Filma G. Brawner (Director of the Department of Science and Technology’s Science Education Institute), Dr. Yolanda S. Quijano (Undersecretary for Programs & Projects of the Department of Education), Dr. Rodolfo S. Treyes (Head, Biology Group of the UP Diliman National Institute for Science and Mathematics Education Development or UPNISMED), Dr. Damasa M. Macandog (Director of the Institute of Biological Sciences, UP Los Baños), Dr. Victor S. Sollman (of the Resource Management Unit, Bicol University), and Dr. Emelina G. Regis (Director of the Institute for Environmental Conservation and Research, Ateneo de Naga University).

Ateneo de Naga University, the only Jesuit School in the Bicol Region, gladly welcomes the participants to this year's convention in its 7 hectare, well landscaped Bagumbayan campus. Existing since 1940, the ADNU, has become the premiere university in Southern Luzon. In 1991, the Department of Education placed Ateneo in its list of 18 excellent Universities and Colleges. ADNU, under the dynamic leadership of its new president, Fr. Primitivo E. Viray, S.J. and ably assisted by its faculty and staff, generously opens its doors to BIOTA convention delegates.

ADNU faculty members, Dr. Michael A. Clores and Ms. Aurora Azurin-Condé, are this year’s tireless and efficient Convention Chair and Co-Chair, respectively. They are actively supported by the officers and members of the BIOTA Bicol Chapter, one of the oldest and productive chapters of the BIOTA. Among the chapter’s most loyal and still active members are Dr. Josephine G. Arcilla (former national BIOTA vice president and board member) and Prof. Socorro Perez del Castillo (a long time national BIOTA board member, and former chapter president).

All delegates are invited to join the educational trip to explore and enjoy Naga, the 3rd oldest City in the Philippines, which is also the center of trade in Region V and is one of the most visited cities because of its accessibility to many tourist destinations. The world famous Camsur Watersports Complex, the Bicol Museum in the University of Nueva Caceres, the Holy Rosary Mino Seminary Historical Museum, and the Naga City People’s mall are among the must-see places in the vicinity. The local government of Naga entices visitors to witness its “Naga SMILES” (See Meet Invest Live Experience Study) to the World” program. The Bicol chapter hopes to showcase the city’s natural beauty and culture through an educational field trip to the Consocep Mountain Resort in Pili, Cam Sur on Day 2 of the convention. The resort, which can be reached through hiking a 2,000-step trail, provides an impressive mountain view, numerous waterfalls with different species of butterflies and a deer farm. It is the perfect getaway from the hustle and bustle of city life with a cool, Baguio-like atmosphere.

Welcome all active members, special guests, and loyal partners of BIOTA to this year’s annual convention!
The University of the Philippines, Institute of Biology - Diliman, Quezon City, hosted the annual convention on April 7-9, 2011. This was attended by 250 participants from all over the country. There were 6 plenary sessions, 39 posters, 18 clustered lectures, 18 clustered workshops, and 5 finalists to the Young Biologists Forum.

Dr. Perry S. Ong, Director, UP Diliman, Institute of Biology welcomed the participants and guests. Keynote address was delivered by Dr. Catherine Q. Castaneda, NCR Director, Commission on Higher Education. Dr. Merle C. Tan, Director, UP-NISMED, talked on the Challenges of the 21st Century: Implication for the K-12 Science Education Program. Dr. Marco Nemesio E. Montano, professor of UP Diliman - Marine Science Institute updated the participants on Marine Biotechnology in Seaweeds. Dr. Raul V. Destura, Director UP Manila – Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology, stressed the role of microbial genomics in Health and Biotechnology.

Dr. Mel Greg Concepcion of Xavier School provided different perspectives on the Utilization and Implementation of Understanding by Design in a Private Sectarian School in Metro Manila. Dr. Antonio A. Alfonso, Senior Scientist, Philippine Rice Research Institute spoke on Betacarotene – dense Rice as an Effective and Sustainable Food – based Strategy to Address Vitamin A Deficiency. Dr. Windell L. Rivera, a multi-awarded scientist of UP Institute of Biology enlightened his fellow BIOTAnns on the recent advances in the studies of Entamoeba histolytica and Trichomonas vaginalis infection in the Philippines. He also provided an overview of recent technologies that have applications for the detection and genetic characterization of protozoans and outlined the principles by which some of the technologies operate.

**AWARDS**

**Poster**
The best poster paper was awarded to Jickerson P. Lado of Genetics and Molecular Biology Division, Institute of Biological Sciences, College of Arts and Sciences, University of the Philippines Los Baños.

**Lecture**
Jayson G. Chavez and Dr. Grecebio Jonathan D. Alejandro of the Graduate School, College of Science and Research Center for the Natural Sciences, University of Santo Tomas garnered the best lecture award for "Establishment of the Genus Rothmania Thunb. (Rubiaceae) in the Philippine Flora: A Proposal of Three Novel Combinations Based from Bayesian Phylogenetics of Two CPDNA Markers".

**Workshop**
The best workshop was won by Jae Joseph Russell B. Rodriguez of the Institute of Biological Sciences, University of the Philippines Los Baños for his demonstration on the "Solving Problems in Human Genetics : The Pedigree Analysis."

**Young Biologists Forum 2011**

Em-Em B. Lamento of the Department of Biological Sciences, College of Science, University of Santo Tomas, won first place in the Young Biologists Forum Award for his research "The Inhibitory Potential of Sesquiterpene Lactones Isolated from Tithonia diversifolia (Hemsl.) A Gray on the Angiogenic Activity in the Chorioallantoic Membrane of a Duck Embryo".

Katrina Mae Concepcion Rendon of the Department of Biological Sciences, College of Science, University of Santo Tomas, for her research “Adam33 V4(CG) as a Genetic Marker for Allergic Asthma in a Selected Filipino Population” as second place winner.

Sherlina Shay Salazar of the Department of Biological Sciences, College of Science, University of Santo Tomas won third place for her research, “Root Elongation and Seed Germination Toxicity of Gold Nanoparticles (AUNP) on Phaseolus radiate, Brassica juncea and Lactuca sativa”.

**Field Trip**
The participants had a very informative and meaningful visit to the “Myth of the Human Body Exhibit” at the Neobabylon Building, 9 Bayani Road, Taguig City. Over 300 specimens were on display with one tour guide per room, explaining the displayed mummified specimens. The Myth of the Human Body came to Manila after a 10-year stint in Korea and used a modern mummification process similar to plastination, invented by anatomist Gunther von Hagens.

Aside from full-body specimens, which have eyelashes, pubic hair, and nails, Myth of the Human Body displayed normal organs and their diseased counterparts: smoker’s lungs stained black by tar, ulcerated stomachs, fatty livers, and sclerotic hearts. A fraction of visitors to the Museum supposedly swear off drinking and smoking after viewing the organs exhibited.
Election of Officers

The BIOTA FEU Chapter, held a general meeting on Dec. 16, 2011 at Far Eastern University Manila. Election and Oath Taking of chapter officers was led by Dr. Glorina P. Orozco, BIOTA Secretary. The duly elected officers are:

President: Prof. Alfredo R. Alvarez
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Annual Biology Research Colloquium

The BIOTA FEU Chapter in cooperation with the FEU Bio MedTech Society sponsored the FEU’s Annual Biology Research Colloquium held last 20 February 2012 at the Far Eastern University, Manila. The research colloquium provided a venue where Bioresearch students’ finalists defended their theses. The ceremonial ribbon-cutting was done by FEU President, Dr. Lydia B. Echauz; IAS Dean, Dr. Myrna Quinto & VPAA Dr. Ma. Teresa Tinio. The judges for the research competition included FEU Research Director, Dr. Richard Pulmones, and Dr. Sonia Jacinto (UPD) and Dr. Grecebio Alejandro (UST) of the BIOTA Board.

Best Thesis was awarded to the paper “Synergetic Effects between Antibiotics (Penicillin and Oxacillin) & Plant Extract (Piper nigrum seeds & Allium sativum bulb) against Staphylococcus aureus”, authored by R.A Iday, Z.G Arevalo & TH Kim with the thesis “Isolation, Characterization & Lead Toxicity Assay Using Bioluminescent Bacteria”.

Also, the FEU Chapter in cooperation with the Biology Faculty Club sponsored the symposium “Towards the Constructivists’ Framework in HIV Education” held on Feb. 22, 2012 at FEU, Manila. The speaker was Dr. Supachai Basit, Vice President of the Phil. Society for Microbiology & Dean of Emilio Aguinaldo College.

The BIOTA national board conducted a teacher training program at the University of San Carlos (USC) Talamban Campus, Cebu City on October 17 – 22, 2011. The 6-day teacher training included lectures and hands-on activities that covered different topics in biology and conducting research in the biological sciences.

Aiming to enrich participants’ research capability, Dr. Jessamyn Marie O. Yazon (Pres., BIOTA Phil., Inc.) delivered a lecture on “Some Updates in Biological Science Research” and Dr. Edna A. Amparado (UP Diliman Institute of Biology or UPD-IB) conducted a lecture-workshop on “Animal Development and the Use of Animal Models in Research” on the first day of the training. On the 2nd day, Dr. John Donnie A. Ramos (UST- Dept. Biological Sciences) lectured on “Genetics” and “Bioinformatics”. Prof. Rosie S. Madulid (UST- Dept. Biological Sciences) conducted a workshop on “Plant Morphoanatomy” and “Plant Identification & Preservation” on the 3rd day. The lecturers on the 4th day were Dr. Julie B. Otadoy (USC) and Dr. Windell L. Rivera (UPD-IB). Dr. Otadoy talked on “Marine Ecology” and Dr. W. Rivera on “Microbiology”. Dr. Sonia D. Jacinto (UPD-IB) and Dr. Thucydides L. Salunga (Miriam College) lectured on “Cell Biology” and “Animal Physiology”, respectively, on the 5th day. On the 6th day, Dr. Ma Josefa R. Pante (UPD-Marine Science Institute) gave a lecture on “Biostatistics”. The Dept. of Biology of USC, through Dr. Filipina B. Sotto hosted the training.

The participants, valuing the experiences gained at the training, looked forward to sharing their learning with their peers and to applying their new knowledge in their respective classrooms.
The Easter College, Baguio City hosted the 2nd BIOTA CAR Regional convention on May 6-7, 2011 with a theme, “Instilling Environmental Wellness Through biology Education”. The keynote speaker for the convention was Dr. Catherine Lagunzad, past president of BIOTA. The plenary speakers were: Dr. Teodora Balangcod, of the University of the Philippines, Baguio who talked on Wellness in Biodiversity; Engr. Raul Cubangay, of EMB, DENR CAR on “Wellness in Land resources through Solid Waste Management”; Ms Vida Ragma, Baguio Water District on “Wellness in Water Sources through Waste Water Management”.

Day 1 was devoted to lecture sessions but Day 2 was a fun-filled activity for the participants who went to different places in Baguio that help in maintaining Environmental wellness: Cabuyao, Mt. Santo Tomas, where the participants had to hike and explore the beauty of the place and see a water reservoir of the city. The participants also visited the Sanitary Waste Water Treatment Plant at Sanitary Camp, Baguio City where Engineer Vick Ferrer of the CEPMO, explained how the city is treating waste water before it goes to the bodies of water. A trip to Loakan was also held where an eco-composting system was presented by Mr. Fred Fangonon, a private individual who has been promoting his invention for composting.

Indeed, the 2 day activity was both mentally and physically exhausting but was really educational. Everyone left the 2-day convention with a challenge to help maintain wellness of the ecosystem.

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THE BIOTA UPLB CHAPTER

Genetics Seminar/Workshop for Secondary School Mentors in UPLB

The BIOTA and the UPLB Institute of Biological Sciences conducted a seminar -workshop on “Enhancing Biology Teaching: Solving Problems in Genetics” on February 11, 2012. Some 43 science and technology II teachers from Laguna attended. Dr. Merlyn S. Mendioro (UPLB-IBS) introduced the dichotomous branching method in solving dihybrid cross.
The Asian Association for Biology Educators (AABE) will hold its 24th Biennial Conference on December 5-9, 2012 in the University of the Philippines National Institute for Science and Mathematics Education Development (UPNISMED), Diliman, Quezon City. The theme of the conference is "The Century of Biology: Towards Transformative Education". All BIOTAns are invited to attend and present a paper. Contact joyazon.pshs@gmail.com for details.

BIOTA Makati Chapter in Action

The BIOTA Makati Chapter in cooperation with the Fort Bonifacio High School Master Teachers Association & Biology Club of Makati conducted an outreach in Brgy. West Rembo, Makati City on March 10, 2012. The activity was attended by 120 underprivileged children of the barangay and their parents. Activities include lectures on Waste Management, Healthy Living, Natural Disaster Risk Prevention and Management, Story telling and Gift Giving. The activity ended with happiness in everyone’s heart. Proverbs 22:6 says, “Train a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it”.

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ANNOUNCEMENT

24th AABE Conference

The Asian Association for Biology Educators (AABE) will hold its 24th Biennial Conference on December 5-9, 2012 in the University of the Philippines National Institute for Science and Mathematics Education Development (UPNISMED), Diliman, Quezon City. The theme of the conference is “The Century of Biology: Towards Transformative Education”. All BIOTAns are invited to attend and present a paper. Contact joyazon.pshs@gmail.com for details.

3rd CAR Regional Convention

Theme: Current Trends in Biology Education
University of Baguio
2 - 4 May 2012
Contact Dr. Narcelles (angelusjean@yahoo.com) for details.

BE AN ACTIVE BIOTA MEMBER

Accomplishments and projects of BIOTA Chapters and individual BIOTANS, as well as requests for assistance to organize a local chapter, may be submitted to:

GLORINA P. OROZCO, PH.D.
BIOTA Secretary
email: orozcogp@yahoo.com

To receive announcements on BIOTA national or chapter activities, and on other organizational conferences or seminar—workshops join the BIOTA e–group by sending an email message to:

BIOTA_Philippines - subscribe@yahoogroups.com
Welcome to the newest BIOTA Life Members!

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- **Noel Capulong (>>>)
- **Analinda M. Fajardo** (UP Los Baños)
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- **Vanessa Vargas (>>>>>>>)
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CONTINUING CALL FOR MANUSCRIPT SUBMISSION:

The editorial staff of The Philippine BIOTA invites the submission of electronic copies of articles. Articles submitted for consideration are PRIMARY and ORIGINAL papers. Review articles may occasionally be accepted. In all cases, papers should present NEW and previously UNPUBLISHED materials on any topic relevant to Biology, Science Education, or Biology Research. Manuscripts are selected for publication according to the editorial assessment of their relevance, and the reviews of two or three independent referees who are chosen for their expertise. Contributors may suggest reviewers. After a peer review process, the editorial board will decide whether an article is accepted for publication. Manuscripts cannot be submitted for publication elsewhere, unless they are not accepted by The Philippine BIOTA.

For details on preparation of manuscripts and submission guidelines, contact the Editor:

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