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Bacolod Adventist Medical Center

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On December 8, 1966, the hospital was inaugurated and given the official name of Bacolod Sanitarium and Hospital with Dr. Willis Gentry Dick as its first medical director. The name of the hospital was changed to Bacolod Adventist

Medical Center (BAMC) in 2004. Adventist Medical Center-Bacolod is owned and operated by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, specifically under the Central Philippine Union Conference.¹

Development that Led to the Establishment of Adventist Medical Center-Bacolod

Dr. Willis Gentry Dick was assigned as the Medical Secretary for the Philippine Mission headquarters in Pasay City. As a visionary doctor with the intent to extend the healing ministry of Christ to far flung areas of the Philippine Islands, Dr. Dick and his wife Eleanor toured the Visayas in 1951 with the intent of establishing a hospital in Southern Philippines. They found Bacolod as an ideal place to set up a hospital and recommended it to the South Philippine Union.² Four years later, in 1955 the South Philippine Union (Visayas and Mindanao), started to put aside funds for the hospital building coming from various people from all over Visayas and Mindanao.³

To pave the way for the medical missionary work in the area, the Executive Committee of the South Philippine Union passed an action on February 1958 to open a medical clinic in Bacolod prior to the building of the hospital with the appointment of Dr. Eliseo Verde as the Physician In-charge. With the approval of the Far Eastern Division,⁴ a 2.5 hectare lot in Taculing Bacolod (the current location of the hospital) was purchased on February 18, 1958 from Mr. Ramon Ramos, to realize the dream of establishing a hospital to extend the medical missionary work in Western Visayas.⁶

In the middle of 1961,⁷ the medical clinic was finally opened tracing the humble beginnings of the Seventh-day Adventist medical missionary work in Bacolod to a small rented clinic at the PhilamLife Building, Lacson St. Bacolod City, run by Dr. Gideon Mercurio, where Dr. Eliseo Verde conducted patient consultations and provided medical treatment.⁸ On fire for the medical missionary work, plans were drafted for the building of the hospital and were approved by Pedro M. Mayuga, the country's director of Medical Service, on April 29, 1962.⁹

By the end of 1961, raising funds for the hospital building proved to be a challenge. They had only raised PhP164,000 and money was needed to be raised to build the hospital. Dr. Eliseo Verde at the forefront as the Physician-In-Charge of the Project, with the support of the South Philippine Union and the local mission, by the grace of God, were able to gather more financial support from both Seventh-day Adventists and fellow Christian friends to build the hospital.¹⁰

Founding of Adventist Medical Center-Bacolod

By faith, the leaders decided to move forward with the construction despite meager funds. On August 29, 1962 the groundbreaking ceremony was conducted with the presence of Dr. and Mrs. Ralph F. Waddell (Far Eastern Division Medical Secretary), Valeriano Gatuslao (Governor, Province of Negros Occidental), Teofisto M. Cordova (Mayor of the City of Bacolod) and other city officials and Union and Mission representatives.¹¹

There was great need for the medical missionary work to start in the small city of Bacolod, with a population of 150,000, that the birth of a pioneering Adventist hospital was warmly welcomed by the people. Two months after the groundbreaking ceremony on November 5, 1962, the actual construction of the building began under the supervision of engineer Tony Habaradas. For 18 months, the work was carried out carefully, however by the end of 18 months, having spent exactly 367,479 Pesos, the work had to be temporarily put on hold with only the shell of the building up as the funds had already been depleted.¹² The pioneers prayed hard and worked hard—hand in hand with God to establish the hospital and by God's grace, funds came as needed.

Early in 1965 Dr. Willis Dick came back from Penang Malaysia and joined Dr. Eliseo Verde and his wife Dr. Rachel Jamandre Verde, an anesthesiologist in the downtown clinic, and together they were a great team used by God to establish the hospital.¹³

Tragically, on June 2, 1965, Dr. Willis Dick's daughter, Lora, was killed in an accident in Niems, France.² The tragedy caused Dr. Dick and his wife to go to France to collect the ashes of their daughter to be brought to Kansas for burial. According to Dr. Dick in his letter to BAMC, this gave him the opportunity to look for equipment in the United States of America. With the insurance fund that the General Conference gave them for their daughter's death, they were able to buy a new Castle operating table and light for the operating room and used equipment from second hand shops in Los Angeles. Other equipment and furnishings came as a gift from various donors through the dedication of Dr. Willis Dick. As he recalls, "There was no basement too musty or attic too dusty that I would not crawl around in to find things for Bacolod. We were fortunate that SAWS, now ADRA could ship goods to Bacolod without cost to us. I could take refrigerators with burned out compressors and Mr. Asher Tanamal and others would saw them apart, rewind the motors and weld the closed compressors back again and we had refrigeration!"¹⁴

The first nurse, Divinia Tingzon came from Manila in the summer of 1966 and worked to get patient gowns and surgical packs ready for patients. Dr. Dick recalls that he could hear her singing while working, "be very sure, be very sure, your anchor holds and grips the solid Rock. That Rock is Jesus."² Truly, the pioneers worked hand in hand with God to establish the medical missionary work in Bacolod.

The First Patient

Before the building was completed and fully functional, the daughter of the barber of Dr. Dick, who was a local in the area, was dying of diarrhea. The man wanted to bring his child to the unfinished hospital. Dr. Dick told his nurse Divinia Tingzon that they were not yet ready, but she said, "Yes we are! We will not need the unfinished kitchen because the baby will feed by IV!"¹⁵ Despite the fact that the permit for occupancy was not yet released, Dr. Dick was forced to treat the baby. Due to the difficulty in transportation, he felt that the patient will not be able to reach the nearest hospital alive. Thus Dr. Dick ordered the nurse to prepare a crib and they did all the measures needed to keep the baby alive. A 24-hour vigil was carried out, with lots of prayers by the Negros Mission workers and the union office in Cebu for the patient to live. God wrought a miracle that day on September 8, 1966 and thus the healing ministry of Christ was extended to the hospital's first patient before the it was completely functional.

Foundation Day

It took 8,000 sacks of cement, 40,000 hollow blocks, enough steel to reach Bacolod to Kabankalan (103 Kilometers), and 40,000 glazed tiles to build the hospital. Through the faithfulness of God working on the hearts of benefactors and friends, the construction was completed by November 1966.

Finally on December 8, 1966, the hospital was inaugurated and given the official name of Bacolod Sanitarium and Hospital with Dr. Willis Gentry Dick as its first medical director.¹⁶ In its infancy, the newly opened Bacolod Sanitarium and Hospital offered the following services when it opened, 50 regular care beds, 10 bassinets with fully equipped Maternity Department, Pharmacy, Physiotherapy Department, Diagnostic Department/X-ray, Operating room with major and minor surgery suites, Delivery room, Laboratory, Sanitary Kitchen, Dental Department, and Out-patient Department.¹⁷

Pioneer Medical Missionaries

Excitement was in the air as the pioneer medical missionaries extended Christ's healing ministry for the first time in a hospital setup in Bacolod. Patients from all over the nearby villages came seeking health care and the first missionaries cheerfully served the community. Among the first missionaries were: Divinia A. Tingzon, the first nurse and first Nursing Director; Asher Barrientos, who manned the Laboratory and X-ray; Elizabeth T. Dalaguan, the first Pharmacist; Fanny Lapojapo-Junsay, who ensured healthy meals were served by the Dietary Department; Jethro G. Tanamal, the maintenance man who assisted Drs. Dick and Verde in the completion of the hospital construction and in refurbishing second-hand medical equipment; Gerarda Albaladejo, making sure fresh linens were available for the patients; and her husband, Teodorico D. Albaladejo, who ensured the safety of the hospital and its workers. Since telephones were not yet available in the area at that time, he also served as the message man, delivering messages to the doctor's quarters and calling them during emergencies. The first few nurses were Rebecca G. Andrada, Sol Aguirre, Tessie D. Bayot, Mila V. Estipona and Ruth Fabruada.¹⁸

In the forefront, the doctors rallied to deliver quality healthcare with the limited resources. Among the first physicians who served with Dr. Dick were: Dr. Eliseo T. Verde, who was appointed as the Director of Surgery, assisted Dr. Dick in every aspect of operation along with his wife, Dr. Rachel Jamandre Verde, who was called upon anytime anesthesia was needed for surgical and OB Cases; Dr. Welda S. Jamandre, who took care of OB/Gyn & Pediatric patients; Dr. Francisco Tugade, a dentist that managed the Dental Department. With them were also volunteer physicians and visiting physicians: Dr. William Richli, who focused on thyroid patients and who did a lot of innovation and tinkering of old machines to get them working, and Dr. Ulyses Carbajal, an EENT specialist who came once a month to see patients.¹⁹

With the Clinical and ancillary needs taken care of, the hospital hired employees to handle the hospital's finances. Winston J. Lim was employed as the first business manager /treasurer with Joel Dalaguan and Diego Rafanan as staff in the business office. All the while the financial work was handled by Mrs. Jamandre who volunteered to help. Secretaries Charity R. Lim, Billie Cuizon, Nori Jarlega were also employed along with the rest of the workers: David C. Cerbo, Lilia C. Colacion, Consolacion A. Daprosa, Editha O. Ejercitado, Bellie C. Ganzon, Carolyn R. Huilar, Estelita P. Pereira, Jimmy A. Quijote.²⁰

The Management Board

The Management Board was composed of the following missionaries who envisioned to extend the medical missionary work in Bacolod: E. A. Capobres, A. E. Gibb, H. B. Ludden, E. L. Longway, O. C. Aguirre, B. R. Arit, F. M. Arrogante, W. G. Dick, M. U. Donato, F. T. Geslani, T. V. Gulfan, W. D. Jemson, M. G. Jereos, D. G. Jucaban, P. M. Lopez, H. V. Maninantan, L. E. Montana, J. R. Obregon, A. Z. Roda, A. C. Segovia, M. G. Yorac, M. M. Zamora²¹

The Local Board

The Local Board was composed of the following missionaries: Chairman, Eugenio A. Capobres; Vice Chairman,

Moises G. Jereos; Secretary, Willis G. Dick; Members: Florencio M. Arrogante, O. C. Aguirre, Eliseo T. Verde and Divinia A. Tingzon.²²

Difficult Times

The medical missionary work in Bacolod was met with difficult times. Due to the lack of funds when it started its operation, there were months when the funds were not enough to pay the wages of the workers on time. By God's providence, moved with compassion for the workers and their families, Dr. Verde provided fish from his own farm and other staple food so that the workers could have food on their tables.²³

Carrying out the healing ministry was difficult with the lack of much needed equipment. During those times Dr. Richli, who volunteered as a thyroid surgeon during the pioneering days, was very resourceful. With the lack of equipment to sterilize instruments and with the lack of necessary instruments in the operating room, Dr. Richli spent much of his time fixing old machines and ensured that the hospital had a working autoclave, baby incubator and other OR instruments.²⁴

While the building of the hospital was still underway, the first church service was held across the street from the hospital in a tent with make shift benches from crates.³ When the hospital opened, the church services were held in the hospital lobby. After a year in 1967, the small company of missionary hospital workers transferred their worship services to the temporary auditorium across the street built by the Negros Mission for the first Negros Mission General Constituency Meeting in April that year. It was in this makeshift building that the company was organized as a church on January 27, 1969 by Pastor Diego Sabrine who was then serving as the mission president.²⁵

The meager resources and the lack of basic facilities did not dampen the hearts of the pioneers. They pressed on cheerfully carrying out the original mission of the sanitarium:

To honor God by providing excellent medical care and health programs through Christian love and care, incorporating Christian principles and values into all our decision, actions, and services;

To demonstrate the biblical principles of health by ministering to the physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional needs of each patient, regardless of sex, race, or creed;

To foster the professional, personal, and spiritual aspects of all personnel;

To maintain financial viability which will enable the hospital to achieve its mission.²⁶

Despite the setbacks, the pioneer workers pressed on to work and God blessed their efforts. The community around began to appreciate the work done in the hospital and in turn many heard about the Seventh-day Adventist faith because of its ministry.

History and Milestones of Adventist Medical Center-Bacolod

In 1969, Dr. Willis G. Dick returned to the United States of America for permanent return, and he was succeeded by Dr. Ronald Spalding in 1970 who stayed for a year to help the hospital.²⁷ On October 4 of that year, the church board acted for the construction of a church building for the newly organized church. In 1971, Dr. Francisco T. Geslani who was the medical director of H.W. Miller Hospital in Cebu (now Adventist Hospital-Cebu) moved with his family to Bacolod to answer the call to be the first Filipino medical director of Bacolod Sanitarium and Hospital. Dr. Francisco T. Geslani was president and medical director of BAMC for 18 years, from 1971-1989.²⁸ During his term, the Medical Internship Training Program was accredited in 1972, and as a visionary leader, he supported the move to build Bacolod Adventist Center that would serve as the Hospital Church, spearheaded by the chaplain of the sanitarium, Pastor Hector Gayares Sr., which still stands today across the street from the hospital.²⁹

In order to accommodate more patients, the hospital opened a new wing on November 30, 1975 to expand the bed capacity from 50 to 100 beds.³⁰ Besides physical plant growth, in 1977, the 3-year surgical residency training program was accredited by the Philippine College of Surgeons, Medical Technology Interns from University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos affiliated in the hospital. A PBX telephone system was acquired to improve communications within and outside of the hospital. The following year, the Colegio de San Agustin School of Nursing sent students to the hospital for clinical exposure and in the same year, a 500 MA X-ray was procured. To further improve the services and extend Christ with compassion, immediately the following year a 200 MA portable X-ray was purchased for patients who cannot be transported to the X-ray department.

Further expansions were also initiated such as the building of the OB/surgical wing, the two delivery rooms and the Nursery which were inaugurated in April 17, 1982.³¹

The following year, in 1983, the Laundry building was constructed and the Operating Room renovated to serve the community better. Around this time, the cane sugar (primary crop of Negros Province) price plummeted to an all-time low, and the Hospital felt the pangs of poverty all around. Despite this, God had been faithful. In 1988, the Esther Geslani Hall, a dormitory for lady nursing students of Central Philippine Adventist College with a capacity to house 100 students was inaugurated,³² and in 1989, the Cafeteria was expanded and renovated, and the first Ultrasound

Machine and the first automated Chemical Analyzer (Kodak Ektachem DT System) was procured³³

Dr. Geslani was recognized in the *Who's Who in the World* for the year 1989-1990 for being a competent surgeon, a seasoned administrator, builder of healthcare institutions, and mentor of Adventist leaders serving in various parts of the world with his unselfish missionary spirit.

Mr. Rufo G. Gasapo, who was then the vice president for finance succeeded Dr. Geslani as president in 1990 at the age of 39. He was named the youngest Adventist hospital president in the Philippines at that time³⁴ By God's blessing, the Hospital continued to grow. In 1991, the first cardiac monitor and first Cardiolife TEC-7300 portable defibrillator were purchased for critically ill patients who need cardiac monitoring and resuscitation. In the same year as a 25th anniversary gift to the hospital, the employees joined hands to cement the driveway and the parking area in front of the hospital. The male employees mixed, poured and levelled cement while the ladies cooked traditional Filipino porridge and snacks for all of the employees who were working at night as a gift to the Hospital³⁵ According to Mrs. Mely Nita Ordinario, one of the workers who helped, everyone pitched in to help with a cheerful vibe, happy to give a gift for God and the Hospital. The project was finished just in time for the 25th anniversary of the hospital on December 8, 1991.³⁶

In 1992, the first 3-bed ICU was inaugurated,³⁷ and in 1993, through the philanthropic efforts of Esther T. Geslani, the Francisco T. Geslani Hall, a dormitory for male nursing students was also inaugurated³⁸ To address the need for specialized care, a Hemodialysis unit was opened in 1996 with only 1 machine—the first series model of GAMBRO³⁹ During the same year, the first year residency training program in Internal Medicine was accredited, wrapping up the year with the hospital's 30th anniversary on December 8, 1996.⁴⁰

To expand the services of the hospital to further extend the healing ministry of Christ, in 1999 the 2 story expansion housing the Maternity Unit, 6 bed Fely Ponce-Mina Intensive Care Unit, the Emergency and Out-patient Department, Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation complex and Hemodialysis complex was inaugurated⁴¹ Then in 2003, the Pediatric Residency Training program was accredited and at the same time, the ground breaking for the East Wing expansion was carried out.⁴²

On September 12, 2004, the 2 story east wing expansion was inaugurated expanding the hospital capacity from 100 to 120 regular care beds establishing Patient Care Unit 3⁴³ along with 7 physician's clinics, a guest room and a new Physical Rehabilitation unit.⁴⁴ Together with the inauguration, the name of the hospital was changed from Bacolod Sanitarium and Hospital to Bacolod Adventist Medical Center (BAMC).⁴⁵

With the thrust for quality management system, BAMC partnered with the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) TUV-SUD and in March 2005, it was certified as compliant to the standards of ISO 9001:2000. The partnership has brought about considerable growth and improvement in the management system of the Hospital. Since then, yearly monitoring and recertification by TUV SUD and version upgrading has been conducted, the current one being ISO 9001:2015.⁴⁶

Among the growth spurts that came subsequently was the setting up of the first Pediatric Ambulatory Services in Western Visayas in 2006, this was established to address the need of Pediatric patients to feel safe in a child-friendly out-patient set up.^{11, 24}

With the management's vision for growth for the next 10 years, the Hospital's mission and vision were revisited and revised by a core team composed of management key officers, the changes were approved by the administrative council on October 20, 2009, changing the Vision to "BAMC as the Premier centre of Healthcare in Negros Province" and the Mission to: "Extending the Healing Ministry of Christ to everyone."⁴⁷ Adding to it the BAMC values, wherein B stands for Beneficent, A for Accountable, M for Masterful and C for Christ-Centered. The team also added the 7 guiding principles:

1. I will live my life as a reflection of Christ's Character,
2. I will reach for the highest standard my work
3. I will provide services that my customer say are excellent
4. I will treat others with the same compassion and respect that I would want my family to experience
5. I will take personal responsibility to ensure the safety of Patients, co-workers and all others I come into contact with at work
6. I will use all resources responsibly and efficiently
7. I will be honest in all things.⁴⁸

To embrace the new mission and vision and to inculcate the guiding principles in the worker's daily dealings of Extending Christ, the Mission, Vision, Values and seven guiding principles are recited every morning after each devotional for the workers.

As healthcare has evolved, and with the increased efficacy of resuscitating patients who go into cardiac arrest, the number of patients needing intensive care and monitoring rose increasingly, thus the management set out to expand the ICU, with the help of God, the Fely Ponce-Mina Intensive Care Unit was inaugurated on January 31, 2010, the new Intensive Care Unit expanded the ICU capacity from 6 beds to 12 beds, on the same day, the new Computed Tomography Machine, expanded Laboratory and the donated ambulance was inaugurated. The area of the 6 bed ICU was converted as rooms in the Maternity unit, increasing the number of private rooms for mothers.⁴⁹

To bring hope and healing to indigent patients on December 17, 2010, the Securities and Exchange commission approved and granted the application for a non-stock non-profit foundation—The Pool of Bethesda Foundation. Adapting the name from the story found in John 5:1-11, where a paralytic man has been waiting beside the pool for

38 years hoping to be healed to no avail, until Jesus in His compassion, came and healed him. As the backdrop of one of the greatest stories of Christ's compassion and love for mankind, the Pool of Bethesda has come to represent selfless healing and compassion. Inspired with this story, the Pool of Bethesda Foundation was established to bring hope and healing to people in need. With a social work system in place, the donations to POBF are conscientiously utilized and afforded to eligible indigent patients.⁵⁰

A Donor Appreciation program was also developed to nurture the cause of the foundation and in effect the program has become the channel of blessing to the beneficiaries who desperately need assistance. In this program, the donor is also dubbed as a HEALER.⁵¹

Rufo Gasapo served the Hospital as president for 20 years, from 1990-2010;⁵² then early in 2011, he was called to be the director of Adventist Healthcare-Systems Asia by the Southern-Asia Pacific Division.⁵³ The senior vice-president for Medical Affairs, Dr. Hector G. Gayares Jr. then accepted the call to be BAMC's 5th president and medical director.⁵⁴ He was installed as president on February 23, 2011.

To provide access to healthy food to those who would want to start a healthy lifestyle in the northern part of the city, the hospital through its DISPAGG corporation established a food stall "Veggie bites" in the Robinsons Mall-Bacolod Foodcourt.

Moreover, to cater to the trend of healthcare for service specialization, On February 1, 2012, the Heart-Pulmonary and Chemotherapy Unit was inaugurated.⁵⁵ The Unit offers cardio and pulmonary function tests, outpatient blood transfusion and chemotherapy, 2d-echo, and other related services.⁵⁶

On May 6, 2012 the Hospital Board acted to change the name of the Hospital, and on October 15 2012, the Hospital's articles of incorporation was amended in the Department of Finance Securities and Exchange commission, whereas the registered name would be changed to read "Adventist Medical Center-Bacolod Inc."⁵⁷ from the registered "Bacolod Adventist Inc."⁵⁸ The public name of the hospital or its brand however reads Adventist Medical Center-Bacolod, without the "Inc."

With the increased occupancy rate, the demand for more patient rooms became more frequent each day. Friction could be felt during admissions and in securing rooms for patients because of its unavailability. In God's providence, means to expand the hospital were provided. With donations and bank loans, the hospital leadership pushed forward toward the building of a 6 story building that would increase the bed capacity from 120 to 170. And in God's time, the ground breaking ceremony for the West building was carried out on December 8, 2011⁵⁹

The Hospital is passionate to bring about the best possible care for the patients. As awareness that breastfeeding and skin to skin contact, rooming in of newborn babies is vital for the well being of the babies and their mothers and ensures a healthier generation, the hospital complied with the standards of the Department of Health to reverse current medical practices in the field of Maternal and Child Care. The transition involved quality orientation of all the staff and putting in place of a lot of policies to ensure the standards are in place. The Hospital lodged its application to be a certified Mother-Baby friendly Hospital and it was awarded the certificate of commitment by the Regional Center for Health Development under the Department of Health Western Visayas Region on April 19, 2012 after a thorough surveillance by the accreditors from the DOH,⁶⁰ a year later after another accreditation surveillance visit, the Hospital was accredited as a Mother-Baby Friendly Hospital on May 20, 2013⁶¹—the first private hospital to be certified in Bacolod City.

Hand in hand with physical plant growth, the services and quality of care needed to be at par with the development, thus to enhance the patient experience in the Hospital, in 2012, the ICARE, (I am, C-Compassionate, A-Attentive, R-Respectful, E-Enthusiastic) a flagship patient-centered administration and customer service program was developed and approved on August 22, 2012.⁶² About the same time, the Healthcare Circle Toastmasters Club, was chartered on August 28, 2012⁶³ as part of the Hospital's thrust to develop good communication and leadership among its employees.

In its continued thrust to deliver the best possible service to the patients, the hospital invested in the putting up of an oxygen generator to deliver pure medical grade oxygen without the risk for inhalation of rust that comes with usage of oxygen from cylinder oxygen tanks. The investment increased the hospital's profit margin for medical-grade oxygen. In the outset a contract was signed for the installation of an OA 300 Oxygen generator which is capable of generating 30 cylinder tanks per day,⁶⁴ with the increased demand, 5 years later (March 15, 2018) the hospital issued a purchase order to upgrade it to increase its capacity to an OA 600 which can generate 50 tanks per day using thin air, with 92 percent to 96 percent oxygen purity.⁶⁵ The said machine is able to supply for 80 percent of the hospital's oxygen needs. On April 9, 2018, the upgraded Oxygen generator (OA 600) was inaugurated.⁶⁶

In 2013, the names of all Adventist Hospitals under the Adventist Healthcare Systems-Philippines was renamed to bear the word "Adventist" as the first word, to establish the Seventh-day Adventist presence in the community and promote that the hospitals belong to one system.

In December 8, 2013, during its anniversary, although not yet fully functional since the transition to full functionality spanned over a year, the west building was inaugurated.⁶⁷ The west building ground floor houses the largest vegetarian canteen in the Philippines with a total area of 1000 sq Meters, 700 sq meters for the dining area and 300 sq meters for food preparation area. The Modern Cafeteria called the Nutribites Cafeteria has a fine Dining area named after one its major Donors— "Aimee's Dining," as a large part of the donation for the cafeteria came from Mr. Emmanuel and Mrs. Aimee Billiones. On the same day of the inauguration, the guests proceeded to the East wing building where the 6-bed⁶⁸ Pediatric Intensive Care Unit which was donated by Mr. Samuel and Mrs. Letecia Recalde

is located, for its inauguration. Subsequently the 3rd floor of the east building was inaugurated to be used for Administrative offices. During the next few months, equipping and finishing touches were done for the West Wing Building to make it ready for occupancy and to provide the services that were needed. Among the facilities upgraded in preparation for the increase in electrical needs was the powerhouse and generator the upgrade involved the installation of a 1200 KVA power generator and another one with 650 KVA as backup generator.

The Patient Care Unit 4A which is located on the 4th floor of the new West Building started its operation on March 18, 2015, marking its partial operation. 3 months later, on June 27, 2015, with the steady increase of demand for private rooms, the Station 4-B was opened completing the 27 additional private rooms that were added to the 120 beds of the Hospital.⁶⁹ Two months later, on August 10, 2015, the Patient Care Unit 5 which has 14 deluxe Private rooms and 6 executive suite rooms designed to provide a hotel-like ambience for VIP patients was inaugurated. The spacious rooms on the 5th floor with wide glass windows spanning the room's entire walls and the VIP care with low nurse to patient ratio gave the patients a good healthcare experience.⁷⁰

These milestones expanded the Hospital Bed capacity to 170 beds which included the 12 ICU beds and 6 Pediatric ICU beds. Subsequent adjustments were made in the existing ward rooms in the old building, reducing the number of beds in the wards to increase the efficiency of the workflow and enhancing the safety of the patient's safety and comfort.

On August 11, 2015 the Renal Care Center which is located on the 3rd floor of the West Building which was established in partnership with Fresenius Medical Care was inaugurated. The said company installed 20 4008S machines in the Renal Care Center to cater to the ever growing number of renal patients needing hemodialysis.⁷¹ On the same day, the Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Department transferred to its new location, which is beside the Renal Care Center. This was followed by the inauguration of the second floor of the West Building which is home to six major OR suites and two minor OR suites.⁷²

The first surgery on the new Operating Suites was a laparoscopic cholecystectomy which was performed last August 31, 2015. Even after the first surgery, the staff worked double time to move the equipment and supplies from the old Operating suites to the new one, that the OR was completely functional by the middle of September. On September 14, 2015, a laparoscopic hysterectomy, first in Negros, was performed in the new OR. The next day, the Maternity Unit was expanded, as the old OR suites were allotted for cesarean section and other OB/GYNE cases as part of the Maternity Complex.⁷³

Before the year 2015 came to a close, on December 3, the Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Unit and Fitness Gymn located on the 3rd floor of the west wing building was activated⁷⁴ along with the opening of the Health and Lifestyle Hub in the 6th floor which also houses the Guest Rooms, Training Hub and a Spa. In the same year, the Adventist Emergency Response Unit (AERU) was officially affiliated with the hospital. The group is composed of workers and friends who volunteer to be trained and to respond to emergencies brought about by calamities and accidents outside of the hospital. With the strong support of the administration, the group is one of the major disaster response units in the city of Bacolod and Negros Province. As a result of the hospital's involvement with responding to disasters and calamities, the government both regional and national levels awarded the BAMC with the 18th and the 19th National Gawad Kalasag Award in Disaster Risk Reduction Management Excellence in Humanitarian Service as "Best Private Hospital" for the Private Hospital Category for 2 consecutive years; October 21, 2016 and December 11, 2017.⁷⁵

At the outset of the year 2018, God has bestowed another blessing to BAMC. As demand for healthy bread and veggie products increased in Bacolod City and nearby provinces, by early 2017 the hospital set out to build a separate building for the production of freshly baked breads and pastries, plant-based milk and tofu for the Hospital and the surrounding community every day. A lot adjacent to the hospital was purchased and on January 25, 2018 the new Food Factory was inaugurated.⁷⁶

A patient who was blessed with the Ministry of the hospital decided to donate 70 Million Philippine Pesos to the hospital to build a Medical Arts Building during the said patient's 95th Birthday on March 12, 2018. The ground breaking ceremony was attended by the Hospital officers, the donor—Atty. Simplicio Palanca who was wheeled down from the patient's room in the 5th floor and some city officials on April 12, 2018.

To extend the medical missionary work with the drive to promote a Healthy lifestyle among the people of Bacolod, the Hospital through its DISPAGG Corporation established a vegetarian restaurant on March 19, 2018, in Villa Angela Hi-Strip Building 4, near the New Government Center of Bacolod City—the Veggie bites Cafe, a center of influence outside of the doors of the hospital for those who would want to start a healthy lifestyle.⁷⁷

For over 4 years during the construction of the west building, the Emergency Department occupied a temporary location near the original hospital entrance. After 4 years of delivering emergency care in a temporary location, the expanded and renovated Emergency Room was inaugurated on November 14, 2018.⁷⁸ The New Emergency Department is designed to address the increasing need of emergent and urgent cases, equipped with a main Emergency Room area that could accommodate 12 stretchers, a separate Code Room, Trauma Room, Isolation Room, a Pediatric Ambulatory Services area with 4 stretchers, 2 cribs and an Isolation room, a separate Pediatric emergency room with 2 stretchers for Pedia patients for admission, an out-patient area with 2 examination/treatment beds a total of 24 stretchers and 2 examination/treatment beds. Despite the expansion, the ER is full with patients sitting on mono bloc chairs lining up during peak seasons.

Dr. Hector G. Gayares Jr. was elected as the Adventist International Health Systems-Philippines Chief Executive

Officer with this, Dr. Galileo J. Pabalinas the serving Senior Vice President for Medical Affairs was elected as the 6th president of BAMC on November 1, 2018⁵⁰ and was installed as the new president on December 10, 2018 during the employee's year-end thanksgiving banquet at the SMX Convention Center.

As part of the overall renovation of the old building, the Hospital renovated the Admitting office, transferring its location adjacent to the Emergency Room so that the patient services would be more efficient. On June 24, 2019, the new admitting Office was inaugurated with the vision to provide better and a more comfortable place for the watchers to transact business matters with the hospital.⁷⁹

With the thrust to ensure patient safety and staff competency, the hospital has ensured that staff are trained in Basic life support and advance cardiac life support. And to ensure this, the hospital has subsidized the training of the staff. In 2018, the Nursing Education and Training Officer Lovely Sheila B. Rizado worked out for BAMC to be an accredited training site of the American Heart Association under the supervision of the University of Santo Tomas Faculty of Emergency Medicine and then eventually a Training Center of the American Heart Association, and by God's grace, on November 13, 2019, the hospital was acknowledged as the first and only Hospital-based American Heart Association Training Center in Central Philippines.⁸⁰

At the turn of a new decade, the Hospital through the Health and Lifestyle institute launched the Health and Lifestyle Center on January 24, 2020,⁸¹ In her speech during the opening ceremony, Dr. Mechelle Palma the president of the Philippine College of Lifestyle Medicine⁸² said that the center will be a first in the country under the supervision of the Philippine College of Lifestyle Medicine.⁸³ The Program will be accepting Resident Physicians for Training in lifestyle Medicine.⁸⁴ With a resource as valuable to health as lifestyle medicine with 16 certified Lifestyle Medicine Doctors in the Hospital, the landscape of healthcare in BAMC and Negros is at the threshold of change.

It also has been a dream to establish an Invasive Cardiology Department in Bacolod City, since patients in critical condition needing cardiac catheterization would have to be transported to Manila by air or Iloilo City by boat for emergency lifesaving procedures and treatment—cardiac catheterization, an essential lifesaving procedure which could not be performed in the absence of necessary equipment which cost millions of Pesos. By God's providence, as a footprint hospital of AdventHealth, the people of Bacolod received a blessing as AdventHealth's Donation of a Cathlab Machine arrived to Adventist Medical Center Bacolod on February 5, 2020. The 40 foot container held lifesaving equipment, a first in Negros island and among Seventh-day Adventist Hospitals in the Philippines. Praise and Thanksgiving to God filled the air on February 11, 2020 as voices rang in prayer and praise to God for its safe arrival after travelling thousands of miles from Florida, during the ceremonial breaking of the seal of the container van.⁸⁵

Today the Hospital stands in its original location since the time it was established, a testament of God's Faithfulness to His Institution. As the hospital has grown, God has provided many other properties, adjacent to the hospital where the food factory now stands is a purchased land of 977 sq. meters which was acquired in 2015;⁸⁶ another adjacent lot of 8,078 sq. meters and another 2000 sq meter⁸⁷ lot has been purchased for additional parking space, and across the street, a 500 sq meter lot⁸⁸ with a house was donated by the children of a previous worker to the hospital which is utilized as worker quarters, another 8,868 sq. meter lot in Abuanan area⁸⁹ which is utilized as a farm, and by God's providence, in 2010 a 17 hectare land 2 hours away from the hospital, in Bunga, Don Salvador Benedicto situated in the mountainside was acquired for future plans to establish a Health and Wellness facility.⁹⁰ In total, the hospital land property has grown from 2.5 hectares when it started in 1966 to 21.59 hectares today.

Presently, services and amenities continue to develop to serve the demands of the community and more importantly to extend Christ to all the patients and their family members and friends. God is very much involved in the affairs of the Hospital. His faithfulness throughout the years is evident in every story, and in the lives of its leaders and staff. The Hospital turned 50 last December 8, 2016, and continues to extend Christ to everyone—even beyond its doors. The hospital is looking forward to building a Medical Arts Building and a Patient Tower to further extend God's healing ministry to more souls.

Name Transitions

The first official name of the hospital was Bacolod Sanitarium and Hospital. In 2004, 38 years after the hospital was established, with the expansion of the hospital and the specialization of medical services, the management under Rufo Gasapo decided to change the name of Bacolod Sanitarium and Hospital to Bacolod Adventist Medical Center.

A year later, on March 3, 2005, the hospital was registered with the Philippine Government's Securities and Exchange Commission and In the course of registration, the name registered in the country's Securities and Exchange Commission is *Bacolod Adventist Inc.*⁹¹ However, the name which was officially used by the Hospital was Bacolod Adventist Medical Center.

With the mission of extending Christ to everyone, the management under the leadership of Dr. Hector Gayares Jr. who was the president at the time, thought it wise to place the word Adventist as the first word of the name of the hospital, so that the first word will bear the gospel message of our Hope for eternity as a people. As such on October 15, 2012, the name of the hospital was amended in the Securities and Exchange Commission and now reads: Adventist Medical Center-Bacolod, Inc.⁹² However, the name which is officially used by the hospital does not bear the word Inc. and only reads: Adventist Medical Center-Bacolod. Later with the organization of all the Seventh-day Adventist Hospitals in the Philippines, to create a unified identity, the name was adapted for all secondary and tertiary Adventist hospitals in the country, with only the last word (e.g., Bacolod) as its location Identifier.

Historical Role of the Institution

Bacolod Sanitarium and Hospital now Adventist Medical Center-Bacolod, was established through the direction of the Seventh-day Adventist Church as the right arm of the Gospel in Negros, spearheaded by the South Philippine Union since Negros Island was then part of the territory of the South Philippine Union when the hospital idea was pitched. The hospital has played a vital role in the healthcare of the people of Bacolod City since its inception. For many years it has been the only hospital located in the southern part of the City, near the location of the old Bacolod Airport, as such when Philippine Airlines flight 137, a scheduled passenger flight carrying 124 passengers and 6 flight crew members aboard an Airbus A320-214 from Manila's Ninoy Aquino International Airport had a runway overrun, on March 22, 1998 majority of the injured patients were rushed to Bacolod Sanitarium and Hospital. Of the 130 on-board the flight, 44 were injured but there was no fatality, however there were 3 ground casualties and 25 ground injuries, a total of 66 injured patients in all.⁹³ The Hospital continually supports the national and the local government during its major events such as serving as primary referral hospital for ASEAN delegates during the 50th commemorative anniversary of the Association of South-East Asian Nations last March and August of 2017 and also during official government events as standby response team. The Hospital through its Adventist Emergency Response Unit continues to serve the country by responding to various disasters around the Visayas Region, notable response dispatches were made for the victims of the Super Typhoon Yolanda or Typhoon Haiyan on November 3, 2013 in Tacloban, the team were among the first to respond bringing healthcare and relief goods for the victims at the epicenter of damage wrought by the said typhoon,⁹⁴ and to various other places in the Visayas during the earthquake in Bohol on October 13, 2013 and flooding in Western Visayas among others.

To extend the healing ministry of Christ beyond its doors, the hospital conducts an average of 3 to 4 medical missions per month around Negros Island and in various locations across the country. In a span of 9 years, from 2011 to 2019, BAMC with its partners has conducted 245 Medical Missions and served 63,200 patients, offering free medical consultations, free medications, dental and minor surgical services, health and diagnostic screening and appraisals, Karada scanning, lifestyle change lectures and one on one health coaching.⁹⁵ With its passion to reach out to less fortunate Filipinos, the hospital sets aside a budget for medical outreach, in partnership with its organized foundation, the Pool of Bethesda Foundation.

In its effort to reduce the carbon footprint of the Hospital and reduce environmental pollution, the Hospital sought out to recycle its waste water. Along with the construction of the west building, a Sewage Treatment Plant with a capacity of 350 cubic meters was constructed. With this, 65 cubic meters of used water is being treated and recycled to be used in toilet closets per day.⁹⁶

Among the dreams of Negros Island is a Cardiac Catheter Lab where cardiac patients could be given the best chances of survival after the insertion of a stent. Currently, patients needing this treatment or even simple Angiogram to visualize which arteries are occluded or blocked is not available in Negros Island. Unstable patients, and patients in Post cardiac arrest care are hemodynamically stabilized then transported to Hospitals in other islands with the capability to perform such procedures. They are transported to either Iloilo City or Metro Manila. This however poses a risk to the patients during transport. By God's faithfulness, the donation of AdventHealth of a cathlab machine to BAMC would be a blessing to the people of Negros. God willing, it will be the first Cathlab in Negros Island, and would open the way to further extend the healing ministry of Christ.⁹⁷

The Hospital also served the community of Bacolod City during the Covid-19 Pandemic— wherein majority of the critical Covid-19 patients were admitted in the hospital during the first wave. The BAMC Hospital Emergency Incident Command System was activated and a Covid Unit (PCU4B) and Covid Emergency Room was established to isolate suspect and probable patients from other patients to keep everyone safe. The Covid unit has its own dedicated Entrance/Exit accessed only by authorized personnel and the staff on duty are dedicated to the unit and are provided with dedicated room accommodations with a separate and dedicated access direct to the unit to avoid exposure with other staff and family members. As the pandemic rages on, the hospital is working closely with the local government for the establishment of facilities in relation to Covid-19 as BAMC continues to extend the healing ministry of Christ to everyone.

Adventist Medical Center-Bacolod is owned and operated by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, specifically under the Central Philippine Union Conference (CPUC). The Hospital Board is chaired by the president of the CPUC, with the President and Medical Director of the Hospital as the Board Secretary. BAMC, is one of 10 Seventh-day Adventist Hospitals in the Philippines under the Adventist International Health Systems-Philippines which is under the Adventist International Health Systems-Asia of the Southern Asia Pacific Division of Seventh-day Adventists.⁹⁸

Outlook

Adventist Medical Center-Bacolod stands as an evidence of God's faithfulness to His people in Negros. And with God's providence and grace, with the Mission of Extending the Healing Ministry of Christ to everyone, BAMC strives to provide quality healthcare to both rich and poor, old and young. It envisions to be the premier center of healthcare in Negros Province, a vision that has propelled its leadership and employees to strive for excellence in all its services.

BAMC is among the top preferred hospitals in Negros, and to be effective in extending the healing Ministry of Christ to more souls hungering and thirsting for holistic healing, the strategic thrusts of the hospital is geared towards the intentional introduction of Christ to every patient, along with service enhancement and facility expansion. As Dr. Hector Gayares Jr. says it "Mission fulfilment in healthcare is planting seeds of the gospel... and ultimately such seed will result to someone tapping us in heaven saying; thank you for that BAMC experience."⁹⁹

To date, the 5 story Medical Arts Building is being built, and with it comes the need for more patient beds, as such the Hospital looks forward to the building of a 10 story patient tower. The Emergency Department is flooded with patients who wait for room availability for hours and even days, which paints a picture of the drastic need for more patient rooms and beds to cater to the sick and suffering—giving the hospital missionaries a bigger and grander opportunity to Extend the Healing ministry of Christ to Everyone.

Building on its strengths, future perspectives include the optimization of its services by building of a Maternal and Child tower, and more importantly in its drive to keep people healthy, with the recent establishment of the Health and Lifestyle Center of the Hospital—a first in the country under the PCLM,¹⁰⁰ the Hospital looks forward to sustainable wholistic healing of patients ultimately restoring the lost image of God in man.

BAMC is at the forefront in the campaign for a healthier and more productive citizenry through programs and services that give emphasis on the preventive aspect of medicine, a holistic approach to healing and responsible lifestyle management... the dynamism of the healthcare industry compels BAMC to be as vibrant and active in pursuing quality and excellence while passionately serving to live up to its mission of "Extending the healing ministry of Christ to everyone."¹⁰¹

List of Names

Bacolod Sanitarium and Hospital (1966-2004); Bacolod Adventist Medical Center (2004-2012); Adventist Medical Center-Bacolod (2012-Present 2020)

Presidents and Medical Directors

Dr. Willis G. Dick (1966-1970); Dr. Ronald W. Spalding (interim medical director, 1970); Dr. Francisco T. Geslani (1971-1989); Rufo G. Gasapo (1990-2010); Dr. Hector G. Gayares Jr. (2011-2018); Dr. Galileo J. Pabalinas (2019-).¹⁰²

Chairman of the Hospital Board

Eugenio A. Capobres (1964-1971); Florencio M. Arrogante (1972-1973); Leodegario E. Montaña (1974-1979); Dionisio M. Niere (1980-1987); Violeto F. Bocala (1988); Hector V. Gayares, Sr. (1988-1996); Alberto C. Gulfan, Jr. (1996-2003); Jemuel M. Toledanes (2003-2004); Don Weideman (2004-2006); Agapito J. Catane, Jr. (2006- 2015); Rufo G. Gasapo (2016); Agapito J. Catane, Jr. (2017-2020).¹⁰³

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NOTES

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