



# ATENEUM DE MANILA UNIVERSITY

## OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Memo # U2526-022

15 Aug 2025

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TO The University Community

SUBJECT 2025 Traditional University Awards

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The Traditional University Awards of the Ateneo de Manila recognize the life and works of men and women in our society who exemplify the values of the university. For 2025, the Board of Trustees has chosen to award the following individuals, all exemplars in their respective fields:

### Shahidul Alam HONORARY DEGREE



Alam has made significant contributions to the field of photojournalism, both as a practitioner and an educator. Over the past four decades, he has built an extensive portfolio as a photojournalist, advancing the causes of democracy, human rights, social justice, and climate change in his native Bangladesh. Under his leadership, the Pathshala, now known as the Pathshala South Asian Media Institute, has become one of the world's premier photography schools. Alam has worked as a lecturer, tutor, and mentor in various academic institutions and non-governmental organizations, both domestically and internationally. He played a key role in the growth of the Diploma in Photojournalism Program offered by the Ateneo Asian Center for Journalism (formerly called the Konrad Adenauer Asian Center for Journalism). Likewise, he served on the International Advisory Board of the Ateneo Center for Asian Studies from 2021 to 2024.

### Jose Dean W Sola and Josefa Ardis A Sola OZANAM AWARD



The husband-and-wife team established He Cares Mission in 1996 as a Christian nonprofit organization dedicated to helping street children meet their basic needs, such as food, clothing, education, medical assistance, and spiritual support. Supported by donations from both local and international benefactors, He Cares Mission offers six programs designed for the holistic restoration of children and their families: Saturday feeding, Balik Loob sa Diyos (Back to God), Balik Kalusugan (Back to Health), Balik Bahay (Back to Home), Balik Aral (Back to School), and Balik Hanapbuhay (Back to Work). These programs aim to provide comprehensive support and uplift the lives of the children and their families.



## ATENEO DE MANILA UNIVERSITY

### Jose Noel D Olano (*posthumous*) LUX-IN-DOMINO AWARD



Olano lived the Ignatian teachings and embodied the ideals of Ateneo, demonstrating a deep commitment to service and justice. A Management Engineering graduate of Ateneo de Manila, he served as a high school teacher at Sacred Heart School for Boys in Cebu City as part of the Jesuit Volunteers Program. Wherever he was, whatever position he held, and whatever work he did, Olano's heart and mind were always for the last, the least, and the lost. He served as executive director of the Philippine Agrarian Reform Foundation for National Development. As section director for Amnesty International Philippines, Olano condemned human rights violations, speaking against the extrajudicial killings that accompanied the anti-illegal drugs campaign of the Duterte administration and exposing labor rights abuses of mining companies. Until his last day, Olano dedicated himself to the indigenous Manobo-Pulangiyon people of Bukidnon, assisting them in their fight for their ancestral lands.

### John Burtkenley T Ong PARANGAL LINGKOD SAMBAYANAN



A graduate of BS Physics from Ateneo de Manila, Ong has applied his expertise in physics and hydrogeology to address environmental challenges and serve society. His work primarily benefits indigenous groups and marginalized communities across the country. In Mindoro, where he was assigned, Ong assisted the Mangyan people in creating 3D maps that allowed them to identify their ancestral lands. He investigated landslides in Southern Leyte, flash floods in Quezon, and flooding in Pampanga. His work encompasses a range of activities, including the development of instrumentation, river and flooding studies, geological surveys, and mapping. Since 2016, Ong has been teaching geographical information systems, earth sciences, hydrology, and instrumentation at Ateneo de Davao University.

### Hans Leo J Cacdac GOVERNMENT SERVICE AWARD



Cacdac has dedicated nearly 20 years to protecting the rights of Filipino overseas workers (OFWs). His journey began in 2006 when he was appointed Deputy Administrator of the now-defunct Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA). In 2010, he assumed the role of Undersecretary for Labor Relations at the Department of Labor and Employment, and two years later, he became the Administrator of POEA. With his extensive expertise in labor and migration governance, Cacdac has led several negotiations for the rights and protection of migrant



## ATENEUM DE MANILA UNIVERSITY

workers on both local and international levels. Under the Duterte administration, he served as head of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration. In 2024, Cacdac was appointed Secretary of the Department of Migrant Workers, where he continues to implement innovations to ensure that workers are truly protected and their well-being is looked after.

### Soledad S Reyes GAWAD TANGLAW NG LAHI



Reyes is a pioneer in Filipino literary criticism, cultural history, and scholarship. A Professor Emeritus at Ateneo de Manila, she dedicated over 40 years to teaching and held various administrative positions at the University. She co-founded the Ateneo Library of Women's Writings (ALIWW) with Dr Edna Manlapaz. ALIWW is the only library of its kind in Asia dedicated to the retrieval, collection, conservation, and study of Filipino women writers and artists. Her work has highlighted Filipino novels that might have otherwise gone unread and unknown, while also drawing attention to Filipino women writers who would have remained marginalized. Through her examination and analysis of popular culture, as well as her investigations into cultural expressions and behaviors, Reyes has provided valuable insights and interpretations that help us better understand ourselves as a people.

The Special Academic Convocation for the conferment of the 2025 Traditional University Awards will be held on Thursday, 4 December 2025, 3:00 pm at the Hyundai Hall in Areté.

(Sgd) Roberto C Yap SJ  
President