

Our People

Alumni Edition

R.G. Manabat & Co.

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RGM&Co. supports the Asia CEO Awards



RGM&Co. supported the 2015 Asia CEO Awards through the announcement of the KPMG Executive Leadership Team of the Year award during its media launch held on 14 April 2015 at the Marriott Hotel Manila.

Held each year since 2010, the Asia CEO Awards recognizes the management teams and individuals who have made significant contributions to help build the nation into one of the fastest-growing countries in the world. It promotes leadership excellence and team-building within organizations and highlights Filipino business accomplishments to the world's business leaders. RGM&Co. partners with the Asia CEO Awards every year to award the KPMG Executive Leadership Team of the Year given to the organization that best exemplifies exceptional leadership through its executive management team. With the theme *Excellence in Solidarity*, it is unprecedented in scope as it will now officially accept nominations across the ASEAN region starting 1 May 2015 until 28 September 2015.

"It is our hope that the KPMG Executive Leadership Team of the Year award will continue to play a part in encouraging the success of a company through teamwork and effective collaboration. It is another step along the way as companies and organizations strive to achieve a better and stronger performance each year. This year's theme is very fitting because we must all be united in our goal of making the Philippines emerge as a strong economic leader and reach a greater role in Asia and ultimately, in the world," said Emmanuel Bonoan, Vice Chairman and Head of Tax, Chief Operating Officer of RGM&Co.

Partnership with Arangkada continues



RGM&Co. once again participated during this year's Arangkada Philippines conference held on 3 March 2015 at the Makati Shangri-La Manila.

In 2010, the Joint Foreign Chambers (JFC) published *Arangkada Philippines*, an advocacy paper reflecting inputs from nine focus group discussions on sectors with high growth potential: agribusiness, IT, creative industries, infrastructure, manufacturing and logistics, mining, and tourism. The 471 recommendations in Arangkada hope to build a more competitive Philippine economy that will lead to high growth and millions of new jobs.

This year's forum featured another set of notable speakers and panelists, including Department of Labor and Employment Secretary

Rosalinda Baldoz, Department of Finance Undersecretary and National Treasurer Roberto Tan, Department of Trade and Industry Undersecretary Ponciano Manalo, Department of Energy Undersecretary Zenaida Monsada, International Monetary Fund Resident Representative for the Philippines, Dr. Shanaka Jayanath Peiris, former Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Dr. Cielito Habito, National Competitiveness Council Private Co-Chair Guillermo Luz, Makati Business Club Chairman Ramon del Rosario, Jr., and former Finance Secretary Dr. Roberto de Ocampo. Top news personalities Maria Ressa and Cheche Lazaro moderated panels on power, transport infrastructure, labor and education. Senate President Franklin Drilon addressed the delegates on investment climate law reforms while Cabinet Secretary Rene Almendras delivered President's Aquino keynote speech on the this year's theme entitled *Investing NOW for Inclusive Growth!*

The forum was attended by over 600 business leaders, industry experts, investors, diplomats, government officials and media.

Henry Antonio speaks at Asia Finance Summit

RGM&Co. Head of Advisory Henry Antonio was a guest panelist in the recently concluded Asia Finance Summit held at the newly opened Makati Diamond Residences on 21 April 2015. Asia Finance Summit is a brainchild of Chalre International, the same organization behind the very successful Asia CEO Awards held annually. This year's theme for the summit is *Excellence in Solidarity* which aims to highlight the key strengths of countries throughout the ASEAN region. For the panel discussion, the group tackled the topic "Appraising the Future of Southeast Asia." Other panelists include Asia CEO Awards Chairman Richard Mills, Abrea Consulting President and Chief Strategy Officer Raymond Abrea, I-Remit Chairman and CEO Bansan Choa, Undersecretary and Chief Economist of the Department of Finance Gil Beltran, ICCP Group President- Financial Services William Valtos, Asia CEO Awards President Rebecca Bustamante and Business + Class Magazine Managing Editor Kim Bernardo.



Our Victories

Our new Tax lawyers!

The Tax Supervisors of RGM&Co. have successfully passed the October 2014 Philippine Bar Examinations, namely, Atty. Joseph C. Ladlad, Atty. Raymond V. Vallejo, Atty. Mark Darryl A. Caniban, Atty. Ma. Louise C. Aviso, Atty. Roxanne Marie A. Mendoza, Atty. Rachel Bernadette B. Chua, Atty. Glenn D. Delos Santos and Atty. Philip Marion A. Ortal.



KPMG Alumni Paolo Cortez

Formerly an auditor at KPMG in the Philippines and now with Coca-Cola doing financial planning and analysis, Paolo Cortez reminisces on his years with the Firm and the career he has built from the solid foundation he has made.



How many years have you been working for Coca-Cola?

Paolo: I started working for Coca-Cola last December 2014. I do Financial Planning and Analysis. But before that, I worked for Proctor and Gamble (P&G) for ten years.

Can you tell us more about your work in P&G?

Paolo: I was a group manager for P&G in the Philippines. I was handling the business planning and analysis organization. That's more of the GBS or Global Business Services side of business planning and analysis. The scope is mostly global, but I have other counterparts from the U.S., Europe, and Latin America. What happens normally is that if there are queries from across the globe and *tinamaan yung oras na andoon ka, ikaw ang sasagot* regardless of where they're from. So they call it 24/5 operations.

My career was split half-half. I was doing audit for the first half of my career, and the last half, I was doing more of business finance. At P&G, what they do is you rotate from one finance role to the next. So that is sort of how you acquire skills and that's how you also get ahead. When I joined P&G, I joined the Global Internal Audit (GIA) group because that is what I have been doing previously. That was my ticket to go inside P&G. I was doing GIA for two years and then I wanted to stay in Audit so I told my boss that it was what I wanted to do for the rest of my career since I have been doing it for five years already, so why not stay longer. My boss said I should be open to

trying other finance disciplines so they decided to move me to a plant role in 2006. From 2006 to 2008, I was doing product supply finance. I was the finance manager for fabric and home care in the Philippines plant production. Then in 2008, I was assigned in Singapore until 2014. There, I was doing different kinds of jobs at P&G. I was the finance manager for Downy and home care for Asia. Then I did the Research & Development reorganization. So we moved the R&D organization from Japan and other parts of the globe to Singapore. We constructed an R&D facility in Singapore and moved people from across the world to Singapore. I was the finance person in charge of managing the transitions and processes. After which, that's when I moved back to the Philippines to manage the business planning role in 2014. After six months of doing that, I moved to Coke and became the Financial and Analysis Leader for Coke Bottlers. Before all of this, I graduated from UP in 1999 and right after graduation, I joined KPMG. We were the first batch of auditors that actually came from UP.

What was your most memorable client experience in the Firm?

Paolo: My most memorable client experience was my first client, my in-charge gave me the directions to go to their office in Alabang, bring the papers to their office and study. That's it. I was in their office, I have a room, and I didn't know what to do because it was my first time. All I had to do was to study the working papers. I didn't know what to do but my in-charge came in a little bit later and taught me how to go about it. And of course, them being my first client sort of stayed with me for the rest of my career until my in-charge was making me the pseudo in-charge of the accounts.

What were your vision, goals and dreams before entering the Firm?

Paolo: Before I entered the Firm, what I really wanted to do was do audit. I figured graduating Business Administration and Accounting, taking and passing the CPA exams would be a great start for a career to practice what you were taught, which was my initial goal. Of course, the goal has been to be able to get to either a CFO level or chief audit executive (CAE) level in a particular company, and then after retirement, I eventually wanted to own a business.

What were your expectations from KPMG in the Philippines before entering the Firm?

Paolo: At that time, a lot of the people I've talked to and my friends would go to SGV, P&A and PwC. I really didn't want to do that because I was more of rooting for underdogs – the smaller the firm, the better. I felt that smaller firms would take care of you more and I would have better exposure at a relatively smaller firm. At that time, KPMG was small in Manila, but still I wanted to go to a firm that has a huge international presence which is KPMG.

What were the challenges when you started working for the Firm? How did you overcome those challenges? What did you learn from it?

Paolo: The main challenge is really being able to manage the schedule during the busy season but then my thinking has always been if I'm busy, I must be doing something right. I would be happier if I were busy than not doing anything during

busy season or slack season. *Pag slack season and wala akong ginagawa, kinakabahan ako. Bakit wala akong ginagawa? Bakit hindi ako binibigyan ng assignment?* In Audit, that's how you try to evaluate yourself, they are giving you good feedback, if they give you assignments.

The other realization really are relationships. It is very important for new people, even the ones that have already started their careers, to build relationships because you'll never know *kung kailan sila magiging* useful for you, not in a very user kind of way, but more of give and take. There are times *na may tatawag sa akin, hihingi ng tulong tapos* I'll help them and there are times that I would call my clients and ask. It's very important to have good working relationships. *Kasi ikaw din mahihirapan kapag* pissed off *sila sa iyo tapos hindi nila bibigay gusto mo.* There would be clients that are difficult. The challenge of people would be to understand and know *kung paano ka mag-click* sa client and develop that kind of relationship to provide the right assessment.

How would you describe your working style?

Paolo: I'm very laidback. *Hindi ako ganon ka-OC.* I try to put as much trust in the people that are working under me and the people that I'm closely working with. The issue is *pag kunyari may pinagawa ako sa iyo tapos* you didn't deliver or there's something wrong with what you gave me, then I become stricter and guarded in terms of dealing with you.

What was your most notable moment in the Firm or the accomplishment you are most proud of?

Paolo: The most notable moment is meeting my wife. I met my wife in KPMG, we were batchmates. She was an auditor too, we were in the same training.

What was your favorite part or the highlight of your role as an employee of the Firm?

Paolo: I think it's the love for Auditing. That career is a passion and it still is. Wherever I go, there's always a hat that I can put on where I can be an auditor. It's really the passion. It was a realization *na, "Uy, kaya ko gawin ito for the rest of my life. I wouldn't regret it. Hindi ako malulungkot, hindi sasama loob ko."*

What do you miss most about being at the Firm?

Paolo: The camaraderie. A lot of times, when you come in, you come in with the same people, the same age so *parang* university vibe. *Yung magkasama kayo, parang barkada.* The *barkada* that we had, we still meet now. *Madami sa kanila* out of the country *na,* but when someone comes home, we would meet up.

How did your work experience at the Firm help you in your career and your succeeding endeavors?

Paolo: I think the value of integrity. Being an auditor would teach you that one of the traits that you must have to succeed as an auditor is integrity. If you don't have integrity, you wouldn't be able to trust yourself.

Which part of your work experience do you think will be most useful for the Firm's professionals today?

Paolo: It's okay to do overtime. It's an investment.

What advice or message can you share with the current and future employees of the Firm?

Paolo: I think the best advice for me would be to continue developing your skills. Because the moment you stop developing your skills, the moment you stop learning, then that's the time you decline. Also, see whether you have a passion for auditing because it is a commitment, not just for auditing but across any role.

What's the most important thing you've learned from KPMG in the Philippines that you can bring with you throughout your career?

Paolo: I think I owe KPMG Philippines my skill as an auditor. That's where I started to develop my skill in analyzing, the skill in doing risk-based work. In fact, those skills, the way we analyze risks, were the things that I was able to bring to P&G.

What are the other things that you've been busy with lately?

Paolo: I used to play basketball a lot. Before we moved back to Manila, we used to play basketball three times a week. So here, *pag weekend kasama ko family ko.* I like driving, *paikot-ikot*, out of town. *Ayun lang.*

Family?

Paolo: I have two daughters, aged 6 and 2. They were both born in Singapore but are Filipino citizens.

KPMG Alumni Anna Magno-Pabellon

Formerly part of the team who established the IT Audit services at KPMG in the Philippines and now the Vice President for Information Security Pillar of one of the largest telecommunications companies in the country, Anna Magno-Pabellon describes how she strived to discover what she really wanted to do and the reasons behind her biggest career decisions.



How many years have you been working for Smart and what is your current position?

Anna: I'm on my third year here in Smart Communications. Before Smart, I stayed for four years in BDO. And I actually spent 10 years in KPMG but I moved to Sydney on the latter part of my KPMG career.

I am currently the Department Head and Vice President for Information Security Pillar of the PLDT group, Smart, and Sun.

What was your most memorable client experience in the Firm?

Anna: When I went to Brazil and I was auditing ICTSI, if I'm not mistaken, and I was riding a freighter, it was a unique experience because I was looking at the process in their yard. It was scary but at the same time, fun. It was really a unique experience to travel to Brazil. Also, I liked the inventory counts in Laguna. I almost got stuck in one of the freezers there!

What were the challenges when you started working for the Firm? How did you overcome those challenges? What did you learn from it?

Anna: Oh yes, I hated my work first week on the job and I wanted to resign already. I was in Audit, Financial Audit to be exact. I discovered very early on that I do not like Financial Audit. Two months on the job, I was serious on resigning because I really didn't want the audit work. But they opened a new department which is the IT Audit services. So they brought in people and we started that group in KPMG Philippines. I've been there ever since.

What caused the change of heart?

Anna: I owe everything to KPMG. The training that I got was priceless. I was very fortunate to be under very good mentors that they were able to mold me to something useful. So I was very fortunate to be managed by very good partners. *Sinasama nila ako sa meetings nila.* I got to really learn from the best, and that is why I stayed.

How would you describe your working style?

Anna: I was enjoying it so much that I didn't even feel like I was working. I don't do a lot of overtime but that's because I finish my work early. I prioritize my work, my family, and my social life. There's a balance. I finish quickly, and I have the discipline that when I work, I really work so that I can also leave early since I was also taking my Master's degree and my certification all at the same time. So I really had to manage my time. Also, I have to manage my boyfriends (laughs). It's really about working efficiently. I don't like wasting time. I don't like being late as well because time is important, and I want my people to have a life of their own, too.

What was your most notable moment in the Firm or the accomplishment you are most proud of?

Anna: It's building the practice that we started. From just two staff members working, to many professionals, and from no income at all, to what I would think has income. I'm proud of what the team has become. I'm also proud of my people, where they were able to go, what they were able to do with their careers. Some of them are still with me right now. Some have reached very good positions in the private sector so I think that is a very good accomplishment as well.

What was your favorite part or the highlight of your role as an employee of the Firm?

Anna: Audit seasons are fun because I would see the attitude of people *'pag nastress na sila. Nakikita ko rin yung mga tag team, parang sige ako matutulog ngayon, ikaw mag balance. Nakakatuwa* during audit season. That was an experience. It's the company and the team, those were the highlights. Another highlight was the sendoff *na ginawa sa akin nung partners nung papunta na ako ng Sydney.* It was a nice feeling to be valued by the Firm. All the partners were there, and even the managing partners were there to send me off.

What do you miss most about being at the Firm?

Anna: Making proposals and presentations, client calls to sell. Because now, I'm on the other side already, meaning I'm the

one who receives the proposals. A lot of people don't like it but I kind of enjoyed it. Also, being able to attend and learn from various clients. That's something that I miss because I get to learn from different boards of different companies. It was a privilege to hear how they think and to learn from them. I have that privilege here now, but when you're in consulting, you get to see the different views of the businesses.

How did your work experience at the Firm help you in your career and your succeeding endeavors?

Anna: *Iyon yung sinasabi ko na* KPMG was very instrumental to me. It's because of the mentorship that I received when I was working with the Firm. So what actually helped me is the resilience that I developed while I was there, being very resourceful but still being very humble enough to listen and learn from your mentors or coaches.

Which part of your work experience do you think will be most useful for the Firm's professionals today?

Anna: What I found useful and still am using right now is when you deal with clients, you develop a lot of negotiation and presentation skills. I find it key in whatever career you want to go, even in a very IT or tech-intensive arena, it is such an advantage if you know how to talk to other people and you know the language of Management. That's one thing I learned that's very useful. It's how to deal with clients and being able to read them.

What advice or message can you share with the current and future employees of KPMG RGM&Co.?

Anna: Get as much as you can in terms of experience. Seek and actively find a mentor that really cares about your career and listen. Money is not everything, build your skill set, find your strength and everything will follow, even money.

What's the most important thing you've learned from KPMG Philippines that you can bring with you throughout your career?

Anna: Humility.

What made you go back to the Philippines?

Anna: My husband. I had the opportunity to go back, I still think I can contribute more to the Philippines. I still haven't given up on the country. I think there's hope. That is why I chose the companies that I went to. These are the companies that I think can really help the Filipino people. There's a chance for the Philippines. The reason why I went to BDO and Smart was because their vision for the Filipino people is being financially literate so that they will be able to support themselves. If they support themselves, then they can create businesses. When there are businesses, then that is when investments will come in, everything will follow. *Sana mangyari yun*, probably not in my lifetime but eventually. So, that's why I came back.

What are the other things that you've been busy with lately?

Anna: Family - my kids. I'm a frustrated farmer. I'm fascinated with my small garden of herbs. I'm also trying to learn how to cook, because I'm not good at cooking. Also, *nahawa ako sa asawa ko sa* electronics. It's like the concept of Internet of Things. It is creating concepts of electronics of some sort. I'm actually trying to understand it because it's my husband who is well-versed with it. I'm also trying out running, biking, but not really too serious about it.

Family?

Anna: On weekdays, as much as possible, we read. On weekends, we go to Nuvali and swim. We do weird stuff like electronics, we're a geeky family. We go to Mind Museum to do science workshops with the kids, and they are just 4 and 7 years old. We're introducing them to a lot of geeky stuff. It's really time for the family and the church during Sundays.

First Alumni Career Mentorship Talk

The Alumni Career Mentorship Talk kicked off on 20 May 2015 with KPMG in the Philippines Alumni Pearl Siguan as the first guest speaker. Formerly an auditor of the Firm, she is now the CFO of Ramcar Food Group - KFC.

To start the program, there was a small welcoming surprise by former colleagues, namely, Juvielon Arlos, Elena Española, Melanie Giron, and Renato Calma, followed by Audit Partner Wilfredo Z. Palma who gave the opening remarks and introduced the guest speaker whom she has worked with for many years.

Pearl Siguan initially asked the professionals to draw or write down where they see themselves 10 to 15 years from now as an ice breaker. She then talked about her work experience, learnings and trainings while working in the Firm. She closed the first session of the Alumni Career Mentorship Talk by saying that it was through the seven-year training she received from the Firm that she was able to achieve her goals and get to where she is today.



Calling all KPMG in the Philippines Alumni, you may now register online to join our Alumni Program.

Click on the link below for the details:
<https://rea.msvcs.kpmg.com/gqt-anonym/Entry/QuestionnaireEntry.aspx?QuestionnaireId=35274>

For queries, please send us an e-mail to ph-alumni@kpmg.com or call 885 7000 local 327.



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Editorial Page

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Our Values

We lead by example
We work together
We respect the individual
We seek the facts and
provide insight
We are open and honest in
our communication
We are committed to
our communities
Above all, we act
with integrity

For comments and suggestions,
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