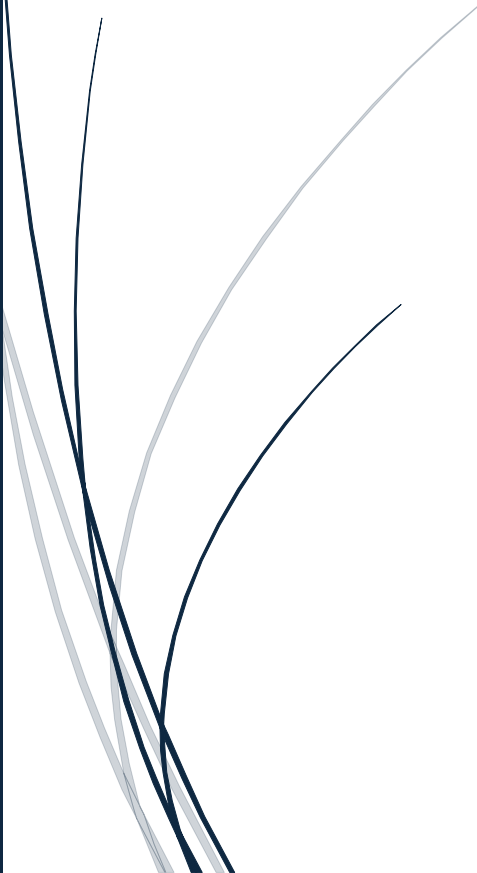




4/10/2026

Balik-Turo 2026

Program



A Collaboration between the University of the
Philippines (UP) College of Nursing and UP
Nursing Alumni Association International, Inc.

UPCN-UPNAAI BALIK-TURO 2026 PROGRAM LIST

- **Master of Ceremonies** – Manuela Castillo, UPNAAI Adviser
- **Invocation** – Lynnette Faylona, UPCNAA President
- **Welcome and Opening Remarks** – Dr. Sheila Bonito, UPCN Dean
- **Keynote Address** – Rosemarie Gadioma, UPNAAI President
- **Presentation 1: From Individual to Community: Transforming Health Through Lifestyle and Culture**

Geraldine Kidary

- **Presentation 2: Interprofessional Collaboration in Healthcare**
Elizabeth de Leon-Gamboa
- **Audience Q & A**
- **Stethoscope Raffle 1**
- **Panel Discussion: Evidence-Based Factors to Successful Nursing Careers: Insights from Leaders in Clinical Practice, Education & Life Sciences**

Raquel Bertiz, Anabelle Mazzoch, Christina Ycaza-Gutierrez, and Ramil Cabela

- **Open Forum/Audience Q&A**
- **Awarding of Scholarship Grants**
- **Stethoscope Raffle 2**
- **Closing & Tokens of Appreciation** – UPNAAI President, UPCN Dean
- **Lunch**

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Ramil Cabela, DBA, MBA, BSN, RN is a nurse executive and pharmacovigilance leader with more than 20 years of experience advancing drug safety through high-performing teams, innovative systems, and data-driven processes. A trained critical care nurse and graduate of the **University of the Philippines College of Nursing, Class of 1991** (graduate education degrees obtained in the US), Dr. Cabela built a strong clinical foundation before transitioning into global pharmacovigilance leadership roles across Pfizer, Celgene, and Bristol Myers Squibb.



His work includes transforming paper-based case management into fully electronic systems, improving case narrative quality through Six Sigma methods, developing a pharmacovigilance quality assurance database, and leading the design and implementation of safety signal detection and management platforms. At Bristol Myers Squibb, he served as Head of Safety Science in hematology-oncology and cell therapy, co-leading the integration of teams and systems following a major merger. Dr. Cabela holds an MBA from the City University of New York and a DBA from the University of South Florida. He currently serves as a consultant with Perspective Pharmacovigilance, where he advises organizations on building sustainable, compliant, and innovative safety operations.

Anabelle Mazzochi, BSN, RN is a senior nursing executive whose career reflects sustained excellence across clinical practice, operations, and quality leadership. A graduate of the **University of the Philippines College of Nursing, Class of 1991**, she built a strong professional foundation through early practice in medical-surgical and ICU settings before advancing through progressive leadership roles in the United States.



Anabelle has served as Assistant Director of Nursing, Director of Nursing, and currently as Regional Director of Clinical Operations at Virtue Clinical Solutions. She provides system-level oversight for multiple skilled nursing facilities across several states with responsibility for regulatory compliance, quality assurance, resident safety, and clinical performance improvement.

In addition to her executive leadership roles, Anabelle is a Certified Basic Life Support (BLS) Instructor through the American Heart Association (AHA), further demonstrating

her commitment to clinical excellence, emergency preparedness, and ongoing staff education.

Known for her collaborative leadership and mentorship of interdisciplinary teams, she consistently delivers measurable improvements in care quality while aligning operational outcomes with professional values, purpose, and long-term career success.

Geraldine “Gigi” Kidary, MS, BSN, RN, APRN, FNP-BC, GS-C is a board-certified Family Nurse Practitioner and autonomous Advanced Practice Registered Nurse in Florida with more than 30 years of nursing experience across primary care, care management, geriatrics, and community-based practice. A graduate of the **University of the Philippines College of Nursing, Class of 1991**, with advanced nursing education in clinical systems management, family practice, and ongoing doctoral study in lifestyle medicine, Gigi has built a career grounded in strong clinical judgment, continuous professional development, and holistic care.



She has held long-standing roles at United Health Group, one of the largest healthcare organizations in the United States, contributing expertise in clinical care management, analytics, and population health, while also expanding her impact by founding **Narra Primary Care, PLLC** in 2023 to address complex and preventive health needs. Gigi is recognized for her collaborative leadership and professional engagement, serving as President of the **University of the Philippines Nursing Alumni Association–Florida Chapter**. Her work reflects a deep commitment to patient-centered care, healthy aging, professional service, and lifelong contribution to nursing and community health.

Elizabeth de Leon-Gamboa, MSN, RN, CPHQ, CCM, CMCN is a nurse leader and healthcare quality practitioner whose career reflects sustained professional growth, system-level impact, and service-driven leadership across clinical practice, quality oversight, and policy engagement. She is a graduate of the **University of the Philippines College of Nursing, Class of 1991**. With **35 years of nursing experience in the Philippines and the United States**, Elizabeth built a strong clinical foundation across medical-surgical, oncology, rehabilitation, skilled nursing, primary care, and care management roles before advancing into healthcare quality, compliance, and education.



She currently serves as **Manager of Quality in Delegation Oversight at Optum Care**, providing regional oversight of delegated entities and ensuring regulatory compliance, performance improvement, and patient safety. Elizabeth holds multiple national certifications in healthcare quality, case management, and managed care, and is pursuing a **Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)** degree to further strengthen her leadership and systems expertise. Her career is marked by deep commitment

to mentorship, advocacy, and community leadership, including service as **Secretary of the Nevada State Board of Nursing**, past president of the Philippine Nurses Association of Nevada, advisory board member of the Nevada Nurses Foundation, and founding president of **Healthy Fil-Am Nayan**. Through scholarship, policy leadership, and culturally responsive wellness initiatives, Elizabeth advances nursing excellence, public protection, and holistic care for diverse communities.

Maria Christina Ycaza-Gutierrez, BSN, RN, CCRN is an accomplished critical care nurse whose career reflects sustained clinical excellence, leadership at the bedside, and meaningful contributions to patient care, education, and quality improvement. A graduate of the **University of the Philippines College of Nursing, Class of 1991** where she ranked in the **Top 10 of her class**, Ms. Ycaza-Gutierrez established a strong foundation in clinical judgment and professional discipline that has guided more than two decades of practice in high-acuity care settings.



She has spent the majority of her career at **Maimonides Medical Center**, progressing through roles in pulmonary care and the Medical Intensive Care Unit to her current position as **Nurse Clinician**, where she provides expert care to critically ill patients, manages advanced technologies such as mechanical ventilation and CRRT/CVVHD, and supports safe, evidence-based practice. Her leadership is evident through her service as charge nurse, preceptor, unit educator, and contributor to performance improvement initiatives and nurse-driven clinical protocols. Recognized with the **DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses**, she is also a published author in *Critical Care Nurse*, highlighting her impact on practice innovation. Ms. Ycaza-Gutierrez's career is defined by professional integrity, mentorship, and a deep commitment to advancing critical care nursing and patient safety.

Raquel Bertiz, PhD, RN, CNE, CHSE-A is a nationally and internationally recognized nurse educator, scholar, and leader whose career reflects sustained clinical credibility, educational innovation, and system-level impact in nursing education. A graduate of the **University of the Philippines College of Nursing, Class of 1991** (PhD in Nursing) with advanced/graduate preparation in health professions education in the US, she built a strong clinical foundation through practice in medical–surgical, maternal–child, and perioperative nursing before transitioning into academia and educational leadership.



She has served for more than 18 years as faculty and professor in prelicensure nursing programs, where she led major curriculum redesigns, integrated simulation and concept-based education, expanded ADN-to-BSN pathways, and developed widely adopted **open educational resources** that have improved access, equity, and affordability for diverse learners.

Currently, Raquel serves as **Senior Manager at the National League for Nursing Center for Innovation in Education Excellence**, where she leads national faculty development initiatives, co-directs the NLN Simulation Leaders Program, and advances simulation, AI, and technology-enhanced learning for nurse educators worldwide. She previously led statewide simulation capacity-building as **Lead Faculty for the Maryland Clinical Simulation Resource Consortium**, significantly increasing faculty preparation, simulation utilization, and certified simulation educators across Maryland. A published scholar and presenter, Raquel is known for mentoring educators, fostering collaboration, and translating evidence into scalable educational models that strengthen the nursing workforce and improve health outcome.

PRESENTATION 1

From Individual to Community: Transforming Health Through Lifestyle and Culture

Speaker: Geraldine Kidary, MS, BSN, RN, APRN, FNP-BC, GS-C

Synopsis:

This session explores how lifestyle medicine and whole-person, culturally responsive care can transform health outcomes for individuals and communities. Using global and Philippine health data, it highlights the growing burden of chronic disease and the powerful role nurses play in prevention, early intervention, and behavior change. Students will learn the six pillars of lifestyle medicine, understand how social and cultural factors shape health, and discover practical, culturally aligned strategies—from plant-forward Filipino meals to physical activity and sleep optimization—that can be applied in both clinical and community settings. The session equips future nurses with actionable tools to promote wellness, reduce health risks, and support healthier communities.

PRESENTATION 2

Interprofessional Collaboration in Healthcare

Speaker: Elizabeth de Leon-Gamboa, MSN, RN, CPHQ, CCM, CMCN

Synopsis:

This session introduces nursing students to the essential principles and real-world impact of interprofessional collaboration in modern healthcare. Through clear frameworks, practical strategies, and a compelling stroke-rehabilitation case study, the presentation illustrates how nurses—through communication, coordination, advocacy, education, and leadership—serve as the vital link connecting diverse professionals to deliver safe, efficient, and patient-centered care. Students will explore common barriers to teamwork, learn evidence-based approaches to overcoming them, and understand how strong interprofessional relationships improve patient outcomes, reduce burnout, enhance continuity of care, and strengthen their own clinical confidence. This talk equips future nurses with the mindset and skills needed to thrive as collaborative, compassionate members of the healthcare team.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Evidence-Based Factors to Successful Nursing Careers: Insights from Leaders in Clinical Practice, Education & Life Sciences

Panelists:

- **Raquel Bertiz, PhD, RN, CNE, CHSE-A** (academia)
- **Maria Christina Ycaza-Gutierrez, BSN, RN, CCRN** (acute care/hospital industry)
- **Anabelle Mazzochi, BSN, RN** (long-term care/rehabilitation industry)

Moderator:

- **Ramil Cabela, DBA, MBA, BSN, RN** (life sciences/pharmaceutical industry)

Synopsis:

A growing body of nursing and organizational research shows that long-term career success in nursing is shaped by five interconnected factors: Personal Mastery, Performance & Achievement, Relational Capital, Contextual Advantage, and Psychological Success. Together, these factors highlight how nurses grow through self-awareness and lifelong learning, deliver safe and evidence-based care, build strong professional relationships, work within supportive environments, and find meaning and empowerment in their roles. This model will be the focus of a panel discussion featuring experienced nurse leaders from clinical practice, education, and the life sciences, who will share how these research-based principles translate into real-world practice and offer guidance to students preparing for their own professional journeys.

Research Summary:

The nursing career success model helps students understand that successful nursing careers are not accidental—they are built through intentional habits, supportive environments, and meaningful professional relationships.

1. Personal Mastery refers to the internal capabilities that help nurses navigate complex clinical environments. Research highlights the importance of self-awareness, emotional intelligence, resilience, and lifelong learning in shaping professional identity and sustaining motivation over time (Cummings et al., 2018; Zhang et al., 2024).

2. Performance & Achievement captures the clinical excellence and reliability that form the backbone of professional credibility. Studies show that safe care, evidence-based practice, and strong clinical judgment predict early-career advancement and confidence among new nurses (Numminen et al., 2016).

3. Relational Capital emphasizes the power of mentorship, teamwork, and professional networks. Nursing is a relationship-driven profession, and evidence demonstrates that mentorship and organizational involvement significantly improve career satisfaction, leadership readiness, and long-term retention (Nowell et al., 2017; Huston, 2020).

4. Contextual Advantage recognizes that work environments profoundly shape career trajectories. Supportive leadership, psychologically safe units, healthy staffing, and access to growth opportunities—

such as those found in Magnet-recognized organizations—are strongly linked to retention, job satisfaction, and leadership development (Shirey, 2017; Drenkard, 2010).

5. Psychological Success reflects the internal sense of meaning, empowerment, and alignment with values that keep nurses engaged and committed to the profession. Research shows that nurses who feel valued and empowered experience less burnout and greater long-term satisfaction (Laschinger et al., 2016; Wong & Laschinger, 2015).

Together, these five factors provide a clear, evidence-based roadmap for nursing students to intentionally shape their careers from the very beginning—helping them build not only successful professional pathways but also deeply meaningful and sustainable lives in nursing.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Our deepest appreciation goes to our generous sponsors and partners who help bring Balik-Turo to life for our UPCN undergraduate students.

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