



**JULITA V. SOTEJO MEDALLION OF HONOR**

*Medallium Honoris Servitium Patriae et Humanitate*  
(For Service to Country and Humanity)

**MA. REBECCA MARAÑA GALVEZ TAN**  
BSN '75, MAN '83, RN

2016 Julita V. Sotejo Medallion of Honor Awardee

*For her commitment to championing a community-based nurse living and working with the people using a holistic perspective and approach. She distinguished herself as a pioneer in the practice of traditional Filipino medicine and other forms of complementary health strategies.*

In the not so distant past, when just about any high school graduate aspiring to become a doctor or a nurse was asked the reason for choosing a career in the medical field, the usual reply would be: “I want to serve humanity.” Idealistic thoughts often engrossed young impressionable minds during those days and that statement became a standard answer and soon enough, a cliché. However, to those who took it seriously, it became a calling.

Such was the case with Maria Rebecca Marana Galvez Tan, the 2016 Julita V. Sotejo Medallion of Honor Awardee, who had a strong urge towards a particular way of life and career – to be in the service of her less fortunate fellowmen. There’s nothing doubtful about this fact because proof positive is the statement she herself provided:

*“It has been thirty-eight years since I took that first step and committed myself to the mission of providing access to primary health care in the underprivileged communities. It may have seemed like a long time ago but if there is anything that has not changed through the years, it is my grateful heart that longs to keep on giving without counting the cost. I continue to dedicate my twilight years towards the service and development of the greater majority of Filipinos in marginalized areas in the country. I have undeniably found my passion in creating communities of wellness for my countrymen who need it the most. It was my calling then and it still is my calling now.”*

It all started for “Becks,” as she is fondly called, during her elementary schooling at Maryknoll Academy in Lipa City, Batangas. Mary Ann Barrientos-David, UPCN '75, a very dear friend and current President of the DelMarva Chapter recalled the following anecdote. “When Becks was in third grade, she was a member of the “Little Workers Club. She always volunteered to go with the nuns to distribute food rations to the indigent areas of her hometown.” Even then, she knew she had the calling.

At the University of the Philippines, her burning desire to serve others grew more intense as she immersed herself in the service-oriented education program that the University offered. In 1975, she graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree and worked as a graduate and research assistant from 1975 to 1977. In 1983, she earned her Master’s Degree in Nursing.

What else has she accomplished to date?

By far, the biggest feather in her cap is her involvement in Health Futures Foundation (HFI) which she and husband, Dr. Jaime Galvez Tan, UPCM, established in 1998. It is a non-stock, non-profit organization dedicated to empowering communities and local governments to achieve access, quality, and equity in health and development. As Training and Projects Coordinator for the HFI, she traveled nationwide from Ilocos to TawiTawi, laying the groundwork for their flagship program “Alaga Ka” (Alay

sa Ginhawa at Kalusugan). The program aims to strengthen the Philippine health care system through the renovation or construction of Barangay Health Stations in the poorest communities in the Philippines. Specifically, they develop health human resources for indigenous peoples and hone the knowledge and skills of health personnel. As Project Director, she led and supervised several medical missions to typhoon-struck municipalities in Samar province and coordinated efforts for livelihood assistance to calamity-stricken areas.

For the last 18 years, she has committed herself to championing a community-based nurse living and working with the people using a holistic perspective and approach. She distinguished herself as a pioneer in the practice of traditional Filipino medicine and other forms of complementary health strategies. She authored, co-authored, edited and contributed to relevant books, manuals and other literary materials with national and international readership. She supervised the implementation of grants and research projects from partner agencies like the World Health Organization, UNICEF, UNFPA, Bill and Melinda Gates Leadership Institute for Population Management, JICA, Consuelo Foundation, among others.

Her list of achievements is long and lack of space precluded the inclusion of no more than the ones that are most significant.

Therefore, the UPNAAI Board of Directors, on recommendation by the Awards and Citations Committee chaired by Lyvia M. Villegas, BSN, MA, RN, FNP, unanimously voted Rebecca Marana Galvez Tan, BSN'75, MAN'83 as the 2016 Julita V. Sotejo Medallion of Honor Awardee for her significant and innovative contributions to the nursing profession; for attaining national and international prestige which brought honor and distinction to nursing, university and country; and for rendering an extraordinary and selfless service to country and her fellowmen, specifically the less fortunate.

Mahatma Gandhi said that “The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.” Becks found herself by totally submerging herself in the service of others. Service defined, is an act of helpful activity. That, she joyfully and wholeheartedly provided.

We take our hats off to you, Becks!

By Vladimir B. Santos, M.D.  
Editor

*Those who are happiest  
are those who do the most for others.”*

— **Booker T. Washington**

*The greatest joys in life are found  
not only in what we do and feel,  
but also in our quiet hopes and labors for others.”*

— **Bryant McGill**

*“Service which is rendered without joy  
helps neither the servant nor the served.  
But all other pleasures and possessions pale into nothingness  
before service which is rendered in a spirit of joy.”*

— **Mahatma Gandhi**