



The Wiloci Room
at Malcolm Hall

UP College of Law
21 May 2018





U.P. WOMEN LAWYERS' CIRCLE, INC.

Message



We congratulate and thank our Wiloci sisters and benefactors for making the Wiloci Room a reality. And we thank the former dean of the UP College of Law, and now the University of the Philippines President, Danilo L. Concepcion, for giving Wiloci the permission and privilege to undertake this project, and to forthwith designate it as the "Wiloci Room". Also, a hearty congratulations to the new dean of the UP College of Law, Fides Cordero Tan, past president of Wiloci. We thank Dean Fides for her love and never-ending support for Wiloci.

As UP Law alumnae, this project, modest as it is, gives us a sense of joy and pride because through it we have somehow reconnected ourselves and brought us back to our roots -- our dear alma mater which taught us to be great lawyers. It gives us a reason to stay in touch.

The Wiloci Room is for all law students. In particular, it is our way of reaching out to our younger sisters, reminding them that we are here for them, watching, and waiting in eager anticipation for that great day when they take their oath as Wiloci sisters. But this early in their law studies, we wish to engage them in an exciting yet meaningful conversation on the *Whereases*, the *Wherefores* and the *Therefores* of law practice.

Finally, it is our hope that the Wiloci Room will serve as a visible symbol of Wiloci as an organization, its beginnings and its mission of providing legal aid to the poor, its hopes and aspirations as envisioned by its founders, and what it has become through the years in its adherence to, and pursuit for the rule of law and commitment to legal excellence.

WILMA M. VALDEMORO CUA
President







UNIVERSITY of the PHILIPPINES

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

MESSAGE



My sincerest congratulations to the UP Women Lawyers' Circle, Inc. for the newly-inaugurated WILOCI Room in the UP College of Law on May 21, 2018.

It is only befitting that the WILOCI Room is inaugurated following the national celebration of Women's Month and the international celebration of Women's Day with themes in line with change and progress coupled with compassion. This room is one of many testaments that women lawyers are leading the charge as changemakers in their own respective fields. With huge leaps forward in women empowerment, gender equality, and policies that protect and promote women's rights, the innovative creation and use of safe spaces for both men and women to be educated is another laudable contribution of the Women Lawyers' Circle and its inspiring members to the noble vision of teaching law in the grand manner.

May the WILOCI Room serve its purpose to be a conducive expanse where students may engage and be informed, where knowledge may be created and replicated, and where inspiration may take root in the minds of women as future icons and men as future allies in the fight to bring positive change in the lives of all.

The University will remain steadfast in its commitment to preserve these spaces and facilitate more fruitful partnerships with its stakeholders. On behalf of the University, I extend to the WILOCI my gratitude for your generosity and my appreciation for their unwavering support.

Again, congratulations and *mabuhay po kayo!*

DANILO L. CONCEPCION

The 21st President



UNIVERSITY *of the* PHILIPPINES

COLLEGE OF LAW

MESSAGE



My dear WILOCI Sisters,

WILOCI has always endeavored to have some form of visibility among the female students of the College of Law, or among they who would eventually become WILOCIs.

I remember during the leadership years of Bella Castillo, Violy Drilon and Vicki delos Reyes, WILOCI would invite the female students to volleyball games so that familiarity and bonding could start soonest possible and not wait for after graduation. The games were however fierce and far from friendly, but the fellowships right after never failed to melt the competitiveness into warm and hearty conversations of the sisterly kind. Needless to say, WILOCI always lost the volleyball games.

Under the leadership of Wilma V. Cua, WILOCI will now have a permanent presence in the College, in a dimension different from the sports events of long ago. In a short while, we will cut the ribbon and enter what used to be Rm 212 of the Malcolm Hall -- rebranded and glamorized *à la* WILOCI.

The donation of the WILOCI Room that will serve as a classroom in the College of Law is testament of our continuing affection for our one and only alma mater. It brings us back where we all started dreaming dreams, which dreams became the excuse for forging eternal friendships we call the WILOCI.

Thank you WILOCI for taking care of our alumnae. I have no doubt our alumnae are stronger and more inspired due in no small measure to the nurturing of WILOCI.

And in behalf of the faculty, students and staff of the UP College of Law, an astounding congratulations on the occasion of the inauguration of the WILOCI Room.

Mabuhay ang WILOCI! Mabuhay ang UP College of Law!


FIDES C. CORDERO-TAN
Dean



U.P. WOMEN LAWYERS' CIRCLE, INC.

Message



The U.P. Women Lawyers' Circle (UP WILOCI), the association of the alumnae of the UP College of Law was founded 72 years ago. Throughout its long and distinguished history, the UP WILOCI has shared the vision of the UP College of Law "to teach law in the grand manner and to make great lawyers". From the portals of Malcolm Hall, increasing numbers of U.P. Wilocis, have applied their excellence in law towards building legal institutions, dispensing justice, providing legal aid and enhancing the practice of law. Its roster of illustrious and dedicated alumnae in public service and private practice is a testament to the continuing realization of this vision.

The U.P. WILOCI, through the donation of the U.P. WILOCI room, reaffirms, once again, its commitment to the welfare of the law students who are in the process of becoming great lawyers. It is the hope of the U.P. WILOCI that this modest contribution will assist both professors and students to teach and learn the law in the grand manner.

REGINA PADILLA GERALDEZ
UP Law Class of 1978
Chair, WILOCI Room Project



The Wiloci Room: where dreams are nurtured and hope kept alive

Room 212 stands at the end of the row of classrooms located at the second floor of Malcolm Hall. On October 23, 2017, former UP College of Law Dean Dani Concepcion agreed to turn-over Room 212 to UP WILOCI for the latter to convert to a classroom. Through the joint efforts of UP WILOCI President **Wilma Cua** and Past Wiloci President **Gina Geraldez**, funds were raised to transform Room 212 into what would be known as *The Wiloci Room*. Aably designed by Architect Richard Marten E. Rinen, the room is slightly bigger than the regular classrooms with seats for about 40 students.

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HOLMES



U.P. Wiloci: 71 Years of Commitment to Legal Excellence and Public Service

The U.P. Women Lawyers' Circle (WILOCI) emerged from the ashes of World War II – a unique sisterhood of talented and dedicated professionals eager to participate in rebuilding and restoring a ravaged country.

Seventy-two years ago, on November 9, 1946, eighty-one of the College of Law, University of the Philippines, met at the Orchid Room of the *Ang Tibay* shoe store on Rizal Avenue. They heeded the call of Corazon Juliano Agrava for a long-awaited reunion. From courtrooms, government offices, and the War Damage Commission, from their homes, business enterprises and places of work, they converged on that fateful day to establish a sorority which they named "*The U.P. Women Lawyers' Circle*". Among the purposes declared in its Constitution was to keep close contact with the U.P. Portia Sorority, promoting cooperation and mutual help in the fulfillment of common aims and purposes.

Corazon Juliano Agrava was elected as the Most Exalted Sister; Cecilia Muñoz Palma as Vice-Exalted Sister; Eugenia Banzon as Keeper of the Records; Felicidad Manotok as Keeper of the Purse and Frine Asprer Zaballero as Publicity Manager. Also elected was a Council of Twelve headed by Paz Legaspi Bautista who, in 1915, had been named the first Portia of the Orient by then U.P. President, Murray Butler.

On June 5, 1947, the U.P. WILOCI was formally organized as a non-stock, non-profit organization dedicated to public service. Its inspiring objectives then and now are "to defend the rights of individuals, contribute to the alleviation of the economic, educational, and political status of the Filipino, and strive for greater social order through the proper administration of justice." The fifteen officers and members of its first Board of Directors were: President Corazon Juliano Agrava; Vice-President Pacita de los Reyes; Secretary Eugenia Banzon; Treasurer Felicidad Manotok, Publicity Manager Priscilla Gonzales; Dean Paz Legaspi Bautista; and Directors Rosario Esquivel Gonzales; Salvacion Joven, Pilar Perez Nable, Remedios Acosta Azurin, Rosa Santos Munda, Socorro Tirona Liwag, and Liwayway Barican Fuentes.

Since then WILOCI has been headed by a stellar cast of successful and dedicated women lawyers – Corazon Juliano Agrava (1946 to 1952), Ameurfina Melencio Herrera (1952-1953; 1958-1960), Socorro Tirona Liwag (1953-1954), Pacita de los Reyes (1954-1956), Emma Quisumbing Fernando (1956-1957), Remedios Mijares Austria (1957-1958), Carolina Basa Salazar (1960-1962), Gregoria Cruz Arnaldo (1962-1966; 1968-1969), Ester Sison Cruz (1966-1968), Sylvia Lopez Alejandro (1969-1970), Teresita Cruz Sison (1970-1974), Yolanda Quisumbing Javellana (1974-1976), Mary Concepcion Bautista (1976-1978), Violeta Calvo Drilon (1978-1980), Bellaflor Angara Castillo (1980-1984), Rizalina Bonifacio Vera (1984-1986), Lilia R. Bautista (1986-1988), Ofelia Calcetas Santos (1988-1989); Victoria C. de los Reyes (1989-1991),



Purification Valera Quisumbing (1991-1993), Regina Padilla Geraldez (1993-1995), Cleofe Villar Verzola (1995-1997), Ana Teresa Arnaldo Oracion (1997-1999), Eva Policar Bautista (1999-2001), Maria Teresita Sison Go (2001-2003), Delia L. Hermoso (2003-2005). Teresita Mortola-Villaruz (2005-2007), Katrina Legarda (2008-2010), Fides Cordero-Tan(2010-2012), Fina De la Cuesta-Tantuico (2012-2014), Diana F. Franco (2014-2016). Wilma M. Valdemorro Cua is the incumbent President. The late Justice Corazon Juliano Agrava retains her position in its history as President Emerita.

Wilocis in Government

Beginning with Cecilia Muñoz Palma who blazed a trail when she was appointed as the first woman justice of the Supreme Court on October 29, 1973, all but two of the 14 women who have sat in the highest court have been WILOCIs. The Supreme Court and the Filipino nation have been enriched by the brilliance, dedication, courage, integrity and patriotism of WILOCIs Ameurfina Melencio Herrera, Irene R. Cortes, Carolina Grifño Aquino, Florida Ruth Pineda Romero, Minerva Gonzaga Reyes, Consuelo Ynares Santiago, Alice Austria Martinez, Conchita Carpio Morales and Minita Chico Nazario.

After her retirement, Justice Ameurfina Melencio Herrera became the first Chancellor of the Philippine Judicial Academy, the Supreme Court's training ground for the members of the judiciary. Incumbent Associate Justice **Teresita Leonardo de Castro** and no less than the incumbent Chief Justice of the highest Court of the land, **Chief Justice Maria**

Lourdes P.A. Sereno, along with retired Court of Appeals Justices **Josefina Guevara-Salonga**, **Rebecca de Guia Salvador**, **Rosemarie D. Carandang**, **Celia Librea-Leagogo**, **Mariflor Punzalan Castillo**, **Victoria Isabel A. Paredes**, and incumbent Justices **Nina G. Antonio-Valenzuela**, **Geraldine Fiel-Macaraeg**, as well as Court of Tax Appeals Justices **Cielito N. Mindaro-Grulla**, **Amelia Cotangco-Manalastas**, **Maribel Ringpis-Liban** and **Catherine Triunfante Manahan** continue to add luster to the roster of Wiloci's membership. WILOCI RTC judges have consistently been recipients of awards for Judicial Excellence, such as RTC Judges **Rona Modesto San Pedro** and **Angeline Quimpo-Sale**. The incumbent RTC judges include **Amifait Fider-Reyes**, **Tita Obinario**, **Tess Rana-Bernales**. Former RTC Judge **Marissa Macaraig-Guillen** is currently Assistant Solicitor General.

In the same manner, the executive and legislative branches of government have benefited from WILOCIs in their midst. The EDSA People Power revolution saw the emergence of colorful political leaders in the persons of **Miriam Defensor Santiago** as Commissioner of the Bureau of Immigration and Deportation and Secretary of Department of Agrarian Reform and **Haydee Yorac** as Comelec Commissioner. Several WILOCIs have served the executive branch of the national government as secretaries, undersecretaries, assistant secretaries, bureau heads, heads and members of regulatory boards such as the SEC, the NAPOLCOM and the Monetary Board. Others have preferred foreign service, rising from the ranks to become ambassadors, consuls and vice consuls. In the local government



organization, countless WILOCIs have been elected as governors, vice-governors, board members, mayors, vice-mayors and councilors. WILOCI have made their mark as legislators. In the 60's, the late **Tecla San Andres Ziga**, the first women bar topnotcher, was elected to the Senate. In the last 15 years, more WILOCI's have earned legislative mandates – **Miriam Defensor Santiago** and **Pia Cayetano Sebastian** were elected to the Senate and **Bellaflor Angara Castillo** and **Josephine Ramirez Soto** were elected to the House of representatives. Worthy of note is former Congressman Angara-Castillo's sponsorship of liberal and progressive laws on Domestic Partnership and Divorce. Two WILOCIs – **Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago** and the late PCGG Commissioner **Haydee Yorac** have received the equivalent of the Nobel Peace Prize in Asia the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Public Service. Of late, WILOCIs continue to dominate the national scene with the appointment of retired **Justice Conchita Carpio Morales** as Ombudsman, former corporate and tax practitioner **Grace Pulido-Tan** as Chairman of COA and litigation expert **Teresita Herbosa** as Chair of the Securities and Exchange Commission who succeeded former SEC Chair **Fe Barin**, also a Wiloci. Worthy of note was the appointment of **Darlene Marie Berberabe** of Class' 99 as CEO of the Pag-ibig Fund and her receipt of the recent Asia Pacific CEO award. **Gwendolyn Pimentel-Gana** of Class'86 is currently a Commissioner of the Commission on Human Rights. Just recently **Rosario "Girlie" Bernardo Sagadal** of Class'87 was appointed Commissioner of the National Labor Relations Commission. Of course, Wiloci

isproud to note that its former President, **Fides Cordero-Tan** succeeded Danilo L. Concepcion (who is now the President of the U.P.) to the deanship of the UP College of Law.

The great majority of WILOCIs have, however, chosen the difficult but rewarding path of private law practice. Many are single practitioners specializing in litigation; others are ranking partners of institutional law firms or in-house counsels of corporations engaged in such diverse fields of law practice as litigation, arbitration, corporate, banking, intellectual property, labor, tax, and immigration. Still, others have found fulfillment in the vocation of law teaching. Lastly, many have chosen to be entrepreneurs, applying their legal training to the enhancement of personal business.

Truly, the concerted action of the committed members of the WILOCI under the leadership of their dynamic past presidents and members of the Board and officers have borne fruit, thus enhancing a solid reputation for excellence and a commitment to public service. Moving forward, the U.P. WILOCI continues to forge ahead in pursuit of the same ambitious vision and dedicated commitment to public service that have been the hallmarks of its past.

*(Excerpts from the Article "60 years of Adherence to Legal Professionalism and Public Services" and "The Wiloci Story" penned by **Regina Padilla Geraldez** and **Diana Franco** on the occasion of U.P. WILOCI's 60th anniversary and 75th Anniversary respectively. The article has been updated by **Fina de la Cuesta- Tantuico** with the permission of the authors.)*





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The Legal Aid Program

Considered as the centerpiece of the UP WILOCI's advocacy, the Legal Aid Program (LAP) started in the late 40's, when President Manuel Roxas tasked our founder & President Emerita, the late Court of Appeals **Justice Corazon Juliano Agrava**, and the WILOCI to provide legal services in domestic relations. Since then, the LAP underwent major transformations.

In the 1990's, WILOCI President **Dr. Purificacion Quisumbing**, who was also holding the position of UNICEF Senior Regional Adviser for Social Mobilization and External Relations, conducted a consultative seminar-workshop with the theme, "**The Child in the Justice System**" as an expression of support and active compliance to the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. A total of 84 participants attended representing the different departments of the country's judicial system including government agencies, Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and media, i.e., Department of Justice, National Bureau of Investigation, Philippine National Police, Philippine Judges Association, Department of Education, Department of Labor and Employment and Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), as well as representatives from the academic community, the UNICEF and other civic and religious groups.

Taking off from Dr. Quisumbing's advocacy, the next WILOCI President **Regina Padilla Geraldez**, further strengthened the LAP by entering into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the DSWD. WILOCI then designated Minerva June Ambrosio, an active WILOCI legal aid volunteer lawyer, to handle all cases of child and women abuse referred by DSWD. A Legal Aid Committee chaired by **Catherine Manahan** was also constituted to aid the WILOCI and Atty. Ambrosio in complying with their obligations under the MOA.

Expanding further the outreach of its LAP, WILOCI under the leadership of President **Delia Hermoso**, successfully forged a partnership with the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) in 2003 whereby the latter agreed to provide a regular allowance for two(2) WILOCI members who will handle cases which were referred to the IBP. This agreement institutionalized the Women's Desk at the National Committee on Legal Aid of the IBP National Office, with the deputization of two volunteer WILOCI's. As of July 2006, the WILOCI through the National Committee on Legal Aid Committee, has provided legal services relating to child support, illegal dismissal, child custody, domestic violence, land title problems, correction of birth records, physical injuries, urban poor housing, lease, ejection, unlawful detainer, coercion, free patent, migrant workers' duties, NLRC-pending cases, credit transactions, malicious mischief, trespassing and grave threats.

Inspired by this outburst of volunteerism, the term of President **Teresita A.M. Villaruz** witnessed further partnership with other government agencies and international agencies, in addition to DSWD, such as the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). Under the UNDP-assisted IBP Jail Decongestion Program, WILOCI provided legal advisory and courtroom representation assistance to women detained in Quezon City, Manila, Pasay and Pasig City

jails. It also participated in the preparation of the IBP Decongestion Publication and the MOA with CARITAS Manila for a more comprehensive and integrated approach to the jail problems. Still under Atty. Villaruz' leadership, WILOCI began a partnership with CHR to study the human rights' conditions of, and provide legal interventions to the Muslim women and children/juveniles in conflict with the law (CICL/JICL) who were detained in Metro Manila detention centers. This project entailed visits to 12 Metro Manila jails, interview of some 260 detainees and the review of their court records. Additional aid came in the form of trial assistance, pleading preparation, coordination with the providers of justice in government and actual courtroom representation.

The spirit of volunteerism among the WILOCI began to spread out to other NGOs advocating the rights of children. This occurred during the incumbency of President **Katrina Legarda**. Volunteer WILOCI then handled cases of violation of childrens' rights referred by the Child Justice League, Inc. (CJL), an NGO located at the 4/F of the DSWD Central Office in Batasan Complex, Constitution Hills, Quezon City.

Further institutionalization of the LAP of WILOCI happened under the leadership of **Fides Cordero Tan**, when she executed two sets of MOA, namely: with the DSWD on July 7, 2011 and with Hyundai Asia Resources Inc. (HARI) Foundation, Inc. on November 18, 2011. The first MOA with DSWD reiterated the program of WILOCI to provide legal assistance to indigents through (a) legal counseling; (b) court representation; and (c) legal literacy; while the second MOA with the HARI Foundation provided a P1 Million grant to be released in tranches in order to help the implementation of the 3 pillars of WILOCI's LAP, as outlined under the MOA with DSWD. It was also under this MOA with HARI that a Hyundai utility van was donated to WILOCI for use in its LAP. A total of 7 active trial cases involving abuse and violation of children's rights were started, more than 10 consultations were rendered to walk-in and DSWD/IBP-referred clients and 3 legal literacy programs were conducted covering the topics on legal rights of women, domestic relations covering child support, legal separation and domestic violence, and the legal procedure for handling child complaints, including preparation of evidence, counseling, etc.

At present, the incumbent President **Wilma Valdemoro Cua** continues to support the 3-pronged legal assistance program with the appointment of a Coordinator who reports to the WILOCI Center every Monday and Wednesday to render legal consultation services from 9:00AM to 1:30 PM. She also handles the overall coordination and management of the court cases being handled by the WILOCI lawyers and courses all new case referrals to the Legal Aid Committee for approval whose members include **Assistant Solicitor General Marissa Guillen, Minerva June Ambrosio, Anna Maria Abad, Ma. Luz R. Raval, Gwendolyn Pimentel-Gana, Fides Cordeo-Tan** and the incumbent President **Wilma Valdemoro Cua. Arlene Lapuz- Ureta** recently succeeded **Annie Ayo** as Coordinator for the Legal Aid Program.

NOT ALL SISTERS ARE BY BLOOD

By: Kat Franco

When my grandaunt, the late Atty. Diana F. Franco, WILOCI Past President (2014 to 2016) invited me to be her corporate secretary if she would run for WILOCI President in 2012, I turned her down. It was not because I did not want to help her out – I really did, but it was more of a misconception of what WILOCI was, and not knowing what it would eventually mean to me. Being a young single lawyer working in a medium-sized law firm in Makati City, you tend to be very focused on the job. It is not an common joke that you are referred to as the “slaves” of the firm and the clients, and mostly, your time is not your own. My mom once left me a note on my bedroom dresser saying “Dear Tin, I have not seen you in 2 weeks, I miss you. Love, Mama.” And we live in the same house.

But when Tita Diana asked me a second time to be her corporate secretary, in 2014, I said “yes,” and to this day, I am very thankful that I did. Being an active member of WILOCI made me take a second look at my practice of our profession, and the standards and goals that I have set for myself. Being in the regular company of brilliant female lawyers who are at the peak of their careers, and those who refuse to let something like retirement slow them down, has really shown me that you can be professional, excellent, funny, caring, loving, self-giving, thoughtful, principled, service oriented, loyal, gracious, and act with integrity, and at the same time be a good boss, a colleague, a daughter, a partner, a wife, a mother, a grandmother, an aunt, a friend, and a sister.

WILOCI is a reminder of our alma mater, the UP College of Law, and the principles that it stands for: honor, excellence, service, and the constant challenge to be the best lawyer that you can be. It is also a venue for us female lawyers from the UP College of Law to get together to reminisce, have fun, serve others, and to help each other through life’s challenges, both professionally and personally. When you are with WILOCI, you are in good company, because these ladies are tough, they get things done, they are well-organized, they don’t let their gender be a hindrance – in fact, it is an asset. WILOCI members come from a long line of beauty queens, justices, judges, commissioners, senators, private practitioners, professors, a list too long to mention here, but get a copy of “The WILOCI Story 70 Years of Legal Excellence & Public Service.”

Being in WILOCI is like one big celebration of womanhood, and it shows too in our advocacy, the promotion of the welfare and the protection of women and children. I only hope that as the years go by, I can earn my place among these distinguished ladies and that live up to the of bar of professional excellence that they have set for the rest of us. After being a member of WILOCI for more than ten years, and now having a law firm of my own together with other UP Law graduates in Bonifacio Global City, I have learned that service and fun go hand in hand no matter what the circumstances, and that you can always look to your older WILOCI sisters for guidance, mentorship and inspiration. And of course, there will always be that extra touch of glee when you get together and you hear people start calling you “Seeeeeester!!!!!!”



UP Women Lawyers' Circle, Inc. (WILOCI)

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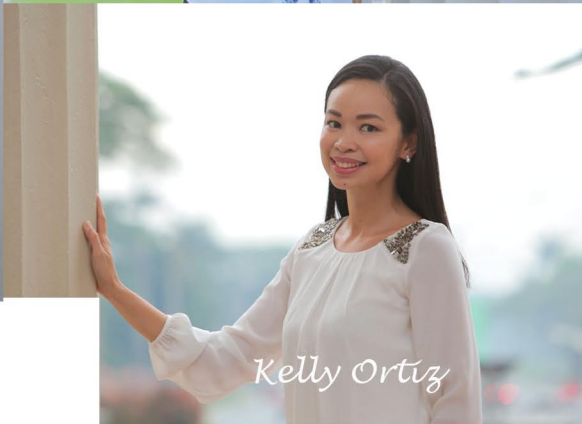
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Pin Paz

Postscript

Finally, a room called Wiloci! Congratulations to **President Wilma Cua** and **Past President Gina Geraldez** for embarking on this project and pulling it through. At long last, we now have another tangible legacy and no less than at Malcolm Hall this time. We hope that with this room, students of the college will be acquainted with our 70-year old institution and find something to emulate in its tradition of honour and excellence in all its endeavors.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, may I thank the following without whose support this Wiloci magazine would not have been made in time for the inauguration of the Wiloci room:

Dean Fides "Deng" Cordero-Tan, for breakfast, lunch and merienda

The Office of the Dean, UP College of Law (Rhona, Nora)

Erik Cusi, who patiently took all our photographs and "chika chikas"

Lai Pineda who continued to work on the file against doctor's orders

Alphabet Printing, for ensuring the magazine will be out on Inauguration Day.

On the pages that follow, we thank our sponsors - whose financial contributions made The Wiloci Room a reality.

Mabuhay ang U.P. Women Lawyers' Circle!!

Fina A. de la Cuesta - Tantuico

*Past President, UP Wiloci
Editor, The Wiloci Room Magazine*





In support of THE WILOCI ROOM



Lilia R. Bautista

Class '57

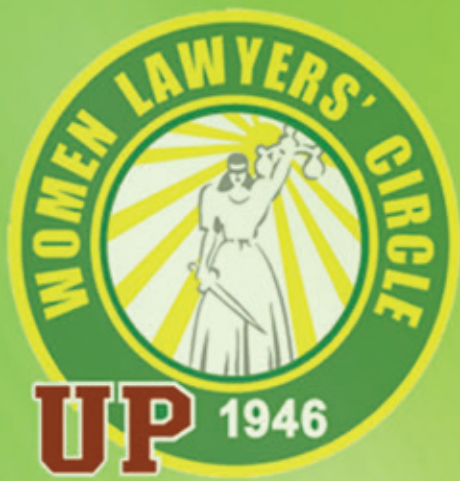
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In support of THE WILOCI ROOM



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In support of THE WILOCI ROOM



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Arlene Lapuz-Ureta

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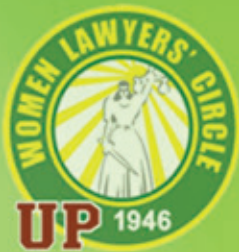
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General Counsel, UP WILOCI



Estelita D. Cordero



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