

Message: NAST & PSHC Anniversary Celebration



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Greetings!

Today, I am reminded of the long legacy and tremendous responsibility carried by the National Academy of Science and Technology Philippines (NAST PHL). For forty-nine years, NAST PHL has served as the nation's highest recognition and advisory body for science, honoring outstanding Filipino scientists, elevating the standards of research and innovation, and providing independent, evidence-based advice to the government on matters critical to national development.

This is not an easy task. Through political shifts, evolving national priorities, and the rapid acceleration of global science and technology, NAST PHL has stood firm, guided by the belief that science must always serve the Filipino people.

And as President of NAST PHL, I am constantly inspired by the dedication of our Academicians, National Scientists, Corresponding Members, scientists, and researchers who continue to offer and lend their time, expertise, and voices to the country.

Before I held this position, I was once an Outstanding Young Scientist who dreamt of a nation where science was not confined to textbooks or laboratories, but lived and felt by every Filipino child.

Every time I visited science centers abroad, I would always dream: "*Sana sa Pilipinas, may ganitong espasyo rin para sa agham*" [I hope that in the Philippines, there is also a space like this for science]. A place where curiosity is welcomed, questions are encouraged, and imagination is allowed to roam free. That dream felt closer to reality on the day the Philippine Science Heritage Center (PSHC) was launched in 2001. At last, Filipino scientists, our thinkers, discoverers, innovators, had been given a home. A place where the public could see their stories, understand their contributions, and feel the profound impact science has on our daily lives.

As National Scientist Gelia Castillo once said, "Science must serve a human purpose." This is the principle that drives PSHC. If we remain committed to bringing science closer to our people, helping Filipino children understand, explore, and apply knowledge, then PSHC will not falter. It will continue to serve its mission: shaping minds, empowering communities, and driving national progress.

Through the years, I have seen that belief come to life. Today, as PSHC celebrates its twenty-seventh anniversary, we mark it alongside NAST's forty-ninth anniversary. These milestones are not simply dates on a calendar. They represent decades of perseverance, purpose, and progress. They reflect how deeply intertwined NAST PHL and PSHC truly are: One uplifts our scientists; the other inspires the next generation who will follow in their footsteps. Together, they form the continuum of knowledge, our *Salinlahi*, our scientific heritage. When we speak of *Salinlahi*, we are not only referring to what we pass on, but to the responsibility we carry. What kind of scientific nation will our grandchildren inherit? And the children of our grandchildren? The answer depends on what we choose to nurture today.

So, as we celebrate this double anniversary, allow me to make this commitment on behalf of NAST PHL and the PSHC: For as long as we are here, we will strive to strengthen both NAST PHL and PSHC, not for ourselves, but for every Filipino child who deserves to discover the power of science, and for every Filipino scientist who deserves to be recognized, supported, and remembered.

Maraming salamat po at isang maka-Agham na araw sa ating lahat. [Thank you so much and have a science-oriented day to all of us.]

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