



# Forging *Real* Alliances in *Virtual* Spaces

Lisa Traboco, MD, FPCP, DPRA

In 2020, the summer was foregone to a virtual space.

Webinars and remote learning have existed for more than ten years. However, the pandemic has suddenly catapulted us into the virtual dimension, now a rapidly evolving and challenging landscape - what to do, and how? A summer heat was nothing to an adventure of learning.

And just like everyone else - we took the new virtual road most travelled. A fierce team with a passion for all things Lupus, young residents, fellows and junior consultants of the University of Santo Tomas Hospital (USTH) and St Luke's Medical Center (SLMC) gather under the leadership of Dr **Sandra V. Navarra** to conduct the Lupus Roadshow 2020 Webinar series. Our team meticulously planned, brainstormed ideas, topics of interest, and potential guest faculty.

Propelled by Lupus Academy's mission to "Communicate, Educate and Treat", Lupus Inspired Advocacy (LUIA) in partnership with Philippine Rheumatology Association (PRA) began the pilot webinar of this season's series on October 10, 2020. Rheumatologist & lead session co-chair, Dr **Leonid Zamora** from the University of Santo Tomas Hospital (USTH), gave us a review of the pros and cons of the different kinds of Lupus Assessments in Clinical Care. He was joined by the PRA president, Dr **Juan Javier Lichauco** who provided additional insight on disease assessments in the real world setting: such as using calculators for bedside assessment as well as the importance of monitoring of serum C3.



Dr Leonid Zamora  
Rheumatology, USTH



Dr Juan Javier Lichauco  
Rheumatology, SLMC



Dr Sandra Navarra  
Rheumatology, USTH



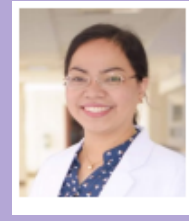
The following week, rheumatologist Dr **Ma. Eizelle Fernandez** from the De La Salle University Medical Center provided a general review on important things to remember with Lupus Pregnancy. This was followed by a case discussion of a lupus pregnancy with a fortunately normal course. We invited in Dr **Ditas Decena**, former president of the Philippine Obstetrical and Gynecological Society, to give us the OB-Gyne perspective in taking care of pregnant lupus patients. Questions about the G6PD child of this patient was addressed by our USTH pediatric rheumatologist, Dr **Ma. Theresa Collante** - in particular on monitoring medications.



Dr Ma. Eizelle Fernandez  
Rheumatology, DLSUMC



Dr Ditas Decena  
Obstetrics & Gynecology, USTH

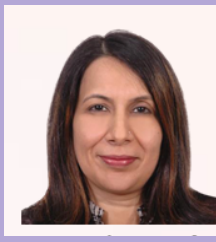


Dr Ma. Theresa Collante  
Pediatric Rheumatology, USTH

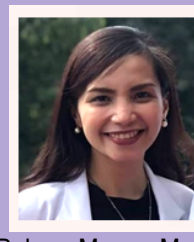
Taking the virtual roads also means flying the virtual skies. The team took a break to attend the Asia Pacific League of Associations for Rheumatology ([APLAR2020](#)) and the American College of Rheumatology ([ACR20](#)). Fresh from the virtual international airport, we resumed our sessions on November 14 with a presentation on lupus nephritis updates by Dr **Sandra Navarra**. The timezones did not stop us from arranging a schedule for our international friends to continue their worldwide journey with us. Dr **T.M. Chan**, a Nephrologist from Hong Kong University and Rheumatologist Dr **Aisha Lateef**, from Woodlands Health Campus - Singapore, headlined our first international panel to discuss lupus nephritis and renal insufficiency in a pregnant patient. They were joined by Dr **Belmar Magno-Mendiola**, our colleague from Maternal-Fetal Medicine to share the Philippine experience.



Dr. T.M. Chan  
Nephrology, Hong Kong



Dr. Aisha Lateef  
Rheumatology, Singapore



Dr. Belmar Magno-Mendiola  
Maternal-Fetal-Medicine, USTH

Dr. **Michelle Petri** continued our international panel the following week, giving us the highlights from Boston on Antiphospholipid syndrome and other coagulation issues in relation to CoVID-19. An afternoon case discussion of a lupus nephritis patient with pelvic mass and antiphospholipid syndrome was headlined by a powerhouse USTH panel: Dr **Flordeluna Z. Mesina**, hematologist, Dr **Maria Rhona G. Bergantin**, infectious diseases, Dr **Stephanie Andres**, nephrologist and again Dr Ditas Decena of Obstetrics & Gynecology. We reviewed some basics on lupus nephritis, and followed the course of the patient through the operating room subsequently connecting the dots with the infectious problem - tuberculosis.



Dr. Michelle Petri  
Rheumatology, USA



Dr Stephanie Andres  
Nephrology, USTH



Dr Maria Rhona G  
Bergantin  
Infectious Diseases,  
USTH



Dr Ditas Decena  
Obstetrics &  
Gynecology, USTH



Dr Flordeluna Z Mesina,  
Hematology, USTH

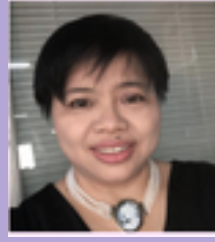
The different manifestations of Lupus opens collaboration with many subspecialties. For the last weekend of November, we invited dermatologist, Dr **Arnelfa C. Paliza** to give us a review about cutaneous manifestations in lupus. There were many discussion points on skin care, medications and other supplements for Lupus patients. In the afternoon, dermatologist and rheumatologist Dr **Rogelio Bagat** takes over to discuss this case of a pregnant patient with febrile neutropenia with Dr **Maria Rhona G. Bergantin** from infectious diseases, and Obstetrician-Gynecologist Dr **Katherine A. Dela Cruz**.



Dr Arnelfa C. Paliza  
Dermatology, USTH



Dr Rogelio Bagat  
Dermatology &  
Rheumatology



Dr Maria Rhona G Bergantin  
Infectious Diseases, USTH



Dr Katherine A. Dela Cruz  
Obstetrics & Gynecology, USTH

The December penultimate webinar discussed another virtual alliance. Dr **Carlo Ladores** from Ophthalmology walked us through examinations and differentials for lupus patients with eye involvement. Since the case discussion also involved neurologic involvement, we also learned from Prof **Marcelo Govoni** from Italy on diagnosing and treating neuropsychiatric lupus. Our neurology colleague Dr **Meliza De Leon** from USTH provided her insights on the causes and treatment as well from their subspecialty standpoint. The story of the patient was left as a cliffhanger - to be continued in the finale. We thus closed the series on December 12, with a recorded lecture about new SLE treatments by Prof **Ronald Van Vollenhoven** from Amsterdam. This was followed by the continuation of the previous week's double case conundrum of patients with fever & CNS manifestations. We invited special panelists for these cases namely -- Dr **Vicente Rosales** of Neurology, Dr **Paul John Ablaza** from Cardiology, and Dr **Daisy Tagarda** from Infectious Diseases subspecialty. Lastly, a live lecture on Evidence based treatment of Lupus Comorbidities by Prof **George Bertsias** from Greece closed the year of roadshow learning.



Dr Carlo Ladores  
Ophthalmology, USTH



Dr Meliza De Leon  
Neurology, USTH



Dr Vicente Rosales  
Neurology, USTH



Dr Daisy Tagarda  
Infectious Diseases,  
USTH



Dr Paul John Ablaza,  
Cardiology, USTH



Prof Ronald van Vollenhoven  
Netherlands



Prof Marcello Govoni  
Italy



Prof. George Bertsias  
Greece

We are truly grateful for the time and expertise of our local and international panelists. We also recognized the special involvement of our Indonesian colleagues in the attendees, many thanks to the encouragement of Dr [Laniyati Hamijoyo](#). Despite the nature of webinars as being limited by speakers and moderators who are the only ones who see each other's faces, the inquisitive nature of all our attendees was crucial to a robust Q and A session. From October to December, there were **1,337** participants who were internationally virtually connected in time of social distancing.

The team thus successfully wraps up a challenging year. We are proud to say the series was an outstanding achievement: a testament of the strong teamwork of the organizers composed of USTH and SLMC consultants, USTH rheumatology fellows, internal medicine residents and the resourcefulness of a technical and research support staff. The international, multi-institution, multi-disciplinary panelists, guests and attendees we had on this journey brought the flavor of an amazing travelogue albeit virtual, all for the common goal of better healthcare for our patients.

We look forward to a new 2021, and the summer once more regained.

*Click on [www.rheumacares.ph](http://www.rheumacares.ph) for more details of each session of the Lupus Roadshow 2020 webinar series*

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The Lupus Roadshow 2020 webinar series is jointly organized by University of Santo Tomas (UST) & St. Luke's Medical Center (SLMC) Sections of Rheumatology, in partnership with Lupus Academy®, Lupus Inspired Advocacy (LUISA) of Rheumatology Educational Trust Education, Inc. (RETFI) and Philippine Rheumatology Association (PRA), supported by an unrestricted educational grant from Astellas Pharma Philippines, Inc.