

RIPPLES

THE OFFICIAL COMPANY NEWSLETTER OF MAYNILAD WATER SERVICES, INC.



THINK. CREATE. EVOLVE. REPEAT.

- From idea to impact: The winning projects of Innofest 2024
- Pop Icons take center stage at Maynilad's Chill-Out Christmas Party
- Unfiltered: A candid conversation with Che Marilla
- Maynilad named 2024 IWA Climate Smart Utility

Where ideas take root

Innovation doesn't always come from a big idea. Often, it starts with a question: "What if there's a better way?" This issue of Ripples celebrates that spirit of curiosity and continuous improvement that lives in every corner of Maynilad. Whether it's improving water quality, enhancing safety in the field, or creating something entirely new, our people are proving that innovation is a mindset.

In our cover story, we shine the spotlight on the winning teams of InnoFest 2024, whose projects—"The Drainage Investigator" and "Project Achromos"—are powerful reminders that the best ideas often come from those closest to the work. Their journeys show us that innovation is about collaboration, persistence, and the drive to make a difference.

Throughout this issue, you'll also meet colleagues who are breaking stereotypes and building a culture where creativity can thrive—from the bold leadership of Engr. Cherry Marilla to the surprising rise of a civil engineer-turned-beauty queen. Even our year-end party was a showcase of imagination and joy, proving that when people are empowered to express themselves, incredible things happen.

We hope this issue reminds you that no idea is too small, and no role too routine, to spark meaningful change. So keep thinking. Keep creating. Keep evolving. Then do it all over again.

Cheers!

Jen



4 COVER STORY

FROM IDEA TO IMPACT: THE WINNING PROJECTS OF INNOFEST 2024

In this article, we explore how InnoFest 2024 celebrated groundbreaking employee-driven innovations, recognizing "The Drainage Investigator," a cutting-edge leak detection tool, and "Project Achromos," an advanced water purification solution. These projects showcase Maynilad's commitment to fostering a culture of safety, efficiency, and sustainability, proving that great ideas can transform operations and improve lives.

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POP ICONS TAKE CENTER STAGE AT MAYNILAD'S CHILL-OUT CHRISTMAS PARTY

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FROM IDEA TO IMPACT: THE WINNING PROJECTS OF INNOFEST 2024

By Alpha Bierreza



Maynilad's Innofest competition, a platform for employees to develop innovative solutions for the company, recently concluded its 2024 edition, recognizing two outstanding projects: "The Drainage Investigator" and "Project Achromos". We sat down with these teams to get the inside scoop on their winning projects, their journeys, and what ignites their ideas.

QUEST FOR SAFER, SMARTER LEAK DETECTION

Imagine being inside the confined, damp interior of a manhole where the only light is coming from a headlamp and all kinds of smells—none pleasant—assault your nostrils. This is a typical workspace for personnel under the Leak Detection Management (LDM) department of the Central Non-Revenue Water division. And it was while working inside a manhole that Maria Sheila Decena, Paolo Gojar, and Dale Santiago began thinking that there had to be a better way of detecting leaks.

"It all started with safety, really," Paolo explains. "During our Intensive Walk-the-Line program, we saw our colleagues putting themselves at risk. Inspecting those drainage systems manually? It's tough, and honestly, it can be dangerous." That spark of concern ignited a quest for their innovation.

The team introduced the project, The Drainage Investigator—an advanced camera technology designed to improve leak detection within Maynilad's extensive pipeline systems. This innovation directly addresses the challenge of inspecting hard-to-reach drainage systems, making the process safer and more efficient for LDM teams. But getting there wasn't a walk in the park.

"We went through so many trials!" Dale recounts. "Different camera lenses, tweaking the rod for flexibility, finding the perfect LED light... we even tested it out on various drainages!" Maria Sheila adds, "There were moments of doubt, but we were driven by the belief that this tool could make a real difference. To witness

it evolve from a mere concept to a fully functional prototype, and now a winning project... it's an indescribable feeling."

According to the team, it was all about collaboration and keeping the end-user in mind. "We learned so much from each other," Dale avers. "The project pushed us to think critically and really listen to the feedback we were getting. It made us realize how important it is to consider the perspective of the people who will actually be using the tool."

The Drainage Investigator transcends mere leak detection; it's about safeguarding Maynilad's most valuable asset—its employees—and creating a work environment where safety and innovation go hand in hand. And that's a win-win for everyone.

CRACKING THE CODE TO WATER PURITY

Meanwhile, another team was pushing boundaries with an inventive approach to water purification, a surprisingly simple yet profoundly effective approach. Mark Vincent Talosig, Kier Vandamme Suyat, and Louie Lungao of Water Supply Operations were grappling with a persistent issue: Color management in the water treatment process. Their answer? Project Achromos, an ingenious pre-membrane sodium hypochlorite dosing system.

"Basically, we're injecting sodium hypochlorite into the Ultrafiltration (UF) Feed Tank," Vincent explains, his eyes lighting up with enthusiasm. "It reacts with the dissolved manganese in the influent, producing precipitate which is filterable by the UF." The result is a more efficient, cost-effective way to address color issues, reducing reliance on energy-intensive reverse osmosis systems.

But here's where the story takes an unexpected turn: The team admits that joining Innofest was a total impulse decision! "It wasn't planned at all," Kier laughs. "That's where our first challenge started: figuring out how to actually make it happen!"

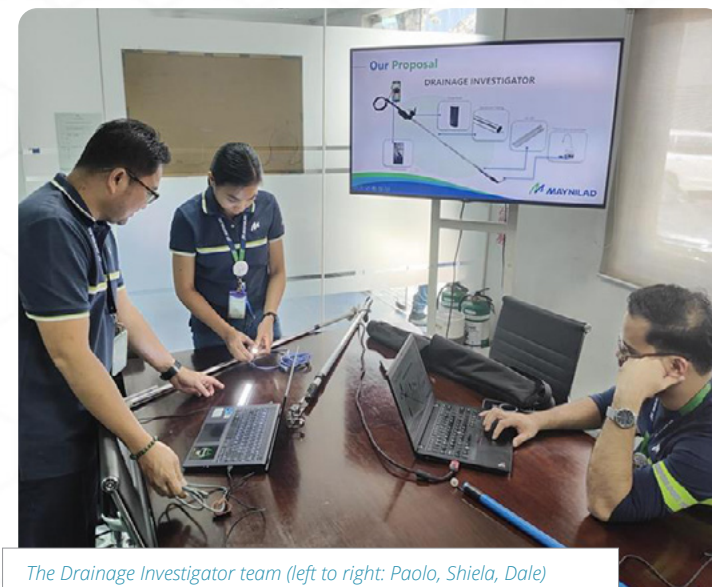
The team's diverse personalities also added another layer of complexity. "Louie is calm and calculated, always approaching problems with a methodical mindset. Marvin, on the other hand, is... well, let's just say he's bursting with energy and never shy about expressing his opinions," Kier teases. "And me? I'm apparently the bossy one!"

But somehow, this team made it work. "We realized that our different skills and perspectives were actually our strength," Louie chimes in. "We learned to use them to our advantage."

"Innovation doesn't have to be complicated or expensive," Kier says. "Sometimes, the simplest ideas can make the biggest impact." And for Louie, it's all about the thrill of turning ideas into reality. "Innovation is fun!" he says. "Innofest offers an unparalleled platform to transform ideas into reality, and the sense of accomplishment is incredibly rewarding. I wholeheartedly encourage everyone to seize their ideas and make them a reality!"

THE FUTURE IS NOW

Team Drainage Investigator and Project Achromos are shining examples of the innovative spirit that thrives within Maynilad.



The Drainage Investigator team (left to right: Paolo, Shiela, Dale) collaborates together as they refine their project, leak detection tool.



Project Achromos team (left to right: Marvin, Louie, Kier) tests water purity in a beaker to ensure clarity and cleanliness.

Their projects aren't just about solving technical problems; they're about improving lives and building a better future for the company and its customers. These innovations emphasize the profound impact that employee-driven solutions can have on operational efficiency and, more importantly, on the well-being of the communities Maynilad serves.

Maynilad recognizes that its greatest asset is its people, and Innofest seeks to empower employees to think creatively and contribute to meaningful change. By fostering this type of culture, Maynilad ensures that groundbreaking solutions will continue to emerge, addressing present challenges and anticipating future needs.

This tangible commitment to ongoing progress means that Maynilad is not just keeping pace with the future, but actively building it, one innovative project at a time. At Maynilad, the future isn't a distant dream—it's being engineered today.



POP ICONS take center stage at MAYNILAD'S CHILL-OUT CHRISTMAS PARTY

Compiled by Alpha Bieneza

Maynilad's Chill-Out Christmas Party was a night of music, nostalgia, and high-energy fun as employees transformed into their favorite pop icons. From international superstars like Taylor Swift and Michael Jackson to beloved local legends like April Boy Regino, the event was a dazzling showcase of creativity and team spirit.

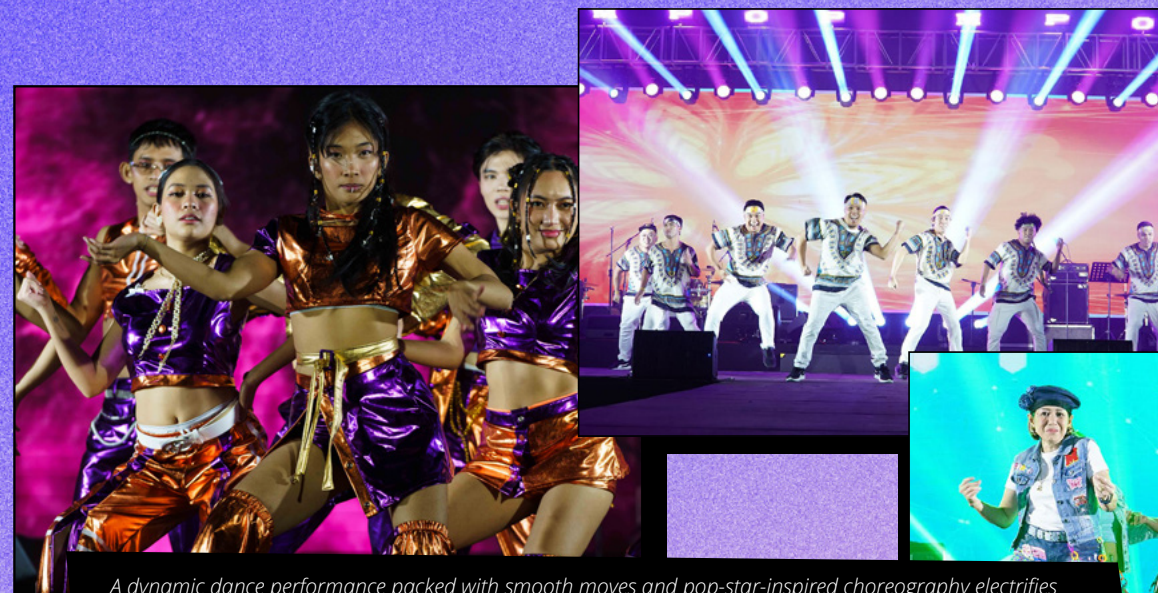
The night was an electrifying party from start to finish. Employees danced the night away to live performances, with the legendary Imago headlining the evening's entertainment. Adding to the excitement, the company's top management team presented a special dance number, proving that Maynilad knows how to have fun at every level.

The celebration reached new heights with a thrilling best-dressed contest where standout pop star look-alikes were recognized, and an exciting raffle draw that had lucky winners taking home cool prizes. And of course, no party is complete without great food, and moments that turned colleagues into a family.

The event was a celebration of teamwork, success, and the people who make Maynilad thrive. Relive the best moments of the night through these snapshots of Maynilad's most memorable year-end celebration!



The venue buzzes with energy as employees arrive, dressed as their favorite pop icons in true star-studded fashion.



A dynamic dance performance packed with smooth moves and pop-star-inspired choreography electrifies the crowd. The energy stays high as employees fully embrace the theme, dancing along with enthusiasm and star-worthy flair.



Maynilad Chief Operating Officer Randolph T. Estrellado delivers a heartfelt message, expressing deep appreciation for employees' hard work and dedication throughout the year.



Guest bands set the perfect vibe with their dynamic live performances.





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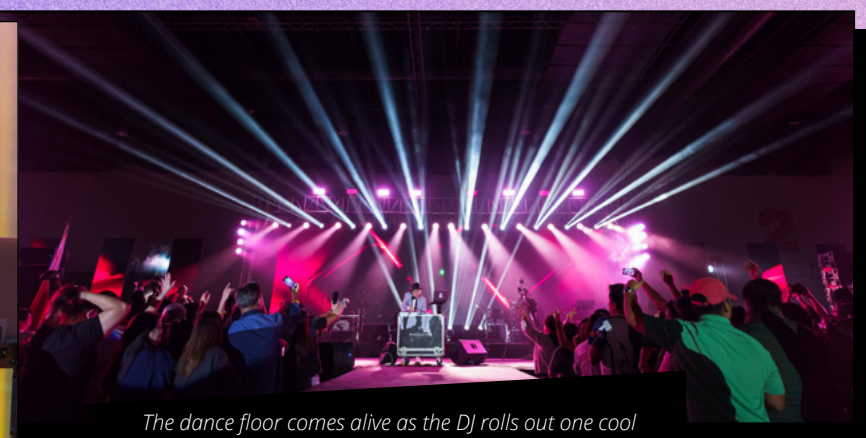


Employees bring their pop star personas to life in a fun-filled costume contest.



Maynilad Chief Executive Officer Ramoncito S. Fernandez reflects on the company's achievements and the employees who made them possible. His words serve as a warm tribute to their dedication, making the moment a fitting celebration of both hard work and the spirit of the season.

The Top Management Team brings the house down with a lively, pop star-inspired dance performance, proving they can have just as much fun as everyone else.



The dance floor comes alive as the DJ rolls out one cool tune after another.



Lucky employees not only enjoyed a fun party but also took home amazing raffle prizes.



A trip down Christmas memory lane

Compiled by Alpha Bierneza

There's a unique magic woven into Christmas memories—the crisp breeze, the aroma of castañas, and the tolling of church bells during Simbang Gabi. These familiar sights, scents, and sounds create the tapestry of our holiday reflections. But perhaps the most powerful time capsules of Christmas cheer are the photographs we've collected over the years.

In this spirit, we asked our colleagues to share their most cherished Christmas photos and the heartfelt stories behind them. Get ready to take a nostalgic journey through treasured holiday moments, where the true meaning of the season shines brightly in the faces of family, friends, and the enduring spirit of togetherness.



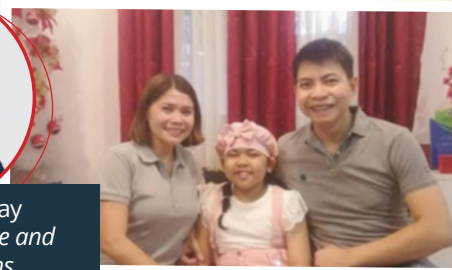
Arbonico T. Tagle
Water Supply Operations



"December 18 to 20, 2023. Camping sa Hideaway Campsite, Norzagaray, Bulacan. Tulad ng marami, naghihintay at nag-aabang sa tuwina ng mga ganitong pagkakataon dahil I considered this holiday extra special. I was with my own family, and we reconnect-ed with nature—no gadgets, just the four of us! Napakabihira ng ganitong pagkakataon. I cherish it a lot!"



Dennis M. Aglipay
Customer Experience and Retail Operations



"This photo was taken last Christmas 2020. Family makes Christmas brighter and extra special. I am blessed with a beautiful family to spend time with year after year. After all, 'home is where the heart is,' especially at Christmas."



Gemma S. Manrique
Water Supply Operations



Madelane O. Guinto
Customer Experience and Retail Operations

"Year 2018. Ito po ang pinaka-memorable na picture at Pasko para sa akin, dahil ito ang huling Pasko na kasama namin si Papa. Tuwing Pasko, bukod sa paghahanda sa aming bahay, hilig din niya na kaka-in kaming lahat sa labas. Malungkot man dahil hindi na namin siya kasama ngayon pero pinalitan naman ito ni Lord at binigyan ako ng dalawang magagandang anak."



Ana Michaela I. Reyes
Quality, Sustainability, and Resiliency



"It is our family tradition to have a motif for our outfits coordinated with our decoration. We make it a point to look lovely for our family picture. This picture was taken last year with a new addition to our family—our pet, Tofiluk. This year, our family has grown with my husband joining the family."



Juni Jane E. Castillo
Quality, Sustainability, and Resiliency

"Year 2021 versus 2024. Kalaban namin ang distansya, ngunit tapos na natin yakapin ang lamig ng nakaraan dahil umayon din sa atin ang panahon at tadhana. Mas maliwanag na ang darating na Pasko dahil may isang kumpletong pamilya."



Khristian Colene L. Litonjua
Wastewater Management



"Sobrang saya ko tuwing Pasko noong bata pa ako, lalo na tuwing may Christmas party sa aming eskwela. Kulitan at tawanan kasama ang aking mga kaklase, pananabik dahil malapit na ang bakasyon, at higit sa lahat, dahil nandoon siya—ang aking unang crush. Palagi akong excited makita siya, at ang bawat ngiti niya ay parang regalo sa aking puso. Binigyan niya pa ako noon ng sulat bilang regalo na talagang aking ikinagulat. Ngayon, labing-limang taon ang lumipas, siya na ay aking girlfriend, at ang mga Paskong iyon ay magiging mga alaala na hinding hindi ko malilimutan."



Arianne B. Diaz
Wastewater Management

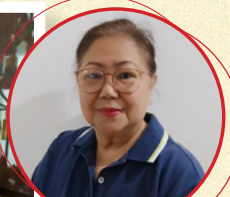
"Our traditional family photo during the holidays. Ang huling larawan ng pamilya namin na kasama pa namin ang aking napakabit, mapasensya, at generous na asawa bago siya pumanaw nung January 31, 2023. Sobrang na mi-miss namin siya 'pag Christmas, New Year, at iba pang occasion ng pamilya. We lost him but we gained a prayer warrior in heaven."



Stella R. Gregorio
Information Technology Services



"Maraming handang nasa la mesa, pero 'yung nakaupo ay konti na lang. I came across this sentence while scrolling my newsfeed. It hit me. It was too close to home. Noong bata pa ako, lagi magkasama ang pamilya namin tuwing Pasko. Nagsasalong masaya sa la mesa kahit konti o halos walang handa, may regalo man o wala. Ngayon, may sarili nang pamilya ako at mga kapatid ko. Ang nanay at tatay ko naman ay nasa malayo din. Sobrang bihira na kami magkakasama sa Pasko. Malungkot pero kinakaya. Masarap balikan ang nakaraan na magkakasama kami tuwing Pasko."



Odette G. Lardizabal
Office of the President



Looking back, moving forward

EMPLOYEE RESOLUTIONS FOR A BETTER 2025

Compiled by Alpha Biernesa

As the confetti settles on 2024, we turn the page to a brand-new chapter. But before diving into the future, it's worth reflecting on the lessons learned, the challenges overcome, and the moments that shaped us.

Here at Maynilad, we asked ten employees to share their biggest "aha!" moments from 2024 and the New Year's resolutions they're setting for 2025. Their insights and aspirations will inspire us all as we embrace the opportunities and possibilities of the year ahead!



This year napadalas ang pagkain ko nang marami, parang tina-try ko ubusin lahat sa unli. I miss my old body, that's why in 2025, I'll lift my dumbbells naman.

Radjiel B. Soliman
Wastewater Management



2024 was a challenging year for me. Stepping out of my comfort zone has been one of the most significant shifts in my life. While it was not easy, it gave me the chance to grow and gain new perspective. This 2025, I want to prioritize reconnecting with my loved ones. The distance between us has made it difficult to see each other as often as I'd like.

Lalyn P. Nicodemus
Customer Experience and Retail Operations



Liwanan ko na si gastador self sa 2024 kasi 'di naman tayo apo ni Henry Sy. This 2025, magiging magastos pa rin pero responsibly na kasi nga YOLO!

Ma. Chinie Ayn Fabros
Water Supply Operations



I can't save enough money because I tend to buy items on a whim. I'll prioritize purchases for really essential items starting 2025 so that I can save money for the future.

Joshua Carl L. Guan
Technical Resources Management



liwanan ko na ang 'taba' sa 2024, at sa 2025 ay healthy living na at magkaroon ng work-life balance

Marivic M. Hernandez
Finance



Ang aking New Year's resolution ay iiwasan ko na ang mga bagay na nagpapataba kagaya ng TIMBANGAN, SALAMIN, at PAG-PICTURE. Ang New Year's Resolution ko ay wala, kasi 'di ko kayang baguhin ang nararamdaman ko para sa'yo! Ito na, hindi ko na kakalimutan mag-skincare.

Ian Jay C. Estrella
Human Resources



Ang New Year's Resolution ko para sa taong 2025 ay magiging mas matapang ako sa pagharap sa mga bagong karanasan. Hindi ko na hahayaang puro 'next life na lang' ang sagot ko sa mga pagkakataong kumakatok. Maglalaan ng oras para sa sarili at makapag-travel kasama ang pamilya. At pang huli, mag-exercise at hindi na papadala sa tawag ng 'extra rice'.

Laarnie C. Malubay
Legal & Regulatory Affairs



Procrastination has significantly affected my work performance and social interactions in 2024. I used to overthink many things, which often led to failure. In 2025, I look forward to starting the year with a positive outlook, a healthy body, and self-love, and sustaining these until they become second nature.

Sean D. Aguilar
Supply Chain Management



In year 2024, I met some people who hurt me, and I caused them pain as well. Year 2025, I want to forget the pain and forgive myself and others. 'More love than hate.' Also, I hardly spent time with my family, so in 2025, I'm making it a priority to cherish every moment with them.

Razel De Torres
Finance



The fear of making mistakes and not fully trusting myself was my main problem in 2024, and this greatly affected my decision-making and confidence in my work. I realized that this hindered me from seizing opportunities that could help me grow, both personally and professionally. That's why in 2025, I commit to trusting myself more and developing a mindset that I am capable of achieving great things.

John Dailo Luis Candelaria
Project Management



FEATURES

Executive Close-up

Get up close and personal with Maynilad executives as they open up about their work habits and personal lives, and see what truly inspires them to keep striving for excellence.



Engineering excellence at work—Che and her co-engineers ensuring clean and safe water for all.

UNFILTERED: A candid conversation with Che Marilla

by Alpha Biernesa

With over two decades of experience in water infrastructure management, Engr. Cherry S. Marilla has built a career marked by technical expertise, strategic thinking, and a strong commitment to innovation. As the head of Maynilad's Technical Resource Management (TRM) Division, she now leads a critical team responsible for ensuring the reliability and efficiency of the company's infrastructure.

Her promotion to TRM head was a natural progression, reflecting years of dedication and leadership within the organization. Before assuming this role, she played a key part in the transition from the former Technical Services Division (TSD) to TRM, a move that integrated the strengths of TSD and Integrated Asset Management into one cohesive unit. Today, TRM oversees five key departments: Asset Information and Mapping, Central Maintenance Control, Strategic Asset and Program Planning, Integrity & Reliability, and Telemetry—each playing a vital role in maintaining Maynilad's service excellence.

Beyond her technical acumen, Che's leadership is deeply rooted in her values of stability, teamwork, and connection. Having experienced the challenges of her parents' separation during childhood, she made a conscious decision to prioritize family—a value that extends to her leadership approach at Maynilad, where she fosters a culture of camaraderie and support. She sees her colleagues not just as teammates but as family, working together toward a shared mission of delivering safe and reliable water services.

How did you end up working in Maynilad?

Maynilad has been my professional home since I graduated from college. I had a friend *na niyaya kami ni Malou Concepcion na magpasa ng resumé* for cadetship. That year in my life was really unforgettable *kasi* four stages *yata ang* recruitment noon. And in every stage, *hindi ako tinatawagan* (for some reason, *hindi ako ma-reach*), *pero yung* two friends *ko, ini-inform ni Ma'am Emily ng* HR (retired *na siya*). *Tapos ako, ina-assume ko na pasado ako kaya*



Che Marilla with her loving family—her two wonderful children and her engineer husband, sharing a moment of joy.

tinatawagan ko mismo yung HR. Inaasar nga nila lagi sa akin na, "Naawa lang sa'yo si Ma'am Emily kasi tawag ka ng tawag."

It has been around a year now since you first joined the TRM. What has been the most rewarding and challenging part of being TRM head?

The most rewarding part is seeing the direct impact of strategic decisions on our operations. Leading change and inspiring a team to work towards shared goals has been incredibly fulfilling, especially when those efforts translate into measurable improvements.

One of the biggest challenges was aligning diverse teams with different priorities towards a unified vision. *Dalawang teams kasi ito, tapos pinag-combine*. I managed this situation by fostering open communication, setting clear goals, and empowering leaders at all levels to take ownership of their contributions.

What are you most proud of in your new role?

I want to believe (*sana*) that I positively impacted our workforce's morale and engagement. Of course, I can't take all the credit. I'm fortunate to work with a group of smart, hardworking, and diligent individuals. My role has been to foster a work environment where people aren't dreading their jobs but are motivated to come in every day. It's a culture where you can speak your mind without fear of being judged. *Kung may problema, pag-usapan natin anong solusyon. Hindi naman bawal ang magkamali. Pero kung nagkamali ka, anong gagawin para 'di na maulit.*

What is one thing that disappoints or frustrates you?

I get frustrated when there's a lack of accountability, follow-through, or initiative. In such situations, I address the issue directly, seek understanding, and work on solutions to prevent a recurrence. If *may problema, huwag itago—sabihin. Kasi kung problema lang binibigay, nagsusumbong lang. Dapat may solusyon.*

Let's talk about something more personal. What hobbies do you enjoy nowadays?

Pasok ba yung paglilinis? Nanonood ako ng K-dramas. Five months ago, I tried Pilates; Cybele (*Regalado*) encouraged me *kasi napapan-sin niyang sedentary ang lifestyle ko, saka stress reliever na rin. Pero alam mo, I love reading. 'Yun ang hobby ko noong nasa high school and college ako, kaso nawala siya simula nung nagtrabaho at nag-asa-wa ako.* I'm slowly rediscovering my passion for it.

If you had a "no-commitment week", what would that day look like?

I would definitely be traveling with my family. Probably watching the northern lights. Seeing the Aurora Borealis is in my bucket list.

What is your favorite food?

Sinigang, pero dapat gawa either ng mother or ng husband ko. My husband is Ilocano; *magaling siya magluto. 'Di ako nagluluto, so kahit yung favorite food ko, 'di ko magawang perfect for my panlasa.*



Inside the pipeline: teamwork at its core.



Throwback to Che's cadet days at La Mesa Water Treatment Plant.



In action at the dam site, ensuring progress and safety.



FEATURES

Executive Close-up

Get up close and personal with Maynilad executives as they open up about their work habits and personal lives, and see what truly inspires them to keep striving for excellence.

Continued from previous page

Speaking of your husband, can you tell us a little about him and your children?

My husband was my classmate *noong* college, but we actually started dating after our graduation. *Lagi niyang sinasabi na mas matanda ako, eh isang buwan lang naman ang pagitan namin* — July *ako*, August *siya*. We have two kids; eldest *ay* 3rd year college and he is currently studying Psychology in Our Lady of Fatima University – Antipolo. The other one is in Grade 9; she is 14 years old.

How do you stay connected with your family despite your busy schedule?

Our strict rule is to eat together as much as possible. *Kapag weekdays, dapat sabay-sabay kami kumain ng dinner. Kung nag-kataon naman na wala kami dahil sa work, kailangan sabay silang magkapatid. Bukod doon, open lines kami lagi ng husband ko and our kids. They know they can call me anytime. And from time to time, we travel. We really enjoy traveling.*

Did it ever cross your mind to look for greener pastures, especially abroad?

Alam mo, breadwinner ako. Kahit may asawa na ako noon, pina-pa-aral ko pa ang mga kapatid ko. Pero simula nung nag-flourish ang career ko sa Maynilad, hindi ko na inisip lumabas ng bansa.

When I asked my friends who were working overseas back then, *sabi nila, “Kung kumikita ka ng ganitong amount sa Pilipinas, you do not need to go abroad.” And, ayokong umalis and leave behind my then young family. Sabi ko, kung aalis ako, dapat pati asawa at mga anak ko, pero malaking pera ang need if you want to migrate as a family. Or subconsciously, baka takot ako because my parents separated noong bata ako. OFW ang father ko.”*

What has been one of the most difficult conversations you’ve had with your family or children?

Year 2020, pandemic *’yun* when I had my miscarriage. *Yung check-up ko that day, supposedly malalaman ko yung gender kasi I was five months along in the pregnancy. Tapos sinabihan ako na wala ng heartbeat. So pag-uwi ko, nasa pinto sila, “Ma, ano? Girl or boy?” Nagpupustahan pa silang magkapatid. I looked at my hus-*



Che and her husband enjoy the breathtaking view of Mount Fuji and Chureito Pagoda together!



Technical Resources Management team poses together during the 16th Golden Meter Awards 2024.



Che's family moments under the glowing Sydney Harbour Bridge.



Adventurous vibes on the trail with ATVs and smiles all around!

band, *nilagpasan ko silang magkapatid, umakyat ako sa kwarto. That was very difficult for me, kasi we really wanted na to have another baby in the family.*

Was there a moment in your life when you felt you had to make a difficult choice?

When I gave birth to my firstborn, very sickly *sila* and pre-mature *pa*. Twins *sila pero siya lang nag-survive. Namatay yung youngest of the twin. Nung time na ’yun, torn ako. Sabi ko, “Kailangan ko mag-work and at the same time, kailangan din ako ng anak ko.” May time na lagi kaming nasa hospital. Doon ako napa-isip kung kailangan ko pa ba mag-trabaho. Pero sickly nga ang anak ko, kaya kailangan kong tumulong mag-work. I feel guilty as a mom na hindi ko nabibigay ang buong attention ko sa anak ko, pero kailangan ko rin tumulong mag-provide ng mga needs niya.*

Can you share some of your biggest fears in life?

’Yung mawala kaming sabay ng asawa ko na hindi pa ready ang mga anak ko. Hindi ’yung mawala kami dahil wala kaming maipapamana, ha? It is not about the money or material things, but I want them to learn how to survive and thrive in this world. Kailangan ready sila, matapang sila, ’yung hindi sila sumusuko, hindi sila mahihirapan kasi matatag silang harapin ang buhay, anumang problema ang kaharapin nila.

As a leader in Maynilad, what message or reminder would you like to leave with the team today?

Let us continue to give our best each day, knowing that the work that we do truly makes a difference. We are fortunate to have a job that not only sustains us but also serves a greater purpose—ensuring families have water to drink, businesses can thrive, and communities can grow.

As you look ahead, what’s one personal dream or aspiration you hope to achieve in the next chapter of your life—something that would bring you a deep sense of fulfillment?

I want to be someone my loved ones can always rely on, someone who inspires, supports, and leaves behind values that will guide them long after I’m gone.

As for my career, from the 21st Law in John C. Maxwell’s, “The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership – The Law of Legacy”, it is said that, “Legacy comes when they put leaders in position to do great things without them.” I aim to make a meaningful impact—not just through results, but by mentoring and empowering the next generation of leaders. True fulfillment, for me, will come from knowing that I’ve helped shape a culture of excellence, service, and integrity that continues even when I step aside.

Over 1,300 kilograms of waste collected at International Coastal Cleanup



Key leaders including DENR Secretary Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga and Pasay City Mayor Imelda Calixto-Rubiano, joined the Maynilad team for International Coastal Cleanup, highlighting collaborative efforts in environmental initiatives.

Demonstrating its commitment to environmental protection, Maynilad mobilized 130 participants for this year's International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) at SM By the Bay, Pasay City. The group successfully gathered 1,305 kilograms of garbage, including plastics and wood debris, contributing to the global effort to reduce ocean pollution.

Beyond providing manpower, Maynilad supported the initiative by setting up hydration and washing stations at five cleanup sites—SM By The Bay, Baseco Beach, Las Piñas-Parañaque Wetland Park, Dolomite Beach, and Bagumbayan North Coastal Dike. Volunteers at SM By The Bay also had access to a shower trailer, ensuring they could freshen up after the cleanup.

"Protecting our water sources and coastal areas is critical to ensuring sustainable access to clean water, and our participation in the ICC reflects our commitment to environmental stewardship," said Maynilad Chief Sustainability Officer, Atty. Roel S. Espiritu. "We are proud to be part of this global initiative and remain dedicated to contributing to the preservation of our ecosystems."

Maynilad's involvement in the ICC is part of its broader environmental advocacy, which includes water conservation efforts, waste reduction, and the promotion of sustainable practices.

The ICC is the world's largest volunteer effort to clean up oceans and waterways, with millions of volunteers participating in more than 150 countries.

Turning waste into energy: Advancing biosolid solutions with DOST

Maynilad teamed up with the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) to explore waste-to-energy solutions, particularly in converting biosolids — an organic byproduct of Maynilad's wastewater treatment process—into biogas.

This partnership, which emerged from Maynilad's participation in the DOST's "Balik Scientist Program," involved tapping the expertise of returning Filipino scientist Dr. Mario Rebosura to help assess and pilot technologies that can transform biosolids into a source of renewable energy.

Maynilad is the first water utility to participate in the DOST-Balik Scientist Program, a government initiative aimed at promoting the exchange of scientific knowledge and advancing technology in the country. The program encourages Filipino scientists to return to the Philippines and share their expertise, enhancing the development of various sectors, including health research and development.

During his six-month stint with Maynilad under the program, Dr. Rebosura shared innovative approaches in biosolids management

to fine-tune Maynilad's ongoing study of waste-to-energy technologies. This collaboration supported Maynilad's goal of reducing the environmental impact of biosolid disposal while also providing opportunities for energy generation.

"As part of our commitment to environmental stewardship, Maynilad constantly seeks ways to reduce waste and promote circular economy principles. This partnership with the DOST allowed us to address the challenge of biosolid disposal while tapping into renewable energy solutions, which can benefit both our operations and the environment," said Maynilad President and CEO Ramoncito Fernandez.

The DOST's Balik Scientist Program played a pivotal role by linking Maynilad with Filipino scientists who have gained specialized expertise abroad. "We are excited about the potential of this project to contribute to the country's renewable energy goals. This collaboration with Maynilad underscores the critical role of science in overcoming key challenges in the water sector. Indeed, through science and technology, we can provide solutions and open opportunities for the Filipino people," said DOST Secretary Renato U. Solidum Jr.

PhilHydro spends ₱50M for water treatment plant upgrade in Legazpi City

Philippine Hydro, Inc. (PhilHydro)—wholly owned subsidiary of Maynilad—spent ₱50 million to upgrade its Legazpi City Water Treatment Plant in Albay, Bicol, which produces potable water supply for some 22,000 households in the area.

The upgrade involves the inclusion of a clarifier technology in the facility's treatment process to enhance the removal of sediments from the raw water, making water treatment faster and more efficient.

With this upgrade, the facility can sustain its production output of 30 million liters per day (MLD) even during the rainy season when the level of turbidity in the raw water supply increases. Turbidity refers to the cloudiness of a fluid caused by the concentration of particles.

This project is in line with PhilHydro's initiative to address the impact of climate change on the quality of the raw water supply coming from the Yawa and Pawa rivers, which serve as the supply source of Legazpi City.

"The increased turbidity of the river water—exacerbated by man-made activities upstream and soil erosion during heavy rains—necessitate this additional water treatment process. The upgraded facility will ensure consistent water quality and supply, even under these challenging conditions," said PhilHydro General Manager, Engr. Mirla M. De Leon. "Our sustained investment in the infrastructure is proof of our commitment to provide quality service to Legazpeños."

PhilHydro operates under a 25-year contract to supply treated water to Legazpi City Water District, which is responsible for



Investing ₱50M to upgrade Legazpi City Water Treatment Plant for a stronger, more sustainable water future.

operating and maintaining the distribution network and selling the water directly to households in the area.

PhilHydro also owns and operates water treatment plants that supply treated bulk water to Norzagaray Water District, Santa Maria Water District, and Bocaue Water District in the province of Bulacan. It also supplies water to Bambang, Nueva Vizcaya, and to Rizal, Nueva Ecija. All PhilHydro facilities are under Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Contracts with the government, either directly contracting the Local Government Unit or with Government-Owned and Controlled Corporations, such as water districts.

Caloocan, Maynilad join forces to curb water loss

Maynilad and the Caloocan Local Government Unit (LGU) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to improve water management and reduce water loss in Caloocan City over the next three years.

In the MOU—signed by Caloocan City Mayor Dale Gonzalo R. Malapitan and Maynilad Central Non-Revenue Water (NRW) Division Head Ryan B. Jamora—the LGU committed to issue permits for Maynilad's NRW-related projects within a maximum of seven days upon submission of complete documents. This will help accelerate key water loss recovery initiatives, leading to faster project execution and more effective leak repairs.

Jamora emphasized the significance of this agreement, noting that delays in permit issuance have previously hampered NRW projects, sometimes taking months to process. "This partnership will streamline the process for obtaining roadwork permits, enabling us to facilitate projects that are essential for water loss recovery and service level enhancement. We are grateful to the

Caloocan LGU for their support, which will be instrumental in accelerating our NRW initiatives," he said.

Under the MOU, Maynilad will carry out pipe replacement and leakage control programs, while the Caloocan LGU will oversee timely issuance of clearances, establish a technical working group for project monitoring, and lead public awareness campaigns on water loss prevention.

Following the signing of this MOU with Caloocan, Maynilad is working to secure similar agreements with other LGUs in its concession area, further aligning with the goal of streamlining permit processing, especially for NRW projects.

Maynilad is also coordinating with the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) to strengthen support for these initiatives. Early gains from this collaboration include the DILG's recent release of a memorandum calling on all LGUs to effect faster processing of permits and clearances for water-related works.

Maynilad named 2024 IWA Climate Smart Utility



Maynilad's Chief Sustainability Officer Atty. Roel S. Espiritu holds the certificate of recognition given to Maynilad by the International Water Association (IWA) as a "climate smart" utility for its innovative strategies in mitigating climate change impacts.

IWA extended this recognition to Maynilad for its innovative strategies to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change, particularly in its approaches to reducing water losses, expanding wastewater services, boosting water production for more reliable service, and pursuing sustainability programs in line with its "climate neutral by 2037" goal.

Maynilad is one of 28 utilities from 19 different countries that were recognized as "climate smart" following a robust review of 92 total applications worldwide by expert, independent jury members. "Being recognized by IWA as a 'climate smart' utility affirms our commitment to addressing the challenges of climate change. This is a testament to the hard work of our team and our continuous efforts to implement sustainable practices that ensure water security for future generations," said Maynilad Chief Sustainability Officer Atty. Roel S. Espiritu.

IWA is a global network of water professionals who collaborate to promote the development and implementation of innovative and effective approaches to water management. Its Climate Smart Recognition Program highlights utilities that are "leading the way towards a low carbon water and sanitation sector, embracing the shift needed to adapt to and mitigate climate change".

Maynilad was hailed as one of 28 "climate smart utilities" worldwide during the 2024 International Water Association (IWA) Climate Smart Utilities Recognition held recently in Toronto, Canada.

Cracking down on water theft; 560,000 cubic meters recovered

Maynilad recovered an accumulated volume of around 560,000 cubic meters of potable water that had previously been lost due to illegal connections, following its January to August 2024 implementation of 6,900 anti-illegal operations targeting unauthorized water connections, tampered meters, and unregistered lines across its service area.

This accumulated volume of recovered water is enough to meet the daily needs of around 3,500 water service connections, improving water supply availability and pressure for legitimately paying Maynilad customers. Additionally, this initiative generated Php62 million in revenues, as violators were required to settle their penalties and reconnect legally to the Maynilad water network.

Maynilad attributes the success of this initiative to the cooperation of local government units (LGUs), whose assistance was instrumental in enforcing the anti-illegal water campaign. Since 2016, Maynilad has successfully closed nearly 25,000 illegal water service

connections, reducing losses and improving service delivery to legitimate customers.

"Our efforts to crack down on illegal water connections not only prevent the possible entry of contaminants in the system but also ensure that all customers receive their fair share of the water supply," said Maynilad Customer Experience and Retail Operations Head Christopher J. Lichauco. "We are grateful for the support of the LGUs in our campaign to uphold water equity and discourage illegal activities."

The closure of illegal connections form part of Maynilad's Non-Revenue Water (NRW) Management Program, which aims to bring down "physical" (i.e., from pipe leaks) and "commercial" (i.e., from water theft and unregistered consumption) losses. NRW is defined as the gap between the amount of water put into the distribution system and the amount of water for which customers are actually billed. Around 92% of water losses in the West Zone are due to physical losses, while the remaining 8% are due to commercial losses.

GHD campaign reaches nine schools



Celebrating Global Handwashing Day 2024, Maynilad's Corporate Marketing Head Rosmon Tuazon educated 600 students and teachers from nine public schools on health and hygiene, emphasizing the company's dedication to community well-being.

In celebration of the 2024 Global Handwashing Day (GHD), Maynilad engaged 600 students and 60 teachers across nine public schools, reinforcing the importance of proper hygiene in preventing illness.

Through a partnership with the Department of Education (DepEd) and the local governments of Pasay and Quezon City, Maynilad organized interactive activities designed to encourage lifelong hygiene habits. The initiative emphasized proper handwashing as a simple yet effective way to protect against diseases.

To support these efforts, Maynilad donated handwashing stations and hygiene kits to participating schools, ensuring students have the resources to maintain good hygiene practices. The company also conducted water and hygiene education workshops, inspiring students to appreciate the value of water and take an active role in environmental conservation.

"Our dedication to promoting proper hygiene and water conservation extends beyond Global Handwashing Day. We implement these programs year-round because we believe that building healthier communities and ensuring access to safe water are essential to achieving a sustainable future," said Maynilad's Corporate Affairs and Communication Head Marie Antonette H. De Ocampo.

Global Handwashing Day is an international advocacy campaign that highlights the importance of washing hands with water and soap as a key preventive measure against illnesses such as diarrhea and pneumonia. Celebrated every October, it is observed in over 1 million schools across 100 countries, reaching more than 200 million people worldwide.

"WASH Up" Program brings hygiene services to communities

Maynilad launched its "WASH Up" program in Barangay 12, Caloocan City, bringing essential health and hygiene services to the community. Present during the launch were (from left) Maynilad Government and Community Partnerships head Emil Carlo Comsti, Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System - Regulatory Office (MWSS-RO) Public Information department manager Joan Antonio, MWSS-RO Chief Regulator Patrick Ty, Maynilad Corporate Affairs and Communication head Marie Antonette H. De Ocampo, and Maynilad COO Randolph T. Estrellado, shown posing in front of the mobile shower facility,

a key feature of the program designed to provide hygiene support in communities.

The event was attended by more than 400 residents who benefited from free medical checkups, hygiene education, and the use of the mobile shower, which Maynilad plans to deploy to communities most in need, especially during disaster situations. The "WASH Up" program aligns with global efforts to promote water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) and is part of Maynilad's mission to foster healthier, more resilient communities.

Excellence in environmental and social sustainability recognized



Maynilad's Plant for Life Program, which rehabilitates critical watersheds, earned the company the "Excellence in Environmental & Social Sustainability (Water Utilities)" award, accepted by Chief Sustainability Officer Atty. Roel S. Espiritu (2nd from right). Presenting the award were (from left) Triple P Awards Evaluator Ludwig Federigan, IABC Philippines President Belle Tiongco, and IABC ESG Committee chairwoman Melody del Rosario.

The Plant for Life Program seeks to restore critical watersheds that supply water to Metro Manila and surrounding provinces through large-scale reforestation. As part of the program, Maynilad collaborates with local volunteers and various organizations, as well as the Dumagat community in the Ipo watershed, who maintain a tree nursery as an alternative livelihood to traditional slash-and-burn practices.

Since its inception, PLP has led to the planting of over one million trees. This initiative has enabled Maynilad to reduce its annual carbon emissions by approximately 33,000 tons, supporting the company's sustainability goals and commitment to climate action.

"We are grateful for this recognition from the Triple P Awards, which inspires us to further our mission of protecting the environment for the benefit of current and future generations," said Maynilad Chief Sustainability Officer Atty. Roel S. Espiritu.

Organized by the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) Philippines, the Triple P Awards honor companies demonstrating excellence in People, Planet, and Prosperity through impactful sustainability initiatives. Maynilad's Plant for Life Program stood out for its significant contributions to preserving vital water sources and promoting community engagement in environmental stewardship.

Maynilad was recognized for its outstanding environmental and social efforts, receiving the "Excellence in Environmental & Social Sustainability (Water Utilities)" award for its Plant for Life Program (PLP) at the inaugural Triple P Sustainability Awards, recently held at the Marriott Hotel, Pasay City.

₱695M project underway to expand sewer network in Parañaque

Maynilad is installing 4.8 kilometers of new sewer lines in Parañaque City, marking a significant step in the company's efforts to expand its sewerage services in the area.

This ₱695-million project involves the laying of sewer lines along portions of NIA Avenue, Radial Road, and Sucat Avenue, which will collect wastewater from over 35,000 residents of Barangays La Huerta and San Dionisio. The wastewater will be conveyed to Maynilad's Parañaque Water Reclamation Facility for proper treatment before being safely discharged into the Kayboboy River, in compliance with environmental standards.

The project, which started in 2021, is slated for completion by the third quarter of 2025. According to Engr. Zmel Grabillo, Maynilad's Wastewater Management head, "Sewerage projects are highly complex and take time, as new sewer lines must be laid deeper than water pipelines—sometimes as deep as 14 meters below ground. This requires precise engineering and careful excavation."

To minimize disruption, Maynilad is utilizing trenchless technology, which allows the insertion of durable sewer pipes

without the need for extensive surface digging. "This method reduces traffic congestion and disturbance to the community, as pipe-laying works can be done through small insertion points," Grabillo explained. Additionally, construction is restricted to nighttime hours—between 10:00 p.m. and 4:00 a.m.—with all trenches safely covered during the day to keep roads accessible to motorists and pedestrians.

Beyond Parañaque, Maynilad continues to lay its sewerage network in key cities such as Manila, Muntinlupa, Valenzuela, Bacoor, Las Piñas, Caloocan, and Quezon City. As part of its ongoing wastewater infrastructure development, the company has allotted Php 19 billion from 2023 to 2027 for the installation of 121 kilometers of new sewer lines across its service area.

Maynilad currently operates and maintains a sewer network spanning 651 kilometers and 23 wastewater facilities, with a combined treatment capacity of 684 million liters per day. These efforts form part of the company's commitment to protecting water bodies and improving sewerage and sanitation services for its customers.

DOLE, unions and Maynilad partner to strengthen labor-management relations



DOLE Secretary Bienvenido Laguesma and Maynilad President and CEO Ramoncito S. Fernandez solidified a partnership to enhance labor-management relations, investing in essential skills for managers to cultivate a collaborative and respectful workplace

Maynilad has reinforced its commitment to a harmonious and collaborative workplace by launching a comprehensive Labor Relations Training Program in partnership with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and labor unions.

This initiative, formalized through a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), aims to equip over 300 Maynilad managers with critical skills in labor standards, conflict resolution, and effective communication. Initial training sessions have begun, with full implementation scheduled for 2025.

"At Maynilad, we strive to create a workplace where respect, fairness, and collaboration thrive," said Maynilad President and CEO Ramoncito S. Fernandez. "This program underscores the important role our unions play in ensuring that every employee feels valued and heard."

The training is designed to empower managers to act as 'first responders' to workplace concerns, enhancing their capabilities in addressing employee rights, management responsibilities, disciplinary procedures, and grievance handling.

DOLE Secretary Bienvenido Laguesma commended the partnership, calling it a model for public-private collaboration. "Labor education is key to fostering a culture of mutual respect and shared responsibility in workplace governance. This partnership demonstrates how organizations can proactively support labor-management relations," he said.

UP, Maynilad partner to advance water safety and quality

Maynilad has partnered with the University of the Philippines (UP) to enhance research on emerging pollutants in Metro Manila's water sources and wastewater systems. This partnership reflects Maynilad's proactive approach to ensuring the long-term safety and quality of its water services.

Although Maynilad's water supply consistently meets the stringent Philippine National Standards for Drinking Water, the company recognizes the importance of staying ahead of potential future risks. Through this collaboration, UP will conduct comprehensive testing to assess the presence of unregulated pollutants that have been identified as emerging concerns in other countries.

"Maynilad strictly complies with national water quality standards, providing safe and reliable water to our customers," said Maynilad Chief Sustainability Officer, Atty. Roel S. Espiritu. "This partnership allows us to anticipate future challenges by exploring advanced technologies and ensuring that our treatment systems remain robust and adaptive."

The research will also support Maynilad's development of advanced treatment methods such as UV photolysis and advanced oxidation to address potential emerging contaminants. These innovations are key to initiatives like Direct Potable Reuse, which aims to further enhance water sustainability while maintaining the highest safety standards.



TOP 5 Awesome Gifts FOR CO-WORKERS

By Alpha Biernesa

The holiday season is the perfect time to show appreciation for your co-workers with thoughtful and meaningful gifts. A well-chosen present can strengthen workplace connections and make colleagues feel truly valued. If you know their interests, great! If not, practical gifts that enhance the work environment are always a safe bet—something that sparks joy without breaking the bank. To make your holiday shopping easier, we’ve curated a list of the top five Christmas gifts that strike the perfect balance between thoughtful and affordable.

From sleek gadgets to stylish desk accessories, these picks cater to different personalities and preferences, ensuring there's something for everyone in your team. So if you're looking for a little holiday inspiration, we've got you covered—because spreading joy at work is always in season!



Image Source: stancephilippines.com

STANCE X LAPTOP STAND (Stance Philippines)

Whether at the office or on the go, this sleek laptop stand is the perfect blend of style and functionality. It raises your device to an ergonomic height, promoting better posture and reducing neck strain. Plus, it effortlessly folds flat for easy storage, making it a must-have for a comfortable and productive workspace—anytime, anywhere!



Image Source: omni.com

OMNI UNIVERSAL TRAVEL ADAPTER (Ace Hardware)

A travel adapter is a game-changer for anyone on the go, making it a no-brainer addition to our gift list. With different plug types used worldwide, a universal adapter ensures devices stay powered up no matter the destination. Whether for a frequent business traveler or a co-worker planning their next getaway, this practical gift takes the stress out of searching for compatible outlets abroad. Compact, versatile, and incredibly handy, it's the ultimate travel essential for staying connected anywhere in the world.



Image Source: pennlive.com

STANLEY CUPS AND TUMBLERS (Chris Sports)

For that colleague who never goes anywhere without their oversized “emotional support” water bottle, why not gift them an upgrade? Stanley bottles are a fan favorite for a reason—they keep water ice-cold for up to 40 hours and come in a variety of stylish colors. Practical, trendy, and built to last, this is one hydration essential they'll love reaching for every day.



Image Source: Shoppee - amusing.ph

NATURAL BAMBOO CHARGING STATION FOR MULTIPLE DEVICES (Shoppee)

Help your co-worker stay organized and powered up with a sleek bamboo charging station! This eco-friendly organizer not only declutters their workspace but also charges multiple devices at once, seamlessly blending function with style. A perfect gift for tech lovers who appreciate both efficiency and a touch of natural elegance!



Image Source: decathlon.ph

QUECHUA ISOTHERMAL LUNCH BAG (Decathlon)

For a thoughtful and practical gift, an isothermal lunch bag is a top pick. Designed to keep meals fresh for hours, it's perfect for co-workers who love home-cooked lunches or meal prepping. The insulated lining maintains food at the ideal temperature—hot or cold—making it a must-have for long office days. Stylish, durable, and easy to carry, this lunch bag adds both convenience and sustainability to their daily routine, ensuring every meal is enjoyed just the way it should be.



The WSO Summit 2024 committee closing off the event with executives from the Top Management Team.

Sustaining water, elevating expertise

by Karen D. Garcia, WSO-Solutions Design Department

Since 2012, Maynilad's Water Supply Operations (WSO) Division has been hosting the WSO Summit, a cornerstone event that brings together water professionals and advocates to strengthen collaboration, celebrate achievements, and drive innovation in the water sector. More than just an annual conference, the summit has become a tradition—one that fosters a shared understanding of best practices, encourages open dialogue, and ultimately improves water services for communities.

The 12th WSO Summit, held on November 6, 2024, carried the theme “Outlast: Delivering Water Services Beyond Obligation and Expansion.” The event gathered over 250 participants, including Maynilad experts who shared valuable insights on customer experience, network hydraulic modeling, and treatment plant operations. Case studies highlighted the profound impact of taking ownership in our work, demonstrating how proactive efforts lead to improved water access, stronger community ties, and sustainable business growth.



A participant engages with the speakers during the question-and-answer segment.



Speaker Engr. Daryll Custodio responds to a question about network hydraulic modeling.

A significant milestone this year was the WSO Summit's accreditation for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) points. Through a memorandum of understanding with the Philippine Institute of Civil Engineers (PICE), the summit became Maynilad's first CPD-accredited event. This is an important step in strengthening and recognizing the expertise of water professionals.

CPD accreditation is vital for professionals in the water sector, as it reinforces a commitment to lifelong learning. Keeping up with emerging technologies, evolving regulations, and industry best practices is crucial in an ever-changing field like water management. Continuous professional development enhances problem-solving abilities and ensures engineers and specialists remain competent in tackling challenges such as water scarcity, infrastructure maintenance, and environmental sustainability.

For Maynilad, integrating CPD-accredited events like the WSO Summit reflects its dedication to fostering a culture of continuous improvement and professional excellence. By providing employees with opportunities to earn CPD units, the company empowers its workforce to expand their knowledge, refine their skills, and elevate their professional standing. This investment not only benefits individual employees but also strengthens the organization as a whole, leading to enhanced performance, improved service delivery, and greater innovation in addressing the evolving needs of customers and communities.

Looking ahead, the WSO Summit will continue to explore critical areas such as climate change adaptation, smart water technologies, and community engagement strategies. By tackling these emerging challenges, the summit will remain a key platform for shaping a resilient and sustainable water future.



Trisha Montaña proves that Maynilad can shine both in the field and on the stage as Ms. MVPO 2024 pageant champion!

HARD HATS AND HIGH HEELS: Trisha Montaña's winning strut

By Richela P. Galang, CNRW Planning and Support Department

Trisha Montaña, a dedicated civil engineer under Maynilad's Program Management Division, never envisioned herself participating in a beauty pageant. Her world revolved around blueprints and infrastructure, and she was known for her quiet and reserved nature. "To be honest, the thought of competing in a pageant never crossed my mind," Trisha admits.

However, beneath her calm exterior, colleagues saw something more—a radiant positivity and an authentic smile that left a lasting impression. These qualities became the foundation of her unexpected journey to becoming Miss Maynilad.

Trisha's initial foray into the spotlight came through her involvement in Maynilad's street dance group, where her natural charisma began to shine. Her presence during performances hinted at her potential for pageantry. "Dancing really helped me come out of my shell," Trisha avers. "It gave me the confidence to believe I could do more."

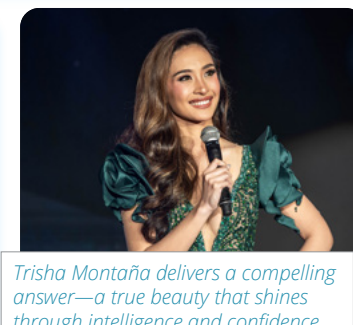
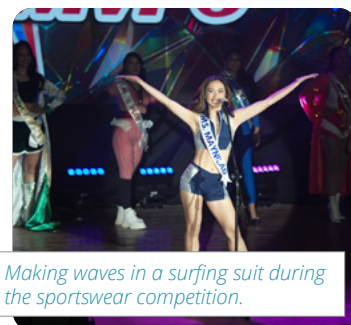
The road to Miss MVPO 2024 was not all glamor—it was paved with discipline, commitment, and hard work. Trisha embraced an intensive training regimen, working closely with a seasoned trainer and training daily with her gym coach. The journey tested her limits and brought moments of self-doubt. "There were definitely times when I felt overwhelmed," she confides. "But I knew I couldn't let myself give up. I had to keep pushing forward."

Throughout her journey, the support of her Maynilad colleagues proved invaluable. Their encouragement helped her face every challenge with strength and confidence. "The support from my colleagues was incredible," she recalls. "They were always there to cheer me on and remind me why I was doing this. I couldn't have done it without them."

As the day of the competition drew near, Trisha felt a whirlwind of emotions—but she stayed focused on one goal: to represent Maynilad



Making waves in a surfing suit during the sportswear competition.



Trisha Montaña delivers a compelling answer—a true beauty that shines through intelligence and confidence.

with pride. Win or lose, she was determined to give her best. For Trisha, this experience was about more than personal recognition; it was about embodying the values and spirit of Maynilad.

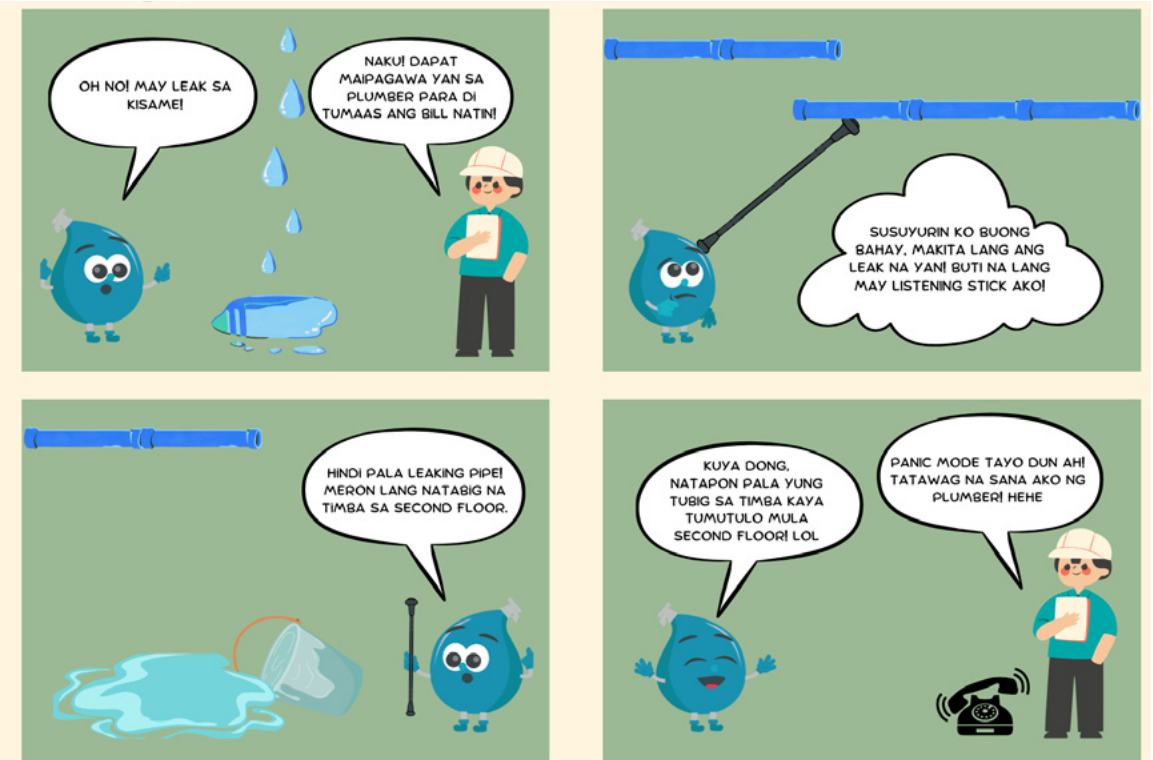
When she was crowned Miss MVPO 2024, the auditorium erupted in cheers. Her victory became a moment of shared pride—not just for her, but for everyone who believed in her.

Trisha's journey reminds us that with perseverance, dedication, and a supportive community, even the most unexpected paths can lead to incredible outcomes. "Winning Miss MVPO was an incredible experience," Trisha shares. "But the best part was knowing that I had inspired and encouraged others, proving that even the most unlikely person can achieve great things with support and determination."

TUBEE COMICS

STORY AND ILLUSTRATION BY: ALPHA BIERNEZA

FALSE ALARM



Defying gravity: My pole fitness journey

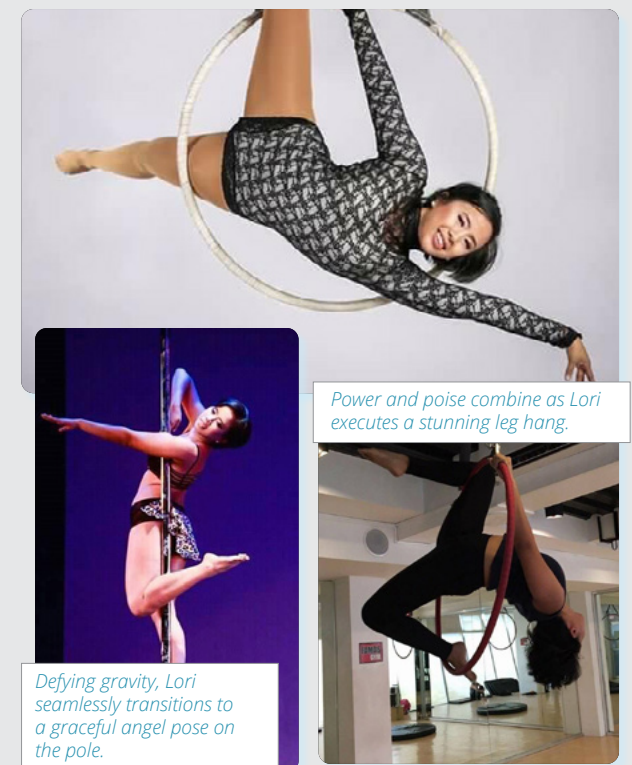
by Ma. Loricar Arboleda, Information Technology Services

I was in my 20s when I first discovered pole dancing—coincidentally, the same year I joined Maynilad. I felt the need to try something different, something out of the ordinary. Before that, I had never been physically active. I didn't play sports growing up; I was more of a music and math/science kind of girl.

Walking into that pole studio in Ortigas for the first time, I was nervous. I had been instructed to wear short shorts, and if I remember correctly, I paired them with a tank top. Like many, I initially thought pole dancing was all about sultry, seductive movements. But after my first class, I realized how physically demanding it actually was. It wasn't just about spinning around a pole—one of the first challenges was simply lifting myself up or executing a move called "Dream Girl," where you hold the pole between your thighs.

But more than what made me start, what truly mattered was what made me stay—or at least keep coming back. It was the thrill of achieving new heights, both literally and figuratively. It's natural to feel fear when trying something new, but the sense of accomplishment that comes with overcoming it is incomparable. And then there's the community—pole dancers and aerialists who are incredibly welcoming, always cheering each other on whenever someone masters a new trick, especially beginners.

Now that I'm older, flexibility doesn't come as easily as it once did. But every time I return to the studio, my former instructors greet me with a warm "Welcome back." And that, to me, makes all the difference.



Defying gravity, Lori seamlessly transitions to a graceful angel pose on the pole.

Power and poise combine as Lori executes a stunning leg hang.





MAYNILAD WATER ACADEMY

Leading innovations in water education

By Oliver B. Sta. Ana, Maynilad Water Academy

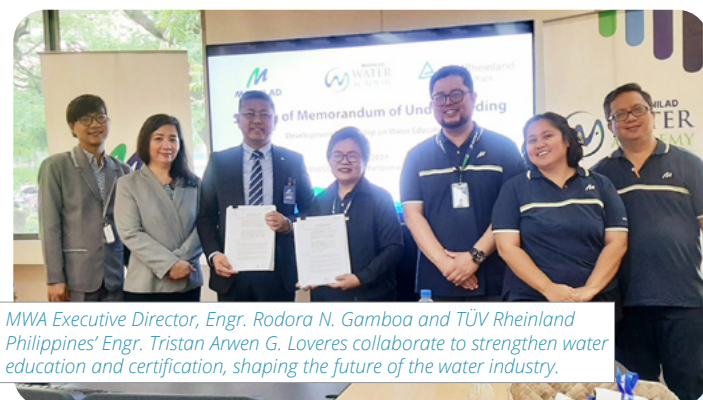


MWA brings together passionate youth at the 4th Philippine Symposium on Freshwater Biodiversity and Ecosystems, inspiring innovative solutions for sustainable water management.

The Maynilad Water Academy (MWA) continues to make waves as a premier capacity-building institution, committed to enhancing the competencies of water and sanitation professionals in the Philippines and beyond. As the education arm of Maynilad, MWA leverages innovation, partnerships, and forward-thinking strategies to advance water education and management practices across the region.

In a significant development, MWA signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with TÜV Rheinland Philippines, Inc. last July 12, 2024, to co-develop certification programs for water professionals. This partnership will enable the use of standardized training materials, examinations, and credentialing systems to produce highly qualified practitioners ready to elevate the industry's standards.

MWA's commitment to professional development is reflected in its growing portfolio of training programs. One notable example is the session titled "It All Starts Here! Training on Water Balance in Managing Your NRW," held on August 15, 2024 at Chalet Hotel in Baguio City. Attended by representatives from 25 water districts



MWA Executive Director, Engr. Rodora N. Gamboa and TÜV Rheinland Philippines' Engr. Tristan Arwen G. Loveres collaborate to strengthen water education and certification, shaping the future of the water industry.



MWA Executive Director, Engr. Rodora N. Gamboa showcases Maynilad's NRW technologies to the Quezon City University President Dr. Theresita V. Atienza during the WEST Fair.

nationwide, the session provided practical insights on applying water balance methodologies to manage non-revenue water (NRW) more effectively.

Beyond training industry professionals, MWA also invests in youth engagement and education. During the Youth Forum at the 4th Philippine Symposium on Freshwater Biodiversity and Ecosystems in Dumaguete City, over 150 students participated in developing ideas and solutions for freshwater issues. Meanwhile, the Water Engineering Science Talks (WEST) Fair & Symposium at Quezon City University highlighted emerging technologies in water and sanitation—encouraging collaboration between the academic and professional sectors.

These initiatives reflect MWA's holistic approach to water education—one that spans from the classroom to the field. By equipping today's professionals and empowering tomorrow's leaders, the Maynilad Water Academy is playing a vital role in shaping a sustainable and resilient water sector. Its focus on certification, innovation, and inclusive learning cements its place as a cornerstone of water capacity-building in the Philippines, across Asia, and the Pacific.