



CatSU climbs 14 ranks higher to No. 130 in 2026 Webometrics Global University Rankings

Albert G. Clemente

Catanduanes State University (CatSU) has once again proven its growing presence in the academic world after earning strong results in the latest Webometrics Global Ranking of Universities.

In the January 2026 edition, CatSU ranked 3rd in the Bicol Region, 130th

nationwide, and 4,631st globally. This achievement marks a clear improvement for the University, as it climbed 14 places from its previous 144th national ranking in both the January and July 2025 results.

The improved ranking reflects CatSU's continued efforts to

strengthen its online presence, research impact, openness of information, and global visibility.

Webometrics ranks universities based on their digital performance and academic influence. The ranking system evaluates institutions using indicators such as online visibility,

research output, and accessibility of academic content.

It covers more than 32,000 higher education institutions across over 200 countries. Rankings are released twice a year, every January and July.

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CatSU secures P10M grant for flood resilience project under Bicol RISER Consortium

Albert G. Clemente with reports from Research and Development Services

The funding was formalized during the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the Bicol RISER (Regional Innovation and Sustainability Empowerment for Resilience) Consortium on February 5, 2026, held alongside the Budget Forum at Vela Hotel in Legazpi City.

Through the consortium, CatSU will undertake the project titled, "A Multi-faceted Approach

to Enhancing Flood Resilience in the Bicol Region: From Baseline Assessment to Strategic Framework Development."

According to Research and Development Services, the initiative seeks to develop an integrated and strategic flood risk management framework designed to improve community preparedness, strengthen local response systems, and reduce the impact of future flooding

across the region.

The MOA signing gathered representatives of member institutions, research officials, and technical staff to formally launch the consortium's implementation for FY 2026 and align priorities on programs, budget allocation, and project execution.

Representing CatSU at the event were Gemma G. Acedo, SUC President III, and Dr. Jose

Z. Tria, Director of the Research and Development Services and Project Leader.

The consortium initiative underscores collaborative research efforts among institutions in the Bicol Region, with a shared focus on innovation, sustainability, and resilience-building.

CatSU prepares workforce for proposed revised SUC Leveling Guidelines

Albert G. Clemente



LEARNING THE STANDARDS . Vice President for Research, Extension, and Production Affairs Dr. Roberto B. Barba (left photo) delivered a message during the seminar on the proposed revised SUC Levelling Guidelines, bringing together Catanduanes State University employees, directors, and unit heads in a meaningful discussion on strengthening institutional standards, fostering continuous improvement, and advancing the University's pursuit of excellence.

Catanduanes State University (CatSU), through the directive of University President Gemma Acedo, is taking proactive steps to raise awareness and prepare its workforce for the proposed revised guidelines of the State Universities and Colleges (SUC) Levelling.

While the current SUC Levelling framework is anchored on four (4) Key Result Areas (KRAs), the proposed revised

guidelines expand this to five (5) KRAs, namely: access and equity; quality and relevance of instruction; excellence in research and creative works; extension and community services; and governance and management of resources.

In anticipation of these changes, the University is already working toward integrating the revised guidelines into its strategic plan to ensure alignment with

national standards and future directions in higher education.

In line with this initiative, the CatSU Planning Unit spearheaded a three-day orientation on the revised SUC Levelling instrument held from January 13 to 15, 2026.

The activity was participated in by teaching and non-teaching personnel from academic, administrative, financial, and

research divisions, including central management and the Panganiban Campus.

The orientation aimed to familiarize employees with the proposed revised guidelines jointly crafted by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), in coordination with the Philippine Association of State Universities and Colleges (PASUC).

From Classroom to Field:

CAF launches professional readiness program

Albert G. Clemente



TURNING KNOWLEDGE INTO ACTION . Invited resource person Gerry S. Rubio, Provincial Employment Service Officer, encouraged student-attendees from the College of Agriculture and Fisheries during the Labor Education Seminar to bridge the gap between theory and practice by communicating agricultural knowledge in ways that farmers can easily understand and apply, turning classroom learning into meaningful change in the field.



Equipping student-interns with practical knowledge on employment readiness, work ethics, safety, and global opportunities, the Catanduanes State University (CatSU) College of Agriculture and Fisheries (CAF) organized its 'Professional Launchpad: Pre-Internship Orientation' on Monday, January 12, at the CatSU Gymnasium.

The one-day event brought together fourth-year students and their parents to strengthen shared awareness and support as they transition from classroom learning to real-world work environments.

Significant insights were shared by Internationalization Director Zyra Mae T. Tumala, who emphasized that internationalization goes beyond working abroad and includes integrating global practices at the local level.

Director Tumala also mentioned success stories of Overseas Filipino Workers, including a Filipino farmer in New Zealand, and asked students to engage globally through networking, and virtual collaboration.

Providing practical workplace guidance, Provincial Employment Service Officer Gerry S. Rubio also urged students to apply classroom knowledge effectively in the field, particularly in communicating agricultural knowledge clearly to farmers.

However, both speakers cautioned the participants against illegal recruiters and job scams, advising them to verify employment opportunities through official Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) channels.

Further reinforcing employment preparedness, DOLE Senior Labor and Employment Officer Danilo Balilo discussed general labor standards, including provincial minimum wage rates and policies that protect workers' rights and welfare.

Workplace values were underscored by University Guidance Office Chief Noly T. Benavidez, who described work ethics as the "how" behind the "what" of work, reminding students to practice professionalism, discipline, and constructive behavior in the workplace.

Meanwhile, College of Humanities and Social Sciences faculty member and 2025 Bar Examination passer Jozem Niño I. Morales addressed legal awareness in the workplace, emphasizing that sexual harassment can affect anyone regardless of gender, as affirmed in the Supreme Court ruling *Toliongco v. Court of Appeals* (July 8, 2020).

A representative from the Philippine Red Cross-Catanduanes Chapter also briefed participants on student medical insurance coverage, including its processes, policies, and benefits.

The program opened with a welcome message from Student Scholarship and Employment Director Dr. Gemma M. Samas, followed by remarks from newly designated CAF Dean Dr. Medie Lopez, who encouraged students to remain resilient and persevering.

In the afternoon, Dr. Roberto B. Barba, Vice President for Research, Extension, and Production Affairs, delivered a short message reaffirming the university's commitment to student development and employability.

Teaching demands courage

DepEd Catanduanes OIC chief calls on CatSU pre-service educators to be brave during 7th Pinning Ceremony

Albert G. Clemente



PINNED WITH PURPOSE, GUIDED BY LIGHT . During the 7th Nameplate Pinning and Torchlighting Ceremonies, a mother proudly pinned her daughter's nameplate, symbolizing the responsibility she now carries as a pre-service teacher preparing for the internship. Alongside her fellow College of Education students, she held her candle, embracing the commitment to keep the light of learning burning for future generations.

"Only the BRAVE can teach."

This was the powerful challenge delivered by Dr. Ma. Jeany T. Abayon, Officer-in-Charge of the Office of the Schools Division Superintendent, Department of Education-Catanduanes, to 273 pre-service teachers of Catanduanes State University's College of Education during the 7th Nameplate Pinning and Torchlighting Ceremonies on January 26, 2026.

A Magna Cum Laude graduate of CatSU and alumna of Suchan Elementary School in Bagamanoc and

Viga Rural Development High School, Dr. Abayon called on the future educators to reflect deeply on their commitment to the profession.

She noted that teaching today requires 'Brilliance, Responsiveness, Agility, Value-ladenness, and Engagement', qualities she summarized with the acronym B.R.A.V.E.

"Education faces immense challenges: technological shifts, mental health concerns, competency-based learning, high dropout rates, and limited resources, compounded by natural disasters," she said.

"Yet you, my dear pre-service teachers, have the power to bring hope, light the flame of learning, and transform lives. Are you brave enough to take on this calling?"

A resounding yes echoed from the pre-service teachers inside the CatSU Gymnasium, signaling their acceptance of the challenge.

"Then, carry on, and teach. Otherwise, take a self-check," Dr. Abayon responded.

"We don't want you to be imprisoned in a career where you will find prolonged agony. The choice is yours to make," she added.

"Have enough courage to bring the torch of education,

keep the flame burning, enlighten the darkest road to ignorance, and bring hope to families and communities," she concluded.

The ceremony, attended by students' parents and guardians, marked the pre-service teachers' readiness to begin their internship phase, where they will gain hands-on teaching experience in their assigned schools.

COEd Dean Dr. Ma. Sheila R. Gregorio echoed Dr. Abayon's message, reminding students that "a pin in your chest is not merely an accessory but a badge of responsibility, integrity, and service."

Purpose, empathy, consistency highlighted for NSTP trainees in 2nd sem orientation

Albert G. Clemente



GEARING UP TO SERVE. National Service Training Program Director Dr. Ma. Antonia E. Rojas led a session on community-based immersion as NSTP student-trainees convened for their final semester in the program, preparing to bring their skills, service, and learning beyond the classroom and into the communities they will serve.

Catanduanes State University (CatSU) President Dr. Gemma G. Acedo, represented by Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) Dr. Kristian Q. Aldea called on CatSU NSTP trainees to uphold purpose, empathy, and consistency as they begin their community immersion for the second semester.

Speaking at the January 29 orientation held at the CatSU Gymnasium, Dr. Aldea emphasized that NSTP is more than a classroom requirement,

it is a bridge between academic lessons and real-life community experiences.

"It is very easy to view NSTP as just another commitment, another Saturday of waking up, but it is an opportunity to learn from the narratives and stories of the locals," Dr. Aldea said.

He explained that empathy goes beyond giving back, requiring students to listen, understand, and engage with community issues, some of

which can be addressed through teaching and learning.

The VPAA also stressed consistency, reminding trainees to stay focused on their goals despite challenges in the field.

The orientation included welcome remarks from LTS Coordinator Anthony T. Emerenciana, who highlighted the students' role in service, leadership, and nation-building.

NSTP Director Dr. Ma.

Antonia E. Rojas led the session proper, outlining the steps for community-based immersion, including conducting a needs assessment and coordinating with partner barangays.

The program prepares students under the Literacy Training Service and Civic Welfare Training Service programs to translate classroom knowledge into meaningful community impact.

CatSU records 7.75% increase in 2nd Sem enrollment for AY 2025–2026

Albert G. Clemente

Catanduanes State University (CatSU) continues to experience steady growth in student enrollment, recording a total population of 15,166 students for the Second Semester of Academic Year 2025–2026.

This represents an increase of 1,091 students, or 7.75 percent, compared to the 14,075 students enrolled during the same period in Academic Year 2024–2025.

Among CatSU's colleges and campuses, the College of Industrial Technology (CIT) posted the highest enrollment with 2,859 students, maintaining its position as the University's largest academic unit.

It was followed by the College of Business and Accountancy (CBA) with 2,005 students, and the College of Information and Communications Technology (CICT) with 1,711 students.

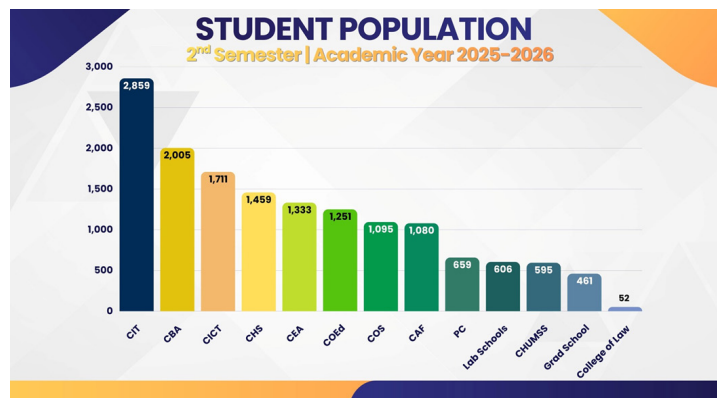
Enrollment figures also include students from the Panganiban Campus, College of Law, and Graduate School, highlighting the University's diverse academic offerings that cater to various educational and professional pathways.

Meanwhile, the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHASS) recorded the smallest student population among the University's nine colleges, with

595 enrolled students for the semester.

of student enrollment across all colleges and campuses may be viewed in the infographic.

The complete distribution



CatSU-COS, PhiTonS promote safe response to snakebite and jellyfish stings

Albert G. Clemente



RESPOND RIGHT, SAVE A LIFE. Participants took part in a hands-on demonstration of proper first aid for snakebite emergencies, learning how to apply a pressure bandage and immobilize the affected limb to help prevent the spread of venom while awaiting medical care.



In collaboration with the Philippine Toxinology Society, Inc. (PhiTonS), the Catanduanes State University-College of Sciences (CatSU-COS) conducted a training on first aid management for snakebite and jellyfish stings on January 30, 2026, attended by over 50 participants.

According to the College of Sciences, the activity aimed to equip participants with evidence-based, practical, and context-appropriate knowledge on the immediate management of envenomation cases.

The training focused on enhancing participants' understanding of venom effects, correct first-aid interventions, and practices to avoid, while emphasizing the importance of timely referral to appropriate medical facilities.

Anchored on CatSU's mandate for health education, the college said the program strengthened community preparedness, improved safety awareness, and fostered interdisciplinary

collaboration among the academe, health professionals, and local stakeholders.

"The program contributes to risk reduction, informed decision-making, and the protection of lives, particularly in vulnerable agricultural and coastal settings," the college added.

The training was led by Marvin Jay R. Sarmiento, a wildlife biologist, master's degree holder in Wildlife Science from the University of the Philippines Los Baños, and

a post-graduate trainee in Clinical Toxinology at King Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand.

Participants also engaged in hands-on demonstrations on first-aid management.

PhiTonS is a non-profit organization that promotes research and the dissemination of updated scientific information in the field of toxinology.

CatSU lauded for digital innovation, research gain, and flexible learning measures in 2nd Surveillance ISO Audit

Albert G. Clemente

Catanduanes State University (CatSU) received notable observations from TÜV Rheinland Philippines auditors during the closing meeting of its ISO 9001:2015 Second Surveillance Audit, citing the University's strong digitalization initiatives, research productivity,

and international recognitions.

Among those cited were the development and implementation of the CatSU online registration and enrollment system, which auditors said enhances process efficiency and demonstrates the University's commitment

to continual improvement and innovation.

The implementation of digital client satisfaction survey, which increased respondent participation, was also commended, along with management's proactive

issuance of flexible learning modality guidelines during weather-related disturbances.

The auditors further recognized the University's multiple completed, published, and presented studies, as well as its growing international presence

through recognitions such as the World University Rankings for Innovation (WURI), Webometrics, and Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings, alongside national distinctions including the Department of Labor and Employment's Most Outstanding Program Partner

award.

Prior to the presentation of preliminary results, TÜV Rheinland Lead Auditor Ms. Maria Russet Bondoc, together with Ms. Jogina Mendiola, expressed appreciation for the University's continued partnership and

commitment to strengthening its management systems.

University officials, led by Dr. Gemma G. Acedo, welcomed the positive observations and reaffirmed the institution's dedication to quality and continuous improvement.

TÜV Rheinland Philippines, Inc. is a trusted subsidiary of the TÜV Rheinland Group, a global leader in certification services, and has played a key role in promoting the adoption of international certification standards nationwide.

CatSU short video ad “Parahag-ot” cited in National DOST-TAPI competition

Albert G. Clemente



WINNING TRIO . Led by Vice President for Research, Extension, and Production Affairs Dr. Roberto B. Barba Jr., the team behind ‘Parahag-ot’ celebrates national recognition after their short video advertisement earned a citation in the DOST-TAPI competition.

Catanduanes State University (CatSU) is among the five national winners recognized by the Department of Science and Technology – Technology Application and Promotion Institute (DOST-TAPI) during the Gawad Alunig 2025 awarding

ceremony, held as part of the 39th TAPI Anniversary Celebration at the Manila Hotel on Friday, January 30.

CatSU received an ‘Honorable Mention’ for its three-minute short-video advertisement

titled “Parahag-ot”

Gawad Alunig is a nationwide contest that highlights local and national inventions, aiming to give greater visibility to homegrown technologies and their impact on communities.

The CatSU entry was produced by ‘Team CatSU,’ led by Dr. Roberto B. Barba, Jr., Vice President for Research, Extension, and Production Affairs, and faculty member of the College of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Team members include Raymund Sandy S. Barcelon, Director of the English Language and Speech Communication Center and faculty of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, and Kristopher T. Visaya, University

Intellectual Property Rights and Commercialization Director and faculty of the College of Business and Accountancy.

“Parahag-ot” features innovations developed by CatSU retired Professor VI Estrella Tribiana, namely Abaca Sanitizer, Abaca Gel, and Abaca Ointment.

The products carry the tagline: “For the hands that work, hands that sacrifice, hands that provide.”

Beyond product use, the video emphasizes the lives of abaca farmers and workers, highlighting the broader social and economic benefits of supporting local innovations.

Out of 70 submissions nationwide, with 40 shortlisted entries, Team CatSU emerged as one of the top five finalists, announced on January 17, 2026.

During the awarding ceremony, CatSU President Dr. Gemma G. Acedo received the award, along with a P25,000 cash prize and a medal, together with Dr. Barba and Mr. Barcelon.

The Grand Winner of Gawad Alunig 2025 was “Taghoy” by ‘Creative Blocks’ from Davao City, while “Nuez Naturals” by ‘Stem Uno Productions’ from Lanao del Norte placed as first runner-up.

Other honorable mentions include “Dropwise: Where Clean Water Has No Social Status” by ‘Team PATAK’ from Pangasinan and “Project Abiso” by ‘KATIG Productions’ from Bukidnon.



THE HANDS BEHIND EVERY FIBER . A glimpse from ‘Parahag-ot’, the nationally recognized DOST-TAPI entry, capturing the quiet resilience of an abaca farmer carrying the fruits of his labor—an enduring symbol of Catandunganon industry and pride.

Environmental leaders convene at CatSU for climate action forum

Albert G. Clemente



VOICES FOR THE PLANET . Participants gathered for the Climate Action Forum led by the Climate Change Commission, with Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Kristian Q. Aldea joining the conversation on building a more climate-resilient future.

A Student and Stakeholders' Forum on Environmental Protection and Climate Action was held at the CatSU Auditorium on January 30, 2026, bringing together students, government agencies, and environmental partners to strengthen local climate initiatives.

In her message, Gemma G. Acedo, represented by Dr. Kristian Q. Aldea, welcomed participants and emphasized the importance of collective responsibility in addressing climate and environmental challenges.

The forum was organized by the Catanduanes State

University – Center for Island Climate Change Solutions (CICCS) in partnership with the Climate Change Commission, in cooperation with the Provincial Local Government of Catanduanes and the Lloyd's Register Foundation.

Plenary sessions featured discussions on environmental protection and climate action initiatives, climate and environmental innovations from the Department of Science and Technology – Bicol Region, and updates on the C2C Project.

Serving as guest speaker, Albert Dela Cruz Sr. of the

Climate Change Commission underscored the need for collaborative and science-based approaches to climate action.

An open forum allowed participants to raise questions and share insights. This was followed by the orientation and oath-taking of the Climate Change Task Force – Catanduanes, marking a renewed commitment to coordinated local action.

The activity concluded with a ceremonial tree planting, symbolizing unity and shared responsibility in caring for the environment.

According to CICCS, the forum aimed to provide a platform for dialogue, collaboration, and knowledge exchange

among students, educators, policymakers, and environmental stakeholders.

Messages of support were delivered through video presentations by Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., Bong Go, and Loren Legarda.

Among the notable attendees were Col. Elmer Cereno, Dep. Com. Ruth Rances, PD Col. Franklin O. Arcilla, OIC PENRO Cyril Magdaraog, DOST PSTO Engr. Marie Grace T. Molina, and CICCS Director Engr. Dexter M. Toyado, along with other representatives from partner agencies and institutions.

3 CICT faculty, CEA dean named associate members of National Research Council of the Philippines

Albert G. Clemente with reports from Research and Development Services



CEA Dean Engr. Dexter M. Toyado



Dr. Belen M. Tapado



Dr. Maria Concepcion S. Vera



Dr. Ramona Michelle M. Magtangob

Three faculty members of the College of Information and Communications Technology (CICT), and dean of College of Engineering and Architecture have been elected as Associate Members of the National Research Council of the Philippines (NRCP).

Recognized under Division VII – Engineering and Industrial Research are Dr. Belen M. Tapado, Professor VI; Dr. Maria Concepcion S. Vera, Associate Professor II and Dean of CICT; Dr. Ramona Michelle

M. Magtangob, Assistant Professor I, and CEA Dean Engr. Dexter M. Toyado, who is concurrently serving as director of Center for Island Climate Change Solutions.

The NRCP, an attached agency of the Department of Science and Technology and a member of the International Science Council, serves as an advisory body to the Philippine Government on matters of national interest.

It is composed of researchers,

scientists, engineers, and technologists across various disciplines, including the social sciences and humanities.

Established on December 8, 1933 through Act 4120, the NRCP promotes and supports basic research to strengthen the capabilities of individual and group scientists.

It also fosters linkages with local and international scientific organizations, provides expert

advice on national concerns, and advances a strong culture of science and technology across sectors.

The election of the three CICT faculty members highlights the college's growing contribution to engineering and industrial research and its active role in advancing scientific development in the country, according to the Research and Development Services of the University.

Advancing Science: COS faculty represents CatSU in Bioinformatics Training at DLSU Laguna Campus

Albert G. Clemente

A faculty member of Catanduanes State University - College of Sciences, Wally I. Tapas, was selected to participate in the Bioinformatics Workshop for Mass Spectrometry (MS)-based Metabolomics Annotation held on February 9–11, 2026, at the Laguna Campus of De La Salle University.

The COS Instructor II joined the said workshop as a travel

grant awardee, receiving P6,000 to help subsidize transportation and related expenses. Tapas application was chosen based on the relevance of his research and his potential to contribute to the advancement of metabolomics in the region.

During the first day of the workshop, he delivered a five-minute rapid presentation outlining his previous, ongoing, and planned

research projects related to metabolomics, particularly those requiring metabolite annotation.

The workshop was organized through a joint initiative of the University of Antwerp, Ghent University, the Department of Science and Technology - Food and Nutrition Research Institute, and De La Salle University, in collaboration with the Philippine

Metabolomics Network. The event was funded by the VLIR-UOS.

The COS faculty member expressed gratitude to Gemma G. Acedo and Dr. Roberto B. Barba Jr., Vice President for Research, Extension, and Production Affairs, for their mentorship and support in advancing his research work.

German physicist, climate expert delivers lecture at CatSU

Albert G. Clemente



STRAIGHT FROM THE CLIMATE EXPERT . German physicist and atmospheric scientist Dr. Alfred Wiedensohler shared insights on the potential impacts of climate change in tropical regions like Catanduanes during a lecture attended by students, faculty-researchers, and university officials.



To deepen the local understanding of the shifting global environment, the Catanduanes State University (CatSU) hosted a lecture on "Global Climate Change and its Potential Impacts on the Tropical Region" on February 27.

The event, held at the CatSU Accreditation Room, featured world-renowned physicist and atmospheric scientist Dr. Alfred "Ali" Wiedensohler as the keynote speaker.

The lecture was a collaborative effort between the College of Agriculture and Fisheries (CAF) and the Center for International Relations, Continuing Professional Development, and Services (CIRCPDS).

Dr. Wiedensohler, a visiting professor from Leipzig, Germany, is a leading figure in the study of aerosols and their critical role in air quality and climate regulation. He currently serves as the Director of the ACTRIS European Center

for Aerosol Calibration and Characterization and is a senior scientist at the Leibniz Institute for Tropospheric Research (TROPOS).

During the half-day session, Dr. Wiedensohler discussed the specific vulnerabilities of tropical regions to rising global temperatures and atmospheric changes. His expertise is backed by a distinguished international career, including guest professorships at Peking University in China and the University of the Philippines

Diliman.

The lecture was attended by a select group of students and faculty members. Also in attendance were university officials, including Professor Emeritus and former CatSU President Dr. Minerva I. Morales, Vice President for Research, Extension, and Production Affairs (VPREPA) Dr. Roberto B. Barba Jr., CAF Dean Dr. Medie M. Lopez, and CIRCPDS Director Zyra Mae T. Tumala.

Defending Rights, Protecting Health: USC marks EDSA Anniversary with Seminar on WPS and Wellness

Albert G. Clemente

In a dual-purpose session aimed at fostering nationalism and health consciousness, the Catanduanes State University (CatSU) University Student Council organized a seminar titled "West Philippine Sea (WPS) is Ours: Our Seas, Our Rights, Our Future" on February 25.

The event coincided with the national commemoration of the EDSA People Power Revolution, serving as a symbolic backdrop

for discussions on sovereignty and civic responsibility.

In partnership with the Office of Student Affairs Development Services (OSADS), the university invited 1st Lt. Michael John A. Pinuela of the 14th Special Forces (Swordfish) Company, Philippine Army, to lead the maritime awareness session.

Guided by the theme "Karagatan ng Pilipinas, Karapatan ng Pilipino," Lt. Pinuela emphasized

the critical importance of understanding the Philippines' maritime rights and territorial integrity. The discussion sought to empower students with knowledge regarding national sovereignty in the West Philippine Sea and the role of the youth in upholding these rights.

Transitioning from national security to personal well-being, the seminar also featured Dr. Marian Lianko Tresvalles from the Eastern

Bicol Medical Center – Ginaha Wellness Center.

Dr. Tresvalles conducted an informative session on sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV and other STDs. Her discussion focused on breaking the social stigma surrounding these conditions and promoting informed, responsible health choices among the student body.

Quality Check: PRC evaluates CatSU Nutrition program to bolster healthcare standards

Albert G. Clemente



CHANNELING ADVANCED HEALTHCARE STANDARDS. Officials from the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) visited the College of Health Sciences and met with Vice President for Research, Extension, and Production Affairs Dr. Roberto B. Barba Jr. and Governor Patrick Alain T. Azanza.

To ensure that the next generation of registered nutritionist-dietitians (RNDs) meets the PRC-set standards, officials from the Professional Regulatory Board of Nutrition and Dietetics conducted a comprehensive inspection and monitoring visit at Catanduanes State University (CatSU) on Thursday, February 26.

The visit, led by PRB

Chairperson Ma. Socorro Endrina-Ignacio and Board Member Dr. Imelda A. Agdeppa, focused on evaluating the University's Bachelor of Science in Nutrition and Dietetics (BSND) program. As part of the Professional Regulation Commission's (PRC) regular quality assurance mandate, the audit checked for compliance with national academic standards, and



laboratory facilities.

Representing CatSU President Gemma G. Acedo, Vice President for Research, Extension, and Production Affairs (VPREPA) Dr. Roberto B. Barba Jr. formally received the delegation. Dr. Barba reaffirmed the university's commitment to sustaining high-caliber health education and continuous program enhancement.

The PRC officials also engaged in a technical meeting with the faculty of the College of Health Sciences (CHS), led by Dean Ma. Alma V. Tabirara and Nutrition and

Dietetics Department Chair Assoc. Prof. Emily T. Romero.

Highlighting the province-wide importance of the program, the officials also paid a courtesy call to the Governor's Office, meeting with Dr. Patrick Alain T. Azanza. The meeting underscored the shared vision between the university and the provincial government in producing competent health professionals to address the nutritional needs of the island.

Helping Farmers Rebuild: CatSU-CBA holds outreach in San Miguel

Albert G. Clemente



CHAMPIONING THE ABACALEROS. Project Head Vivienne May Rubio-Valenzuela and CBA faculty led an extension activity, welcoming participants and expressing thanks for their engagement.



To support local farmers and families affected by Super Typhoon Uwan in November 2025, the faculty, staff, and students of the Catanduanes State University (CatSU) College of Business and Accountancy (CBA) conducted an outreach activity for members of the Mabato Abaca Farmers Association (MAFA) in Brgy. Mabato, San Miguel, Catanduanes on March 11, 2026.

The activity, titled "EmpowerTHEM: An Outreach Activity at Mabato, San Miguel," is part of the university's extension

program "Agripreneurship Empowerment: Developing Entrepreneurial Competencies for Sustainable Development among Abaca Farmers."

Project head Vivienne May Rubio-Valenzuela, a CBA faculty member, welcomed the participants and thanked those who supported

the outreach. Guest Fr. Joseph B. Saratan also encouraged the community to continue helping one another and to be inspired to share with others.

Beneficiaries received cereals, canned goods, clothing, hygiene products, and accessories. Many of the items were donated from the

United States through Ms. Anita A. Gutierrez, along with pre-loved clothes from CatSU-CBA faculty and staff.

The activity also featured a Sharing of Blessings, where donations were given to selected families, especially those whose homes were severely damaged by

the super typhoon.

Through initiatives like this, CatSU continues to support local communities and promote the welfare of abaca farmers in the province.

CatSU receives initial crab facility grant and additional P100K operational fund from Wong family for PAGLAOM Center

Albert G. Clemente and Dr. Roberto B. Barba, Jr.

In a significant step toward developing agro-fishery and eco-tourism in the province, Catanduanes State University (CatSU) received a P100,000 cash donation and a crab facility from former governor and Oceancell Trading International Corporation (OTIC) owner Ms. Araceli Bernardino-Wong during a turnover ceremony held at the Palnab Agro-Fishery Learning and Opportunities for Mangrove-based Eco-Tourism (PAGLAOM) Center in Palnab Del Sur, Virac.

The donation, intended for the initial

establishment and operationalization of the 44.92-hectare PAGLAOM Center, was received by Vice President for Research, Extension, and Production Affairs Dr. Roberto B. Barba, Jr. together with key university officials on Wednesday, March 11.

In fact, the P100,000 cash donation is an addition to the initial crab facility with an estimated amount of around P400,000 and at zero-cost for CatSU.

Ms. Wong attended the ceremony with her family and friends, including Ms. Grace Relucio Princesa, former Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates and the Vatican City, and her

youngest son John Ashley Wong, who oversees the family's crab project in the province.

PAGLAOM program is one of the priority programs under the administration of CatSU President Dr. Gemma G. Acedo, reflecting the University's commitment to aquaculture production, research and eco-tourism development for the island province.

Part of the program was an ocular visit to the mangrove area of the Center, which Dr. Barba envisions as a future regional eco-tourism hub integrating research, environmental conservation, and community development.

The VPREPA likewise acknowledged the support of the Provincial Local Government of Catanduanes (PLGU), led by Governor Dr. Patrick Alain T. Azanza, particularly in the repair of the center's dike.

Through the collaboration, the estimated repair cost was significantly reduced from P15 million to only

P122,000, covering fuel expenses shouldered by the university.

Representing the provincial government in the turnover ceremony, Provincial Administrator Atty. Evelyn L. Gutierrez reaffirmed the PLGU's full support for the PAGLAOM Center and commended both the university and Ms. Bernardino-Wong for their initiatives. The PLGU also provided assistance by deploying a backhoe and operator for the dike repair works.

The ceremony was attended by university officials and partners, including Dr. Kristian Q. Aldea, Vice President for Academic Affairs; Dr. Arthur I. Tabirara, Vice President for Administrative and Financial Affairs; Dr. Minerva I. Morales, Professor Emeritus and former CatSU President; Mr. Raymond C. Tollo, Provincial Fishery Officer of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR); Mr. Ferdinand Ocol, and Provincial Agriculturist Mr. Ace William R. Tria, who expressed his commitment of support, along with other stakeholders.

Looking ahead, CatSU plans to expand the PAGLAOM Center's programs, including a request for 200,000 prawn fry from BFAR and the establishment of a P1-million stingless bee project from the Department of Agriculture to support honey production.

Also exploring a potential TESDA collaboration to offer aquatic production and grow-out culture training for local fisherfolk, equipping communities with practical skills to support





PARTNERS IN GREEN ECONOMY.

Oceancell Trading International Corporation and the family of former Governor Araceli B. Wong turned over a crab facility and ₱100,000 support to Catanduanes State University for the CatSU PAGLAOM Center, boosting its push for mud crab development and eco-tourism.

sustainable livelihoods.

Activities during the turnover ceremony and pre-Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) and Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) engagements included mangrove tree planting, crab stocking, and a visit to the university's Abaca Technology

Innovation Center.

A formal MoA/MoU signing is scheduled to take place and this will be attended by former Governor Wong, Governor Azanza, and CatSU President Acedo.

With the support of the Wong family and local government units, CatSU

continues to strengthen its initiatives in agro-fishery development, environmental conservation, and community-based eco-tourism, reaffirming its role as a center of innovation and sustainability in Catanduanes.



6 CatSU Programs Secure AACUP Accreditation, Re-accreditation

Albert G. Clemente

LEVEL II RE-ACCREDITED PROGRAMS

Master of Arts in Industrial Education

Master of Arts in Teaching Chemistry

LEVEL I ACCREDITED PROGRAMS

Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Management (For revisit, Area VI)

Bachelor of Culture and Arts Education

Bachelor of Physical Education

Bachelor of Science in Fisheries

Catanduanes State University (CatSU) has earned accreditation recognition for six of its academic programs from the Accrediting Agency of Chartered Colleges and Universities in the Philippines (AACUP), following an assessment conducted on October 27-30, 2025.

In a letter dated February 20, 2026, AACUP Executive Director Dr. Milabel E. Ho informed Catanduanes State

University President Dr. Gemma G. Acedo of the accreditation results. Four programs were granted Level I accreditation, while two programs were granted Level II re-accreditation.

The Level II re-accredited programs are the Master of Arts in Industrial Education and the Master of Arts in Teaching Chemistry. Meanwhile, the Level I accredited programs include the Doctor of Philosophy in

Educational Management (subject to a revisit of Area VI), the Bachelor of Culture and Arts Education, the Bachelor of Physical Education, and the Bachelor of Science in Fisheries.

Dr. Acedo congratulated the deans, faculty members, non-teaching staff, administrators, and the entire CatSU community on the achievement, noting that the accreditation affirms the University's adherence to

national quality standards.

"The accreditation of these programs ensures that the quality of education at CatSU is relevant and aligned with national standards," she said. "May this milestone inspire us to sustain a culture of quality, innovation, and continuous improvement across all our programs."

As of February 2026, CatSU offers 60 undergraduate programs, three of which hold Level I accreditation, 16 hold Level II re-accreditation, 21 hold Level III re-accreditation, and one—the Bachelor of Science in Economics—holds Level IV re-accreditation. Five undergraduate programs hold candidate status, while 14 are not yet accreditable.

For graduate education, the University offers 15 programs, including one with Level I accreditation, nine with Level II re-accreditation, and two with Level III re-accreditation. Two graduate programs hold candidate status, while one is not yet accreditable.

CatSU is READY: Students, employees join 1st quarter quake drill

Albert G. Clemente with reports from Research and Development Services



DRILLED FOR SAFETY . Students of Catanduanes State University move in an orderly queue to open grounds, hands over heads, during the 1st Quarter Nationwide Earthquake Drill, showing readiness in action.

Students, faculty, and staff of Catanduanes State University actively participated in the 1st Quarter National Simultaneous Earthquake Drill held on Thursday, March 12, at 3:30 PM.

During the drill, members of the CatSU community practiced the standard "Duck, Cover, and Hold" procedure before calmly and safely

evacuating to designated open areas across the campus.

The university's participation highlights its commitment to ensuring that CatSUans remain READY—Resilient, Empowered, Alert, Decisive, and Year-round prepared—in responding to possible emergencies and disasters.



CatSU future educators explore tech integration at Edutech Summit

Albert G. Clemente with reports from Research and Development Services



LEARNING STRAIGHT FROM TEACHERS IN FIELD. COEd faculty Zyra Mae T. Tumala shared insights during the EduTech Summit, where English major students engaged with real-world voices from the teaching field under Catanduanes State University.



Bachelor of Secondary Education major in English students of Catanduanes State University – College of Education took part in the 'Edutech Summit '26: The Digital Pedagogy' on Wednesday, March 18. The half-day event focused on helping future educators better understand how to integrate technology into today's classrooms.

Speakers from the Department of Education shared practical insights and approaches. Mr. Ruel C. Fernandez, Master Teacher II, discussed the broader design framework of the language curriculum.

Meanwhile, Ms. Loraine D. Taule, also a Master Teacher II, walked participants through the

instructional design behind the MATATAG Curriculum, and Teacher VI Ms. Juvy Z. Aracosta led an engaging session on blending ICT and digital citizenship in the MATATAG era.

Student participants likewise got the chance to witness a special macro demonstration by Mr. John Cyrus Ereso (BSED-English 4A),

along with students from the Laboratory Schools, adding a hands-on element to the learning experience.

The event was organized by BSED-English 3A in collaboration with the Lingua Poetica Society.

Staying Safe in the Digital World: CatSU hosts cybersecurity talk

Albert G. Clemente



CYBERTALK. Laboratory Schools students engaged into a cyberspace seminar with Rotary Club of Paranaque East and former Congressman Cesar V. Sarmiento, linking learners to digital awareness and safety.

Senior High School students of Catanduanes State University Laboratory Schools took part in the talk "Cyber Smart: Protecting Yourself Online," led by Rtn. John Ang of the Rotary Club of Paranaque East on Thursday, March 19.

Held at the CatSU Gymnasium, the session focused on staying safe in the digital space, with a strong reminder to "think before you click."

Also present during the activity were former Congressman Cesar V. Sarmiento, Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Kristian Q. Aldea, and Executive Assistant and College of Business and Accountancy Dean Ian V. Aranel.

CatSU welcomes Australian Embassy officials, highlights PAGLAOM Center and proposed KIST park

Albert G. Clemente



CHEERS TO ISLAND-INDUSTRY INNOVATION. Catanduanes State University President Dr. Gemma G. Acedo shared a glass of abaca wine with an Australian Embassy to the Philippines official during a visit to the PAGLAOM Center and Abaca Technology Innovation Center.

Underscoring opportunities for collaboration in education and sustainable development, Catanduanes State University (CatSU) showcased its key innovation and sustainability initiatives to officials from the Australian Embassy in the Philippines during a Familiarization Visit on Thursday morning, March 26.

The delegation, composed of Counselor Luke Villiers (Economic and Public Diplomacy), Second Secretary (Economic) Lachlan Parsons, and Senior Program

Officer (Economic) Mabellene Reynaldo, toured the Palnab Agro-Fishery Learning and Opportunities for Mangrove-based Eco-Tourism (PAGLAOM) Center, walked through the crab facility, explored the Abaca Technology Innovation Center (ATIC), and were introduced to the proposed Knowledge, Innovation, Science, and Technology (KIST) Park.

They were received by President Dr. Gemma G. Acedo along with key University officials.

The University President invited the delegation to participate

in a mangrove planting activity as part of the University's "one tree per visitor" initiative, expressing appreciation for the visit and optimism for future collaboration.

Vice President for Research, Extension, and Production Affairs Dr. Roberto B. Barba Jr. presented the PAGLAOM project, highlighting its role in advancing aquaculture, research, and eco-tourism in the province. He shared his vision of the project as a future regional hub that integrates environmental conservation, community development, and innovation.

Counselor Villiers expressed gratitude for the warm welcome.

"Thank you so much for this incredibly warm welcome. We heard before leaving Manila that Catanduanes is the Happy Island,

and we certainly felt that the moment we arrived," Villiers said.

He also shared that Australia is strengthening its engagement with Southeast Asia through its "Invested: Australia's Southeast Asia Economic Strategy to 2040," which aims to deepen economic ties in the region.

"We are working to build stronger connections, especially in key areas like agriculture and education," he said, noting ongoing efforts to expand partnerships with institutions in the Philippines.

Villiers also introduced to the University deans, directors, and employees the Australia Awards scholarship program, which supports Filipino professionals in pursuing graduate studies in Australia.

"Each year, we support around 40 to 50 Filipinos to undertake master's degrees, with the goal of bringing that expertise back to benefit their communities," he added.

Second Secretary Parsons echoed the enthusiasm, looking forward to learning more about

the University and the province's programs in key sectors such as energy, infrastructure, and connectivity.

"We are excited to be here and learn more about what CatSU and the province are working toward," he said since their visit was organized by the Provincial Local

Government of Catanduanes.

The half-day activity continued with the signing of the PAGLAOM commitment wall and a mangrove planting. While exploring the ATIC, the delegation was introduced to various abaca-based products, including alcohol and soap, and they even tried abaca wine.

The visit concluded with a meet-and-greet at the CatSU Conference Room, where the University President presented the proposed KIST Park and later offered a token of appreciation to the visitors—a small wooden clock shaped like Catanduanes Island.

CatSU boosts IZN efforts as 2 representatives complete Indonesian Language and Culture Course

Albert G. Clemente

Catanduanes State University (CatSU) continues to strengthen its global engagement initiatives as two representatives from the University successfully completed the Fun Bahasa Indonesia and Cultural Course (FBICC), a flagship program hosted by ITS Global Engagement.

The 12-day virtual course, with two-hour sessions, brought together participants from different institutions, including Jevan P. Sualibio from the College of Education and Director Zyra Mae T. Tumala of the Center

for International Relations and Continuing Professional Development Services. Their participation marks another step in the University's efforts to further strengthen its international engagement.

According to the internationalization (IZN) director, the initiative is part of CatSU's preparations for welcoming Indonesian inbound students in the first semester of Academic Year 2026–2027.

"This helps us build basic proficiency in the Bahasa language

while also gaining a better understanding of Indonesian culture," she shared.

Director Tumala and Sualibio, a third-year Bachelor of Secondary Education major in English student, completed the 12-day virtual program held from February 12 to March 16. They were among the 25 completers out of 276 participants in Batch 1 and attended a total of 10 sessions, each earning a score of 83.33.

The COEd student is expected to serve as a peer bridge for incoming international

students, helping them adjust both academically and culturally.

Launched in 2021, the FBICC offers free training in basic Bahasa Indonesia while introducing participants to Indonesian culture. Delivered in English, the program also features activities such as a virtual city tour of Surabaya, giving learners a glimpse of life in Indonesia.

Through initiatives like this, CatSU continues to strengthen its readiness to welcome international students and foster meaningful cross-cultural exchange.

CatSU CICT faculty wins Best Paper Presenter Award at TechRevEd 2026

Albert G. Clemente with reports from Research and Development Services



Catanduanes State University (CatSU) faculty researchers of the College of Information and Communications Technology (CICT) bag the

Best Paper Presenter Award at the PSUCCESS Technological Revolution in Education (TechRevEd) Research Conference 2026.

Assoc. Prof. Joy V. Santelices presented the research titled "Catanduanes Tourist Companion: A Chatbot-Enabled Website Solution for

Simplifying Tourist Information." The study proposes a digital platform designed to make tourist information in Catanduanes easier to access through a chatbot-enabled website.

The research was conducted in collaboration with Ms. Mae Ezra T. Abundo, Dr. Belen M. Tapado, and Ms. May G. Yuga, and was supported by an internally funded research grant from Catanduanes State University.

The conference took place from February 18 to 20, 2026, at Bulwagang Balagtas in Polytechnic University of the Philippines, Sta. Mesa, Manila, bringing together educators and researchers to present innovative studies focused on technology and education.

The recognition highlights CatSU's continued commitment to research excellence and innovation in information and communications technology.

CATANDUANES STATE UNIVERSITY

FEATURED ARTICLE:

Bridging Nations Through Nature: **CatSU Hosts 22 Embassies for PAGLAOM Initiative**

Albert G. Clemente



FROM AROUND THE GLOBE . Catanduanes State University President Dr. Gemma G. Acedo, together with key officials, welcomed the unprecedented visit of 22 embassies from around the world and marked the occasion with a historic photo in front of the main building.

On a bright Saturday morning, February 7, the grounds of Catanduanes State University turned into a stage for diplomacy, culture, and shared purpose.

University President Dr. Gemma G. Acedo, joined by key officials, welcomed resident foreign ambassadors and their spouses from 22 embassies for a Familiarization Visit organized by the Department of Foreign Affairs in partnership with the Provincial Local Government of Catanduanes.

The visit carried more than ceremonial value. It was a meeting point of local vision and global commitment.

At the heart of the program was the presentation of the proposed PAGLAOM Center or the Palnab Agro-Fishery Learning and Opportunities for Mangrove-based Eco-Tourism, led by Vice President for Research, Extension, and Production Affairs Dr. Roberto

B. Barba Jr.

"Paglaom," he shared, "means hope in Bikol." The word set the tone for what the University hopes to build: a 44.92-hectare coastal site already undergoing rehabilitation, envisioned not merely as a local initiative but as a platform for international collaboration.

Dr. Barba described PAGLAOM as a practical, nature-based solution anchored on research, community engagement, and global priorities.

The project aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly in promoting food security, environmental protection, and decent job creation.

But beyond frameworks and targets, he invited the guests to see the mangrove ecosystem up close through an audio-visual presentation.

To understand its importance,

he said, one must look down and step into the mudflats. These are not idle stretches of land but living systems, feeding grounds for migratory birds, natural recyclers of nutrients, and protective barriers against storm surges.

In a province often tested by strong typhoons, mangroves are silent defenders.

PAGLAOM, he emphasized, goes beyond eco-tourism. It is designed as a science-based learning hub that will strengthen mangrove ecosystem research while serving as a training ground for communities.

Through research, extension, and partnerships, the University

aims to turn conservation into action and knowledge into opportunity.

The ambassadors' engagement did not end with the presentation. In a symbolic gesture of support, members of the delegation signed the Commitment Wall, affirming shared responsibility for conservation and sustainable development.

The moment reflected what Dr. Barba described it as a diplomatic platform for conservation—where local initiatives contribute to broader biodiversity commitments.

The visit also highlighted Catanduanes' cultural and technological strengths. At the

University lobby, guests explored locally crafted abaca costumes and products, showcasing the province's identity as the Abaca Capital of the Philippines. They then toured the Ondra Gallery on the second floor, where art and heritage intersect.

The program concluded at the Abaca Technology and Innovation Center. There, the ambassadors gained insights into the diverse applications of abaca fiber—from textiles to industrial materials—and sampled abaca wine, a creative example of value-adding innovation rooted in local resources.

Conversations flowed between cultures and countries,

but the message remained clear: sustainable development thrives when communities, institutions, and international partners move in the same direction.

In PAGLAOM, CatSU offers more than a project. It extends an invitation to collaborate in research, invest in conservation, strengthen education, and support community-driven initiatives that are both locally grounded and globally relevant.

On that Saturday, hope was not merely spoken. It becomes visible and shared to one another. In the words of the VPREPA, CatSU cares "to get there, together."

CatSU strengthens AI advocacy through president's participation in CHED RAISE 2026

Albert G. Clemente



REDEFINING HIGHER ED THROUGH AI.

Catanduanes State University President Dr. Gemma G. Acedo joined CHED RAISE 2026 on AI for societal development, with CHED Chair Dr. Shirley Agrupis and Bicol higher education leaders.

Catanduanes State University (CatSU) President Dr. Gemma G. Acedo represented the University at CHED RAISE 2026: Responding through AI for Societal Empowerment, held February 25–27 at the Iloilo Convention Center in Iloilo City.

According to Dr. Acedo, the conference aimed to

foster meaningful discourse on the responsible, inclusive, and transformative integration of Artificial Intelligence in education and society.

The three-day confab featured discussions on policy directions, best practices, ethical considerations, and innovative applications of AI in teaching, research, and institutional governance.

The summit, organized by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) in partnership with West Visayas State University and Northern Iloilo State University, convened leaders from public and private higher education institutions across the country to chart the future of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Philippine education.

Dr. Acedo was among the 59 participants from the Bicol Region, which included SUC presidents, deans, program chairs, and faculty members from various colleges and universities. Her presence underscored CatSU's active engagement in national conversations shaping the future of higher education.

Dr. Acedo calls on Bicolano BSOA students to lead with purpose at 6th PASOA Convention

Albert G. Clemente



AT THE CENTER OF REGIONAL HOSTING. Catanduanes State University (CatSU) President Dr. Gemma G. Acedo addressed the PASOA Regional Convention hosted by CatSU, welcoming delegates from across Bicol.



Catanduanes State University (CatSU) President Dr. Gemma G. Acedo urged Bicolano students to see themselves as future drivers of national progress during the opening of 6th Philippine Association of Students in Office Administration (PASOA) Regional Convention 2026 on Wednesday, March 25.

In her message, she reframed empowerment as something deeper than authority—something built through discipline, skill, and purpose.

"Empowerment is not just giving authority. It's about refining excellence and turning local offices into national assets. You are going to be the backbone of future organizational success," she said.

As host of this year's convention, CatSU welcomed

delegates from across the region, with Dr. Acedo thanking the organizers and participating institutions for coming together. She also pointed out that the activities lined up are meant to go beyond competition.

"The skills you sharpen here—whether in a power pitch challenge or other activities—are the same tools you'll carry with you to help drive national progress," she added.

Meanwhile, guest speaker Atty. Terelyn C. Villareal, a Court Legal Researcher and a 2010 CatSU graduate of the Bachelor of Science in Office Administration, shared that real growth begins with self-belief.

"Empowerment begins with believing that your role matters," she said. "As future professionals, I challenge you to hold on to three

things: excellence, integrity, and service."

She also encouraged the student-participants to see the convention as more than just a requirement or a competition.

"This is more than an academic exercise—it's a declaration of your potential," Villareal said. "You are the future office leaders who will strengthen institutions and help move the country forward."

She closed with a simple but firm challenge: "Empowerment is not given—it's claimed. Excellence is not a one-time act—it's a habit. And national progress isn't a distant goal—it's built every day by people like you. Be leaders who inspire, administrators who excel, and citizens who serve."

The opening program was attended by local and university

officials, including Municipal Administrator John V. Socito, representing Virac Mayor Sinforoso M. Sarmiento, Jr., along with Dr. Ma. Concepcion V. Marquez and College of Business and Accountancy Dean Ian V. Aranel.

Delegates from institutions across the Bicol region—including Polytechnic University of the Philippines-Ragay Campus, Camarines Norte State College, Camarines Sur Polytechnic Colleges (Nabua and Buhí campuses), Partido State University, Oas Community College, Catanduanes Colleges, CatSU, and the University of Saint Anthony—participated in the convention, which ran from March 25 to 27, 2026.

Working Together for Bicol: CatSU joins regional innovation partnership

Albert G. Clemente

Catanduanes State University (CatSU) has strengthened its role in regional development through a new inter-agency partnership aimed at advancing grassroots innovation across the Bicol Region.

Held on March 19, 2026, CatSU

President Dr. Gemma G. Acedo joined the Department of Science and Technology – Regional Office V, headed by Director Rommel R. Serrano, CESO III, in signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that brings together key institutions to collaborate on research, communication, tourism,

capacity-building, and multi-sectoral initiatives.

The partnership also includes fellow higher education institutions in Bicol, along with the Department of the Interior and Local Government Regional Office V, the Department of Tourism Bicol, and

the Philippine Information Agency Bicol.

By taking part in this initiative, the University underscores its support to working closely with regional partners to create more inclusive and sustainable opportunities for local communities.

Defying the Odds: How an English Major CatSUan made 'HERstory' to Top the LEPT

Albert G. Clemente

While some choose to delay the board exam after graduation to prepare and cling to age-old superstitions for luck, Kym Lyan S. Terrago decided to forge a different path.

Ranking 4th nationwide (Secondary Level) in the September 2025 Licensure Examination for Professional Teachers (LEPT), the Magna Cum Laude graduate from Catanduanes State University

(CatSU) proved that her story is defined by tremendous effort, hard work, and strong faith in God—making the "impossible" possible.

With a remarkable 94.20% rating, Terrago, who hails from San

Andres, made history and wrote her own story as the first English major from the College of Education to break into the national list of toppers.

Leap of Faith

As she recounted during the EduKahusayan event on March 4, 2026, Terrago's path to the top was initially a detour.

Following her graduation in June 2025, she originally intended to rest and delay her board exam until March 2026. However, the collective support of her classmates, friends, and family, as well as a series of "divine signs" received through the advice of mentors, pushed her to dive in early.

"I prayed harder to come up with better decisions. The indications I received through the people I asked for advice pushed me to take the board exam in September 2025," she recalled.

Despite her success, she admitted that her journey was far from 'smooth sailing.' She treated her review

like a marathon, starting her preparations even before her graduation gown was tucked away.

Recounting her preparations, Terrago shared that she scheduled her most intense study sessions from the afternoon until midnight and practiced strict digital discipline, transforming her gadgets from distractions into study companions by utilizing

supplemental videos provided by her review center.

Terrago was likewise consistent with her "no zero days" rule, refusing to let a single day pass without reviewing concepts.

"We should not let a day pass without reviewing concepts. Even small progress is still progress,"

Terrago emphasized.

This disciplined approach paid off early in the process. Terrago was a consistent top performer in diagnostic and pre-board exams at her review center, though she refused to let those early wins breed complacency.

Faith over superstition

Interestingly, in a culture where "red underwear" and specific board exam superstitions are often part of the preparation, Terrago chose to forgo traditional 'pamahiin.'

"I believe that my dedication and faith in God is way stronger than any of those superstitions," she stated.

Her prayers remained specific but humble, asking for a high rating while entrusting the topper spot entirely to God's will.

When the results finally dropped, the anxiety that had

shadowed her waiting period vanished.

"I burst into tears of happiness and appreciation. It was a heartfelt praise and utmost gratitude to God," she expressed.

Beyond personal glory, her achievement carries significant weight as an inspiration for her alma mater. While English majors have rarely appeared among the toppers in previous LEPT editions, Terrago has effectively shattered that glass ceiling for all CatSUans.

'HERstory' made

As she transitions from making "HERstory" to becoming a professional educator, Terrago's message to those following in her footsteps remains clear and grounded. She

encourages future LEPT takers to never let the perceived difficulty of a goal stop them from pursuing it.

'HERstory' serves as a living testament to her final piece of advice: "dream big, aspire big, and always partner those ambitions with tremendous effort, hard work, and unwavering faith."

LEPT TOP 4 . Kym Lyan S. Terrago makes history as the first English major from Catanduanes State University to top the board examination.



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

CatSU receives P25M for Student Amphitheater; Sen. Gatchalian confirms

Albert G. Clemente



ANOTHER WIN FOR CATSU INFRA . Sherwin Gatchalian, Senate Finance Committee Chairperson, delivered remarks at the 1st PASUC and announced a P25M allocation for the Catanduanes State University student amphitheater.

Catanduanes State University (CatSU) has been allocated P25 million for the construction and completion of its Student Convention Center with Amphitheater, Senator Sherwin "Win" T. Gatchalian confirmed.

Indicated in a February 18, 2026 letter addressed to CatSU President Dr. Gemma G. Acedo, the said infrastructure project was included as an amendment to House Bill No. 4058, now enacted under Republic Act No. 12314, the General Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2026.

According to Sen. Gatchalian, the project aims to help address capacity challenges faced by State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) under the full implementation of the Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act (RA 10931).

CatSU President Dr. Gemma G. Acedo expressed gratitude to the Senate Finance Committee

Chairperson for his support in securing the funding.

The letter was presented during the 1st Executive Board Meeting of the Philippine Association of State Universities and Colleges (PASUC) on February 19 at Rizal Park Hotel, Manila.

During the meeting, SUC Presidents and Officers-in-Charge discussed recommendations on the draft CHED-DBM Revised SUC Levelling Guidelines and Instruments, as well as the draft Revised Organization and Staffing Standards (ROSSS) Phase III for SUCs.

Sen. Gatchalian emphasized that the historic education budget underscores the legislature's commitment to expanding access to quality tertiary education and called for the transparent and effective use of public funds under university leadership.



CatSU, DSWD Bicol ink MoA to boost literacy dev't through 'Tara, Basa! Tutoring Program'

Albert G. Clemente



BUILDING READERS. Catanduanes State University President Dr. Gemma G. Acedo joined Bicol higher education leaders in signing a partnership with Department of Social Welfare and Development for the Tara Basa Tutoring Program, reinforcing support for literacy initiatives.

To support college students with financial needs through the Cash-for-Work program, Catanduanes State University (CatSU), represented by President Dr. Gemma G. Acedo, formalized its partnership with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Region V through the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) for the agency's "Tara, Basa! Tutoring Program" this afternoon, March 16, 2026, at Vela Hotel, Legazpi City.

President Acedo expressed

the University's full support and active participation in the initiative, which aims to promote literacy development and assist low-income families and college students.

Under the program, college students will serve as tutors for children struggling with reading and as Youth Development Workers, facilitating Nanay-Tatay Teacher Sessions to strengthen parents' capacity to support their children's learning.

Mandated under Executive Order No. 76, this flagship program ensures the cooperation of national and local government agencies in establishing a collaborative learning program.

Launched in August 2023 and expanded in 2024, the program is now in its second cycle for 2026, partnering with agencies from the Department of Education Regional Office V, State and Local Universities and Colleges, and Provincial and Municipal Local Government Units.

Joining Dr. Acedo at the signing were Dr. Maria Sheila R. Gregorio, Dean of the College of Education, and Jowi B. Resayaga, Director of Extension Services and the program's focal person.

Through this collaboration, CatSU, DSWD Region V, and the Department of Education reaffirm their commitment to academic excellence and social development in the region.

CatSU renews partnership with Kansas State University to advance agritech

Albert G. Clemente

Catanduanes State University (CatSU) continues to strengthen its global partnerships as President Dr. Gemma G. Acedo signed the renewal of its Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with Kansas State University's Carl and Melinda Helwig Department of Biological and Agricultural

Engineering.

The renewed partnership reflects a shared commitment to deepen knowledge exchange and advance the use of technology in agriculture.

The signing took place on

Thursday, March 19 in Naga City, where Dr. Acedo joined fellow leaders of State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) from across the country. CatSU's participation highlights its ongoing efforts to create more opportunities for faculty and students, particularly in the areas of education, engineering,

and agriculture.

Kansas State University, based in Manhattan, Kansas, is a comprehensive research and land-grant institution in the United States, offering more than 250 undergraduate programs and over 165 graduate programs.

A Week of Partnerships and Purpose: CatSU strengthens ties and student support services

Albert G. Clemente



TECHVOC ED IN MOTION . Catanduanes State University President Dr. Gemma G. Acedo received newly appointed Technical Education and Skills Development Authority Catanduanes Provincial Director Engr. Eduardo B. Bonagua.



POWERING REGIONAL INNOVATION . Catanduanes State University President Dr. Gemma G. Acedo met with representatives Marites L. Belen and Vanessa A. Binasa of Bicol University under the Bicol RISER Consortium's PRIME Program, advancing collaboration in regional innovation and research.

The third week of March 2026 proved to be a meaningful and productive stretch for Catanduanes State University President Dr. Gemma G. Acedo, marked by new partnerships, ongoing collaborations, and acts of generosity that directly touched the lives of students.

Early in the week, Dr. Acedo welcomed the newly appointed TESDA Catanduanes Provincial Director, Engr. Eduardo B. Bonagua, for a courtesy visit at her office. Along with his team, the meeting quickly moved beyond introductions into a thoughtful exchange of ideas. They talked about TESDA's current programs and future plans for the province, while also exploring ways the University and TESDA could work more closely together moving forward.

In another meeting, Dr. Acedo sat down with representatives from Bicol University's Program PRIME under the Bicol RISER Consortium. Project staff Marites L. Belen and Vanessa A. Binasa shared more

about their initiative, which focuses on helping microenterprises become more resilient—especially in the face of disasters—through data-driven training and support systems. With Virac identified as one of the program's beneficiaries, CatSU expressed full support and readiness to contribute wherever possible.

The week also carried a heartfelt moment of gratitude. Dr. Acedo extended her thanks to the Philippine Nurses Association of Metro Houston, Texas, represented by Mrs. Araceli R. Katigbak, for providing financial assistance to eight deserving Bachelor of Science in Nursing students. The support will help cover their Related Learning Experience (RLE) fees for a semester—an expense that can be challenging for many families.

Mrs. Katigbak, a proud alumna of the former Catanduanes State Colleges Laboratory Schools and now a retired nurse based in Houston, continues to give back to her roots in a meaningful way.



SUPPORT FOR FUTURE NURSES . The Philippine Nurses Association of Metro Houston, Texas, together with beneficiaries, met with Catanduanes State University President Dr. Gemma G. Acedo for the RLE fee assistance program, supporting nursing students through expanded educational aid.

"This kindness has lightened the burden on the families of these students," Dr. Acedo shared. "It's gestures like this that not only provide financial relief but also remind us of the strong sense of community and shared responsibility we have in helping our students succeed."

Dr. Acedo was joined during the turnover by College of Health Sciences Dean Dr. Ma. Alma V. Tabirara and Ms. Karie Ann S. Zafe.

All in all, the week reflected what CatSU stands for—building connections, supporting communities, and creating opportunities that make a real difference.

CatSU President joins SUC, LUC, HEI leaders at Higher Education Summit 2026

Albert G. Clemente



SHAPING THE FUTURE OF HIGHER ED . Catanduanes State University President Dr. Gemma G. Acedo joined the Higher Education Summit 2026 with CHED leaders led by Chairperson Dr. Shirley A. Agrupis, focusing on strengthening collaboration and direction in higher education.

Catanduanes State University Pres. Gemma G. Acedo joined fellow presidents of State Universities and Colleges (SUCs), Local Universities and Colleges

(LUCs), and private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) at the kick-off ceremony of the Higher Education Summit (HES) 2026, held at the SMX Convention Center

Clark in Pampanga on March 10, 2026.

Also present at the opening of the summit were Commission on

Higher Education Chairperson Dr. Shirley C. Agrupis, CatSU Board of Regents Chairperson Dr. Myrna Q. Mallari, and board member Hon. Jude A. Acidre, Chairperson of the House Committee on Higher and Technical Education and Tingog Party-list Representative, along with key officials from the Commission on Higher Education (CHED).

The summit, themed "Achieving Sustainable Futures: Transforming Higher Education for Human Capital, Innovation, and Global Responsibility," was spearheaded by CHED in collaboration with the Department of Science and Technology (DOST).

Running from March 10 to 12, the gathering of higher education leaders aims to advance transformative strategies for Philippine higher education under the CHED ACHIEVE Agenda.



THE HERALD

The **HERALD** is the official publication of Catanduanes State University which is produced by CatSU Information Unit.

The HERALD complements the multi-platform communication arm of Information Unit which utilizes print, radio broadcasting, and social media, as well as the World Wide Web, in the dissemination of the different milestones, programs, projects, activities and achievements of the University, particularly on areas of Instruction, Research, Extension, Production, Governance and Management, and Student Services.

The HERALD exists to advance the interest of development communication in higher education, and to provide another venue in informing, involving, and empowering the stakeholders of the Catanduanes State University.

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