

SPOTTED IN THE WIDE WIDE WORLD



One thing's for sure: Brent International School Manila is very proud of its students and alumni! We have such a diverse group of talented, fascinating, and beloved Brent alumni that span the globe and who have such interesting stories to tell.

Many thanks to the alumni who sent in their stories, pictures and updates to the Alumni Office and were willing to share them with the rest of the Brent family in this first issue. Please keep those stories coming and help create a greater awareness of what it's like to be a Brent lion in the wide, wide world!



KEEPING IN TOUCH

with **AUDREY ENRIQUEZ '91**

After almost 20 years, Class of '91 **Trista Almario-Mendoza** (a banker in Philadelphia), **Audrey Enriquez** (a teacher in New York), and **Susan Brennan** (a banker in San Francisco) reunited in NYC on a cold spring weekend in March 2015. Nothing had changed except the cities they now lived in. They spent most of the weekend just filling each other in on all the bright and beautiful things they have been doing since they last saw each other in Manila.



"What a blessing to be able to pick up where we left off and carry on being the best of friends!"



*Close friends **Trista Almario-Mendoza '91** and **Audrey Enriquez '91** celebrating the 4th of July in Philly*

The girls frequently visit each other in NYC where Audrey teaches at an international school and in Philadelphia where Trista lives with her husband and two sons, and works in the banking industry.



Stacy Brennan-Punzalan (Mark's wife), Mark Punzalan '91, Audrey Enriquez '91, Malu Ignacio-Mauleon '91, and Carl Mauleon '90 at Iron Chef America Marc Forgione's acclaimed eatery in Manhattan's TriBeCa neighbourhood

Audrey and fellow NYC Brentonian **Mark Punzalan '91** met up with **Carl Mauleon '90** and his wife **Malu Ignacio-Mauleon '91** who vacationed in the US for the summer. Carl and Malu work with their respective family businesses in Manila. Mark works in the health care industry and writes a food blog as well (On The Mark).



Retired IB Filipino teacher **Dr. Arthur Casanova** found time during his recent Mindanao State University Grand International Reunion in New York to meet with Audrey. They caught up over dinner at Ellen's Stardust Diner on Broadway and a thrilling walk through Times Square.

Audrey, an IB English teacher at Brent from 2003-2007, left the school in 2007 to pursue an MAT in English from Bard College in New York. She then went on to teach at several public and private schools in NYC. She taught an ESL summer programme at Juilliard and will resume teaching middle school English at an international school in Queens in the fall.



SINGING AROUND THE WORLD

by MISHA BUENSUCESO '11

*Misha Buensuceso '11
(lower right corner)*

It was my third time to tour with the UP Concert Chorus, and all I can say is that there is nothing like the experience. From traveling to different parts of the world to performing in well-known concert venues- I was pretty much living the rockstar life! Kidding aside, it is truly an honor and privilege to be able to use my passion for singing to help spread Filipino music, and to a greater extent represent the Philippines in prestigious international chorale competitions.

For our 22nd international tour, we visited countries like Italy, Switzerland, the Czech Republic, Germany, and Poland; the choir staging concerts comprised of songs of multiple genres. In Poland, we were lucky to bag the Grand Prix in the Cracovian Cantans, which is an award given to the overall best choir of the festival. We also won first place in the Mixed Choirs Adults Category and second in the Folk, Gospel Music and Popular Music Category. We then toured the United States and gave concerts in the Mid-west and East coast area, namely in New York, New Jersey, Dallas, Houston, Seattle and Hawaii.

Upon our return to Manila, we presented the "Muling Dating" concert at the Bahay ng Alumni in UP Diliman to showcase our winning competition numbers. If you're really interested in what my choir does, visit [The U.P. Concert Chorus](#) Facebook page or contact me at mishaadrielle@gmail.com to learn more.



*You know you're from Brent International School when you catch up with a classmate (and good friend) in the most unlikely places. **Gaby Garcia '11** and **Misha Buensuceso '11** in downtown Prague during the tour*

LIONS UNDER THE SEA

by CAROLINE PERALEJO '00

Anyone can Google “scuba diving” on the internet and find all the fascinating reasons to do it. It would be redundant to mention how much fun it is, how it’s more awesome than any other activity you could try, or how it can change your life as much as it changed mine and many others. There is a lot of information out there about it, but one thing for sure, your first real diving experience will be unforgettable.



It is good to note that scuba diving is not for the faint of heart. The sport is not very difficult to learn with the numerous dive agencies and instructors you could find in the Philippines. (One of which is our very own Brent alumnus, **Michael “Mike” Gilhyun An** '00, a NAUI instructor who operates [Sea's Spring Resort](#) in Anilao, Batangas .) As I’m sure Mike would agree, scuba diving tests outside an individual’s physical capacity to perform. It instills the discipline to become a knowledgeable explorer who can plan, innovate, and problem solve under pressure in underwater environments where the margin of error can escalate quickly without proper training. Finding a good trustworthy and knowledgeable instructor is imperative.

On the other hand, if, despite being aware of its dangers, you find yourself interested in this activity, if you think you have the physical endurance to train for it, if you love the ocean, if you love to explore, if you love adventure, if you want to see fascinating creatures, and if you want to experience something completely out of this world, then, by all means, please schedule your first scuba diving experience. As writer Dave Barry explains it, “There’s nothing wrong with enjoying looking at the surface of the ocean itself, except that when you finally see what goes on underwater, you realize that you’ve been missing the whole point of the ocean. Staying on the surface all the time is like going to the circus and staring at the outside of the tent.”

If you find yourself curious, join us beneath the waves.



*Brent Alumni in the Deep Blue:
Caroline Peralejo '00, Mike An '00, and Johannes Tan '01 at Bonito Island Shore*

LION TALES FROM THE DESERT

by GABY GARCIA '11

NYU Abu Dhabi was something that neither of us had ever expected. Five years ago, our guidance counsellors, Mr. Compton and Mrs. Levno, called us into their offices to give us application packets to a brand-new university situated in a city we had vaguely heard of. As part of the application process, we were flown to Abu Dhabi - all expenses paid - to participate in Candidate Weekend, an immersive two-day experience in which we were able to meet other applicants from around the world, take part in sample classes, and learn about the university and the city.

Reflecting on our experiences after recently graduating from NYU Abu Dhabi, we can only come to the conclusion that our decision to attend was one of the best we've ever made. Fortunately, Brent helped make this decision possible by connecting us with this opportunity and providing us with an international mindset that would make NYU Abu Dhabi seem like a natural fit. This decision resulted in an educational experience unlike any other. We became part of a community that was truly global. With over 100 countries represented in the student body, it was impossible not to learn something new from our peers every day. Our classes took experiential learning to an extreme, providing us with countless opportunities to travel (from a history class in Morocco to a politics class in Nepal), network, and learn, resulting in special memories that we will never forget.



Gaby Garcia '11 with John Sexton at his last commencement exercise as President of NYU



Barbara Jance '14, Ben Jance '11, Gaby Garcia '11, and Carla Garcia '13 Siblings of the graduates flew to Abu Dhabi to participate in all of the graduation ceremonies and celebrations.

Gaby graduated magna cum laude from NYUAD with a bachelor's degree in psychology. What's next for Gaby? "I'm switching climates and moving to Evanston, Illinois. I'm joining my sister at Northwestern University to complete a graduate program in speech pathology."

Ben graduated with honors from NYUAD with a bachelor's degree in Political Science. What's next for Ben? "I'm delighted to be returning to the sandy dunes of the United Arab Emirates as a professional at Four Communications Group, a London-based public relations agency. There's lots of writing involved from here on out, but I'll always do my best to make it home for Christmas in the Philippines."

Special Memories from Our Years at NYUAD



"In Spring 2013, I travelled to Istanbul as part of a literature class. Our main purpose was to visit the Museum of Innocence, a museum created to accompany a novel by Orhan Pamuk we had read. However, we also managed to do some sightseeing and visit the beautiful Hagia Sophia during the trip." - Gaby

"Living in Abu Dhabi meant having the opportunity to experience a brand new culture. Trips into the desert meant climbing sand dunes, sand boarding, and riding camels!" - Gaby



"In Fall 2014, I travelled with the NYU Abu Dhabi women's soccer team to participate in Euro Roma, a multi-sport tournament held in Rome with participants from all over Europe and the Middle East. We were able to represent our university, meet new people, and explore a new city, all while playing a sport we love." - Gaby



"In January 2013, a team of 11 core students and I created and hosted the first collegiate Global Issues Network conference, bringing over 50 delegates across 19 nationalities to forge solutions to pressing issues in Abu Dhabi. I learned so much: budget and team management, conference logistics, and event planning are only the beginning!" - Ben

"In Fall of 2013, I joined NYU's premier all-male a cappella group, The Vocaholics. We sang a tune all the way to the White House for the holiday season, serenading Mr. and Mrs. Obama with our rendition of Beyoncé's "End of Time." The President's handshake paled in comparison to the First Lady's!" - Ben

HACKTHECLIMATE by RAYA BUENSUCESO '13

Last March, Princeton scholar **Raya Buensuceso '13** received the esteemed Davis Projects for Peace grant which led to a combined, climate change-themed social enterprise conference and hackathon entitled **HackTheClimatexWatson**. Raya served as the Project Head for this special 3 day event.

Climate change is a problem that cannot be solved in isolation, a problem that requires solidarity, and most importantly, a problem that demands to be taken seriously. Hack The Climate x Watson - which brought together over 220 students, social entrepreneurs, professional developers, investors, government officials, NGO representatives, and environmental advocates - taught me that people are indeed capable of devising effective solutions to such urgent issues as climate change; and that the best way to harness this capability is by providing them with a space to learn, engage, collaborate and act. Though Davis was a one-off grant, we've already been invited by different universities, investors and government agencies to conduct similar events in other parts of the Philippines, which I believe is reflective of the demand and the need for projects like this.



Collaborative minds at HackTheClimatexWatson held Sept. 4-6, 2015

ABOUT BRENT... One of the things Brent has given me for which I will always be grateful is a network of friends that literally spans the globe. I can no longer count the number of times since graduation when I have met or reconnected with former classmates or friends from APAC. Over the past two years, I've met up with high school classmates in San Francisco, New York, Hong Kong and Sydney. I was on the same basketball team as two SAS alumni, was next door neighbors with an APAC Track participant, became Physics lab partners with a former opponent in three APAC sports, traveled to Scandinavia with a CISS alumna, met an ISB alumna and former APAC Softball opponent in my Christian fellowship, and visited a friend - who my family and I hosted for an invitational meet - in London and in Hong Kong. My roommate at university today is one of three fellow recipients of the EARCOS-affiliated Margaret Sanders Scholarship. I am certain that these connections will come in handy and that they'll be even more accessible in the coming years, what with a new Alumni Center and an official Alumni Coordinator. And of course, crossing paths with a familiar face and reminiscing about high school days is always a delight!



*Reunited with Brent friends in Australia
Nick Azurin '13, Raya Buensuceso '13, and Vien Bote '13*

CATCH A SHOW!

with HANS ECKSTEIN '02

Hans Eckstein '02 cordially invites you to catch one of his performances in Repertory Philippines production of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. (Please check the poster for more details.)

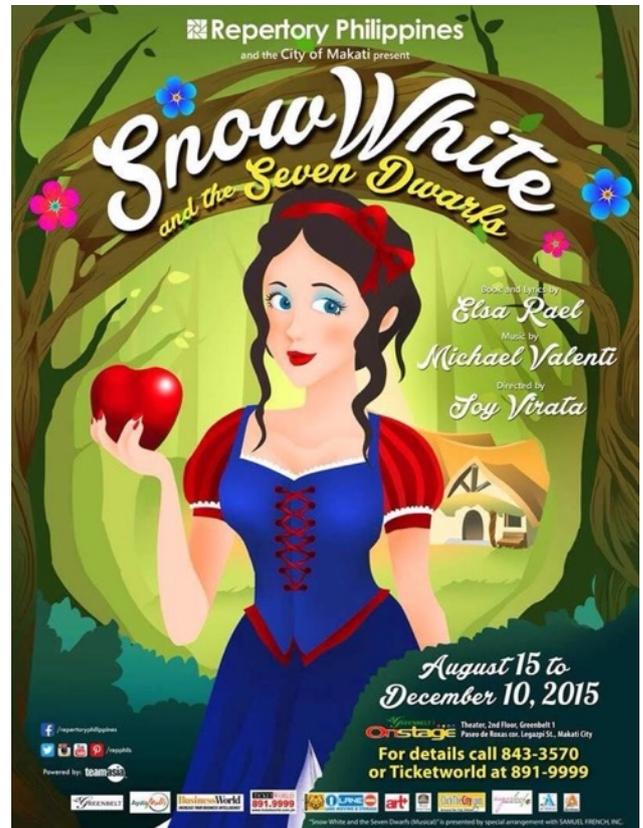
Hans is a professional stage actor/performer and voice talent. He debuted on stage in 2005 with Manila's premier theater company, Repertory Philippines, and has since performed in over 30 professional stage productions with Repertory Philippines, Atlantis Productions and Dalanghita Productions.

Hans received a Gawad Buhay nomination in the category of "Male Lead Performance in a Play" in 2011 for *Shakespeare in Hollywood*, then again in 2014 for "Male Featured Performance in a Play" for *August: Osage County*. His interest in theatre began at Brent, where he was always active in school productions, mostly under the direction of Dr. Arthur Casanova.

Hans had also made a career as a professional voice talent, beginning with freelance work for various radio, tv and online advertisements. In 2013, he became the resident voice talent of National Geographic Philippines under Fox International Channel Productions.



Call the Repertory Philippines office at +6328433570 or log on to www.ticketworld.com.ph to buy your tickets.



MIX IT UP

with **KATHRYN ECKSTEIN CORNISTA '00**



Balay Dako's Terraza Bar



When she's not busy being a super mom and wife, **Kathryn Eckstein Cornista '00** can be found in the "mix of things". Kath was recently featured on food website Pepper.ph in an article about being a mixologist, a career path that she has been on for the past 16 years. Kath is currently the Bar Consultant for Antonio's Group. She cordially invites you to check out their latest project, [Balay Dako](#) in Tagaytay, where she has curated all the cocktails, trained the staff, and designed the back bar. She has also been the official mixologist of Don Papa Rum since 2012.

"Being a mom is the most important job I have ever had in my life. Kalila always comes first."

ON THE SAME TEAM ... AGAIN!

with **TRINA AQUINO SALAVANTE '99** and **ELAINE MACDONALD SOMERA '02**

Trina Aquino Salvante '99 and **Elaine Macdonald Somera '02** knew each other well at Brent because of Glee Club and Varsity Soccer. They were reunited in 2013 as coworkers on the Operations team of [MyOutDesk](#), the first home-based company offering the same perks as BPOs. They help realtors and investors in the US find high-caliber virtual assistants from the Philippines, while at the same time maintaining quality standards for the company.



Trina Aquino Salvante '99 (2nd from left) and Elaine Macdonald Somera '02 (on right) with colleagues from work

SURVIVING THE ATOMIC BOMB: The Nakamura Family Story

by **AKIKO THOMSON GUEVARA '92**

My siblings and I have always wanted to document my mother's family as they are survivors of the Hiroshima atomic bomb. Our mother, Hiroko, and her twin were born 6 months after and 3 kms away from where the bomb dropped. They are the youngest of eight siblings. What is most miraculous is that everyone, including my grandparents, survived the bomb. Our grandparents died later in life, and all the siblings, except for one, are thankfully still alive. But we knew time was pressing.

Last year, we finally did it. Armed with a professional videographer, Julia, Joshua and I made our way to Hiroshima unsure of what we would find. Being a very private family, all but one of the siblings, were wary of being interviewed. But God is good and everyone fortunately spoke. After months of translating and editing the family documentary we finally finished the project early this month in time for the 70th anniversary of the dropping of the bomb last August 6th. While we would love to share this video with those who are interested, we are still finding a way to compress and upload the file.

This is/was a milestone project for us, as our history, and the lessons from it, are something we never want to forget.



*Joshua Thomson '90, Julia Thomson Fontana '89 and Akiko Thomson Guevara '92
with their Uncle Yutaka Nakamura*

WHAT'S COOKING?

with ERNEST GALA '98



Chef **Ernest Reynoso Gala '98**, owner and chef instructor of GalaStars Culinary, was featured and interviewed by CNN Philippines about Philippine Cuisine in the world market at the recent World Food Expo.

Interested in taking a culinary course?
Check out the [GalaStars Culinary website](#) and [Facebook page!](#)



Crossing paths in Japan:
Mark Que '14, Naoto Ido '13, and Justin Jaudines '13

SPOTTED IN JAPAN

"Seeing that Justin was in town on holiday, Naoto and I had a quick meet up with him at Lumine Est in Shinjuku. We didn't have time other than to just have dinner, but we still made the most of it! It was a great night of sharing stories and catching up with each other!" - Mark

Naoto left Brent after Grade 10. Mark and Naoto bumped into each other again at Waseda University.



Brent Family: Mavic Maranan '09, Francene Maranan '16, Harley Maranan '18, and Gedo Maranan '08

MAVIC MARANAN '09

The Maranan Family traveled to Chicago to attend Mavic's graduation from Elmhurst College. Mavic '09 received a Master of Science degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders (Speech Pathology). Her brother Gedo '08 graduated from Boston University in 2012 with a degree in Mechanical Engineering. He is currently working in Boston with GrabCAD, a company recently acquired by 3D printing company Stratasys, which builds software to help engineers get products to market faster by connecting people, content, and technology.

CHARLES ACUÑA '14

During the Philippine National Games 2015, the UP Fighting Maroons men's volleyball team won the championship. Brent alumnus Charles Acuña '14 earned the Best Setter award in the tournament.

Charles is a student at UP, studying towards a Bachelor of Science degree in Hotel, Restaurant and Institution Management.



Champions! Charles Acuña (on right)



Special Awards: Best Setter Charles Acuña (3rd from left)

MINI REUNIONS!



*L-R, standing: Danielle Santiago Lizares, Jonas Figueroa, Anders Johanson, Rene Garcia, Akiko Thomson Guevara (Batch 1992), Paolo Farley, Liza Chan Parpan, Ed Lizares (Danielle's husband)
L-R, seated: Peter Limjoco, Les Romero, Julia Thomson Fontana*

"Batch '89's mini reunion was held in honor of **Julia Thomson Fontana** and **Anders Johanson**, who paid a special visit to Manila from a business trip in Shanghai just to meet up with friends. It was a rare occasion and such a special treat, and we all enjoyed reminiscing about our days in Brent International School Manila's Pasig campus!" - Liza



Class of 2013's Sidney Meñez, Raya Buensuceso, Meynard Chan, Charles Lontoc, Arwin Zaidem, Ramera Abraham, Matthew Hettel, Justin Jaudines, Hasan Bolkih, Robert Segismundo, Fred Kang, Jennings Leung, and Carla Garcia



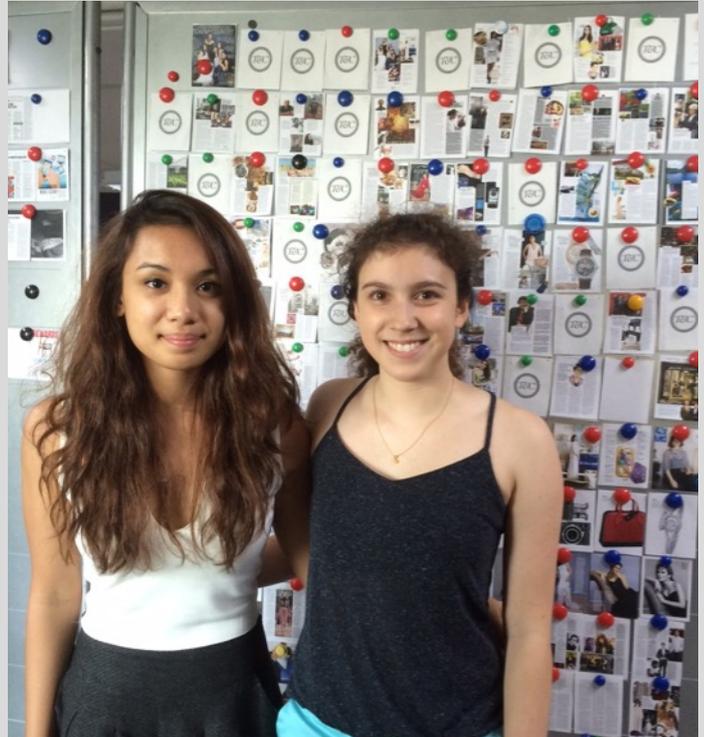
WE KNOW WHAT YOU DID LAST SUMMER...

MIKAELLA EVARISTO '15 and CARLA GARCIA '13

For most of the summer, **Mika Evaristo** '15 and **Carla Garcia** '13, both former Brent Forward editors, did an intensive internship with Town & Country Philippines, a great opportunity to learn the ropes of putting out a publication. Look closely and you will spot some of their articles in the August, September, October, and November issues of the magazine.

Mika is a freshman at New York University, doing a Liberal Studies Program. She plans to double major in journalism and pre health.

Carla is a junior at the Northwestern Medill School of Journalism with a concentration in magazine writing. She is also an editor of Spoon Magazine, Northwestern's campus food publication.



DR. FAITH ESCOBAR

"I taught a summer course in Writing and Imagination with the Johns Hopkins University Center for Talented Youth at the Stanford University site in California. My course was one of 14 courses offered in the summer program. Teaching on the Stanford University campus has been awesome, the campus being the 2nd largest contiguous university campus in the world with 8000 acres. It's been great being back in the classroom in a different setting and a privilege to teach writing to students who are mostly gifted Asian students from international schools in Singapore, HK, Shanghai and Beijing, S. Korea, and from other states as well as local Californians. Writing, for me, has been a way to explore the world."

Dr. Faith Escobar served Brent with excellence in so many ways as a faculty member and an administrator during her long tenure with the school, starting in 1986 until her retirement in 2014.





MATTHEW HETTEL '13

Matthew Hettel '13 was spotted with some of the most devoted Brent sports fans, his parents Aurora and Gene Hettel.

During the summer, Matthew was invited to play for the Palms basketball team that participated in the MPG Open tournament. He had the opportunity to play alongside former Brent schoolmates Justin and Jason Ishaak, as well as coaches John Macalma and Wacky Garcia.

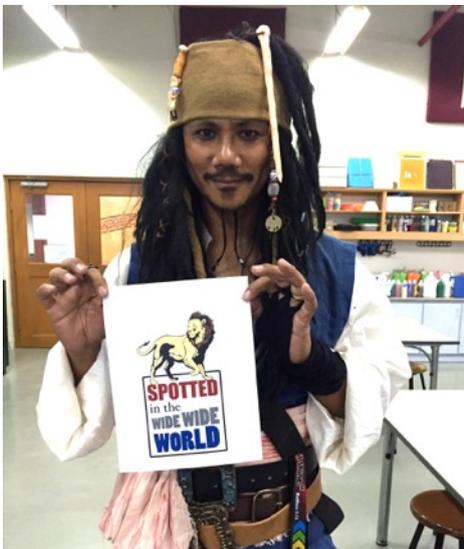
BARBARA JANCE '14

Over the summer, Barbara Jance '14 participated in a Repertory Philippines acting workshop for adults. She performed various roles in the workshop's culminating show "Take the Lead" directed by Jamie Wilson and Goldie Soon.

Barbara has been accepted to the American Musical & Dramatic Academy, AMDA College and Conservatory of the Performing Arts, New York City, New York. She is taking up musical theater in the fall.



THANK YOU, Jack Sparrow a.k.a. LS Art teacher **Rodrigo Barrera** for helping to design the lion for the Spotted in the Wide Wide World logo!



CONTRIBUTE YOUR STORIES!

Do you have a favorite story or picture to share? It could be a mini reunion, a new job, an advocacy you are actively involved with, a new business, a move to a new city, a family photo, an awesome vacation spot, something crossed off your bucket list, a special Brent memory, etc. We'd love to share your news and promote your endeavors.

Help the Alumni Office create a greater awareness of the numerous and diverse Brent alumni that span the globe! Email your pictures and captions to alumni@brent.edu.ph.