On April 1, 2011, the Ateneo de Manila University will have a new president. Fr. Jose Ramon T. Villarin, sj has been elected by the Board of Trustees to an initial three-year term as university president.

Villarin graduated bs Physics, magna cum laude and class valedictorian, Ateneo de Manila University, 1980; ms Physics, Marquette University in Wisconsin, 1987; stb Theology summa cum laude, Loyola School of Theology, 1991. He acquired his phd in Atmospheric Physics from Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, Georgia, in 1997. He received the National Outstanding Young Scientist award in 2000, and the Outstanding Book Award for “Disturbing Climate” in 2002. He is also an active member of several local and international environment and climate committees, such as the United Nations’ Consultative Group of Experts for Developing Countries, and the Inter-Agency Committee on Climate Change, among others.

He has held various positions as campus minister and faculty member of the Physics Department at the School of Science and Engineering, Chief of Climate Studies in the Manila Observatory, and member of the Board of Trustees of Ateneo universities in Manila, Davao, and Zamboanga. He is currently the president of Xavier University in Cagayan de Oro.

Vergara is New VPLS

The Loyola Schools has a new Vice President. Dr. John Paul C. Vergara began his first term as Vice President for the Loyola Schools on April 1, 2010. His terms runs through March 2013. Vergara succeeded Dr. Ma. Assunta C. Cuyegkeng, who was vpls from June 2006 to March 2010.

Vergara has been a faculty member of the Ateneo since 1986, following his graduation that same year with a bs Mathematics/Computer Science, also from the Ateneo. He did his doctoral studies at Virginia Tech, finishing with a phd in Computer Science and Applications in 1997. At Virginia Tech, he was recognized for Scholarly Performance in Graduate Study. He was an Outstandig Young Scientist awardee of the National Academy of Science and Technology in 2001, and was given the DuPont Miracles of Science Award by DuPont Far East, Inc. that same year.

No stranger to leadership positions, Vergara has been department chair of the Department of Information Systems and Computer Science of the Loyola Schools, and chair of the IT Faculty Cluster of the Graduate School of Business. He was appointed vpls during his term as Vice President for Administration and Planning, a position he held from early 2009 to the end of sy 2009-2010.

University President Bienvenido F. Nebres, sj identified Vergara’s strengths as that of being “a systems person, a strategist, and a problem solver with a vision for devolution and interdisciplinarity.” Nebres further cites Vergara’s extensive experience in working with the University and the Loyola Schools budget systems as well as with academic research and mentoring, all of which will enable him to address the challenges currently facing the Loyola Schools.

3 Peat!

The first semester’s uaap triumphs still give the campus a feel-good atmosphere, with the Blue Eagles and Blue Judokas taking home three-peat wins in the uaap Season 73 basketball and judo competitions. Turn to page 8 for the stories. One big fight!
NEW PRESIDENTS IN Naga, Cagayan de Oro, & Davao

The Society of Jesus’ Philippine Province Superior Fr. Jose Cecilio J. Magadiia, SJ announced in recent weeks the election of new presidents for Ateneo de Naga University, Xavier University, and Ateneo de Davao University.

Fr. Primitivo E. Viray, Jr., SJ will succeed Fr. Joel E. Tabora, SJ as president of Ateneo de Naga University. Fr. Viray is at present the rector of Loyola House of Studies. Fr. Tabora, who was Ateneo de Naga president for 11 years, will be moving to Davao to assume the presidency of Ateneo de Davao University.

Fr. Roberto C. Yap, SJ will succeed Fr. Jose Ramon T. Villarin, SJ as president of Xavier University in Cagayan de Oro. At present, Fr. Yap is the Province Treasurer for the Society of Jesus. Fr. Villarin, after five years of leading Xavier University, will be moving to Manila to assume the presidency of Ateneo de Manila University.

Fr. Joel E. Tabora, SJ will succeed Fr. Antonio S. Samson, SJ as president of the Ateneo de Davao University. Fr. Tabora will move to Davao from Naga, where he is the current president of Ateneo de Naga University. Fr. Samson has served as president of Ateneo de Davao and Xavier University for the last 24 years—first at Ateneo de Davao, then Xavier University, and back to Ateneo de Davao, with his present stint in Davao beginning in 2001.

The three new university presidents will assume their positions at the end of the current academic year.

ASPAC honors outstanding teachers Vistro-Yu, Respeto, and Server

Each year, three Loyola Schools faculty members are honored by the Ateneo Schools Parents Council (ASPAC) as the group’s Outstanding Teachers. For schoolyear 2009-2010, the awardees were Catherine P. Vistro-Yu (Mathematics Department, Outstanding Senior Teacher), Jerry C. Respeto (Kagawaran ng Filipino, Outstanding Junior Teacher), and Joseph B. Server, Jr. (Leadership and Strategy Department, Outstanding Part-time Teacher). They were recognized at the ASPAC’s 19th Gabi ng Parangal at Pasasalamat held on February 19, 2010.

In her opening remarks, then-Vice President for Loyola Schools Dr. Ma. Assunta C. Cuyegkeng characterized the Outstanding Teacher awards as a reflection of parents’ commitment to giving their children the best education. She remarked on how meaningful the awards are to the faculty members who receive them, since it is a so-called stamp of approval from the parents themselves.

Joseph B. Server, Jr.: Outstanding Part-time Teacher

Joseph B. Server, Jr., of the Leadership and Strategy Department of the John Gokongwei School of Management has taught at the Ateneo for 29 years, beginning in the early 1970s. In his response, which was peppered with his trademark deadpan remarks, Server shared that he was touched at hearing his 70 years described as a life of service and leadership. He thanked his parents and teachers, and most of all, his students, whom he said “make life exciting because of what I learn from them.”

Jerry C. Respeto: Outstanding Junior Teacher

Dr. Jerry C. Respeto of the Kagawaran ng Filipino of the School of Humanities gave an insightful response in Filipino, thanking mentors and colleagues and reflecting on the different qualities of effective teaching, or mabang paggamit, which he learned from each of them. Effective teaching, according to Respeto, has as its objective the sharing of knowledge which is gained from one’s own efforts and research, and which is within the context of the wider world. It comes from a definite orientation which is manifested in the practice of teaching. It challenges students to pay attention to basic principles because these are what compel them to think and ask questions. It is rich in examples that are close to students’ experience and give clarity to the meaning of the topic at hand. It is an open exchange of ideas and the correction of erroneous ideas and flawed thinking. It is learning from each other and taking part in the growth of knowledge.

Catherine P. Vistro-Yu: Outstanding Senior Teacher

ASPAC honoree Catherine P. Vistro-Yu of the Mathematics Department of the School of Science and Engineering reflected on what teaching is about. To her, “It is largely about being present to your students in their journey through college.” And it is a presence that is not just psychological or emotional in nature, but physical as well. To Vistro-Yu, a teacher’s availability to his or her students not only during classes but outside of them too, be it for extra sessions or for heart-to-heart talks, is paramount.

ASPAC Academics Committee Chair Ma. Cristina B. Caoile; ASPAC Board Secretary Gina Gil; Ateneo President Bienvenido F. Nebres, SJ; Outstanding Teachers Jerry C. Respeto, Catherine P. Vistro-Yu, Joseph B. Server, Jr.; Then VPLS Ma. Assunta C. Cuyegkeng; ASPAC President Daisy E. Mendoza; ASPAC immediate past president Maette Zoe Se K

Photos courtesy of the President’s Office
Jose Ma. Joaquin B. Buñag (4th from left) with Fr. Xavier Olin, S.J, Mr. Eduardo Calasanaz, Dr. Edna Franco, his mother Mrs. Cora Buñag, Fr. Catalino Arevalo, S.J, his father Mr. Mon Buñag, and Mr. Hector Tagaysay.

Class 2010 valedictorian is one of TOSP

The Ateneo Cultural Laboratory in Intramuros

The Ateneo Cultural Laboratory (ACL) was envisioned as a hands-on way to extend students’ classroom learning and demonstrate the connection between research and application, particularly in the field of Philippine culture. For 2010, the actual laboratory was to be a site which has been at the forefront of Philippine history: the walled city of Intramuros. This was particularly timely since there are plans to put up a Museo de Intramuros on the site of the Jesuit church of San Ignacio. Designed as a three-week intensive program, the ACL’s aim was to give the participants knowledge and skills in cultural documentation. The objective of the program was to come up with cultural maps of Intramuros per century to reveal the role of Intramuros in nation-building. This, in turn, would form the narrative for the Museo de Intramuros. The ACL was held from April 12 to May 1, 2010 under the auspices of the Ateneo de Manila’s Department of Sociology and Anthropology represented by Dr. Fernando N. Zialcita, the Department of History represented by Dr. Rico T. Jose, Dr. Michael Camlao, and Dr. Anna Labrador. The participants were composed of undergraduate and graduate students of Ateneo, as well as participants from other institutions such as Colegio de San Juan de Letran, Caribe Studer Center and Holy Angels University. There were also participants from other countries such as China, Nigeria, and Japan.

The next two weeks entailed site visits, tours, and hands-on research conducted in Intramuros itself. These were supplemented by on-site lectures—Dr. Celerina Boncan’s “A Market in Intramuros: Bucos’ Impossible Dream”, Dr. Macario Ofilada’s “The Beginning of Liberal Education in the Philippines” and Romeo Galang’s “The Culture Bearers of Historic Manila”. In teams, the participants documented cultural heritage, interviewed informal settlers and residents, and researched on sites and structures. As a culminating activity, the participants presented their findings to the NCCA and Intramuros Administration. Ms. Bambi Harper, head of the ta, commended the rigor of the research and was impressed with the output. She was hopeful that the suggestions could be carried out and applied to the Museo de Intramuros and in general, raise awareness of heritage documentation in Intramuros. All in all, the experience was described by students as fruitful and revealing as it in general, raise awareness of heritage documentation in Intramuros. All in all, the experience was described by students as fruitful and revealing as it

Begun in 1961 by Jose S. Concepcion, Jr. of the RMF Foundation, the TOSP has evolved into a so-called “laboratory of leaders” which has produced outstanding contributors in the fields of governance, business, the academe, church, and civil society. TOSP alumni make their contributions for the purpose of spreading the TOSP credo—learning, leading, and serving for life.

Being recognized as the TOSP is only the start of a lifelong journey for the winners, and it is not a journey that only members of their distinguished TOSP community take. As Buñag remarks, “There is nothing extraordinary about being a TOSP finalist. What we are called to do is in fact the most ordinary thing a typical Filipino is called to do: loving the country in the best way possible using our unique gifts. TOSP is a realization that the start of a lifelong journey for the winners, and it is not a journey that only members of their distinguished TOSP community take. As Buñag remarks, “There is nothing extraordinary about being a TOSP finalist. What we are called to do is in fact the most ordinary thing a typical Filipino is called to do: loving the country in the best way possible using our unique gifts. TOSP is a realization that
This was supposed to be an interview. It was not easy inviting them to the interview. In the conference room of the Social Sciences building, they are fidgeting in the seats, clearly uncomfortable sitting in the seats they have so often carried and re-arranged.

Thirteen people are sitting down, twelve men and one lady. They are all wearing the blue shirts and jeans of the Loyola Schools maintenance staff. They are all tanned from years working under the sun, their arms muscled and their hands rough. These same hands are now lost, some clenched, others rubbing together self-consciously. They aren’t used to be the centers of attention. For nearly all of them, the idea of being interviewed is unheard of. They are being interviewed because they are volunteers for Gawad Kalinga, and have been for quite some time now.

These thirteen people are being interviewed because they are heroes. It would be so easy to extol their heroics, to talk about them as if they were extraordinary individuals, gifted with divine grace. But that would cheapen them and their efforts. They are ordinary folks, but they are folks who have learned the peculiar joy that comes with volunteering. And in their stories, one finds a common thread, that of joy.

They stare at the recorder set in the middle of the room like it was about to explode. Finally, however, the stories begin, awkwardly at first. The questions were never answered by one person, eventually, it would become too difficult to keep track of who would be answered what.

It was less of an interview and more just talking, trading stories. People would reply individually to some questions, in chorus to others. In the end, the interview failed, not because no one answered, but because there were just too many stories, too many inputs being given. An interview would be cumberome and confusing, and it may just sully the story that these people told. Instead of giving a transcript, we will tell their story.

The Gawad Kalinga projects that they are being interviewed for are just part of the story. For some of them, volunteering is nothing new—they have been volunteering in various capacities for some time. Richardo Gabito, for example, was already helping out when Areno began its formal disaster assistance efforts with the sheltering of Mt. Pinatubo refugees in 1991. He smiles shyly as he recounts an instance when he had to sing to the refugees, just to try to keep their hopes up in light of everything they had lost.

For others, their experience in volunteering, and in Gawad Kalinga, began with Cabiao, Nueva Ecija. It was a call made by their supervisor, Jun Granada, to assist in the construction of a library. It was, for many, a new thing, many not having heard of Gawad Kalinga before. They were greeted by the members enthusiastically. Alex Ferrer relates his experience of being given the only bedroom in a household of women, given a bed filled with teddy bears even as they slept on the floor. The story is told with smiles, but this and the group’s other experiences were evidently more than that, as one sees the emotions clouding their eyes. For many of them, being given a bed as the owners slept on the floor was humbling.

The experience in Cabiao, however, was more than just humbling—it was traumatic. The volunteers set to work, only to be set on by torrential rain. The rain was enough to cause their cement to run, making placing blocks one on top of each other impossible. Cenon Tapel had his foot impaled by a metal spike in the construction. Even then they struggled, at times simply standing still as they were battered by the wind and rain. The residents called for them to stop, but they stubbornly refused, concerned that the cement they had already prepared would go to waste. It was only when they were reassured that the cement would not be wasted that they relented, surrendering to the weather. They would realize later that, in the confusion of the storm, they had built a house with no doors and windows, which they needed to rectify once more. The Cabiao project was completed in the time allotted, the volunteers refusing sleep just to get things done.

It was to be a start for them, the project proving to be a baptism of fire. From there, they would go on to other areas in Nueva Ecija, Palawan, and Payatas. They would build houses and schools, often in a span of a few days. They would go back not just because they were doing good, but because the good they did made them feel good. The songs of thanks that the children of the communities would bring even the toughest men to tears. Some of them needed to slow down in the telling, their eyes misting over, obviously remembering songs and voices of thanks they will never forget. Others remember being locked in an embrace by grateful elders, overwhelmed with gratitude. Their efforts would bring them into contact not only with volunteers from around the country, but around the world.

They would have other experiences as well. When Typhoon Ondoy hit, they replied to the call once more, this time to clean and lend assistance. Here, the people they helped were not as grateful and were, at times, openly hostile to them. More often than not, it was simply a matter of proximity; there was no one else to get angry at. Their faces hardened a bit, talking about Ondoy. The storm brought out the worst in people, and they tended to be at the receiving end of it. Some of them were also victims of the storm, and was placed in the unique situation of being both helper and beneficiary.
Volunteering is not something that comes easy for them. They have little to spare, whether in resources or in time. The weekends that they spend at the projects are weekends spent away from their families. They are often asked by others, whether co-workers or family members, why do they do it, why sacrifice their bodies and energy for something that gives them nothing in return? Their voices soften when they talk about this, some in disappointment at their peers, others in sadness, wishing that their critics could experience what they experience. Their rewards cannot be brought home, not to a welcoming family, but one that is a different joy, a shared joy, that is said over and over by all of them. It is the only way to share the joy, the only way to make them understand why they do it and why they keep coming back. They have gained friends who have visited them, and they are friends, with a shared experience that few can ever imagine.

In the end, as they loosened up and felt that they were an integral part of the community they served, it was supposed to be an interview. Their voices failed when they showed themselves to be just like everyone else. It was supposed to be an interview at its most natural form. It was supposed to be an interview when they volunteer, and it is something that cannot be explained adequately.

Most of these volunteers do not have homes themselves. And yet they build homes for others, in faraway places.
Judokas bag 3-peat
continued from page 8

now this is for your own personal glory. You should go for it,” he told them.

Ateneo emerged as the best team with the best judokas. In the -81kg division, rookie Anjo Gumila threw his opponent from DLSU in under three minutes. Knowing that he had won another gold for his team, Gumila ran around the mat with arms stretched out like an Eagle spreading his wings. Gumila was crowned Rookie of the Year. Veteran Daniel Velasco took down his UST opponent in the -66kg finals to win the gold. Velasco scored big points and was named Most Valuable Player.

Meanwhile, Jamie Reyes, Char Custodio and Jackie Francisco each took home a bronze medal for the women’s team. The three-peat champions have a total of four golds, three silvers, and one bronze.

Asked about his strategy coming into the season, coach Sulit said, “I taught them how to fight well beyond Judo.”

Ateneo team captures Microsoft Imagine Cup top prize in game design

The team “By Implication” composed of Wilhansen Li (BSc’10, BScMa), Rodrick Tan (BSc’10), Philip Cheang (BSc’10) and Levi Tan-Ong (Chemical Engineering, University of the Philippines) took first place in the Microsoft Imagine Cup World Finals for Game Design. The Imagine Cup is a yearly competition held by Microsoft, with five main segments: Software Design, Embedded Development, Game Design, Digital Media, and IT Challenge. This year, the world finals were held in Warsaw, Poland.

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The three winning teams bested more than 1,000 teams from six Asian countries in the regional leg of the business plan competition. Each team was composed of two to three university students.

Other countries that competed were Brunei, Malaysia, and Thailand. Now in its 10th year, the Microsoft Young Entrepreneur Awards is a regional business plan competition for post-secondary students from Hong Kong and countries in Asia to demonstrate their creativity and business grasp. www.ateneo.edu

The Delta Eco Team composed of Wylie Emille Datu (BS Management 2010) and Ma. Isabel Lacanana (BS Management Engineering 2010) bagged the Jade Award at the HSBC Young Entrepreneur Awards 2010 held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on June 28, 2010. The Jade Award is equivalent to third place with a cash award of HK$10,000.

Bagging the Platinum Award (first place) were students from the City University of Hong Kong while students from the Institute of Business Administration in Dhaka University, Bangladesh bagged the Diamond Award (second place). Team TAK brought home a trophy and HK$100,000 while Team Bangladesh brought home HK$220,000.

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In 1989, Ateneo was the hands down favorite to cop its third straight title following its first UAAP Crows in 1987 and 1988, but health concerns prevented center Danny Francisco from suiting up while other key players like Alex Araneta and Jay Gayoso were unable to suit up. With their finals lives on the line against the FEU Tamaraws, the Blue Eagles came up short as gunner Joseph Canlas found the range from three-point distance a little better.

Twenty-one years later, Ateneo was in a rare position to complete the three-peat.

The Tamaraws came to play in Game Two as they tightened up their defense and led early in the game behind Paul Sanga’s three triples that gave them a 22-13 first quarter lead. Following a jumper by Rookie of the Year Terrence Romeo that gave FEU at 24-13 lead, the largest double digit lead of the match, it was time Ateneo to make a stand. The series would go to a deciding third game. Ateneo responded and held the Tams scoreless for five minutes and 13 seconds while unloading 14 points of their own. Coincidentally in Game 1, Ateneo also dropped a crippling 14-0 run on FEU that helped them erect a huge lead in the first quarter alone.

Buenafe was magnificent in the second quarter as he hit a fallaway jumper over FEU’s Pipo Noudoud and ditched former Smart Gilas teammate JR Cawaling with a nasty fake for a score off the window. He was in his element—playing big in big games. Although the Tamaraws led 31-30 at the half, one could sense that it was just a matter of time as the Blue Eagles seized control of the game. Had Ateneo shot better from the free throw line (they were 10-16 in the first half), the game would have had a different complexion. As it was, the game was close.

The Tamaraws returned to the court after the break without head coach Glenn Capacio who was suffering from a bout of hypertension following an argument with the referees over a call. If the Tamaraws were bothered by their coach’s absence they did not show it as they started the third quarter as they did in the first—by scoring first and inside with Reil Cervantes, Paul Sanga, and RR Garcia leading it strong.

Ateneo went to its pair of wondrous point shooters, how it is done. Then showed Sanga, the 30.2% three-point specialist, how it is done against Cruz with the game on the line. Intal juked Chan with a crossover move and then showed Sanga, the 30.2% three-point shooter, how it is done.

Bedlam. It was all net and Ateneo was in a rare position to complete the three-peat. The three-peat, the long-awaited—bedlam. It was all net and Ateneo was in a rare position to complete the three-peat. The three-peat, the long-awaited—bedlam. It was all net and Ateneo was in a rare position to complete the three-peat. The three-peat, the long-awaited—bedlam. It was all net and Ateneo was in a rare position to complete the three-peat. The three-peat, the long-awaited—bedlam. It was all net and Ateneo was in a rare position to complete the three-peat. The three-peat, the long-awaited—bedlam. It was all net and Ateneo was in a rare position to complete the three-peat. The three-peat, the long-awaited—bedlam. It was all net and Ateneo was in a rare position to complete the three-peat. The three-peat, the long-awaited—bedlam. It was all net and Ateneo was in a rare position to complete the three-peat. The three-peat, the long-awaited—bedlam. It was all net and Ateneo was in a rare position to complete the three-peat. The three-peat, the long-awaited—bedlam. It was all net and Ateneo was in a rare position to complete the three-peat. The three-peat, the long-awaited—bedlam. It was all net and Ateneo was in a rare position to complete the three-peat. The three-peat, the long-awaited—bedlam. It was all net and Ateneo was in a rare position to complete the three-peat. The three-peat, the long-awaited—bedlam. It was all net and Ateneo was in a rare position to complete the three-peat. The three-peat, the long-awaited—bedlam. It was all net and Ateneo was in a rare position to complete the three-peat. The three-peat, the long-awaited—bedlam. It was all net and Ateneo was in a rare position to complete the three-peat. The three-peat, the long-awaited—bedlam. It was all net and Ateneo was in a rare position to complete the three-peat. The three-peat, the long-awaited—bedlam.
A history lesson
(Ateneo 65 vs. FEU 62)

There were 32 seconds left in the game with Ateneo on top by a slim 61-59 lead over FEU in Game Two of the UAAP Finals when Ryan Buenafe got hold of the basketball after a hand off from Nico Salva. In the past two years, the third year forward has been suppressing different emotions inside of him. After a promising freshman year, he was relegated to the bench. And although he was every bit as integral to the success of the Ateneo Blue Eagles, he chafed at his role. “I’m greedy,” he said to a few close friends. “But it’s never about the statistics. It was about playing time and being on the court with the ball in my hands in the clutch.” He wanted the responsibility of taking the big shot. If the ball fell in then it was all good. If he missed then he wouldn’t mind taking the flak. It comes with the territory.

He immediately noticed that it was FEU Tamaraws rookie Carl Cruz in front of him. Cruz checked in for JR Cawaling who Buenafe burned badly on many a post up earlier in the game. Except the move backfired because Buenafe was out in the perimeter. The Blue Eagle quickly waved off his teammates away for an isolation play. Thinking he was going to drive to the basket, Tamaraws center Al Ramos positioned himself behind Cruz to protect against the drive.

Only Buenafe wasn’t taking it to the rack. With the shot clock winding down to five seconds, Buenafe instead threw up a trey. “I was really going to take that three-point shot. When it left my hands, it felt good. I knew I was going to make it,” said the third year forward who was named Finals MVP.

Judokas bag 3-peat

Three is the lucky number for Ateneo champions in UAAP Season 73, as the men’s judo team won their third straight championship on October 10, 2010 at The Arena in San Juan.

The competition was out to get the Blue Judokas, forcing them to lag behind in day one of the tournament. “Things don’t usually go the way you want them to. It was looking really dismal for us for quite a while,” said coach Ali Sulit.

Ateneo, however, didn’t go down without a fight. Matthew Jao and JR Reyes slugged it out in the +100kg finals. Jao’s win gave Ateneo its first gold; Reyes finished with the silver. Andro Umali won the -100kg battle for third and added a bronze to Ateneo’s medal tally.

In day two of the competition, Ateneo decided to turn things around in the eliminations as strong performances from DLSU and UST threatened to dethrone the defending champions. Coach Sulit reminded his team what was at stake, and what they needed to do to bag the three-peat, “I told them, ‘we can still do it but you’ve gotta fight like you’ve never fought before. It was really tough but these guys pulled through. Iba talaga pag Atenista–malaki heart,” added Sulit.

Ateneans dominated the finals and won medals left and right to give them a clear shot at the championship. Captain Jhonel Faelnar grappled Kevin Movido for the gold in the -60kg finals. Faelnar described his team as a “band of brothers.” He said he never really liked going up against teammates but “at that point, it was a sweet moment knowing that win or lose, the points would go to Ateneo.” Having two Ateneans assured of a gold and a silver made coach Sulit proud. “You did your part for the team,