# FROM THE EDITOR

This June 2020 issue of *Science Diliman* is memorable in a way because it is being released in the midst of the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic caused by the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). To date, there are over 14 million confirmed cases of COVID-19 and more than 600,000 deaths worldwide. In the Philippines, as of this writing, there have been 70,764 confirmed cases of COVID-19 with 1,837 deaths. These numbers continue to increase as scientists are scrambling to develop vaccines for this dreaded disease. This disease has caused so much anxiety and misery as lives and livelihoods have been lost and as our normal lives have been disrupted in very profound ways. Our hope rests in science to stem the tide of the spread of the virus, to find cures for this disease, and eventually, to bring our lives back to normalcy.

As we are struggling with anxiety and uncertainty amid the COVID-19 pandemic, *Science Diliman* deeply mourns the passing of one of its Associate Editors, Dr. Alonzo A. Gabriel, on March 31, 2020. He was a professor in the Department of Food Science and Nutrition at the College of Home Economics, University of the Philippines Diliman. He was a prolific and multi-awarded food scientist. His research focused on food processing and preservation, microbiological food safety, and traditional and innovative food technologies. He was a tremendous loss, indeed, not just to *Science Diliman* and the university, but also to the scientific community.

In this issue, we feature five research articles. The first article is by Galgana et al. who determined the effects of the tectonic deformation of Luzon on existing survey networks in the Philippines. Their block and continuum modeling experiments revealed the amount and spatial extent of deformation within the island of Luzon. Understanding the nature of this deformation is needed so that appropriate corrections can be applied to minimize transient errors affecting the Philippine survey network. Their study, however, is limited to examining the contribution of tectonic deformation to the overall error field. The authors recommend the application of corrections for other systematic error sources, such as global reference system corrections, rapid horizontal and vertical crustal motions, volcano-induced deformation, and hydrological effects. The second article is by Gonda and Paras who determined the Jordan canonical form of a product of two elementary S-unitaries.

The third article is by Mapile and Obusan who isolated bacteria and fungi from the gut of the earthworm, African Nightcrawler, and screened these microorganisms for their ability to fix nitrogen, solubilize phosphate, and utilize polyethylene, as well as for the antagonistic potential of fungal isolates against bacterial isolates. The authors hope to harness the earthworm's casts and compost for agricultural, medical, and other applications. The fourth article is by Molina et al. who examined the body size, microhabitat, and feeding ecology of two species of edible freshwater or semi-terrestrial crabs that are endemic to Mindanao island in the Philippines. The authors hope to contribute to a better understanding of the biology of these two economically important crabs so that appropriate conservation strategies can be formulated for the two species. The fifth and last article is by Que et al. who used DNA barcoding to trace the possible source of the non-native Philippine population of the Greenhouse Frog. Their analysis revealed that the DNA sequences of the samples they collected from the Philippines are genetically identical to DNA sequences of samples from Hawai'i and Florida, USA and are closely related to the DNA sequence of an individual from Cuba. The authors surmised that importation of plants from the USA is the most likely mode of introduction because this frog species lays its eggs in soil and is often found in bromeliad plants that are commonly imported from the USA into the country.
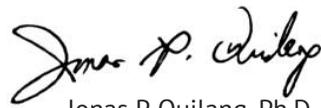
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Editor-in-Chief