



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
MARITIME INDUSTRY AUTHORITY

Message

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MARINA Administrator

*38th COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES
MARINERS POLYTECHNIC COLLEGES FOUNDATION OF
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Dr. Gabriel La Jimenez, Chairperson, Board of Trustees, Ms. Merle Jimenez-San Pedro, President, Members of the Board of Trustees, industry partners, distinguished guests, esteemed faculty members, proud parents, and most importantly, the exceptional maritime graduates, ladies and gentlemen, good day to all.

I AM TRULY HONORED AND PRIVILEGED to be part of this celebration. Congratulations to the Class of 2024, congratulations Batch Dagisik!

Today marks the culmination of your years of dedication, hardwork, sacrifices and unyielding resolve. It signifies the initiation of a new phase in your lives, as you step into the expansive and dynamic realm of the maritime industry. Armed with the essential knowledge, skills, and proficiency, you stand equipped to navigate the seas with assurance, and for that accomplishment, you should take great pride.

As graduates of maritime studies, you are professionals who wield a pivotal role in shaping the global economy and forging connections between nations across the oceans. Our industry serves as the backbone of international trade, facilitating the movement of goods and commodities that sustain economies worldwide. Your capabilities as seafarers are indispensable in ensuring the secure, efficient, and sustainable operation of vessels.

Beyond its economic significance, the maritime industry holds a deeper purpose. It encapsulates the essence of adventure, exploration, and cultural interchange. It nurtures ties among diverse cultures, fostering understanding and promoting peace. The maritime sector carries a rich heritage and a profound sense of responsibility to preserve the oceans and safeguard marine life for future generations. As contemporary maritime graduates, you carry the torch of this legacy, entrusted with the responsibility of upholding these values in your professional pursuits.

While the challenges ahead may be numerous, with additional training requirements and years of seagoing experience to accumulate, I have unwavering confidence in your ability to surmount them. The maritime industry is in constant evolution, propelled by technological advancements, environmental considerations, and shifting global dynamics. You are the vanguards of innovation, adaptability, and resilience. Embrace emerging technologies like digitalization and automation,

utilizing them to elevate safety, efficiency, and sustainability in the maritime sector. Foster diversity and inclusivity, recognizing that a varied workforce cultivates creativity, collaboration, and global understanding.

On the part of the government, we at the MARINA are continuously improving our policies and systems in order to ensure the continued employment and welfare of our seafarers.

On a recent development, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. signed Executive Order No. 55 last 08 February adopting the Maritime Industry Development Plan 2028, that includes as one of its Core Program the Promotion of Highly skilled and Competitive Filipino Maritime Workforce, with a target outcome of increased reservoir of qualified and competent maritime human resource who future-ready. This is a manifestation of this Administration's recognition on the importance of the maritime industry to nation building and the President's commitment to be hands-on in ensuring that welfare of Filipino seafarers are truly in his Agenda.

The Philippines through the Maritime Industry Authority, continues to make strong representation in the international regulating bodies, such as the International Maritime Organization and the International Labor Organization, to ensure that the rights of seafarers are protected and their well being prioritized.

Dear graduates, as you commence your professional journeys, bear in mind that success extends beyond personal accomplishments; it is measured by the positive influence you wield on society and the global community. Aim to be guiding figures who inspire and uplift others, advocating for ethical conduct and nurturing a culture of safety and environmental responsibility. Keep in mind the enduring significance of continual learning and professional growth, as the maritime industry is in a constant state of evolution; necessitating ongoing development and enhancement.

Everyday should be a learning process. When you learn as much beforehand, you will be in a better position and more prepared to make the right choice any time along your career path. Whenever a chance presents itself, you are one step ahead of the competition.

The maritime and seafaring industry is currently facing many challenges. Technology is advancing rapidly to meet demands for sustainable development driven by globalization, automation, digitalization, and decarbonization.

Adapting to what lies ahead may seem like an uphill battle, but it's really rather manageable if you have a plan. With an industry as dynamic and global as maritime, how quickly can you adapt? Have you familiarized with the emerging use of artificial

intelligence (AI), both through voice assistants like Siri or Alexa and natural language processing tools like ChatGPT. We are now using virtual reality simulators, there are now maritime autonomous surface ships or MASS, unmanned ships are being tested in some parts of the world, more and more green and digital solutions are now in the market. Staying abreast on the latest developments and trends in your respective fields, either on deck or at the engine department, is something I highly recommend that you all do. You need to equip yourself to make sure you are future ready and that you will stay relevant amid all these new technologies and business models.

In MARINA, the Blockchain-Enabled Automated Certification System or MARINA BEST, is now in use. It is an advanced web application that provides online services from application to certificate and permit issuance, streamlined processes, real-time application status tracking, standard inspection and survey checklists with easily verifiable documents, and secured and contactless transactions to avoid corruption and preserve document integrity. Part of the MARINA Best is our MiSMO for the online certification system for seafarers. It is essential that you register in the MISMO and always remember your SRN or Seafarers Registration Number. The SRN is a unique number that will be issued to each seafarer and shall be used for life...allow me to appeal to all our graduates, so please remember you SRN and MISMO account credentials, as you will be using your MISMO account regularly.

We recognize that the advent of new technologies and the utilization of alternative energy sources in the maritime sector can have a significant impact on the opportunities available to Filipino seafarers. As a result, MARINA actively engages in conversations and international conferences promoting a just transition in shipping.

The MARINA is also closely monitoring the passage of the Magna Carta for Seafarers. The Senate ratified the current version in May. We know the Magna Carta is being enacted to protect Filipino seafarers' rights, to promote their full employment, and to ensure equal opportunity in the maritime industry.

Perhaps one of the biggest strides we have achieved recently that directly connects to the employment of our seafarers is the country's continued inclusion in the so-called "white list" of the International Maritime Organization (IMO). The IMO Maritime Safety Committee (MSC), in its 108th Session, confirmed that the Philippines has fully complied with the relevant provisions of the STCW Convention. This is the result of the successful completion of our Independent Evaluation back in 2022 and the submission of our corrective actions to the identified deficiencies. Our inclusion in the IMO "white list" reinforces the decision of the European Union to extend their recognition of Philippine-issued STCW certificates after we have "taken concrete progress and

improvement” as regards to compliance with the STCW Convention.

As a result of EU’s extension of recognition and our inclusion in the IMO white list, we have seen an influx of Member States who are very keen in entering into an Agreement with our country on the recognition of seafarers' certificates as required by Regulation I/10 of the STCW Convention. For the first semester of this year alone, we have inked a total of 4 Agreements namely with Qatar, Norway, United Kingdom and Brunei. This brings to 52 the total number of Agreements we have with other IMO Member States and translates to the continued employment of Filipino seafarers onboard foreign-flagged vessels.

MARINA is likewise actively participating in the comprehensive review and revision of the STCW 1978, as amended that is currently being undertaken in the International Maritime Organization.

Graduates, your government led by the MARINA has done and is doing everything to set the environment that you will see when you decide to go through the new door of opportunity that appears before you today. On behalf of the men and women of MARINA, I assure you that your interests and the interests of hundreds of thousands of Filipino seafarers is primordial to MARINA. The Mariners Polytechnic, its officers and faculty members have educated, trained and equipped you to the best

possible preparation you need to succeed in your professional journey.

Whichever course you have taken, the BS Marine Transportation or the BS Marine Engineering, I trust these programs have prepared you to handle the challenges that lie ahead. As you embark on your careers as maritime professionals, always bear in mind the lessons learned thus far. You will need to rely upon those learning experiences, so try to recall what it was like to be tested, to be challenged, and to be part of a team.

You should not let this occasion put a stop to your drive to learn more and become a better seafarer, no matter where your future takes you. Make your sickle sharp and broaden your horizons. Always give your best and do your job with vigor, dedication and commitment and love. "Work at it with all your heart, as if you were working for the Lord and not for men," the Apostle Paul states in Colossians 3:23.

Keep in mind where you came from and who you are today. There is no doubt in my mind that you have what it takes to become highly successful maritime professionals who will lead our country and global shipping into the future. Live by values of professionalism, integrity, discipline and competence.

In closing, I wish to remind you of what you have become. Remember your are not only representing your family or Mariners but most importantly you are representing our country,

the Philippines, remember your lessons, and remember your values. They are your anchor and your compass. Utilize them and use them well.

It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the substantial support and guidance provided by your parents, families, friends, educators, and mentors who have been steadfast companions on this odyssey. They have served as your pillars of strength and unwavering wellsprings of encouragement. Take a moment to express gratitude and acknowledge their indispensable role in your achievements.

To the Class of 2024, batch dagisik, dear parents, families and loved ones who have been there for you and will continue to be, and to the faculty and staff of Mariners, to the officials of this esteemed academic institution, MASSIVE congratulations TO ALL. I urge each one of you to persist in your careers as esteemed Filipino seafarers of choice.

Thank you and mabuhay ang Mariners Polytechnic, Mabuhay ang MARINONG PILIPINO.

Dios Mabalos!