

February 18, 2009

UST ROTC Unit and its Alumni Association to march towards the University's Quadri Centennial Celebration

For the first time in the history not only of the University of Sto. Tomas (UST) Reserve Officer Training Course (ROTC), but probably in the history of the entire ROTC program, the UST ROTC Alumni Association will march alongside its cadets, augmented by the Philippine Army's Security and Escort Battalion (SEB) personnel and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Band to kick off the celebration of the 400th year of the oldest Pontifical University in Asia on March 1, 2009 with the Department of National Defense Secretary Honorable Gilberto C. Teodoro Jr. as the Guest of Honor and Speaker.

The event will be highlighted by a wreath laying ceremony in honor of the 200 Thomasians who gave up their lives defending the city against the British invaders in the 17th century. It can be recalled that it was at the UST main building where the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) took part in the unveiling of the marker commemorating this historical event.

Also part of the program was the signing of a manifesto by the members of the UST ROTC Alumni Association, cadets and UST students to support a Bill which seeks to make the program a mandatory curriculum in college again.

The ROTC program used to be the main source of officers joining the AFP and Philippine National Police (PNP) when it was a mandatory curriculum in college. Among the successful professionals in various fields who were once UST ROTC cadet officers were Honorable Antonio Cerilles of the House of Representatives; Lt. Gen. Pedro R Cabuay Jr. AFP (Ret), the Director of the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency; and Jun Palafox, a successful architect and environmental planner. Other distinguished alumni include Lt. Gen. Rodolfo Garcia (Ret) (former The Deputy Chief of Staff, AFP), Lt. Gen. Alberto F Braganza (Ret) (former Southern Command commander) and the late Brig. Gen. Arturo Asuncion of the Philippine Navy (Marines) who died in action as the First Marine Brigade Commander at the height of the Mindanao conflict.

Some alumni are still in active service in the other Armed Forces here and abroad. Among those who will take part in the parade are doctors, lawyers, successful businessmen and PMA graduates who were once part of the UST ROTC.