



## Remarks by Dr. Nancy Chapman

Event: ACUCA-SU-United-Board Joint Consultation

Date: 16 July 2021

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Greetings! I'm Nancy Chapman, President of the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia. On behalf of the United Board, I welcome you to this gathering on the theme "Envisioning Christian Higher Education: Our Preferred Futures". This event is being hosted by Silliman University. To President Betty Cernol-McCann and her colleagues at Silliman, and to everyone associated with ACUCA, as well as the organizing committee for this conference, we express our warm appreciation for all that you have done to bring us together.

The theme of this event is especially timely given all of the disruptions, changes and adaptations forced on our colleges, universities and societies by the COVID-19 pandemic. Higher education continues to face extraordinary challenges brought on by, or accelerated by the pandemic. There's no question that it will emerge from this crisis significantly changed. The role of visionary leaders with the ability to adapt and shape the world that is emerging, not just respond to immediate crises is more critical than ever. Surely, the starting point should be a commitment to hold fast to our core values and beliefs. In the words of the conference organizers values that are uplifting, hope inspiring and life-giving, while at the same time remaining curious and open to how these values might inform and shape our institutions and our work in a changed world.

Of course no one has all of the answers about what Christian higher education should, or will become in the post-pandemic period, and this makes this gathering all the more valuable as a forum for sharing perspectives, concerns and insights as we make our way through these many challenges. I am especially excited to hear the voices and visions featured in the various preferred futures that will be shared during the conference sessions and the short videos between sessions.

The very process of articulating a vision can often stimulate new thinking and broader hopes, in turn inspiring others to dream more expansively. And I can think of no more fitting organization than ACUCA to convene an event as hopeful as this, nor a college or university better suited to serve as host than Silliman University. The United Board

has been connected to both ACUCA and Silliman for decades. We ourselves were founded almost 100 years ago as a network, in our case, a network of Christian colleges in China, and the United Board has a special appreciation for the synergy and mutual benefit that can be gained from a network of institutions working together for a common purpose.

We congratulate ACUCA for all of the shared effort, exchanges of information and insights, and mutual benefit that it has facilitated since its founding in 1975. We also extend our warm congratulations on the occasion of the 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Silliman University. What an achievement that is to have endured and flourished for well over a century, bringing the blessings of education and enlightenment to so many generations of students.

While somewhat younger than Silliman, the United Board too, will be celebrating an important birthday next year: the hundredth anniversary of our founding. The United Board's vision has always been simple yet deeply inspiring. In all of our work, we seek to support Asian colleges and universities as they deliver education that enriches students intellectually spiritually and ethically. Through the institutions in our network, we hope to help both students and faculty develop their minds, hearts and consciences, so that they can better serve their families, communities and societies. For 100 years, these goals have set the foundation for our great expectations for our organization and they will continue to guide us in our second century.

On behalf of the united board's trustees and staff, I thank you for all of your support for the work of the United Board, Silliman University, and ACUCA and its member institutions. Thank you also for joining this inspiring gathering. We look forward to the interesting presentations and discussions in these days, and to continuing our friendships and shared vision for many years to come. Thank you very much and best wishes to all.

**Watch the video:**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wn8-uf9oFFw&list=PLyYArF\\_Ccn5i\\_BFpMifB-xCNCjtjGkY2j&index=1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wn8-uf9oFFw&list=PLyYArF_Ccn5i_BFpMifB-xCNCjtjGkY2j&index=1)