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The awareness on applied principles of laboratory biosafety and biosecurity, maintaining high quality specimen for surveillance and accurate laboratory diagnosis, and the projected perils of terrorist attack using biological agents have directed our institution to esteem the need to have a centralized and /or unified system of isolate, specimen, and biological banking. In the process of constructing a centralized storage facility and establishing biobanking procedures, we have experienced challenges and lost. Those challenges should have been avoided if only we were aware that there is an organization who shares ideas, experience, expertise and innovations in biobanking. I am personally thankful to the Biorepository Manager, Mr. Louis Bryden, who introduced ISBER to me while I was participating in the 8th International High Containment Operation and Maintenance Workshop by the International Center for Infectious Disease in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. That day, I claimed that I will win the 2016 ISBER Travel Award. I thank God and all His people for making it happen.

Participating in this ISBER conference made me realized that biobank/biorepository is more than just a storage facility. The use of stored biological materials could be maximized for research. Pathogens come and go without boundaries. Although these organisms are labeled harmful or devastating today, they could be considered as equally beneficial in the future. For a comprehensive and profound study, preservation and storage is vital. Biobank and biological repositories hold the future of research for infectious diseases.

The theme for this year's annual meeting was "breaking the wall". Having insufficient information and biobanking experience is a huge wall for beginners. It can be overcome more effectively through a unified ISBER community. Being with the community of biobank experts and leaders, our biobank will grow all its way towards sustainable operations, biobanking independence and freedom from unnecessary challenges and painful damages and losses. The conference has been a great learning and networking opportunity. The sessions were filled with topics that helped me project the future of biobanking for our research institution.

Disseminating the knowledge gained at the ISBER 2016 Annual Meeting will be executed through institutional policy and personal initiatives. We have institutionalized technology transfer activities. It includes seminars, group discussions, laboratory conferences, open discussions and forum. Through these activities, the knowledge gained will be broadcasted along with an action plan towards its implementation and monitoring. With all the passion for laboratory biosafety and biosecurity as the institution's trained Biorisk Officer, the knowledge will not only be reflected on the works towards full establishment and sustainable biobanking operation for high risk organism in the Philippines. Raising "awareness" on standard system of

biobanking will continue as I personally promote advocacy of safe and secured storage of infectious organism while keeping its quality. I firmly believe that these banked organisms will be the answer for future scientific challenges of next generation.

Let me take this opportunity to thank the organizers and all my ISBER family who participated in ISBER 2016 5K Fun Run. My participation was made possible because of your generosity. I personally would like to thank Diane McGarvey, Sheila O'Donoghue, Nicole Sieffert, Debra Garcia, Katherine Sexton, Zisis Kozlakidis, Zachary von Menchhofen, Heidi Kwong, Jajah Fachiroh, Maui Hudson, and Thyrza Toledo who made me feel cozy and at home with ISBER. I have no words to say other than "Maraming Salamat po!" (*Thank you very much!*). More than the information I gathered by attending series of sessions, preconference workshops and meetings; I will forever treasure the warm welcome, friendship, and camaraderie I witnessed during my stay with the group.

The ISBER 2016 Annual Meeting has been a unique experience for me. Members are learning from each other, getting to know people who have similar work interests, sharing experiences, baring selfless generosity while esteeming physical fitness and having fun all at the same time. I will stay connected with ISBER and I am looking forward to the day that I will contribute towards the prestige of this organization starting with the simplest but structured way.

Congratulations to ISBER and may you continue to support more ISBER Travel Awardees who will spread ISBER's best practices around the world!