

COLLEGE NEWSLETTER

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Angeles College Assisting With LA Wildfire Relief

This past January, **Angeles College VN & BSPN students**, along with the **Philippine Nurses Association of Southern California**, volunteered at the Pilipino Worker Center Fire Relief event in Pasadena. Students assisted individuals who were affected by the fires in the Altadena/Pasadena region by providing blood pressure screenings and health education, as well as distributing relief goods. ACLA students show that nursing is more than a job: it's a *vocation!*

Congratulations

John Krause Academic Excellence Scholarship recipients for Winter 2025!

Yangmei Guan (BSPN04)
Telayah Harte (BSPN04)
Hyejin Lee (BSPN05)
Kittayporn Pholchang (BSPN05)
Kerwin McCoy (BSPN06)
Ewa Scott (BSPN06)
Yen Chou (BSPN07)
Kathleen Anne Doctolero (BSPN07)
Maggie Hou (BSPN08)
Danilo Yalang (BSPN08)
Haiyang Jin (BSPN09)
Yeonseo Kim (BSPN09)
Sung Hwang (BSPN10)
Seoyoung Kim (BSPN10)



BSN Graduation Ceremony
05-08-2025

01/05





Angeles College Faculty & Students Serving Our Community

- Under the guidance of **Dr. Cynthia McClain**, Angeles College students volunteered with **Project Access** to provide personalized tutoring, including engineering projects, childhood cancer awareness, and creative expression through art.

- **Angeles College** is a CA Board of Registered Nursing (BRN) Approved & Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) Accredited Baccalaureate Degree Program



Getting to Know: Dr. Batool Sabha

Dr. Sabha currently teaches MTH101 & MTH 200 at Angeles College. She received her Master's Degree from the University of Jordan in Organic Chemistry, and while working on her PhD, taught lab class for medical students. She says that teaching has been the natural progression born out of her passion for being a student. She enjoys spending time with her family, hiking, and cooking.

02/05



A Message From Our Dean: Make Mental Health a Priority

In a world where the demands of work and life can often feel overwhelming, taking time to prioritize mental health and self-care is essential. For Filipino and Filipino American workers, who often juggle cultural expectations, immigrant challenges, and the pressures of entry-level jobs, this is even more pronounced.

Dr. Sasha A. Rarang, PhD, PMHNP, APRN, a passionate advocate for mental health awareness, recently made a meaningful impact in this space by leading an in-service at the Pilipino Workers Center (PWC) in Los Angeles. Invited by PWC's administrative leader, Ms. Clydee, Dr. Rarang's session on April 7, 2025, focused on equipping workers with practical tools like meditation and mindfulness to support their mental well-being.

A Space for Healing and Growth

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Recognizing the mental health challenges faced by PWC's workers, Ms. Clydee reached out to Dr. Rarang to facilitate a special in-service dedicated to self-care and mental health awareness. The event, held from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm, was aptly themed "Be Kind to Yourself," reflecting its focus on fostering self-compassion and resilience.

Dr. Rarang, an Associate Professor and Dean at Angeles College with over three decades of experience in nursing practice, education, and psychiatric care, and also a proud member of PNASC, Inc. and PNAA brought her expertise and warmth to the session. Her goal was clear: to provide Filipino and Filipino American workers with



Be Kind to Yourself

MENTAL HEALTH

Pilipino Workers Center
Employee In-Service!
When? April 7, 2025, 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm
Who's speaking? Dr. Sasha A. Rarang, PhD, PMHNP, RN she's bringing her expertise to us!
Where? Pilipino Workers Center, 153 Glendale Blvd, 1st Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90026
Topic: Self Care and Mental Health Awareness



Make your mental health a priority
Mental health is an important topic and **should be discussed** more frequently



03/05



accessible strategies to manage stress and prioritize their mental health, all while honoring their cultural values and promoting mental health awareness equity for all.

Mindfulness and Meditation: Practical Tools for Everyday Life

A key highlight of the in-service was Dr. Rarang's introduction of mindfulness and meditation exercises, which she led as group activities to create a shared experience of calm and connection. Understanding the demanding schedules of the workers—many of whom are caregivers, service workers, or laborers—Dr. Rarang tailored the practices to be simple, practical, and easy to integrate into daily routines.

The session began with informing the group with mental health importance and issues currently plaguing the community, she then segue the group to a guided group meditation. Dr. Rarang invited participants to sit comfortably, close their eyes, and focus on their breathing. "Take a deep breath in, and as you exhale, let go of any tension," she instructed softly. The room, filled with workers who rarely get a moment to pause, became a sanctuary of stillness as participants followed her lead. This exercise helped them release stress and reconnect with their inner calm, with many noting how refreshed they felt afterward.

Dr. Rarang also introduced mindfulness exercises to encourage present-moment awareness. One activity involved a "mindful check-in," where participants were asked to notice five things they could see, four things they could feel, three things they could hear, two things they could smell, and one thing they could taste. This sensory grounding technique helped workers anchor

themselves in the moment, offering a break from the mental clutter of their daily challenges.

"Mindfulness is about being fully here, even in the simplest moments," Dr. Rarang explained, encouraging the group to try this practice during breaks at work or at home.

The group also engaged in a gratitude meditation, where participants reflected on things they were thankful for in their lives. This exercise resonated deeply, as it aligned with the Filipino value of *kapwa*—a shared sense of humanity and community. Workers shared reflections on their gratitude for family, health, and the support of PWC, fostering a sense of positivity and connection within the group.

Culturally Informed Care and Empowerment

What set Dr. Rarang's approach apart was her deep understanding of the cultural context of the Filipino and Filipino American community. She acknowledged the cultural tendency to prioritize others' needs over one's own, often leading to burnout. To counter this, she reframed self-care as an act of strength rather than selfishness. "When we take care of ourselves, we're better able to care for our families and communities," she emphasized, encouraging participants to see self-care as a way to honor their responsibilities rather than detract from them.

The in-service also created a space for community building. Through the group activities, workers connected with one another, sharing their experiences and challenges. This sense of togetherness was a powerful reminder of the importance of support systems in mental health, a value deeply rooted in Filipino culture.

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A Lasting Impact

The impact of Dr. Rarang's session was palpable. Participants left the in-service feeling empowered to incorporate mindfulness and meditation into their lives. One worker shared, "I never realized how much a few minutes of breathing could help me feel less stressed. I'm going to do this every day now." Another appreciated the group setting, saying, "It felt good to know I'm not alone in my struggles. We all need this kind of support."

Ms. Clydee, who organized the event, praised Dr. Rarang's contribution. "Dr. Sasha's session was exactly what our workers needed. She brought practical tools and a lot of heart to this event, and we're so grateful for her partnership," she said.

A Call to Make Mental Health a Priority

Dr. Sasha Rarang's in-service at the Filipino Workers Center serves as a powerful example of how targeted mental health initiatives can make a difference, especially for underserved communities. By focusing on mindfulness and meditation, she provided Filipino and Filipino American workers with tools to navigate their unique challenges while fostering a sense of community and self-compassion.

As the flyer for the event boldly stated, "Make your mental health a priority. Mental health is an important topic and should be discussed more frequently." Let's take inspiration from Dr. Rarang's work and continue to advocate for mental health awareness in our own communities. Whether it's through a few minutes of mindful breathing, a gratitude practice, or simply reaching out for support, small steps can lead to big changes in our well-being. Let's commit to being kind to ourselves—and to each other.



05/05

