



## Association of Hand Surgeons of the Philippines

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### HISTORY OF HAND SURGERY IN THE PHILIPPINES

Hand surgery in the Philippines began with two premier orthopedic institutions: The National Orthopedic Hospital (now the Philippine Orthopedic Center) and the University of the Philippines - Philippine General Hospital, Department of Orthopedics. The National Orthopedic Hospital evolved during the aftermath of World War II in 1945 as an Emergency Hospital-The Civilian Aid Unit I, organized by a Filipino Surgeon-Colonel under the USAFFE Medical Corps. After the post-war emergency period, the emergency hospital was renamed in 1947 as the "National Orthopedic Hospital" under the Bureau of Health with Dr. JV delos Santos as the first Chief of Hospital. In 1956, the Hand and Peripheral Nerve Surgery Unit was established at the National Orthopedic Hospital with Dr. Buenaventura Canto as head and Dr. Eugenio Inocentes as the senior resident. Three years later, through the efforts of Dr. Canto and Dr. Benjamin Tamesis, Dr. Inocentes was sent to the United Kingdom and India from 1959 to 1960 under the British Colombo Plan Fellowship Grant. Dr. Inocentes rotated under Dr. RG Pulvertaft, Prof. HJ Seddon and Dr. D Brooks in England, Prof. JP James in Scotland, and Prof. PW Brand in India. After his return to the Philippines in 1960, Dr. Inocentes headed the Hand and Peripheral Surgery Unit and had been a lecturer in Hand Surgery until 1999.

At the other end of the capital city of Manila, the University of the Philippines College of Medicine-Philippine General Hospital (PGH) established in 1952, the Section of Orthopedics under Dr. Ambrosio Tangco under the Department of Surgery. Dr. Tangco sent a promising surgeon Dr. Jose V. Silao, Jr. for hand surgery training in the USA under Dr. Robert E. Carroll from 1970-71. In June 1971, the Section of Orthopedics became a separate Department, with Dr. Jose V. Silao, Jr. as first Department Chairman. Dr. Silao formed the different sections of orthopedics, which included the Section of Hand Surgery. In 2002, the Section of Hand Surgery established the Microsurgery Service and in 2005, the Microsurgery Service was renamed the Microsurgery Unit-a multidisciplinary unit dedicated to microsurgical reconstruction needs of patients. To this day, the Section of Hand and Reconstructive Surgery of the Department of Orthopedics, University of the Philippines Manila is the only training institution in the country with a clinical fellowship in hand surgery which started way back in 1995.

## ASSOCIATION OF HAND SURGEONS OF THE PHILIPPINES (AHSP)

The Association of Hand Surgeons of the Philippines (formerly called Philippine Society for Surgery of the Hand) was conceptualized to address the needs of the Filipino people for specialized care of the hand. The group was initially formed in 1984 through the initiatives two prominent hand surgeons: Dr. Vicente Pido and Dr. Eugenio Innocentes, Jr. The society had seven founding members with Dr. Vicente Pido as president and Dr. Eugenio Innocentes, Jr. as vice-president. A year later, the society constitution and by-laws were drafted and approved by its members.

Today, the society has expanded its membership to 35 hand surgeons from Orthopedic, General and Plastic Surgery. In November 2017, the AHSP hosted the 11<sup>th</sup> APFSSH (Asian Pacific Federation of Societies for Surgery of the Hand) in Cebu City, Philippines. This was a historic event for Philippine Hand Surgery since this was the first time that the Philippines hosted an international Hand Congress. Four hundred plus participants attended the Congress from 25 countries. Leading hand surgeons from the Asia Pacific region and around world shared their expertise in hand and microsurgery.



*Guest speakers with AHSP members during the 11<sup>th</sup> APFSSH Congress in Cebu*



*Banquet Night during the 11<sup>th</sup> APFSSH Congress*