

STORIES THAT HEAL. ADVOCACY THAT MOVES.

MAXAM

Magazine

FEATURED IN

Patrick Abels

CEO, Miss & Mrs Celestial Universe

Leading Celestial Universe into its next chapter, he brings heart-centred leadership, global vision, and unwavering support for women-led advocacy.

www.maxamfoundation.org

END OF THE YEAR
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Merry
Christmas



MaxaM Foundation is a purpose-driven non-profit organization committed to advancing education and mental health awareness in underserved communities, particularly in the Philippines. Rooted in compassion and lived experience, MaxaM empowers students through scholarships, learning tools, and school outreach while also addressing the often-silent struggles of emotional well-being.

From grassroots support to global advocacy, MaxaM bridges the gap between opportunity and dignity, helping individuals rise beyond survival toward a future of purpose.

Education. Healing. Hope.

This is MaxaM. Where missions begin with the heart.

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KNOW ABOUT

Patrick Abels



Patrick Abels serves as the Chief Executive Officer of Celestial Universe, a global platform for empowerment and advocacy operating under the umbrella of the MaxaM Foundation. With a strong professional background in health and safety engineering, Patrick brings over a decade of experience in compliance, risk management, and operational leadership. Based in the Netherlands, he has worked extensively in the industrial and engineering sectors, where he developed systems that prioritise both efficiency and human well-being.

Now steering Celestial Universe at the executive level, Patrick applies that same precision and foresight to help scale the organisation's impact across continents. As CEO, his primary focus is securing global supporters, strategic partners, and value-aligned sponsors who believe in Celestial Universe's mission. These collaborations directly benefit the foundation's social impact projects, particularly in education, youth development, and mental health, creating a powerful bridge between pageantry and purpose.

Patrick's transition into mission-led leadership began through his partnership with Lina Gabbaoan, founder of the MaxaM Foundation and visionary behind Celestial Universe. Together, they have launched several ventures that combine entrepreneurship and social responsibility, including Kubertos, a Filipino-Dutch restaurant, and grassroots campaigns supporting underprivileged communities.

While Lina champions branding and community engagement, Patrick ensures that the organisation's structure is sound, sustainable, and scalable. He oversees governance, fiscal responsibility, and international coordination, all while cultivating the ecosystem of supporters needed to bring the platform's vision to life.

Patrick lives in Groningen with Lina and their blended family. Whether managing risks in technical operations or building relationships with global changemakers, he leads with quiet strength and a deep belief that meaningful change starts with ethical leadership and collective effort.

ADVOCACY IN FOCUS: EDUCATION & MENTAL HEALTH



The Year They Nearly Gave Up

December often brings a familiar sense of closure: students looking forward to the break, families preparing for the holidays, and schools winding down after a long year. But in many parts of the Philippines, there is little sense of relief, only quiet exhaustion.

For thousands of Filipino students, 2025 has been a year not just of learning, but of surviving. The academic challenges were never just academic. They were layered with loss, instability, and a profound emotional fatigue that no exam score can measure.

In flood-prone areas, classrooms were closed for weeks. Some students didn't return. Others studied in borrowed spaces that doubled as evacuation centres. In provinces hardest hit by typhoons and the fallout from failed flood-control projects, the promise of uninterrupted learning faded with every rainfall. The water wasn't just rising outside their homes, it was rising inside them too, in the form of anxiety, helplessness, and burnout.

One student in Northern Luzon shared, "There were days I just sat there staring at my notebook. I couldn't think. I kept worrying if we'd be evacuated again." Another said she felt ashamed asking for paper because her family couldn't afford school supplies that month, after their home was damaged in the floods.

These aren't isolated experiences. They are the stories behind the statistics, behind the dropout rates, the slipping test scores, the behavioural changes quietly noticed by teachers who are themselves overwhelmed.

Despite ongoing curriculum reform and digitisation efforts, the most urgent gap in the education system remains the most invisible: mental health. Public schools still operate without enough counsellors, emotional first aid, or safe spaces for children to process what they've lived through. Many students return to school while still grieving the loss of their home, their parents' jobs, or a sense of safety they may never fully get back.

In some schools, teachers try their best to compensate. They hold space between subjects. They bring snacks. They say "okay lang" even when it's not. But teachers are not therapists, and compassion alone cannot carry a system in crisis.

This December, as we give, reflect, and plan for the year ahead, may we ask not just "How do we improve grades?" but also, "How do we protect the minds and hearts of those we expect to learn?"

Because the most urgent educational reform is not in textbooks or test scores. It's in how we treat the children who are trying their best to stay afloat.

SOULFUL PHOENIX: VOICES THAT RISE

Why Filipinos React Strongly to the “₱500 Noche Buena” Narrative?

by: Lina Gabbaon



It is not really about the money. Most Filipinos know how to stretch a budget. We have mastered the art of making do, of substituting, of surviving. What made the Department of Trade and Industry's ₱500 Noche Buena statement painful was not the suggestion itself, but the message behind it, and the moment it was said.

Noche Buena, for many families, is not just a meal. It is a sacred pause at the end of the year. It is the one night when poverty tries to take a back seat. A table with spaghetti, ham, or even just hot dogs means more than food. It means trying to feel normal. It means trying to give children something joyful after another long year of sacrifice.

So when a government agency tells the public that ₱500 should be “enough,” during a time when billions are allegedly lost to corruption, it cuts deep. The real pain is in the contrast. While flood control projects failed and communities drowned, we learned of ghost contractors and diverted public funds. While some families could not afford rice, others flaunted private jets and designer handbags paid for by stolen public money.

This is not about entitlement. It is about dignity. Filipinos are not asking for luxury. They are asking not to be insulted. When a government speaks of austerity, it must first clean its own house. Otherwise, it sends the message that sacrifice is only for the poor.

There is also something deeper at play. Many of us were raised to endure. We were taught to keep quiet, to adjust, to understand. The phrase “tiisin mo nalang” echoes in our culture. Over time, this builds up. So when someone in power tells us again what should be “enough,” it opens old wounds.

Psychologists might say this is a form of collective trauma. Our nervous systems respond in many ways. Some of us become angry and speak out. Others shut down and say nothing. A few try to rationalise, but deep down, most feel the same thing: the weight of being told to be grateful for crumbs while others feast.

Christmas is not the time to shrink people’s hope. It is the one season when Filipino families, no matter how poor, try to feel whole again. When the government frames celebration as wasteful or unnecessary, it touches something sacred. And when that comes alongside stories of billions being lost, the injury feels personal.

This is why people are hurt. It was about timing, inequality, and a culture that deserves better than bare minimums.

Let this be a lesson to every leader. Words matter. Timing matters. And more than anything, people’s dignity must be protected. Because sometimes, a plate of spaghetti is not just food. It is a family’s way of saying, “We are still here. We still hope. We still matter.”

CELESTIAL UNIVERSE EXCLUSIVE

Celestial Universe Int. Finals 2026
Amsterdam, The Netherlands | July 6–12, 2026



The CU Ambassador Crown
An emblem of grace, legacy, and unity.

This crown will be worn by the Celestial Universe Ambassador, a woman chosen to lead the coronation of national titleholders during the opening night of pageant week.

More than a ceremonial role, she will serve as the bridge between generations, embodying both the journey of a Miss and the evolution into a Mrs.

In this historic year, as we merge both Miss and Mrs. categories into one powerful platform, our Ambassador will represent every woman who has grown, transformed, and risen with purpose.

She carries not just the crown, but the message: That empowerment does not end at any age, title, or chapter. It evolves.

Stay tuned. She is coming.
Our very first Celestial Universe Ambassador will soon be revealed!

Celestial Universe National Title Crown
A symbol of purpose, resilience, and radiant leadership.

This intricately crafted crown, adorned with celestial stars and emerald accents, embodies the spirit of women rising for a cause. Every detail honours the values of advocacy, authenticity, and empowerment that define the Celestial Universe platform.

As we prepare for the upcoming pageant season, Celestial Universe is building new alliances with businesses and brands that believe in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) rooted in action. Our mission is to spotlight companies committed to women's empowerment, inclusivity, education, and social equity.

Through these partnerships, we aim to co-create impact-driven campaigns, scholarship opportunities, and global awareness initiatives that celebrate not just winners but women who lead, uplift, and serve.

This crown is not the destination. It is a declaration of a movement.



PATRNER & SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT



H&MV Engineering The Netherlands

H&MV Engineering is a globally recognised specialist in high-voltage design, engineering, and construction services, bringing over 25 years of expertise to complex infrastructure projects across energy, data centre, and renewable sectors. The company combines global experience with a strong commitment to safety, innovation, and environmental stewardship as it works to support sustainable development and the energy transition. Beyond technical excellence, H&MV Engineering invests in growing talent, advancing diversity, and fostering inclusive professional opportunities, aligning with its broader values of integrity, collaboration, and long-term positive impact.

NEXT ISSUE

Introducing
The Celestial Universe,
Ambassador 2026

She will connect generations,
representing the transition
from a Miss's journey to the
strength and depth of
womanhood as a Mrs.

Discover her story in our
upcoming issue.





FROM OUR HEARTS TO YOURS A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE TO OUR READERS

As the final pages of this year's issue turn, we want to pause and say, **thank you**.

Since our very first issue in April, when we introduced you to our founder and chairperson's vision for Celestial Universe and MaxaM Foundation, you've been with us. You read, shared, reflected, and helped build this growing platform of stories that matter.

From heartfelt features on mental health and education, to profiles of quiet leaders and empowered survivors, each page we published this year was shaped by your presence. Your support gave voice to the women we featured, and your belief in our mission kept this magazine moving forward.

Now, as we close our final issue of 2025, we do so with full hearts and even fuller hope. Because 2026 is already calling with new journeys to highlight, bold women to celebrate, and global stories of healing, leadership, and transformation waiting to be told.

Our promise is simple: we will continue to spotlight stories that are not only beautiful but brave. Stories that spark change, honour truth, and reflect the diversity of strength that women carry around the world.

From our editorial team to every writer, advocate, and contributor who made these pages come alive, thank you.

And to you, our reader, thank you for believing that media can serve a higher purpose.

We wish you a season of warmth, rest, and reflection. May your holidays be filled with meaning, and may the coming year remind you of your own light.

Merry Christmas, and see you in 2026.

With love and purpose,
The MaxaM Magazine Team
Celestial Universe | MaxaM Foundation

*Wishing you all a
prosperous New Year!*



Lina Gabbaan & Patrick Abels
Founder/Chairperson & CEO
Miss & Mrs Celestial Universe

WELCOME
2026