

Nikolo Ariel M. Ansaldo, MD (1983-2024)

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It is my great honor to share my experiences as we celebrate the life of Dr. Nikolo Ariel Ansaldo. Cole was not just a trusted colleague, he was a good friend and a remarkable individual who has left an indelible mark on all who knew him. His warmth, generosity and unwavering positivity were among the traits I sincerely admire about him. Please allow me to share three important life lessons I learned from him.

Lesson 1: The Value of Kindness

I first met Cole when applying for residency training in Otorhinolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery at the Southern Philippines Medical Center in October 2011. He was a dependable partner during the highs and lows of residency training and helped me get through all those tasks, sanctions, and difficult surgeries. He was the king of small talk and was incredibly warm to anyone he met. You felt at ease talking to him because of his humorous banter and amusing anecdotes. Throughout his medical career, he helped many patients and did not hesitate to extend his assistance to anyone who needed it. Cole showed us that no act of kindness is ever too small or inconsequential.

Lesson 2: The Power of Resilience

After we passed the diplomate board exams in 2016, we wanted to contribute more to the department by pursuing fellowship training. He ended up doing his Otology fellowship at the University of Santo Tomas Hospital which he completed in 2018 then came back to help improve the audiology services of our department and the surgical competencies of our residents. He did these while pursuing his private practice and giving lectures to national and international medical students of his alma mater, Davao Medical School Foundation.

Life was not always easy for Cole, especially with his physical health, but he faced every challenge with courage and a positive disposition.



Cole faced those struggles head-on, never losing hope or his sense of humor. He made it a point to be present during his clinic duties and the weekly department conferences even when he could barely walk. He taught us that resilience is about finding strength in our vulnerabilities and courage in our fears. I hope that we also learn to find our strengths and overcome our toughest obstacles by staying positive and true to ourselves.

Lesson 3: The Relevance of Essentialism

Cole lived his life with an enviable amount of energy and enthusiasm which was truly inspiring. He embraced every moment with joy and gratitude whether it was attending a soccer game with Mason, going to pediatric visits with Mari, or spending an adventurous weekend with Christie and their families. I know that he was making the most of every experience as he always shared those stories with us with fondness. He taught us to cherish the present, to find beauty in the everyday, and to never take a single moment for granted. In his memory, let us strive to live our lives with the same passion and appreciation for the here and now.

Let us celebrate the memories we have with Cole. Each memory brings to mind the impact he had on our lives. His untimely passing allows us not only to reflect on our own mortality but also to decide on what to do with the time that is given to us.

I truly regret not knowing him more because his life was cut painfully short, but the memories I had with him during our time together during residency training, in the operating room, and outside the confines of the hospital will be cherished for many years. Rest with God, dear Cole, and please know you will be missed by the many people who loved and admired you.