

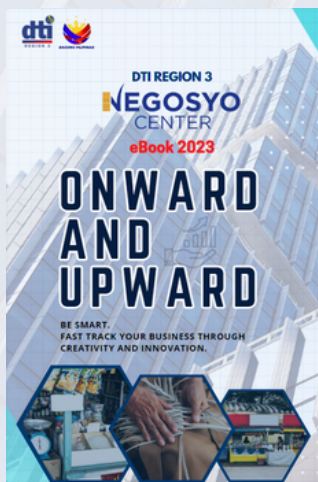
DTI REGION 3
NEGOSYO
CENTER
eBook 2023

ONWARD AND UPWARD



**BE SMART.
FAST TRACK YOUR BUSINESS THROUGH
CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION.**





The cover

Step into the world of entrepreneurship with our eBook, 'Onward and Upward.' The cover reflects the growth of MSMEs guided by DTI 3 Negosyo Centers. The title, cover pictures, and high-rise buildings symbolize businesses rising to new heights through support programs and services. Join us on the journey as we navigate the ever-changing world of entrepreneurship together.

This electronic compendium of MSME stories, available for everyone to read anytime and anywhere, is part of DTI-3's IMPACT I.D. project, advancing Innovation and Digitalization.

INTRODUCTION

Onward and Upward: DTI Region 3 Negosyo Center eBook 2023 is the 2nd collaborative compilation of success stories captured and documented by DTI 3 business counselors and associates. It aims to promote a positive mindset as the foundation for success, acknowledging that nothing is achieved without the belief that it can be done. The eBook recognizes the importance of a positive mindset, especially during this ongoing COVID-19 pandemic recovery, and when learning new things for businesses.

The eBook presents inspirational success stories of Central Luzon MSMEs who have made significant advancements and growth, thanks to the diverse DTI 3 program interventions. These interventions have enabled their growth and success at a faster pace than usual. The stories highlight how DTI 3's programs and services, such as access to capital, business development training, market linkage assistance, and technology upgrading, have helped MSMEs overcome challenges, increase competitiveness, and achieve sustainable growth.

The eBook aims to motivate readers to start their own businesses and avail of DTI programs and services to target and achieve greater goals as entrepreneurs. It serves as a source of inspiration and encouragement, urging readers to read, be inspired, and aim high for their businesses.

With a positive mindset and the support of DTI programs, the eBook hopes to empower MSMEs in Central Luzon and beyond to pursue their entrepreneurial dreams and contribute to economic growth and development.

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Messages

Message from the Undersecretary for Regional Operations Group



As we delve into the pages of this year's ebook, **"Onward and Upward: DTI Region 3 Negosyo Center eBook 2023,"** we embark on a journey of inspiration and empowerment.

This ebook, our second collaborative compilation of success stories, sheds light on the incredible achievements of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Central Luzon. These stories inspire young and new entrepreneurs, proving dreams can indeed become reality.

Every narrative is a testament to the unwavering dedication of the DTI 3 business counselors and associates, who continually strive to provide "Serbisyon Higit Pa Sa Inaasahan". They have worked tirelessly to bring forth this eBook, an inspiring read for everyone.

It is a reminder that the road to success is marked by hard work, determination, and the belief that we can achieve greatness even in changing business environments with a positive attitude as our greatest asset.

The success stories of our MSMEs serve as evidence of DTI 3's comprehensive program interventions, which have propelled them toward remarkable growth and advancement. These initiatives encompass access to capital, business development training, market linkage assistance, and technology upgrading. Within this framework, Negosyo Centers' Business Counselors play a pivotal role as mentors and supporters, illuminating the path to our MSMEs' prosperity through their dedication, knowledge, and guidance. Their unwavering commitment significantly contributes to the expansion of our entrepreneurial community.

This eBook serves as a call to action for potential entrepreneurs. We encourage you to read, be inspired, and aim high for your businesses. With the right mindset and the support of DTI programs, you have the power to embark on your own journey of growth and success.

As you explore the stories within these pages, may you find the motivation and guidance to pursue your entrepreneurial dreams and join us in moving "Onward and Upward."

Blesila A. Lantayona
Undersecretary

Message from the Regional Director



"The best time to support small businesses is always today." – Gisele Barreto Fetterman

I am delighted to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Industry Development Division of DTI – Regional Office 3 for the commendable effort in presenting the second compendium of success and feature stories of Central Luzon's MSMEs.

This compilation, **"Onward and Upward: DTI Region 3 Negosyo Center eBook 2023"** captures the stories of triumph, resilience, and innovation of our cherished MSMEs. Each story represents a remarkable journey driven by unwavering determination, the thirst for learning, and the courage to navigate through challenges.

The narratives encapsulated in this e-book not only echo the dedication, passion, and enthusiasm of our Business Counselors but also spotlight the unwavering support they have provided in realizing the aspirations of our entrepreneurs. Their tireless efforts have been instrumental in the success stories we celebrate today.

At DTI-3, we continue our commitment to fostering a vibrant entrepreneurial landscape. Our 139 strategically positioned Negosyo Centers are designed to nurture a thriving culture of entrepreneurship. These centers serve as beacons of guidance and support, providing invaluable services to those aspiring to venture into the world of business. Through these centers, we aim to cultivate a multitude of success stories, propelling the entrepreneurial spirit across our region.

As you turn the digital pages, it is our fervent hope that these narratives serve not only as celebratory milestones but also as guiding lights for those contemplating the entrepreneurial path. May these real-life journeys of triumph and perseverance spark the entrepreneurial spirit within our readers, propelling them towards their own pursuits of success.

In closing, I extend my best wishes for the well-deserved success and recognition of this publication

Brigida T. Pili
OIC-Regional Director, DTI 3

Message from the Assistant Regional Director



It is my pleasure to introduce our latest eBook compilation of success stories, showcasing the inspiring journeys of our MSMEs and the impactful initiatives of our Negosyo Centers in Central Luzon.

As the Assistant Regional Director of the Department of Trade and Industry 3, I am proud to present this collection of stories that embody the entrepreneurial spirit and resilience of our MSMEs in the region. These stories show how hard work, creativity, and innovation can build and maintain successful businesses.

Through this **Onward and Upward: DTI Region 3 Negosyo Center eBook 2023**, we hope to inspire and motivate aspiring and existing entrepreneurs to pursue their dreams and take advantage of the various programs and services offered by the Negosyo Centers. We also want to stress how important it is to support our local businesses and communities, highlighting the crucial role of helping them.

I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to all the MSMEs who shared their stories, and the Negosyo Center staff and partners who contributed to the success of this eBook. Your dedication and commitment to promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth are truly remarkable.

I invite you to read and share this e-book with your friends, colleagues, and networks. Let us continue to work together towards a more prosperous and resilient Philippine economy.

Edna D. Dizon

OIC-Assistant Regional Director, DTI 3

NEGOSYO CENTERS: The Gains Realized

A practical inspiration from MSMEs in Central Luzon, packed with success stories. It highlights how DTI 3's programs, like funding support and business training, propel businesses forward, even in challenging times like the COVID-19 recovery.

Food MSMEs Sector

Rise like a dough

Mindi's Food Products

By: Pauline E. Alegre, NC Limay. Bataan



Ms. Arminda Tanjuan during one of DTI Trade Fairs

From shaping young minds to shaping delicious treats, Arminda Tanjuan, a teacher from Limay, Bataan has traded in her chalkboard for a whisk and her students for satisfied taste buds. Mindi's Food Products began with just a sprinkle of passion and an initial investment of 2,000 pesos. She baked her way into everyone's hearts with her famous cassava cookies. Effectively, looks like cassava won to sneak its way into the cookie game.

After being presented with the chance to become a pre-school teacher, she hung up her apron and bid farewell to her beloved baking endeavors. For seven long years, she dutifully taught the little ones in her care, but deep down inside, her true calling for baking was still there. The sweet aroma of freshly baked goods and the thrill of entrepreneurship appealed to her in a way that she couldn't resist.

She decided to leave her job as a preschool teacher and pursue her passion for baking in 2011. She bought baking tools from her savings and with finger crossed, she registered her business name and got her business permit.

With steadfast drive, she began on a journey to share her passion for cassava cookies with Bataños. Through the Department of Trade and Industry's support, Ms. Arminda was inspired to become a member of Bataan Food and Non-Food Manufacturers, Inc. (BAFNOFMAI), a community established for Bataan's aspiring entrepreneurs. From then, she began selling in DTI-organized trade fairs, which served as an entry point for spreading her brand's name throughout Bataan. Lo and behold, people couldn't get enough of her tasty cookies! The perfect balance of sweetness, coupled with its uniqueness from cassava, made her cookies an instant hit among cookie lovers everywhere. With her delicious cookies gaining popularity, they have now made their way to various locations including Manila and Tagaytay. Even overseas Filipino workers have been bringing her treats abroad, leading to a remarkable 70% increase in sales.



Sneak peak of their facility (L-R): Washing area, Peeling and slicing area, Frying and packaging area, and Sorting (orders) area

>> continued on p. 15

<< Rise like a dough from p. 14

Her unwavering commitment led her to attend various entrepreneurship seminars conducted by DTI like Basic Bookkeeping and Food Safety, where she gained invaluable insights on how to keep her finances in check and on how to keep her products safe for her clients, respectively. She also took advantage of the DTI's One Town, One Product Program, which provided her with free label design and financial help for nutrition facts.

With so many current and new rivals, it's not easy to sell baked goods. Despite the competition, Arminda pushed on. *"I knew I had to stop thinking so much about the race. Even though I've gotten much better at controlling my anxiety and keeping my mind on work, there are still times when I have to force myself to stop "sweating the competition," she said.*

She went on to talk and consult with business experts. *"After many talks with advisors and other entrepreneurs who are much smarter than I am, as well as honest reflection on our goals, I no longer lose sleep over competition," she added.*

Her cassava cookies have become a sensation in Bataan and beyond. She plans to raise her output to meet rising demand. A pinch of baking prowess and an overflowing cup of passion have helped her business expand and bloom like a rising dough.



Ms. Arminda Tanjuan during the awarding of 2022 Galing! Bataan Awards with Rep. Jett Nisay, Limay Vice Mayor Richie David, Gov. Joet Garcia and Cong. Abet Garcia (left to right)



Plaque of Appreciation awarded to Mindi's Food Products during the Galing! Bataan awarding ceremony

A story with a twist

Saleng's Native Delicacies

By: Pauline E. Alegre, NC Limay, Bataan

Meet Rosalina Tolentino, the mastermind behind Saleng's Native Delicacies known for her pilipit, a native sweet delicacy. Her secret recipe of glutinous flour and sugar will have your taste buds begging for more. She didn't just cook up a storm, she cooked up a reputation as one of Bataan's top delicacy dealers with her unyielding perseverance and determination.

Armed with just ₱200.00, Aling Saleng took her pilipit game to the streets of their neighborhood. She braved the treacherous conditions of her food preparation battlefield to whip up some delicious pilipit. Her pilipit was such a hit that her customers became fiercely devoted, spreading the word faster than a wildfire in their neighborhood.

Her pilipit business had its fair share of rollercoaster rides over the past seven years, with demand hitting the brakes at times. She felt like she was playing a never-ending game of catch-up with all the trendy new products flooding the market. The pandemic really twisted her sales game for selling pilipit since March 16, 2020.

Aling Saleng's optimism remains unshaken as she pursued her dreams with the government's backing. She visited the Department of Trade and Industry Negosyo Center in Limay, Bataan to get her business game on. Thanks to the Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginawa (PPG) Program, she got a sweet deal and received P15,000.00 worth of raw materials including sugar, glutinous rice, anise, and oil. With her fiery ambition and the valuable insights, she gained from DTI seminars such "Money Management" & "Basic Recording", she turned her negosyo kit into a maximum potential powerhouse. She played the game of supply and demand like a pro, whipping up new products, particularly pichi pichi, kutsinta and other kakanin, to satisfy her customers' cravings and boost her sales to 70%. She was like a sponge, soaking up all the knowledge she could to make her creations even more impressive.

>> continued on p. 17



Rise and grind! Aling Saleng starts her day at 3am to fulfill orders from her loyal customers.



Saleng's Delicacies most famous pilipit

<< A story with a twist from p. 16

She soon realized she could do more, so she gladly signed up to be a protégé in the DTI's Kapatid Mentor Me Program (KMME). She learned to evaluate her own business and recognize its various components. She was able to handle her everyday operations as well as her finances with the help of this program. She also learned how to use social media for marketing and networking. She felt grateful to have the program as it has helped her gain a better understanding of her business.

"The hope of making a better life for our son has motivated my husband and myself to keep working hard at this business. Before deciding what to serve, I always made sure to find out what my customers were desiring. " She reflected on her motivations and remarked, *"I believe that the key component of my success is my constant pursuit of opportunity."*

She purchased a grater, a large oven, a coconut press, and a large mixer to keep up with the constant increase in orders. From additional space on their roof without sufficient ventilation to brand-new production space, her business has come a long way. She was also able to acquire new land for investment purposes. Aling Saleng successfully transformed her struggles into a magnificent feat deserving of admiration.

Her dedication to understanding her customers' needs and desires fuels her drive to constantly innovate and create new products. Aling Saleng's story is a testament to the fact that every bit of knowledge we acquire can help us seize opportunities and achieve success. With sheer determination and unwavering perseverance, she untwists the chains that tied her to failure and paved her own path towards success.



Aling Saleng's various delicacies based on client requests

Perserverance shapes triumph

Joan Sushi Hub

By: Lizette A. Befetel, NC Balanga City (LGU), Bataan



Ms. Joanne T. De Leon, owner of Joan Sushi Hub

Joanna Trinidad De Leon's journey is a testament to sacrifice, perseverance, and adaptability. As a dedicated single mother of three, she pursued her dream of becoming a renowned chef. To achieve this, she enrolled in a Culinary School from 2010 to 2012, immersing herself in culinary techniques and skills.

Following her education, she worked at an authentic Japanese restaurant in Glorietta, Makati City, from 2013 to 2016, enduring long commutes and demanding work schedules. She triumphed over these challenges but never gave up on pursuing her culinary dreams.

In 2019, Joanna laid the foundation for her business, Joan Sushi Hub, and had it registered with the Department of Trade and Industry. Starting from her home in Bulacan before relocating back to Bataan, she established her presence both online and in the local market. Despite the challenges of having no physical store yet, she adapted her offerings to local preferences, introducing "Sushi Buffet" and offered catering services. Her unwavering dedication and relentless perseverance led her venture to flourish, becoming a reputable establishment in Balanga City.

Joanna's success was built on the support of her family, relatives, and friends. She faced challenges but propelled forward with strategic planning and creativity. Even during the pandemic, Joan Sushi Hub expanded its online presence, leading to a 40% increase in sales and income growth. Engaging in E-commerce, her Facebook page became an ally on pursuing new clients and patronage. In February 2022, Joan opened her physical store and her initial team of two employees expanded into six dedicated staff.

>> continued on p. 19



The establishment of Joan Sushi Hub at 158 J.P. Rizal St. Lote, Puerto Rivas, Balanga City

<< Perseverance shapes triumph from p. 18

In August 2022, Joanna received valuable support from the Negosyo Center in Balanga City with the assistance of Trade and Industry Development Analyst Lizette A. Befetel. She joined the Kapatid Mentor Me Program 2023 Batch 1, emerging as the top mentee and enhancing her business acumen. On November 15, 2022, her loan was Small Business Corporation was granted for her additional capitalization to cater her expanded production and market.

Joan Sushi Hub's ambition is to present authentic Japanese culinary delights that captivate diners with bursts of flavor. Joanna and her establishment express deep appreciation to their patrons and vow to consistently exceed expectations. Her journey is an inspiration, highlighting the power of perseverance, adaptability, and determination in achieving remarkable success, regardless of circumstances.

MSME Information

Enterprise Name: Joan Sushi Hub

Location: 158 J.P. Rizal St. Lote, Puerto Rivas, Balanga City, Bataan

Contact Numbers: 0927-525-5816 / 0939-325-7765

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/joansushihub/>



Ms. Joanna De Leon during business consultancy with TIDA NC
Lizette Befetel of Balanga City and SB Corp.'s P3 Focal Person
Ms. Kath Cruz for availing the RISE UP Program



Ms. Joanna De Leon of Joan Sushi Hub garnered first place in BIP presentation during the 2023 KMME Graduation Batch 1.

Nursing your palate with desserts

Olegario's Cakes and Pastries Pastry Products Manufacturing

By: Lizette A. Befetel, NC Balanga City (LGU), Bataan

Dianne Romero Olegario is a dedicated entrepreneur who started her business, "Olegario's Cakes and Pastries Pastry Products Manufacturing," after leaving her nursing career to become a mompreneur. Her passion for baking grew during the pandemic, and with the encouragement of friends and family, she decided to turn her baking skills into a business. With the aim of serving delectable desserts, she improved her expertise by enrolling in the Center for Asian Culinary Studies where she earned a Silver Medal for performance. With determination and skills, she officially launched Olegario's Cakes and Pastries Pastry Products Manufacturing and registered it with the Department of Trade and Industry on January 7, 2022.

Ms. Olegario expresses deep gratitude for the unwavering support of her clients and their loyalty to her business, which she single-handedly manages. Her exposure to fellow entrepreneurs also acquainted her with the advantages of the DTI program. Embracing this opportunity, she engaged with the Negosyo Center (NC) Balanga City, participating in business consultancy and product development with Trade-Industry Development Specialist Lizette A. Befetel on February 28, 2023.

Her involvement extended to various activities organized by the DTI and NC, including consultations with the Intellectual Property Office (IPO) representative, Sir Barry Marcelino, on March 8, 2023. Participation in fairs like the Bataan Trade Fair in Capitol Ground Balanga City on April 11 to 14, 2023, and the Bataan Diskwento Caravan at Plaza Mayor de Balanga on May 16 to 18, 2023, further amplified her business exposure and opened new avenues for growth.

>> continued on p. 21



Olegario's Cakes and Pastries joined the DTI Bataan's Diskwento Caravan held on May 16-18, 2023 at Plaza Mayor de Balanga

<< Nursing your palate with desserts from p. 20

In addition, her business was also enrolled in the One Town One Product Next Generation (OTOP NG) program. The program involves a package of assistance to capacitate the MSMEs thru product development initiatives, training, referral, and others with the goal of leveling up the products in the areas of design, quality, volume, among others. Also, having engaged in her Facebook page added opportunities to gain more clients and customers. These activities expanded her business exposure and opened up new growth opportunities.

These dynamic engagements have resulted in a remarkable 40% increase in income over the past year and lead to the creation of four jobs and the establishment of her physical store.

From a nurse to budding entrepreneur, Ms. Olegario's story proves that the pivot from one career path to another isn't a hindrance but a transformative journey, laden with chances to explore new horizons, learn fresh skills, and embrace novel perspectives. With determination and adaptability, Ms. Olegario remains committed to serving her clients with delicious desserts and firmly believes in the power of consistency over natural talent.

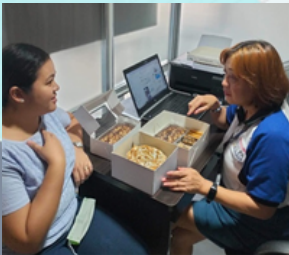
MSME Information

Name of Business: Olegario's Cakes and Pastries Pastry Products Manufacturing

Business Location: Ibayo, Balanga City

Contact Number: 0916 704 5675

Page: <https://www.facebook.com/olegarios/>



Ms. Dianne Marie Romero Olegario owner of Olegario's Cakes and Pastries visited NC Balanga City for Product Clinic with TIDA NC Lizette A. Befetel on February 28, 2023.

Spices of resilience

Bheng's Food Products

By: Darwin G. Musni, NC City of Malolos (Mall), Bulacan



Very satisfied customers take photo with Ms. Rosalinda(rightmost) in front of her first food stall of Bheng's Food Products. (Credit to Ms. Rosalinda for the photo)

Before becoming an entrepreneur, Rosalinda worked as a dress and cloak designer for religious statues. However, her interests shifted when she started watching videos about popular Korean food at the time.

Becoming an entrepreneur wasn't new for Rosalinda. When she was still in school, she learned how to sell things to earn money. These early challenges taught her that life doesn't always go smoothly, a wisdom she wants to pass on to her five children, nurturing their strength and independence.

In 2019, Rosalinda began her kimchi venture. Faced with illness and depleted funds, she chose to invest her daughter's 18th birthday savings into kickstarting her kimchi enterprise. Learning from a Korean cooking video, she adapted the recipe to create a Filipino version of kimchi. Her market debut took place in a local marketplace, where she initially produced 5 kilos of kimchi using a Php1000 startup fund. The swift sell-out affirmed the profit potential of her business.

The pandemic in 2020 opened opportunities for Rosalinda. Since she sells food, the implementation of lockdowns and mobility restrictions didn't affect her business that much. With more people ordering her products online, Rosalinda saw an opportunity to try her luck and explore into becoming a vendor on a popular food delivery app.

Rosalinda complied with the requirements of the food delivery application by registering her business name with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) through the assistance of Negosyo Center Robinsons Malolos. Her business also qualified as a Barangay Micro Business Enterprise (BMBE), unlocking access to a spectrum of incentives.

>> continued on p. 23



BC Darwin of Negosyo Center Robinsons Malolos conducting an interview to Ms. Rosalinda Bais, the owner of Bheng's Food Products at her food kiosk in Waltermart, City of Malolos, Bulacan.



Bheng's Food Products by Ms. Rosalinda I. Bais together with her two hard working female staffs.

< Spices of resilience from p. 22

As a mentee graduate of the Kapatid Mentor ME (KMME) online in 2021, Rosalinda gained invaluable insights into financial discipline, inventory management, and effective online marketing. Spearheaded by DTI, this program aimed to empower MSMEs through mentorship and coaching.

Armed with the knowledge gained from the KMME, she opened her first food stall in 2021 in the City of Malolos. Not long after, she opened another stall in Plaridel town. These endeavors were marked by challenges, given that most of her resources were just borrowed.

In that same year, she seized another opportunity to launch a store in Quezon City. However, as the pandemic subsided and conditions improved, new issues emerged. Some of her student workers had to leave for school, rent costs continued to rise, and a pest problem even plagued one of her stores, causing financial losses. These challenges forced her to shutter all her physical retail locations.

Undeterred by challenges, Rosalinda persevered, shifting her focus to online selling. She bolstered her virtual footprint by creating content, expanding across delivery platforms, and participating in trade fairs. This strategy not only increased her online visibility and product promotion but also connected her with a wide customer base, driving up sales.

Introduced to the LABEL-UP program in 2022 through the Negosyo Center, Rosalinda harnessed the program's potential to enhance her products' marketability through improved labeling.

Presently, Bheng has scaled her weekly kimchi production from 5 kgs to an impressive 50 kgs weekly. In addition to her signature kimchi, her product line now spans kimchi ramen, fried rice, beef bulgogi, and her own Bheng's Homemade Samgyupsal. Daily sales have surged from Php1,500 to an average of Php10,000.

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From left to right: Former Negosyo Center Robinsons Malolos Business Counsellor Alyssa Sunga, Rosalinda I. Bais owner of Bheng's Food Products, and Mr. Rom Tapel, outsourced designer during the presentation of the final prototype at Negosyo Center Robinsons Mall Malolos, City of Malolos, Bulacan.



Bheng's Food Products existing label design before she was enrolled as one of the beneficiaries of the Label-UP! Innovation Labels, Innovating Business program of DTI Negosyo Center Bulacan.

< Spices of resilience from p. 23



Bheng's Food Products improved labels designs from the Label-UP! Innovation Labels, Innovating Business program of DTI Negosyo Center Bulacan.

Rosalinda's ultimate aspiration is to further expand her business. Her steadfast belief in DTI's unwavering support fuels her conviction that this objective is both attainable and within reach.

"To all those in business like me, my advice is to persevere. Don't be disheartened because starting isn't easy; the beginning is the toughest phase. Stay grateful to the Lord. I'm immensely grateful because, despite my challenges, DTI came into my journey. I now sense a guiding presence, always supporting me. Heartfelt thanks to DTI for their assistance. I eagerly await the future, confident that with their support, I'll achieve much more." Rosalinda said.

MSME Information

Business Name: Bheng's Food Products

Owner: Rosalinda I. Bais

Store Location: Waltermart Malolos, City of Malolos, Bulacan

Products: Kimchi, Kimbap, Tteokbokki (Spicy Rice Cakes) , Odeng (Korean Fish Cakes) , Rabokki, Garlic Baby Potato, and Kimchi Ramen.

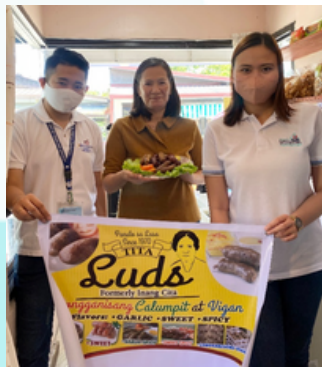
Flavors of success

Tita Lud's Longganisa

By: Danilo F. Aquino III, NC Calumpit, Bulacan

Lourdes Hipolito champions the mantra of Franklin D. Roosevelt: "The only limit to our realization of tomorrow will be our doubts of today." Lourdes, who hails from Barangay Caniogan, Calumpit, Bulacan, is a mother of three and a cancer survivor. At a young age, she learned from her mother Teresita the art of processing longganisa. It was their mother who established a home-based longganisa processing business back in 1970, under the name Inang Cita's Longganisa. After her mother's demise, Lourdes took over the business and renamed it Tita Luds Longganisa.

Recognizing the limitations of her husband's overseas job as a long-term financial solution, Lourdes devised a strategy to secure their financial future by sustaining her mother's business. Taking charge in 2016, she steered the ship of the longganisa enterprise, quickly identifying avenues for improvement and embracing automation. With unwavering support from her husband and family, Lourdes harnessed her belief in the power of modernization. This paved the way for gradual investments in machinery, driving the growth of Tita Luds Longganisa.



From left to right: Business Counsellor Danilo Aquino III of Negosyo Center Calumpit, Ms. Lourdes Hipolito, owner of Tita Lud's Longganisa Food Products, and Trade and Industry Development Specialist Ma. Charisse R. Miravalles during the AVP video shoot for Kwento ng Asenso ni Ka Negosyo at Brgy. Caniogan, Calumpit, Bulacan

Through careful steps, Lourdes transformed their production site and physical store. She expanded her team and introduced new longganisa flavors like Spicy and Vigan style to cater to a wider market. Initially producing 20 kgs of longganisa a day with an initial capital of Php10,000 and with the assistance of her children, she found satisfaction in their earnings. However, her perspective on entrepreneurship changed when the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) programs and services were introduced to her by Negosyo Center- Calumpit Business Counsellor Danilo F. Aquino III.

Registering her business name with the Negosyo Center opened doors of opportunities for Lourdes. Starting in 2016, she attended various managerial and productivity seminars that improved her business operation. In 2019, she participated in the Meaningful Inspirations for Newbiz Made Easy program, a partnership between DTI-Bulacan and Bulacan Chamber of Commerce and Industry which empowered her in marketing, financial management, operations, supply chain management, and product development.

Lourdes also found value in the DTI Region 3's Kapatid Mentor Me Program Online in 2021, which provided her with comprehensive business insights.

She said, "I used to think that as long as I sold things and made money, that was enough. But it's more than that, thanks to the new opportunities that DTI has provided since I joined these seminars."

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< Flavors of success from p. 25



Before (left) and after (right) photos of Tita Luds Longganisa's product label.

Her products underwent transformation through the One Town One Product (OTOP) program, which enhanced her products packaging and labeling. She also attended a Food and Drug Administration (FDA) seminar, which facilitated the registration of her processing plant and products. Tita Luds Longganisa became the third longganisa business registered with the FDA in Calumpit, Bulacan.

Through the assistance of the DTI, Lourdes' business gained media exposure, including appearances on radio stations like Ang Mamiling Pinoy RW951 FM and AgriPreneur with Mr. Jiggy Manicad.

To safeguard her brand "Tita Luds Longganisa," she received guidance from DTI Negosyo Center in Calumpit to officially register the trademark with the Intellectual Property Office (IPO).

Additionally, Lourdes actively took part in numerous trade fairs organized by DTI Bulacan. Her participation is set to continue as she plans to join the Likha ng Central Luzon Trade Fair in October 2023. According to Lourdes, the trade fair serves as a platform for her business to showcase products, connect with various clients and generate revenue.

>> continued on p. 27

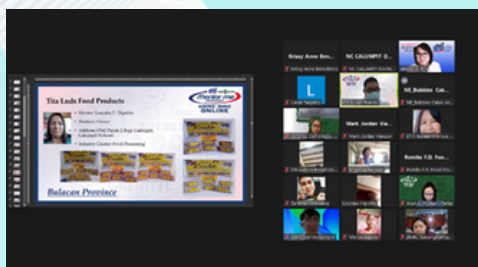


Ms. Lourdes Hipolito of Tita Luds' Longganisa Food Products receives her Certificate of Registration from Intellectual Property Office (IPO) at Negosyo Center-Calumpit.

< Flavors of success from p. 26



Ms. Lourdes Hipolito of TiTa Lud's Longganisa Food Products during a radio interview with Information Officer Nerson Romero and Business Counsellor Danilo Aquino III at Ang Mamiling Pinoy RW951 FM.



Ms. Lourdes Hipolito of TiTa Lud's Longganisa Food Products during one of the modules of the KMME Online via Zoom App in 2021.

Currently, Lourdes proudly discloses a remarkable daily production capacity of 100 kilograms, yielding monthly earnings spanning P600,000 to P700,000. Moreover, the distribution network for 'TiTa Luds Longganisa' has flourished, extending from nearby towns to different regions. Lourdes expresses deep gratitude to DTI for their support that have paved the way for her business success.

"Don't be afraid to attend seminars. Just say YES. It's free, and you're not losing anything; you're winning, just like the slogan of TiTa Luds Longganisa: Panalo ang Lasa since 1970," Lourdes says.

MSME Information

Business Name: TiTa Luds Food Products

Owner: Lourdes Hipolito

Business Address: 0542 Purok 2 Brgy., Caniogan, Calumpit, Bulacan

Products: Garlic, sweet, spicy garlic, spicy sweet, Vigan longganisa

Bayanihan sa munting bayan ng Laur

Laur OFC Food Products Manufacturing

By: Jeremy Ian S. Lulu, NC Laur, Nueva Ecija

In 2018, through the initiative of Center for Migrant Advocacy (CMA), the Local Government and Public Employment Services Office of Laur, Nueva Ecija, eleven (11) OFW Family Circle (OFC) barangay associations were established and registered individually with the Department of Labor and Employment. The following year, the associations decided to form a federation, where they appointed Mrs. Elisa D. Untal & Mrs. Rowena Batucan, OFC barangay leaders, as the President & Vice-President respectively. They registered the federation with DOLE and secured a Certificate of Accreditation from the Sangguniang Bayan that same year.

The group did not have any livelihood activities for more than 2 years until they have learned about DTI's programs and assistance to MSMEs. To create sustainability among the group, representatives of the OFC visited the recently launched DTI Negosyo Center in Laur, Nueva Ecija on November of 2021. Business Counselor Jeremy Ian cheerfully welcomed them and conducted a business consultation and discussed the different programs and services of DTI that will cater their needs. A month after the visit, NC Laur successfully conducted a skills training on making dishwashing liquid, fabric conditioners, and powdered detergents. With the newly-acquired skills, OFC was able to start an income-generating business for a couple of months. However, due to lack of support and interest from its members, especially on production and marketing, the said venture did not last that long. To seek other means of livelihood, selected members from the barangay OFC association were able to gain new skills on making calamansi and kamias-based processed products, Through the assistance of CMA and Ma'am Hazel Alfon of Central Luzon State University (CLSU).

On July 2022, OFC representatives again sought the assistance of NC Laur on how to improve and market their products – calamansi juice, and kamias juice and prunes. This time, BC Jeremy Ian facilitated the business name registration to what they will consider as the production and processing arm of the association, thus the birth of Laur OFC Food Products Manufacturing. After which, a product clinic was conducted that paved the way for the group to be included to the 2022 OTOP Program which will improve the label design and packaging of their products.

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Mrs. Elisa Untal happily posing while holding the BN registration for Laur OFC Food Products Manufacturing and Mrs Rowena Batucan with BC Jeremy Ian flexing the products of OFC.



FROM LEFT: Mrs. Elisa Untal, together with two barangay OFC leaders, Rowena Batucan and Fe Larioque, presented their newly-developed products before BC Jeremy Ian of NC Laur for the product clinic and facilitation of business name registration

<< Bayanihan from p. 28



Label design and packaging before DTI intervention



Significant improvement on the label design and packaging because of the OTOP intervention

Since then, Laur OFC never missed an opportunity in joining DTI-organized seminars and activities, be it face-to-face or virtual. During the last quarter of 2022, they were able to participate in major activities conducted by DTI Nueva Ecija like the Bida MSME Tradefair and the Pre-Christmas Diskwento Caravan where they showcased their products. Marketing their products was challenging, as they started selling their products to their immediate families, relatives and neighbors only. From having no income at all, their monthly sales are now averaging from P15,000 to P20,000 and they were able to gain more clients from private organizations to government agencies like Central Luzon State University, Department of Agrarian Reform, PhilRice Research Institute, Department of Health, Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, & CMA. Their very own Kamias Prunes already reached Canada and Australia thru other OFW friends and acquaintances. They also have their very own Oatmeal cookies with Kamias prunes that were already rolling out in the market. At present, Laur OFC Food Products Manufacturing is continuously developing other products, like Camias vinegar, Camias powder, and Camias wine to maximize resources that are readily available in backyard farms of their members and market it in the near future.



Some members of the OFC association volunteering and providing support to the manual production of their calamansi juice (from cleaning to sorting, cutting, extraction, and drying)



Maximizing resources, cultivating success

Kasava Nauzon Food Products

By: Jeremy Ian S. Lulu, NC Laur, Nueva Ecija

For years, residents of Brgy. Nauzon struggled to find ways to sustain their daily needs since there is no access to public transportation in their area. Despite the desperate situation of their barangay, Mr. Rodolfo Calawagan, a cassava farmer from Brgy. Nauzon, envisioned helping his fellow farmers. He led a group of cassava farmers in establishing an association and registered it with DOLE in 2018.



Simple Bookkeeping Seminar with TIDS Debbyriza Hihalgo as resource speaker last September 17, 2022.

In 2021, Mr. Calawagan learned about the Negosyo Center (NC) in Laur to inquire about possible assistance. Business Counselor (BC) Jeremy Ian Lulu gladly welcomed him and discussed the different programs and services of DTI that are aimed to capacitate and empower associations. Eventually, that meeting led to a successful Simple Bookkeeping Seminar for the association on September 17, 2021. Since then, the group never missed an opportunity to participate in every activity of DTI Nueva Ecija.



Members of the association doing hands on during the Skills training on organic cassava flour and starch processing with Mr. Alexander Alfon as the trainer (red polo shirt).

label design creation and packaging selection, as well the logo, with the help of BC Allen Royce Gamit of NC Gen. Natividad, Nueva Ecija.

About a year later, DTI Nueva Ecija thru NC Laur again assisted selected members of the association by conducting skills training on cassava processing with Mr. Alex Alfon as a trainer, particularly organic cassava flour & starch. The training aimed to help address their issues on how they can fully maximize their resources and eventually help every cassava farmer in Nauzon in terms of income and job generation. The results were rewarding since the group produced the first-ever cassava flour and starch in their town. NC Laur further assisted them to prepare for a bigger market by developing their products'

>> continued on p. 31



The Negosyo Center label and logo designs for KNFP

<< Maximizing from p. 30

In the last quarter of 2022, Ms. Marilyn Calawagan sought the assistance of DTI thru NC Laur, this time by registering Kasava Nauzon Food Products (KNFP) to have its legal identity and to prepare also for their participation to the upcoming 2022 BIDA MSME Trade Fair. Kasava Nauzon's cassava products were initially displayed at NC Laur but ultimately, they are ready to be rolled out anytime

They established their presence on the market when they joined their first-ever trade fair, the 2022 BIDA MSME Trade Fair held at the NE Pacific Mall on November 2022. They were also invited to join the Pre-Christmas Diskwento Caravan at Palayan City last December 2022. They actively participated in other seminars facilitated by DTI Nueva Ecija such as Pricing & Costing Seminar and Awareness to Energy Conservation and Green Practices. Participating in such activities gave them a good head-start especially in producing an income-generating livelihood and establishing their goodwill to the public.

At present, from having no income and sometimes negative income, KNFP now has monthly sales ranging from P5,000 to P8,000 and diligently working its way to a bigger market. They are developing other products such as cassava chips and vodka that will significantly boost their income, and most importantly help their fellow cassava farmers financially.

"Hindi po naming lubos-maisip na magiging harina at gewgaw na yung mga kamoteng-kahoy naming na madalas ay suman lang ang nagiging produkto, pero dahil sa DTI at Negosyo Center Laur ay nagbago ang lahat. Kami po ay lubos na nagpapasalamat dahil iba talaga kapag alagang DTI." – Marilyn Calawagan.



Mrs. Marilyn Calawagan with the cassava products of KNFP, showcased during the 2022 BIDA MSME Trade Fair at the NE Pacific Mall on November 2022.



KNFP joining the group picture of the 2022 BIDA MSME NC Trade fair exhibitors with DTI Nueva Ecija associates.

A native concept in millennial era

Hermanos Ihawan at Kamayan

By: Rachelle E. Badiola, NC Lupao, Nueva Ecija



Hermanos Ihawan at Kamayan in a Bahay Kubo concept

Enjoy our simple yet delightful dishes cooked in native palayok pots and served in banana leaves. Feast with your family – kamayan style!

This is the concept of a new ‘tambayan’ food hub that rocks the municipality of Lupao. Riegel Troy Angels is a young entrepreneur that made Hermanos Ihawan at Kamayan famous in a short period of time. It started to operate last July 2020.

Hermanos is a Spanish word meaning “older brother”. Riegel is the ‘older brother’ who dreamt on having a unique business that will become popular in Lupao. Like any other businessmen, Riegel strives hard. He lived in Manila for a long time and went through different part time jobs to be able to pursue his studies, Vocational course of “Biomedical Equipment Technology”. After graduating, Riegel worked in different parts of the Philippines and overseas. He served as a service crew, product specialist, and brand manager before becoming an entrepreneur. Because of the Covid -19 Pandemic, Riegel decided to go home to their province and live healthy with his family in Lupao.

“Masarap sa probinsya kumakain nang simpleng pagkain at naka kamay kasama ang pamilya,” Riegel recalled. From this idea, he decided to put up a resto that will make every family feel the Filipino dining culture again. Not long after and with his family’s support, Riegel opened his resto in Lupao.

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Bubu Jelly- best seller product of Hermanos Ihawan at Kamayan at Bida MSMEs Trade Fair held December 2021 at Waltermart, San Jose City, Nueva Ecija



Sukang Ina, best prduct Label in his 1st Trade Fair at Bida MSMEs Trade Fair held December 2021 at WalterMart , San Jose City, Nueva Ecija

<< A Native Concept from p. 32

It was in 2020 when Business Counselor Rachelle Badiola and Mr. Riegel Troy met. BC Rachelle conducted a post audit monitoring together with Local Government Unit (LGU) team for the compliance of minimum health protocols for dine-in establishments in Lupao. His resto is one of the dine-in establishment that is being audited. After a week, BC Rachelle went back to the resto to see if the resto complied with the protocols. BC Rachelle also offered him to have a market matching for his pasalubong items, and what DTI services could help him. After that, he joined seminars conducted by NC Lupao like marketing and simple bookkeeping. The DTI's One Town One Product (OTOP) program also became an avenue for Hermanos labels. OTOP's product development made his products more presentable to the market. He then joined his first trade fair 'BIDA MSME' Trade Fair at Walter Mart San Jose last December 2021 where he won as Best Product packaging category. He is very thankful and happy for this opportunity introducing his product to the market. His sales increased, his resto was also featured in vlog "Laban na" as one of best in Lupao, Nueva Ecija.



Mr. Rigel Troy, owner of Hermanos Ihawan and Kamayan at San Jose City, Nueva Ecija

"Natutuwa ako kasi di lang yun mga taga Lupao ang nakakakilala sa amin, kahit ibang mga taga ibang bayan ay dinadayo na kami dahil narinig daw sa ibang tao o nakita sa post iba, nakakatuwa kasi un konsepto namin ay pumatok sa mga tao," Riegel Troy stated.



Business Counselor Rachelle Badiola conducting Business Consultancy and advisory with Mr. Riegel Troy, owner of Hermanos Ihawan and Kamayan



Awarding of OTOP labels for his 3 Products (Bubu Jelly, Leche Plan, Sukang Ina) with Mr. Rigel Troy, the owner of Hermanos Ihawan at Kamayan

Two things at the same time

Mom'ch Food Products

By: Maneliza B. Romero, NC Science City of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija



Nancy Santiago Dela Cruz the owner of Mom'ch Food Products, flexing her spreads.

Being a mother requires multitasking because one is expected to care for the household and the family, so how much more being a “mompreneur”. Let’s take a glimpse how arduous the journey can be with our mompreneur Nancy Santiago Dela Cruz.

Nancy’s background and love for cooking enabled her to create milk-based spreads. She prepares dulce de leche while waiting for her husband and kids at home. Eventually, she mastered the recipe that her children favored, which they then used for school snacks and shared with friends. Unknowingly, co-parents kept asking where Nancy gets the spread, saying that their kids talked about it. Upon knowing that it’s her original recipe, they began ordering on 2014. The spreads had the typical homemade look, bearing self-made packaging.

As orders plucked in, Nancy established Mom’s Sweet Creations (MSC) on 2017 and began soliciting for assistance. One of her friends recommended the Central Luzon State University-Agriculture and Food Technology Business Incubator (CLSU-AFTBI), where she became an incubate, attended the Share-Service Facilities launching, met with Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Associates and started her journey as an assisted MSME.

She attended capacity-building activities conducted by DTI and CLSU-AFTBI, such as entrepreneurship, bookkeeping, marketing, good manufacturing practices, food safety, and food nutrition and innovation. She was also able to finish two modules of Kapatid Mentor ME (KMME) which improved her manufacturing procedures and developed new variants on a whole new look. Her products’ new high-standard labels and packaging also gained her confidence in partnering with other institutions.

MSC later came up with peanut butter, cheese pimiento, and chicken sandwich spreads which were then sold through CLSU University-Mart, College of Business Administration and Accountancy students and resellers from different locations. Her monthly sales increases from 10 to 200 bottles. However, during the prevalence of the Covid-19 Pandemic, her income decreased drastically by 80% as her channels had stopped operation.

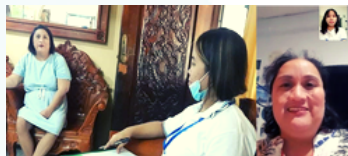
As online platforms boosted on 2020, Nancy was assisted in utilizing such. The opening of Department of Science and Technology (DOST) OneStore.ph also became an opportunity for her. Recently, through DTI’s referral, she attended Masterclass of Improve your Business plus Digitalize your Business, capacitating her on business improvement and online marketing.

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<< Two things from p. 34

As activities revert to being conducted physically, DTI Nueva Ecija Provincial Office started reordering from MSC which were given as tokens and enable her to acquire more resellers and regulars and be back on track.

After regaining her pre-pandemic sales, the business is now known as Mom'ch Food Products starting February 2023 which offers greater variations of her recipe including "ulam-in-a-jar". She's also venturing to catering services.



Visitation and online consultation conducted by Business Counselor Maneliza Romero to Mom'ch Food Products' owner

The owner is ecstatic and thankful as she can do two things at the same time, being a "mompreneur". Her message for all the moms out there, *"Give your dream and idea a shot, and keep moving forward"*.



Mom'ch Food Products participation to the 2018 Agro-Trade Fair of San Jose City LGU through DTI-NEPO



Mom'ch Food Products was awarded as most promising MSME during the 2017 MSME Summit facilitated by DTI-NEPO and NE-MSMEDC



BEFORE

Mom'ch Food Products' yema spread initial packaging personally designed by the owner



AFTER

Mom'ch Food Products' dulce de leche, peanut butter, cheese pimiento and chicken sandwich spread on their improved label and packaging after product development through AFTBI and DTI's assistance

Passion for charity turns into a tangy opportunity

Kaagapay sa Pag-unlad ng Mamamayan Producers Cooperative (KaPMCo)

By: Imiemalen S. Javar, NC Palayan City, Nueva Ecija



KaPMCo members during the Calamansi Processing Training.

"Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much." – a quote from Helen Keller which inspires Viva Sto. Niño Foundation members in their mission to help children, senior citizens and people affected by calamities.

Couple Marlon and Julie Ann De Dios are members of Viva Sto. Niño Foundation. In the midst of the pandemic, the couple thought of ways to put up something for the benefit of the foundation. With the consensus of the foundation's members, Marlon and Julie set up the Kaagapay sa Pag-unlad ng Mamamayan Producers Cooperative (KaPMCo) and registered it with the Cooperative Development Authority on April 2021.

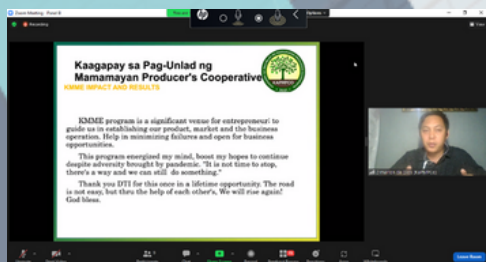
Since their area is abundant in the supply of calamansi, the group started producing calamansi juice. The initiative is not only to produce a concoction to help fight Covid 19 symptoms but also as an income generating activity to elevate the life of calamansi growers in the area.

Marlon and Julie Ann are also engaged in other businesses and are known to and existing clients of Negosyo Center (NC) Palayan City. Hence, a big help in seeking assistance for the cooperative. Julie then contacted Business Counselor (BC) Imiemalen Javar and asked for her assistance with their Skills Training in Calamansi Processing. They were then trained to prepare calamansi juice and concentrate.

After training, KaPMCo began producing calamansi juice. Because of manual production, they were referred to Palayan City Calamansi Growers Association to assist them and use the latter's calamansi extractor.

BC Javar then provided various NC and Department of Trade and Industry services & programs to the cooperative. They were enrolled in the One Town One Product Next Generation (OTOP NG) to improve their products, labeling, and packaging. They also participated in different seminars and trainings to increase the cooperative's productivity and efficiency. Chairman Marlon De Dios was also a mentee of Kapatid Mentor Me Program (KMME) to boost their entrepreneurial capacity through improved access to mentorship, money & market. The group is also now engaging in e-commerce and are joining various trade fairs.

>> continued on p. 37



Mr. Marlon De Dios, Chairman of KaPMCo, during the presentation of their KMME final output – Business Improvement Plan.

<< Passion for charity from p. 36



Before (left), After (DTI NE in-house design (center) and OTOPI design (right)) Label Designs of KaPMCo's NOVO-C calamansi juices.

Gradually equipping knowledge and expertise in various elements of business, KaPMCo has been invited to join different local trade fairs within and outside Nueva Ecija. Trade fair sales accounted for 15% of their total revenue, Julie said.

The DTI programs also provided opportunities for the cooperative's development. This year KaPMCo became an Agrarian Reform Beneficiary Organization (ARBO) beneficiary of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) receiving 100 bags of organic fertilizer and a full set of hand tractor. They also became a beneficiary of Village Level Farm-Focused Enterprise Development (VLFED) project and signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with DAR, DTI, DOST, and LGU Cabanatuan City for a production facility grant.

With rising competition in the calamansi processing industry, KaPMCo is constantly inventing, adding new flavors to its juice, such as calamansi juice with blue ternate. Also, they are targeting to contract with different institutions to supply fresh calamansi, juices and extract.

"Huwag matakot sumubok magbusiness, kung may opportunity, dagdagan ng kaunting kaalaman at mag simula kahit sa maliit na puhunan. Along the way marami pang learning, challenges, may ups and down, ok lang yan tuloy lang, part of development yan, hanggang sa makuha na ang tamang timpla sa pagbi-business. And last mag tiwala sa sarili at laging humingi ng gabay kay Lord para ang ating business ay laging bless at mag tagumpay." Marlon shared advice for aspiring entrepreneurs.



Ms. Julie Ann De Dios posing with KaPMCo's booth during the Women's Month Trade Fair 2023 at SM City Cabanatuan.

Chips Lover turns to malunggay chips maker

Yassitomo Food Products

By: Ronavel DP. Aquino, NC SM City Cabanatuan, Nueva Ecija

“Huwag tanawinang pangarap, subukan mo itong abutin at simulan kahitpaunti-unti. Malaki man o maliitang kitain mo sa umpisa, wag kang susuko at magmamadali. Lahat ng nagtatagumpay sa negosyoay sinasamahan ng pagtyatyaga, pagsisikap at determinasyon hanggang samakamit mo ang tagumpay na ninanais mo.” This is what Christopher “Cris” Crisostomo, owner of Yassitomo Food Products, advises to aspiring entrepreneurs.

As a teenager, Cris was inspired by the main character in the true to life movie “The Billionaire”. The movie tells the story of an entrepreneur whose business empire started from selling dried seaweed snacks to convenience stores across a country. With this, Cris began to consider a brand-new product for the market because their family enjoys munching on snacks. The idea inspired him to develop his own product, tasty and healthy malunggay chips. He first shared his malunggay chips with his loved ones and friends, and they all gave him favorable reviews.



Yassitomo Food Products during the BIDA MSMEs and Cooperative Month Trade Fair (2022)

On March 17, 2022, Cris visited Negosyo Center (NC) SM City Cabanatuan and sought assistance on the business name registration of Yassitomo Food Products - this name was the combination of his daughter’s name and the last two syllables of his surname.

Starting with a capital of P11,000.00 he put up his simple production area in Barangay Concepcion, Cabanatuan City. Thereafter, DTI Nueva Ecija TIDS Gesyl Dacanay and BC Ronavel Aquino visited Cris’ production. The two conducted an on-site business counseling, coaching, and product clinic. They also presented Cris the different programs and services of DTI that he can avail.

Initially, DTI-NE TIDS Darwin Manumbali helped Cris come up with the latter’s product label. In 2022, Cris was enrolled in the One-Town-One-Product (OTOP) which improved his labels. Eventually, Yassitomo Products received its newly designed labels on February 28, 2023.

Aside from the business name registration, BC Ronavel also introduced e-commerce to Cris. Now, Yassitomo has a Facebook business page and online shops in Shopee and Lazada platforms. Yassitomo products are also in display at NC SM City Cabanatuan. With e-commerce, Cris was able to establish a strong online presence where more inquiries and orders are taking place resulting in sales amounting to P 15,000.00 monthly.

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Mr. Christopher Crisostomo (second from left) joins OIC-DC Maria Odessa Manzano (left), Provincial Director Richard Simangan, PhD (third person from left), and STIDS Gerald Dennis Suyayan (right) during the awarding ceremony of newly designed labels under the OTOP Next Gen Program at DTI-Nueva Ecija Provincial Office on February 28, 2023.

<< Chips lover from p. 38



Yassitomo Food Products during the Women's Month and NEUST National Research Conference Trade Fair (2023)

Yassitomo Food Products' first participation in a trade fair was the Cooperative Month with generated sales of P10,515.00. Being a first-timer Yassitomo was awarded Most Innovative Products under the Food Category. Last year, the BIDA MSMEs Trade Fair generated P3,395.00 sales for Yassitomo. This year he participated in the Women's Month Trade Fair with generated sales of P 2,975.00 and recently the concluded NEUST National Research Conference with sales amounting to P3,750.00. Participation in local trade fairs in the province and using different platforms to sell his products help his business to widen its market reach.

Last March 15, 2023, Cris was interviewed at DWAY SonshineRadio 1332 and shared his humble beginnings with the help of continuous guidance and assistance of the DTI-NE through the NC SM City Cabanatuan. His story as batang negosyante was featured on the Philippine Startup Week Facebook Page. He was also selected and enrolled as one of the mentees for this year's Kapatid MentorME Program where he will learn the different strategies on how to scale up his business.



Ms. Christopher Crisostomo during his phone interview at DWAY Sonshine Radio 1332 last March 15, 2023.

Mr. Cris shows his appreciation and gratitude to DTI through NC SM City Cabanatuan and quoted, "Labis po ako nagpapasalamat sa DTI sa walang sawang suporta at paggabay sa katulad kong halos baguhan palang sa pagnegosyo. Pagpalain pa po kayo ng Panginoon upang sa gayon mas marami pa po kayong matulungan na kagaya ko."



Healthy and Nutritious Malunggay Chips

Former OFW turns into WomEntrepreneur

Bethesda Food Products

By: Ronavel DP. Aquino, NC SM City Cabanatuan, Nueva Ecija

Ms. Maribeth quoted for those aspiring entrepreneurs, “*Ang advise ko ay maging matatag at matiyaga sa na-build mo na business. Kahit may kamukha at madami kayo na parehas na business ay don’t give up.*” Her principle in life is “*Do the best you can until you know better. Then, when you know better, do better.*”

Back in 2003, Ms. Maribeth Adrada served as an Overseas Filipino Worker (OFW) in Taiwan, where she worked as a seamstress. Upon completing her contract, she returned to her home in 2006. During this period, she engaged in a side business making curtains and selling them to her relatives, neighbors, and friends.

Maribeth’s husband was also an OFW, working as a welder in Saudi Arabia but returned home for good in 2018. With their accumulated savings, the couple embarked on a business venture with an initial capital of P 5,000.00, producing atchara and selling it in their barangay. Business initially started good as they enjoyed the advantage of having no competitors at that time.

In 2020, Maribeth had a chance encounter with DTI-Nueva Ecija Trade-Industry Development Specialist (TIDS) Allan Cañaveral when the latter was visiting Ms. Antonina Roldan of Niña’s Food and Beverages. Ms. Roldan, happened to be a good friend of Maribeth. TIDS Allan Cañaveral took the opportunity to discuss DTI programs and services to Maribeth. However, Maribeth at first, was hesitant about registering her business name at that time.

A year later, on October 9, 2021, Ms. Maribeth decided to register her business as Bethesda Food Products with assistance from Business Counselor (BC) Ronavel Aquino at the Negosyo Center (NC) SM City Cabanatuan. She named her company “Bethesda” after the biblical term, which means “House of Mercy”. Bethesda Food Products is located in Barangay Tagpos, Santa Rosa, Nueva Ecija.

BC Ronavel provided counseling, coaching, and free labeling assistance for Maribeth’s products which now includes bagoong, chili oil, and atchara. She also developed new products, tamarind jam, papaya kimchi, and alamang granules. Business Counsellor Allen Gamit of NC General Mamerto also provided labeling assistance for the products. With the development, Maribeth was very grateful for the BCs’ help.

Bethesda Food Products’ mission is to produce the most affordable and tastiest products in Santa Rosa. Vision will be driven by the desire to create innovative products that are both delicious and satisfying to eat.

Eventually, BC Ronavel assisted Maribeth in registering her business with DTI and created a Facebook page for online promotion. At present, Bethesda Food Products are also displayed at NC SM City Cabanatuan for marketing support. Utilizing social media has led to increased inquiries and orders, building a strong online presence for Maribeth’s business.

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<< Former OFW turns into from p. 40



Bethesda Food Products was awarded "Most Innovative Product" during the Women's Trade Fair Month March 16-20, 2023 at WalterMart Cabanatuan.



Bethesda Food Products also participated in trade fairs like BIDA MSMEs Negosyo Center Trade Fair and Women's Month Trade Fair in 2021 and 2022. During the Women's Month Trade Fair, Bethesda Food Products received an award for Innovative Products in the Food Category.

Previously, Maribeth's monthly sales only ranged from P 1,000. 00 to 2,000.00. However, after the intervention made by the DTI, her monthly sales increased to P 10,000.00.

BC Ronavel listed her as one of the 2022 One-Town-One-Product (OTOP) enrollees where products will undergo product development for improved designs of packaging and labels.

Another milestone of Bethesda Food Products was when she was interviewed at DWNE Teleradyo last March 13 to promote her products. Last March 15, she was chosen as one of the guests as an OTOPreneur at DZRH Teleradyo with the segment of Negosyo Atbp together with DTI Asec Leonila Baluyut and DTI-Nueva Ecija PD Richard Simangan.

"Taos puso po akong nagpapasalamat sa DTI at Negosyo Center sa walang sawang suporta at paggabay sa kagaya ko na halos kakaumpisa palang mag negosyo. Paggalain nawa kayo ng Panginoon nang sa gayon mas marami pa po kayong matulungan. Muli po maraming maraming salamat po sa DTI." Maribeth quoted.



Ms. Maribeth Andrada during the OTOP Next Gen (Act) with the designer, Mr. Arturo Delgado Jr. at NC SM City Cabanatuan.

MSME Information

Business Name: Bethesda Food Product

Owner: Maribeth Andrada

Address: Sitio Sapang Kubo Brgy. Tagpos, Sta.

Rosa, Nueva Ecija

Email: andradamariabeth@gmail.com

Contact number: 09102586099



On 15 March 2023, Ms. Maribeth Andrada during her guesting at DZRH Teleradyo with the radio anchor Mr. Angelo Palmones together with Asec Leonila Baluyut and PD Richard Simangan of DTI Nueva Ecija.



On 13 March 2023, Ms. Maribeth Andrada during her phone interview at DWNE Teleradyo with the radio anchor Ms. Gina Magsanoc

A Sweet Yet Not Sugary Success!

Izzamawy Pastries and Delicacies

By: Alfine B. Bonus, Negosyo Center MACCII, Angeles City, Pampanga

Marissa Marquez Santos, a firm believer in giving her best, embarked on a mission to provide delicious and health-conscious food to people. Her venture, Izzamawy, specializes in crafting sweet but not overly sugary treats with unique flavors that have captured the hearts of many.

In her early entrepreneurial journey, Marissa began by creating sample products for her friends and launched her business without the necessary permits. In 2019, with aspirations of taking Izzamawy to new heights, she turned to the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and its Negosyo Center for support and guidance.

Marissa's turning point came when she engaged with the DTI's Negosyo Center Mexico in 2019. The center provided invaluable support and programs tailored to startups and small businesses. The same year, Marissa successfully participated in her first trade fair at Holy Angel University, opening numerous doors of opportunity for Izzamawy. Business Counselor Alfine Bonus of Negosyo Center MACCII also played an important role in helping Marissa develop her company logo, a critical component of branding and marketing.

Amidst the challenges of the ongoing pandemic in 2020, Marissa's determination remained unshaken. She continued her business operations and even joined the DTI Kapatid Mentor Me (KMME-MME) program. KMME is a 10-module mentorship program that optimizes weekly online interactions between mentors and mentees with the key goal of boosting the entrepreneurial capacity through improved access to Mentorship, Money and Market. She achieved a notable top 5 ranking in the program.

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Ms. Marissa Marquez Santos
Owner – Izzamawy Pastries and Delicacies



Izzamawy Pastries and Delicacies Products:
Creamy and Premium Cashew and Cashew Polvoron

<< A sweet yet not from p. 42

In February 2021, Izzamawwy achieved yet another remarkable milestone by opening its first physical store in SM City Pampanga. The opportunity enabled Marissa to expand her product distribution to various outlets in Tagaytay, Bacolod, Bulacan, Tarlac, Nueva Ecija, Manila. In 2023, Her products received approval from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Certificate of Product Registration (CPR). Moreover, with the enhancement of her logo, her brand name "Izzamawwy" is now IPO registered. Izzamawwy's products are also available at the One Town One Product (OTOP) hub in Marquee Mall, Pampanga, OTOP Hub Baguio and OTOP Hub Batangas.

Marissa is profoundly grateful to DTI Pampanga for their unwavering support in building her brand from the ground up and introducing Izzamawwy to the market. She believes her business would not have reached its current status without the services and assistance they provided.

Marissa's story serves as an inspiration to fellow entrepreneurs, emphasizing the value of resilience and perseverance. She encourages aspiring business owners to focus not on the hardships and challenges but on the eventual rewards. As cliché as it may sound, she firmly believes in the Filipino saying, "*Kapag may tiyaga, may nilaga*" – meaning that patience and hard work will eventually pay off.

MSME Information

Business Name: IZZAMAWWY PASTRIES AND DELICACIES

Owner: Marissa Marquez Santos

Address: Sapang Maisac, Mexico, Pampanga

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/izzamawwycashewron>

Email: izzamawwy14@gmail.com



Izzamawwy Logo and Label designed in 2020 OTOP Next Gen Product Development via Zoom

Kay buti ng kabute

Carillo Kabute Food Products

By: Kenneth E. Gabay, NC Sta. Ignacia, Tarlac

Generous, helpful, and persistent. This is how Mr. and Mrs. Edward Carillo describe themselves as entrepreneurs.

It was in 2004 when Mr. and Mrs. Carillo engaged in the livestock industry which was named Carillo Integrated Farm. Just like other businesses, they encountered ups and downs in managing a company.

In 2013, their farm was severely affected by the strong Typhoon Santi. With nothing in their pockets, the couple needed to walk the extra mile to pay for their loans. They came up with the idea of planting vegetables as well as mushrooms as alternative crops to augment their income.



Ms. Anna Marie Castillo, owner of Carillo Kabute Food Products flexing newly harvested mushrooms

Having a capital of less than P1,000.00 and some available materials found on their farm, they built a makeshift facility for mushroom farming and started with 800 fruiting bags.

"It was an accidental business, not intentional," Mr. Carillo said. *"Our friends visited our farm, took photos, and posted them on social media. Netizens saw the post, contacted us and ordered fresh mushrooms,"* he added. Social media made a big impact on their business and that was how A.S. Carillo Mushroom Farm started in 2015.



Carillo Kabute Food Products' Crispy Mushrooms

Their mushroom farm business flourished, so did the facilities. Eventually, they constructed another building for mushroom processing to give added value to their produce and avoid wastage of unsold mushrooms. In 2022, they decided to rename their business to Carillo Kabute Food Products.

Finding out about the Negosyo Center (NC) Santa Ignacia on social media, the Carillos visited the office to seek assistance with their new business name.

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<< Kay buti ng from p. 44



The makeshift mushroom house that the couple built was made of the available materials found in the farm.



The improved mushroom facility made of standard materials

Aside from business name registration, the NC provided business counseling and other services which helped the company even prosper. The Carillos availed of the one-on-one online coaching for food manufacturers which paved way for their Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Registration and their license to operate was approved in January 2023. Currently, they are applying for the FDA – Certificate of Product Registration as well as Halal Certification to cater to a wider market.

Equipped with perseverance and know-how in mushroom cultivation, the business flourished. From 800, they now manage 53,000 fruiting bags. The mushroom housing which was made of salvaged materials from their farm has improved and is now made of standard materials. They were also able to provide employment – from a husband and wife tandem to 25 workers. They are now generating 500% more than their first earnings.

“To those who are new and just starting their business, always do your crafts wholeheartedly. This is the secret to development and success,” Mr. Carillo said. “Do not rush, be patient,” he said.

Carillo Kabute Food Products is an example of a business that started small. With patience and persistence, the business will prosper. Just like a mushroom that sprouted and in the course of time, will grow.



One-on-one coaching with Ms. Lea Milan of Tarlac State University, focused on FDA Registration



Pre-audit of production facility in preparation for the FDA Registration

A God-sent business

Omarasa Food Products

By: Renz Joseph L. Perez, NC Camiling, Tarlac



PHAC members during their Skills Training Seminar on Kalamansi Processing at Pura Tarlac, Sept. 20, 2019

“Our ultimate goal is not just to gain a lot of money but also for us to become channels of blessing”. This is the inspiring message of Ms. Arceli Oriondo on becoming a successful small business owner from a self-employed mother.

Arceli's failed attempts in various businesses due to lack of capital and marketing skills led her to buy and sell items while working as a customer service representative. However, she found interest in mushroom farming when she stumbled upon a training about it since it is aligned with her advocacy of turning agricultural wastes into food and preventing global warming.

In 2021, she started her business and named it Omarasa Food Products. Omarasa was derived from her and her husband's combined name, OMAR, and RASA, a Waray term meaning taste. With a P5,000.00 capital, she processed 80 packs of mushroom chicharon and sold them to her church members.

Like other business newbies, oversupply was a concern for Omarasa due to the low demand for mushrooms. Arceli solved the problem by processing the unsold mushrooms to prevent spoilage.

Eventually, she expanded her product range to include mushroom-based crackers, chili garlic paste, burger patties, tocino, longganisa, and embutido. However, marketing was a new challenge for her.

Fortunately, the Department of Trade & Industry (DTI) through the Negosyo Center Camiling invited her to a trade fair and offered free training and seminars where she learned the basics of pricing and marketing. They improved her business logo, product packaging, and label.

Omarasa faced setbacks from the Covid-19 Pandemic. To help the business get through, Omarasa was selected as one of the recipients of a food processing kit under DTI's Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa (PPG) Program.

These assistances from DTI resulted in improved facilities, wider market reach, doubled sales, and the development of more product lines such as banana chips and sweet potato chips, candies, and baked products.

>> continued on p. 47

<< A God-Sent Business from p. 46

With the increasing demand and sales, they were also able to invest in their first service vehicle for their deliveries.

"DTI really helped us recover from the pandemic and made our financial needs much more stable. The kits I received helped me to save and reinvest my capital instead of using them to buy the equipment," Arceli said.

"God gave us the ability to create wealth, and we need to trust Him and have the right attitude to succeed in business. It may be difficult, but we should aim to do it right and with a greater purpose. Our goal is not just to make money, but also to become channels of blessing," she added.



One of the outputs of the product development of DTI Tarlac through the Negosyo Center Camiling



From L-R: Mun. Secretary Karlo Pacada and Mun. Administrator Randy Felix of Camiling, Ms. Arceli Oriondo of Omarasa Food Products, STIDS Maria Divina Gloria Ramos and BC Renz Joseph Perez of DTI Tarlac during the PPG Awarding of Livelihood Kits



Cultivated by faith, hard work, and perseverance

Tingtano Integrated Farm

By: Jean V. Aquino, NC San Jose, Tarlac

"Our desire to spend quality time with our family, produce healthy food, and offer a safe work environment for farmers – these were our dreams which started everything," Marilou Facun, owner of Tingtano Integrated Farms said.

An Overseas Filipino Worker (OFW) married couple who worked in Rome, Italy returned home for good to pursue business in the Philippines. Christian and Marilou Facun decided to come home to cultivate an inherited 3-hectare agricultural land and turn it into a farming business. As advocates of organic farming, they started their business in 2018 and named it Tingtano Integrated Farm.

Starting a business was not as easy as they thought. Initially, they coordinated with government agencies for possible assistance. With the assistance of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) through Negosyo Center (NC) San Jose, they were given opportunities to attend seminars, join trade fairs, and participate in other learning and marketing events which have given them opportunities to learn new ideas and approaches for effectiveness and efficiency.

It was in 2018 when Tingtano had its first taste of a DTI-facilitated Trade Fair exhibiting their freshly produced crops and herb seedlings, including but not limited to oyster mushroom, basil, rosemary, pechay, kamote tops, and papaya. They also sold their own manufactured products, such as chili paste and mushroom chicharon.

Tingtano participated as one of the exhibitors during the DTI Diskwento Caravan Presyong Panalo Para sa Mamimiling Pilipino & Tarlac Provincial Trade Fair last November 19–21, 2019 at City Walk, San Roque, Tarlac City, and the 3rd DTI-Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) Region 3 Trade Fair last November 20–24, 2019 in Marquee Mall, Angeles City, Pampanga.

"Joining DTI trade fairs is very beneficial for us. This is where our products became known and where we gained trust and confidence from our buyers," Marilou said.

Trade fairs opened up many opportunities for their brand as people followed them on social media, which resulted in wider exposure and gained them more customers.

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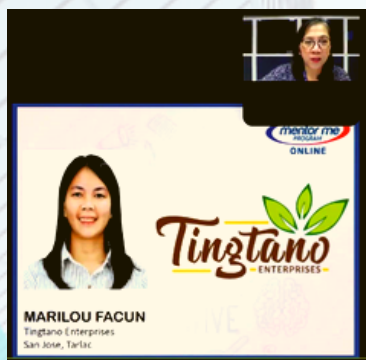


Mr. Christian Facun and Mrs. Marilou Facun participated at DTI Diskwento Caravan Presyong Panalo Para sa Mamimiling Pilipino & Tarlac Provincial Trade Fair last November 19–21, 2019 at City Walk, San Roque, Tarlac, City.



Mr. Christian and Mrs. Marilou Facun participated as One of the Exhibitors during the 3rd DTI-CARP Region 3 Trade Fair last November 20–24, 2019 in Marquee Mall, Angeles City, Pampanga.

<< Cultivated by faith from p. 48



Ms. Marilou Facun was one of the Mentees during the 2020 KMME

Tingtano Integrated Farm's logo was made under DTI Tarlac's Local Designers Program. According to Marilou, their logo had a significant impact on how people perceived them and effectively portrayed their brand as an organic farm.

Marilou was also one of the mentees in the DTI's Kapatid Mentor Me (KMME) Program. She said that the KMME Program helped them learn about different business aspects, which helped them make wise decisions in Tingtano.

Tingtano has grown and developed over the years by diversifying the services it provides. Their farm produces a variety of high-value crops, livestock, poultry, and fish.

They also provide accommodations for visitors so they can experience farm life through natural farming activities and savor the taste of their organic dishes.

Moreover, Tingtano is a Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA)-accredited school, where the couple serves as trainers. Their farm also generated jobs for the community, as they employed numerous people on their farm projects.

Mr. and Mrs. Facun said, *"True success is not measured by how much money you earn, but can be seen in how many people you were able to bless, inspire, help, and encourage in your chosen field. It is how much you love what you are doing. You are successful when the people who work with you see you as a leader, not a boss, and you see them grow as you grow."*

Tingtano deserves all the success they've achieved through perseverance, faith, and hard work. Building their business with DTI helped them increase their brand exposure, gain more customers, and expand their knowledge in business.



Chili Paste and Crispy Oyster Mushrooms made of organically grown chilis and mushrooms from Tingtano Integrated Farm



Power of perseverance

Zacobi Pearl Shake

By: Adrian Paolo P. David, NC Capas, Tarlac

"Achieving one step at a time." This is how Maria Lourdes Arboleda describes herself as an entrepreneur in reaching her dreams.

'Des', as she is fondly called, worked in Makati City for five years as an accounting staff. When she got married, she decided to leave her job to spend more quality time with her family.

In 2009, she decided to put up a homemade beverage business and named it Zacobi Pearl Shake. She started small with a capital of P10,000.00. With years of hard work, its market reach widened with 30 branches in the Philippines and 3 branches in Dubai. After a decade, her products became available in Philippine supermarkets. With her increasing income, she also ventured into food services.



Ms. Maria Lourdes M. Arboleda , owner of Zacobi Pearl Shake discussing her Business Improvement Plan during the Kapatid Mentor Me Program Batch 4 BIP Presentation day.

Despite the sweet developments, Zacobi also encountered problems in business operations such as limited capital, inefficient cash flow management, improper work delegation, and poor decision-making among others. But these hurdles did not stop Des from pursuing her business venture.

In 2017, the Negosyo Center Capas discovered Zacobi since Des helps in managing the canteen of her mother in the Capas Municipal Hall. She was invited to attend an Entrepreneurship Seminar and was impressed by the way the resource speaker discussed the topic. Des then showed interest in joining the other programs of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). These helped her reach her goals for the company. Zacobi's operation has improved since then. Their capital increased by 30% and sales grew by almost 50%.

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Zacobi Pearl Shake's Milk Tea Drinks



Zacobi Pearl Shake's Fruit Coolers with Blue Butterfly Pea will definitely satisfy your thirst.

<< Power of perseverance from p. 50



Ms. Maria Lourdes M. Arboleda, owner of Zacobi Pearl Shake (in blue) attending the Entrepreneurial Mind-setting Seminar conducted by Negosyo Center Capas, Tarlac on November 28, 2018.



Ms. Maria Lourdes M. Arboleda, owner of Zacobi Pearl Shake (in red), with her fellow mentees, DTI Associates, Panel of judges, after the Kapatid Mentor Me Program Batch 4 Graduation.

In 2019, she enrolled in DTI's Kapatid Mentor Me (KMME) Program. There, she got the chance to connect with other MSMEs and some government and private stakeholders. She considered the program as a blessing as it equipped her with the knowledge she needed for her business.

In 2020, Zacobi was not spared from the effects of the Covid-19 Pandemic. DTI helped her recover through the Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa (PPG) program where she received a food processing kit. Upon receipt, she immediately opened her branches in Pampanga and Capas.

"You have to start small. Persistence, perseverance, and hard work is the key to success," Des said.

As her way of paying forward, she is at present inspiring would-be and start-up MSMEs by sharing her entrepreneurial journey during DTI-led events.



Ms. Maria Lourdes M. Arboleda, owner of Zacobi Pearl Shake (in dark blue) receives livelihood kits awarded by Trade Industry Development Specialist Maria Teresa R. Bondoc and Business Counselor Adrian Paolo David under the Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa (PPG) program on November 6, 2020 at Negosyo Center Capas, Tarlac.



Zacobi Pearl Shake participating in a Trade Fair at the 30th South East Asian Games (SEA Games), at New Clark City, Capas, Tarlac

Son's selflessness lead to success

Jeon23 Snack House

By: Anthony S. Corpuz, NC San Clemente, Tarlac

We are usually faced with difficult choices that require us to prioritize our wants and responsibilities. For some, this means sacrificing personal ambitions in order to fulfill familial responsibilities. Dominador Laborera Jr. is an example of a man whose sacrifices opened his way to success.

Dominador, has been working in a lending company before he decided to file a resignation in 2020 to take care of his aging parents with medical conditions. Fortunately, he has a sibling who supports his parent's maintenance medication. As he continued to look after them, he realized that he needed to find a way to contribute to their financial needs. Thus, he decided to take the leap and start his own food business.



From L-R: Dominador Laborera Jr. and Business Counselor Anthony S. Corpuz during the interview for the success story article.



From L-R: LDRRMO II/ Executive Assistant Rodessa Solis, TIDS Ma. Fatima David, Dominador Laborera Jr. owner of Jeon23 Snack House, San Clemente Mayor Elma Macadamia and STIDS Maria Divina Gloria Ramos during the PPG Awarding of Livelihood Kits

He began by selling sopas and pancit. He marketed his business through online platforms which earned ₱300 pesos a day. Dominador's stall is located near a school so when face-to-face classes resumed, his business received a boost as students began to patronize his products. Due to the growing demand, he eventually added more dishes to his menu.

On June 24, 2022, he visited the Negosyo Center in San Clemente, Tarlac to finally register his business name. He named it "Jeon23 Snack House" derived from his nickname 'Jun' which was twisted by his workmates into "Jeon". He added '23' which depicts his birthday.

Despite the initial success of his food business, Dominador faced a setback when he was diagnosed with diabetes. The news shocked him, but did not let it get in the way to support his financial needs.

Fortunately, he was chosen as one of the beneficiaries of the Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginahawa program of the Department of Trade and Industry. The program provided him with a livelihood kit and helpful seminars for managing his business. He was very excited since the items he was planning to buy were included in the package such as LPG tank, regulator, 3-way burner, Ice Box, and tables and chairs. With the items given, Dominador was able to improve the quality of his food and increase the efficiency of his operations. As a result, his profit increased to at least Php 1,000 a day. Not long after, he was able to invest in a motorcycle and some appliances needed in his business.

"Always be kind to your customers, work hard, and believe that you can do everything," Dominador shared.

Dominador is not just happy because of the success of his business but also because he was able to take care of his parents. Let Dominador's journey inspire you through the sacrifices he made.



Mr. Dominador Laborera Jr. together with his parents in front of Jeon23 Snack House at Brgy. Bamban, San Clemente, Tarlac

Maning-mani ang diskarte

M.N. Marzan Food Products

By: Val Maenar L. Echevarri, NC Pura, Tarlac

A dream that all mothers wanted is to be able to provide for their children as well as to become more efficient and responsible human being in the society. Myrna Marzan is a single parent and has three children who are currently studying. Besides her courageous battle as a mother, she experienced her most unforgettable challenge in life when she invested in a franchise food cart sometime in 2016 but did not work and led to bankruptcy in 2017.

Despite being at rock bottom, she thought of starting anew by peddling fried shelled peanuts in jars to sustain their daily needs. In February 2020, she passed by the Negosyo Center - Pura and sold her products. Thinking that her products had potential, the business counselor invited her to attend a How to Start Your Business Seminar on the same month.

With her participation in the learning event, Myrna was inspired to have her business registered and named it M.N. Marzan Food Products.

During the same period, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) -Tarlac launched the Negosyo Serbisyo sa Barangay – Livelihood Seeding Program (NSB-LSP) in Barangay Balite, Pura, where Myrna lives. Fortunately, she was one of the chosen beneficiaries to receive a business kit. She was very grateful for the unexpected blessing that she received.

A few months after, she was assisted by the business counselor with her business logo and label for her peanut products. She also responded to the invitation for a one-on-one coaching for food manufacturers where she learned how to properly process her products and the preparations for FDA Registration.

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(from L-R) BC Val Maenar Echevarri, DC Zaida Garibay, Ms. Myrna Marzan, and TIDS Maria Teresa R. Bondoc during the awarding of packaging materials under the Negosyo Serbisyo sa Barangay Program



Ms. Maria Theresa Bondoc (right) awarding business kits to Ms. Myrna Marzan under the Negosyo Serbisyo sa Barangay Program-Livelihood Seeding Program

<< Maning-mani from p. 53

Myrna is a very good example of an entrepreneur who emptied her cup and absorbed all the learnings and advice of her mentors like standard processing, proper handling, and storage of products. Eventually, she was able to add new products to her business. Aside from peanuts, she now manufactures native delicacies like espasol and rice cakes. Having considered those recommendations, her products improved. With this, walk-in and online clients kept on coming and repeating orders which led to 80% increase on sales.

"I thank DTI for all their support for my business. My knowledge about my product and doing business has broadened. I will pursue this and there is no turning back. I will continue to be hardworking as my business becomes bigger." Myrna said.



One-on-one coaching and mentoring with Food Technologist, Dr. Lea B. Milan of Tarlac State University



A cruncy find

Mang Ipong's Food Products

By: Joana Marie R. Obena, NC Ramos, Tarlac

Robelyn Dela Vega has always been an entrepreneur at heart. Her business was not only fueled by her entrepreneurial spirit, but it was also a means to provide for her family. Her humble beginnings in business started in early 2021, when she and her husband, Jeffrey, set up a café in Ramos, Tarlac with a budget of P120,000. Their initial capital turned out to be insufficient to establish the enterprise to their liking as Robelyn admitted. Nevertheless, they continued because they had always dreamed of starting their own café.



Mang Ipongs Food Products initial packaging design

Named Humanitea Café, it was one of the first cafés in the town. In five months, it expanded to accommodate more customers. However, after a few weeks, new diners offering similar products at lower prices opened nearby. Due to financial difficulties and tight competition, the couple had to lay off their staff and eventually closed after a year. They regretted rushing the expansion and wished they have kept things simple.



Starting a new business is definitely not a walk in the park for the couple. Despite adversities, they did not give up. They found hope in a new product they discovered, Kangkong chips which were originally intended as snacks during their movie nights. Soon, they began selling the chips through social media, gaining customers, and establishing a new business with just P15,000 capital.

The couple started small by designing the logo and packaging themselves, sourcing kangkong leaves from nearby farms, and setting up their workstation at home. The business was registered with the Department of Trade and Industry through the Negosyo Center (NC) Ramos in September 2022. They named their enterprise Ipong's Food Products since Jeffrey was fondly called Ipong by the locals

One out of five designs developed during the product development. Other flavors include Cheese, Sour Cream, Barbecue, and Garlic Parmesan,

>> continued on p. 56

<< Mang Ipong's from p. 55

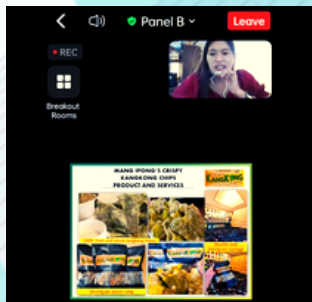
With the assistance of DTI-Tarlac through NC Ramos, they were given opportunities to attend programs like the Kapatid Mentor Me (KMME) with Robelyn participating in the program.

"The KMME program helped me a lot in improving the business plan I had in mind," she said. The program also made her realize the importance of a positive attitude for success.

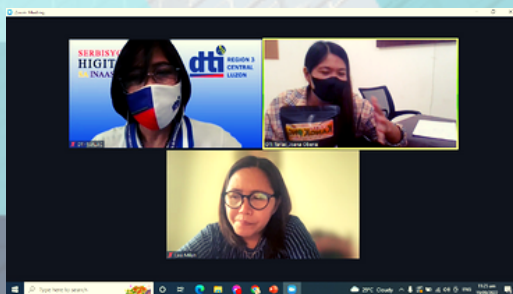
She also attended DTI Tarlac's one-on-one coaching on food safety and standard sanitation operating procedures with Dr. Lea Milan, an expert on food technology from Tarlac State University. *"I am grateful for this consultation since our main goal is to maintain product quality and safety while seeking ways to improve further," she shared.*

DTI Tarlac also provided Mang Ipong's product and packaging improvement through the Local Designers' Program. From the strings of assistance, they received from DTI, they learned different avenues to market their products which enabled them to reach a wider market outside Tarlac like Pangasinan, Manila, Cavite, and Laguna. These resulted in a 60% increase in their sales.

There is still a lot to develop in their business and they are excited about what the future holds. On her final note, Robelyn expressed her gratitude to DTI Tarlac for the unwavering support and for providing opportunities to attend seminars that helped build their business. She also hopes to join the next trade fairs and apply for their FDA license.



Kapatid Mentor Me Program last June 2022.



Food Technology Coaching for Community Based Micro Food Processor with Dr. Lea Milan last November 8, 2022.

Started mini, now we're going Nini

Nini's Food Products Manufacturing

By: Krizia Anne O. Dela Cruz, NC Anao, Tarlac



2020 LSP-NSB Launching and Awarding of Livelihood Kits | July 15, 2020. Ms. Emelyn Putungan gave her message of thanks to DTI Tarlac, as she was chosen as one of the beneficiaries of Livelihood Seeding Program – Negosyo Serbisyo sa Barangay last 2020.

business, the essentials on how to get started, and the fundamentals of good practices of food product manufacturing.

Her business venture was eventually registered on September 26, 2018, as Nini's Food Products Manufacturing which primarily produced chili paste, peanut butter, and native delicacies.

The possibility of failure didn't deter her from pursuing her dreams. The intense competition in the food industry and uncertain financial status were among the barriers she endured in her business. Despite the risks, she asserted that she must always come up with new ideas without compromising the quality of her products.

The NC Anao provided various assistance to Emelyn over the course of five years. She was a beneficiary of Negosyo Serbisyo sa Barangay-Livelihood Seeding Program and Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginawa Program, wherein she received food manufacturing kits.



Success is the sum of small efforts repeated day in and day out. That's how Emelyn Putungan of Anao, Tarlac described her business endeavor in the past five years.

From 2015 to 2017, Emelyn worked as an Overseas Filipino Worker in Qatar. Relentlessly working abroad, she realized her family's financial stability isn't guaranteed simply by working. Having a passion for cooking and believing in Filipino food are the strategic reasons why she pursued putting up her own business.

A week after launching the Negosyo Center (NC) Anao in 2018, Emelyn visited to inquire about registering her



2020 PPG Launching and Awarding of Livelihood Kits | December 18, 2020. Nini's Food Products Manufacturing was one of the beneficiaries of Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginawa last December 2020, a livelihood and entrepreneurship program by DTI.

>> continued on p. 58

OTOP NextGen Photoshoot of ONG Products | June 16, 2022. Ms. Emelyn D. Putungan with her newly redesigned products under the OTOP NextGen Program, she also received a set of her new stickers under the said program.

<< Started mini from p. 57

She attended relevant activities that strengthened her foundation in food handling and processing. She partook in a one-on-one product development program 'One Town, One Product Next Gen', which aims to innovate her products while establishing her brand identity.

She continuously improves her products through the recommendations from her coaching sessions with Dr. Lea Milan of Tarlac State University (TSU). To further assist entrepreneurs, DTI-Tarlac partnered with TSU for business coaching sessions. The sessions were very crucial in paving the core of her business, which is her products.

As of today, her products are now present in Tarlac Province, Pangasinan, and Manila. Back in 2018, Nini's Food Products had a capital of PHP 15,000.00. As of today, it has already tripled.

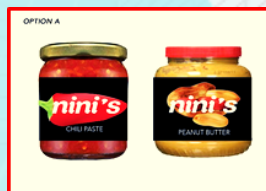
"I am very grateful to NC Anao for the unending guidance and support I have received," Emelyn said. Emelyn envisions her products being available nationwide and internationally. With that goal in mind, she aims to give back to people who helped her during the early stages of her business operation.

Nini's Food Products is the first manufacturing client registered at NC Anao, and is currently an enrollee of the 2023 Kapatid Mentor Me Program.



Product Development

Product **prior** Product Development intervention



Product Development

Product **during** OTOP NextGen Product Development



Product Development

Product **after** Product Development intervention

Kapag may SABA, may nilaga

Ashmace Food Products Manufacturing

By: Erica P. Turla, NC Bamban, Tarlac

"Don't sit down and wait for the opportunities to come. Get up and make them." - Madam C.J. Walker

It was in the latter part of 2017 when the garment factory where Mark Anthony and Mary Jane Boral worked faced financial difficulties. The company gradually laid off employees and the couple were not spared. Losing their job, the couple needed to find ways to make ends meet. With a spare cash of P1,500, they bought ingredients and tried making banana chips out of saba, a banana variety. Their own home kitchen served as their first production area. They tried offering their chips to their relatives and friends, students and parents, who would later become their resellers.

It was a challenging journey as they faced numerous obstacles and uncertainties along the way, but they persevered with a SABA mindset - Strategy, Ambition, Boldness, and Action. Their first hurdle was figuring out how to make a difference and make their product stand out in the market even without a physical store.



In photo: (right) the Boral couple with their product and business registration documents on their back, left is one the working area of their facility

Their boldness in taking risks despite the competition in the common banana chip business led to a strategy of research and development, even after the first few batches were not appetizing. After several attempts and experiments, they were able to set a standard for their product.

In March 2019, they finally formalized their business by registering their business name, Ashmace Food Products with DTI Negosyo Center. "Ashmace" represents the initials of their family members: "Ash" for Ashley, their eldest child, "M" for Mark Anthony

and Mary Jane, and "Ace" for their youngest. This was when Ashmace Food Products Manufacturing was born and was discovered by the Department of Trade and Industry.

The agency began to assist them by providing logo and label designs through the Negosyo Center in Bamban. After that, the couple joined different DTI Programs such as SME Roving Academy, Kapatid Mentor ME (KMME), Trade Fairs, OTOP Next Gen, and Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa (PPG) in which they received LPG tank and plastic pockets which double their production output. With these programs, their production and accounting system has improved.

>> continued on p. 60



Ashmace Food Products attending The Kapatid Mentor Me Online Program that presents her Business Improvement Plan last November 5, 2020.

<< Kapag may SABA from p. 59

Armed with business knowledge and trainings, they were able to maintain the quality of their products which gained positive reactions from customers. Thereafter, orders kept coming and before knowing it, their sales significantly increased by up to 70%. They also gained about 30 regular resellers from Tarlac and Pampanga, Pangasinan, Baguio, and La Trinidad. Since the demand was growing, they connected with the nearby Aeta community for their regular supply of bananas. They were able to set up their production area making sure everything is organized, clean, and convenient for their work. Since then, they have employed 2 workers, had their license approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and registered their brand name.

With these developments, they have exceeded their initial ambition of just supporting their family. They had their house renovated, invested in a service vehicle, and even granted a scholarship for their niece. From participating in trainings, they are now being invited by DTI as resource speakers in some of their skills trainings.

>> continued on p. 61



The Boral as one of the beneficiaries of Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginawa (PPG) Program of DTI at Negosyo Center Bamban last October 16, 2020, in partnership with Municipality of Bamban.



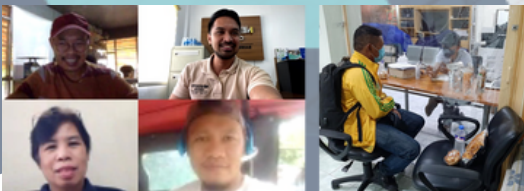
Skills Training in Banana Chips Making facilitated by Mr. and Mrs. Boral



Business Consultancy and production area visit during Ashmace's renovation/expansion



Sneak peak of their facility (L-R): Washing area, Peeling and slicing area, Frying and packaging area, and Sorting (orders) area



Virtual and in-person OTOP Next Gen Product Development

<< Kapag may SABA from p. 60

They did not let their circumstances define them, instead, they chose to act and work toward their dreams. Their advice is simple, "Don't give up, for the sake of your family." With their SABA mindset and relentless determination, they have achieved what they once thought was impossible. They now plan to double their action and aim to have a bigger manufacturing site in the next 3-5 years.



Ashmace Food Products Manufacturing during the Likha ng Central Luzon National Trade Fair happened last October 2022 at SM Megamall. Together with her (left) is Mrs. Melissa Yeung Yap the wife of 1st District Congressman Christian Yap of Tarlac.



Photo taken during the Local Trade Fair of DTI Provincial Office of Tarlac. It was exactly the celebration of Women's Month, which aims to promote the local products of businesswomen of Tarlac.

"When we were starting, we were already happy with just P50.00 sales in one day. Now, it is really overwhelming. Having your business registered is really a big factor. We gained the trust of our customers and everything else followed," Mark Anthony said.

Their journey teaches us that with the right mindset and attitude, anything is possible. So, if you have a dream or a goal, go out there and pursue it with all your heart. With Strategy, Ambition, Boldness, and Action, you too can achieve your dreams and live the life you've always wanted.



Captured in this photo is an interview taking place at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Boral in Sto.Niño, Bamban, Tarlac. The couple who are successful business persons in banana chips industry.

From a domestic helper to culinary trailblazer: A flavorful odyssey

L.G. Ybanez Eatery

By: Val Maenar L. Echevarri, NC Pura, Tarlac

In a world where flavors danced and dreams simmered, a woman named Lorda Gamit Ybanez traveled to different countries and worked as a domestic helper. But after 13 years of hard work, she decided to go back to the Philippines and start a small eatery business.

With passion and determination, she started with a small canteen in front of their house, selling delicious home-cooked meals to her neighbors and passers-by. Her goal was to build a successful business and provide a stable life for her family. Little did she know, her flavorful creations would soon capture the hearts and palates of people beyond her community, setting her on a remarkable journey of culinary triumph.

She registered her business with Department of Trade and Industry as L.G. Ybanez Eatery. Her dedication caught the attention of their Barangay Chairman who selected her as one of the five beneficiaries of DTI's Negosyo Serbisyo sa Barangay (NSB) program in 2019. With the business kit she received and the knowledge she gained from the Entrepreneurial Mind-setting Seminar under the said program, Lorda recognized the potential of her enterprise (MSME).

She registered her business with Department of Trade and Industry as L.G. Ybanez Eatery. Her dedication caught the attention of their Barangay Chairman who selected her as one of the five beneficiaries of DTI's Negosyo Serbisyo sa Barangay (NSB) program in 2019. With the business kit she received and the knowledge she gained from the Entrepreneurial Mind-setting Seminar under the said program, Lorda recognized the potential of her enterprise (MSME).

Despite the unforeseen challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, Lorda still managed to open her eatery. Lockdowns and strict protocols meant the loss of some customers, posing a significant threat to her business. Undeterred, Lorda turned to the internet during the lockdown and searched for alternative products she could create and sell.

Her resourcefulness led her to discover how to make tempting treats like milky buns, caramel bars, and brownies. Devoting countless hours to practice and perfecting her creations, she was able to hone her baking skills.

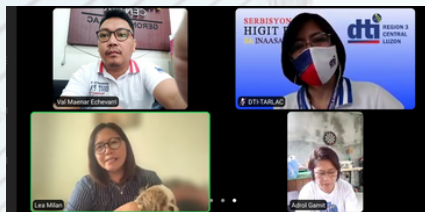
As restrictions eased and the lockdown was lifted, the Local Government Unit of Pura organized a cake and pastry training for an Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) association, where Lorda eagerly participated. It further expanded her baking skills and inspired her to include baked goods in her business. This strategic move proved fruitful as her new product offerings attracted more customers.



(from L-R) STIDS Ana Marie Tabamo, DC Zaida Garibay, Ms. Lorda Ybanez (beneficiary), Brgy. Captain Samuel Novesteras, and Val Maenar Echevarri during the Negosyo Serbisyo sa Barangay Awarding of Negosyo Kits on December 19, 2019

>> continued on p. 63

<< From a domestic helper from p. 62



Lorda Ybanez undergoing (lower right frame), undergoing one-on-one consultation with food technology expert, Dr. Lea B. Milan (lower left frame), assisted by STIDS Lunabelle Sison (upper right frame) and BC Val Echevarri (upper left frame) on September 19, 2022

Seeking continuous growth, in September 2022, Lorda had an opportunity to attend the one-on-one coaching session facilitated by DTI and the Negosyo Center dubbed “Food Technology Coaching for Community-Based Micro Food Processor. The food technology expert from Tarlac State University provided invaluable insights such as considering the right mixture, amount, and cooking time for her products. It addressed her concerns and provided guidance on improving her products’ mixing, proofing, and cooling processes.

With newfound knowledge and confidence, Lorda left the virtual session with gratitude towards the mentor, business counselor, and DTI for their unwavering support. She felt empowered, knowing their assistance would help her business thrive and secure its place in the competitive market. These developments boosted her profitability up to 40%.

Lorda’s journey from an eatery to a bakery exemplifies her resilience and determination. Despite the hurdles faced, her unwavering spirit, adaptability, and eagerness to learn have transformed her business. She was able to invest in more kitchen utensils and equipment and was able to renovate her canteen little by little. Today, she inspires aspiring entrepreneurs in her community and beyond, showcasing the power of perseverance and the rewards of embracing change.

In the face of adversity, Lorda’s story serves as a reminder that with determination, resourcefulness, and willingness to evolve, anyone can overcome their challenges and turn their dreams into reality.

“Ako po ay nagpapasalamat ng marami sa DTI sa pagsuporta at pagbibigay sa akin ng pangunahing gamit para sa pag-uumpisa ng aming maliit na negosyo. Malaking tulong po ito sa akin. Sana po ay madami pa kayong matulungan at masuportahan na maliliit na negosyo. Pagpalain po kayo ng ating Diyos. Maraming salamat po DTI,” she said



A glimpse of L.G. Ybanez Eatery with the owner, Lorda Ybanez

Pastilicious trend

Schoendel Pastil-icious Fast-food Chain

By: Khaycee Yvonne O. Ampania, NC Gerona, Tarlac



Schoendel Pastil-icious, innovates the famous 'pastil' delicacy of Maguindanao people, making it available in variations like spicy, beef and silog style.

In 2019, the couple put up a makeshift stall in front of their house and sold their pastil. They started offering chicken pastil to students at a nearby school and passers-by who had to have a quick lunch at an affordable price. Business was doing good for quite some time until the pandemic. When Covid-19 hit the world, it made a huge toll on their business like any other industry. They lost most of their customers and had to take a pause.

Due to the unforeseen global health emergency, it was only in 2022 that "Schoendel Pastil-icious" was officially registered as a business. When online selling and vlogging rose to fame, food vloggers introduced the dish pastil which made her business gain more clients. Her patrons then went from just her relatives and friends, to students and local employees who opted for affordable but filling meals.

Liedel said she was thankful for the online Business Name Registration service of the Department of Trade and Industry since it was very convenient for her to register the business safely in the comfort of their home. On top of that, she felt fortunate to be one of the beneficiaries of the Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangan at Ginhawa (PPG) Program, where she received a food processing kit. The cooking tools and equipment given to her allowed her to prepare bigger batches of pastil.

"With the help of livelihood kit my business continued to grow, catering to the growing product demand. I was able to double production, thus my business' income has also multiplied," Liedel said.

Schoendel Pastil is now making deliveries in nearby towns and has added variations like spicy, beefsilog style, and pastil in a jar, gaining a 30% increase in monthly sales. From the humble makeshift stall in front of their house, Liedel is now setting up their physical store at the Gerona Food Park in the heart of their town.

From being a housewife, who only intended to help her husband with their family's daily expenses, Liedel is now a certified mompreneur, balancing her family life and her passion for entrepreneurship.



Liedel Baluyot starts her busy day as she dedicatedly cooks and prepares bulk orders of her 'pastil' for her loyal customers.



Liedel Baluyot (left) gratefully receives the livelihood kit awarded through the Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangan at Ginhawa (PPG) by Division Chief Zaida F. Garibay.

From zero to hero

Shejay Snack Corner

By: Anthony S. Corpuz, NC San Clemente, Tarlac

Rhodeliza Bonnet exemplifies the adage "never give up" by continuing her business despite months of zero sales for both walk-in and delivery orders.

In 1997, Rhodeliza made the difficult decision of working in Hong Kong as a Domestic Helper. Three years later, she returned to the Philippines to get married and start her own family.

She decided to go back to Hong Kong in 2002 since the couple's earning was not enough to cover the needs of their family. After 6 years, her husband got a job opportunity abroad so she chose to go home and take care of their children.



Ms. Rhodeliza Bonnet, owner of Shejay Snack Corner at Brgy. Nagsabaran, San Clemente, Tarlac.

Rhodeliza's husband came back to the country for a vacation in February 2020. Unfortunately, he cannot return to work due to the Covid-19 lockdown in March of the same year. To support their needs, the couple decided to engage in the food industry, capitalizing on the husband's skills as a chef. They first started selling burgers through social media. As people patronized their business, they added more items to their menu like rice meals, pasta, and pizza. They also provided delivery services to cater more customers. Their business initially generated an average of P2,500.00 in daily sales.

Since business is running smoothly, the couple eventually opened a snack corner in Brgy. Nagsabaran, San Clemente on March 20, 2021. They registered their business name at Negosyo Center (NC) San Clemente, Tarlac. They named it Shejay Snack Corner, derived from the combination of their children's name, Shekinah, and VJ.

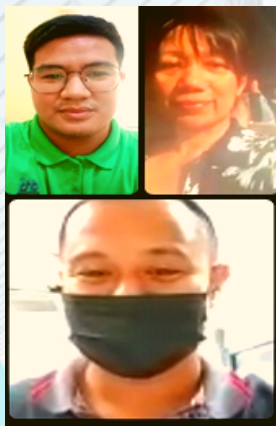
In 2022, Rhodeliza's husband had to fly back for work. Since she had no idea about kitchen operations, she had to learn from scratch. She faced more challenges when she experienced zero sales for five consecutive months because the delivery service was put to stop as their son, who was in charge of transporting, resumed attending face-to-face classes. She thought of giving up, however, her husband encouraged her to still pursue the business.

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Business logo and product label design made by Tarlac Provincial Designer Adrian Estacio.

<< From zero to hero from p. 65



Business Counselor Anthony Corpuz (upper left frame), Ms. Rhodeliza Bonnet of Shejay Snack Corner (upper right frame) and Tarlac Provincial Designer Adrian Estacio (lower frame) during the design consultation.

Through NC San Clemente, Rhodeliza was invited to attend a Seminar on Entrepreneurial Mind-setting on June 23, 2022. She learned about the characteristics of an entrepreneur which gave her inspiration and enough courage to push through. She was also chosen as one of the beneficiaries of the Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa (PPG) Program of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), which provided her with food processing kits. DTI also helped her design a business logo and product label that she can use in their business.

With these developments, she was encouraged to persevere and do more. She made extra effort to market her business on social media and improved her physical store. Gradually, Shejay Snack Corner recovered from the setback, earning at least 1,500 pesos a day. Not as good as before but not bad for a recovering establishment. She was also able to hire a staff to help her with the business.

"You may experience zero sales, but never give up. Focus on your business and always be mindful. With perseverance and hard work, anyone can overcome challenges and achieve success in their ventures," Rhodeliza said.



From L-R: LDRRMO II/ Executive Assistant Rodessa Solis, TIDS Ma. Fatima David, Ms. Rhodeliza Bonnet of Shejay Snack Corner, San Clemente Mayor Elma Macadamia and STIDS Maria Divina Gloria Ramos during the PPG Awarding of Livelihood Kits

Belly belly good!

Inang Maring's Food Products

By: Ranjee T. Mañalac, NC Paniqui, Tarlac

A former OFW turned entrepreneur who craved lechon while abroad found success in his delicious lechon belly business.

Leo Lapurga of Inang Maring's Food Products tried his luck in Dubai in 2018 as an accounting staff in an advertising company, but after six months of working abroad, he decided to go home since it was hard to live there and anxiety and homesickness was a constant battle.



BEFORE: Inang Maring's Food Products during its early years.



AFTER: Inang Maring's Food Products after renovation.

His lechon belly business is the result of his yearning for lechon while abroad. The first thing he did upon arrival was to cook lechon using the industrial oven available in their home. He made it into a hobby and served it to his family and relatives occasionally, until he decided to make it a full-time business and registered its name on June 2020 at the Negosyo Center Paniqui. Inspired by her lola Maring's cooking skills and as an heir to her lola's kitchen tools, he decided to name it after her. Thus, Inang Maring's Food Products was born.

The pandemic and swine flu tested Inang Maring's but overcame it by raising awareness that pork is still safe to eat. Some of Leo's customers during that time were doctors and medical professionals. Their testimonies gave confidence to other clients who continuously patronized their lechon. In addition, Leo also offered other products such as pancit, spaghetti, and other Filipino cuisines.

In 2022, through the Negosyo Center, Leo became a recipient of various programs organized by the Department of Trade and Industry such as Kaptid Mentor ME (KMME), Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangan at Ginhawa (PPG), and OTOP Next Gen. He acknowledged that he learned a lot from these programs, and the knowledge he gained helped a lot in the development of his business. According to him, he became wiser in managing his business.

>> continued on p. 68



Leo Lapurga receiving the livelihood kits under the Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangan at Ginhawa Program

<< Belly belly good! from p. 67



Bellylicious Lechon! Who could resist this mouth watering lechon belly?

"DTI made me more efficient and made me earn from P1,000 daily to P3,000-P5,000 pesos daily. It enabled me to add more products, employ 5 more staff, and renovate and improve my store," Leo said. The newly renovated Inang Maring's is located at Brgy. Tablang, Paniqui, Tarlac

Leo is also planning to invest in other industries like Information Technology services, rice retailing, and leasing. Through Inang Maring's, Leo is now able to support his child's education and defray their daily expenses. It also allowed him to buy three motorcycles for personal and business use.

As advice to those who wanted to have their own version of Inang Maring's, Leo said, *"Pursue your passion and be resilient. Hangga't may isang customer na naniniwala tuloy lang."*



Party trays that will make you stay



Strong Independent Woman

Annejulz Sweet Treats

By: Adrian Paolo P. David, NC Capas, Tarlac

"Patience is the key to success." This is how Raquel Lanzar describes her entrepreneurial journey.

Kei, as she is fondly called, worked as a home-based pillow distributor for 2 years in a pillow manufacturing company in the Philippines.

In 2016, she decided to quit her previous job and tried to venture into a baking business since it was her hobby. She started baking cupcakes using just an oven toaster. Aside from the sweet treats, she also tried making lasagna and macaroni using a stove top. She initially sold her products to her relatives and friends.

With the business starting to flourish, she decided to register her business name Annejulz Sweet Treats at the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Tarlac in November of the same year. During the process, DTI Provincial Designer Richard Gomez offered her the product development services of the agency which she took advantage of. For her, it was a big help to have a free logo and label design to make her products more appealing.

After a year, she was able to buy a gas range oven from what she earned. From there, she started to bake and sell yema cakes too.

Unfortunately, Kei had a miscarriage for her third child which made her stop baking for a while. At that point, she took another path and decided to pursue education units. She focused on applying for teaching jobs and accepting cake orders one at a time.

However, she had her second miscarriage which led her to depression. With love and support from her family, she was able to overcome the challenges and recover.

>> continued on p. 70



Annejulz Sweet Treats' elegant and delicious cakes and pastries

<< Strong independent woman from p. 69



Some of the Skills Trainings on Baking conducted by the Negosyo Center Capas, wherein Ms. Raquel A. Lanzar was invited as resource speaker

She took a Bread and Pastry Production Class and started accepting cake orders again. Since she could not afford advanced baking lessons, she had to learn the baking techniques through the internet. She also started using social media to promote her products. Little by little, Kei was able to get back on track by selling her products online.

Along the way, Kei also encountered problems in business, such as lack of capital and qualified employees. However, she used these as motivation in pursuing her business venture.

In 2019, Kei visited Negosyo Center (NC) Capas and offered her services as a trainer on baking. Business Counselor Adrian David accommodated her and at the same time briefed her on other DTI and NC services.

She took advantage of some of the services of the DTI like Entrepreneurship Seminars and Provincial Trade Fairs. In December 2019, with Small Business Corporation's assistance, she availed the P3 Loan, a financial program that offers micro-entrepreneurs financial assistance with low interest rate. With these, Annejulz's operation has improved. Its capital increased by 20% and sales went up by 30%.

In 2020, she enrolled in DTI's Kapatid Mentor Me (KMME) Program. She eagerly joined the program to further improve her business.

>> continued on p. 71



The Negosyo Center Capas conducted a Financing Forum and P3 Loan Endorsement with the help of the P3 Coordinator, Mr. Paolo Manese; which one of the participants was Ms. Raquel A. Lanzar of Annejulz Sweet Treats

Ms. Raquel A. Lanzar (in white) of Annejulz Sweet Treats and STIDS Maria Divina Gloria VGarcia Ramos (in red) during the plant visit for KMME-Online mentees in 2020.

<< Strong independent woman from p. 70



Ms. Raquel A. Lanzar, owner of Annejulz Sweet Treats (in pink) receives livelihood kits awarded by Trade Industry Development Specialist Maria Teresa R. Bondoc and Business Counselor Adrian Paolo David under the Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginawa (PPG) program on November 6, 2020 at Negosyo Center Capas, Tarlac.

Just like other MSMEs, Kei was not spared from the effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic. DTI helped her recover through the Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginawa (PPG) Program where she received a sticker printer for her product labels. From there, she started accepting orders for fondant cakes which became her best-selling products. This increased her sales from 30% to 50%. She started selling her products within the Municipality of Capas and eventually reached as far as Manila.

“Start from the bottom; success isn’t instant,” Kei advises.

Aside from being a regularly assisted entrepreneur, Kei became a partner of DTI in spreading entrepreneurship as well. She now regularly serves as a resource speaker on cakes and pastry trainings of the agency.

Kei is very grateful to DTI and Negosyo Center because they helped her a lot with the exposure of her business. At the same time, she can share her passion to start-up MSMEs.

MSME Information

Business Name: Annejulz Sweet Treats

Business Address: PThe Regina Northview Subd., Brgy. Cutcut 1st, Capas, Tarlac

Owner: Raquel Alagano Lanzar

Social Media Page/s: Annejulz sweet treats (FB Page) / annejulz_sweet_treats (Instagram)

Email: kei.lanzar@gmail.com



Annejulz Sweet Treats' joined the Palengke Fresh Trade Fair by the DTI Tarlac and WalterMart Capas in 2021



Kapag may kakanin, may aanihin

Mariz Native Cakes

By: Adrian Paolo P. David, NC Capas, Tarlac

"Sipag at tiyaga ang aking puhunan." This is how Marissa A. Lagman describes herself as an entrepreneur.

Mariz as she is fondly called, worked in a well-known native cake manufacturer in Tarlac City for 3 years.

In 2002, she decided to set up her own native cake business, because she felt that she could manage her own business based on what she learned from her previous job. She started with P1,500.00 as her initial capital plus the cooking skills that she acquired as an employee.

Mariz first started offering her products to her relatives and friends. Two months later, she was able to sell her products in their local public market. Her business became an instant hit. Thus, she decided to register the name Mariz Native Cakes in 2004 at the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Tarlac Provincial Office.

Over time, Mariz managed to secure a stall at Capas and Concepcion Public Markets. During those years, business was smoothly flowing. However, she was aware that her products are seasonal, and the competition was tight. Realizing this, she started exploring online marketing options, including selling her products through her social media account.

>> continued on p. 73



Tricycle Side Cars made by Jay-Cho Side Cars Manufacturing.



<< Kapag may kakanin from p. 72

During her business name renewal in 2019, Business Counselor (BC) Adrian David assisted her and discussed the services that the Negosyo Center and DTI offer. BC Adrian introduced a product development program which Mariz availed of. The new logo and label provided through this program enhanced Mariz Native Cake's identity resulting in a 10% customer gain, a 20% boost in capital, and a 30% increase in sales which she was thankful for.



Labeling Designs of Mariz Native Cakes



Ms. Marissa A. Lagman, owner of Mariz Native Cakes (in blue) during the product clinic on February 12, 2019 with Designer Shelle Mae Agatep. The activity is under the Local Designers Program of DTI and the Provincial Government of Tarlac.

Mariz was also able to avail of the Pondo sa Pagbabago at Pag-Asenso (P3) Loan Program, with the help of NC-Capas and the Small Business Corporation. The P3 Loan is a government initiative to assist micro-entrepreneurs by providing them financial assistance with low interest rates. She then used the loan to buy new equipment like steamers and an additional oven.

Mariz was also invited to join the DTI-Tarlac's Diskwento Caravan, an advocacy in partnership with manufacturers, distributors, and MSMEs that offers affordable quality products to consumers. She was so pleased because aside from the sales she generated from the walk-in customers, she was able to link with the other participating MSMEs which became her regular resellers.

Mariz later partnered with DTI on business development and became a resource speaker in skills training on native cake-making in various Negosyo Centers. She was so grateful for DTI's programs and support, which improved her business and family's life.

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Ms. Marissa A. Lagman, owner of Mariz Native Cakes during the P3 Loan Endorsement with P3 Coordinator, Mr. Paolo Manese on April 5, 2019.



Mariz Native Cakes joins the Diskwento Caravan in 2019

<< Kapag may kakanin from p. 73



Some of the Skills Trainings on Native Cake Making conducted by the Negosyo Centers Capas and Victoria, where Ms. Marissa A. Lagman was invited as the resource speaker.

However, just like other businesses, Mariz Native Cakes also suffered from the effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic in 2020. They lost customers and employees due to the lockdown. BC Adrian David informed Mariz that she was selected as one of the recipients of the Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa, a program that helps micro-enterprises recover after being affected by calamities. In November of that year, she received a set of ingredients needed to make native cakes. Upon receiving the livelihood kits, she immediately used them to revive her business. The timing was perfect in preparation for the Christmas season.

Now, the business is back to normal. The various DTI programs greatly helped improve her business, increasing sales from 30% to 50% and growing her customer base from 10% to 30%. Thanks to the programs that enhanced her business recognition.

"Kailangan maging madiskarte para umangat sa buhay," Mariz shares.

Mariz is continually thinking of ways to make her business even better. She plans to secure a space at Citywalk in Tarlac City and hopes to join the Kapatid Mentor Me (KMME) Program to enhance her business skills.

MSME Information

Business Name: Mariz Native Cakes

Business Address: Capas Public Market, Brgy.

Cubcub, Capas, Tarlac

Owner: Marissa Andaya Lagman

Social Media Page/s: Mariz Native Cake (FB Page)

Email: businessmarissa1985@gmail.com



Ms. Marissa A. Lagman (middle), owner of Mariz Native Cakes receives livelihood kits awarded by TIDS Maria Teresa R. Bondoc (right) and Business Counselor Adrian Paolo David (left) under the Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa (PPG) program on November 25, 2020 at the Negosyo Center Capas, Tarlac.

Lasang tagumpay

E.D. Leonida Food Products

By: Val Maenar L. Echevarri, NC Pura, Tarlac

Edna Leonida's journey from a simple housewife and mother to a successful business owner is truly inspiring. She faced many challenges as a mother, but her determination to provide for her family led her to start a business in 2017. Her decision to make and sell puto and empanada was a great idea, and she received positive feedback within her barangay in Pura, Tarlac, and even overseas as requested by her relatives. This encouraged her to take her venture more seriously, accepting orders for family gatherings and special occasions.

The turning point in her business journey came when she visited Negosyo Center Pura to register her business name, E.D. Leonida Food Products. Business Counselor Val Maenar Echevarri saw the potential of her products and encouraged her to avail the programs and services of DTI through the Negosyo Center.

Edna's decision to register her business opened up new opportunities for her. She was fortunate to be chosen by the Local Government Unit of Pura and DTI as one of the beneficiaries of the Negosyo Serbisyo sa Barangay (NSB) Livelihood Seeding Program. It is a program that brings business development programs closer to the communities that would equip the micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) with the necessary skills and support to help them grow their businesses. Under NSB, Edna received a starter kit, which included an aluminum tray, mixing bowl, strainer, and wok to support her business.

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(L-R) Then DTI Regional Director Judith Angeles, then DTI Tarlac Provincial Director of Agnes Ramirez, Barangay Buenavista Chairman Elpidio Valdez and Ms. Edna D. Leonida of E.D. Leonida Food Products during the Negosyo Serbisyo sa Barangay awarding of Livelihood Kits

<< Lasang tagumpay from p. 75

She also attended a seminar on food safety and received a one-on-one coaching session. This helped her improve the quality of her products and grow her market presence. Her sales increased significantly, up to 70-90%, allowing her to invest in additional equipment for her business.



BC Val Maenar Echevarri and Ms. Edna Leonida (upper left screen) together with STIDS Lunabelle Sison (upper right screen) during the one-on-one coaching session with Dr Lea Milan (lower left screen) and Mr. Aljon Lusong (lower right screen) of Tarlac State University.

Leonida expressed her gratitude to DTI and the Negosyo Center Pura for their assistance and support, which played a crucial role in helping her build her business.

"Maraming maraming salamat po sa DTI dahil sa mga natutunan at natanggap kong blessing ay unti-unting nakikilala at dinadayo ang aming tindahan. God bless po," Edna said.

Her journey, from humble beginnings to a thriving business owner, serves as a shining example of determination and the invaluable support that government programs can provide to micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). The assistance of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the Negosyo Center coupled with her determination and hard work, Edna's story is a testament to the transformative power of perseverance and community support.

MSME Information

Business Name: E.D. Leonida Food Products
Business Address: Buenavista, Pura, Tarlac
Name of Owner: Edna Dueñas Leonida
Facebook Page: E.D.Leonida Food Products
Email: edleonidafoodproducts@gmail.com

Gulay ang Tulay sa Tagumpay!

Ambong's Delight Food Products

By: Krizia Anne O. Dela Cruz, NC Anao, Tarlac

"Diskarteng malupit – ituloy-tuloy at ilaban lang, dahil ang bawat maliit na hakbang ang magtutulay sa tagumpay." This is how Gerald Badar described his business journey.

Gerald is a micro-entrepreneur based in Anao, Tarlac. Ambong, as his friends and family call him, used to work as a security guard for years. Despite his young age, he encountered unimaginable life experiences, as his wife died when he was 25 years old, leaving him alone with their one-year-old daughter. The death of his wife pushed him to strive to explore various businesses and work to sustain their daughter.

This alone is the reason for him to provide a comfortable life for his daughter. Since then, he has juggled working as a security guard and starting his micro-food venture in Tarlac and Cavite. Hopping from paresan to selling nuts to putting up a grill house, his love for food eventually led him to put up his own food processing business.

In the morning of March 8, 2022, Anao Municipal Councilor Concepcion Almazan visited Negosyo Center Anao to accompany Gerald for the registration of his business, as the former saw the great potential of his business endeavor. Thus, the establishment of Ambong's Delight Food Products. Ambong primarily produces vegetable chips with 3 variants, namely, Squash Blossom Chips (Kalabasa Chips), Water Spinach Chips (Kangkong Chips), and Kamote Tops Chips.

>> continued on p. 78



Kalabasa chips



Kamote chips



Kangkong chips

<< Gulay ang Tulay sa Tagumpay! from p. 77

The enterprise is a product of the pandemic. At the height of the health crisis, Gerald shared that he could not let it bring him down. Utilizing what was readily available in his backyard, Gerald started experimenting with his own kangkong chip recipe.

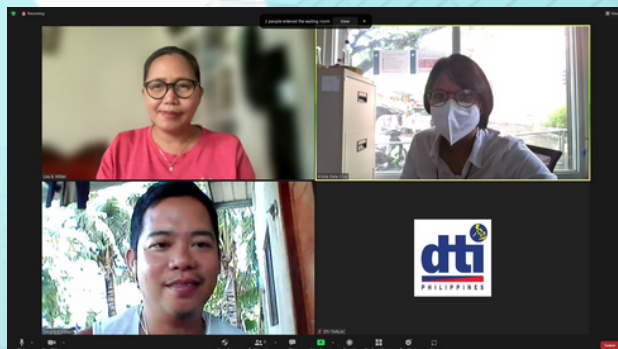
He began with kangkong and eventually added squash blossoms to his product line, which to his surprise became his best-selling item. Gerald recalled that he strategized by collecting orders through an online marketplace, which led him to have a reasonable amount of working capital.

Gerald took advantage of all the possible government programs that could support his business.

He joined the Anao Food Bazaar, a project of the Municipal Entrepreneurial Development and Advisory Council of Anao to support aspiring business owners of the town. It gave him an opportunity to flaunt his products and make them known.

Gerald also received a one-on-one coaching from Dr. Lea Milan, a food technology specialist. The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)-Tarlac and Tarlac State University (TSU) collaborated to create a specially designed program for community-based food processors in the province. The expert thoroughly analyzed his technique and offered suggestions, which helped him improve his manufacturing process.

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Food Technology Coaching Session for Community-Based Food Processors

Via Zoom Conference last October 17, 2022

In Photo: (Left to Right, Top then Bottom): Dr. Lea B. Milan, a food technology specialist, Business Counselor Krizia Anne Dela Cruz, Gerald Silvester Badar, and DTI Tarlac, during the one-on-one coaching session via zoom conference. The food technology coaching session is intended for community-based micro food processors of Tarlac Province.

The coaching session aims to provide knowledge on basic food processing and food safety, and to give a feasible and smart approach to the identified setback in food-related processes. Among's Delight is the beneficiary from Anao, Tarlac.

<< Gulay ang Tulay sa Tagumpay! from p. 78

Gerald is currently working on developing his products to enhance their texture and shelf life. He started with nothing but backyard agri-crop harvests and intends to boost his sales by at least 40% in 2024. He aims to spur his business activity by improving his products, processes, and plans to invest in entrepreneurial activities for himself and his business. Based on his present business sales and success, he aspires to reach the 500,000.00 sales by 2027.

Over the short course of one year, he attended capacity-building seminars on food handling and processing. He is currently an OTOP NextGen beneficiary, which aims to enhance his products' overall design and brand identity. In addition, he is presently an active enrollee in the 2023 Kapatid Mentor ME (KMME) Program. The KMME program aims to teach microentrepreneurs different aspects of business operations, to scale up their enterprises, and to generate and spark economic activities. His perseverance and strong will to learn made Business Counselor Krizia Anne Dela Cruz to endorse Ambong's Delight as enrollee for this year's KMME Program.

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ONE Town, One Product (OTOP) Next Generation Orientation

Via Zoom Conference last June 14, 2023

In Photo: Mr. Gerald Badar during the One Town One Product (OTOP) Next Generation orientation of beneficiaries. He presented his product and expectations during the orientation.



One Town, One Product (OTOP) Next Gen Product Development Design Presentation

Via Zoom Conference last September 13, 2023

In Photos: Proposed product development designs for the label of Ambong's Delight Veggie Chips. Product development session includes brand logo design, and individual packaging design of kalabasa, kangkong, and kamote chips.



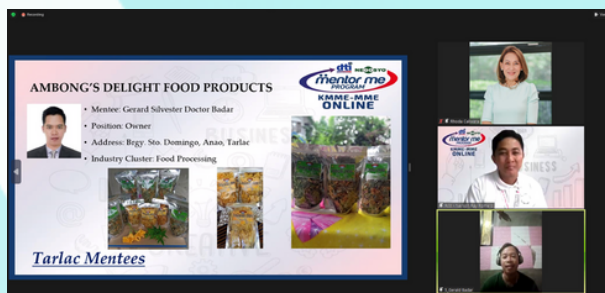
<< Gulay ang Tulay sa Tagumpay! from p. 79



Kapatid Mentor Me (KMME) Program Mentee Profiling

Profiling by: STIDS Lunabelle Sison | September 8, 2023

In Photos (Left to Right): Gerald Silvester Badar and STIDS Lunabelle Sison during the face-to-face Kapatid Mentor Me (KMME) Program Profiling. During the profiling, STIDS Sison ensured Badar's commitment in accomplishing the program.



Kapatid Mentor Me (KMME) Program Launching

Via Zoom Conference last October 2, 2023

Gerald shared that DTI's program combination led him and his mind to look for more opportunities for his business and encouraged him to become more successful in the food processing industry.

Ambong's Delight veggie chips are reaching various municipalities in Tarlac Province with the intention of making his products widely known locally in the Philippines. In the next five years, he envisions himself and his business becoming an FDA-certified manufacturing business and a quality exporter of veggie chips in the next ten years.

MSME Information

Business Name: AMBONG'S DELIGHT FOOD PRODUCTS

Business Address: Brgy. Sto. Domingo Anao, Tarlac

Name of Owner: Eduardo Butardo Santillan

FB Page: <https://www.facebook.com/ambongbadar>

Shopee: <https://shopee.ph/ambongbadar>

Email: badargerald33@gmail.com

The help I'll never waste

Tamtamz Food Stall

By: Anthony S. Corpuz, NC San Clemente, Tarlac

"There have been changes in my life after I received assistance from various government agencies. That is why I am very grateful and I will never waste their help," Rica Samonte – entrepreneur.

In 2007, Rica started her entrepreneurial journey by opening a sari-sari store. Unfortunately, it slowed down. In 2009, she decided to give up the sari-sari store and took over the ice tube retailing business of her uncle who went abroad.

Come 2016, While managing the ice tube business, her brother-in-law encouraged her to venture into food business. Rica noticed that there were only 3 food stalls in the Municipal Plaza. This prompted her to seek permission from the Local Government Unit (LGU) of San Clemente to operate a food stall in the area. The request was granted, opening a new chapter in her entrepreneurial journey.

Rica decided to franchise a food stall offering sisig and siomai rice meals, bentelogs (egg with rice), siopao, and buko juice. Yet, her path was not without its challenges. She struggled to sell most of the rice meals because most of her customers, primarily students and employees, were only looking for affordable and simple snacks.

As her franchise contract ended in 2018, Rica decided not to renew it and started her business model focusing on snacks affordable and appealing to the taste of her customers, like burgers, fries, dumplings, and cold drinks. With her strategy and hard work, she earned up to P6,000.00 daily.

Unexpectedly, the world soon faced with an unusual challenge – the COVID-19 pandemic. Rica had to close her food stall. However, that did not stop her. She started selling her snacks online. Though it was hard due to the restrictions brought about by the health protocols, she still did her best and managed to earn a daily profit of up to P500.00, quite lower than usual but enough to sustain her business and personal needs.

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Franchised Food Stall, Year 2016



New Food Kiosk provided by DOLE, Year 2021

<< The help that I'll never waste from p. 81



From L-R: LDRRMO II/ Executive Assistant Rodessa Solis, TIDS Ma. Fatima David, Rica Samonte owner of Tamtamz Food Stall, San Clemente Mayor Elma Macadamia and STIDS Maria Divina Gloria Ramos during the PPG Awarding of Livelihood Kits

Rica felt better about the state of her business when she was chosen as one of the recipients of the Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa (PPG) Program of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). PPG is a livelihood seeding and entrepreneurship development program which aims to assist individuals and entrepreneurs affected by fire incidents and other calamities, including health disasters like the COVID-19 pandemic.

Through this program, she received a business kit that includes an LPG Tank, LPG Regulator, 3-way Burner, Ice Box, and table and chairs. Additionally, she attended an Entrepreneurial Mind-setting Seminar conducted by the

Negosyo Center (NC) San Clemente under the same program. This further enhanced her knowledge of doing business.

She was also chosen by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) to receive a food kiosk. Furthermore, the LGU of San Clemente provided her with a table and chairs.

With these opportunities, she was able to expand her menu, adding trendy snacks like corndogs and noodles as well as the usual Filipino street foods like fishballs and kikiam. Her profit soared up to 5,000 pesos a day.

With this significant development, she was able to invest in additional appliances for the business as well as for their family, purchase a motorcycle and a tricycle, and save for equipment maintenance.

Rica Samonte's story shows that the help received from the government will have a significant impact if utilize properly and could make a way to have a better future.

MSME Information

Business Name: Tamtamz Food Stall
Business Address: Poblacion Sur,
San Clemente, Tarlac
Owner: Rica Samonte
Email: ricasamonte0821@gmail.com



Rica Samonte owner of Tamtamz Food Stall at San Clemente Plaza.



The sweet taste of success: Exploring milktea amidst pandemic

Tealerin Milktea House

By: Cathlyn D. Oledan, NC Olongapo City, Zambales

In the midst of the pandemic when many businesses were struggling to survive, Mr. Paolo Navarrosa decided to start his own milk tea business. Despite having no prior experience in the industry, he attended trainings to learn the ins and outs of the milk tea business. The trainings also led him to nearby milk tea suppliers.

In May 2020, Navarrosa contacted Business Counselor Cathlyn Oledan of Negosyo Center-Olongapo for online business name registration assistance. He registered his business under the name “Tealerin Milktea House”. They started their home-based milk tea business by selling their products to their distant relatives and

friends, and through online platforms. In February 2021, they opened their first physical store to reach out to their customers who are not always online. Then sometime in mid- 2021, they were able to open another shop. As time went by, one of their friends proposed opening their business for franchise. Since he has zero knowledge in franchising, Navarrosa studied the ins and outs of franchising. Their first franchisee is a relative who opened it at Simpson St. Gordon Heights, Olongapo City.



The Owner: Mr. Paolo Navarrosa
introducing their kopi series



L-R: Mr. Paolo Navarrosa and BC Cathlyn Oledan during the interview last October 18, 2022 at Tealerin Milktea House Main branch.

In October 2021, Navarrosa visited Negosyo Center-Olongapo for assistance in updating his business territorial scope. Business Counselor Oledan suggested registering his business logo with the Intellectual Property Office. Almost a year after, he was able to register his Trademark – “Tealerin Milktea”. A trademark protects business’ brand identity in the marketplace; registration of it gives the owner the exclusive rights to prevent others from using or exploiting the mark in any way; aside from being a source-identifier, differentiator, quality indicator, and an advertising device, a protective mark may also bring another stream of income to the owner through licensing or franchising. **

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<< The sweet taste of success from p. 83



Before & After: The first physical store was established last February 13, 2021 and located at Blk 11 Gordon Heights. Then, he moved to a bigger and more visible location on October 22, 2021 at Blk 10 Gordon Heights.

Milktea was his first product to introduce through online. Soon, he added varieties of products as he slowly opened his physical store; such as ice cream, takoyaki, fried noodles, coffee, etc.

Presently, Tealerin Milktea House has a total of seven (7) franchise stores in Olongapo and Zambales. From Navarro's initial sales of ₱30,000 net during pandemic, his sales increased to 110%. He also added ice cream and other food and beverage products to their stores. Through his milktea business, Navarro was able to buy some assets such as a car, additional machines for their stores, and a lot in Zambales.

Despite his achievements, he also encountered many challenges. He overcame it all because of his determination, adaptability, and passion. His advice to all starting up a business, *"Do it with passion. So whatever comes in your way, hindi ka magigive up agad."*

** (Source: <https://www.ipophil.gov.ph/trademark/>)



Tealerin Milktea House is rapidly growing, with seven franchise stores currently located in Olongapo City and Subic, Zambales. In addition to its stores in Olongapo and Subic, Tealerin Milktea House also has a location in Orani, Bataan.





New door of hopes for the young entrepreneur

Erika Louise Food Products

By: Jhoana Rosalyn M. Pona, NC Castillejos, Zambales

Every youth has the power to create their own destiny and future, but only a few dares to pursue it. Some find their dream job after college, but Erika Louise wanted to become an entrepreneur at a young age.

Erika Louise Corpus and her family started the Mama Lina Meat Shop in 2015. Their shop located at the heart of Castillejos, in Zambales. After finishing her degree in 2016, she took on the responsibility of managing the meat shop business. Unfortunately, the business took a hard hit on sales due to the African swine fever. Not long after, the family decided to close the meat store.

In January 2020, the family opted to open a meat processing business and named it 'Mama Lina by Erika Louise Food Products'. They situated their business within their residential compound in Nagbunga, Castillejos, Zambales. Mama Lina produces longganisa, tocino, marinated meats and barbecue, pork sisig, pork and beef tapa, and more.

The first two months of Erika's meat-processing business were really hard. This was even made harder when they had to close businesses for two months due to pandemic lockdowns.

The surge of opportunities followed after Erika was tapped by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Zambales through the Negosyo Center (NC) Castillejos. Mama Lina's was selected as the main supplier of livelihood packages for the Negosyo Serbisyo sa Barangay-Livelihood Seeding Program (NSB-LSP) in their barangay on June 25, 2020. Amidst the pandemic, Mama Lina's sales increased by 100% after participating in DTI's Rolling Store, Diskwento Caravan, and Christmas Bazaar. The same year, Erika became a graduate of DTI's Kapatid Mentor Me (KMME) Online program. KMME made a significant impact on her business after she implemented all the learnings and skills she learned from the program.

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Mama Lina joining the DTI's Diskwento Caravan on July 28, 2020 at Buenavista and Nagbayan Castillejos, Zambales

<< New door of hopes from p. 85



Product of Erika Louise Food Products (Mama Lina) - Longganisa, Tocino, Marinated meats/barbecue, Pork Sisig, Pork and Beef Tapa, and more

Presently, Mama Lina Food Products continues to expand their market. They were able to obtain distributors such as Sari-Sari Stores in Castillejos, Subic, Olongapo City, and Edrea's grocery store in San Antonio town. They also supply food products at the Philippine Merchant Marine Academy (PMMA) Cafeteria in San Antonio, Eduardo's Kitchenette, Momo Tea in Castillejos, and the AM Hotel in Barreto, Olongapo City.



The enterprise was also to innovate a new and healthy product, the rabbit meat longganisa.

Mama Lina aims to provide a livelihood for every aspiring entrepreneur and generate employment for the people of Zambales. Cuurently, the company has six production staff.

"I am very thankful to DTI - Zambales for opening a new door of hope for young entrepreneurs like me who are struggling to achieve their goals," Erika said.



Mama Lina's production area in Nagbunga, Castillejos, Zambales with 6 production staff



A century of devotion and success

San Narciso Woman's Club

By: Johanna M. Llabres, NC San Narciso, Zambales

A woman is the full circle. Within her is the power to create, nurture, and transform. – Diane Mariechild

Inspired by the National Federation of Women's Club of the Philippines (NFWC), the San Narciso Woman's Club (SNWC) was founded in 1921. Through generations, the SNWC has been active in extending social services and involving themselves in humanitarian activities such supplemental feeding, offering scholarships and providing medical assistance to the needy.

From 2019, the SNWC has been under the leadership of Regina Fuerte-Agadier, an active entrepreneur. Together with the group's 35 coordinators and 25 officers, Regina thought of a way for SNWC to sustain its purpose and continue their activities. They were fortunate to be beneficiaries of the Zambales Coconut Free Farmers Association (ZCFFA), one of the province's agri-providers that provides seminars and skills training, production materials, and other assistance. Through trainings, the SNWC was able to produce their own products such as fruit jams, taro and banana chips, and pickled onions among others. This humble beginning made the group earn weekly sales of ₱2,100.00

It was also through ZCFFA that the group was introduced to the services of the Department of Trade and Industry. The members of SNWC actively participated in the trainings and livelihood programs that the agency provided. In 2018, SNWC had break when they were asked by the San Narciso Local Government Unit to provide products for the locale's One Town One Product (OTOP) Center. After which, they also consistently participated in Diskwento Caravans and other trade exhibits spearheaded by DTI Zambales.



The photo here were Narcisenian women who may not be the founders of these two organizations but were active members of their time. The Cultural Mapping Team of San Narciso digitized both for conservation as part of the archival heritage of the municipality.

>> continued on p. 88



SNWC Products such as PINEAPPLE JAM, TARO CHIPS & BANANA CHIPS using the label from OTOP program

<< A century of devotion from p. 87



Opening of the Diskwento Caravan in San Narciso with RD Leonila Baluyut



Displaying of products in the San Narciso Pasalubong Center year 2019

In 2019, SNWC was enrolled in the Product Development Project under the OTOP program. The program helped the group to create new logos and better product designs which were enthusiastically accepted by their customers within and outside Zambales.

Presently, the group have added pickled ampalaya and onion, atsara mix, coco jam, and garlic chips in their production line. This made the group gain 50% additional sales per month. During high demands of their products, relatives of SNWC members would even come to work in the production. SNWC now supplies the Pasalubong Center in Iba town, Zambales and is a persistent trade fair participant of Zambales OTOP.ph Hub at Harbor Point, Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority.

Today, everyone is welcome to join as long as they are willing to follow instructions of the production process. With this, they don't only produce but also bond and share thoughts, ideas and experiences to better improve their products and be more competitive in the market.

"Alone, we can do little but together, we can do so much" – this is the quote which Mrs. Agadier adapt in leading the San Narciso Woman's Club.



"On behalf of San Narciso Woman's Club, we are so grateful to ZCFFA and most of all to DTI Zambales for the unwavering support. Our activities turned out a real success in which we were able to serve our community, give them love, hope and restore their faith in humanity. Thank you very much DTI for being a great blessing to us."

-Regina Fuerte Agadier, President/San Narciso Woman's Club



My baby steps to success

Arminione's Food Products

By: Johanna M. Llabres, NC San Narciso, Zambales

"Great works are performed not by strength but by perseverance." - Samuel Johanson.

Behind every small business, there's a story worth knowing. In December 2019, right after passing TESDA's NCII Assessment, Noli Ann Sahagun of La Paz, San Narciso Zambales started a small business with her passion in baking. Together with her husband, they began producing tarts and sold it in their neighborhood. Their tarts became a hit. Later the couple expanded their products to include cakes and donuts.

On August 24, 2020, Noli Ann was one of the 100 recipients of the DTI Zambales Negosyo Serbisyo sa Barangay - Livelihood Seeding Program. She received baking supplies such as stand mixer, all-purpose flour, cake flour and sugar. On the very same day, she registered her business at the Negosyo Center in San Narciso under the name of Arminione's Food Products.

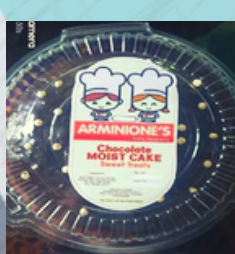
As a registered MSME, the growth in sales from the day she started is now unstoppable. From P3,200 for the first month, she now earns P5,600 average monthly. The impact of DTI's intervention made her products reach wider customers and generate higher income for their family.

Noli Ann exhibits the potential of becoming a successful entrepreneur, being persistent and hardworking. As a starting MSME, she equips herself with knowledge by attending to free webinars. Also, she has already developed her product label and logo and attended training programs on Basic Photography, Franchising Orientation, Product Analysis, FDA Orientation, Packaging & Labelling, Trends & Updates through DTI's OTOP Next Gen 2020 project.

>> continued on p. 90



Awarding of Baking Supplies Livelihood Kit under Negosyo Serbisyo sa Barangay program last August 24, 2020 with Kagawad Rosalinda Gruspe, Kap. Romulo Rivas, Ms. Ms. Noli Ann Ayonque Sahagun, And BC Johanna Llabres of Negosyo Center San Narciso



Arminione's Food Products using the provided new label designs under OTOP Next Gen program

<< My baby steps from p. 89



Awarding of labels under OTOP Next Gen program last February 5, 2021

Amidst the pandemic, Noli Ann continues to sustain the quality of her products and deliver these to her customers by following the standard health protocols set by the government. With the groundworks she has worked in 2020, Arminione's Food Products is ready to sustain the business with a new brand energy.

Today, she looks forward to a better sale despite the tighter government restrictions. Noli Ann perceives to reap the success in the near future through her efforts and with God's grace.

"Nagpapasalamat po ako sa DTI Zambales lalo na sa Negosyo Center-San Narciso sa pagbibigay sa akin ng oportunidad at pagbubukas ng mga pinto upang matuto at magpursige sa kabila ng hirap ng buhay upang maitaguyod ang pamilya kasabay ng pagtupad ng aking mga pangarap. God has its perfect timing. We have to trust Him." Noli shares.



Noli Ann Ayonque Sahagun
Owner/Arminione's Food Products



Moving up with moringa

San Antonio Moringa Processors Association
By: Reymart C. Lacson, NC San Antonio, Zambales

According to nutrition experts, malunggay (Moringa Oleifera) is one of the healthiest vegetables available on the market. There is no doubt that anything with malunggay is a top seller. It is for this reason that in 2012, the San Antonio Moringa Processors Association (SAMPa) was organized and registered.

Backed by baking skills, SAMPa introduced banana loaf, oatmeal cookies, polvoron, pastillas, and muffins, all filled with ground malunggay. Soon after, they introduced malunggay pancit canton noodles as a healthy alternative to ordinary canton noodles. Eventually, the noodle was turned into "shing-aling", which was made as its banner product.

SAMPa started its business with the assistance of LGU-San Antonio. It provided them with a production area and enrolled malunggay as the LGU's One Town-One Product. In its first year, SAMPa was producing once or twice a week, selling during the locality's market days and LGU events, and often peddling its products to friends and relatives.

Due to its persistence, SAMPa was awarded tools and equipment in 2015 under the Shared Service Facility (SSF) Project and the Small Enterprise Technology Upgrading Program (SET-UP) of DTI and DOST, respectively. They received equipment like spiral dough mixer, stainless steel working tables, refrigerator, gas stove, blender, oven, and a noodle maker machine. These interventions scaled up production and improved the quality of its products.

SAMPa President Nancy Fitel never ceased to look for opportunities to improve their enterprise. She attended seminars and training programs on food safety, costing and pricing, and greening practices, to name a few. The most significant is her participation in the Kapatid Mentor ME (KMME) Program, where she graduated with a concrete business plan. Somehow, that business plan has provided a pathway to better production, marketing, and management.

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Kapatid Mentor ME (KMME) Batch 1 Graduation ((L-R): Romell Isidro (MSMED Council Member), PD Leonila Baluyut (DTI Zambales), Nancy Fitel (San Antonio Moringa Processors Association), ARD Zorina Aldana (DTI Region 3), James T. Lee (MSMED-Olongapo President), Benjamin Farin Jr. (MSMED-Zambales President)

<< Moving up from p. 91



SAMPA in Action (Shing-a-ling Cooking and Packaging)

In 2017, business started to pick up as they regularly attended trade fairs and supplied the different pasalubong centers in the province. Shing-a-ling was a favorite item, and sales per month were averaging ₱30,000.

However, in 2020, operations were greatly affected due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While waiting for the economy to open up, they used their idle time to improve labels and packaging. During this time, SAMPA was awarded a livelihood package to augment material needs through the Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa (PPG) program.

Today, SAMPA is slowly bouncing back by attending provincial trade fairs and delivering in pasalubong centers and nearby schools. It has brought back its seven operators, working five days a week and generating an average monthly sale of ₱50,000. In March 2023, they registered their company with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

"Sipag, Tiyaga, at Pagkakaisa - 'yan ang sikreto sa matatag naming samahan. To all aspiring business owners, never give up and don't stop dreaming to reach your goals to success." - Ms. Nancy E. Fitel shared.



Inset (L-R): Banana Loaf, Shing-a-ling, Oatmeal Cookies and Pastillas



Savoring Bibingka Royale a la Cabanilla

Cabanilla's Homemade Food Retailing

By: Jonah M. Fortin, NC Sta. Cruz, Zambales

"If you have a dream, don't let anyone tell you that you can't achieve it. With hard work, dedication, and a little bit of help from others, anything is possible." -Will Smith

This quote is a powerful reminder that anyone can achieve their dreams, no matter how big or small. Mrs. Marites Cabanilla is a shining example of this, and her story is an inspiration for all. From a humble kitchen to the hearts of a thriving community, discover how Mrs. Cabanilla transformed her passion for making bibingkainto a flourishing enterprise, fueled by the support of the Department of Trade and Industry programs and an unwavering commitment to growth.

Mrs. Cabanilla, a passionate home cook, embarked on her entrepreneurial journey in 2016. Inspired by her talent, she decided to produce and sell bibingka, a popular rice cake traditionally enjoyed during holiday seasons and a sought-after pasalubong for families and friends. She branded her product Bibingka Royale. Initially, Mrs. Cabanilla began selling her delicious creation to her neighbors and within her barangay, and the positive response from customers encouraged her to turn her passion into a thriving business.

On May 5, 2021, the Negosyo Center Sta. Cruz, under the supervision of DTI Zambales, launched the Negosyo Serbisyo sa Barangay – Livelihood Seeding Program. This program aimed to empower local micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) by providing support and resources. Mrs. Cabanilla was fortunate to be selected as one of the beneficiaries of the program and was awarded a Food Processing Package. With the support, she was able to fulfill more orders and scale up her production. During peak seasons, she hires four additional workers to meet the growing demand from customers.

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(L-R) Mrs. Marites Cabanilla and DTI Zambales Business Development Division Chief Marilou Arcega during the awarding of NSB-LSP Livelihood Package

<< Savoring Bibingka from p. 93

Seeking further growth opportunities and an expanded market, Mrs. Cabanilla took advantage of another DTI program called OTOP – Next Gen, which focused on enhancing packaging and labeling. In November 2021, she proudly unveiled her products with the new labels provided through the program. The revamped packaging not only appealed to the locals but also attracted tourists. When DTI conducted a monitoring visit, Mrs. Cabanilla joyfully shared that her monthly sales had increased by an impressive 35%. This remarkable growth indicated that her business was thriving and gaining a larger market share.

Grateful for the invaluable assistance she received, Mrs. Cabanilla remains eager to further enhance her business acumen by participating in seminars and training sessions organized by DTI. She firmly believes that continuous learning is the key to unlocking greater success and increasing her earnings. With a resilient spirit and an unwavering commitment to her craft, Mrs. Cabanilla looks forward to a future filled with endless possibilities for her business.

“Success in management requires learning but talent alone won’t make you successful. Let God be a part of your business to become more successful,” – Mrs. Cabanilla shares.

Mrs. Cabanilla’s story is a reminder that anything is possible if you set your mind to it. So, if you have a dream, don’t give up on it. Work hard, stay focused, and never give up on your dreams.



Old packaging and label of Cabanilla’s Homemade Food



New Packaging of Cabanilla’s Bibingka Royale from OTOP Next- Gen



All day ulam ng bayan

Inang Oya's Food Products

By: Jhoana Rosalyn M. Pona, NC Castillejos, Zambales

The greatest legacy a mother can pass to her children is not wealth but the ability to survive and continue to live a better life.

Inspired by her mother's garlic longganisa recipe, Ma. Offera Soriano started her own meat processing business in 2018. Based in Castillejos, Zambales, Ma. Offera registered the business with the Department of Trade and Industry under the name Inang Oya's Food Products.

Inang Oya's longganisa comes in different variants like hot-spicy, garlic, and skinless sweet/hamonado. They are also offering Siomai and barbeque as new products. The products are being promoted with no preservatives and no meat extenders.

Some of their buyers claim that their longganisa is not just for breakfast but can be entree for lunch or dinner. With the feedback, they came up with the tag line "All Day Ulam ng Bayan". Inang Oya's products are mainly sold online. Most buyers are from the locality and the rest are from Metro Manila, Cavite, and Olongapo.

When Ma. Offera started her business, she never stopped developing herself and her products. She attended seminars and training programs, the most relevant of which is her participation in the Kapatid Mentor Me (KMME) Program in 2020 where she graduated with a concrete Business Plan on hand. She has also developed a brand logo and new product labels and packaging through the OTOP Next Generation Program.

These improvements brought her products to Provincial Trade Fairs such as Diskwento Caravan, MSME Week, and Rolling Stores generating an average sales increase of 200%. Currently, Inang Oya's has 3 production workers and 1 delivery rider.

"I do business not just for income but to give job opportunities.", Offera said.

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Maria Offera Soriano, owner of Inang Oya's Food Products



Ma. Offera Soriano during the Kapatid Mentor Me (KMME) Program online (The New Normal) Launching in July 2020

<< All day ulam ng bayan from p. 95



Inang Oya's Specialties: Garlic Longanisa, Skinless Longanisa, Pork Tocino, and siomai

Seeing more opportunities in the food business, Ms. Soriano expanded her product line from meat products to macaroons and pastillas which are sold at thru their Facebook page.

Inang Oya's received livelihood assistance through the DTT's Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangan at Ginhawa (PPG) Program providing her with meat processing equipment like pressure cooker, microwave, stand mixer and other supplies in 2020. Before, she only uses one mixer, and it takes a long time to produce more ingredients needed for the products. The additional equipment/tools made it easy to produce bulk orders in a shorter period.

Each day, Ms. Soriano shows a passion for doing better and delivers the best products she can. She looks forward to being an FDA-registered food handler/producer very soon.

She continues to share the taste of Inang Oya's Food Products as she participated in the Tagpuan sa "Subic Ay!" trade fair and Paskuhan Fair both in Subic in November and December 2022.

Recently, Inang Oya's participated in the Kadiwa Fair at Ayala Mall, Subic Bay in February 2023 and Castillejos Food Fair in March- April 2023 at Municipal Ground, Castillejos, Zambales.

"My mother has positively impacted my life with her legacy and taught me the importance of being independent and will continue and pass it on to the next generation." Offera said.



Ms. Ma. Offera Soriano Participates the Kadiwa Fair at Ayala Mall, Subic Bay



A mother's legacy

Marlyn's Kakanin

By: Katherine U. Dizon, NC San Marcelino, Zambales

"Family legacy is not what you leave to your children, it's what you leave in your children that matters."

Marilyn Siapco is a mother of four who strives to give the best to her children. She helps her husband by selling fruits and vegetables in the early 2000s but she was not able to sustain this livelihood because there were too many vendors selling the same thing.

She tried her luck in the native delicacies business by making rice cakes from glutinous rice and cassava. Fortunately, there were only few rice cake sellers in the market that time so her food processing venture became a hit. Her three children would help her in manning their stall.



Ms. Macoliza MalaMs. Marilyn Siapco with her products at the local market of San Marcelino, Zambales flexing her crochet handmade top

She registered Marlyn's Kakanin on October 4, 2016 at the Department of Trade and Industry Zambales Provincial Office and was oriented with the programs by the agency. She was invited to seminars like Food Safety and Hygiene Orientation, Costing and Pricing Seminar, and Greening the Enterprise to name a few. She was also encouraged to enroll in the Kapatid Mentor Me Program in 2018.

On November 27, 2020, she was identified by Negosyo Center San Marcelino as one of the beneficiaries for the Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbabago at Ginhawa Program and was awarded a baking livelihood package consisting of 2 sacks of sugar, 50 kilos of flour and cans of condensed milk to re-stimulate her rice cake business during the Covid19 pandemic. The awarding serendipitously coincided with the yuletide season and she was able to garner sales of up to P 30,000 which she used as revolving capital for the coming year and helped her retain her 5 employees.

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Ms. Marilyn Siapco with Division Chief Marilou Arcega, STIDS Gilbert Villanueva and BC Katherine Dizon during the PPG Livelihood Kit Awarding on November 27, 2020 at the Negosyo Center San Marcelino, Zambales

<< A mother's legacy from p. 97

Marilyn then enrolled in the 2021 One Town-One Product Development Program for her labelling and packaging needs firmly believing that to get ahead in her industry, one must continuously innovate and improve her products. She was provided with 5 labels for her special cassava cake, special puto pao, special puto cheese, sapin-sapin and bibingka. Currently she is using these labels for her online and special orders.

She vigorously trained her four children in making these native delicacies and encouraged them to venture and make a name for themselves in the rice cake industry. Currently, three of her children have established their own rice cake businesses at their town's public market. Today, the Siapcos are at the number one go-to store for delicious native tummy fillers in the municipality of San Marcelino.

"Patuloy lang sa pagnenegosyo, huwag sumuko kahit na may pagkakataon na hindi mabili ang mga paninda at lagi lang isama si Lord sa lahat ng bagay." -Marilyn Siapco



Label before OTOP Prodev



OTOP Prodev Labels awarded in October 2021 for special puto cheese, cassava cake, special puto pao, sapin-sapin and special rice cake for Marlyn's Kakanin.



Cultivating nature's gift

Zambales Coconut Free Farmers Association (ZCFFA)

By: Johanna M. Llabres, NC San Narciso, Zambales



ZCFFA production area/office located at Brgy. Natividad, San Narciso, Zambales.

"If you truly love nature, you will find beauty everywhere"
– Vincent Van Gogh.

This was exemplified by Mr. and Mrs. Virgilio and Regina Agadier, who generously made their private land available for conversion into a farm. Here, they actively encouraged members of their association to cultivate and nurture their own raw materials. Their dedication to harnessing nature's offerings played a pivotal role in maintaining low production costs, as nearly all essential resources were readily accessible right on the farm.

The Zambales Coconut Free Farmers Association (ZCFFA) is one of the many agri-providers in the province of Zambales. Located in Barangay Natividad, San Narciso, the group is led by Mr. Orlando Pampolino with their 110 members working together as one.

ZCFFA members started to produce papaya and onion pickles in 2013 using only traditional tools and techniques. They offered their products to balikbayans who fancied Filipino foods. A year after, they were able to participate in their town's Trade Fair Bukid which was organized by the Department of Agrarian Reform

In 2016, ZCFFA became a beneficiary of the Department of Trade & Industry (DTI) Zambales' Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program. With the program, the group was provided with various capability and skills training, including product and market development, business counselling, marketing, Food and Drug License to Operate processing, product analysis, and labeling. The members devoted an enormous amount of hard work to maintain the quality of their products.

Later, the organization was identified as a beneficiary for the transfer of a Shared Service Facility (SSF) by DTI. The SSF is a program where DTI provides equipment to qualified MSMEs or cooperatives to improve their production. The equipment received includes a sterilizer, tumbler mixer, pulverizer, upright chiller, stainless steel working table, stock pot with steamer, and heavy-duty LPG cooking stove. These were originally granted to another cooperative but were transferred to ZCFFA due to the former's business woes. Presently, the acquired equipment helps ZCFFA to produce new products such as chili condiments and assorted chips which eventually increased their production volume.

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September 6, 2021 – SSF Turnover Ceremony at Cabangan, Zambales with DC Marilou Arcega (back left), PD Enrique Tacbad (2nd to the back-left), Mayor Ronald F. Apostol (second to the back-right), STIDS Cynthia Jaravata (back right), ZCFFA Pres. Orlando Pampolino (front left), Virgilio Agadier (front second to the left), Corazon Gallardo (front middle), Nancy Fitel (front 3rd to the front right), Regina Agadier (front 2nd to the right), & Apolinario Rapada (front right)

<< Cultivating nature's gift from p. 99



December 14, 2020 – Awarding of PPG Livelihood package with STDS Cynthia Jaravata (left), Virgilio Agadier(middle) and BC Johanna Llabres (right) of Negosyo Center San Narciso.

Through the intervention of Negosyo Center – San Narciso in 2019, they were identified and enrolled in DTT's One Town One Product (OTOP) program which provided them with new label designs. In 2020, they were awarded with livelihood kits (packaging materials such as Jars and sealing tools) under the DTT's Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa program.

As a result of improved production, excellent service to customers and continuous assistance of DTI, ZCFFA now produces approximately 300 bottles of chili products and 100 packs of chips per day. Their sales continued to grow

from ₱10,000 pesos from the year they started to ₱55,000- ₱100,000 pesos per month. With their current line of products such as coco jam, pickled ampalaya, atsara mixed, garlic chips and spiced vinegar, they are consistently supplying the OTOP Hub at Harbor Point Ayala Mall, SBMA, Pasalubong Center, Iba, Zambales and at the Mango Highway in San Narciso, Zambales. They are also a regular participant of DTI-3's annual Likha ng Central Luzon Trade Fair in SM Megamall where they earn average sales of 40,000 pesos.

Sales may go up and down, but the service stays forever. This was proven when ZCFFA adopted the San Narciso Woman's Club (SNWC) in 2015 as their beneficiary to sustain the advocacies and humanitarian activities of the group. SNWC later became a part of the ZCFFAs' production activities. ZCFFA also provided the group with seminars, skills training, use of equipment, provision of raw materials, and other assistance for them to have their own source of income.

"Yes, I know that it is hard. It's a lot of work. What I can say is, that's life. Besides, look on the bright side. You get to do what you want and do it your way. There's just one catch, you've got to start somewhere. Ideas and opportunities don't just materialize out of thin air." – ZCFFA Secretary Regina Agadier said.

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October 26-30, 2022 – Likha ng Central Luzon Tradefair at SM Megamall

<< Cultivating nature's gift from p. 100

It never ceases to amaze the group how much time people waste searching endlessly for magic shortcuts to entrepreneurial success and fulfillment when the only real path is staring them right in the face because real entrepreneurs who start real businesses and employ real people will provide real products and services to real customers.

MSME Information

Business Name: Zambales Coconut Free Farmers Association (ZCFFA)

Business Address: Barangay Natividad, San Narciso, Zambales

Name of Head: Mr. Orlando Pampolino

FB Page: <https://www.facebook.com/ZCFFA>

Email: reginaagadier@gmail.com

Contact numbers: 09982124499



PRODUCTS OF ZCFFA

Non-Food MSMEs Sector

Couplepreneur – The perfect duo in life and business

Bleue R Enterprises

By: Gizel O. Dukha, NC Baler, Aurora

"It is always better when we're together, to have and to hold, in life and in business." Isn't it a perfect vow for a couplepreneurs? A husband and wife tandem in raising both their family and a business of their own.

This is the story of a man with a talent and passion for drawing who matches a woman who loves sports and is fond of collecting stationery and other school and office stuff, Mr. and Mrs. Reuel and Jayleen Bitong.



New Bleue R Enterprises Building.

During his time at the Far Eastern University in Manila, Reuel's artistic abilities significantly progressed. Living near Recto Avenue which is renowned for its printing services, he gained insights into screen-printing techniques from local shops. In contrast, Jayleen, a graduate of BSSED Major in MAPEH from the University of the Cordilleras in Baguio City, exhibited the typical traits of a dedicated teacher. She consistently needs teaching and recording materials, demonstrating a passion for collecting school supplies, purchased with her own funds before each school year started.

Their romance started when Jayleen sought the services of Reuel to print their school's intramural shirts to which Reuel obliged. What started a casual conversation through Facebook messenger blossomed into a love affair which eventually led to the church altar.

In July of 2014, just three months after the couple's wedding, Reuel established Bleue R Enterprises with his mere skills in screen printing. The name BLEUE R was derived from the reversed letters of his name, "Reuel B." The newlywed couple rented a small house then and acquired only meager equipment for their business - one computer, printer, PVC cutter, paper cutter, and mug press for mug printing. They were both government employees but had efficiently managed their time to produce orders after their working hours. Like most profitable business journeys, they also encountered several challenges along the way. For them, the more hurdles they faced, the more flexible and innovative they had to be to keep their firm going. The business continued until it started capturing local customers within the province, primarily walk-in and institutional buyers.

Jayleen decided to leave her teaching career during her second pregnancy in year 2016 so that she could also supervise their business operations. They also bought the most modern tarpaulin printer capable of printing the tiniest detail through the help of their family and friends, who lent them money amounting to five hundred thousand pesos (P500,000.00) and found a new location for their business.

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<< Couplepreneur from p. 103

In 2016, their connection with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) – Aurora Provincial Office started as the Negosyo Center Baler tapped them to be the trainer for the T-shirt printing training for the souvenir shop owners. During this time, Blue R Enterprises was also granted a loan from DTI's financing arm, the Small Business Corporation (SB Corp.), and DOST SET-UP Program, they were able to buy the first-ever multi-head embroidery machine in Baler. Through rigorous training sessions and seminars facilitated by organizations like DTI and DOLE.

In 2017, piloting the DTI's Kapatid Mentor Micro Enterprise (KMME) Program in the province, Blue R Enterprises, represented by Jayleen, became one of the mentees where she gained relevant learnings on different aspects of business management and has explored more opportunities to grow and expand. Through KMME, she has met some business personalities who served as their mentors for the ten learning sessions of the program.

After KMME, Jayleen never stopped learning and continuously improved her management skills and capability to upgrade their business operations through DTI's neverending invitations to training and seminars. The booming tourism industry in Baler played a significant role in their progress. Encouraged by their growth, they applied for a loan again with SB Corp. This financial aid was pivotal in constructing their own building, a project that commenced in 2019. Despite the challenges posed by the global pandemic in 2020, they persevered, overcoming obstacles and ensuring the continuity of their business and building construction.

Blue R Enterprises continued innovating its products and processes. This time, Jayleen represented the company again as one of the participants under the Integrated Digital Marketing Training Program (IDMTP) of DTI and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), in partnership with Facebook, Lazada, and Shopee, under the US Government's Women's Global Development and Prosperity (W-GDP) Initiative. This activity aims to empower women entrepreneurs (WEs) to expand their businesses through capacity building and become effective digital marketers, online sellers, and digital payment users. Through this, Blue R became more aggressive in posting its products on different social media platforms, which helped them gain more customers.

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Old shop and production area (left side) versus the new Blue R Enterprises Building (right side) with their employees

<< Couplepreneur from p. 104

Since then, the company has offered more printing services for T-shirts, tarpaulins, stickers, CAD, lanyards, invitations, eco bags, button pins, umbrellas, PVC IDs, large format scanning, offset printing, logo designing, embroidery services and manufacturing of signages, plaque, trophy, and other corporate and souvenir items. They also retailed textiles, clothing, footwear, leather goods, office and school supplies, and sporting and athletic goods. With the couple's passion and commitment to business, they were able to position Blue R Enterprises as one of the most sought-after companies in terms of printing services in Aurora.

Blue R Enterprises also participated in many capacity development programs offered by relevant agencies, which made them more competitive in the industry. Reaping the fruit of their labor, Blue R Enterprises was recognized as the Regional Winner in the 2021 and 2023 Productivity Olympics under the Service Sector - Small Enterprise Category.



The couple, Mr. and Mrs. Bitong of Blue R Enterprises, won the 2021 and 2023 Regional Productivity Olympics conducted by the Department of Labor and Employment.

Productivity Olympics is a national competition organized by the National Wages and Productivity Commission in coordination with the 16 Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Boards for best productivity practices of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSME) nationwide.

Giving back to the community, Blue R Enterprises has also been doing social practices and outreach programs every year. The "Blue R Outreach Program and Back to School Program" have been conducted every month of June, celebrating the birth month of Reuel.

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Mr. Reuel Bitong, the man on the left, during their outreach programs and social practices. The "Blue R Outreach Program and Back to School Program" have been conducted every month of June celebrating the birth month of Mr. Bitong.

Today, with the vision to have the most extensive and modern printing services and production facilities in Aurora, providing quality products and services, Bleue R Enterprises has already grown the business. It now has three branches in Baler, Maria Aurora, and Dipaculao. Its manpower portfolio has also increased from 6 to 28 employees with the right benefits and incentives. Bleue R has also built a three-storey residential and commercial building considered the main branch to house their large equipment and site for bulk productions.

With the humble beginnings and passionate heart of Mr. And Mrs. Bitong, Bleu R Enterprises is now unstoppable. Together as a couple, they are building a life and a business empire.

"Every day, we draw inspiration from our children. Their presence reminds us of our purpose and our responsibility to create a legacy from them. We consider ourselves immensely fortunate to possess talent, strength, good health, and wisdom. Above all, we acknowledge the constant guidance and blessings from the Almighty, illuminating our path and fueling our determination. With gratitude and unwavering commitment."- Reuel and Javleen

Name of Enterprise: BLEUE R Enterprises

Owner: Javleen Maure Bitong

Address: Succlavin, Baler, Aurora

FB page/Email: BLEUE R ENTERPRISES/ bleuerInathan@gmail.com

Contact numbers: 09688883235



Blue R Enterprises also catered the printing of jackets for Top 30 Leaders on LINKEDIN (left photo), as well as the t-shirts used in DTI-3 2023 Sports fest (upper photo).

Weaving dreams in a craft

JML Trading

By: Lizette A. Befetel, NC Balanga City (LGU), Bataan

"Weaving Her Dreams" is a powerful story of determination and resilience that follows the journey of Ma. Lourdes Jennifer Villaroman, a mompreneur who transformed her passion into a successful business called JML Trading. Despite facing challenges and uncertainties, she managed to build her business.

Jenny, as she was fondly called, was exposed early into their family's business and this greatly influenced her entrepreneurial spirit. Growing up, she saw her mother engage in buy-and-sell activities and her aunt manage a hardware store. These experiences played a crucial role in shaping her dreams. Her hands-on involvement with her aunt's hardware business laid the foundation for her future entrepreneurial endeavors.

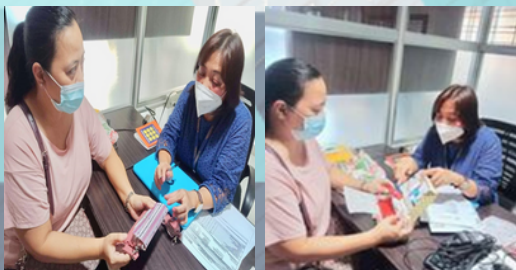
Initially, she started as an online seller of Korean skincare products. However, finding more free time when the pandemic hit in 2020, she decided to explore her creative side by watching YouTube tutorials on Arts and Crafts. This led to the discovery of her talent for crafting various items.

Throughout her journey, her loving husband and devoted son have been a constant source of inspiration, supporting her in managing the business while dedicating time also as a volunteer at the Philippine Red Cross.

Frequent trips to the Negosyo Center in Balanga City, coupled with the support and guidance of Business Counselor (BC) Lizette A. Befetel, a trusted family friend and Trade and Industry Development Analyst, have proven to be priceless assets for Jenny. BC Lizette has offered her crucial business insights and ensured she remained well-informed about initiatives that could enhance the prospects of her venture.

As a result of the series of counseling, Jenny actively participated in trade fairs, such as the Bataan Trade Fairs, which significantly boosted her sales of 20% as well as income generated and enabled her to hire an employee for selling at these events. Jenny also expanded her knowledge by attending webinars on various topics, including financial matters and business management.

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Ms. Jenny Lenon of JML Trading visited Negosyo Center Balanga City to sought assistance with TIDA NC Lizette A. Befetel for her product enhancement/development on November 3, 2022.

<< Weaving dreams in a craft from p. 107

A significant milestone in her entrepreneurial journey was her selection as a Mentee in the Department of Trade and Industry's Kapatid Mentor Me Program 2023 Batch 1, a coaching and mentoring approach where large corporations teach MSMEs on different aspects of business operations.

She then applied her KMME learnings in her business which boosted a 20% growth income from increased sales in trade fairs and e-commerce. Referrals from previous clients also grew her market and generated jobs locally. Recently, she applied for registration of her logo with the Intellectual Property Office for added business protection and security.

Jenny's story serves as an inspiring example of how determination, a thirst for knowledge, and the right support network can transform dreams into reality in the world of entrepreneurship.

MSME Information

Name of Enterprise: JML Trading

Owner: Ma. Lourdes Jennifer Villaroman Lenon

Address: Tuyo, Balanga City, Bataan

FB Page: <https://www.facebook.com/myjuanderfulcreations>

Contact Number: 09499954750



JML Trading owner Ms. Jenny Lenon with TIDA NC Lizette A. Befetel, Balanga City LGU- CEIDO OIC Head Edmer C. Fabian and Balanga City Counselor Jowee N. Zabala holding a wallet during the Maagang Pasko Diskwento Caravan at Plaza Mayor de Balanga on November 15-16, 2022.



The owner of JML Trading, Ms. Jenny Lenon at Robinson's Galleria during the Likha ng Bataeno Trade Fair on December 9-11, 2022

Change is a good thing

DenDen Sari-Sari Store

By: Marc Lindon S. Lazaro, NC Hagonoy, Bulacan



Ma. Cecilia Villadarez, a beneficiary of Livelihood Seeding Program- Negosyo Serbisyo sa Barangay transacting with a customer at DenDen Sari-Sari Store, Barangay San Pascual, Hagonoy

Ma. Cecilia Villadarez is the owner of DenDen Sari-Sari Store located at the far end of Barangay San Pascual, Hagonoy, Bulacan. She used to own a computer shop, which she later converted into an eatery, and eventually into a sari-sari store when the pandemic hit. Like many small business owners, Cecilia faced several challenges, including procuring goods due to a shortage of supplies, stiff competition, and limited capital. However, she never gave up and continued to explore ways to sustain her business.

In April 2022, Cecilia's fortunes changed when she was introduced to DTI's Livelihood Seeding Program - Negosyo Serbisyo Sa Barangay (LSP-NSB) through the Negosyo Center Hagonoy. The program, which provides livelihood kits to qualified individuals affected by calamities and health disasters, offered Cecilia a package worth P13,000.

With the help of the LSP-NSB program, Cecilia was able to improve her business significantly. Her initial capital of Php 20,000 increased by 65%, and she now has a capital of Php 33,000. Her sales also increased by 75%, which allowed her to provide better support to her growing children.

Cecilia credits the LSP-NSB program through the Negosyo Center for the success of her business. She says that the program has helped her source essential goods for her sari-sari store, which has attracted more customers. She was also able to use the additional capital to purchase more goods and expand her business. Cecilia's story is an excellent example of how DTI programs like the LSP-NSB can help small business owners like her overcome challenges and succeed.

Today, Cecilia's sari-sari store is thriving, and she continues to provide for her family's needs. She hopes to expand her business further and contribute to the local community's growth and development. Cecilia's story is a testament to her determination and resilience and is an inspiration to other small business owners facing similar challenges.

Cecilia also said that through her business she can now sustain her family's needs. *"Malaking tulong po ang naibigay ni DTI lalo na po at nadagdagan ang aming mga paninda"* Cecilia shared.



Ma. Cecilia Villadarez, a beneficiary of Livelihood Seeding Program- Negosyo Serbisyo sa Barangay (LSP-NSB) displays the items she received from the program at DenDen Sari-Sari Store, Barangay San Pascual, Hagonoy



DTI-Bulacan Provincial Director Edna D. Dizon, Division Chief Maria Cristina V. Valenzuela, Ma. Cecilia Villadarez, LSP-NSB beneficiary, together with other beneficiaries from Barangay San Pascual, Hagonoy receives livelihood assistance on April 27, 2022 at the DTI- Bulacan Provincial Office, City of Malolos, Bulacan.

Limitless: Dreaming without ceasing

Bheng Sari-sari Store

By: Daniela Paula O. Uy, NC Pandi, Bulacan



Ms. Rosita E. Tolentino, owner of Bheng Sari-Sari Store located at Barangay Baka-Bakahan, Pandi, Bulacan, proudly showcases her childhood dream business.

“Dreaming knows no limit” that’s what Rosita E. Tolentino, owner of “Bheng Sari-Sari Store” proves as she continuously pursues her childhood dream of owning a sari-sari store.

At the age of 28, Rosita had the opportunity to work abroad and provide for her two children as a single mother. Toiling for 18 years as a caregiver, she never forgets her dream of putting up her own business. And soon after Rosita’s eldest son graduated from college and started working, she decided to go back to the Philippines and continue to provide for her family by pursuing her business dream.

In 2014, Rosita started a sari-sari store at the front of their house using the money she was able to save from working abroad and named it *“Bheng Sari-sari Store”*. Since then, she started to face a lot of challenges.

In 2020, just when Rosita thought her business was already stable, problems gradually appeared. One of the challenges that had a big impact on her business was when one of her clients who bought products on credit didn’t pay her back. Moreover, the same year COVID-19 hit, caused economic shock, leaving small-business owners including Rosita struggling.

Despite the situation, Rosita’s faith in her dream remains steadfast and soon brings hope when she was introduced to the Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginawa (PPG) program of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) through the Negosyo Center in Pandi, Bulacan. The program, which provides livelihood kits to qualified individuals affected by calamities and health disasters granted Rosita a Sari-Sari Store package worth P10,000 on December 16, 2022.

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Ms. Rosita Tolentino, owner of Bheng Sari-Sari Store (in white) receives livelihood kit under the Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginawa (PPG) program on December 16, 2022 at Barangay Bagbaguin, City of Meycauayan, Bulacan.

<< Limitless from p. 110

Through the PPG program, Rosita's business was able to recover. Her capital increased by 20% and sales increased by 50%, which according to her is enough to support their family's needs and very timely for her youngest son's graduation expenses.

Moreover, Rosita was able to expand her business, in fact, she now has a snack stand beside her store offering burgers and drinks.

Rosita is truly proud to share that from a livelihood kit that she received, she was able to sustain her business. *"Salamat, maraming salamat sa tulong, malaking tulong ito para sa amin."* Rosita said.

Rosita's story is proof of how DTI programs like PPG were able to change lives by empowering women entrepreneurs.



Negosyo Center- Pandi, Business Counselor Daniela Uy (in blue and white) interviews Ms. Rosita Tolentino, owner of Bheng Sari-Sari Store (in yellow) during the monitoring and evaluation of Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa (PPG) program at Barangay Baka-Bakahan, Pandi, Bulacan



Dreaming has no age limit

Anita's Sari-sari Store

By: Reymart L. Cruz, NC Balagtas, Bulacan

Just because you're retiring doesn't mean you have to stop dreaming. For Anita T. Lumindas, a senior citizen who owned a sari-sari store in Barangay Dalig, Balagtas, Bulacan, age is just a number. According to Anita, age should not be a factor by which we measure our capacity to dream and to provide for our family.

Anita has been managing her sari-sari store for almost six years, offering goods such as candies, biscuits, soft drinks, and chocolates. She was contented with what her business was doing because somehow, she was able to provide for her family. However, due to mobility restrictions during the peak of the pandemic and other unfortunate circumstances, her business operation was hampered which resulted in losses of income. Despite the unfortunate situation, Anita did not let discouragement drag her down, instead of focusing on the pandemic she concentrated her time on thinking of ways how to help her business survive.

Despite Anita's age and the Covid-19 risk, she continued to move forward and eventually saw the pandemic as an opportunity. She saw the change in demand for essential products, thus, Anita decided to shift to selling essential goods. She used her savings to start selling different kinds of essential goods including canned goods, laundry soap, purified drinking water, and rice. From then on, she saw that her business was getting stable but needed additional capital to sustain its operation.

In March 2021, Anita decided to visit the Negosyo Center (NC) in Balagtas, Bulacan to register her business name, "Anita's Sari- Sari Store". During her visit, she discovered that the Department of Trade and Industry Bulacan Provincial Office (DTI Bulacan) has many programs that can help and guide her in sustaining her business. She was also informed about the webinars that can help her in managing her business and was also coached by NC Business Counsellor Reymart Cruz about financing and marketing. Moreover, with the help of the center, Anita was able to receive a Sari-Sari Store package worth P13,000 from the Livelihood Seeding Program-Negosyo Serbisyo sa Barangay (LSP-NSB) on April 27, 2022. The LSP-NSB is a program of DTI that aims to provide a package of livelihood assistance that could aid qualified calamity-affected individuals in restoring and improving their businesses.

According to Anita, the program has helped her improve and sustain her business. From an initial capital of Php10,000, her capital increased by 130%. She also added that her sales increased by 70% and all because of the assistance she received from the LSP-NSB program.

Moreover, she also learned how to manage her business better, be prepared when unforeseen circumstances arise, and to appreciate the importance of having a registered business.

From beating the negative impact of the pandemic to discovering ways to sustain her business, Anita T. Lumindas proves that there is a truth in the saying, "*Age is just a number*".



Mr. Ignacio Lumindas and Mrs. Anita T. Lumindas, owner of Anita's Sari-Sari Store during the monitoring of the Livelihood Seeding Program- Negosyo Serbisyo sa Barangay (LSP- NSB) beneficiaries on June 22, 2023 at Barangay Dalig, Balagtas, Bulacan.

Diligence of a good father

Dang's and Jeff Sari-sari Store

By: Daniela Paula O. Uy, NC Pandi, Bulacan

Fatherhood entails great responsibilities, but for Rolando G. Batas it is the most rewarding job, a title that must be diligently earned. From providing food on the table and a roof over his children's head, it's something Rolando is truly proud of, being able to provide continuously for his family through his sari-sari store business.

Rolando, a former factory worker at a plastic manufacturing company, faced challenging times as the company's business operations gradually declined, leading to its eventual closure. With the loss of his job, Rolando and his family were confronted with the uncertainty of being without a stable source of income, putting their livelihood and well-being at risk.

Despite the situation, Rolando remained positive. He set aside his own worries, stress, personal struggles, and never let his thoughts get in his own way. Thus, from the money he has saved from years of working, he decided to take the risk and put up a sari-sari store business in 2018 at the front of their house in Pandi, Bulacan and named it "Dang's & Jeff Sari-Sari Store".

Rolando at first, was contented with what his business is doing, because somehow, he was able to provide for his family and was able to support his son's special needs. But things changed when the COVID-19 pandemic started in 2020. It was indeed a difficult journey to sustain a small business due to limited capital and mobility restrictions brought by the pandemic. In addition, Rolando is also battling with a medical condition which made things more difficult for him. Despite Rolando's situation he diligently pursued his sari-sari store business. From then, Rolandos' store became the primary source of income for his family.



Mr. Rolando G. Batas (in white), together with other endorsed beneficiaries, preparing the documentary requirements and filling out the Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa (PPG) Application Form at DTI Negosyo Center in Pandi, Bulacan.



Mr. Rolando G. Batas, the owner of Dang's and Jeff Sari-sari Store, receives the voucher for his livelihood kit under the Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa (PPG) Program on February 14, 2023, at DTI Provincial Office, City of Malolos, Bulacan.

In 2022, fortune smiled at Rolando when he was endorsed as one of the beneficiaries of the Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa (PPG) program of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) by the LGU of Pandi through the Business Permit and Licensing Office (BPLO). The program, which aims to help small businesses affected by natural calamities and health disasters, provided Rolando with a Sari-Sari Store package worth P10,000.00 on February 14, 2023.

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Through the PPG Program, Rolando's capital increased by 200%, and sales also increased by 50%. Moreover, Rolando said the program was able to help him sustain his business. He also said that he learned how to manage his business and expenses better through the entrepreneurship development seminar that he has attended.

These drastic changes put his business in a growing and sustainable state. At this time, Rolando is no longer lacking financial support for his family with the help of the PPG Program. Moreover, he's now able to save extra money for emergencies and future expenses.

"Nagpapasalamat ako samin napunta ang package, salamat po, muntik na pong hindi makuha dahil ako ang nag aalaga sa anak kong may special needs, salamat po sa pagpupursigi ng DTI, napakalaking tulong sa aming tindahan." Rolando gratefully said.



Mr. Rolando G. Batas, the owner of Dang's and Jeff Sari-sari Store, during the monitoring of the Livelihood Seeding Program- Negosyo Serbisyo sa Barangay (LSP- NSB) beneficiaries on July 17, 2023, at Pandi, Bulacan.

Unconditional: A mother's dream

Vicky's Sari-Sari Store

By: Daniela Paula O. Uy, NC Pandi, Bulacan



Ms. Rebeca Lozada (in white, seated), owner of Vicky's Sari-sari Store, attends interview and prepares her business' documentary requirements as part of Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa (PPG) profiling at Negosyo Center in Pandi, Bulacan.

It is every parent's dream to see their children have happy and fulfilling lives in the future. For Rebecca S. Lozada and her husband, education is the most priceless inheritance they can give to their three children to secure their future. This is the reason why Rebecca and her husband worked hard to double their income to provide for their children's needs. Rebecca's husband is a factory worker while she runs a small sari-sari store in Pandi, Bulacan.

It was not easy for the couple to juggle work and business. The COVID-19 pandemic even worsened their financial situation. Just like other businesses, their business operation was hampered due to impositions of community quarantines. Even her husband's work was also adversely affected that led to losses of income.

Struggling to provide for their family, Rebecca's dreams for her children remained steadfast. Instead of feeling helpless and overwhelmed by stress and anxiety, she remained confident that eventually she will find solution to their situation.

Timely, while Rebecca is in the midst of financial crisis, on May 2022, the Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa (PPG) program of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) was introduced to her by the Negosyo Center in Pandi, Bulacan. The said program aims to help small businesses affected by Covid-19 to recover through the provision of livelihood assistance.

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Negosyo Center- Pandi, Business Counsellor Daniela Uy (in orange) provides business counseling to Ms. Rebeca Lozada, owner of Vicky's Sari-Sari Store (in pink) during the monitoring and evaluation of Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa (PPG) program at Barangay Bunsuran III, Pandi, Bulacan.

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Fortunately, she passed the qualification and was chosen as one of the beneficiaries of the program and received a Sari-Sari Store package worth P10,000.00 on December 16, 2022.

Through the help of the PPG Program, Rebecca's capital and sales increased by 50%. She added that apart from being able to expand the variety of goods she was able to sell, she was also able to add printing and photocopying services.

According to Rebecca, the program has been an instrument to relieve their financial distress. *"Nakatulong po ng malaki ang package ng DTI, maraming maraming salamat po,"* Rebecca said.

Rebecca's story shows how DTI programs including PPG has great impact on the journey to achieving not only an entrepreneur's dream but also a mother's dream.



Ms. Rebeca Lozada owner of Vicky's Sari-sari Store, flexing the printer she was able to buy from the money she earned from running her sari-sari store.

Sewing miracles

Miracle's Sweet Dreams Bedsheets

By: Karen M. Villaseñor, NC San Rafael, Bulacan

In the heart of the Province of Bulacan, nestled amidst the serene beauty of its landscapes, lies an inspiring story of resilience and determination. This is the story of Miracle Galvez Bigonia, known as Raquel, the woman behind the success of "Miracle's Sweet Dreams Bedsheets," a business that has not only sewn quality household linens but also woven threads of hope throughout her community.

Raquel and her husband used to sell various products like fresh sampalok, snails, boiled peanuts, and household linens. However, in 2010, they discovered the potential in sewing and decided to create their own household linens. With a capital of P8,000, they acquired a second-hand sewing machine. Raquel began creating bedsheets, pillowcases, and curtains from the comfort of her home. As dedicated parents to two children, they tirelessly worked to provide for their family, actively seeking markets for their products.

Little did Raquel know that her path would be riddled with challenges, including capital and cash flow management issues. Despite these challenges, Raquel finds success through perseverance, innovation, and a deep passion for her craft and in 2011 she was discovered by a mall in Metro Manila.

Fast forward to 2018, a pivotal year in Raquel's business journey, when she was discovered by Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) Senior Trade and Industry Development Specialist Marisol G. Bunoy during client profiling. Later, she was assisted by former Business Counsellor Lyka Marie Viola of Negosyo Center San Rafael in her business name registration and introduced her to the wide array of support and services provided by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).

Raquel's pursuit of knowledge didn't stop there. In 2019, she became a mentee in the Kapatid Mentor Me Program (KMME), a comprehensive 10-module mentorship initiative designed to enhance entrepreneurial skills. Successfully completing the KMME program became a turning point for Raquel, especially considering her limited formal education in business management. The insights and knowledge acquired during these sessions became her beacon of guidance.

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Ms. Miracle G. Bigonia during the KMME Graduation program last May 30, 2019 at Hiyas Convention Center, City of Malolos, Bulacan.

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With DTI's support, she participated in Diskwento Caravans and trade fairs across Central Luzon. Her products graced the One Town, One Product (OTOP) event in Malolos, Bulacan, and amazed attendees at the Singkaban Festival in 2022.

Raquel's resilience and high-quality products drove growing demand. Her business expanded from a single sewing machine to six, including two edging machines. She also employed five local mothers from her community. Additionally, she diversified her income streams through subcontracting and online sales.

Raquel also embraced online selling through Shopee platform that started during the pandemic. Presently, she has established partnerships with thirty-one resellers across nearby municipalities and cities. Additionally, her products are now supplied to malls and hospitals in Metro Manila.

Incredibly, Raquel's initial P8,000 capital has grown to P200,000, and her monthly sales have gone from P10,000 to P60,000, showcasing her business skills and determination.

The success Raquel now enjoys, stands as a testament to her unyielding perseverance and tireless dedication. As Raquel often emphasizes, *"Never, ever let go, no matter how many times you stumble, keep getting up."* Undoubtedly, Miracle Sweet Dreams Bedsheet is not only a miracle for Raquel but also for the individuals she employs.



Logo and Packaging designs developed through the One Town, One Product (OTOP) Next Generation Program.

MSME Information

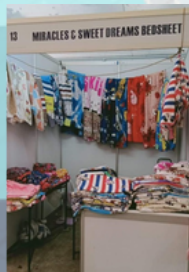
Business Name: Miracle's Sweet Dreams Bedsheets

Business Address: Pantubig, San Rafael, Bulacan

Owner: Miracle Galvez Bigonia

Social Media Page/s: Miracle's Sweetdream's/Liana's Beddings

Contact number: 0931-035-4383



Miracle Sweet Dreams Bedsheet Booth on 10th Bulacan Food Fair and Exposition (BUFFEX), and Singkaban Festival 2022.

Tiangge stall in Sta. Maria, Bulacan

Dual roles, one passion

560 Sari-sari Store

By: Janice D. Guilalas, NC CSJDM , Bulacan



Mrs. Rizza Z. Fatalla, the owner of 560 Sari-Sari Store at Sarmiento Homes, Barangay Muzon, CSJDM, Bulacan

In the bustling neighborhood of Barangay Muzon, nestled within the City of San Jose Del Monte, Bulacan, a remarkable woman is making her mark as both an educator and a thriving business owner. Meet Mrs. Rizza Fatalla, the proprietor of the 560 Sari-Sari Store, whose inspiring story embodies the spirit of resilience, determination, and the pursuit of dreams.

Rizza, a dedicated teacher for over 12 years, imparts wisdom and molds the characters of the next generation during the day. Simultaneously, she and her husband, Kenneth Fatalla, take charge of their local sari-sari store, where their journey into the world of entrepreneurship began.

Their story, like many during the COVID-19 pandemic, is a testament to the unforeseen challenges that life can throw your way. Kenneth, who worked as a jeepney driver for a decade, had to discontinue his driving job due to the enhanced community quarantine. In response to this unexpected turn of events, Rizza made a bold decision to start a small business.

Armed with 30 sacks of rice from her husband's savings and a selection of homemade snacks, they ventured into a sari-sari store business. Finding a suitable location to set up shop proved to be a daunting task, with numerous rejections from potential landlords. Rizza reflects on this trying time, saying, "Ang pagnenegosyo ay hindi ganun kadali, nakaranas kame ng rejection ng mga nag papaupa dahil sa kagastuhan namin magkaroon ng sariling pwesto."

Despite these early challenges, the couple persevered with the encouragement and support of their loyal customers. They expanded their offerings to include a variety of affordable products, catering to a broader customer base. Wise investment of their capital and a strong focus on excellent customer service became their cornerstones for success. Rizza notes, "*Kapag kinakailangan ng dagdag puhunan sa alkansya kami kumukuha, kahit barya yoon malaking tulong.*"

Recognizing the importance of legalizing their business, they registered it with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) through online registration. This not only granted them the legal rights to their business name but also facilitated compliance with other necessary permits.

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Their breakthrough moment came when Rizza was selected as one of the beneficiaries of the DTI's Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginawa (PPG) Program in 2022. Former Business Counsellor Rabi Rose Buneventura of Negosyo Center City of San Jose Del Monte assisted and introduced the program to Rizza, wherein she received a Sari-Sari Store package worth P10,000.

The program helped Rizza introduced her products to the local market, and through continuous promotion, customers began flocking to their store. The additional capital and increased earnings allowed them to hire employees to meet the growing demand. Their store became a source of support for their children's education and helped them acquire a new house and a second-hand vehicle.

Rizza's journey is a testament to perseverance and the pursuit of dreams. She encapsulates her entrepreneurial experience with the advice, *"Masasabi ko para itong journey sa akin tuloy tuloy lang, magtiyaga, kailangan alamin mo muna kung ano negosyo ang itatayo mo at higit sa lahat ingatan ang iyong puhunan"* Rizza said.

In a world where resilience and determination fuel success, Rizza Fatalla's story is an inspiration to all those who dare to dream and pursue their entrepreneurial goals, even in the face of adversity.

MSME Information

Business Name: 560 Sari-sari Store

Business Address: Sarmiento Homes, Barangay Muzon, CSJDM, Bulacan

Owner: Rizza Z. Fatalla

Social Media Page/s: Rizza Zulueta Fatalla

Email Address: rizzafatalla78@gmail.com

Contact number: 09328578910



Mr. Kenneth Fatalla (In Red/Black Sando) and Mrs. Rizza Fatalla (In White Shirt) during the PPG monitoring.



Mrs. Rizza Fatalla, ownere of 560 Sari-Sari Store with Business Counsellor Janice Guilalas during the PPG monitoring.

Turning Crisis into Opportunity: The Secret to Business Sustainability

Boss Ron Condiments Trading, and Xyrin Beverage Wholesaling

By: Carl Isaac M. Fernando, NC San Rafael, Bulacan

In the face of bizarre challenges brought about by the global pandemic, individuals from all over the world have had to adapt and find innovative ways to sustain themselves. Ronnel T. Idago, a former truck driver for seven years, exemplifies remarkable resilience and creativity, firmly holding the belief that amidst crises, opportunities can be found.

With a capital of P12,000, Ronnel decided to establish his condiments trading business and registered it with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Negosyo Center in San Rafael, Bulacan as "Boss Ron Food Condiments Trading" in 2020. His inspiration for this endeavor stemmed from recognizing the growing demand for essential condiment products and a desire to generate income.

Starting a business in the midst of a pandemic takes a lot of courage, given the substantial risks involved. The presence of economic instability, constraints on financial resources, disruptions in the supply chain, mobility restrictions, and the challenge of making just P53 a day would have understandably been discouraging for Ronnel. But despite the uncertainties, he remained steadfast and proves that when there is crisis, there is opportunity.

Despite the restrictions on travel and face-to-face interactions, Ronnel was determined to reach out to potential customers and expand his market reach. He took a proactive approach by establishing a rolling store selling condiments such as vinegar, soy sauce, and fish sauce, across the areas of San Rafael and San Ildefonso in Bulacan. This allowed him to connect directly with customers, establish personal relationships and gain their trust. *"Try lang ng try, tiyagaan lang talaga, kulitin mo ng kulitin hanggang sa umorder sayo."* Ron said.

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Mr. Idago with his beverage and condiments product.

(Vinegar, Fish sauce, Soy sauce, Salt, and Pepper etc.)



Boss Ron Food Condiments Trading and Xyrin Beverage Wholesaling are both owned by Mr. Ron Idago

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In 2022, because of Ron's potential and determination to succeed, he was chosen as one of the beneficiaries of the DTI's Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa (PPG) Program. The program aims to support and provide livelihood opportunities for businesses affected by calamities. Business Counsellor Karen M. Villaseñor of Negosyo Center San Rafael assisted Ron and introduced him to the program. The program provided additional support to his business in the form of condiments worth P10,000.

According to Ronnel, he witnessed a substantial 30% increase in his total income after receiving the PPG livelihood kits and to date, he earns P10,000 to P15,000 a day. Additionally, the entrepreneurship development and financial literacy seminars he participated in played a crucial role in enhancing his understanding of the importance of financial record-keeping and management.

Moreover, through the program, Ronnel managed to diversify his business and subsequently entered the wholesale beverage business selling carbonated drinks, juices, and beers and named it "Xyrin Beverage Wholesaling". Leveraging his expertise, existing customer base, and well-established supply chains, he diversified his product range. This strategic move allowed him to tap into a broader market and capitalize on the growing demand for beverages.

Ronnel Idago's remarkable journey from hardship to success in the business world serves as an inspiration to aspiring entrepreneurs and individuals facing adversity. Overcoming the challenges brought about by the pandemic, he transformed a modest condiment trading business into a thriving enterprise. With unwavering determination, innovative thinking, and a commitment to self-reliance, he continuously finds his ways to grow and evolve.

MSME Information

Business Name: Boss Ron Food Condiments Trading & Xyrin Beverage Wholesaling

Business Address: Pasong Intsik, San Rafael, Bulacan

Owner: Ronnel T. Idago

Social Media Page/s: Boss Ron FCT

Contact number: 0967-762-7951



Mr. Ron Idago together with Negosyo Center San Rafael Business Counsellor Carl Isaac Fernando during the enterprise visit last June 16, 2023.

From Solo Parent to Solopreneur

Jasmine's Sari-sari Store

By: James Dominic P. Borja, NC Doña Remedios Trinidad, Bulacan



Cherilyn L. Santiago, owner of Jasmine's Sari-Sari Store, Located at Sitio Parang, Pulong Sampaloc, Doña Remedios Trinidad, Bulacan showing the fruit of her determination.

In the quiet town of Doña Remedios Trinidad, Bulacan, Cherilyn L. Santiago, a solo parent with an unbreakable spirit and sheer determination, achieved success despite facing numerous challenges. Cherilyn's story is not just one of entrepreneurship, it's a testament to the extraordinary strength that lies within a single parent navigating the challenging waters of life.

After separating from her husband in 2013, Cherilyn, a devoted mother, found herself raising three children on her own. Fueled by determination to provide for her family, she courageously continued the sari-sari store they had established in 2010 with a startup capital of P10,000 from her mother-in-law

The early days after the separation were filled with challenges as Cherilyn juggled the responsibilities of parenting and managing a business. Despite the hurdles, her store became a symbol of resilience and dedication.

The struggle intensified when the year 2020 brought unprecedented challenges globally, and Cherilyn, like many, faced the harsh realities of a pandemic. With a determination that refused to waver, Cherilyn took on the role of not just a store owner but also a dress sewer, managing both her business and her home.

The turning point came in March 2022 when Cherilyn learned about the programs of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) through their barangay secretary. Choosing to formalize her business under the name Jasmine's Sari-Sari Store, she embraced optimism with the guidance and support of Business Counselor (BC) Hanna Colleen Sarmiento, previously managing Negosyo Center Doña Remedios Trinidad and currently serving at the Negosyo Center in Angat.

BC Hanna cooperated with the Business Permit Licensing Office (BPLO) in the Municipality of Doña Remedios Trinidad to organize an assessment for potential beneficiaries of the Livelihood Seeding Program-Negosyo (LSP-NSB). Among the selected beneficiaries was Cherilyn, who met the necessary requirements, particularly those impacted by the pandemic. Facilitated by the BC Hanna, Cherilyn participated in a seminar and orientation about the program.

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From then, Cherilyn became a beneficiary of the Livelihood Seeding Program-Negosyo sa Barangay, a DTI initiative aimed at helping existing micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) recover from the impacts of the pandemic. With a grant of P13,000 worth of sari-sari store packages in 2022, Cherilyn's business received the boost it needed.

Determined to thrive, Cherilyn, guided by Negosyo Center's financial and marketing related advices gained through attendance to seminars, diversified her product offerings. Beyond the usual products, her store now has a variety of local snacks and personal care items, catering to the diverse needs of their community, turning it from struggling to bustling with more customers.

Not stopping there, Cherilyn invested part of her profits into establishing a backyard piggery, expanding her ventures and ensuring a more stable future. Beyond personal gains, she used part of her income to support her father's medical expenses and continued to prioritize her children's education.

Cherilyn Santiago became an inspiration in her community, proving that with determination and the right support, small businesses could not only survive but flourish.

"Maraming salamat po at isa po ako sa nabigayan ng oportunidad na mabigyan ng pandagdag puhunan ng DTI, sa mga nagbabalaka magnegosyo, maging positibo, maging matiyaga, at masikap para lalong lumago pa kanilang negosyong itatayo." She said." Cherilyn said.

As Cherilyn expresses her heartfelt appreciation to the DTI Negosyo Center for their instrumental role in her growth and recovery, Cherilyn stands as a testament to the power of resilience and government support.

MSME Information

Jasmine's Sari-Sari Store

Owner: Cherilyn Luciano Santiago

Contact number: 09065842587

Email: kylamaeluciano@gmail.com



Cherilyn L. Santiago, Owner of Jasmine Sari-Sari Store, together with Former Negosyo Center Coordinator Ma. Charisse R. Miravalles, receives a Livelihood kit on May 13, 2022 at Puregold, Malolos, Bulacan.

Weaving dreams into a tapestry of success

Dreamweaver Handicrafts

By: Miah Minerva C. Gatbonton, NC Mabalacat City, Pampanga



Ms. Jhoana S. Navarro
Owner – Dreamweaver Handicrafts

DreamWeaver Handicrafts was born out of the visionary spirit and determination of its founder, Jhoana S. Navarro. Previously working as a freelance content moderator, Jhoana navigated the online realm until the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic prompted her to seek a new direction. In April 2021, eager to acquire a skill that would not only fulfill her personally but also serve as a valuable side hustle during uncertain times, Jhoana ventured into the realm of crafting.

Specializing in crafting contemporary Macramé pieces seamlessly interwoven with laser-engraved and laser-cut woodcrafts, DreamWeaver Handicrafts has established a strong reputation catering to customers through their online platforms, specifically Facebook, Instagram, and Shopee. Their innovative approach has set their creations apart in the market, capturing the attention of art enthusiasts and customers alike.

Embracing core values of community and environmental responsibility, DreamWeaver Handicrafts prioritizes eco-friendly materials, sourcing most of their supplies locally to support other small businesses like theirs.

The business received significant support from the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and Negosyo Center Mabalacat. Business Counselor Miah Minerva Gatbonton played a vital role by conducting Business Counseling and presentation of DTI Programs and Services which encouraged Jhoana to secure their business name registration in 2022. Additionally, [RPI] Jhoana's expertise led her to become a resource person and trainer in Magaral Tamu Negosyo Center Series of Trainings and Seminars, “Basic Macramé Making” to the Women's Group of Mabalacat City in June 2022. She was also able to participate in various Trade Fairs, including Lugud Trade Fair at Holy Angel University in 2023. Because of this exposure, DreamWeaver Handicrafts became even more popular and received additional connections which gained more orders, sales and an opportunity to expand.

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Ms. Jhoana S. Navarro as a resource speaker and trainer in Magaral Tamu
Negosyo Center Series of Trainings and Seminars
“Skills Training on Basic Macramé Making” for the Women's Group of
Mabalacat City in June 2022

<< Weaving dreams from p. 125

Looking forward, DreamWeaver Handicrafts envisions an exciting future, intending to broaden their product range by incorporating Heat Transfer Vinyl and sublimation services and etc. They remain steadfast in their commitment to an eco-friendly approach and their mission of offering personalized, sustainable pieces. The business eagerly anticipates participating in more Trade Fairs and DTI programs. One of their primary objectives is to become a merchant in OTOP HUB Marquee Mall in the future, acknowledging the substantial impact these opportunities have had on their popularity and growth.

Jhoana offers insightful advice to aspiring entrepreneurs: *"Putting up a business is risky, but having solid support, especially from your family, is key. Embrace failure as an opportunity to learn and grow. Stay committed to your vision, and with dedication and resilience, you can turn your dreams into reality."*

DreamWeaver Handicrafts stands as a testament to how determination, innovation, and community support can transform a creative hobby into a thriving, socially responsible business.

MSME Information

Name: DreamWeaver Handicrafts

Owner: Jhoana S. Navarro

Business Address: Mabiga, Mabalacat City, Pampanga

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/macramebyjho>

Email: jhoesoriano@aol.com

Macrame owl



Macrame mandala



Macrame accessories and many more



Macrame wall hanging



DreamWeaver Handicrafts ProductsMaterials are made of cotton fiber with drift wood and laser-engraved accessories

From flight attendant to fashion entrepreneur: The journey of Crystal Joice Herrera

Your Joice Clothing Shop

By: Charmaine S. Tiongson, NC City of San Fernando, Pampanga

From soaring heights to runway lights, elegance knows no bounds – where sky-high service meets runway-ready style. Crystal Joice Herrera, a mother of three, initially pursued a career as a flight attendant for several years. Amid her aviation career, she ventured into the cosmetics business. However, when the pandemic struck, her cosmetics business faced significant challenges. Concerned about the risks associated with COVID-19 during her pregnancy, she resigned from her job as a flight attendant, marking a turning point in her professional journey.

During the pandemic's uncertainties, Joice pivoted to establish her clothing business. Initially focusing on selling t-shirts, she diversified her offerings by introducing thrift clothes. Despite the pandemic's adverse effects, she observed a continuous demand for clothing among consumers. Motivated by this demand, she began designing her own clothing pieces and effectively communicated her concepts to tailors. Positive reception of her designs encouraged her to produce more of them.

In 2022, she found a support system through the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and Negosyo Center City San Fernando, thanks to the assistance of Business Counselor Charmaine Tiongson. She actively participated in the Mentor Me Program, a collaborative initiative between the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the Local Government Unit (LGU) of the City of San Fernando. This comprehensive 10-module course aimed to equip entrepreneurs with essential business management skills, covering areas such as marketing, operations, and human resources. The program significantly contributed to enhancing her knowledge and skill set, enabling further growth in her business endeavors. Their recognition extended beyond the City of San Fernando when they began participating in the DTI and Negosyo Center Manyali Tamu Trade Fair in Newpoint Angeles City in 2022. Subsequently, in 2023, they secured a display at the OTOP Hub located in Marquee Mall.

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Ms. Crystal Joice Herrera
Entrepreneur

<< From flight attendant to fashion entrepreneur from p. 127

Empowered by the insights gained from the Mentor Me Program, Joice developed innovative designs for her clothing line. One notable creation is the "Kaye Puff," a Filipino-inspired design infused with modern elements. This fusion of traditional Filipino clothing with contemporary flair resonated well with the current market, leading to its widespread popularity among customers. The success of the "Kaye Puff" design stands as a testament to her creativity, dedication, and the invaluable knowledge acquired from the mentorship program. Their products have also been worn by several celebrities. Additionally, to further enhance her product line, she actively engaged in the DTI Pampanga Pasantingan, also known as the One Town One Product (OTOP) Next Generation Product Development in 2023.

Continuously seeking inspiration and avenues to refine her designs, Joice remains committed to exploring new horizons for her business, driven by her unwavering passion for creativity and growth.

MSME Information

Name: Your Joice Clothing Shop

Owner: Crystal Joice Herrera

Business Address: Dolores, City of San Fernando, Pampanga

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/yourjoice>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/yourjoice.ph>

Email: yourjoice.ph@gmail.com



Ms. JC Parker wearing the
Kaye Puff by Your Joice Clothing Shop



The "Kaye Puff" a Filipino-inspired design infused
with modern elements.

Unwavering sacrifice: A mother's story of resilience as a small business owner

Liza's Sari-sari Store

By: Renz Joseph L. Perez, NC Camiling, Tarlac



Ms. Liza Allingag, owner of Liza's Sari-Sari Store at Brgy. Lasong, Camiling, Tarlac

Mothers are known for their unconditional love and selflessness when it comes to their families. They are often the backbone of the household, working tirelessly to ensure their loved one's comfort and well-being. Mothers' sacrifices are countless, from foregoing personal ambitions to staying up late to take care of a sick child. One such mother is Liza Allingag, who gave up her job as a store employee in their family business to set up her own store at home, sacrificing her time and energy to provide for her growing family.

Liza and her parents have extensive experience in managing a store at the Camiling Public Market. After graduating from high school, she immediately joined their family business, selling vegetables and other consumer goods. At 19 she got married and blessed with two kids. Having children proved to be challenging for her so in 2020, she decided to quit her job and set up her own sari-sari store at home since there were only a few stores in their area at that time.

Starting with a capital of ₱10,000, Liza was able to sell an average of ₱800 worth of goods every day, enough to sustain their family's needs.

However, the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Liza's sales dropped to ₱300 daily. Fortunately, she was chosen as one of the beneficiaries of the Negosyo Serbisyo sa Barangay-Livelihood Seeding Program (NSB-LSP) of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) which was launched in Brgy Lasong, Camiling, Tarlac. She was provided with a sari-sari store package worth ₱10,000. She was also invited to attend an entrepreneurial mind-setting seminar through the Negosyo Center (NC) Camiling to help manage her business. As a result, Liza's business grew significantly, now, with daily sales of ₱500.00 which is still increasing.

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<< Unwavering Sacrifice from p. 129

"I am very grateful to DTI-Tarlac through NC-Camiling and the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Camiling because they helped us small business owners who were affected by the pandemic to recover," Liza said.

Liza's story highlights a mother's sacrifice for her family and the importance of support programs like DTI's LSP-NSB. With such assistance and valuable knowledge, Liza's small business survived amidst the pandemic. Her story is an inspiration to all mothers who make daily sacrifices. Let us recognize and support programs that empower small business owners to overcome challenges and thrive.



From L-R: Mayor Erlon Agustin of Camiling, Ms. Liza Allingag of Liza's Sari-Sari Store, STIDS Maria Divina Gloria Ramos and BC Renz Joseph Perez of DTI Tarlac during the LSP-NSB Awarding of Livelihood Kits



Business Counselor Renz Joseph Perez (in blue and white) interviews Ms. Liza Allingag (in white), owner of Liza's Sari-Sari Store during the profiling of Livelihood Seeding Program - Negosyo Serbisyo sa Barangay (LSP-NSB) program at Negosyo Center Camiling, Tarlac

Even a small step is a big win

Mary Orola Sari-Sari Store

By: Erica P. Turla, NC Bamban, Tarlac

"Great achievements often require great perseverance." – Unknown

We face challenges and obstacles on our personal journeys, whether it's pursuing our dreams, overcoming hardships, or striving for success in our careers, perseverance plays a crucial role. It is the determination, and refusal to give up that allow us to push through despite difficulties and stay committed to our goals. Perseverance helps us bounce back from failures, learn from mistakes, and grow stronger.

12 years ago, Mary Orola embarked on her entrepreneurial journey by establishing her very own Sari-Sari Store. Mary, a former beneficiary of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), experienced remarkable growth in her business, prompting her to be graduate from the program. With a modest capital of P5,000.00, which she borrowed from a lending center, she decided to venture into retailing, recognizing it as a business that aligned well with her capabilities. Her store offered different products including grocery items, processed foods, and rice.

However, when the pandemic struck, she was compelled to temporarily close her business. Along with the economic struggle of the pandemic, many of her customers were unable to settle their debts, resulting in a significant loss of income. It was during this challenging period that Mary realized she was depleting her savings rather than generating income.

Determined to turn her situation around, Mary patiently waited for the opportune moment to reopen her store. She restarted by registering her business at the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) under the name Mary C. Orola Sari-Sari Store in May 2022.

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In this photo taken 12 years ago, we see Mary Orola standing in front of her Sari-Sari Store, which marked the beginning of her entrepreneurial journey.



(Store front view) Mary Orola sells a variety of grocery items, such as snacks, candies, and coffee, as shown in the photo.

<< Even a small step from p. 131

The following month, she became a beneficiary of DTT's Negosyo Serbisyo sa Barangay (NSB) Program, which provided support in the form of additional inventory for her store, enabling her to start again. She discovered that even small profits from individual products could accumulate into significant earnings when combined.

Inspired by the possibility of achieving more, Mary's perseverance paid off. Her daily sales, which were once about P500.00, soared to P10,000.00 on a weekly basis. She was able to purchase a brand-new refrigerator and even renovated her house. Mary's success has taught her a valuable lesson that she eagerly shares with others - "tighten your belt." She emphasized that sales from the store should be reinvested into the business rather than being used for personal expenses.

Despite facing tough circumstances, Mary's determination and financial discipline not only revived her business but also brought about a positive change in her life. Her story showcases the immense power of perseverance and wise money management in attaining lasting success.



Mary Orola receiving livelihood kits during the awarding of Negosyo Serbisyo sa Barangay in June 2022.



The refrigerator which Mary purchased from the fruit of her hard work.

Turning passion into macrame-zing creations

Anikka's Handy Crafts/ Knots in Ropes

By: Jhoy Alouh P. Pangilinan, NC Tarlac City, Tarlac

With a combination of hard work, creativity, and self-determination, amazing things start to happen.

In 2020, amidst the challenges the world was facing, a young woman named Raechelle Anikka Pascual, fondly called as Anikka, discovered a new hobby that was deeply inspired by her mother's love for plants. Intrigued by her mom's passion, she began crafting beautiful plant hangers using ropes.

Amidst the pandemic that confined everyone to their homes, Anikka's family faced financial challenges, particularly with her parents lacking a stable income. As the eldest in the family, Anikka recognized the urgency to contribute and help meet their needs. Drawing on her newfound passion for crafting plant hangers, she decided to take a leap of faith and share her creations online. To her delight and surprise, Anikka's plant hangers captured the attention and interest of people not just in her local community but also from plant enthusiasts abroad. The demand for her beautifully handcrafted plant hangers began to soar, leading to an overwhelming response from customers worldwide.

Starting at P500.00 initial capital, Anikka's handy crafts was born with its brand name "Knots in Ropes".

The brand name was inspired by the art of Macramé, where "Knots" symbolize the intricate patterns formed when cords are skillfully tied together, and "Ropes" refer to the strands of cords used in the craft. They specialize in creating unique, stylish, and practical macramé pieces, including fashion accessories, wearables, gift items, souvenirs, and decor.

A few business hurdles were encountered by Anikka along the way. As a fresh graduate, limited financial resources to cover the initial expenses of the business is the most challenging one.

Her uncle suggested registering her business name with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) to have access to the programs and other assistance offered to young entrepreneurs. True enough, upon registration, DTI services overflowed.

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Knots in Ropes joined 149th Araw ng Lalawigan Trade Fair- Tarlac Province last May 27-29, 2022

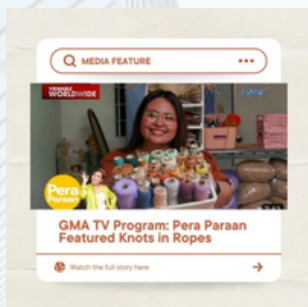


Knots in Ropes joined Likha ng Central Luzon Trade Fair last October 26-30, 2022 held at SM Megamall.



Knots in Ropes joined Tarlac MSME Caravan Trade Fair last November 8-10, 2022 held at Bulwagan ng Kanlahi, Diwa ng Tarlac, Tarlac City

<< Turning passion from p. 134



Knots in Ropes was featured in a GMA Television Program called "Pera Paraan" aired on June 10, 2023.

The Negosyo Center Tarlac City assisted her in registering her brand name with the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines (IPOPHIL). She was also invited to various business and product development seminars.

In 2022, Anikka joined various local and regional trade fairs organized by DTI in Central Luzon. Their creations are now present in physical stores just like the concept store in Alabang, Muntinlupa, and an art café in Tarlac City.

Through DTI's help, the business was able to expand and has reached a wider market. This increased exposure led to the recognition and appreciation for her craft. Its recent exposure at GMA Public Affairs reached 22,000 viewers and has undoubtedly helped raise awareness of her creations and attract more customers.

From P500.00, she is now earning up to 50,000 monthly. Initially, Knots in Ropes was a one-woman team but Anikka was able to expand her business and now has her family on board as part of the team. Anikka shared her vision in the coming years, which is "We are committed to pushing boundaries, embracing new trends, and staying ahead of the curve."

As advice to young entrepreneurs, Anikka said, *"Stay focused, keep learning, and enjoy the exciting adventure of building your own business."*



Ms. Raechelle Annika Pascual shared her entrepreneurial journey in the 2023 National Women's Month celebration organized by DTI Tarlac in partnership with SM City Tarlac.

Rising beyond obstacles

Belle Sari-Sari Store

By: Anthony S. Corpuz, NC San Clemente, Tarlac

Focusing on goals, persevering through challenges, and remaining determined is how Ms. Norabel Tahilan, owner of Belle Sari-Sari Store, has achieved success.

Norabel has been passionate about doing business, which she cultivated by assisting her mother in their sari-sari store when she was young.

Upon leaving her job at a private company to start a family, Norabel's entrepreneurial drive emerged. Recognizing her desire to support her husband and family, she embarked on her entrepreneurial journey in November 2018 by launching a store on a cart. In just a month, she expanded to a physical sari-sari store, thanks to her mother-in-law's support. As her business flourished, she officially registered her business at the Negosyo Center (NC) San Clemente in March 2022.

Norabel's journey wasn't without challenges. She faced difficulties with customers unable to pay debts due to circumstances and disputes over obligations. The COVID-19 lockdown further impacted her business, leading her to temporarily close for two months to prioritize her family's safety, especially her five-month-old baby. When she finally decided to reopen her business, she felt like she was starting from scratch as her store was nearly empty.

Driven to rebuild, Norabel was fortunately selected by their Barangay Development Council for the Livelihood Seeding Program – Negosyo Serbisyo sa Barangay (LSP-NSB) by the Department of Trade and Industry. Through the program, she received a sari-sari store package on May 2022. This gave her a much-needed boost to restart her business. At the same time, she was also invited by Business Counselor (BC) Anthony Corpuz to a seminar on Entrepreneurial Mind-setting. The activity equipped her with valuable knowledge, allowing her to approach her business with the right mindset and strategies.

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STIDS Lunabelle Sison of DTI (1st from left), Brgy. Captain Marie Carmela Estrada of Poblacion Norte (4th from left), San Clemente Mayor Elma Macadamia (5th from left), then OIC-PD Zaida F. Garibay of DTI (6th from left), Norabel Tahilan of Belle Sari-Sari Store (3rd from right), and BC Anthony Corpuz (1st from right) together with the other beneficiaries of NSB-LSB, during the awarding of Livelihood Kits.

<< Rising beyond obstacles from p. 135



Norabel Tahilan inside her Sari-Sari Store

With her husband as a partner, they extended their store hours, significantly increasing their daily earnings from ₱1,000-₱2,000 pesos to at least ₱5,000 pesos. This boosted their economic standing, enabling them to improve their store, invest in appliances, and even acquire a motorcycle. Through incremental steps, Norabel curated a diverse range of products to meet customer needs.

With small but very valuable steps, she was able to fill her store with a wide variety of products that catered to the needs of her customers.

“Kailangan samahan mo ng sipag, tiyaga at pasensya para makamit mo yung pangarap mo para sa Negosyo mo,” Norabel advises future entrepreneurs.

Her story shows that the best thing to do when you fall is to stand up and keep moving forward.

MSME Information

Business Name: Belle Sari-Sari Store

Business Address: Poblacion Norte San Clemente, Tarlac

Name of Owner: Norabel Tahilan

Email: norabeltahilan@gmail.com

TODA moon and back

Jay-Cho Side Cars Manufacturing

By: Adrian Paolo P. David, NC Capas, Tarlac

“Tiyagaan ang kailangan pagdating sa negosyo.” This is the mindset of Jayson S. Mendoza in his journey way to success.

Jayson, a tricycle driver, and a motorcycle mechanic, thought of venturing into making sidecars in 2017. He chose this kind of business because it is his hobby to repair motorcycles and assemble sidecars. He also believed that it would be a big help for him and his family.

Together with his wife, he decided to open a shop in their house. With a starting capital of P10,000.00, they bought a welding machine, grinder, iron, and other materials.

They were able to sell their first finished product after several months to their neighbor for P3,000.00. Through word of mouth, orders came and their sales started to increase. Thanks to his fellow tricycle drivers.

With the increase in market reach, in 2020, the couple decided to register their business name “Jay-Cho Side Cars Manufacturing” at the Negosyo Center Capas. They were also guided by Business Counselor Adrian Paolo David in completing all the required permits for operating their business.

However, in March 2020, their sales declined because of the COVID-19 pandemic. They were forced to close their business temporarily due to lack of income and limited sources of raw materials.

After the lockdown, the couple decided to reopen their business. It was very challenging for them to start all over again as they did not have enough savings to operate. However, they did not lose hope and they were still determined that their business would grow again amidst the pandemic.

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Tricycle Side Cars made by Jay-Cho Side Cars Manufacturing.

<< TODA Moon and back from p. 138



Mr. and Mrs. Jayson Mendoza, of Jay-Cho Side Cars Manufacturing (middle) receives livelihood kits awarded by Trade Industry Development Specialist Maria Teresa R. Bondoc (right) and Business Counselor Adrian Paolo David (left) under the Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginawa (PPG) Program on November 25, 2020 at Negosyo Center Capas, Tarlac

In November 2020, Jay-Cho was chosen by DTI as one of the beneficiaries of the Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginawa (PPG), a program that aids micro-enterprises to recover after being affected by calamities. They received raw materials in making sidecars which helped their business recover.

As of date, they are still engaging in business because of the continuous orders. They maximize the use of their Facebook page. For them, the utilization of the social media platform is the most effective way to promote their business.

With that marketing strategy, they were able to increase their market and sales up to 50%. From one sidecar a month, they now produce and sell two to three sidecars per month. From offering their services to their neighbors, they now reach clients from other provinces.

With this development, Jayson said, *"Maging matiyaga lamang po sa pagsisimula ng negosyo, samahan ng sipag at tiyaga."*

MSME Information

Business Name: Jay-Cho Side Cars Manufacturing

Business Address: Brgy. Aranguren, Capas, Tarlac

Name of Owner: Jayson Salvador Mendoza

Social Media Page/s: Jay-Cho Side Car

Email: cholapasmendoza@gmail.com



The raw materials awarded to Jay-Cho Side Cars Manufacturing under the Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginawa (PPG) Program on November 25, 2020 at Negosyo Center Capas, Tarlac

From teaching to weaving

Bayong Gracia Plastic Bags Manufacturing

By: Ranjee T. Mañalac, NC Paniqui, Tarlac

You will never go wrong with a fashionable bayong.

Bayong Gracia is a thriving hand-woven and hand-painted bag business that started from humble beginnings and grew into a successful enterprise known for its quality and innovative designs. The story of Bayong Gracia is a testament to the power of determination, creativity, and a commitment to excellence.

The journey began with Honey Tess B. Alcantara, a teacher by profession and an entrepreneur with a passion for fashion and design. She had a background in direct selling, networking, and bag reselling but in her case, all of them were failed investments.



Honey Tess Alcantara at Tarlac Provincial Trade Fair.

Honey Tess always dreamed of providing a good life for her family. Therefore in 2018, she decided to turn her passion into a business and founded Bayong Gracia in her abode located at Cariño, Paniqui, Tarlac, and started selling her bags in bazaars, and to friends and relatives.

She realized the importance of an online presence and launched the Bayong Gracia Painted Bags Facebook page. This move opened up a whole new world of customers beyond her local reach. She also embraced other social media platforms, showcasing her creations on Instagram, Tiktok, and even on e-commerce sites, which helped her reach a wider audience.

As an active joiner of local bazaars organized by the private sector, she was discovered by Senior Trade-Industry Development Specialist Ana Marie Tabamo of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). With that, she was introduced to Business Counselor Ranjee Mañalac and was able to attend DTI-organized seminars like marketing and mompreneur seminars, OTOP product clinics, and local trade fairs through the Negosyo Center (NC) Paniqui.

At the heart of Bayong Gracia's success was its commitment to craftsmanship and unique designs. Honey Tess personally crafted each bag with the help of her trusty weavers and artists, focusing on quality materials and attention to detail. Her designs were fresh and innovative, setting her bags apart in a competitive market.

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The must have bags in your rotation

<<From teaching to weaving from p. 139



The products of Bayong Gracia when they were starting.



The recent products of Bayong Gracia

She only uses polypropylene plastic, since it is a more environmentally conscious option than the other types of plastics. It has a lighter carbon footprint and is not threatening to the health, aligning her brand with the growing demand for eco-conscious fashion.

Eventually, Honey Tess became a recipient of other DTI-led programs such as OTOP Next Gen, a product development program, and Likha ng Central Luzon a trade fair showcasing products of Central Luzon conducted in Manila. With these, she was able to improve her products, increase their value, and widen her market reach.

Honey Tess testified that she learned a lot from these programs which improved her business a lot. "I became more knowledgeable in managing Bayong Gracia," she said.

As the business grew and with the encouragement from DTI-Tarlac, she expanded her product line from stylish customized handbags to functional planters, trays, organizers, and other hand-woven products.

She had a remarkable 30% increase in sales. Her efficiency made her earn more, which enabled her to increase the volume of her production, and generate more employment, from six, she now has nine employees.

These fruits of labor improved their socioeconomic status. They were able to improve their house, support their children's education, and buy a new car.

Bayong Gracia is now making a name in Tarlac.

Honey Tess plans to invest in physical stores, more product lines, and innovations.

"Always dream, walang imposible kung may pangarap and be resilient, do not step on others feet, be accountable, and think positive always," she said.

Honey Tess' journey from failed investments to a thriving business serves as a testament to the power of perseverance, learning from mistakes, and adapting to changing circumstances.

MSME Information

Business Name: Bayong Gracia Plastic Bags Manufacturing

Business Address: Cariño, Paniqui, Tarlac

Owner: Honey Tess Alcantara

FB Page: Bayong Gracia painted bags

Gamit sa bahay, gamit sa buhay

M.B. Borja Furniture Manufacturing

By: Luis M. Casupanan, NC Mayantoc, Tarlac



Monalisa Borja with her husband Renato Borja Sr. at their shop in Brgy. Nambalan Mayantoc Tarlac

"Furniture must have a personality as well as be beautiful," Rose Tarlow, an interior designer, famously stated.

Monalisa Borja's journey as an owner of a furniture shop is nothing short of inspiring and filled with determination, creativity, and hard work. Her success story is a testament to her vision and passion for design, turning a small capital of P10,000.00 into a profitable business that she started in 2011.

Monalisa, a 43-year-old mother of four, together with her supportive husband, embarked on a furniture shop journey, crafting one piece of furniture at a time in their house in Mayantoc, Tarlac. Thanks to their supportive neighbors who became their initial clients. Their neighbors became their first customers, who were very supportive of their business.

Eventually, Monalisa decided to open a store in Gerona, Tarlac. Her husband's love for interior design and furniture craftsmanship has always been their driving force. He began as a wood carver, eventually focusing on and thoroughly studying the furniture-making process to develop his crafting skills. Unfortunately, after a year, they had to give up their store and move back to their hometown due to a lack of personnel to watch over the shop.

Running a furniture shop presented numerous challenges, demanding considerable effort, time, energy, and patience to deliver high-quality products and earn customer trust. They faced difficulties when delivering products during rainy seasons, which affected the furniture's quality. Monalisa and her husband supported each other in overcoming these challenges, and their business eventually became a reliable source of income, allowing their eldest child to pursue a college education.

As technology advanced, "M.B. Borja Furniture Manufacturing" established an online presence. They created their Facebook page, showcasing their products with detailed descriptions and sample images and successful deliveries. They invested in digital marketing to reach a broader audience and started selling products online.

Their shop offered a variety of items, including beds, dining sets, cabinets, doors, jambs, and other customized furniture.

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Some of the products of MB Borja Furniture Manufacturing

<< Gamit sa bahay from p. 141

In 2020, amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the business struggled greatly – from 10 to 15 clients per month down to two to four, significantly impacting their sales decreasing to almost 80%.

Monalisa was fortunate to be chosen by the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Mayantoc and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) as one of the recipients of the Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginawa (PPG) in 2022. It is an initiative that aims to support individuals and businesses affected by fire incidents and various calamities, including health through provision of livelihood kits.

Through the PPG, she received a router and power planer. These additional items significantly improved their shop's production process, making their work easier and faster while recovering from their losses. Their sales increased by up to 15%, gradually enhancing their production from one to two pieces of furniture per week to three to four.

This development also paved the way for the renovation and expansion of their work area. PPG also led Monalisa to register and formalize their business from DTI Business Name registration up to Barangay and Mayor Permits.

Monalisa established M.B. Borja Furniture Manufacturing as one of the notable furniture shops in Mayantoc. Her success story serves as an inspiration to aspiring entrepreneurs and designers. She continues to push the boundaries of design and sustainability, setting the standard for the future of furniture craftsmanship. Her firm belief in the importance of upholding values, such as quality and innovation, underlines her commitment to providing the best to her customers.

In the world of furniture, " M.B. Borja Furniture Manufacturing " stands as a testament to the power of creativity, community involvement, and a customer-centric approach.



(from L-R) License Inspector/BPLO Jea Pascual, Monalisa Borja, STIDS Maria Divina Gloria Ramos, and Business Counselor of Sta Ignacia Ken Gabay during the PPG Awarding of Livelihood Kits

MSME Information

Business Name: M.B. Borja Furniture Manufacturing

Business Address: Nambalan, Mayantoc, Tarlac

Owner: Monalisa Borja

Social Media Page/s: Facebook: Monalisa Borja/Renato Borja Furnitures

Email: monalisa.borja16@yahoo.com

Lihim na bulaklak sa balat ng mais

Tresvalles Cornhusk Flowers and Decors

By: Val Maenar L. Echevarri, NC Pura, Tarlac



Franchised Food Stall, Year 2016

A heartwarming and inspiring story unfolds under the gentle rays of the sun. A woman rich in life experiences, Elizabeth Tresvalles, proved that a kingdom of flowers can emerge from a humble material - cornhusk.

Corn is abundant in Elizabeth's hometown, Pura. Thus, the Local Government Unit (LGU) enrolled it as the pride of their place under the One Town One Product (OTOP). Government interventions poured out in developing corn products and Beth, as she is fondly called, was able to avail of the Skill Training on Cornhusk Flower Making conducted by the Department of Agriculture.

Initially, Beth began her business from a small space within her house, setting up a workshop to craft her corn husk flowers and decorations. She modestly started with a capital of P5,000.00, which she used to purchase materials and tools. She began her creative journey by producing an average of six roses a day, offering them to her relatives, friends, and acquaintances, gradually perfecting her designs and gaining confidence in her craft.

Her decision to register her business name with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in 2014 was driven by her desire to avail of the various services and support that it provides to Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in her community.

Upon registering Tresvalles Cornhusk Flowers and Decors, Beth was able to access various services such as entrepreneurial and managerial trainings under the SME Roving Academy. These developed her entrepreneurial skills.

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Ms. Elizabeth Tresvalles during the product design consultation with Mr. Val Maenar L. Echevarri

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Her breakthrough came when she unexpectedly received a large order of 500 orchids and 1,000 daffodils from the LGU of Pura. These substantial orders highlighted the growing demand for her unique and realistic creations, and it marked a turning point in her business. With her determination, talent, and the support she received from the government, Beth was able to scale her production and meet the demands of her rapidly expanding customer base.

She also had networking opportunities through local and regional trade fairs like Tarlac Provincial Fair and Likha ng Central Luzon Trade Fair as well as market matchings that helped increase her market reach. She now caters to clients as far as Visayas and occasionally in the United States and Germany.

Beth's participation in the Kapatid Mentor ME (KMME) Program in 2018, an initiative that provides focused mentoring and trainings to micro-enterprises provided her with more knowledge and direction in running her business.

After KMME graduation, Beth decided to visit the Negosyo Center in Pura, Tarlac to seek additional assistance in improving her products. Business Counselor Val Maenar Echevarri, also a designer, provided ideas on refining her product designs. The consultation and product evaluation sessions with the business counselor likely contributed to the improvement and development of her products.

Tresvalles increased its sales by an impressive 50%. This surge in revenue allowed Beth to save money for her family and make a significant impact on their socio-economic status. The increased profits not only provided financial security but also allowed her to invest in the business further.

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Ms. Elizabeth Tresvalles during the Kapatid Mentor Me Program Graduation July 2018

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Ms. Elizabeth Tresvalles during the Likha ng Central Luzon Trade fair at SM Megamall October 2023

However, the COVID-19 Pandemic did not spare her from its effects. Thanks to DTI's Pangkabuhayn sa Pagbangon at Ginawa (PPG) Program, an initiative that helps individuals and businesses affected by incidents such as fire and calamities recover. She was able to receive raw materials for her business to recover.

"Thank you, DTI for all your support, like seminars especially the Kapatid Mentor Me Program which improved my management skills. Thank you for letting me join various trade fairs like Likha ng Central Luzon where I was able to showcase my products and gain more clients," Beth said.

From a humble laboratory technician, Beth transformed into the Cornhusk Flower Queen, showcasing the beauty and value of corn waste material in her creations. Her story reflects hope, inspiration, and determination in the life of an entrepreneur filled with dreams.

MSME Information

Business Name: Tresvalles Cornhusk Flowers and Decors

Business Address: Poblacion 1, Pura, Tarlac

Owner: Elizabeth Domingo Tresvalles

Social Media Page/s: Tresvalles Corn Husk Flowers and Decors

Email: zabeth.dom@yahoo.com



Yahoo sa Bamboo!

Edsanti Bamboo Crafts Manufacturing
By: Krizia Anne O. Dela Cruz, NC Anao, Tarlac

Success is sweeter the second time around. Indeed, it was for Mr. Eduardo Santillian.

Egay, as people call him, is a public servant and a visual artist. A barangay councilor, designer, and even a haircutter—these were some of his jobs before venturing into business.

With his rich experience in handicrafts and anything related to arts, he was always tasked with creating beautiful entries for various activities and contests held by the municipality, to represent their barangay.

Also, a cooking enthusiast, Egay started a food manufacturing business in 2019, offering spicy alamang and chili paste. Drawing inspiration from her mother, he labeled it La Consolacion Food Products, using her name, Consolacion.

In the same year, he attended a two-day skills training on making bamboo novelty items organized by Business Counselor Krizia Anne Dela Cruz of the Negosyo Center Anao in Tarlac. The activity re-ignited his passion for creating beautiful crafts.

He recalled that he was ignited by Woodinspirations Crafts, a local business in Tarlac that manufactures crafts from recycled wooden pallets and bamboo. Egay was mesmerized by their products during the Likha ng Central Luzon which he visited last 2015. He said, “Kaya ko rin gumawa ng ganito kaganda gaya ng kanila.”

However, he was unable to begin creating one because he lacked the necessary tools, and no one provided him with the opportunity to do so.

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Skills Training on Bamboo Novelty Items Making
Brgy. San Francisco West Anao, Tarlac | October 11, 2019

In Photo: Members of Group 2 during the conduct of two-day skills training on bamboo novelty items making on October 11, 2019 at Brgy. San Francisco West Anao, Tarlac. Egay is seen third in photo (left to right).



Skills Training on Bamboo Novelty Items Making
Brgy. San Francisco West Anao, Tarlac | October 11, 2019

In Photo: During the conduct of training, Egay is seen consulting the texture of his sanded bamboo to STIDS Eduardo Yabut, skills trainor from DTI NCR.

<< Yahoo sa Bamboo! from p. 146

During the 5th Kanlahi Festival, a cultural event celebrated yearly in the Province of Tarlac, Egay participated in its 1st Bamboo Arts and Crafts Contest in February 2022 as an official contender in the professional category. He lost during the competition but gained by introducing and marketing himself as a self-made entrepreneur. As a start-up, he began accepting commission-based bamboo crafts and products.

DTI ROG Undersecretary Blesila Lantayona was one of the few who noticed the potential of Egay's craft in a bamboo showcase during the Department of Trade and Industry – Regional Operations Group Assembly. His craftwork, 'Carpe Diem', unfortunately, failed to bag the top spot in the competition but managed to capture the hearts of the exhibit's visitors. Usec Lantayona commissioned him to create 2 similar pieces for bamboo promotion.

What started as a passion sparked an idea in his mind to turn it into a business.

"Wala kasi akong self-confidence," Egay laughingly said. But he reminded his old self that negative thoughts would bring him nothing. Thus, on July 22, Edsanti Bamboo Crafts Manufacturing was established.

While juggling many jobs at the same time, he needed to stop manufacturing food products as his mother, her inspiration in the business, passed away in the same month. La Consolacion Food Products strived to produce its food products.

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Egay's bamboo craft entry under the professional category, during the 5th Tarlac Kanlahi Bamboo Arts and Crafts Design Contest. His craft was famously known as 'Carpe Diem'. The exact entry was re-created and sold.



<< Yahoo sa Bamboo! from p. 147

Egay was a beneficiary of Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa, a livelihood seeding and entrepreneurship development initiative program for micro enterprises, affected by calamities such as the pandemic. He was one of the selected beneficiaries among the long list of MSMEs submitted by the Local Government Unit of Anao. Egay received heavy duty planer, and wood router, which are essential for furniture manufacturers. The items received added not only efficiency in doing his works, but also improved the quality of his crafts.

Today, he creates commission-based bamboo crafts and novelty items like candle holders, trophies, bamboo props, and many more. He is very diligent in sharpening his skills in creating bamboo crafts by participating in various activities like parol making and Belenismo sa Tarlac.

In the next 10 years, he envisions himself and his business at the same level as Woodinspirations Crafts. He wants to share his skills with other aspiring entrepreneurs. With determination, he will experience success in no time. It was indeed a sweeter success the second time around.

MSME Information

Business Name: EDSANTI BAMBOO CRAFTS MANUFACTURING

Business Address: Brgy. San Francisco West Anao, Tarlac

Name of Owner: Eduardo Butardo Santillian

Email: edsanti0331@gmail.com



PPG Awarding of Furniture Livelihood Kits

Brgy. Poblacion Anao, Tarlac | November 23, 2022

In Photo (Left to Right): Business Counselor Krizia Anne O. Dela Cruz, Eduardo B. Santillian, and CTIDS Zaida F. Garibay during the awarding of furniture livelihood kits, under the Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa (PPG) Program. The awarding was held at the New Municipal Grounds Brgy. Poblacion Anao, Tarlac on November 23, 2022.



PPG Awarding of Furniture Livelihood Kits

Brgy. Poblacion Anao, Tarlac | November 23, 2022

In Photo: Items of the furniture livelihood kits include a heavy duty 3-1/4 in planer, and a circular wood router with substitute blades. Kits amounted to PhP 10,000.00.

Beauty from Ashes

Eugene Salon

By: Ranjee T. Mañalac, Negosyo Center Paniqui, Tarlac

"Behind every fashionable hairstyle is a passionate hairstylist." That's what we can learn about the success story of Eugene Salon.

In a close-knit community nestled in the small town of Paniqui, there was a beloved beauty salon known as "Eugene Salon." The salon was founded by Eugene Sumaoang, a skilled and passionate hairstylist who has built a loyal client base over many years. Eugene Salon was not just a place for beauty treatments but also a hub for social connections and support.

Eugene started as a salon apprentice at the early age of 15, with courage and willingness to learn. He worked his way up to become a hairstylist. However, before owning a salon, he worked as an Overseas Filipino Worker (OFW) in Saudi Arabia as a hairstylist for 7 years and in Macao as an assistant cook for 4 years. While abroad, he learned how to manage his finances, practice time management, and save for the future.

In 2014, he purchased a salon named Raising Sun Salon situated in the old Paniqui Public Market. He renamed it Eugene Salon in 2018, for easier recall.

One fateful night in January 2019, a tragedy struck the salon as it fell victim to a devastating fire that gutted the entire establishment. The flames consumed everything Eugene had worked so hard to build. The salon was more than just a business to him; it was a place where friendships were forged and dreams were realized. Eugene and his team were devastated by this loss, but they were determined to rise from the ashes.

With the help of the Local Government Unit of Paniqui and the community's support, Eugene Salon found a temporary location at Paniqui Athletic Bowl provided by the local government unit (LGU). It was not too far from the old market, enabling them to continue offering their services. This allowed them to maintain their clients and stay connected with them. Eugene also used social media to keep everyone informed about their progress, expand his network, and reach a larger market.

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On the left is Eugene Salon in the temporary relocation in Poblacion Sur, Paniqui, Tarlac, and on the right is the permanent location of the salon in the new Paniqui Public Market located in Tablang, Paniqui, Tarlac.

<< Beauty from ashes from p. 149

However, the challenges kept on coming because of the relocation, such as having zero clients in a day, adapting to the new place due to the changed landscape, learning to use and maximize social media, and keeping the market informed of their new address.

Being a passionate entrepreneur, Eugene overcame the hurdles and saw them as opportunities to learn new things. Thus, he adapted, learned social media, and used it to his advantage. Eventually, it paid off. In social media alone, the platform gave him a remarkable 100% increase in number of clients.

With the intervention of the Negosyo Center Paniqui and LGU, Eugene learned about Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginawa, a program of the Department of Trade and Industry that helps MSMEs recover from tragedies. In 2022, Eugene Salon was chosen as a beneficiary of the said program. In November 2022, he received the livelihood kit consisting of electric fans, chairs, and drawers. The PPG livelihood kit is a big help. He felt like he was starting a new business, as it helped him ensure the continuity of the salon and saved him a significant amount of money.

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Eugene Sumaoang at PPG Awarding in Paniqui, Tarlac



Eugene Sumaoang, along with other PPG beneficiaries, Ma'am Zaida F. Garibay of DTI-Tarlac, and Ranjee Mañalac of Negosyo Center Paniqui, met with Mr. Edgar Galeon, the Municipal Administrator of Paniqui.

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In March 2023, with the help of the Paniqui LGU, Eugene Salon is now permanently situated in the newly built Public Market of Paniqui, which was completed in the last quarter of 2022. This move has resulted in a remarkable 300% increase in his net profit, from 500 pesos per day to 2,000 pesos per day, and that is only on a normal day. On some occasions, he earns 18,000 pesos in a day. The salon has also increased its manpower from one on-call employee to three regulars and two on-calls.

With this progress, Eugene was able to send his 2 nieces to college, improve their house, and buy 3 motorcycles. He also managed to invest in a fruit stand for added income.

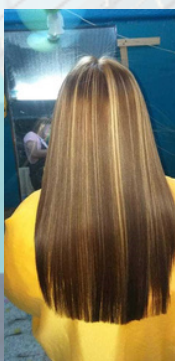
Eugene plans to expand the salon to other towns of Tarlac and to start a food business to practice his cooking skills.

The salon's story of resilience and rebirth became an inspiration to the community and beyond. Eugene and his team proved that through determination, support, and a commitment to serving their clients, a business can not only recover after a tragedy but also thrive and grow stronger.

Today, Eugene Salon stands as a symbol of resilience and hope, not just for the beauty services it provides but also for the strength and determination it exhibited in the face of adversity. It is a testament to the power of a supportive community and a passionate business owner's dedication to rising from the ashes of tragedy.

MSME Information

Business Name: Eugene Salon
Business Address: New Paniqui Public Market, Tablang, Paniqui, Tarlac
Name of Owner: Eugene Sumaoang
FB Page: Eugene Salon
Email: EUGENE_SUMAOANG@YAHOO.COM



The must try services of Eugene Salon.

Do it yourself: Weaving the moment, handcrafted with love

Loveknots - Art & Crafts Handy Crafts

By: Adrian E. Melanio, NC Subic Bay (Mall), Zambales

A former Overseas Filipino Worker (OFW), Princess Erica Trinidad, ventured into entrepreneurship and decided to take advantage of the benefits of macramé crafting. Macramé is a crafting technique that uses knots to create a variety of textiles such as wall decorations, bags and other home accessories. Her fondness of the craft led her to set up a business – Loveknots - Art & Crafts Handy Crafts.

Loveknots - Art & Crafts Handy Crafts is a home-based business which started selling macramé products through online platforms during the pandemic community lockdown. Princess sought help from the Department of Trade and Industry-Zambales Provincial Office to improve its business capabilities and market presence. She was invited to several webinars hosted by DTI-Zambales and later participated in trade fairs such as the DTI Zambales Yuletide Fair in December 2020.

For Princess, being part of DTI programs and activities is proof of being a legitimate entrepreneur, especially in social media. Through these programs, she was able to struck a deal with a large retail store in April of 2021. From producing only an average of ten (10) art pieces, the business deal caused Loveknots - Art & Crafts Handy Crafts to produce 200-300 pieces of art products per month.



Loveknots Art & Crafts Handy Crafts booth during 24th Lihka ng Central Luzon Trade Fair last October 26-30, 2022 at SM Megatrade Hall, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City



Mrs. Princess Erica Trinidad babysitting while on a macrame project

Due to its vast potential, Loveknots Art & Crafts Handy Crafts macramé products have been enrolled in the One-Town-One-Product Next Gen Program (OTOP NG) of DTI Zambales. In August of 2021, Princess also joined and graduated in the Kapatid Mentor Me (KMME) program of DTI Zambales. The OTOP NG provided Loveknots - Art & Crafts Handy Crafts with new products such as macramé bag designs which were later sold on their social media accounts. Loveknots - Art & Crafts Handy Crafts is a woman-led enterprise and because of that, Princess received a trademark registration incentive program from the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines (IPOPHL) called "Juana Make a Mark".

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<< Do it yourself from p. 152

“Juana Make a Mark” is a trademark registration incentive program for eligible Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to have their trademarks registered at a reduced cost. Also, it aims to introduce the ‘first-mover filing’ mindset amongst MSMEs. It is a mindset the MSMEs must establish while putting up a business to ensure availability of and secure exclusivity over the marks or trade names.

“Finding and asking someone for help is not a bad thing, be humble always and don’t let them ‘beat’ you down. Do not be discouraged if you sometimes experience a loss in business but use this as a motivation to further improve what you are doing.” ~ Ms. Princess Trinidad of Loveknots - Art & Crafts Handy Crafts



First Macrame Bag Designed under OTOP NG



Macrame Wall Clock Designed by Mrs. Princess Erica Trinidad



Challenges overpowered through continuous persistence

Mortel's Riverpool Resort

By: Raymart C. Lacson, NC San Antonio, Zambales

Swimming is a low-impact workout that benefits both physical and mental health in a variety of ways. The idea of building a swimming pool first came to the Mortel family when their three-year old daughter was diagnosed with mild autism. Their plan was to incorporate swimming activities into their daughter's rehabilitation program to improve her motor and socializing abilities and with the expectation that she will eventually manage the resort.

Mortel's Riverpool Resort is located at Brgy. San Nicolas, San Antonio, Zambales and is owned and operated by Mrs. Gemma Lyn Mortel and her family. The resort started operation in January 2020 and prides itself of its clean facilities and excellent services. The resort offers rooms and cottages, but guests can also pitch their tents on their open grounds. Mortel's Riverpool Resort is a perfect getaway for family bonding, picnics, and celebrations, giving every guest the calming scenery of the Pamatawan River.

The opening of the resort seemed to be untimely though as it was forced to halt operations on March 16, 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. It was a lowly time for the Mortel Family because all the marketing efforts were suspended, and the supposedly income-generating business was put on hold. Fortunately, in July 2020, the business was allowed to operate again while complying with the IATF protocols and requirements. While the anticipated operation and profitability were not met, the resort is gradually regaining its footing.

Just in time when the resort business was still catching up, Mrs. Mortel was invited to the Department of Trade and Industry's (DTI) Kapatid Mentor ME (KMME) program. She committed herself to the program, diligently attended the webinars, and persevered in learning the modules amidst a hectic schedule. Through the KMME program, she was able to learn new strategies and innovations to address her financial planning weakness and further think of alternative plans to improve the resort.

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Kapatid Mentor ME (KMME) Online - Tourism Sector Batch 1 Graduation

<< Challenges overpowered from p. 154

Since full operations were allowed in 2022, the resort was able to employ 3 additional employees, and have an increase in their monthly average sales. They're also a beneficiary of DTI's Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginawa (PPG) program in which they received souvenir items for additional income generation.

"Napakaraming aral, sobrang lumakas ang loob ko na magpatuloy pa rin sa negosyo, lumakas ang aking self-confidence. Sa mga baguhan sa negosyo, huwag po tayong mawalan ng pag-asa kung magkaroon man ng problema at isipin lagi na kung kaya nila, kaya rin natin. Sa lahat ng bumubuo ng programang ito, KMME at sa Department of Trade and Industry, maraming-maraming salamat po." – Ms. Gemma Lyn Mortel/Owner, Mortel's Riverpool Resort



Resort Amenities (Swimming Pool, Riverbank, Bedroom/Bathroom Essentials, Outdoor Dining Area, Free/Safe Parking)

Home away from home

Prince JB Beach Resort

By: Johanna M. Llabres, NC San Narciso, Zambales



Seafront of Prince JB Beach Resort, Brgy. Lapaz, San Narciso, Zambales

Many would agree that there is no place like home especially when you're at the beach. Prince JB Beach Resort can be an example because among the beach resorts in the municipality of San Narciso, Zambales, it stands out with a collective family-oriented experience provided by the crew and their activities. It gives every guest a subtle tropical beach atmosphere, without compromising the warmth feeling of a home.

the idea of turning this into a beach resort. And so, they started the resort business and named it after their son, Prince JB.

Mrs. Mellibelle Jallorina never expected that the small lot they bought would turn into a business they would invest in the future. It was their visitors who gave them

Mrs. Jallorina and her family invested all their profits to construct a kiddie pool last January 2020 in preparation for a fruitful summer. But as the world entered a pandemic, they were forced to pause operations for straight consecutive months. It was just recently when a Provincial Certificate of Authority to Operate from Department of Tourism enabled them to operate again, maintaining their 10 loyal employees.

Their customers' feedbacks have inspired them to further develop the resort. Mrs. Jallorina inquired thru Negosyo Center (NC) San Narciso if there is any way she can borrow additional funds to improve their resort's facilities. The query wouldn't have come at a better moment as the NCs during that time were promoting the Small Business Corporation's (SB Corp) loan programs to the MSMEs. Mrs. Jallorina immediately submitted the requirements and with the help of Business Counselor Johanna Llabres, she was approved as P3 Loan recipient by SB Corp last August 18, 2021. She used the money to build a covered area where guests can hold their meetings and team building activities.

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Prince JB Beach Resort's information area to cater customer inquiries and needs.



Construction of a Kiddie Pool from the earnings of Prince JB Beach Resort



The building a covered area of Prince JB Beach Resort from the approved SB Corporation's P3 loan

<< Home away from home from p. 156

With years of hard work, improvements and with the blessings of the Almighty, Mr. & Mrs. Jallorina has successfully maintained the business despite the many competitors around. As of now, weekly minimum sales of 40,000 pesos was being enjoyed by the management.

It is a truly marvelous experience. Every guest can enjoy the heat of summer together with the warmth of "home". They can ride banana boats, swim in the salty sea or the indoor pool, feast on a wide variety of snacks and food, and enjoy the summer altogether with relatives, friends or family! Other than outdoor activities, guests can still laze around inside the comfortable and relaxing lounges and suites. Everyone can also enjoy dining with loved ones as the staff caters small to huge dining set ups, offering various types of meals that visitors will surely want every second of. Truly, a home away from home.



Certificate of Recognition during the Online Graduation of the KMME-MME Online Tourism Sector held last May 18, 2021

Ms. Bhel credits DTI especially on the recent 2021 KMME Online Program held from March to May, which aims to assist small players scale up their business and contribute to economic growth, and address issues of unemployment, job mismatch and migration through coaching and mentoring.

"What once was a single dream has turned into a great blessing of business with God's grace & guidance"-Melibelle Bactad Jallorina/owner



Creating picture perfect figures!

Gawang Kamay Olongapo Arts and Crafts

By: Adrian E. Melanio, NC Subic Bay (Mall), Zambales



Closer look on how mini me Chibi dolls are being assembled part by parts before the drying process.

There are no happier people on this planet than those who decide that they want something, define what they want, get hold of the feeling of it even before its manifestation and then joyously watch the unfolding as, piece by piece, it begins to unfold. That's the feeling of your hands in the clay. - Esther Hicks

Richel Eve Torralba Marabe had this one transformative moment that changed her life. In the midst of the pandemic and pregnancy bed rest, Facebook became her favorite hangout. Somewhere along the feed, a cute miniature food keychain caught her interest and triggered her to browse how to make the miniature clay item.

After gaining enough strength, she began to look at the polymer clay set that had been in her cart for several days. She finally bought her first clay set and started creating air dry and polymer clay art. With enough knowledge and skills, combined with courage, she sought help from the government and started her business. Since then, she has been part of various programs of the Department of Trade and Industry Zambales. One of them is the Women's Month Trade Fair at SM Downtown Olongapo City back in March 2021. Also, due to the potential of her products she got invited to the Kapatid Mentor Me – Money Market Encounter (KMME-MME) Program held last March 2022 where she graduated and was recognized as one of the top 10 high scorers of the said program. She was also invited to "Juana Make a Mark", a trademark registration incentive program of the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines (IPOPHL).

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Mr. Romar and Mrs. Richel Eve Marabe (husband and wife) having fun while on a chibi doll clay project.

<< Creating picture perfect from p. 158



Finish Product

Richel was also enrolled in the One Town - One Product Next Generation program where she attended a one-on-one product consultation for her product labels and packaging. This partnership with DTI-Zambales took her business to new heights. Working with a government agency opened up new opportunities, such as participation in trade fair activities, as well as free training and professional assistance to improve her business. It is also a proof of legitimacy, especially on social media. It has become easier for customers to do business with Gawang Kamay Olongapo Arts and Crafts because they know that they are assisted by DTI-Zambales. As a result, their total sales have increased by 60%, more than they expected since they partnered with DTI Zambales programs and activities. This can be attributed to the collective efforts of their team and the assistance provided by DTI.

Gawang Kamay Olongapo Arts and Crafts products are customized and their specialization is to capture the important events of their clients using 3D clay art. Gawang Kamay is famous for their Chibi miniatures. They have made Chibi figures for famous artists and politicians. They were even featured in a TV show called "Swak na Swak" hosted by Mr. Bobby Yan on June 5, 2021. Now that there is tough competition, more products have been added by Ms. Richel like keychains, earrings and small standees with voice recordings.

The birth of Gawang Kamay Olongapo Arts and Crafts is the product of life's many challenges that turned into great opportunities. Like Richel always says *"Don't be afraid to start over it gives you a chance to build something better"*.



Mrs. Richel Eve Marabe the
proprietor of Gawang Kamay
Olongapo Arts and Crafts

Hooked on success

Macrochet Arts and Crafts Manufacturing

By: Jonah M. Fortin, NC Sta. Cruz, Zambales



Ms. Macoliza Malay flexing her crochet handmade top

Ms. Macoliza Malay, a Bachelor of Elementary Education student at PRMSU Iba, Zambales, found inspiration in the timeless quote by Confucius, "Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life." Driven by her passion for crocheting, she transformed her hobby into a thriving business venture. It all began in November 2021 when she started creating handmade crochet items, including bags, flowers, bandanas, dresses, earrings, and tops during her free time.

To improve her craft, Ms. Malay avidly watched videos from various social media platforms, honing her skills and expanding her creativity. As her confidence grew, she decided to showcase her creations to a wider audience by posting them on Facebook. The appeal of crochet items led to an overwhelming response, with all her products selling out quickly. Enthusiastic clients reached out to her, expressing their interest in placing custom orders.

While her business initially started as a way to make money while doing something she loved, it turned out that she was also able to provide for her school needs and help her parents with their day-to-day expenses. As a result, she invested in buying more yarns and different sizes of hooks to produce more extensive varieties of handmade crochet items.

Despite having limited free time as a student, Ms. Malay remained dedicated to her craft, overcoming the significant challenge it posed. Each item she created demanded 2 to 3 hours of her time, and custom orders with specialized designs required several days of commitment. However, due to her love for crocheting and its stress-relieving effects, she was able to work on it with a sense of ease and enjoyment.

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Crochet Handmade items of Macrochet Arts and Crafts

<< Hooked on success from p. 160

As she was scrolling on Facebook, she saw a post about DTI's Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa program which provides assistance to micro, small, and medium enterprises. She became interested because she knew that it would help her grow her business. She immediately visited Negosyo Center Sta. Cruz, and inquired about the program and fortunately, Ms. Malay was chosen as one of the beneficiaries in September 2022. The livelihood package she received was used as additional capital, and she expressed gratitude for being a part of the program. With DTI's intervention, she was able to showcase her creativity. Her sales had increased to 20% as she grew her customer base on Facebook where she continuously posts her products and through referrals from her existing customers.

As her business continues to grow, Ms. Malay's goal is to establish her own shop and attract more customers, not just in their town, but also in other parts of the province. She advises potential entrepreneurs always to persevere and have a clear strategy in order to succeed. With her commitment, understanding, and drive, Ms. Malay has proven that following one's passion and being supported by DTI programs can lead to a successful entrepreneurial endeavor.

"Sa pagnenegosyo hindi mawawala ang pagbagsak, kaya gamitan mo lang ng tiyaga, unawa, at diskarte, at makakabangon ka rin ulit." – Ms. Macoliza Malay



Awarding of DTI-Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa Livelihood Package to Ms. Malay with STIDS Gilbert Villanueva And PPG Staff Ethyl Abadam

Fashion with passion

Hija Zambales Apparel

By: Jayson M. Tenerife, NC Botolan, Zambales

"Build something you're passionate about. As an entrepreneur, you have to have the passion and drive to stay the course." -- Alexandra Chong, CEO and founder, Lulu

Hija Zambales Apparel is a store in Zambales that uses tote bags to spread the word about empowerment and sustainable fashion. A joyful undertaking by sisters Claire and Valerie Catacutan.

During the height of the pandemic, in July 2020, Claire and Valerie decided to create an online shop where they can sell their preloved and thrifted clothes. They named their page Hija Zambales Apparel. The siblings love to create post-publication materials that focus on women's empowerment on their social media page. They noticed that many people resonate with their posts, as it is their way to inspire and empower one another.

One of the owners, Valerie, gifted one of her buddies a tote bag printed with the phrase "Babae ako, hindi babae lang". Her buddy really appreciated the gift. With this, Claire had the idea to sell statement tote bags. This idea turned reality when they started their venture letting them earn from selling and at the same time advocating for women empowerment with the printed statements. The sisters easily sold a thousand tote bags so they decided to focus selling the bags instead of thrift clothes.

Aside from the message that they try to deliver in their tote bag design and print, the bag itself is very sustainable. It is made of eco-friendly materials and is reusable. Their products became a hit and soon they added other products such as caps and pouches in their line.

The sisters came to know of the Department of Trade and Industry programs through DTI Zambales and DTI Negosyo Center (NC) Botolan. NC Botolan Business Counselor Jayson Tenerife was then collaborating with LGU Botolan in establishing the Botolan Pasalubong Center. He assisted them thru business name registration and business counseling. After that, they received the opportunity to join local trade fairs like OTOP Hub in Harbor Point Ayala Mall, Subic Bay Freeport Zone, and Earth Day Bazaar at Anvaya Cove, Morong Bataan. With DTI NC assistance, they are now able to display in malls and have access to potential clients. Not long after, Hija Zambales Apparel became well known now in the province for their products.

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Hija Tote Bag Official Pacakging photo



Hija Tote Bag on stand inside Botolan Pasalubong Center

<< Fashion with passion from p. 162



Hija Apparel Shop during 100 Days of Happiness Christmas Sale at SM City Olongapo Downtown last Sept. 30, 2022



Hija Apparel Shop at SM Megamall in Mandaluyong City on October 26 - 30, 2022.



Hija Apparel Shop during Paskuhan Zambales Fair from November 29 - December 4, 2022.

After availing of DTI services, they were able to join DTI-organized trade fairs. They've participated in the 100 Days of Happiness Christmas Sale at SM City Olongapo Downtown in Olongapo City on September 29 - October 2, 2022 and Likha ng Central Luzon Trade Fair 2022 at SM Megamall in Mandaluyong City on October 26-30, 2022 with sales of Sixteen Thousand Ninety-Two Pesos (P16,092.00). They also joined the Paskuhan Zambales Fair on November 29 - December 4, 2022.

Now, Hija Zambales Apparel's tote bags are one of the most bought products in Botolan Pasalubong Center. From October to November 2022, Hija Zambales Apparel Shop generate a total sale of Twenty-Six Thousand Eighty pesos (26,080.00). As of October 2023, the percentage of sales gained up to 40%.

According to the Catacutan sisters, their business has become more legitimized, organized, and beautiful because of the assistance of DTI Zambales through the seminars attended by Hija Zambales Apparel. They give them a lot of input on how they can present their product better and sell it better.

Hija Zambales Apparel Shop is also active on e-commerce platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Shopee, and Tiktok. Hija Zambales Apparel's Facebook page followers grew, thus, the buyers.

"Success is a series of small victories." - Claire Aubrey Catacutan

MSME Information

Owner: Claire Aubrey Catacutan

Address: Brgy. Taugtog, Botolan, Zambales

E-mail: parakayhija@gmail.com

Contact Number: 0936-774-5033

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/hija.zmbles>

Instagram: <https://instagram.com/hija.zmbles?>

Shopee: <http://shopee.ph/hija.zmbles>

Tiktok: [hija.zmbles](https://www.tiktok.com/@hija.zmbles)

2023 Negosyo Center AVP



The NC AVP project aims to showcase how DTI 3 Negosyo Centers empower MSMEs through success stories and program impact. It encourages entrepreneurs to use available support, promoting collaboration among MSMEs, experts, and government institutions to strengthen the business environment.



Scan or click the QR code
to watch the AVP

DTI Region 3 Negosyo Center Directory

AURORA

Baler

Baler Public Market, Brgy. Suklayin, Baler, Aurora

Baler.ACA@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Casiguran

Public Market, Brgy. Calantas, Casiguran, Aurora

Casiguran.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Dilasag

Municipal Compound, Brgy. Masagana, Dilasag, Aurora

Dilasag.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Dinalungan

Public Market, Dinalungan, Aurora

Dinalungan.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Dingalan

Municipal Compound, Poblacion, Dingalan, Aurora

Dingalan.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Dipaculao

Municipal Compound, North Poblacion, Dipaculao, Aurora

Dipaculao.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Maria Aurora

G/F Municipal Bldg., Maria Aurora, Aurora

MaAurora.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

San Luis

2/F Public Market, Brgy. 1, San Luis, Aurora

SanLuis.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

BATAAN

Abucay

Municipal Grounds, Abucay LGU, Bataan

Abucay.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Bagac

Municipal Bldg., Bagac, Bataan

Bagac.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Balanga City (LGU)

City Hall Compound, St. Joseph St., Balanga City, Bataan

BalangaCity.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

City of Balanga

2F The Bunker Bldg., Capitol Compound, Tenejero, Balanga City, Bataan

Bataan.DTI@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Dinalupihan

Dinalupihan Municipal Building, San Ramon, Dinalupihan, Bataan

Dinalupihan.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Hermosa

Burgos-Soliman, Hermosa, Bataan

Hermosa.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Limay

Municipal Grounds, Limay LGU, Bataan

Limay.LGU@negosyocenter.com.ph

Mariveles

One Stop Shop Building, Municipal Compound, Poblacion, Mariveles, Bataan

Mariveles.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

BATAAN

Morong

Municipal Compound, Poblacion, Morong Bataan
Morong.Bataan.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Orani

Orani Multipurpose Gym Bldg., Centro 1, Orani, Bataan
Orani.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Orion

Municipal Bldg., Orion, Bataan
Orion.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Pilar

Municipal Bldg. , Pilar, Bataan
Pilar.Bataan.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Samal

NC Samal Ground Floor, Tabing Ilog, Samal, Bataan
Samal.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

BULACAN

Angat

Angat Municipal Hall Annex Bldg. 2nd Flr., Poblacion, Angat, Bulacan
Angat.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Balagtas

Ground Floor, Municipal Building, Brgy. Poblacion, Balagtas, Bulacan
Balagtas.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Baliwag

Farmers Trading Center, Pagala, Baliwag, Bulacan
Baliwag.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

BULACAN

Bocaue

G/F Municipal Hall Annex Bldg., Shangri-La Road, Igulot, Bocaue, Bulacan
Bocaue.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Bulakan

G/F Municipal Building, Brgy. San Jose, Bulakan, Bulacan
Bulakan.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Bustos

G/F Livelihood Bldg., Municipal Compound, Poblacion, Bustos, Bulacan
Bustos.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Calumpit

Calumpit Pasalubong Center, Calumpit Public Market, Brgy. Corazon, Calumpit, Bulacan
Calumpit.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

City of Malolos

Capitol Compound, Hiyas ng Bulacan Convention Center, Brgy. Guinhawa, City of Malolos, Bulacan
MalolosCity.NGO@negosyocenter.gov.ph

City of Malolos

4/F, Lingkod Pinoy Center Robinsons Place Malolos, Bulacan
MalolosCity.Mall@negosyocenter.gov.ph

City of Malolos

2/F HTJRP Building, MacArthur Highway, Sumapang Matanda, City of Malolos, Bulacan
Bulacan.DTI@negosyocenter.gov.ph

City of Malolos (LGU)

G/F New City Hall Building, Bulihan, City of Malolos, Bulacan
negosyocenter.cityofmalolos@gmail.com

BULACAN

City of San Jose Del Monte

Basement 2, Government Service Express, SM City San Jose del Monte, Bulacan

SanJosedelMonte.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Dona Remedios Trinidad

Assesors Office, Ground Floor, Municipal Building, Brgy. Pulong Sampaloc, Doña Remedios Trinidad, Bulacan

DRT.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Guiguinto

Ground Floor, Municipal Building, Poblacion, Guiguinto, Bulacan

Guiguinto.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Hagonoy

Pasalubong Center, Municipal Building, Brgy. Sto. Niño, Hagonoy, Bulacan

Hagonoy.Bulacan.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Marilao

2F City Hall Annex Bldg. Brgy. Patubig, Marilao, Bulacan

Marilao.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Meycauayan City

New City Hall, MacArthur Hwy Brgy. Saluysoy, Meycauayan, Bulacan

Meycauayan.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Norzagaray

City Hall Annex Bldg. Brgy. Poblacion, Norzagaray, Bulacan

Norzagaray.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Obando

G/F New Municipal Building, Paliwas, Obando, Bulacan

Obando.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

BULACAN

Pandi

2nd Flr. Municipal Bldg., Pandi, Bulacan

Pandi.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Paombong

G/F Municipal Building, Poblacion, Paombong Bulacan

Paombong.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Plaridel

3rd Flr, Muncipal Bldg., Plaridel, Bulacan

Plaridel.Bulacan.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Pulilan

G/F New Municipal Building, Poblacion, Pulilan, Bulacan

Pulilan.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

San Ildefonso

2nd Floor, San Ildefonso Commercial Complex, Brgy. Poblacion, San Ildefonso, Bulacan

SanIldefonso.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

San Miguel

G/F Municipal Building, Poblacion, San Miguel, Bulacan

SanMiguel.Bulacan.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

San Rafael

2/F RCS Building, Municipal Hall of San Rafael, Brgy. Sampaloc , San Rafael, Bulacan

SanRafael.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Sta. Maria

Ground Floor, Municipal Hall, Poblacion, Santa Maria, Bulacan

StaMaria.Bulacan.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

NUEVA ECIJA

Aliaga

Municipal Compound, Brgy. Poblacion Centro, Aliaga, Nueva Ecija
Aliaga.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Bongabon

Municipal Compound, Brgy. Sinipit, Bongabon, Nueva Ecija
Bongabon.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Cabanatuan City

1/F CAL Bldg, Gen. Tinio St. Dimasalang, Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija
NuevaEcija.DTI@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Cabanatuan City

3F, Government Service Express, SM City Cabanatuan, Nueva Ecija
CabanatuanCity.mall@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Cabanatuan City (LGU)

City Hall Compound, Kapitan Pepe, Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija
CabanatuanCity.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Cabiao

Municipal Compound, Brgy. San Juan North, Cabiao, Nueva Ecija
Cabiao.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Carranglan

Municipal Hall, Brgy. DL Maglanoc, Carranglan, Nueva Ecija
Carranglan.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

City of Gapan

Municipal Compound, Brgy. Bayanihan, Gapan City, Nueva Ecija
CityOfGapan.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

NUEVA ECIJA

Cuyapo

LGU Compound, District 1, Cuyapo, Nueva Ecija
Cuyapo.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Gabaldon

Municipal Compound, Brgy. North Poblacion, Gabaldon, Nueva Ecija
Gabaldon.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

General Natividad

LGU Compound, Brgy. Poblacion, General M. Natividad, Nueva Ecija
GeneralNatividad.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

General Tinio

Municipal Compound, Brgy. Poblacion Central, General Tinio, Nueva Ecija
GeneralTinio.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Guimba

Municipal Compound, Brgy. Santa Monica, Guimba, Nueva Ecija
Guimba.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Jaen

Municipal Hall, Brgy. Sapang, Jaen, Nueva Ecija
Jaen.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Laur

General Tinio cor Natividad St., GF Old Municipal Hall, Brgy. Poblacion, Laur, Nueva Ecija
Laur.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Licab

Licab Public Market Office Building, Brgy. Villarosa, Licab, Nueva Ecija
Licab.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

NUEVA ECIIJA

Llanera

Ground Floor, Municipal Building, Brgy. Victoria, Llanera, Nueva Ecija
Llanera.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Lupao

2nd Floor, Municipal Building, Poblacion North, Lupao, Nueva Ecija
Lupao.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Nampicuan

South Central, Brgy Poblacion, Nampicuan, Nueva Ecija
Nampicunan.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Palayan City

Ground Floor, City Hall, Brgy. Singalat, Palayan, Nueva Ecija
Palayan.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Pantabangan

Municipal Hall, Brgy. Poblacion East, Poblacion, Pantabangan
Pantabangan.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Penaranda

Municipal Hall, Liwasan St., Brgy. Sinasajan, Penaranda, Nueva Ecija
Penaranda.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Quezon

LGU Compound, Brgy. II, Quezon, Nueva Ecija
Quezon.NuevaEcijaLGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Rizal

Legislative Bldg. Municipal Compound, Poblacion Sur, Rizal, Nueva Ecija
Rizal.NuevaEcija@negosyocenter.gov.ph

NUEVA ECIJA

San Antonio

2F Municipal Compound, Brgy. Poblacion, San Antonio, Nueva Ecija
SanAntonio.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

San Isidro

Municipal Compound, Brgy. Poblacion, San Isidro, Nueva Ecija
SanIsidro.NuevaEcija.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

San Jose City

OTOP Building, Cardenas St., San Jose City, Nueva Ecija
SanJoseCity.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

San Leonardo

Municipal Compound, Old Bldg., Brgy. Diversion, San Leonardo, Nueva Ecija
SanLeonardo.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Science City of Munoz

LGU Compound, Poblacion West, Science City of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija
ScienceCityMunoz.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Sta. Rosa

1st Floor Municipal Hall, Brgy. Rizal, Sta. Rosa, Nueva Ecija
StaRosa.NuevaEcija.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Sto. Domingo

2/Floor, OFW Building, Municipal Compound, Sto. Domingo, Nueva Ecija
StoDomingo.NuevaEcija.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Talavera

LGU Compound, G/F BPLO Office, Brgy. Pag-asa, Talavera, Nueva Ecija
Talavera.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

NUEVA ECIJA

Talugutug

2nd Floor Municipal Bldg, Brgy. Quezon Dist., Talugutug, Nueva Ecija
Talugutug.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Zaragosa

LGU Compound, Brgy. Del Pilar East, Zaragosa, Nueva Ecija
Zaragosa.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

PAMPANGA

Angeles City

3rd Flr. Government Center, Robinsons Place Balibago, Angeles City
Angeles.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Angeles City (MACCII)

G/F ABC Bldg. Nepo Mart Commercial Complex, Angeles City, Pampanga
AngelesCity.NGO@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Apalit

Gonzalez Ave. Municipal Compound San Juan Apalit, Pampanga
Apalit.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Arayat

Municipal Hall, Arayat Pampanga
Arayat.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Bacolor

Municipal Hall, Cabambangan, Bacolor, Pampanga
Bacolor.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

PAMPANGA

Candaba

Municipal Hall, Brgy. Poblacion, Candaba, Pampanga

Candaba.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

City of San Fernando

GF Heroes Hall, City of San Fernando, Pampanga

SanFdoCity.LGU1@negosyocenter.gov.ph

City of San Fernando

Salilungan Pasalubong Center, Jose Abad Santos Ave., City of San Fernando, Pampanga

SanFdoCity.LGU2@negosyocenter.gov.ph

City of San Fernando

DTI Provincial Office, 2nd Floor ABN Plaza corner Del Rosario, City of San Fernando, Pampanga

Pampanga.DTI@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Floridablanca

G/F BFP BLDG, San Jose St., Poblacion, Floridablanca, Pampanga

Floridablanca.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Guagua

Plaza Burgos, Jose Abad Santos, Guagua, Pampanga

Guagua.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Lubao

Lubao Municipal Hall Compound - Treasurer's Office, Lubao, Pampanga

Lubao.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Mabalacat

Business One Stop Shop, Xevera Complex, Tabun, Mabalacat City

Mabalacat.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

PAMPANGA

Macabebe

Poblacion, Macabebe, Pampanga

Macabebe.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Magalang

Municipal Compound, San Nicolas 1, Magalang Pampanga

Magalang.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Masantol

Poblacion San Nicolas, Masantol, Pampanga

Masantol.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Mexico

Mexico Municipal Hall - Near Police Station, Mexico Pampanga

Mexico.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Minalin

Municipal Compound, San Nicolas, Minalin, Pampanga

Minalin.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Porac

Municipal Annex, Cangatba, Porac Pampanga

Porac.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

San Luis

Municipal Hall, Sto. Tomas, San Luis, Pampanga

SanLuis.Pampanga.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

San Simon

McArthur Hi-way, Brgy. San Agustin, San Simon, Pampanga

SanSimon.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

PAMPANGA

Santa Ana

BPLO Office, Municipal Hall, Sta. Ana, Pampanga
StaAna.Pampanga.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Sasmuan

Brgy Sta. Lucia, Dalan Baba, Sasmuan, Pampanga
Sasmuan.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Sta. Rita

Diosdado P. Macapagal Bldg., San Jose, Sta Rita, Pampanga
StaRita.Pampanga.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Sto. Tomas

Ground Floor, Municipal Hall, Santo Tomas, Pampanga
Sto.Tomas.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

TARLAC

Anao

Poblacion, Anao, Tarlac
Anao.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Bamban

Municipal Hall Compound, Bamban, Tarlac
Bamban.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Camiling

Municipal Hall Compound, Poblacion H, Camiling, Tarlac
Camiling.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Capas

2nd Floor Tourism Building Municipal Hall Compound, Capas, Tarlac
Capas.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

TARLAC

Concepcion

Concepcion Municipal Building, Concepcion, Tarlac

Concepcion.Tarlac.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Gerona

Dona Basilio Santiago St. Barangay Pob.3, Gerona, Tarlac

Gerona.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

La Paz

Municipal Hall Compound, La Paz, Tarlac

LaPaz.Tarlac.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Mayantoc

Mayantoc Arcade, Poblacion Norte, Mayantoc, Tarlac

Mayantoc.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Moncada

Mac Arthur Highway, Poblacion 1, Moncada, Tarlac

Moncada.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Paniqui

Municipal Hall Compound, Paniqui, Tarlac

Paniqui.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Pura

Poblacion 2, Pura, Tarlac

Pura.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Ramos

2nd Floor Municipal Hall Building, Ramos, Tarlac

Ramos.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

San Clemente

1st Floor Municipal Hall building, San Clemente, Tarlac

SanClemente.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

TARLAC

San Jose

1st Floor, Municipal Hall Bldg, San Jose, Tarlac

SanJose.Tarlac.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

San Manuel

Farmer's Training Center, Brgy. San Miguel, San Manuel, Tarlac

SanManuel.Tarlac.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Sta. Ignacia

1st Floor Legislative Hall Building, Municipal Hall Building, Santa Ignacia, Tarlac

Sta.Ignacia.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Tarlac City

5th Floor, Capitol Center Building, Macabulos Drive, Tarlac City

Tarlac.DTI@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Victoria

2nd flr. Public Market, San Gavino, Victoria, Tarlac

Victoria.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

ZAMBALES

Botolan

Botolan Municipal Hall, Botolan Zambales

Botolan.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Cabangan

Cabangan Livelihood Center, Cabangan , Zambales

Cabangan.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

ZAMBALES

Candelaria

Candelaria Municipal Hall, Zambales

Candelaria.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Castillejos

JPRMSU, Castillejos, Zambales

Castillejos.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Iba

Estrada Bldg., Zone 6, Iba, Zambales

Iba.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Masinloc

Masinloc Municipal Hall, Masinloc, Zambales

Masinloc.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Olongapo City

DTI-Provincial Office

OlongapoCity.Aca@NegosyoCenter.gov.ph

Palauig

Palauig Municipal Hall, Palauig, Zambales

Palauig.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

San Antonio

San Antonio Commercial Bldg (Near Municipal Hall), San Antonio, Zambales

SanAntonio.Zambales.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

San Felipe

2nd Floor ATC Bldg, Brgy. West Feria, San Felipe, Zambales

SanFelipe.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

ZAMBALES

San Marcelino

San Marcelino Public Market, San Marcelino, Zambales

SanMarcelino.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

San Narciso

San Narciso Municipal Hall, Zambales

SanNarciso.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Sta. Cruz

Sta. Cruz Municipal Hall, Zambales

StaCruz.Zambales.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Subic Bay (Mall)

2nd Floor Government Center, Ayala Harbor Point Mall, Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Zambales

Subic Bay.DTI@negosyocenter.gov.ph

Subic

National Hiway, Baraca-Camichille, Subic, Zambales

Subic.LGU@negosyocenter.gov.ph

ERRATUM

In our previous copy,
Grow your business: DTI Region 3 Negosyo Center eBook 2022
please note the correction:

Page 72: Correct caption for the 1st picture is,
"Ms. Siena Catherine M. Canlas owner of JSV1 Food Cart
participating in the SME Caravan Mini Trade Fair."

We apologize for any confusion.

Erratum Date: August 16, 2023

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The eBook "**Onward and Upward: DTI Region 3 Negosyo Center eBook 2023**" is made possible by the invaluable contributions of DTI 3 Negosyo Center Business Counselors and Associates who have shared success stories of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Central Luzon. The eBook is aimed at motivating small business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs through inspiring stories and testimonies shared by MSMEs who have benefitted from the services and assistance provided by DTI 3.

The stories in the eBook reflect the genuine support and guidance provided by DTI 3 to MSMEs, and it serves as a testament to the positive impact of their programs and services on the growth and success of these businesses. The eBook encourages existing and potential business owners to seek assistance from the nearest DTI office or Negosyo Center for their business needs.

Gratitude is extended to everyone who has contributed to this meaningful eBook, including the DTI 3 Negosyo Center Business Counselors and Associates, whose dedication and efforts have made these success stories possible. Their contributions have helped inspire and motivate others in the MSME sector to strive for success and make use of the available resources and support from DTI 3.

ADVISERS:

BRIGIDA T. PILL, OIC-Regional Director, DTI 3
EDNA D. DIZON, OIC-Assistant Regional Director, DTI 3

LEADS:

RAQUEL R. MALIG, Division Chief, DTI 3-IDD
NANETTE D. LINATOC, STIDS, DTI 3-IDD

EDITORS:

MARLON P. APOSTOL, JR., NC TIDA, DTI 3-IDD
NERSON RAY F. ROMERO, Regional Information Officer, DTI 3-ORD

LAYOUT CONSULTANT:

BARRY BERNABE J. PANGILINAN, STIDS, DTI 3-IDD

CONTRIBUTORS:




PAULINE E. ALEGRE, BC, NC Limay, Bataan
LIZETTE A. BEFETEL, NC TIDA, NC Balanga City (LGU), Bataan
DARWIN G. MUSNI, BC, NC City of Malolos (Mall), Bulacan
DANILO F. AQUINO III, BC, NC Calumpit, Bulacan
JEREMY IAN S. LULU, BC, NC Laur, Nueva Ecija
RACHELLE E. BADIOLA, BC, NC Lupao, Nueva Ecija
MANELIZA B. ROMERO, BC, NC Science City of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija
IMIEMALEN S. JAVAR, BC, NC Palayan City, Nueva Ecija
RONAVEL DP. AQUINO, BC, NC SM City Cabanatuan, Nueva Ecija
ALFINE B. BONUS, BC, NC MACCII, Angeles City, Pampanga
KENNETH E. GABAY, BC, NC Sta. Ignacia, Tarlac
RENZ JOSEPH L. PEREZ, BC, NC Camiling, Tarlac
JEAN V. AQUINO, BC, NC San Jose, Tarlac
ADRIAN PAOLO P. DAVID, BC, NC Capas, Tarlac
ANTHONY S. CORPUZ, BC, NC San Clemente, Tarlac
VAL MAENAR L. ECHEVARRI, BC, NC Pura, Tarlac
JOANA MARIE R. OBENA, BC, NC Ramos, Tarlac
KRIZIA ANNE O. DELA CRUZ, BC, NC Anao, Tarlac
ERICA P. TURLA, BC, NC Bamban, Tarlac
KHAYCEE YVONNE O. AMPANIA, BC, NC Gerona, Tarlac
RANJEE T. MAÑALAC, BC, NC Paniqui, Tarlac
CATHLYN D. OLEDAN, BC, NC Olongapo City, Zambales
JHOANA ROSALYN M. PONA, BC, NC Castillejos, Zambales
JOHANNA M. LLABRES, BC, NC San Narciso, Zambales
RAYMART C. LACSON, BC, NC San Antonio, Zambales
JONAH M. FORTIN, BC, NC Sta. Cruz, Zambales
KATHERINE U DIZON, BC, NC San Marcelino, Zambales
GIZEL O. DUKHA, BC, NC Baler, Aurora
MARC LINDON S. LAZARO, BC, NC Hagonoy, Bulacan
DANIELA PAULA O. UY, BC, NC Pandi, Bulacan
REYMART L. CRUZ, BC, NC Balagtas, Bulacan
KAREN M. VILLASEÑOR, NC San Rafael, Bulacan
JANICE D. GUILALAS, NC CSJDM, Bulacan
CARL ISAAC M. FERNANDO, NC San Rafael, Bulacan
JAMES DOMINIC P. BORJA, NC Doña Remedios Trinidad, Bulacan
MAIAH MINERVA C. GATBONTON, BC, NC Mabalacat City, Pampanga
CHARMAINE S. TIONGSON, BC, NC City of San Fernando, Pampanga
JHOY ALOUH P. PANGILINAN, NC TIDA, NC Tarlac City, Tarlac
LUIS M. CASUPANAN, BC, NC Mayantoc, Tarlac
ADRIAN E. MELANIO, BC, NC Subic Bay (Mall), Zambales
JAYSON M. TENERIFE, BC, NC Botolan, Zambales



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 /DTI.Philippines  @DTIPhilippines  @DTI.Philippines  /DTIPhilippines  1-384 (1-DTI)  +63.917.8343330  www.dti.gov.ph

 r03@dti.gov.ph  DTI Region 3 - Central Luzon  DTI Central Luzon