



DTI-3 BN processors cited for excellence

By: Nerson Ray F. Romero

DTI-3 Business Name processors were recognized for their excellent service and performance. The recognition was done during the 1st Amazing DTI Business Name Registration (BNR) Awards and Recognition held on July 25, 2023 at the Ballroom 2, Rizal Park Hotel, City of Manila.

DTI-3 bagged 3rd place overall for BNR Regional Excellence for Quality and Accuracy and 3rd place overall for BNR Regional Excellence for Highest Revenue Collection.

In her keynote address during the program, Office of the Secretary (OSEC) Undersecretary and Chief of Staff Ana Carolina P. Sanchez noted that the event served as a special recognition solely for the people behind one of DTI's critical activities which is business name registration.

BN registration serves as the foundational step for entrepreneurs in formalizing and legally establishing their business identity. This registration process ensures that businesses operate under recognized and unique names, fostering credibility, legal compliance, and enabling entrepreneurs to engage confidently in commercial activities within the Philippines.

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DTI-3 Regional Office STIDS Nanette Linatoc (5th from Left) receives the award for Best BN Focal Person for Luzon.



DTI ROG Undersecretary Blesila A. Lantayona (back, 4th from left) poses with DTI-3 Associates headed by OIC RD Brigida T. Pili. (back, 5th from left)

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On top of the group awards, Senior Trade-Industry Development Specialist Nanette Linatoc of DTI-Regional Office was awarded as the Best BN Focal Person for Luzon.

Meanwhile Business Counselor Katherine Dizon of DTI-Zambales received 1st Honorable Mention for Webinar-Topnotchers Award.

In addition, individual awards were also handed out to the best BN processors per province. The best BN processors for Region 3 provinces are the following:

1. Ms. Maria Liezelle Perez for Aurora Province;
2. Ms. Joyce Yambao for Bataan Province;
3. Ms. Louella Talao for Bulacan Province;
4. Ms. Janyne Luna for Nueva Ecija Province;
5. Ms. Arlene Gomez for Pampanga Province;
6. Ms. Ma. Fatima David for Tarlac Province; &
7. Ms. Cathlyn Oledan for Zambales Province





Baler, Baliwag, Samal, among the Most Competitive LGUs in the Philippines

By: Barry Bernabe J. Pangilinan



The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), through its Competitiveness Bureau (CB), held the Philippine Creative Cities and Municipalities Competitiveness Congress on September 28, 2023, at the Fiesta Pavilion, Manila Hotel.

The event highlighted the recognition and awarding of local government units from all over the Philippines with exemplary performance and ranking in the top three of the five pillars of the Cities and Municipalities Competitiveness Index (CMCI) as categorized into the following classifications: 5th to 6th Class Municipalities, 3rd to 4th Class Municipalities, 1st to 2nd Class Municipalities, Component Cities, and Highly Urbanized Cities (HUCs). Special awards were also given to the Most Improved Cities and Municipalities and the Most Competitive Province.

Since its inception in 2013, Central Luzon has consistently positioned a number of LGUs in the top ranks. For 2023, recognition was given to the following:

Baler, Aurora

Class 3-4 Municipalities Category
2nd Overall Competitiveness

Baliwag, Bulacan

Class 1-2 Municipalities Category
3rd Overall Competitiveness

Samal, Bataan

Class 3-4 Municipalities Category
2nd Government Efficiency

CMCI is being administered in Central Luzon through the initiative of DTI-3 under the Industry Development Division, in cooperation with the seven DTI Provincial Offices and the participation of the region's 130 cities and municipalities. Nationwide, 1,634 cities and municipalities have provided their data for the CMCI.



Business Permits and Licensing Officers hold Regional Convention

By: Nerson Ray F. Romero

The 4th Regional Convention of BPLOs in Region 3 gathered over 200 Business Permit and Licensing Officers (BPLOs) and Local Economic Development and Investment Promotion Officers (LEDIPOs) at the Royce Hotel in Clark, Pampanga, from July 6-7, 2023. Organized by the Central Luzon Association of BPLOs Inc. (CLAB) and supported by the Department of Trade and Industry Regional Office III (DTI-3), the convention emphasized the theme "Revolutionizing Business Permit Processes Thru Digitalization," advocating for technological adoption in business permit issuance.

DTI-3 OIC Regional Director Brigida T. Pili welcomed the delegates acknowledging the convention's significance and urging the integration of technology in permit issuance to streamline operations and eliminate bureaucratic hurdles.

Special consultant Mr. Crispin De Luna, representing Bulacan Governor Daniel R. Fernando, praised BPLOs and LEDIPOs for creating a business-friendly environment encouraging investment and sustainable growth.

Keynote speaker OIC Director Rachel Ann Grabador from the Government Digital Transformation Bureau highlighted the role of digitalization in enhancing ease of doing business. She introduced the eGovPH super app, a comprehensive platform for government transactions, urging delegates to leverage its features for diverse services.

Engr. Antonio Edward Padre, DICT-3 Regional Director, shared the status of digitalization in Central Luzon LGUs, citing the Integrated Business Permit and Licensing System (iBPLS) in 79 LGUs, simplifying permit acquisition.

Philippine Statistics Office Region 3 Regional Director Arlene Divino discussed the standardization of business classification via the Philippine Standard Industrial Classification (PSIC), advocating its adoption for uniform data processing.

The second day featured Chief Superintendent Jesus Fernandez of the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP), revealing the integration of the Fire Safety Inspection Certificate (FSIC) in the eGov app. This addition facilitates online application for FSIC, eliminating the need for physical visits.

Department of the Interior and Local Government Region 3 Assistant Regional Director Jay Timbreza highlighted the integration of Barangay Clearance in iBPLS, enabling online application in select LGUs.

The convention also witnessed the CLAB officers' oath-taking, officiated by ARD Timbreza. The gathering was an impactful exchange of ideas and strategies aimed at propelling digital transformation and enhancing business permit processes across Central Luzon's LGUs.



DTI-3 awards rice payout to 2,923 retailers

By: Nerson Ray F. Romero

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Region 3, in collaboration with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the Department of Agriculture (DA) has successfully awarded cash assistance to 2,923 qualified rice retailers in Central Luzon.

The cash assistance pegged at P15,000.00 was set in motion to help micro rice retailers selling regular- and well-milled rice following the issuance of Executive Order No. 39 which set ceiling prices for the said variety of rice. It is part of DSWD's Sustainable Livelihood Program - Economic Relief Subsidy (SLP-ERS). This initiative aligns with the government's commitment to support micro rice retailers and ensure the availability of affordable rice for consumers.

Nueva Ecija had the highest number of payees with 749 beneficiaries followed by Bataan with 563, and Zambales with 497. Meanwhile, Tarlac had 395 payees, Bulacan with 305, Pampanga with 216, and Aurora with 198 beneficiaries.

"We aim for this payout to aid your businesses, to prevent losses, and to sustain your retailing businesses in public markets so that we can assist our consumers in purchasing affordable rice. This comes at a time when we are anticipating the rice harvest in our municipalities and barangays," DTI-3 OIC RD Pili said to the rice retailers in attendance



48 ENTREPRENEURS FINISH DTI-KMME PROGRAM

By: Nerson Ray F. Romero



City of San Fernando –

The Department of Trade and Industry Region 3 (DTI-3) produced 48 new mentee-graduates for its Kapatid Mentor Me Money Market Encounter (KMME-MME) program. The new mentees had their virtual graduation on August 1, 2023 via Zoom platform.

They have completed 10 online modules, coaching sessions, and successfully presented their business improvement plans before a panel composed of outstanding representatives from the government, banking and financial sector, online market platforms and mentors from the Philippine Center for Entrepreneurship (PCE).

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The provinces of Bataan, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Tarlac, and Zambales have 7 mentee-graduates each while Aurora has 6. Launched on May 16, the online learning sessions continued over a period of three months.

The KMME program aims to empower MSMEs (Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises) through mentorship and e-learning sessions. With it, entrepreneurs are continuously kept abreast of innovative information, skills, and knowledge needed to upgrade, upskill, and upsize their enterprises.

The culminating program was graced by DTI Undersecretary for Regional Operations Group Blesila A. Lantayona, PCE - Go Negosyo founder Joey Concepcion, DTI-3 OIC Regional Director Brigida T. Pili and OIC Assistant Regional Director Edna D. Dizon.

In her message, Usec Lantayona challenged the mentees to become mentors to other entrepreneurs.

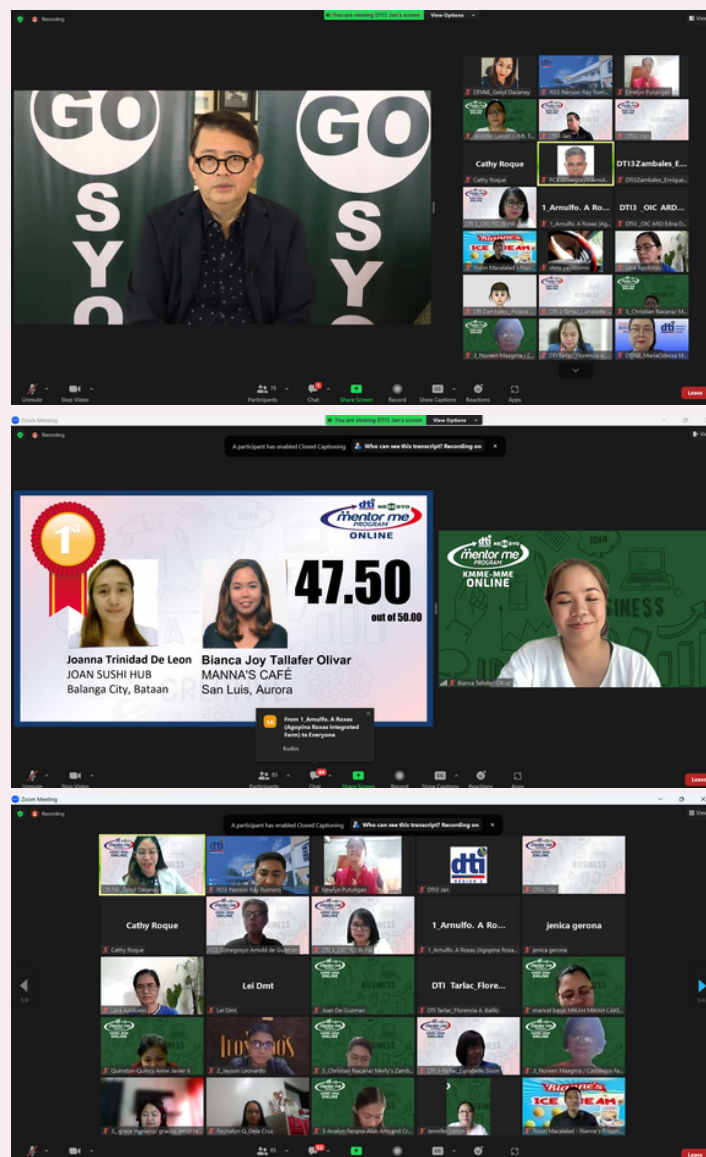
"The KMME Program has again produced graduates with a mindset and values of successful entrepreneurs. You are now part of the network of more than 8000 KMME mentee graduates in the country whose objective is not only to survive but ultimately to scale up under the continued mentorship of the program's 800 accredited mentors," she stated.

Meanwhile, Mr. Joey Concepcion, emphasized the significance of gaining insights from the constantly evolving and competitive market. He highlighted the wide acceptance of the program among 10 ASEAN countries, signifying that mentoring plays a crucial role in assisting our MSMEs to thrive in their business ventures.

On her part, OIC RD Pili conveyed her appreciation to the mentees for their dedication in completing the modules and using such knowledge as a powerful tool to level up their enterprise.

"As entrepreneurs, let us not lose our determination to win and prevail, instead let these setbacks serve as challenges for us to improve and make a difference. We must always remember that our future is not determined by the stars, but by our own sweat," OIC RD Pili said.

A second batch of KMME mentees will undergo the same rudiments of the program before the year ends.



INVESTMENT INITIATIVES



By: Charmaine S. Tongson

TARLAC MSMEDC GOES TO TAIWAN

By: Ma. Fatima A. David

A delegation of 15 members from the Tarlac Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises Development Council (MSMEDC) embarked on a benchmarking mission to Taipei, Taiwan from September 4 to 8, 2023. Led by the Tarlac MSMEDC Chairperson and President of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry Tarlac, Ms. Aileen U. Chan, the group consisted of representatives from various private sectors, including non-food MSMEs, baked goods, meat processing, and fruits and vegetables. The Tarlac Governor, Susan A. Yap, also accompanied the delegation, along with government officials from the Provincial Government of Tarlac – Provincial Cooperative and Enterprise Development Office, the Department of Trade and Industry-Tarlac and the Department of Science and Technology-Tarlac.

The Philippine Development Plan for 2023 to 2028 aims to create a prosperous, inclusive, and resilient society by leveraging lessons learned during the pandemic.

“Taiwan has been acknowledged for its use of technology in managing the pandemic, making it a model for other Southeast Asian nations to follow. The Council aims to gain valuable insights from Taiwan’s effective use of technology in managing the pandemic. The delegation also intends to learn about the interventions implemented by their counterparts from the public and private sectors in support of MSMEs, as well as their best practices. With these newfound insights, our Council will be able to design better strategies to help Tarlac MSMEs transform and thrive.” Officer-in-charge Provincial Director Florencia A. Balilo said.

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The Manila Economic and Cultural Office (MECO) Deputy Resident Representative, Alice Q. Visperas, and Philippine Trade and Investment Center (PTIC) – Taipei Director for Commercial Affairs, Anthony Rivera, welcomed the delegation in Taiwan. During the courtesy call, the delegation was briefed on Taiwan's economic background and PTIC's current programs and projects, one of which is the Taipei International Food Show.

The itinerary involved observing and benchmarking different programs, projects, and initiatives of the Taipei Chamber of Commerce, the Importers and Exporters Association of Taipei, and the Ministry of Economic Affairs – Small and Medium Enterprise Administration (SMEA). The delegation also visited Ming Chi University of Technology and the National Central University to learn about their recent research and development. Additionally, they met with various MSMEs, such as Dahua Bamboo Store, Vigor Kobo Pineapple Cake Factory, IsCoolLab, Zirco Applied Materials, and Smart Tag Inc., to gain product inspiration and adopt best practices.



During the activity, the Council members had the opportunity to interact with various stakeholders in Taiwan's economic development, including government agencies, research institutions, private companies, and industry associations. The benchmarking mission highlighted the significance of collaboration and knowledge sharing among different organizations and sectors. The Council learned about best practices and innovations in different fields and observed how these stakeholders worked together to create a more competitive and sustainable economy for their country. The journey provided valuable insights and ideas the Council can use to help the Tarlac MSMEs embrace transformation.



THRIVE Central Luzon conducts Innovation Forum at the Tarlac BizConEx

By: Ma. Fatima A. David



TARLAC CITY – As part of the Tarlac Business Conference Expo (BizConEx) 2023, the Technological Hive of Regional Innovation for a Vibrant Ecosystem, or THRIVE Central Luzon, conducted an innovation forum on July 11, 2023, at the Diwa ng Tarlac Convention Center in Tarlac City.

The activity aims to give the audience, especially entrepreneurs, a suitable mindset for innovation. Among the panelists were Tarlac State University (TSU) Center for Food Technology and Research Director Leah Matias, TSU Technology Business Incubator (TBI) Manager Aldrex Laxamana, Tarlac Agricultural University (TAU) Research and Development Director Maria Elena Caguioa, TAU TBI Manager Maribel Ramales, Mayantoc Sweet Potato Clean Planting Material (SP-CPM) Producers Cooperative Chairperson Dominador Corpuz, and TLM Yema Buko Pie Proprietor Leonora Magaling. It was moderated by Regional Inclusive Innovation Center (RIIC) adviser Ms. Marella Castro.

"Technology has a big impact on how quickly the world we live in today changes. For businesses to adapt and cope with the challenges of change, innovation is frequently required.



A lack of readiness among the business owners' mindsets often prevents an innovation strategy from moving forward. This forum targets to help the business owners develop an innovative mindset, which can assist them in streamlining their operations and ultimately boosting productivity," Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Tarlac Division Chief Zaida F. Garibay said.

THRIVE Central Luzon is the Region 3 RIIC, an initiative of DTI, the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) with the assistance of the United States Agency for International Development Science, Technology, Research, and Innovation for Development (USAID-STRIDE), which aims to synergize the government-industry-academe stakeholders and harness the region's innovation potential.

The Tarlac BizConEx 2023 is an event organized by the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry Tarlac together with the Tarlac Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise (MSME) Development Council in celebration of this year's National MSME Week.

Bamboo Research and Investment Forum Promotes Sustainable Development in Zambales

By: Andy Marc Bactad



The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Zambales and the Zambales Bamboo Industry Development Council (ZBIDC) recently conducted the Bamboo Research and Investment Forum in Botolan, Zambales. The forum gathered 29 participants from the DTI, the President Ramon Magsaysay State University-Botolan Campus, and other private and public organizations.

The forum aims to discuss the latest findings on bamboo and its potential as a sustainable investment opportunity. Experts from various fields shared their insights on the economic, environmental, and social benefits of bamboo cultivation and utilization.

Dr. Edilyn Vitug-Lansangan, a bamboo expert from the University of the Philippines Los Baños, talked about the bamboo value chain in Region 3. She discussed the importance of bamboo as a sustainable material and the different stages of the bamboo value chain, from cultivation and harvesting to processing and manufacturing.

Ms. Mary Grace Alcantara of Banco Kalikasan Environmental Movement Inc. talked about the Iron Bamboo Towards Rural Resiliency Response. She highlighted the potential of iron bamboo as a sustainable resource for construction and other industries. She also discussed the environmental benefits of planting iron bamboo, such as carbon sequestration and erosion control.

Mr. Emil Paolo Galang, the Bamboo Focal Person of DTI Pampanga, talked about the Good Practices of Pampanga Bamboo Industry. He shared the province's experience in reviving the bamboo industry and the success of the Lubao Bamboo Eco Park.



DTI Zambales Provincial Director Enrique D. Tacbad expressed his gratitude to the speakers and participants and emphasized the importance of bamboo in sustainable development. The Bamboo Research and Investment Forum was successful in promoting the sustainable use of bamboo. The forum provided a platform for experts and stakeholders to share their knowledge and insights on the bamboo industry. The forum's recommendations can help promote the use of bamboo in sustainable construction and development, increase funding for bamboo research and development, develop new bamboo products and markets, and strengthen the bamboo supply chain.

Bamboo is a versatile and renewable resource that has the potential to make a positive impact on the environment and the economy. The Bamboo Research and Investment Forum is a step in the right direction towards promoting the sustainable use of bamboo in Zambales and the Philippines. Bamboo is a sustainable resource because it grows quickly and can be harvested without harming the plant. It is also a carbon sink, meaning that it absorbs carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Planting bamboo can help reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and mitigate the effects of climate change.

The bamboo industry has the potential to create jobs and boost economic growth in rural communities. Bamboo can be used to make a variety of products, including furniture, flooring, construction materials, and textiles. The bamboo industry also supports the tourism sector, as bamboo plantations and eco-parks can attract visitors.

DTI Pampanga Empowers Business Counselors in a Productive Learning Session

By: Grace Afan

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Pampanga recently organized a highly successful Negosyo Centers Learning Session. The event took place on August 1, 2023, at the DTI 3 Regional Office, with the primary objective of equipping Business Counselors with essential skills and knowledge to present business opportunity seminars and DTI Programs and Services effectively.

The day-long learning session provided a platform for meaningful discussions and workshops, covering a range of topics aimed at enhancing the capabilities of the Business Counselors in aiding the local business community. The event not only focused on arming the participants with the necessary tools but also emphasized the importance of effective presentation skills, productivity tools, and strategic planning for the upcoming months.

Provincial Director Elenita Ordonio was present during the session and delivered the opening remarks. Her words of encouragement and support further motivated the participants to actively engage in the learning activities.

The workshop on Business Opportunity Seminars (BOS) and DTI services, presented by selected Business Counselors, was a key highlight of the event. Participants gained valuable insights into how to effectively communicate and promote business opportunities to potential entrepreneurs.



This knowledge will enable them to act as facilitators and mentors, guiding aspiring business owners through the initial stages of establishing their ventures. Ms. Rowena S. Miranda, Supervising Trade-Industry Development Specialist of the Office of the Regional Director (SupTIDS - ORD), graced the event with her presence and shared valuable insights on how Business Counselors can improve their presentation skills. Her expertise and guidance provided participants with actionable strategies to effectively communicate and engage with their audiences.

One of the most crucial aspects of the learning session was the orientation on the significance and fundamentals of intellectual property (IP). This segment was expertly presented by Mr. Buenaventura Marcelino Jr., Regional Intellectual Property Officer for Region 3, shedding light on the importance of protecting and respecting intellectual property rights and trademarks. Armed with this knowledge, Business Counselors are now better equipped to advise local entrepreneurs on safeguarding their innovative ideas and creations and apply for trademark, fostering a more conducive environment for business development and innovation.

The Negosyo Centers Learning Session proved to be a fruitful and productive event, enabling the Business Counselors to acquire valuable skills and knowledge. With their enhanced capabilities, they are now better prepared to serve and support the local business community effectively.

Subic, Olongapo launch Integrated Business Permits and Licensing System

By: Evangeline S. Bulda

The Integrated Business Permits and Licensing System (iBPLS) was successfully launched in LGU Subic and LGU Olongapo City last August 8, 2023 and September 20, 2023, respectively. This complies with Section 11 of RA 11032, or the Ease of Doing Business Law, which mandates the LGUs to streamline the issuance of business permits and licenses.

The launchings were attended by the respective Mayors, DICT, DILG, DTI, LBP, City and Municipality Officials and business sectors.

The launch of iBPLS can lead to significant improvements in the ease of doing business in LGUs, fostering a more business-friendly environment, and promoting economic growth.





DTI, BCCI launched Gabay-Negosyo Project

By: Lota M. Yasa

In an effort to bolster entrepreneurship, innovation, and sustainability among micro-entrepreneurs in the province of Bulacan, the Bulacan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) partnered with the Department of Trade and Industry-Bulacan (DTI-Bulacan) to launch the Gabay-Negosyo Project. This initiative aims to provide comprehensive assistance to local micro-entrepreneurs, equipping them with the necessary knowledge and skills to improve and expand their businesses. The project involves the collaboration of various stakeholders, including the academe, government agencies, and private organizations, and benefitted 28 microenterprises from across Bulacan's seven districts.

The Gabay-Negosyo Project kicked off on July 7, 2023, with a launch event held at Max's Restaurant Kapitolyo. This marked the beginning of a two-month journey for the participating micro-entrepreneurs.

The success of the project is largely attributed to the cooperation of several key partners. The Bulacan State University (BuLSU), Department of

Science and Technology (DOST), Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), Provincial Government of Bulacan - Provincial Cooperative and Enterprise Development Office (PGB-PCEDO), and Small Business Corporation (SB Corp), all playing pivotal roles in providing expertise, guidance, mentorship, and one-on-one consultations to the micro-entrepreneurs.

Key Components of the Project

1. Entrepreneurial Mindsetting Seminar: The project commenced with a seminar focused on cultivating an entrepreneurial mindset among participants. This session aims to enhance their entrepreneurial competencies and technical abilities, preparing them to establish or expand their businesses. Furthermore, participants are encouraged to register their businesses with the DTI, ensuring legal compliance.

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2. **Financial Literacy:** A financial literacy seminar equips participants with essential skills, such as personal financial management, budgeting, and investing. Additionally, a financing forum, in collaboration with PGB-PCEDO and SB Corp, was organized to present various government financing options available to micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs).

3. **Online Marketing and Data Security:** To adapt to the digital age, micro-entrepreneurs received training on online marketing strategies. Topics included data security and privacy for MSMEs, as well as social media branding assessment, with resource persons from the DICT providing valuable insights.

4. **Food Safety and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP):** A seminar on food safety and GMP was conducted to ensure product quality, prevent contamination, and reduce the risk of foodborne illnesses.

5. **FDA Registration Requirements and Packaging and Labeling:** Participants were oriented on FDA registration and packaging and labeling requirements with essential knowledge and guidance regarding regulatory compliance.

6. **Keeping Up with Design Trends:** With the ever-evolving business landscape, staying updated is crucial. A design consultant shared the latest trends in aesthetics, materials, colors, form, and functionality. The consultant drew inspiration from recent visits to trade fairs like Maison de Objet, Ambiente, Christmas World, and Creative World.

The project not only provided knowledge and skills but also emphasized the importance of values like hard work, persistence, and integrity in business. BCCI trustees played mentoring role throughout the program, guiding participants on their entrepreneurial journey.

Twelve (12) out of the 28 beneficiaries had the opportunity to participate in the 2023 Bulacan Food Fair and Expo (BUFFEX) to gain experience in trade fairs. This exposure helped them attract new markets and increase their sales potential.

The Gabay-Negosyo Project concluded with a graduation ceremony held on September 6, 2023, during the DTI Day at BUFFEX. During this event, participants were not only recognized for their dedication but also received financial assistance to further grow their businesses.

The Gabay-Negosyo Project exemplifies the power of collaboration and targeted support in fostering entrepreneurship and sustainability among micro-entrepreneurs. By providing comprehensive assistance and mentorship, and by exposing participants to evolving business trends and practices, this initiative has set a promising path for the growth of microenterprises in Bulacan. The project's success is a testament to what can be achieved when various stakeholders come together to empower local entrepreneurs.



Slicing Through Boundaries: A Meaty Donation Fuels Paschal MPC thru SSF



By: Paolo Mari T. Madlangbayan

The Department of Trade and Industry Bulacan Provincial Office donated equipment under the Shared Service Facility (SSF) Program to Paschal Multipurpose Cooperative on September 1, 2023 held at Masagana, Pandi, Bulacan. The activity was attended by DTI Assistant Regional Director and Concurrent Provincial Director Edna Dizon, Chief Maria Cristina V. Valenzuela, DTI SSF point persons, Paschal MPC Chairperson Maxima Salhay and the cooperative officers and members.

The SSF project of Paschal MPC is a meat processing facility launched in May 2021, during the height of the community quarantine implemented by the government. The donated equipment were: meat slicer, bone saw, meat stuffer, stainless working tables and freezer amounting to two hundred thirty thousand pesos. The counterpart of the cooperator in this project was construction of a processing facility and procurement of other cooking tools and food items.

Cooperator Paschal MPC is a multipurpose cooperative in the town of Pandi, Bulacan, whose primary product is savings and loans with over 50 members who are engaged in various livestock and poultry production. Among their initial products were tapa, skinless longganisa and tocino. They also added chicken nuggets, hotdogs and salami after the SSF was established.

Based on DTI's monitoring, through the submitted reports of the cooperator, the project can be considered a success, as determined by its measurable impacts such as: 150% increase in MSME beneficiaries, 300% increase in jobs generation and 72% increase in sales generation. Ms. Maxima Salhay, Chairperson of Paschal MPC, is very thankful to DTI because of its intervention to their cooperative and they committed to continue the objectives of the Shared Service Facility that was donated to them. DTI will also continue to support the SSF program of Paschal MPC through their enrollment to more advanced programs to help them upsize their business to improve the lives of their members in the spirit of cooperativism.

DTI-Bulacan and Partners Spearhead Sustainable Solutions for Plastic Waste Management in Bocaue

By: Lota M. Yasa

On August 17, 2023, DTI-Bulacan in collaboration with Green Antz Builders conducted an orientation on plastic shredding for the SSF Project- Community Plastic Station beneficiaries in Batia, Bocaue, Bulacan. The objective of this event was to educate SSF beneficiaries on the proper identification and segregation of plastic waste and to provide hands-on training on operating the equipment. This initiative marks a significant step toward operationalizing the SSF in Bocaue.

Following the orientation, DTI-Bulacan and Green Antz Builders engaged in discussions with Barangay Captain Ydayle del Rosario to propose a system where the community could exchange single-use plastic waste for points.

Engr. Nancy Santiago from the BuLSU College of Engineering also visited the project site to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment. She expressed the college's commitment to assisting with the project by preparing manuals for the equipment involved.

On August 29, 2023, a Skills Training on Souvenir Items Making was held at the Multipurpose Hall in Batia, Bocaue. This activity aims to provide participants with valuable crafting skills, including resin casting, molding, and recycling techniques. These skills not only enhance their creative abilities but also open doors to potential income-generating opportunities.

On September 1, 2023, a stakeholders' meeting was convened with the support of LGU Bocaue through its Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Office (MENRO), DTI-Bulacan, Green Antz Builders, and BULSU College of Engineering. The meeting focused on the operationalization of the SSF facility for plastic waste conversion.

Fi Asia and Vitafoods Asia 2023: A Gateway to Innovation and Networking Excellence for Bulacan MSMEs

By: Flora M. Cruz

The Food Ingredients Asia (Fi Asia) event, acclaimed as the leading food and beverage industry gathering in Southeast Asia, continues to be a driving force in propelling the growth and evolution of the food industry.

In an exciting development, Vitafoods Asia 2023, co-located with Fi Asia 2023, brought together over 350 international suppliers and more than 8,000 industry leaders from the nutraceutical, food, and beverage sectors. These professionals converged to explore innovative and premium ingredients, dietary supplements, and services.

Fi Asia and Vitafoods Asia 2023 showcased an extensive array of offerings, spanning agricultural resource products, commodities export, raw material sourcing, product innovation and development, and nutraceuticals. These events served as hubs for businesses seeking to stay at the forefront of industry trends and innovation.

Two standout participants in this transformative event were JNRM Corporation and Appetissant Group Corporation based in Bulacan. They are leading local manufacturers dedicated to producing high-quality ingredients, instant mixes, and food products. Their commitment to excellence and innovation positions them as key players in driving the industry forward. They seized the opportunity to immerse themselves in the latest trends, innovations, and advancements within the food and beverage industry.

These two forward-thinking companies made invaluable connections with industry experts and seized the chance to explore groundbreaking products. In addition to this, they actively engaged in seminars that provided vital insights into the industry's future direction.



As a result of their participation, Nerrisa Larrobis, a representative from these companies, expressed great optimism regarding the new network of contacts and knowledge developed during these activities. “Our time at FiAsia was not only enjoyable but also incredibly informative. The event offered a comprehensive insight into the latest trends, innovations, and advancements in the food and beverage industry. Furthermore, the networking opportunities were invaluable. We had the pleasure of meeting with like-minded professionals, exchanging ideas, and forging new connections. We even met Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Undersecretary Blesila A. Lantayona and the sirs and madams of various DTI regions who also gave us informative learnings. These connections will be beneficial for our business in the future. We would like to give DTI our utmost gratitude for letting us be part of this very meaningful event. It has indeed provided us great pleasure and a new path to leverage our products from the Philippines to the world.”, Larrobis said.

Fi Asia and Vitafoods Asia 2023 have once again demonstrated their pivotal role in shaping the future of ASEAN's food industry. With a focus on innovation, sustainability, and connectivity, these events serve as catalysts for positive change in the region's food and beverage landscape.

DTI's LUCUB Program: Fostering Product Development for MSMEs

By: Clau Blanco



The Department of Trade and Industry conducted a product development program called LUCUB on July 21, 2023. LUCUB is one of the DTI's programs aimed at assisting MSMEs/clients in enhancing their products. Both Phase One and Phase Two were conducted via Zoom, with the first phase taking place on May 21, 2023. During this phase, MSMEs had one-on-one consultations with their assigned designers. The designers asked the MSMEs to present their products and delved into various strategies to make the products and packaging more appealing and inviting to consumers.

The designers also emphasized the importance of the external appearance of the product, including the packaging, logo, and color preferences. MSMEs shared insights on how they started their businesses and provided recommendations on how they would like their product packaging to be improved. Discussions covered color preferences, logos, and packaging materials.

In the second phase of the activity, the designers presented two different designs to the MSMEs. They discussed the unique aspects of each design and how they were developed and improved.

Phase three of LUCUB was conducted face-to-face at the DTI Regional Office on July 17, 2023. During this phase, designers presented their proposals for the final stage of LUCUB. LUCUB clients were asked to bring their products and old packaging for the final phase. This phase involved brainstorming ideas and evaluation, with the goal of creating a clear concept that offered more opportunities and ideas for the MSMEs. It emphasized how essential product development is for their businesses and how it would benefit them as business owners.

At the end of the final phase of LUCUB, each design was effectively distributed and approved by the MSMEs, thanks to the exceptional skills of the designers and the DTI Pampanga's product development program, LUCUB.





Bataan's first OTOP kiosk launched in Morong

By: Teresita E. Magtanong

Morong, Bataan - To further promote and showcase Bataan products, an OTOP Kiosk was launched on September 21, 2023 at the Morong Star Hotel and Resort in Morong, Bataan. The activity was led by DTI-Bataan OIC Provincial Director Eileen Ocampo with Business Development Division Chief Ma. Concepcion Sanico, TIDS Marissa dela Cruz, and Business Counsellor Clarice Medina.

After the launching, a Memorandum of Agreement was signed between DTI and Morong Star Hotel and Resort represented by their Finance Manager, Brigitte Suarez. According to Ms. Suarez, their visitors in the resort will now be able to buy "pasalubong" products produced in the province like cashew nuts, cookies, polvoron, shrimp paste, assorted chips, "adobong mani", bamboo handicrafts, bags, Bataan shirts, and sandals, among others.

Director Ocampo said that the OTOP Kiosk-Likha ng Bataño will showcase the products of Bataan and help reach more buyers especially tourists who visit the province particularly those who stay at the Morong Star Hotel and Resort.

She also announced the next OTOP Kiosk launchings in the province such as those housed in the Negosyo Centers and gasoline stations. She hopes that through the OTOP Kiosks, Bataan products will be made more known and available to the market.

Also present to express their support are Bataan Food and Non-Food Manufacturers, Inc. (BAFNOMAI) President Amanda Battad and VP Pamela Santos, Bataan Homestyle and Wearables Assn., Inc. (BHWAI) President Marlon Pabustan, Sec. Jho Dabuet, and member Ghie Arboleda. "Congratulations DTI! Maraming salamat po sa walang sawa nyong pagsuporta sa aming maliliit na MSMEs", Pabustan said.



DTI, Toyota, UPLB Collaborate Strategies in Enhancing Mobility Solutions for MSMEs

By: Maria Cristina V. Valenzuela,



Transportation plays an essential part in the connectivity and efficient flow of goods in the supply chain. It is considered as the backbone of logistics in the ecosystem that creates impact on costs, efficiency, customer satisfaction, and overall business success.

The Department of Trade and Industry and the Toyota Motor Philippines (TMP), having a common vision in creating a sustainable business environment, partnered in the implementation of "KILOS KA-NEGOSYO" Program effective March 4, 2023. The program aims to elevate and enable mobility of Filipino MSMEs. The Toyota Mobility Solutions Phils. (TMSP), would like to ascertain the logistic needs of MSMEs, to come up with tailored solutions that are accessible and would help bridge the gaps in the value chain, through their mobility products and services.

Under the program, TMP commissioned the University of the Philippines- Los Baños (UPLB), to conduct a research on MSMEs' mobility requirements, particularly in the province of Bulacan. The respondents represent the different categories including wholesale and retail, accommodation and food services activities, manufacturing, other industries and cooperatives and Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Organizations.

In support, the DTI-Bulacan Provincial Office identified the ten (10) MSMEs engaged in manufacturing, service and trading, who signified the willingness to respond and give inputs to the survey facilitated by UPLB. The culminating activity, a Focused Group Discussion on the Logistics Assessments with the stakeholders, was held on August 9, 2023 at the Eden Oasis Events and Banquet Hall in the City of Malolos, Bulacan, with the intention to validate and finalize the results of the survey. It was attended by the representatives of TMSP, DTI, UPLB and the respondents.

In summary, it was noted that MSMEs have different requirements that would suit the specific logistics needs. These would vary according to the type of products (food or non-food), the size of products, speed, capacity, power, fuel efficiency, after-sales services, as well as the procurement terms. These factors were all noted by TMSP for consideration in their planning.

Through Kilos Ka-Negosyo, TMP is expected to provide a more appropriate and viable support in MSMEs' accessibility that would increase business opportunities, value-chain expansion, and sustainable business operations.

DTI Champions Digital Payments for Enhanced Shopping, Entrepreneurship

By: Honeylen Marie P. Fernando



DTI-Nueva Ecija is leading a campaign to encourage the adoption of digital payment platforms, aimed at elevating shopping experience and bolster entrepreneurship. This initiative is aligned with the province's drive towards market digitalization and the implementation of PalengQR Ph plus which is a joint project endeavor of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the Department of the Interior and Local Government.

DTI-NE Provincial Director Richard Simangan expressed the agency's commitment in supporting said project. He underscores the benefits of Market Digitalization and PalengQR Ph Plus which is good for the economy. In addition to the convenience of digital payment platforms as a cash alternative, it serves as a safeguard against fraud, ensuring accurate transactions. Moreover, some platforms offer rebates and loans, providing valuable resources for consumers and entrepreneurs alike.

He said that the entrepreneurs, market vendors, drivers, consumers and the local economy stand to gain significantly from this innovation.

Simangan's statement emphasizes the positive reception of digitalization among market vendors in the province, driven by its relevance in today's world.

These platforms are not only advantageous for shopping but also for handling transportation and other expenses. Simangan also encourages everyone to embrace digital payment solutions, which streamline day-to-day transactions and promote ecommerce.

Several towns in Nueva Ecija that include Nampicuan, Cuyapo, Aliaga, Guimba, Bongabon, Santa Rosa, Gabaldon, Rizal, San Jose City, Zaragoza, Carranglan have already embraced Public Market Digitalization and PalengQR Ph Plus marking a significant step towards a digitally empowered future. More LGUs to launch, like the Science City of Muñoz (10th October).

Notably, the Nueva Ecija League of Market Administrators and the Nueva Ecija Consumer Affairs Advocacy Association, longstanding partners of the DTI-NE are actively participating in the promotion of various DTI and other agencies' programs.

DTI Bulacan Conducts Quality Customer Service Seminar for Teachers, Employees of San Jose Del Monte Trade School

By: Alex Roy F. Dela Cruz

On August 22, 2023, DTI Bulacan and Negosyo Center San Jose Del Monte conducted a seminar on Quality Customer Service for twenty (20) individuals comprised of teaching and non-teaching personnel of San Jose Del Monte National Trade School. The activity was held at the school grounds of National Trade School which was facilitated by Senior Trade – Industry Development Specialist Alex Roy F. Dela Cruz with the support of CSJDM Negosyo Center Business Counselor Ms. Jelly Magno.

The said seminar was identified by the concerned school as essential factor in improving the school's income generating ventures operated by the employee's cooperative where canteen and catering services are their income generating projects. The activity was also aimed at capacitating their frontliners on the right approach in dealing with clients and building customer relationship.

STIDS Dela Cruz's discussion was focused more on the importance of customer care and its relation to marketing and income generation. In his discussion, the vital role of customers in business sustainability and establishing market position.

He also presented practical examples of Quality Customer Service application and showed situational videos that exemplify practices that exceeds customer's expectations.



At the Center: Ms. Rona Concepcion, Business Counselor Jelly Magno, STIDS Alex Roy Dela Cruz, Rose Ann Bautista of DOST and Athena Madlang-Awa of PCEDO with the officers and teachers of San Jose Del Monte National Trade School.

Representatives from other government agencies such as the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) and Provincial Cooperative and Enterprise Development Office (PCEDO) also gave their messages of support and made brief orientations on their programs and services, including advocacy works.

An open forum followed the discussions where the participants were given ample time to raise their questions and inquiries on the topics presented and discussed. The representatives from DTI expressed their gratitude for the warm welcome and promoted relevant training programs and services which the participants may want to consider and avail from DTI and its Negosyo Center in their area.

NC SAN LUIS HOLDS TRAINING ON COCO-SUGAR PROCESSING FOR IPS

By: Florelyn A. Caniete

SAN LUIS, AURORA – The Negosyo Center San Luis (NC SL) of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) – Aurora Provincial Office conducted a Skills Training on Coconut Sugar Processing for Indigenous People (IPs) in Barangay Diteki on July 22.

Thirty-three (33) Samahan ng mga Katutubong Altang Nagkakaisa (S.K.A.N) members attended the training.

Ma. Nelly Gianan, President of the Bianoan Coconut Upland Farmers Association (BCUFA), an existing producer of coconut sugar from Casiguran, Aurora, served as the trainer.

According to Gianan, coconut sugar production requires the crucial process of collecting the coconut sap.

“Kailangan talaga ng tyaga at disiplina sa pangongolekta ng tuba, dahil may oras na sinusunod at kailangan siguraduhing malinis” she added.

In preparation for the training, the coconut farmers had to extract and harvest the coconut sap from healthy, good-bearing palm trees.

It took them three weeks to collect the right amount of coconut sap to be processed into sugar. The harvested sap was immediately boiled into coconut syrup to prevent fermentation. On the day of the training, the coconut syrup was boiled until it turned into granules.

Meanwhile, Jocelyn Callos, President of S.K.A.N, was impressed and appreciated the training since coconut sugar has much commercial potential, and customers increasingly seek regular table sugar replacements.

“Kaya po pala mahal ang coconut sugar dahil napaka sensitibo po pala ng paggawa nito. Nagpapasalamat po kami sa pagtitiyaga ng DTI na maituro ito sa amin”, Callos said.

Furthermore, NC San Luis Business Counselor Florelyn Caniete conducted an entrepreneurship awareness seminar and provided the participants with DTI Programs and Services Orientation.

The activity also includes providing a new logo for the association, product labels, and packaging for the training outputs.



DTI-Zambales conducts ecolabelling webinar

By: Yvonne Abadecio

The Department of Trade and Industry thru the Shared Service Facility Program together with the Philippine Center for Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development Inc. conducted a Hybrid Seminar about Ecolabelling for the Shared Service Facility Cooperators last September 22, 2023 that took place at DTI- Satellite Office Iba, Zambales.

Provincial Director Enrique D. Tacbad highlighted in his opening remarks, that raising the awareness and consumption of Green goods and services will help us reduce hazardous wastes that are bad for the environment that creates pollution. He pointed out that to increase the uptake of green product and services there's a need to increase consumer awareness and preference of products with ecolabel seal and proven streamline certification process to encourage more producer, manufacturers to have their products ecolabeled. He also emphasized that by doing green practices, we not only secure our present but also our future generations.

The Philippine Center for Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development, Inc.'s, Programme Officer, Ms. Brenda Hazel D. Butardo, first introduced the concept of environmental labels and its types, discussed what is Type 1 ecolabelling and how ecolabelling started. She

then provided additional information on how ecolabels can fight greenwashing. She explained that consumers need to look attentively for certified ecolabeled products considering there are some companies in the market who use the term "Eco-Friendly" without actually doing green practices. She also presented a table illustrating the difference of waste production between eco-friendly and consumptive products. As Ms. Butardo, ended her discussion, she encouraged the SSF Cooperators and MSMEs to join in innovating the design of their products to a more sustainable direction.

The discussion concluded with the SSF Cooperators having learned a lot about environmental protection through sustainable consumption and production, as well as raising consumer knowledge about environmental issues and concerns.

In her closing remarks, DC Marilou C. Arcega urged everyone to continue to undertake greening activities, even if they are little, in order to save resources and care for the environment. She also stated that entrepreneurs are in charge of sustainability. She thanked everyone who attended the event and stressed that the DTI will continue to assist MSMEs.





DTI-DOST COLLAB FOR VALUE-ADDING TRAINING IN CASIGURAN, AURORA

By Conilyn T. Sabe

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) – Aurora Provincial Office through Negosyo Center (NC) Casiguran, in collaboration with the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), held a skills training on bread and pastry making in Barangay Lual on July 31.

Members of Casiguran Women's Federation (CWF), Kalipunan ng Liping Pilipina (KALIPI), and Munting Sambayanang Kristiyano ng Pinag-isang Lakas ng Samahan sa Casiguran, Aurora (MSK – PIGLASCA) attended the training.

The collaboration between DTI and DOST seeks to provide these associations with the necessary tools and knowledge to efficiently manage their resources and improve their productivity to sell their produce at better prices and increase their revenue. The participants used fresh produce crops and vegetables in making the breads and pastries.

Josephine Guinacaran, Barangay Councilor and one of the participants expressed her gratitude to DTI and DOST for coming up with such an activity.

“Lubos po kaming nagpapasalamat sa DTI at DOST sa pagbibigay ng oportunidad sa bawat isa na matuto at mapalago ang kaalaman para sa karagdagang pagkakakitaan, sana po ay mas marami pa pong pa-training.”, Guinacaran said.

Ms. Ciela Marie Abordo, Competency Assessor of Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) Aurora, served as the resource person for this one-day activity.

DOST Science Research Assistant, Luzviminda Sardea, stated that DOST will monitor the progress of the training to assess the need for baking tools and equipment.

In addition, NC Casiguran Business Counselor Conilyn Sabe discussed about entrepreneurial mindset and the various programs and projects of DTI for business development.



Cooking of squash for Spanish bread filling

Kapatid Mentor ME Online Program Yields Successful Graduates in Bulacan

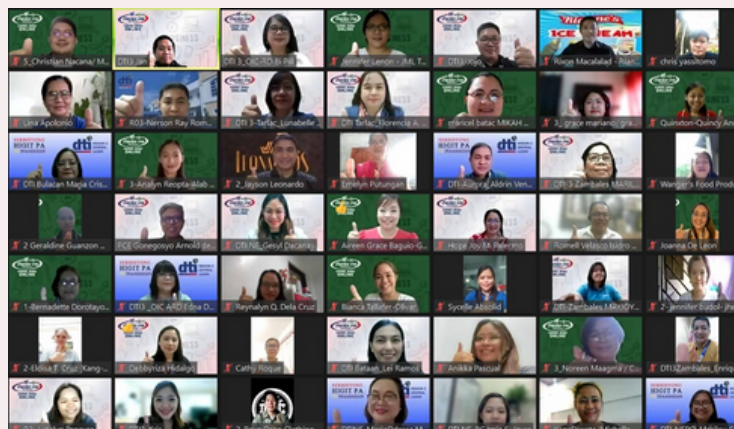
By: Alex Roy F. Dela Cruz

August 01, 2023 marked a significant event for the Forty-eight (48) mentees of Central Luzon, the Kapatid mentor ME Online or KMME Graduation ceremony. The said event was held via online platform and attended by representatives from DTI, Go Negosyo and the MSME sector.

The 1st batch of graduates for calendar year 2023 came from variety of industries such as processed food, pastries, sweets, delicacies, and non-food products such as handicrafts, bag and clothing among others. For this batch, the province of Bulacan produced seven graduates. They are Josephine Serafin of Joji Longganisa, Maricel Santos of Mikah Mikah Cakes and Pastries, Christopher Odoño of Odoño Arts and Crafts, Jeniifer Bauto of Jassis Pastries Shop, Jennifer Budol of Jhenny's Cuisine, Judy Ann Robles of Bites and Bars, and Reynaldo Cabansag of Reyn Drop Clothing.

These mentees were able to gain essential knowledge based on the expertise and wide experience of accredited mentors from Go Negosyo through a 10-week learning and mentoring sessions which covers business important aspects such as marketing, financial management, human resource, product development, business model and operations management among others.

The Business Improvement Plan reflects the knowledge gained by the mentees during the learning and mentoring sessions and is expected to guide and improve their business by implementing additional measures and applying strategic changes to serve the needs and demand of the global market.



During the ceremony, DTI OIC Regional Director, Brigida Pili inspired the mentees with her words of encouragement in her keynote message on overcoming challenges and having the determination to succeed, while another guest of honor, PCE Go Negosyo Founder, Joey Concepcion also expressed his unwavering support to the KMME program and stressed on the importance of mentorship in leveling up enterprises and assisting them to cope with the global market competition.

DTI Region 3, OIC Assistant Regional Director, Edna D. Dizon also imparted her warm congratulations and words of inspiration during her closing remarks and highlighted the importance of the learnings acquired during the ten (10) modules of KMME MME online together with their polished business improvement plans as key elements to improve the status of their respective businesses.

The Philippine Center for Entrepreneurship or PCE also designated successful business professionals with several years of experience in their field of expertise to coach the mentees in developing their own "Business Improvement Plan".

Interested applicants and business owners may inquire with the nearest Negosyo Center or DTI Office in Central Luzon to be part of the KMME network.

CSFP, DTI-PAMPANGA COLLAB FOR LOCALIZED KMME

By: Charmaine S. Tiongson



Following the resounding success of the localized Kapatid Mentor Me (KMME) Program, known as the "Fernanpreneur Mentor Me" Program, in August 2022, the City of San Fernando Investment Office has once again joined hands with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Pampanga Provincial Office as they gear up for the program's second-year implementation.

The planning session took place on July 23, 2023, within the confines of the Negosyo Center – City of San Fernando, Pampanga. The meeting was participated by Ms. Remedios P. Agoncillo, Local Economic Development and Investment Promotion Officer (LEDIPO), Mr. Jeffrey Yutuc, and Mr. Patrick Neil Paningbatan, representing the City of San Fernando. On the DTI Pampanga's side, the delegation was led by Ms. Ma. Cristina B. Evangelista, Division Chief of Business Development Division and TIDS Arlene P. Gomez, KMME coordinator of DTI Pampanga.

Among the pressing matters discussed during the meeting were:

- **Monitoring of FMME Graduates:** Evaluation and tracking of the progress and success of the inaugural batch of program graduates.
- **Identifying Eligible MSMEs:** Identifying and selecting Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) who will benefit most from this mentorship program.
- **Mentor Recruitment:** The recruitment of qualified mentors who can share their experiences and wisdom with the aspiring entrepreneurs.
- **Workshops and Training:** Planning and organizing workshops and training sessions that will provide participants with essential knowledge and skills.

- **Funding and Resources:** Ensuring the availability of financial support and necessary resources to sustain and expand the program's reach.
- **Performance Metrics:** Establishing key performance indicators to gauge the effectiveness and success of the mentorship program.

Furthermore, the meeting featured the assessment of the previous year's program implementation, pinpointing areas for refinement and growth as well as challenges faced and lessons learned. This demonstrates the commitment of both parties to learn from past experiences and ensure a more effective program in the coming year.

The eagerly anticipated "Fernanpreneur Mentor Me" Program for this year had its Launching ceremony on August 31, 2023. A select group of 18 entrepreneurs from the City of San Fernando have embarked on this transformative journey. The culmination of their hard work and dedication will be celebrated with a grand graduation ceremony, slated to take place on October 18, 2023, at the Amphitheater of Heroes Hall, City of San Fernando, Pampanga. This ceremony will serve as a momentous occasion to honor their achievements and the knowledge they've gained throughout the program.



15 MSMEs from Tarlac receive livelihood incentives

By: Grace Lugtu



On Stage L-R: DTI-Tarlac OIC PD Florencia Balilo PCCI-Tarlac Vice President Gene Nicolas, PGT-PCEDO Head Marvi Dela Cruz, PCCI-Tarlac President Aileen Chan, DTI-3 SDD Chief Warren Serrano.

Front: Tarlac entrepreneurs awarded with cash incentives



Five participants from the YEP BYOB (middle) who topped the Business Pitch Competition were awarded with cash incentives

TARLAC CITY –At the event dubbed “Building a Stronger Future Together,” 15 entrepreneurs were awarded cash incentives intended for the upgrading and enhancement of their business operations.

The five existing micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and five start-ups were qualified through their participation in the Go Negosyo 3M on Wheels Program during the Tarlac Business Conference and Exhibit (BizConEx) on July 10 to 12, 2023 at the Bulwagan ng Kanlahi, Diwa ng Tarlac Convention Center.

While the other five were the budding youth entrepreneurs who topped the Business Pitch Competition during the Youth Entrepreneurship Program – Be Your Own Boss (BYOB) held on July 18-21, 2023, at DTI Region 3 Conference Room.

The incentives were financed by the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) Tarlac.

“Building a Stronger Future Together was an event where the fruits of the strong public-private partnership in the Province of Tarlac were showcased. It was made possible through the convergence of the Department of Trade and Industry, Provincial Government of Tarlac, Philippine Chamber of Commerce Incorporated (PCCI) – Tarlac, Tarlac MSME Development Council, Tarlac Henyo Entrepreneurs Marketing Cooperative, and SM City Tarlac,” DTI Division Chief Zaida Garibay said.

Other activities conducted during the event were the formal opening of the Tarlac Provincial Trade Fair and a marketing seminar on adapting to a changing landscape.



84 PPG beneficiaries receive livelihood kits from DTI-Bataan

By: Teresita E. Magtanong

Balanga City - A total of 84 micro entrepreneurs in Bataan, seven recipients per city/municipality received business kits from the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) under the Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa (PPG) Program.

Started in 2019, PPG is a livelihood seeding and entrepreneurship development program which aims to support micro enterprises affected by natural calamities such as flash floods, typhoons, fire, and other calamities, including health disasters like pandemic to restart their businesses.

DTI-Bataan OIC-Provincial Director Eileen Ocampo said that the deserving beneficiaries in the province are under the sectors of solo parents, housewives, and persons with disabilities.

"Through PPG, DTI Bataan has awarded livelihood kits worth P10,000 to each of the 84 beneficiaries of sari-sari and bigasan store packages in the 11 municipalities and one city in Bataan," Ocampo added.

Mr. Godofredo Galicia, Jr. of the Provincial Government of Bataan, who represented Governor Jose Enrique Garcia III during the event, thanked DTI for the opportunity provided to the beneficiaries. "May you work hard on creating, maintaining, and improving your business. We hope that you let it flourish so that in time, you can pay forward by helping our economy," Galicia reminded the grantees.

The Business Counsellors of the Negosyo Centers in each city/municipality in the province will monitor the status of the business kits provided to their assisted beneficiaries.





DTI NE Grants PPG Livelihood to 226 MSMEs

By: Honeylen Marie P. Fernando

The Department of Trade and Industry-Nueva Ecija (DTI-NE) granted 226 livelihood kits worth P 1.76M to MSMEs from August 31 to Sept 9 in several towns of the province, to wit: 110 bigasan livelihood kits, 10 for Science City of Muñoz, 10 for San Jose City, 15 for Lupao, 15 for Cabiao, 24 for San Isidro, 6 for San Leonardo, 15 for Gapan City, and 15 for Jaen. There were 116 sari-sari store livelihood Kits also provided, 26 for Bongabon, 15 for Laur, 15 for Llanera, 15 for General Mamerto Natividad, 15 for Talugtug, 15 for Licab, 2 for San Leonardo, and 13 for Zaragoza. This is under the agency's Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa (PPG) project, a livelihood seeding and entrepreneurship development program that aims to help individuals and families affected by recent calamity like typhoon and government's priority sectors.

The beneficiaries are those affected by calamities (130) and those that fall under the priority sectors like former rebel (1), senior citizens (42), solo parents (26), OFWs (8), repatriated (2) and PWDs (17). They were given entrepreneurial and financial literacy training prior to grant of the livelihood kits. The kits per beneficiary amount to P7,910 and P7,995 for bigasan and sari-sari store livelihood kits, respectively. In return, they have submitted their pledge of commitment to make their business flourish. The PPG awarding in each Local Government Unit (LGU) were conducted with the presence of both DTI-NE and LGU officials/representatives. The mayors of Bongabon, Cabiao, Licab, Llanera, Lupao, San Isidro, Science City of Muñoz were present during their respective awarding rites.

The grant of 26 sari-sari store kits in Bongabon on September 6, 2023 was graced with the presence of former DTI Usec. Flor Amate from the office of Senator Bong Go, DTI-NE Provincial Director Richard Simangan and associates, Bongabon LGU key officials headed by Mayor Ricardo Padilla.

Director Simangan welcomed the guests and beneficiaries who are lucky and blessed to be included as one of the beneficiaries of the program. He further said that they should be grateful and ensure proper management of their respective businesses to help them recover, grow and become successful entrepreneurs thus elevate. Mayor Padilla heartily thanked the DTI and the office of Senator Go for uplifting the business economy of the town by supporting more MSMEs. On the other hand, former DTI Usec. Amate delivered her inspirational message and explained the importance of helping our MSMEs in the whole country. Amate also presented the different programs of the government that could continuously benefit the country. A short video of Senator Bong Go congratulating and giving message to all the beneficiaries was also shown.



DTI Bulacan Awards 64 PPG Program Livelihood Kits

By: Mary Grace S. Reyes

City of Malolos, Bulacan – The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in Bulacan Provincial Office represented by OIC- Assistant Regional Director Edna D. Dizon and Concurrent Provincial Director, together with Division Chief Maria Cristina Valenzuela, recently spearheaded an impactful initiative aimed at uplifting microenterprises in the province. A total of 64 microenterprises hailing from 49 barangays across Bulacan received DTI-Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa (PPG) livelihood kits in a ceremony held at the DTI Bulacan Provincial Office in the City of Malolos, Bulacan.

The beneficiaries of this initiative were strategically spread across the 7 Districts of Bulacan, with 16 beneficiaries from District I, 8 from District II, 1 from District III, 7 from District IV, 19 from District V, 8 from District VI, and 5 from District VII. This geographic distribution ensures that microenterprises from all corners of the province can access the support they need.

The PPG program aims to provide much-needed livelihood assistance to microenterprises that have been affected by fire incidents and other calamities. By augmenting their capital, the program seeks to support small-scale businesses in overcoming challenges, creating employment opportunities, increasing income, and contributing to local economic growth.



The heart of this initiative lies in the provision of livelihood kits that cater to a variety of businesses. The kits included twenty (20) Eatery setups, eleven (11) Bigasan (rice retailers), seven (7) Bakery kits, one (1) Condiments kit, ten (10) Salon kits, two (2) Barbershop kits, three (3) Sewing kits, one (1) Manicure & Pedicure kit, and nine (9) Frozen Foods Livelihood Kits. Each kit is valued at Php 15,000.00, providing microenterprises with the tools they need to get back on their feet.

In addition to the tangible support through livelihood kits, an entrepreneurship development seminar was also conducted for the beneficiaries. This seminar equipped them with essential knowledge, skills, and inspiration to not only initiate their businesses but also expand and thrive in the competitive market.

The DTI-Bulacan's commendable efforts are not only helping microenterprises recover but also fostering resilience and growth in the province. By investing in the dreams and potential of local entrepreneurs, the PPG program is sowing the seeds for a brighter economic future in Bulacan.



DTI-Bulacan Empowers MSMEs with Livelihood Kits and Loan Assistance

By: Judith B. Dela Cruz

City of Malolos, Bulacan -

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Bulacan provincial office took the lead in empowering local microenterprises. OIC-Assistant Regional Director and Concurrent Provincial Director Edna D. Dizon, along with Division Chief Maria Cristina Valenzuela of DTI-Bulacan, led the ceremonial awarding of the DTI-Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa (PPG) livelihood kits to 13 microenterprises affected by typhoons.

No less than President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos, Jr. joined the different national government agencies in extending various assistance in the Province of Bulacan on August 7, 2023. Simultaneously, loan assistance was awarded to a beneficiary of the Small Business Corporation's RISE-UP program.

The event was graced by Assistant Secretary Dominic Tolentino from DTI's Regional Operations Group (ROG), highlighting the government's commitment to supporting local businesses and entrepreneurs during challenging times.

The DTI-PPG program aims to provide vital livelihood assistance to microenterprises, with a particular focus on areas impacted by fire incidents, pandemics, typhoons, and other calamities. By boosting their capital and offering essential support to small-scale businesses, the program plays a pivotal role in facilitating the recovery and promoting overall economic development in the province.

The livelihood kits awarded during the ceremony included a diverse range of packages, including Eatery, Bigasan (rice retailing), Bakery, Condiments, Salon, Barbershop, Sewing, and Frozen Foods Livelihood Kits. Each kit is worth Php 15,000.00, equipping beneficiaries with the tools and resources needed to revitalize and expand their businesses.

The ceremony symbolizes the government's unwavering commitment to fostering economic resilience and growth, ensuring that microenterprises in Bulacan can not only recover but also thrive in the face of adversity.



DTI Tarlac awards more livelihood kits to former rebels

By: Grace Lugtu

PROVINCE OF TARLAC – The Department of Trade and Industry Tarlac Provincial Office, in coordination with the 3rd Mechanized Infantry Battalion (MIB) and Philippine National Police, Camiling, 2nd Provincial Mobile Force Company, granted 37 business kits to another batch of former rebels (FRs) under the Pangkalahatan sa Pagbangan at Ginhawa (PPG) Program on September 13, 2023.

PPG is a livelihood seeding and entrepreneurship development program that aims to support microenterprises affected by incidents such as fire or other calamities and health disasters like pandemics to restart their businesses.

It also intends to provide livelihood opportunities for identified beneficiaries in areas considered as priorities of the national government such as KIA-WIA, NTF-ELCAC, and Balik Probinsya Program for the purpose of establishing a microenterprise.

“We, at DTI, are pleased to be part of the program of the national government in giving business opportunities to FRs. The only thing that we ask them is to utilize the kits properly and enrich them,” OIC Provincial Director Florencia Balilo said.

Thirty-five (35) bigasan packages and two (2) hog-raising kits were distributed during the event. These were based on the recipients’ existing businesses and preferences for those who are yet to start.

Further, an entrepreneurial mind-setting seminar was conducted to educate the beneficiaries on the proper management of their businesses.

Meanwhile, P/Capt. Gerome Boy Simeon, Deputy Force Commander, expressed his gratitude for the said program.

“We thank DTI for being an instrument of the government for this program. This a good step for the FRs to start their business. We hope that this support will result in a favorable outcome,” he said.

In August 2023, 43 FRs also received livelihood kits under the PPG Program.



DTI-Bataan initiates the formation of Bataan Market Administrators Association (BMAA)

By: Teresita E. Magtanong

Balanga City - On August 23, 2023, through the initiative of DTI-Bataan, Consumer Protection Division's OIC-Division Chief Gerardo B. Santos facilitated the meeting of the market administrators in the province. Said meeting aims to discuss the organization of a group that will represent them on the Provincial Local Price Coordinating Council (LPCC) and also to serve as a venue to discuss issues, concerns, and sharing of good practices of their respective public markets.



After the meeting, the group formed the Bataan Market Administrators' Association with Mr. Raymond Dela Fuente, Limay Public Market Administrator, as interim President and Ms. Yolanda Mendoza, Balanga City Public Market Administrator, as interim Vice-President.

With this newly formed association, DTI ensures a strong partnership on the advocacies and initiatives to be undertaken for the welfare of the consumers.

LGU CASTILLEJOS, DTI ZAMBALES DESTROYS DEFECTIVE WEIGHING SCALES

By: Evangeline S. Bulda

The Local Government of Castillejos, Zambales carried out the destruction of defective scales in the Public Market of Castillejos, Zambales last August 15, 2023, in coordination with the Department of Trade and Industry Zambales Provincial Office and with other members of the Local Price Coordinating Council in Castillejos, Zambales such as the Office of the Municipal Mayor, Office of the Market Master and Business Permit and Licensing Office, and members of the Consumer Affairs Council of Castillejos. The Local Price Coordinating Council is chaired by Mayor Jeffrey D. Khonghun.

The 46 defective scales were confiscated during market inspection/monitoring or the DTI's "Ikot Palengke" Program. The Ikot Palengke program is an initiative of the DTI to ensure consumer protection against unfair trade and consumer protection. DTI urges everyone to be a smart, critical, and vigilant consumer.



DTI's Diskwento Caravan - Balik Eskwela Edition Returns to San Jose Del Monte, Bulacan

By: Mary Grace S. Reyes

DTI Bulacan continues to champion consumer advocacy through its annual Diskwento Caravan initiative. DTI-3 OIC-Regional Director Brigida T. Pili, OIC- Assistant Regional Director and Concurrent DTI Bulacan Provincial Director Edna D. Dizon, City Administrator Dennis Booth, City Local Economic Investment Promotions Officer Leny Daza of the City of San Jose Del Monte (CSJDM), and CSJDM Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Rowena Garcia, led the opening of the Diskwento Caravan – Balik Eskwela Edition on August 16, 2023, at the Productivity Center (Motorpool) in Sapang Palay, CSJDM, Bulacan.

DTI Bulacan partnered with the City Government of San Jose Del Monte, the Department of Health (DOH), the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), and the Department of Agriculture (DA) to bring this initiative to San Joseños. Their combined efforts created a dynamic platform for consumers and businesses alike.

The Diskwento Caravan took two forms to cater to a diverse range of consumers. In collaboration with the City Government of San Jose Del Monte, an on-site caravan was hosted at the Productivity Complex in Sapang Palay Proper, City of San Jose Del Monte, Bulacan. This event featured 34 manufacturers, distributors, suppliers, and micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) as exhibitors.

For those who preferred the convenience of in-store shopping, DTI Bulacan partnered with the



leading bookstore chain, National Bookstore, particularly their seven branches across Bulacan. These in-store caravans, part of the "Balik Eskwela" edition, offered discounts and premium items on school essentials such as bags, shoes, and school supplies.

In addition to great deals on goods, the DOH offered free medical checkups, blood pressure monitoring, and multivitamin distribution. TESDA provided complimentary haircuts and massages/reflexology, while the DA contributed by offering free seeds and planting guidance.

The Diskwento Caravan proved to be a resounding success, with a total sales figure of Php 621,644.10 over the two-day event.

Notable top performers included National Bookstore Santa Maria, which recorded the highest sales among in-store caravans, followed by National Bookstores Baliwag and Marilao. For the on-site caravan, Universal Canning, Inc secured the top spot with impressive sales, followed by AES Spree Mall Pull Out Items and Pamana Peanut Butter.

Beyond the financial success, the Diskwento Caravan activity had a broader impact. On-site exhibitors were able to deepen their professional relationships and form valuable networks within their industry. The event showcased the professionalism and strong rapport between DTI Bulacan and its partners and participating stores, reinforcing the importance of collaboration in promoting consumer welfare and local economic growth.

DTI Bulacan's Diskwento Caravan not only benefited consumers by providing access to affordable goods and services but also strengthened the bonds within the local business community. This successful event sets a promising example for future initiatives aimed at empowering consumers and supporting local enterprises in Bulacan.



DTI NUEVA ECIJA HOLDS SEMINAR ON STEEL PIPES

By: Honeylen Marie P. Fernando



The DTI Nueva Ecija, in partnership with the BPS and BI-GI Manufacturers Association, organized the Seminar on Steel Pipes on July 4, 2023 at the Plaza Leticia Restaurant, Cabanatuan City for the 72 hardware store owners and representatives.

The first resource speaker, Engr. Andrea Mikhaela Lazarte from the Standards Conformity Division of the Bureau of Philippine Standards (BPS) briefed the participants on BPS' mandate and functions. She also presented the new Philippine National Standards (PNS) and Technical Regulations on steel pipes.

The second speaker, Engr. Patrocino Santos the Vice-President of the Philippine Association of Black Iron and Galvanized Iron Pipes and Tubes Manufacturers, Inc. presented and discussed the common practices and problems in selling BI and GI steel pipes products.



He also gave tips on how to prevent the acquisition of violative BI-GI steel pipes in the local market. In parting, he gave updates on the steel pipes industry.

The seminar was conducted with the aim of educating the participants on understanding the two new standards for steel pipes based on the approved PNS 26:2018 and PNS 2145:2020, differentiating safe and quality steel pipes versus substandard ones, hot-dipped galvanized iron steel pipes against pre-galvanized iron steel pipes and identifying approved markings, threading and color coding of steel pipes in accordance with the approved standards.

The success of the seminar can be attributed mainly because of the overwhelming response of the hardware store owners as gleaned from the number of attendees coming from different cities / municipalities in the province. It is recommended that similar activity be held/conducted regularly to discuss other products covered under DTI mandatory certification scheme.

DISKWENTO CARAVAN, KADIWA NG PANGULO HELD IN TARLAC CITY

By: Grace Lugtu

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) – Tarlac Provincial Office in partnership with the Provincial Agriculture Office of Tarlac, conducted a one-day onsite Balik-Eskwela Diskwento Caravan and Kadiwa ng Pangulo on August 11, 2023 at Citywalk in Tarlac City.

The activity aimed to give access to school supplies, basic necessities, prime commodities, and fresh produce to consumers at discounted prices. Other consumer goods such as certified household appliances, gadgets, and various food and non-food products were also made available.

“The event was held in time for the opening of classes. This is one way of connecting the suppliers to the consumers for the latter to avail of the commodities at affordable and discounted prices,” OIC Provincial Director Florencia Balilo said.



In order to reach more consumers, In-Store Diskwento Caravan was also organized on August 11-13, 2023 in the various branches of Pandayan Bookshop province-wide and at Unimaker Department Store – Paniqui.

Balik Eskwela Diskwento Caravan – Kadiwa ng Pangulo was participated by a total of 26 retailers, manufacturers, distributors, local MSMEs, and farmers. It benefitted more than 8,000 consumers.



DTI-Bataan, DSWD lead the rice subsidy cash payouts

By: Teresita E. Magtanong

Balanga City - About 558 micro rice retailers and sari-sari store owners in Bataan received P15,000 each with a total amount of P 8,370,000.00 from the Department of Social Welfare and Development and the Department of Trade and Industry during the payouts at the Ground Floor, The Bunker Building, Capitol Compound, Balanga City and Vistamall, Balanga City, Bataan on August 12 and September 28, 2023, respectively.

The aid, under the Sustainable Livelihood Program-Cash Assistance for Micro Rice Retailers is given by DSWD to rice retailers who suffered losses due to the mandated price cap of P41 per kilo for regular milled rice and P45 a kilo for well-milled rice. They incurred losses as they purchased their rice supplies at higher prices before the implementation of

Executive Order No. 39 issued by President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr.

DTI-Bataan Provincial Director Eileen Ocampo certified and listed the beneficiaries as qualified rice retailers and sari-sari stores and compliant with said Executive Order. The Director advised the beneficiaries to adhere to the rice price ceiling which is in effect nationwide.

On the other hand, Provincial Coordinator Ricky Gacayan of DSWD's Sustainable Livelihood Program said both DSWD and DTI will monitor the recipients to ensure the proper utilization of the cash assistance.

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Joyful Garden Organic Farmers Association, Inc. now Halal Certified

By: Marisol G. Bunoy

City of Malolos - The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Bulacan Provincial Office, under its Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP), is championing the growth potential of Joyful Garden Organic Farmers Association, Inc. by facilitating the issuance of its Halal Certification through an accredited body.

On May 22, 2023, following a momentous celebration, Joyful Garden Organic Farmers Association, Inc. was officially granted its Halal Certification. This significant achievement positions the organization, located in San Ildefonso, Bulacan, as a key marketing consolidator for farmers' produce in the province. Today, the association has expanded its market presence, serving larger markets including supermarkets and actively participating in local and national trade fairs.

The rigorous audit process commenced in December 2022, spearheaded by auditor Ms. Genie Aisha Romarate of the Islamic Da'wah Council of the Philippines, Incorporated (IDCP). Numerous site visits and consultations took place, during which the association made essential improvements to its infrastructure, pest management strategies, and hygiene facilities.

Achieving certification compliance was no small feat for the organization, but their unwavering commitment to positive change propelled Joyful Garden to meet the stringent standards. To support this endeavor, DTI CARP partnered with DOST-Bulacan to provide a series of productivity seminars.

The Halal certification signifies the association's competence in producing high-quality and safe products for the Muslim community. This recognition opens up new opportunities for inclusive growth and expansion, benefiting not only the association's members but also the wider community they serve.

This milestone highlights DTI Bulacan's commitment to fostering growth, sustainability, and inclusivity among local enterprises, ultimately contributing to the province's economic development.





Bamboo for Life

By: Marilou Santos

Bambuhay D' Sustainable Planet Incorporated is a social enterprise with a vision to solve poverty, plastic pollution, deforestation and climate change through social entrepreneurship using Bamboo and Technology. It is located in Sitio Digidig, Barangay Joson, Carranglan, Nueva Ecija and offers a range of sustainable products to support plastic free journey and create a better alternative for greener future.

Bambuhay produces bamboo products such as plantable toothbrush, straw, face shield frame, mugs, bamboo casing and soap. Furthermore, from the waste materials, Bambuhay produces natural air purifier and freshener, and activated charcoal. They were able to address the Value Chain Gaps, or the holistic lifecycle of their products from raw material sourcing, production, consumption, and disposal process.

These bamboo products are onboarded to different digital markets/e-commerce not just in the Philippines like Shopee, Lazada, SpeedGift, GrabMart, the Good Life Market of Meralco Foundation, and more, but also in international online platforms, like Vermillion, EBay, IExport, etc. As a result, the association was awarded as the Go Global Awards: Product Innovation of the Year for E-Commerce. Bambuhay also participates in different exhibits and Trade Fairs.

With its sturdy initiative and active role in promoting Green Economic Development the association received various recognition and awards like Grand Winner of Shell LiveWire, Winner of United Nation Development Program Tawid Covid Innovation Challenge, Global Winner of Startupper of the Year in Paris France, Global 100 Winner of Entrepreneurship World Cup in Saudi Arabia, Winner of Enactus World Cup Action Accelerator in Silicon Valley California, Grand Winner of ASEA Impact Challenge in Thailand, Top 10 Social Enterprise in Asia in Singapore, Finalist of APEC Innovation Startup Award, Finalist of Swiss Entrepreneurs for Resilience Award in Switzerland, and a lot more.



Bambuhay is continuously aiming to give brighter future to marginalized communities across the Philippines while leading the planet towards a greener future. Through SSF program of DTI, the company is positive to achieve its mission to eliminate 1 billion plastic toothbrushes by 2030. With DTI's help, Bambuhay would be able to create more networks and awareness about the issues around us through different speaking engagements like when Bambuhay has been invited to be a resource speaker to the recently GPPB Procurement Summit 2022 which tackles about government green procurement. They are also engaged in community building initiatives such as the reforestation program for Pantabangan and Carranglan Watershed Forest Reserve where about 70 jobs were generated as worker and planters, mos of whom are Indigenous People.

With all these, it is an undeniable fact that Bambuhay, which is being assisted by DTI-NE, is producing a world class and globally competitive, sustainable and eco-friendly products. Bambuhay is now generating more jobs for the harvester of bamboo poles who were previous illegal logger, slash and burn farmers, and former rebels. In addition to that, it generates more jobs in the production that gives opportunity to the marginalized communities like PWDs, Indigenous People, Farmers, Solo Parents, and Out-Of-School Youth.

On June 30, 2023, the Founder Mark Sultan Gersava took his oath to President Bongbong Marcos as the youngest Executive Member of the National Innovation Council. This council serves as the Philippine government's highest policy-making body for national innovation development.

Bambuhay creates meaningful business solutions by replacing traditional plastic products with bamboo-based technology and creates a wide array of different bamboo products that is suitable for all the needs and demands of the consumers.



LJRM ENTERPRISES: INNOVATING THE FILIPINIANA AND BARONG WITH ELEGANCE



LJRM Owner, Mr. Rundie Maniquiz

**By: Maria Odessa R. Manzano
Gerald Dennis S. Suyayen**

“Tela, Barong Tagalog, Baro at Saya, Terno” these are Filipino words which were put into flesh by a business genius from Peñaranda, Nueva Ecija. Our modern day guru of simplicity and hardwork, Mr. Rundie Maniquiz. Owner of the popular, LJRM Enterprises.

Observe a big event attended by very important persons in the government, most especially from the Department of Trade and Industry. If they wear a Filipiniana with its unique modern version, most probably it was made by the careful hands of people behind LJRM. The Filipiana mania is getting contagious just like a happy smile when you feel confidently beautiful. Just looking at its various ensemble makes a person feel good. The Filipino native wear in Jusi or Pinya cloth is amazingly admirable, made by LJRM.

How did it happen?

As shared by Mr. Rundie Maniquiz, his previous work as a marketing staff in a fiber weaving company in Aklan was the beginning of his Filipiniana journey. He combined his work experience by taking up a fashion designing course and fabric development training.

Armed with inspiration and experience, he then started his own business in 2008. Sir Rundie, supplies originally designed woven fabrics to different fashion designers and manufacturing companies. In 2011, he started making his own ready to wear (RTW) products, barong and Filipiniana packaged in paper mache boxes to create a more elegant presentation. He then opened his first outlet at The Fort in Taguig City under the business name, Crafts Creation. In 2015, he expanded his business in his hometown Peñaranda, Nueva Ecija.

In 2017, he was approached by the DTI through its Negosyo Center in Gapan City. It was the start of the partnership between DTI and Crafts Creation. A series of assistance was given to Crafts Creation. The company was enrolled under the OTOP Next Generation and was provided with product development of which 15 prototypes were developed and showcased during the 2017 Likha ng Central Luzon Regional Trade Fair at the SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City. Also in 2017, Crafts Creation participated in the National Trade Fair and it generated the highest sales among Central Luzon exhibitors.

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Through OTOP, the business name, Crafts Creation was made their brand name. In 2018, LJRM Enterprises became their lone and legitimate business name. Whenever there is a DTI-initiated trade fair, big or small, there is LJRM.

A taste of resiliency with the flame of hope that never dies....

Prior to the Covid 19 pandemic, the company has 100 subcontracted employees and 45 regular employees. They supply to various department stores and concept shops until 2019. LJRM is also a Kapatid Mentor Me graduate of DTI-Nueva Ecija in 2018. However, due to the Covid19 pandemic, things took a different turn for the company and its workers.

The pandemic almost shut the company down. There were no events that would require the wearing of Filipiniana due to strict restrictions and quarantine protocols worldwide. Market demand stopped. Sir Rundie resorted to a way to survive and live even if it was difficult. They engaged in farming to have other means of income to feed their in-house staff from outside of Nueva Ecija. It was really an extremely challenging predicament as no one knew when the Covid19 nightmare would end.

Another blow of trial hit LJRM when in September of 2021, the devastating Typhoon Karding hit Nueva Ecija. The roofing of their working area was hit by strong winds. A purchase order of boxes worth P200,000 was made and was totally damaged by heavy winds and rains. Nothing was saved except their resilience and hope.

After Covid, what?

They say that with downfalls there is no way but up. The gates of the economy is now open for business, including for LJRM. There was an enhanced fondness for the Filipiniana outfit after the pandemic as it was obviously felt. The people love to show off, as if saying, "Hey, we survived the pandemic and we are Filipinos". And also, the people love to dress up wholeheartedly after almost 3 long years of nothing but pure restrictions. Hence, opportunities are made in heaven for LJRM.

As of to date, the demand for their products continue. Their best sellers are the beautifully designed pieces. Small events in hotels in Central Luzon also give them opportunities to sell through side event trade fairs. The closure of many establishments engaged in barong and Filipiniana-making in other provinces like Bulacan gave other marketing opportunities for LJRM. They now serve as suppliers to these establishments so the latter can continue with their businesses.

LJRM slowly stands up with its effort to modernize production. The embroidery is made with computer aided device which gives them increased productivity and ease of doing the hard and delicate embroidery works. On the one side, the hand painted versions are maintained as this has a market niche.

With its modern facilities and newly renovated showroom in Peñaranda, it has 45 regular employees and 60 subcontractors working daily to make elegantly crafted Filipiniana outfits for men, women and children. This 4-letter business name, LJRM, means business with a heart and touching so many lives in the community. Visit their store and buy now!





BULACAN'S SINGKABAN FESTIVAL: AN ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF ARTS, CULTURE, AND HERITAGE

By: Maria Cristina V. Valenzuela

The Province of Bulacan is rich in culture and heritage rooted in history, traditions, and the ingenuity of its people. "Singkaban Festival", known as the mother of all festivals, is a weeklong festival celebrated annually every September, coinciding with the "Linggo ng Bulacan."

"Singkaban" is a Filipino word referring to bamboo poles decorated with intricately handcrafted shavings that are usually being used in the province during town festivities, as arches or welcome signages. On the other hand, the Bulacan Festival "Singkaban" was coined to mean "Sining at Kalinangan ng Bulacan". It aims to highlight and showcase the creativity of Bulakenyos through street dancing, parades, cultural presentations, arts and culinary exhibit that manifests the legacy of our historical heroes passed on from generations to the present generation.

This year, the theme of Singkaban: "Likas na Yaman, Kasaysayan at Kultura, Pangalagaan Ating Pamana" enjoins everyone to embrace and uphold the rich natural resources, the vibrant history, culture and traditions that represent the resilience, adaptability and strong determination of Filipinos in times of adversity and challenges.

The Festival was formally opened on September 8, 2023 with Senator Imee R. Marcos as Honorary Guest, represented by Eliza Romualdez-Valtos. The occasion was also made more colorful with the fascinating Parade of Floats, launching of Dulaang Filipino, Singkaban Arc Making Competition, Cultural Costume Competition, and other simultaneous activities.

One of the much-awaited event during the grand celebration of the Singkaban Festival 2023 is the Tatak Singkaban Trade Fair which was held in two venues and were formally opened on September 8 in PCEDO Parking Area and on September 18 at SM City Marilao. The trade fair was participated by fifty-eight (58) exhibitors, with food products such as processed fish, meat, poultry, dairy, fruits and vegetables, sweets and delicacies, breads and pastries. In addition, there were also non-food products including footwear, fashion accessories, garments, leather and synthetic bags, home decors, scents and many more.

Tatak Singkaban Fair is indeed a manifestation of the Bulakenyo's creativity that opens opportunities for MSMEs' local and global competitiveness. Through the enactment of Republic Act 11904, otherwise known as the Philippine Creative Industries Development Act, these creative industries showcased at the Singkaban Trade Fair representing the different domains and subsectors, will further be developed to serve as economic catalysts that would help create jobs and generate income for Bulakenyos.



BUFFEX showcases culinary excellence, entrepreneurship

By: Mary Grace S. Reyes

In a vibrant celebration of culture, cuisine, and entrepreneurship, the 11th annual Bulacan Food Fair and Exposition (BUFFEX) kicked off its grand launch and opening ceremonies on September 4, 2023 at the Pavilion, Hiyas ng Bulacan Convention Center in the City of Malolos, Bulacan.

Distinguished guests graced the occasion, including Blesila A. Lantayona, Undersecretary of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Gregoria G. Simbulan, Area Vice President of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) for North Luzon, Edna D. Dizon, DTI Region 3 OIC-Assistant Regional Director and Concurrent Provincial Director of DTI Bulacan, and Cristina C. Tuzon, President of the Bulacan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI), along with the esteemed members of the BCCI Board of Trustees.

BUFFEX, a collaborative effort between the BCCI, DTI Bulacan and other various government and private sector stakeholders, aims to not only showcase the gastronomic wonders of Bulacan but also those of Central Luzon.



DTI ROG Usec Blesila A. Lantayona (5th fr R), PCCI North Luzon Area Vice President Gregoria G. Simbulan (6th fr R), Edna D. Dizon, DTI-3 OIC-Assistant Regional Director and Concurrent Provincial Director of DTI Bulacan (4th fr R), and BCCI President Cristina C. Tuzon (7th fr R), along with the esteemed members of the BCCI Board of Trustees.

It serves as a platform for local food entrepreneurs and enthusiasts to exhibit their creations while fostering economic growth in the province.

Throughout the week-long event, a myriad of engaging activities unfolded, including cooking demonstrations, enlightening lectures, the DTI Day featuring the Gabay Negosyo Project Graduation Day, riveting contests, and a prestigious awards ceremony recognizing the remarkable contributions of Outstanding Bulakenyo Food Entrepreneurs and Enthusiasts to the culinary world.

DTI-Bulacan presents programs before CSJDM Coop Dev't Council

By: Alex Roy F. Dela Cruz



In response to LGU San Jose Del Monte's request for a DTI representative to present the agency's programs and services including the guidelines of Shared Service Facility, DTI Bulacan Senior Trade – Industry Development Specialist, Alex Roy Dela Cruz attended the CCDC meeting at the City Activity Center, Productivity Complex, Brgy. Sapang Palay, City of San Jose Del Monte last September 08, 2023.

Mr. Dela Cruz discussed the functions of DTI as well as the agency's core programs and services for MSMEs and cooperatives such as the Shared Service Facility, Negosyo Center Services, Trade Promotion, Livelihood Seeding Program, Green Economic Development (GED), Training programs, Cities & Municipalities Competitive Index (CMCI) and Consumer Protection, among others.

Twenty-six (26) individuals comprised of the city cooperative councils and members of the CSJDM-based cooperatives attended the meeting. Representatives from other government agencies such as Small Business Corporation (SB Corp.) and RCBC from the banking institution also presented their loan programs and banking services for both cooperatives and individuals.

The City Cooperative Development Council led by Ms. Leonila Daza, expressed her appreciation to the presenters and pledged her continuous partnership and support to the government agencies of the City of San Jose Del Monte.

Pinoy Trail Mix: Taste of Success for Sonia's Sweets

By: Gesyl S. Dacanay

Sonia's Sweets, an award-winning MSME based in Botolan, Zambales, represented Central Luzon as one of the finalists in the first National Processed Fruits and Nuts (PFN) Trail Mix Competition.

Sonia's Sweets' official entry, Pinoy Trail Mix, features diligently chosen ingredients such as roasted peanuts, banana chips, taro chips, kamote chips, dried mango, and sesame seeds, among others. The components are sourced locally in Zambales.

The competition was intended for food MSMEs across the country, featuring one trail mix product per participating MSME. The six official entries who braved the challenge to have the most innovative trail mix product were Villa Socorro Farm from the National Capital Region, Nutridense Food Manufacturing Corp. from Region 1, One Asia Trader from Region 2, Sonia's Sweets from Region 3, Vicky's Pili & Food Products from Region 5, and Green Minds Inc. from Region 10.



Ms. Rachel Ann Encarnacion, the owner of Sonia's Sweets, receives her plaque of recognition from NICC for PFN Cluster and DTI-10 Regional Director Ermedio Abang.



The competition had for its judges Chef Jam Melchor, founder of the Philippine Culinary Heritage Movement; Dr. Lotis Mopera, director of the UP Los Baños Institute of Food Science and Technology; Executive Director Maria Rita Matute of the Design Center of the Philippines; Ms. Virginia Robledo, President of the Packaging Institute of the Philippines; and Ms. Myra Capulong from the research and development team of the Superfood Grocer, a manufacturer and direct exporter of plant-based products, cereals, and grains.

The awarding ceremony was held on July 13, 2023, during the National Food Fair in SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City, and was spearheaded by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Region 10 as the National Industry Cluster Coordinator (NICC) for the PFN cluster.



DTI Bulacan Engages with Media in Informative Kapihan Event

By: Mary Grace S. Reyes

City of Malolos, Bulacan —

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Bulacan Provincial Office organized an insightful Kapihan event on August 22, 2023, at the Negosyo Center-BCCI in the City of Malolos, Bulacan. The event marked a strategic interaction between DTI officials and media partners, aiming to bolster awareness and understanding of crucial programs.

DTI's Business Development Division Chief Maria Cristina Valenzuela and Consumer Protection Division Officer-in-Charge, Librada Estrella, led the said event. The event witnessed the participation of 17 media partners, who eagerly gathered to be enlightened about the latest updates in Micro Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) Development and Consumer Protection initiatives.

Division Chief Valenzuela delivered an engaging presentation that delved into the details of SME Development programs. Her insights shed light on the diverse support mechanisms DTI has in place to foster the growth of local businesses, ensuring their contribution to the province's economic vitality.

Following DC Valenzuela's informative discussion, OIC-DC Librada Estrella captivated the audience with her discussion on Consumer Protection programs. She highlighted DTI's dedication to safeguarding consumer rights, emphasizing the importance of informed choices and fair transactions in today's dynamic market landscape.

The Kapihan provided a unique platform for open dialogue and mutual understanding between DTI and the media. Such engagement plays pivotal role in disseminating accurate information to the public, ultimately fostering a more informed and empowered business community.

The event served as a testament of DTI's commitment to transparency, collaboration, and effective communication with both media partners and the broader community.



Embracing Differences and Fostering Unity

By: Paolo Manese

In this fast-changing world, there are moments when work becomes challenging. Even the hardest-working employees need time to pause and unwind. Also, a workplace can be harmonious when the employees have a strong bond with each other. DTI-Tarlac Provincial Office recognizes this and spared some time on September 22-23, 2023, and headed to Aurora Province to learn, enjoy fun-filled activities, and appreciate and be one with nature.

The team building activity kickstarted with a Professional Development Seminar facilitated by Ms. Madam Cassey Buenaventura of the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) Aurora Provincial Office with the theme "Embracing Diversity and Inclusivity in the Workplace."

The seminar is vital in today's time, especially in the workplace, as everyone is becoming socially aware and knows the importance of understanding people's perspectives from different age brackets, sexual orientations, religions, and physical disabilities. Ms. Buenaventura cited the importance of acceptance in the workplace, ensuring that everyone feels that they belong and are not neglected just because of their beliefs and preferences, as this also helps the employee's mental health and happiness in his/her job.

In the evening, the employees had their "Socials Night." They sang their hearts out with their favorite videoke songs while enjoying delectable dishes that further strengthened their bonds.

On the second day, the morning started with invigorating parlor games that awakened the energy of the associates, igniting their competitive spirits.



As the day continued, they enjoyed the refreshing Sabang Beach. The water and the soothing sound of the waves provided the perfect backdrop for relaxation and contemplation.

In the afternoon, they ventured deeper into Aurora's landscapes as they trekked for 30 minutes and reached the stunning Mother Falls as well as the majestic Millennium Tree, also known as the Balete Tree.

"No one can whistle a symphony. It takes a whole orchestra to play it." A famous quote by H.E. Luccock said. The word "team" or "teamwork" is often considered a cliché or at times a mere fantasy but DTI Tarlac proved that they possess this elusive trait in the workplace. The strong bond of the DTI Tarlac stood the test of time. Surely in the years and even decades to come, one day, we will remember that we worked in an agency that treated us as family.



HR Page

Human Resource
Management Unit



Birthdays

October

RD Brigida T. Pili
Rya Bianca G. Artates
Lizette A. Befetel
Gesyl S. Dacanay
Marben A. De Jesus
Maria Odessa R. Manzano
Angel P. Marzan
Patrick P. Mendoza
Maria Divina Gloria G. Ramos
Jenilyn C. Santiago
Bryan Omar D. Sardea

Voltaire C. Nery
Sherwin P. Pabillo
Jengkie B. Gonzales
Clarice J. Medina
Armida T. Santos
Desiree Anne M. Calandre
Wilbert B. Capiral
Juliane Marie Dionisio
Gilbert B. Rivera
Ronavel DP Aquino
Jacklyn P. Gonzales

Arianne T. Manzano
Cheryl C. Tejada
Nick Angelo B. Tolentino
Amelia F. Latag
Chris Lean B. Tungol
Lorraine R. Dizon
Kate G. Camu
Eileen Grace C. Del Fierro
Reymart C. Lacson
Rosita B. Meneses
Jayson M. Tenerife
Christian M. Manlapaz

November

Marilou D. Beronio
Wilfred Tristan L. Carbonell
Anna Liza M. Cunanan
Marie Kris P. Dumasig
Teresita T. Evangelista
Neil John M. Fabay
Aaron S. Galang
Johnsen V. Javar
Gerardo P. Maglalang
Teresita E. Magtanong
Jeppy P. Ocampo
Carlito M. Mejia

Melanie D. Quito
Karleen G. Ramos
Nathaniel M. Samson
Joyce C. Yambao
Lota M. Yasa
Emmanuel R. Macatiag
Bryan M. Valenzuela
Catherine P. Alcantara
Michael Ralph S. Silverio
Yvonne C. Abadecio
Cris F. Guillan
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