

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF DTI NORTHERN MINDANAO

# FRONTLINE



JANUARY - JUNE 2020



*Thank you, frontliners!*



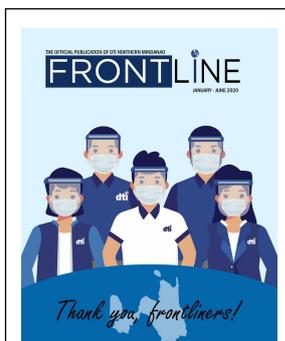
## FRONTLINE

Like the various frontline services offered by DTI to businesses and consumers, DTI "Front Line" Magazine seeks to be the vanguard of information for entrepreneurs and consumers most especially in Philippines' Region 10. This magazine is envisioned to grow into an instrument that will help the trade department in the region show transparency as it pushes its main goal: to enable innovative, competitive, job-generating inclusive businesses while empowering consumers. "Front Line" also highlights the plans and improvements of micro, small and medium enterprises as well as the consumers' welfare in Northern Mindanao.

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### ON THE COVER

Five provinces. One region. One goal. DTI Northern Mindanao continues to serve the community amidst the pandemic to protect consumers and continue the support to MSMEs.

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# FROM THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR



After more than a year of hiatus, praise God, our Front Line is finally back!

2019 was a year of great breakthroughs for DTI-10 but we missed to capture the stories of our provincial offices as they conducted Negosyo Serbisyo to more than 211 Barangays from the 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> class municipalities across the Region. In the urban centers, our collaboration with the industry, academe, and DOST in building an innovative ecosystem for startups by engaging the Fabrication Laboratory (FabLab) and the Food Innovation Centre (FIC) supported the productivity improvements of at least four MSMEs and 14 startups on top of our regular targets with no additional budget. These breakthroughs created ripple effects; thus, we ushered 2020 with high hopes and stretched targets.

The first 72 days of the year was almost a race in making things happen for the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, thereby setting the tone for the rest of 2020. Region 10 was able to sign a MOA with USAID Mission Director for the development and promotion of women entrepreneurs. Likewise, we were one of the very few in the country who was able to launch KMME until module three and established four Negosyo Centers. What used to be an accelerated leap of excitement was unexpectedly on a standstill when COVID-19 surfaced and started to advance.

We were introduced to a new lingo called state of emergency and the realities of lockdowns, quarantines, curfews, stay safe at home, and suddenly, our momentum adjusted to the call of time. So do our MSMEs. With shops closed for months and restricted movements, sustainability is on top of the mind. Thus, when the economy started to open, we witness the resiliency and innovativeness of our MSMEs.

New normal calls for new ways of doing business. Despite our limitations and challenges, creation in our minds can be at our fingertips. We witness new beginnings and business models and some of their inspiring stories are captured in these pages.

Let me express my special thanks and appreciation to all our frontliners in the Consumer Welfare Division who braved their lives monitoring the prices, conducting joint inspections, and submitting daily reports while in the 60-day price freeze. The Provincial Directors are of equal level as they frequently meet physically with their Local Chief Executives and Governors in the implementation of Bayanihan to Heal As One Act. Truly, you exemplify public service at its best!

And to all who braved their lives reporting for duty, connecting with our clients, providing precious encouragement, business advisory service, and those who work behind the scene to ensure we all have our timely benefits, my sincerest thanks!

With this new edition of our Front Line, we commit to continually capture your stories and spread the good news.



**LINDA O. BONIAO**

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**Editorial**

**Editor-in-Chief** RD Linda O. Boniao

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# GreenMinds urges MSMEs, shoppers to practice zero waste management

As told during the Talakayan sa PIA



Local establishment GreendMinds Inc. practices zero-waste management and encourages micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to do the same as concern on the increasing use of plastic is once again highlighted in celebration of Zero Waste Month this January.

During the Talakayan sa PIA in SM CDO Downtown Premier, Reynaldo Gil Lomarda, proprietor of GreenMinds, Inc., shared that his non-government organization practices zero waste management from production, processing, and down to packaging.

*Di mi galabay, di mi gasunog kay amo gamiton. Tanan packaging magamit* (We do not throw, we do not burn because we will use it. All packaging are used), Lomarda said referring to GreenMinds' use of reusable packaging in its products.

Its organic products such as medicinal culinary herbs and the widely known first and only certified organic peanuts in the country, Pilipinut, are sold in jars or resealable packages.

In line with Cagayan de Oro City's ordinance on the full ban of plastic use in all commercial establishments effective January 15, 2020, Lomarda also encouraged shoppers to practice zero waste by bringing their own eco bags or other recyclable containers when buying.

He further added not to use paper bags as it has its own negative effects on the environment.

*Di mi gahatag og brown na bulseta* (We do not provide paper bag). The next step is instead to tell the customers to bring eco bags or containers. *Maoy gabuhaton namo* (That's what we are doing), Lomarda explained. Always start *sa katong kaya nato buhaton* (on what we can do).

GreenMinds, Inc. is an advocate of holistic preservation and protection of the environment through the practice and dissemination of ecological agriculture technologies.

It has uplifted the lives of marginalized farmers and indigenous communities that it served through various trainings and consultancies since it started in 2000.

It currently has two "Learning while Earning" sites to support practical learning in Balay Kinaiyahan in Cagayan de Oro City and organic farm Umanika in Malaybalay City, Bukidnon.

It is recognized for its greening practices by the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) - an international, inter-governmental organization dedicated to promoting pioneering cases of MSMEs sharing their stories on how their committed actions to protect the environment and resources have become beneficial both financially and socially.

GreenMinds, Inc. is a beneficiary of the Shared Service Facility (SSF) program of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and is a constant participant of DTI trade fairs and trainings. (PR)

# DTI conducts free entrepreneurship seminars to OFWs

Some 675 overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) and seafarers gained insight on how to start a business during a series of entrepreneurial development sessions conducted in 2019 by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Northern Mindanao in Cagayan de Oro City.

Eighty-nine (89) percent of the OFWs who attended the seminars were land-based and 11% were sea-based. The OFWs include those working in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, and Qatar.

Classifications of the participants were mainly domestic helpers, followed by seafarers, engineers, pipefitters, and technicians. They came from Bukidnon, Lanao del Norte, Misamis Occidental, and other regions of Mindanao, with majority coming from Misamis Oriental.

The weekly seminar includes topics on what it takes to be an entrepreneur, its benefits and advantages, viable business opportunities, and personal entrepreneurial competencies.

These sessions are regularly conducted by DTI every Friday afternoon in the OWWA Cagayan de Oro Office in Trinidad Building, Yacapin Street, this city.



*Contributed photo taken on 2019*

This partnership between DTI 10 and Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) 10 is implemented to support joint programs, projects, and services as part of the Reintegration Program for OFWs. (PR)

# DTI Lanao del Norte opens 4 remaining Negosyo Centers

The Negosyo Center is responsible for promoting ease of doing business and facilitating access to services for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). Republic Act No. 10644, otherwise known as the “Go Negosyo Act,” seeks to strengthen MSMEs to create more job opportunities in the country.

*Photos by DTI Lanao del Norte taken on February 2020*



## Poona Piagapo 1

Poona Piagapo Negosyo Center opened on February 12, 2020. The official launching was graced by Vice Mayor Imelda Tanggote Polayagan, who attended on behalf of Mayor Muslima Tanggote Macol.

## Pantao Ragat 2

Negosyo Center Pantao Ragat was launched on February 6, 2020, in the Municipal Hall of Pantao Ragat, Lanao del Norte. The opening was attended by Mayor Mohammad Daud Nabil Lantud, Secretary Al-Rajie Bayas, and their municipal planning development officer.

## Tagoloan 3

Negosyo Center Tagoloan officially opened on February 17, 2020, in the Tagoloan Municipal Hall. The launching was attended by Mayor Maminta Dimakuta and Vice Mayor Sittie Ashia Palao.

## Pantar 4

Pantar Mayor Jabar Tago and Vice Mayor Casim Abubacar opened the 24th and last Negosyo Center in Lanao del Norte in Pantar on February 19, 2020.

# INREMP-LES 2

## beneficiaries receive

### livelihood starter kits from DTI

At least 16 people's organizations in Bukidnon received livelihood starter kits from the Integrated Natural Resources and Environmental Management-Livelihood Enhancement Support (INREMP-LES 2) Project under the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Bukidnon during the KMME Press Conference and INREMP-LES 2 Ceremonial Distribution and Delivery of Starter Kits on February 12, 2020, at Haus Malibu, Malaybalay, Bukidnon.

As part of the INREMP-LES 2 project, DTI is assisting farmer beneficiaries in providing strategic enabling conditions that will sustainably increase the sales from commodities produced by upland farmers, smallholders and micro enterprises in the covered areas.

Around P28,000 worth of livelihood starter kits were distributed to eight people's organizations for coffee production. These include Bayanihan Millennium Multipurpose Cooperative(BMMPC), Guihean Farmers Cluster Association, Inc. (GFCAI), Bundaan Farmers Association, Inc. (BFA), Itoy-Amusig Higaonon Tribal Community Organization, Inc. (IAHTCO), Panginuman Bukad Palaopao Upper Kulaman Indigenous People Farmers Association, Inc. (PBPUKIPFA), Kauswagan-Utah-San Vicente Sinasaan Farmers Association, Inc. (KUSSFARMA), Inhandig Tribal Multipurpose Cooperative (ITMPC), and

Kalabasahon Sinaburan Tribal Farmers Association, Inc. (KASTRIFA).

Meanwhile, additional items for the P14,000 worth of livelihood starter kits for the cacao production cluster were given to eight other people's organizations including Balaoro Tigbayon Association, Inc.(BTAI), Barog Integrated Upland Farmers Association (BIUFA), Buyot Upland Farmers Association, Inc. (BUFA), Basyawon-Kisolop Small Upland Farmers Association, Inc. (BKSUFA), Upper Balongkot Small Farmers and Farm Worker Association (UBSAFWA), Alliance of Integrated Farmers in San Isidro Inc.(AIFISI), Sagpagang Upland Farmers Association Inc. (SUFA), and Romagook Small Lowland Farmers Association, Inc. (RSLOFAS).

The provision of the starter kits was to complement the agricultural production training provided to the farmer beneficiaries in 2019. (PR)

*Photo by Aldon Apa-ap taken on February 12, 2020*



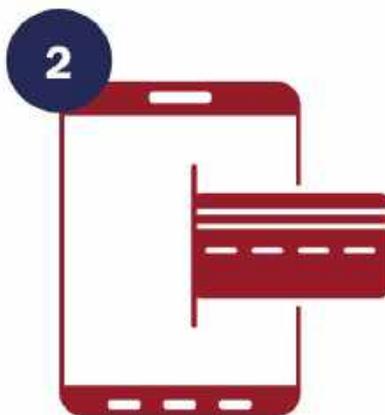
# ADVISORY

In line with ongoing government efforts to contain and mitigate the COVID-19 pandemic, we encourage you to register, renew or request for certification **ONLINE**

***Just go to Business Name Services at <https://bnrs.dti.gov.ph>***



**1**  
Apply for new/  
renewal or  
Request for  
Certification



**2**  
Pay using  
the different  
payment  
options



**3**  
Download your  
Certificate of  
Registration

***- This service is available 24/7.  
- It does not include Cancellation or Authentication of Certificate.***



Photo taken March 4, 2020

## DTI Normin launches KMME batch for 2020

Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Northern Mindanao launched the first batch of Kapatid Mentor ME (KMME) Program for this year with 109 entrepreneurs preselected to join the 10-module business seminar.

In partnership with the Philippine Center for Entrepreneurship (PCE) — Go Negosyo, the KMME Program aims to help micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) improve their businesses through weekly coaching and mentoring by business owners and practitioners who are experts in different functional areas of entrepreneurship.

In her welcome address, DTI Regional Director Linda Boniao apprised the MSMEs that despite the big expense for this project, DTI is willing to support the program because of the equally bigger contribution of the MSMEs. She encouraged the mentees not to skip the modules as KMME is intended to scale up their businesses.

“DTI is in the business of empowering consumers and enabling businesses to be competitive not only in the local but also in the international or global scenario.” Boniao said. “We want you to go beyond your borders, not only for the sales but also for the employment that you provide in our communities.”

The launching included discussions on the first two modules of the program.

Module 1 focused on entrepreneurial mindsetting and values deepening discussed by PCE angelpreneur or mentor Ruben Lanot II. Lanot shared that creating a business is like creating an ecosystem where more businesses means more

employment, leading to more income to families and capacitating them to buy the products and services offered by the businesses.

On the other hand, fellow angelpreneur and brother, John Paul Lanot, emphasized the need to define the target market of a business and properly communicate to the market in the Module 2 discussion on marketing mindset.

An inspirational forum followed where KMME graduates from previous batches shared their learnings after taking the KMME modules.

Melvin Fabello of Kape Higala in Misamis Oriental shared that he was able to change his mindset from the corporate world to the right mindset for a single proprietor. This after he ventured into business after his early retirement from his corporate job.

Julieto Mendoza of Purple Yam Homemade Cakes and Pastries in Misamis Occidental was able to mold people by providing employment for out-of-school youth in his community.

Meanwhile, Paula Chiong of Mama Nene’s Homemade Food Products in Bukidnon realized that her product has the potential in entering the international market. She is currently finalizing her permits to export her products.

The KMME Program was launched on March 4, 2020, at Mallberry Suites Business Hotel, Cagayan de Oro City. It was attended by graduates of previous KMME batches, representatives from provincial MSME development councils, government agencies, and personnel of the DTI regional and provincial offices. (PR)

# Sewing hope beyond borders



Photo by Salika Maguindanao-Samad

It was not a regular day.

The streets that were usually busy with cars driving by and with people frolicking have become empty. What was visible instead were military personnel manning the borders, checking vehicles and IDs of passengers to make sure that no unauthorized individuals can get in and out of Marawi City.

The easy choice was to stay at home, but Salika Maguindanao, who experienced hardship during the Marawi siege, decided to do something different. Together with her husband, Jardin Samad, and with proper documentation at hand, the couple braved the empty streets and crossed the border from Marawi City to extend their help to the community and deliver the first batch of alternative face masks to Iligan City.

The couple, together with a group of weavers and through the Marawi-based Maranao Collectible Services Cooperative, has committed to produce 20,000 alternative face masks per month to counter the limited supply of disposable face masks in the market.

While sewing was an easy task for the members of the

Cooperative, Salika wanted to make sure that they were producing an alternative face mask with an acceptable design and made of quality materials.

Through the help of Task Force Bangon Marawi Shared Service Facility (SSF) Coordinator Joebert Maglangit, the specifications, design and materials for the face masks were finalized and soon production began.

Equipped with 35 high-end sewing machines and handloom equipment provided by DTI's SSF-Bangon Marawi project, the Cooperative can easily produce an estimate of 1,600 alternative face masks per day.

On March 23, 2020, the first batch with 2,400 alternative face masks were delivered to DTI Lanao del Norte for distribution to other offices.

As the Cooperative prepares for the production and delivery of the next batch, Salika expressed her gratitude for the continuous support provided to them by DTI from recovering their lives from the Marawi

siege down to helping the community combat the COVID-19 pandemic.

*"Ang paghimo namo sa masks dili lang makalipay kay naa mi matabangan og panginabuhì but more happy nga nakatabang mi gamay paghatag og protection sa mga tao (Producing the masks brings us joy not only because we are able to provide jobs but we are more than happy that we are able to provide protection to the people)." Salika shared. "Gamay ra siya pero we hope nga daghan matabangan ana ug daghan ang masave nga kinabuhì tungod ana (It's just a small thing but we hope that we can help a lot of people and more lives can be saved because of it)."*

*"Dili gyud mawala atong pagdahom nga naay mga ingon ani nga project ang government para mutabang sa mga tao (We never lose our hope that there are projects like this from the government that is intended in helping people). Thank you, DTI." (PR)*

1

## Barbershops comply to minimum health protocols

DTI provincial offices visited barbershops and salons to check the compliance of establishments in the minimum health protocols.

Barbershops and salons were allowed to open at 50% capacity in areas under modified general community quarantine (MGCQ) starting June 7.

Per IATF resolution, Northern Mindanao was placed under MGCQ starting June 1.



## Donation of coffee to medical frontliners

DTI Northern Mindanao purchased bags of premium coffee beans made by the hardworking local farmers from the highlands of Claveria. The coffee bags were given to the Department of Health (DOH) COVID-19 Emergency Operation Center and the medical personnel of Northern Mindanao Medical Center.

The coffee is a special blend of arabica-robusta from Cape de Ticala. The beans are carefully selected during harvest and undergo fermentation to ensure the best quality on the taste and aroma of the coffee.



2

## Stay at home

In the early days of the pandemic, DTI Northern Mindanao highly encouraged the public to stay at home and avail of the DTI online services.

Red ribbons were also placed outside the regional office to show support and gratitude to the hard work and dedication of medical frontliners.

3

## First online consultation

DTI Camiguin conducts the first online Assessment, Consultation and Triage (ACT) to 30 beneficiaries.

*Photo by DTI Camiguin*

4

## First virtual graduation

Batch 12 of DTI Misamis Oriental Enhanced Business Learning System (EBLS) program graduated virtually after continuing their module online.

*Photo by DTI Misamis Oriental*

5 6

## New normal at work

Foot bath with disinfectant, temperature reading, and sanitation of hands with alcohol are some of the practices expected when entering the DTI office. This is to ensure the safety of clients and employees while at work.



# THANK YOU

to the Price and Supply Monitoring Team of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) 10 for regularly monitoring establishments to ensure compliance of price freeze in times of COVID-19 pandemic.



Photo by DTI Lanao del Norte

## DTI LDN launches Balik Probinsya

Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Lanao del Norte is preparing for its intervention as one of the participating government agencies in the Balik Probinsya, Bagong Pag-asa (BP2) Program of the government.

The BP2 model is expected to be implemented in Kauswagan, Lanao del Norte as a pilot among the provinces in the country complete with housing and livelihood projects. It will be established in a 6.2 hectare in Tacub, Kauswagan with 100 duplex houses that can accommodate 200 families.

DTI through its Negosyo sa Barangay will assist grantees of the program in setting up and sustaining their own businesses in their respective hometowns. The planned intervention will be coursed through the Kauswagan Negosyo Center and will involve profiling the beneficiaries to determine what livelihood starter kits, such as sari-sari store, *karinderia*, or food processing, will be provided under the Livelihood Seeding Program.

The DTI provincial office will also be offering entrepreneurship in small business planning learning sessions and coaching and mentoring on business management topics including marketing, pricing and costing, operations management, and financial management.

The Balik Probinsya, Bagong Pag-asa Program is geared towards addressing Metro Manila's congested urban areas by encouraging people, especially informal settlers, to return to their home provinces and assist them in this transition with support and incentives on transportation, family, livelihood, housing, subsistence and education, among others.

It aims to provide hope for a better future to Filipinos through equity in resources throughout the country that will boost countryside development. (PR)



*Photos taken March 24, 2020*

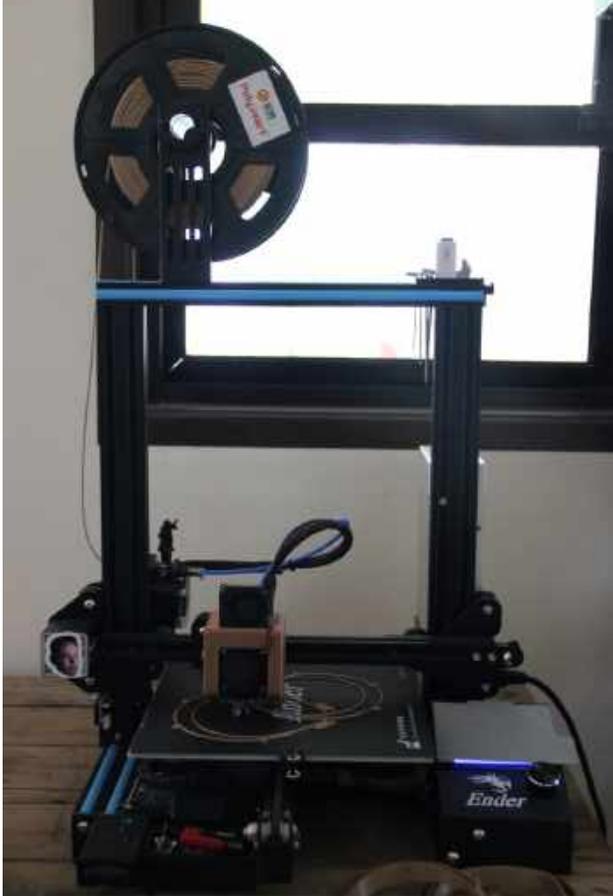
## Fighting COVID in 3D

Joseph Fernan browsed his Facebook group chats.

At first glance, one would assume that he was simply checking his social media platforms to kill his boredom during the community quarantine. In reality, this young entrepreneur was busy checking for new information from volunteers nationwide on how to fabricate and innovate the designs of a face shield through a 3D printer.

Beside him, his own 3D printer was silently doing its work, creating a frame from the rolls of filament donated by DTI Region 10 in collaboration with Fab Lab Mindanao. The frames will later be mounted with acetate sheets to complete the face shield.

Joseph was just one the many volunteers in the Cagayan de Oro 3D-making community who stepped in to lend a helping hand in the production of face shields to help ease the shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE) for the medical frontliners.



*“Para sa amo ang priorities kay DTTBs kay sila ang least support na makuha (We prioritize the DTTBs because of the least support they get),” he shared. “Dinhi sa Cagayan daghan makadonate. Pero didto sa ilaha, sa barangay nila, asa man sila makakuha og face shield? (A lot of people can donate in Cagayan. But where can they [DTTBs] get face shields in the barangay?”*

Together with three companions in his company, ZYX Co., Joseph had started delivering the finished face shields for the DTTBs in El Salvador, Lanao, Balingasag, and Magsaysay.

Offering his 3D services for free was fairly easy as Joseph’s heart was already into volunteering. From his days as a Mechanical Engineering student in Xavier University, down to being an intern in Fab Lab Mindanao, and finally graduating and starting his company in the city, he was already occupied with volunteer work. Joseph had been catering small projects with his advocacy of sharing and improving the knowledge of 3D printing to the locals of Cagayan de Oro. In fact, one of his activities was demonstrating the technology to the doctors of Northern Mindanao Medical Center (NMMC).

Last March 26, 2020, he also turned over 126 frames in the DTI Region 10 office for the fabrication of face shields to be donated to NMMC.

Despite receiving no compensation for electricity and labor cost, Joseph and the rest of the volunteers in Cagayan de Oro’s 3D-making community continue their passion to serve through continuous innovation in the design and production of face shields to help medical frontliners protect themselves from COVID-19. (PR)

Fast forward to today, Joseph spends his time coordinating with other volunteers for donation of materials and fabrication of face shields. But while most of the PPE will be handed over to hospitals designated to fight COVID-19, Joseph had also set his focus in prioritizing the face shields for the doctors to the barrios (DTTBs).



# A spoonful of support



*Photo by Abdul Mohaymen Modaalay*

It was a warm summer day. While most people looked for other ways to spend their time at home, members of My Deen Food Catering endured the heat in the kitchen to diligently prepare hearty packed meals.

The packed meals were ordered by Save the Children Foundation and will be donated to frontliners in Marawi City and other areas of Lanao del Sur.

Abdul Mohaymen Modaalay, chairperson of the catering service cooperative, did not hesitate in accommodating the bulk order. After all, he was already used to cooking and serving for those who are in need.

Abdul's passion for cooking started with his love for *kapagana*, a native Maranao's practice of offering different food to the guests. In almost every occasion, he cooked a lot of food "to share happiness with everybody." Abdul believed that food is what brings the family to gather together.

On normal occasions, he catered food for family occasions and did a few orders from his relatives and friends. When the Marawi siege happened, Abdul and his colleagues in the catering service decided to reach out and served a lot of internally displaced persons (IDPs). However, they humbly admitted to

have only helped a limited number of IDPs because of the shortage of equipment.

Still, it did not stop them from their passion for cooking and in serving other people. The catering service improved when the cooperative received cooking and catering equipment from DTI's Shared Service Facility (SSF) for the Bangon Marawi project.

"The SSF from DTI helps us make our business more efficient." Abdul shared. "We can hold a large scale of people gathering with the help of the facilities shared to us from DTI."

On March 21 and 23, My Deen Food Catering delivered 300 packed meals to the foundation. They are expected to provide 300 more packed meals within the week.

"We are delighted that we had a little share in serving them [frontliners] the best food in our home that . . . somehow can give strength to the hard situation that we are currently facing." Abdul expressed. "Thank you very much [to the frontliners] for the job you did to help our fellow citizens. You deserve to be heroes of our country." (PR)

# Fab Lab Mindanao continues production, donation of PPEs

Fab Lab Mindanao continues its production of personal protective equipment (PPE) for donation to frontline medical professionals and other essential workers in Northern Mindanao.

Located in Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology (MSU-IIT) in Iligan City, the laboratory has distributed 3,431 face shields to 51 hospitals, health units and other groups since it started its production on March 23, 2020.

The face shield frames were designed and printed using a 3D printer. Acetate or plastic sheets were later mounted to the frames to complete the PPE.

The face shields were distributed to hospitals such as the Northern Mindanao Medical Center (NMMC), Northern Mindanao's referral hospital for COVID-19 cases; Rural Health Centers of Balingasag, Jasaan, Magsaysay, and El Salvador; Amai Pakpak; Dr. Uy

Hospital; Mindanao Sanitarium and Hospital; Gregorio Lluch Memorial Hospital; and Lanao Norte Provincial Hospital, among others.

Aside from the face shields, the Fab Lab also fabricated aerosol boxes and a borescope attached to a do-it-yourself 3D-printed laryngoscope. The aerosol boxes, which can be disinfected after every use, is intended to serve as a physical barrier between the attending healthcare personnel and the patient. The prototype was provided to Dr. Uy Hospital in Iligan City for user assessment and feedback. Meanwhile, the laryngoscope is under modifications before it can be officially provided to hospitals and other health care centers.

Funded by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) through its Shared Service Facility (SSF) project, the fabrication laboratory's production of PPEs is in collaboration with the CDO Makers and ZYX Co. It is also working closely with otolaryngologists and head and neck surgeons for inputs in the design thinking process and production of other PPEs, specifically the borescope.

While the first fab lab in Mindanao spearheaded the COVID-19 response initiatives, 29 other Fab Labs across the country eventually joined the action in the production and donation of PPEs. As of press time, the Fab Labs have distributed 60,729 face shields and 266 aerosol boxes to hospitals, health units, and other essential establishments doing frontline work nationwide. (PR)



# Ginama: Made to be Resilient



The COVID-19 pandemic has upended businesses nationwide. While most stores temporarily closed or limited their services, Marle Noble decided to look for alternative solutions to continue the business and employment of her store's personnel.

Marle is the cooperator of OTO.PH Ginama in Gaston Park, Cagayan de Oro. The store was adopted as a One-Town-One-Product Philippines Hub (OTOP.PH) by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in

cooperation with the city government and local community of micro, small, and medium entrepreneurs (MSMEs).

Ginama has been operating for seven days a week since it started in 2019. The pasalubong hub featured over 150 products from local MSMEs in Northern Mindanao, including processed meat and nuts, dairy products, local coffee and cacao, coconut products, pastries, cakes, baked products, and even condiments.



Photos by DTI Misamis Oriental

But due to the decreased foot traffic brought about by the pandemic, Marle shortened the operational hours of the store to three days only—every Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Despite the lesser days, Marle ensured business continuity while protecting the in-stock products of local MSMEs from getting perished.

Marle also took the opportunity to join Department of Agriculture's Kadiwa on Wheels by launching her own Ginama on Wheels. The program brings local products closer to the buying community through a weekly schedule per barangay. The mobile store allowed Marle to provide jobs for her employees while continuing the promotions of local products.

*“Makabalo ang mga local nato na Kagay-anons nga daghay alternatibo na produkto nga gihimo sa mga Kagay-anon ra usab (Locals will become aware that there are a lot of alternative products made by locals of the city.)”* she shared on why she launched Ginama on Wheels.

Apart from the new physical store activities, Marle also embraced e-commerce. The store's strong online presence allowed buyers to order through the Facebook page of Ginama and complete their transaction by paying through the GCash application. The new business scheme not only boosted the sale of local products while ensuring the safety of the buyers but it also provided opportunity for

Ginama to reach a wider audience at a lesser marketing cost.

As new business practices are expected in line with the new normal, Marle continues to explore other options to sustain the business. As of the moment, suppliers of the store are paid through GCash and are advised to only provide the best selling products at a limited quantity to control the stocks and avoid perishables. A menu billboard will also be displayed by the window of Ginama in the coming weeks. This is to inform buyers of what is currently available in the store without having to go inside. In addition, personnel of the store are provided with complete personal protective equipment (PPE) and are advised to strictly impose the physical distancing and sanitation measures.

For Marle, the support of customers to local producers plays a big factor in the persistence of a business. She expressed how important it is for the community to support local products and for local MSMEs, especially those that need to operate their business amidst the pandemic, to not lose hope.

*“Dili ta mawal-an og pag-asa masking kaning nahitabo sa ato. Daghan kaayo pamaagi nga atong mabuhay para makaserve ta sa atong mga komunidad (Let us not lose hope despite what is happening. There are a lot of ways that we can serve our community.)”* (PR)

Bayanihan Act

# Price Monitoring and Anti-Hoarding / Profiteering

as of July 13, 2020

1,035

Number of monitoring activities

99.85%

% of compliance

46

No. of LOIs issued

23

No. of joint operations launched  
with CIDG/PNP and NBI

29

No. of persons arrested

226

Campaigns against Hoarding / Profiteering



DTI Bukidnon

DTI Camiguin



DTI Lanao del Norte

DTI Misamis Occidental



DTI Misamis Oriental



*Photos by DTI Northern Mindanao Provincial Offices and Cagayan de Oro City Philippines Facebook Page*

# Online market gives future to INREMP-LES 2 assisted farmers in Bukidnon

**Integrated Natural Resources and Environmental Management-Livelihood Enhancement Support (INREMP-LES 2) of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Bukidnon's project has shifted to e-commerce to sell local products of eight people's organizations in Bukidnon amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.**

The initiative generated total sales of P62,520 after it accommodated 83 orders and linked with seven businesses since it started promoting farmer products

on Facebook on April 3, 2020.

The people's organizations, assisted by INREMP in selling products online, were originally scheduled to exhibit their local products in the National Food Fair (NFF) at the Megatrade Halls of SM Megamall, Mandaluyong, Metro Manila on March 12-15, 2020.

However, the event was cancelled a day before the farmers were scheduled to fly to Manila on March 10 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## COFFEE



### NOBLE BEAN ARABICA COFFEE

Roasted pure arabica coffee beans  
(Available in ground/whole beans)

Net Weight: 500 g per pouch

Manufactured by:  
Inhandang Tribal Multi-Purpose Cooperative  
Dalwangan, Malaybalay City, Bukidnon

430 PHP



### PORTULIN ROBUSTA GCB

Robusta green coffee beans

Net Weight: 1 kg/pack

Manufactured by:  
Portulin Talaandig Tribal Association (PTTA), Inc.  
Portulin, Pangantucan, Bukidnon

90 PHP

**SUPPORT BUKIDNON FARMERS!**

FOR ORDERS, CONTACT:

**ALDON APA-AP**  
0919 985 3269

**AYA BALTAZAR**  
0916 835 8713

Twenty-eight boxes of coffee, cacao, bamboo, and abaca products that were shipped in advance to Manila on March 6 were returned back to the farmers, prompting the INREMP project to assist the local farmers in augmenting their income by promoting and selling their products online.

“We have seen a great increase in sales after seeking the help of the online community in marketing the products of our assisted farmers through Facebook.” Aldon Apa-ap, Senior Value Chain Facilitator of INREMP, said.



Photos from DTI Bukidnon INREMP Facebook Page



## Enabling Livelihood, Preserving Nature

“With this, we decided to keep the momentum by making an official Facebook page for DTI Bukidnon INREMP. We want to share the stories of the remote farming communities we are working with and be a medium for their voice to be heard. We also hope to build a community of individuals who care about the farmers, the indigenous people, the environment, and the use of eco-friendly and sustainable products.”

Interested customers can order by sending a direct message to INREMP’s official Facebook page at [Facebook.com/DTIBukidnonINREMP](https://www.facebook.com/DTIBukidnonINREMP). An INREMP personnel will facilitate the order until the delivery is complete. To

provide additional convenience and ensure safety to the buyers, payments can be done digitally through Paymaya, GCash, Coins.ph or bank transfers. As of press time, INREMP Bukidnon is currently managing 33 booked orders with estimated total sales of P158,970.

*“Dako gyud ug tabang sa amoang asosasyon ug mga lumad labi na nga naka-quarantine mi. Dili mi kapamaligya sa amoang produkto (It was really a big help in our association and to us as locals during quarantine).”* shared Tessie Abunda, president of Upper Balongkot Small Farmers and Farm Workers Association Inc.

(UBSFAFWA). *“Maayo nalang na naay ahensiya na parehas sa DTI na ga-assist sa amo (It’s good that there is an agency like DTI who is assisting us).”*

Other people’s organizations whose products are being promoted by INREMP are Barog Integrated Upland Farmers Association (BIUFA), Miarayon–Lapok–Lirongan–Tinaytayan Tribal Association (MILALITTRA), Bayanihan Millenium Multipurpose Cooperative (BMMPC), Inhandig Tribal Multipurpose Cooperative (ITMPC), Sunflower Weavers Organization (SWO) and Portulin Talaandig Tribal Association (PTTAI) and Makatagbaw Higaonon Tribal Group Association, (MAHITRIGA), Inc. (PR)



Photo from Turistara Facebook Page

## Online shopping mall now available in Iligan City

Residents of Iligan City can continue their shopping needs while staying in the comfort and safety of their homes with the introduction of Iligan Online Shop (IOS): Ang Online Mall sa mga Iliganon.

Launched by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Lanao del Norte, IOS is an online directory of businesses in Iligan City that can be accessed through the Turistara mobile application or website. Registered businesses in Iligan City can have their business information and products or services displayed in the mobile application or website for free, giving customers a wide range of available products and services to browse with and providing them further the option to order products or book appointment for services online.

DTI Lanao del Norte Senior Trade and Industry Development Specialist Luz Galda, during the Para sa Negosyo ug Konsumante teleradio program of DTI Northern Mindanao, shared that part of the breakthrough goals of the provincial office was to put on-board the assisted micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) of Lanao del Norte to the digital platform.

*“Importante especially karon sa community quarantine nga atong businesses atong gi-encourage to embrace the digital platform or e-commerce platform para mas maserve nila ang ilang mga negosyo (It is important especially during this time of community quarantine that our businesses are encouraged to embrace the digital platform or e-commerce platform for them to serve more).”* she said.

*“Permiro namingaw sila kay sa community quarantine wala kaayoy mga customers nga muadto sa ila businesses but later on narealize nila nga kung magpromote sila through a social media, mareach ra sa ilang mga customers ang ilang establishments og maka-order (At first, there were only a few customers who went to the businesses because of the community quarantine, but they [businesses] realized later on that if they promote through social media, their customers can reach their establishments to make orders).”*

Iligan City merchants who are interested to register their products and services to the online mall directory can simply present their DTI business name registration and 2020 mayor’s business permit to the DTI Lanao del Norte office in Palao, Iligan City.

The Iligan Online Shop: Ang Online Mall sa mga Iliganon can be viewed in Turistara’s website at [turistara.com](http://turistara.com) or through its mobile application that can be downloaded for free in Google Play Store or iOS. It is developed through the collaboration of DTI Lanao del Norte and Minbits Corporation as the local IT solutions and networking company. (PR)

# MisOc entrepreneurs get Negosyo with LOVE



Misamis Occidental entrepreneurs is getting the love with the official launching of Negosyo with Love: Leading OTOpreneurs in the Virtual Environment via Facebook Live. The online series is intended to continue the mentorship of local entrepreneurs of Misamis Occidental on how to go about their online presence.

Negosyo with LOVE which will air every Thursday is in line with the One Town, One Product (OTOP) Next Gen program of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). The program is an offshoot of the OTO first generation, an international priority stimulus program that aims to drive inclusive local economic growth for micro, small, and medium-scaled enterprises (MSMEs) by enabling communities to determine, develop, support, and promote products or services rooted in their own local culture and competitive advantage.

The OTO Next Gen continues the first generation program by leveling up the products and services. This initiative aims to offer assistance to MSMEs to come up with new or better offerings with significant

improvement and innovation in the areas of quality, product development, design, standards compliance, marketability, production capability, and brand development, among others.

OTOP Philippines Program Consultant Clarke S. Nebrao added during the pilot episode that the main effort of OTO Hubs is to also empower businesses to prepare for the new normal. "It's not just about a new normal, but we want to embrace a better normal." Nebrao said.

Part of the preparation for the better normal is the Negosyo with LOVE virtual series launched by DTI Misamis Occidental in collaboration with the OTO Philippines Hub Misamis Occidental to continue assisting local MSMEs for their profitability and marketability amidst the pandemic.

"Despite OTO Next Gen and despite the pandemic, we are happy to respond and move forward the needs of our MSMEs and that is positioning them in the virtual platforms or online markets." DTI Northern Mindanao Regional Director Linda Boniao shared.

"The virtual platform is really an appropriate venue for all of us; and while we are in a pandemic, we should never cease to develop our products to comply with the market standards, the market demands and the needs."

OTOP Philippines Assistant Secretary Demphna Du-Naga also called for business owners to be resilient as she recognized that the series conducted in the new virtual environment will assist more otopreneurs.

"Nagigising ang mga otopreneur na may chance pa pala because of this pandemic." Du-Naga said. "Don't give up. Andiyang lang ang negosyo. Kung nagclose ang door, mag-oopen yung window. Hindi ibibigay sa iyo ang lahat. Hanapin mo ang para sa iyo."

The pilot episode was officially aired on July 9, 2020 at the official Facebook page of OTO Philippines Hub Misamis Occidental. (PR)

# Diskwento Caravan brings basic products closer to barangays





Diskwento Caravan brings reasonably priced basic goods closer to the barangays to help consumers limit their going in and out of their residences just to buy food.

Strict health implementation of protocols, such as social distancing and wearing of face masks, are being followed.

The mobile market is also intended to help micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) continue to earn a living despite the community quarantine.



# MAHITRIGA Bamboo Straws: A Mission to Take Heart

As told by DTI Bukidnon

*“Para sa Kinaiyahan (For the environment).”*

These are words you will hear often when working with indigenous communities in Bukidnon. When asked why, they will tell you about their mission as a community to protect their forests—their sanctuary and their source of life, both spiritually and physically.

In Sitio Kalampigan, Kalabugao, Impasug-ong, Bukidnon dwells a Higaonon tribal group known as MAHITRIGA or Makatagbaw Higaonon Tribal Group Association, Inc. led by Robert “Datu Mansumilya” Sudlayan. Since its founding in 2014, the group has journeyed together to design livelihood strategies, receive assistance from the government, and participate in livelihood programs from various government agencies in order to address their needs as a community.

Among the programs joined by MAHITRIGA is the Integrated Natural Resources and Environmental Management Project – Livelihood Enhancement Support 2 (INREMP – LES 2), a collaboration between the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). The project mainly aims to address unsustainable watershed management in four priority Upper River Basins of the country, which includes the

Bukidnon Upper River Basin in Northern Mindanao. DTI joined the project to provide strategic enabling conditions that will sustainably increase the sales from commodities produced by upland farmers, smallholders and micro enterprises in the covered areas. This is through the introduction of value adding, entrepreneurial skill and market linkages.

## Beginning of a Journey

On February 2019, DTI – Bukidnon INREMP collaborated with the Non-Timber Forest Products – Exchange Programme (NTFP-EP) for MAHITRIGA’s Organizational Development and Strategic Planning Workshop. The activity was conducted to get to know the group better, as well as formulate their vision, mission, and goals to address their lack of structure, direction and cohesion.

According to the group, they have thrived on small farming and abaca fiber trading. A few members of the association have also produced bamboo handicrafts such as chimes, spoon, fork, spoon, and cup, albeit not for commercial purposes. Datu Mansumilya explained that they were not confident enough to sell them, so these bamboo handicrafts only served as an artistic expression for the members. But upon learning that the bamboo straws could be a source of additional income for the tribal community, this piqued their interest on the subject.

The tribe’s heightened entrepreneurial journey started on April 2019 when DTI-Bukidnon INREMP team returned to their community to conduct a Bamboo Straw Processing and Bamboo Crafts Upgrading activity with Mr. Mark Gersava, Chief Executive Farmer and Founder of social enterprise, Bambuhay. Yearning for the training, the group welcomed the visitors with big smiles and kind words, deeply appreciating their efforts and struggles through the challenging path to their small village.

During the training, the participants shared an instant connection with Mr. Gersava due to his heritage as an indigent and his inspiring success story as a fellow farmer. As such, their determination to apply his teachings grew. Their first step was to limit their own use of plastic within the community. Thus, MAHITRIGA rose to the challenge of mastering the craft of producing bamboo straws and growing it as a tribal enterprise.

### A Year of Growth

Following the first fun-filled training on bamboo straw processing, more learning opportunities opened for MAHITRIGA.

More business skills were learned through DTI including marketing, entrepreneurial mind setting, negotiation, management, bookkeeping, decision-making, networking, and communication.

After a year-long journey of growth and learning, MAHITRIGA has shown key improvements in their economic situation, their dynamics as a group, and their mindset and skills as entrepreneurs.

The tribe now have designated personnel for their bamboo straw enterprise. They even opened a separate bank account to keep track of their cash flow. An area has been assigned which is specifically utilized for bamboo straw processing. With the assistance of NTFP, the tribe has constructed a facility amounting to approximately P50,000 to house their growing business.

From a group that was hesitant to talk with strangers and lacked confidence in retailing their bamboo products, some members are now more confident to advertise and sell their products to potential buyers. They are now capable of receiving and delivering orders on their own as well. To date, they have supplied bamboo straws to Ahavah Milk Tea House and



Photo by DTI Bukidnon

Forest Tea Bubble Tea in Malaybalay City, Bukidnon and Atugan Nature Farm in Impasug-ong, Bukidnon.

From having no sales, MAHITRIGA has seen an increase in their sales which is now at approximately P40,000 after accomplishing major improvements in their product quality and consistency. Moreover, the enterprise management gained resilience as seen in combatting against lack of communication infrastructure in the area. Instead of showing reasons, MAHITRIGA managed to find a way to reach out to DTI – INREMP for updates, transactions, and participation in trainings the hardest way they can.

From their first trade fair participation to their entrepreneurial skills trainings and market linkages with business establishments in Bukidnon, MAHITRIGA has shown that they have the heart, grit, and environmental compass to reach further heights as a sustainable enterprise. ♦



Photo by DTI Camiguin

# The Golden Ace to Success

As told by **Jerace A. Tabalba**

Mr. Cruz G. Rambuyon is a dedicated husband and father to his children. A graduate of Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering, Mr. Rambuyon sought for a greener pasture that was far from his chosen profession and became an aspiring entrepreneur in the province of Camiguin in 2015.

He started his business way back in 2003 with just a starting capital of P150 from his remaining salary. The business idea came from his brother-in-law, which initially was a side-line business of Mr. Rambuyon to earn extra income to sustain the needs of his family until he saw the bright side of entrepreneurship. He decided to resign from his work as a project manager in a construction firm in Misamis Oriental after working for twenty-five years and went home to Camiguin to focus on the polvoron production. The business was officially registered on 2015 as Golden Ace Food Products which was located at Barangay Maac, Guinsiliban, Camiguin.

With his eagerness and determination to grow his newfound endeavour and to acquire more knowledge about business, he constantly visited the Negosyo Center to inquire on its services and seek for assistance it may provide to entrepreneurs like him.

In 2017, he began attending various trainings and seminars conducted by the Negosyo Center. He also acquired product development assistance through the creation of a product label for his polvoron which made a big impact on the growth of his sales. His wife was also given the same opportunity to pursue more knowledge in managing a business and even graduated from the Sari-Sari Store Training and Access to Resources (STAR) Program of Coca-Cola Philippines Inc. in partnership with DTI Camiguin.

In 2018, with his growing interest and dedication to his business, he was identified as one of the

mentees of the Kapatid Mentor Micro Entrepreneur (KMME) program. During the KMME

run, he underwent ten business modules in the form of coaching and mentoring sessions which lasted for three months. He then graduated on June 8, 2018 belonging to the second batch of DTI Camiguin KMME mentees.

As a result of the KMME, he learned the importance of having a positive mindset, the importance of bookkeeping and accounting in order to assess the business if it's gaining profit or not, the significance of product development and marketing and the relevance of following the Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP). Moreover, his sales went up by 15% after finishing the KMME program and provided employment to the local residents of the area.

In 2019, he made a step to realize the plans he set on his Business Improvement Plan by applying for a loan from the Spanish Assistance for Integrated Livelihood (SAIL) Inc. for the construction of a separate production area. With the help of DTI Camiguin through Negosyo Center Guinsiliba on the preparation of his project proposal, his loan application of P250,000 was approved.

The construction of a separate production area was for a more efficient operation as being prescribed under the Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) and food safety practices. This would eventually lead to an improved employee productivity, achieved consumer satisfaction, minimized consumer complaints and, at the same time, provide space for technology improvement in the future and to consistently meet existing market demand especially during peak seasons.

With his burning passion for entrepreneurship, his business is now flourishing as it started to carve its own niche in the market. ♦



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# PARA SA NEGOSYO UG KONSUMANTE

1st and 3rd Friday of the Month | 10:30 am - 11:00 am



MAKITA/MADUNGOG SA:

RPN DXKO 1368 kHz Cagayan de Oro  
Parasat Cable Channel 5  
[FB.com/RPNCagayandeOro](https://www.facebook.com/RPNCagayandeOro)

# A Keepsake of Iligan

As told by **Cristian Jefftee Q. Cuarteros**

Specialty foods are popular gift souvenirs. In some areas, a specialty food carries abundant meaning unique to the locality. However, there are some travelers who are more fond of bringing with them a keepsake of the place they are visiting—something that they can keep for years and something to remember in their travels.

This was what Pat D. Noel noticed when he worked with the City Tourism Office in Iligan City back in 2012. He observed that most of the tourists he was guiding were looking for non-food souvenir items. He shared this realization to his wife, Revilla N. Carbonell-Noel, who was then an employee of the City Planning and Development Office.

A few months later, the couple started their journey with Keepsakes Iligan Souvenirs & Crafts with the introduction of two varieties of acrylic refrigerator magnet and acrylic keychains featuring a picture of Iligan's iconic landmarks—Maria Cristina Falls and Tinago Falls.

Keepsakes Iligan was registered with the local government and the Bureau of Internal Revenue in 2013. Inspired by the consistent positive results of their business operation, Mrs. Noel decided to resign from her job on July of the same year and concentrated on experimenting designs on other raw materials. Four years after, through the Department of Trade and Industry – Lanao del Norte Provincial Office, she got an opportunity to be one of the participants of Kapatid Mentor ME (KMME) Program.

Aside from lessons and advices from mentors on how to scale up her business, Ms. Noel was able to network with other businesspeople who became her customers.

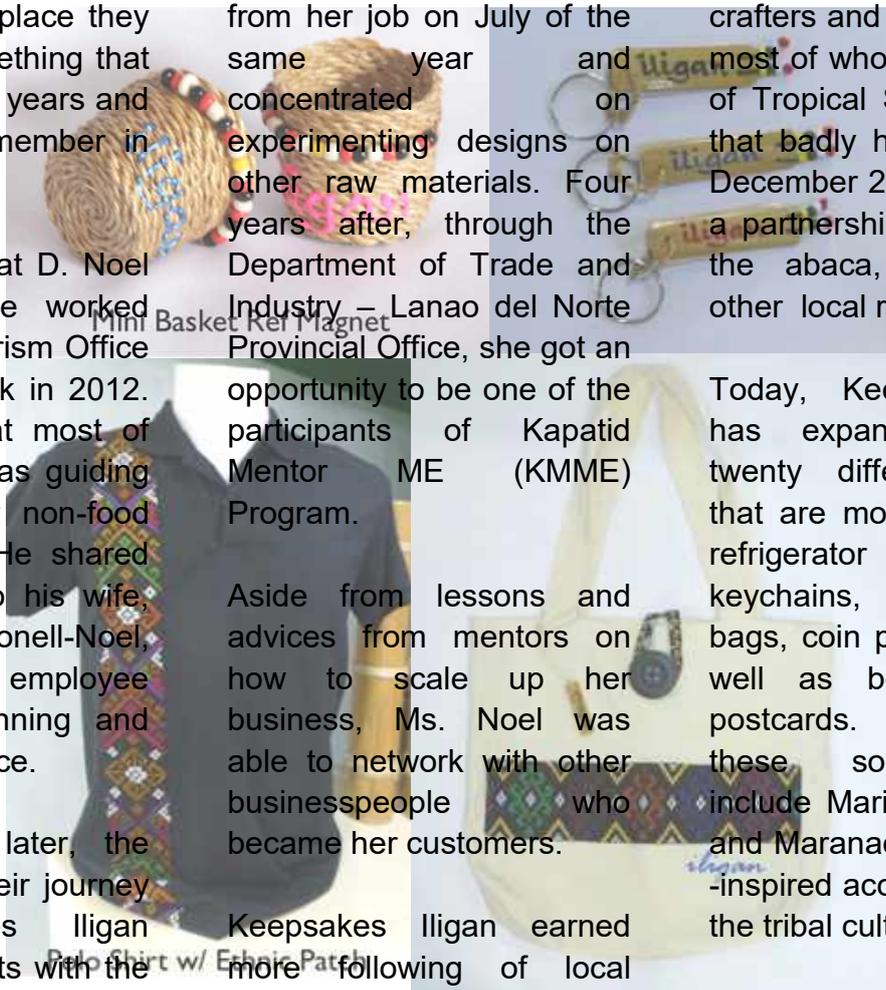
Keepsakes Iligan earned more following of local customers who directly ordered souvenirs through social media, which gave the enterprise an opportunity to offer customized items. It also has two major consignment outlets in OTOP.PH Iligan Hub in Canaway and in the Iligan City Hall Canteen.

It has now enjoyed a five-figure monthly sales, higher than their sales achieved in 2013.

As part of its mission, Keepsakes Iligan supports local livelihood associations, home-based crafters and skilled workers, most of whom are survivors of Tropical Storm Sendong that badly hit Iligan City in December 2011, by forging a partnership with them for the abaca, bamboo and other local raw materials.

Today, Keepsakes Iligan has expanded to over twenty different products that are mostly handmade: refrigerator magnets, keychains, T-shirts, tote bags, coin purse, mugs, as well as bookmarks and postcards. The designs of these souvenir items include Maria Cristina Falls and Maranao and Higaonon-inspired accents that depict the tribal culture of the city.

Next time you visit Iligan City, don't just be astounded by its majestic waterfalls and rich tribal culture. Drop by Keepsakes Iligan and make sure to bring with you a part of the city. ♦



# Handy Face Masks of Puyo Handicrafts

As told by DTI Misamis Oriental



Photo from Puyo Handicrafts Facebook Page

“Seeing the news and knowing that people are starting to hoard face masks, I was burdened, realizing that I can do something,” Engr. Vivian Libao said when asked what moved her to help. She pointed out that that people should not belittle things as it could be a big thing for someone else.

A civil engineer by profession, Engr. Vivian B. Libao worked in Petron Corporation at Senator Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City as a quality inspector and an AutoCAD engineer doing construction plans for the company. She left her lucrative job in Petron Corporation after her husband joined STEAG State Power Corporation. Tugging along their two sons, the young family transferred to Cagayan de Oro to start anew.

Engr. Libao recalled that she was in the middle of seeking employment when her entrepreneurial sister introduced her to handicrafting. She was having second thoughts taking over the business as she did not see herself as crafty; but it was an attractive offer as the business networks were already in-placed and her sister was by her side to help her learn a few ropes and teach her the trick of the trade.

On August 2004, Puyo Handicrafts was established. The company manufactures abaca-based handwoven bags, pillow cases and home furnishings. Over the years, Puyo has showcased their products to various places such as in America Fiesta in New Jersey (USA), Brunei Interational Trade & Consumer Exhibit in Brunei Darussalam, Maehwa Festival in Guangyang City (South Korea) and Sabah International Expo in Kota Kinabalu (Malaysia).

When the COVID-19 pandemic started, Puyo Handicrafts did not spare a moment to respond to the needs of the medical frontliners. It was one of the first few establishments to address the shortage of medical face masks in the community. The company immediately began the production of alternative face masks and donated them to major hospitals of the city, namely: Northern Mindanao Medical Center, JR Borja General Hospital, Cagayan de Oro Medical Center and Capitol University Medical Center.

Puyo Handicrafts further extended its service by encouraging other micro enterprises to also venture in the production of face masks while teaching them how to make one. A tutorial video on how to make face masks was even created by Engr. Libao to easily disseminate the information. In addition, she ensured that the work area of Puyo Handicrafts was well-sanitized.

“We have to enforce strict sanitation in our work area to align with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requirements.” Engr. Libao shared. “We are grateful to Ms. Elsie Limosnero of DTI who facilitated the fast approval of our materials by the FDA. We are also thankful to Ms. Jesse Abear of DTI who linked me with the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) and to Gaisano for my much-needed garters. I was able to purchase garters even if Gaisano was closed due to the city-wide community quarantine.”

As of the press time, Puyo Handicrafts has already dispatched more than 10,000 face masks. ♦

# The Cheesiest Success: An Ensaymada Diary

As told by **Rea Florida**



*Old photo from DTI Misamis Occidental*

**“The quality of a father can be seen in the goals, dreams, and aspirations that he sets not only for himself but for his family” – Reed Markhan**

Alton P. Perez, a resident of Bañadero, Ozamiz City, is one of those aspiring husbands and fathers who wants to provide the needs of his family financially and emotionally. For eight years, he was a branch manager of Citi Hardware Inc. and was assigned to different places while his wife was working in an online job.

One day, he and his wife realized that their combined income was no longer enough especially since they were expecting their first child who was diagnosed with congenital anomalies. In the process of thinking of other ways to have a better income and considering that after the delivery of their first born, his wife and child need his undivided attention,

Mr. Perez decided to resign from the company and put up a convenience store in their area using his separation pay and their savings. He sold varieties of bread in the store and found out that many of his customers were actually looking for the breads. Considering that their area does not have a bakery, he decided to study baking in Cebu for three weeks. Right after his study, he put up a typical bakery named after his son in their barangay, “Gab’s Bakeshop.”

After two years, Mr. Perez and his wife were expecting their second child who was also diagnosed with congenital anomalies. Given the situation, the couple applied for loans just to provide the needed amount of more than P1 million for their child’s operation.

It was a very big challenge for them to get a big amount of money monthly to cope with their liabilities and responsibilities as parents.

In 2018, Mr. Perez was referred to the Department of Trade and Industry by the MSMED Council Chairman of Misamis Occidental, Ms. Elvira D. Tan, to seek more assistance in his business. He was advised to go to the Negosyo Center of Ozamiz City to inquire about the Kapatid Mentor ME Program.

During the mentoring program, his fellow mentees saw his qualities as an entrepreneur and a leader, resulting to Mr. Perez getting elected as the president in their batch called Matatag Class of 2018. Through the KMME Program, Alton learned a lot of things with regard to business. One of the learnings that really gave a great impact and became his turning point leading to his breakthrough was the statement of one of the mentors saying, “It will only take you one product in order for you to be rich”.

Anchoring in this statement, Mr. Perez did several experiments to find that “one product.” He tried many times to make his own version of brioche but did not succeed. Yet, he never surrendered. He continued reading and researching for a new product until, finally, his special cheesy ensaymada was born. After perfecting the ensaymada in his kitchen, Mr. Perez and his wife decided to go online through Facebook Page. Using their strategy to make Gab’s Bakeshop be known on Facebook, they introduced first the innovated banana loaf with chocolate chips, which also became famous. Seeing that Gab’s Bakeshop name was already known and established in social media, they introduced to the public his own version of cheesy ensaymada with a tagline of “one bite is never enough,” which became their banner product. The ensaymada came with different flavors of fillings such as yema, ube, buko pandan, peanut butter, choco, monggo, and mocha. Today his product has reached different places, even as far as

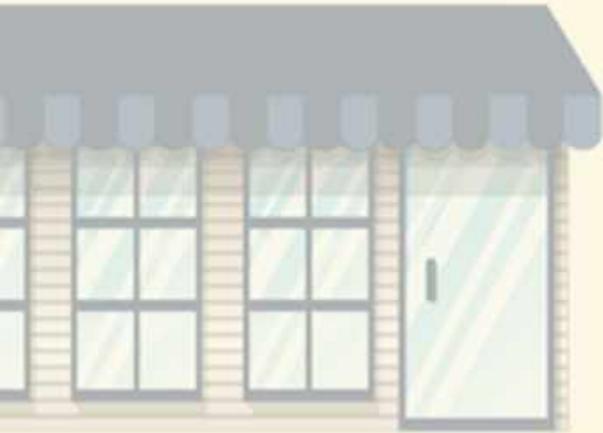
Cebu. It is now known as one of the high quality pasalubong choices uniquely from Ozamiz City.

With all the armor provided by the Kapatid Mentor ME Program—from mind-setting, marketing, product development and critiquing, operating management, human resource, accounting, taxation and business law—Mr. Perez was determined to apply a P300,000 worth of equipment loan from Department of Science and Technology (DOST) through the SET-UP Program to scale-up his business. Not long after, his loan application was granted, leading to increase in his production capacity. He said it was really not a mistake of scaling-up, it was just partly a risk-taking decision. He boosted their revenue for about 600% after the KMME program, which surpassed their sales in their convenience store before by 115%. Now, Gab’s Bakeshop is serving walk-in clients and online orders. Moreover, they already now have an express delivery.

As a way of giving back to DTI and the community, Mr. Perez is one of the pool of local coaches who is committed to help and guide others along their way to success. His story tells of hard work and determination. Through his constant passion to innovate and take risks, he still looks forward to further scaling up his existing ventures in the future and to owning a commissary building dedicated only for the cheesy ensaymada. It’s a dream for his family that takes time to be fulfilled, but Alton is willing to give his all to get Gab’s Bakeshop to a place he has always dreamt of.

His message to his fellow micro entrepreneurs out there? “Never allow hundred times of failures to keep you still, great things happen if you keep on trying.” ♦

# 2019 ACCOMPLISHMENTS



**9,552**  
MSMEs assisted in  
the priority industries

**1** Recognized/maintained  
consumer organization

**1** Agreement/MOA/MOU  
forged with private entity

**34**

New and upgraded  
Bagwis awardees

*20 New  
14 Upgraded  
188 Maintained*

**122**

Investors assisted in  
the priority industries

**33**

Exporters assisted in  
the priority industries



**89**

Negosyo Centers  
established and maintained

*8 Established  
71 Maintained*

**99.99%**

Businesses registered  
within 15 days applied  
through Negosyo Centers

**100%**

BMBE Certificates issued  
within the prescribed time

**84**

LGUS submitting list of  
business permits issued annually

# 61,020

Clients assisted  
(a + b + c)

17,857 MSMEs assisted

*9,486 Registered new  
MSMEs assisted*

*1,218 Unregistered new  
MSMEs assisted*

*5,789 Registered existing  
MSMEs assisted*

*1,364 Unregistered existing  
MSMEs assisted*

19,430 Other clients assisted

23,733 Business name /  
BMBE registered

# 86%

Registered MSMEs  
assisted by DTI

15,275  
Registered MSMEs assisted

17,857  
Registered/unregistered  
MSMEs assisted

# 90%

Operational SSFs

71  
Operational SSF

189  
Established SSF



# 433

Prototypes  
developed

FabLabs 23

OTOP NextGen 212

Other ProDev Activities 198

# 190

Number of mentees

# 97%

Mentees who graduated

*184 mentees who graduated; 190 mentees enrolled*

# 84

 IP applications filed

# 203

 MSMEs doing e-commerce



# 100%

Applications for permits/accreditations/licenses/authorities processed within the prescribed time

# 523

Firms monitored (Price Trending)

# 99%

Consumer complaints resolved through mediation and arbitration within the prescribed time

*133 mediation complaints resolved within 10 working days*

*134 consumer complaints received for mediation*

# 98%

Employees capacitated

94  
Number of employees trained

96  
Number of employees

# 1

Paperless system developed and maintained

# 1

Document tracking system developed and maintained

## PRIME-HRM Level 2



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