

THE VOICE NEWSWEEKLY  
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Vice Mayor Vicky Vega empowers Angelenos with "Kabuhayan Power" **SEE BACK PAGE**

# House approves Clark food hub bill



**APPROVED.** Clark International Airport Corporation (CIAC) executives led by President and CEO Arrey Perez (center) flash the thumbs up after the House Committee on Trade and Industry approved on August 20, 2024 House Bill 10678 that will create the Clark National Food Hub in the Clark civil aviation complex. With Perez are: (R-L) Committee Secretary Valentino Palanca; CIAC New Business Ventures Unit Head Atty. Czarina Michaela Pleyto; CIAC Legal Officer Atty. Hazel Mallari; Committee Vice-Chairperson Cagayan de Oro Second District Rep. Rufus Rodriguez; CIAC Chief Strategic Urban Planner Melissa Feliciano; and, her deputy Kathleen Dizon.

**CLARK FREEPORT ZONE** – Lawmakers approved on August 20, 2024 a measure that will create the national food hub at the Clark civil aviation complex that aims to centralize and modernize the distribution, storage, and processing of agricultural products in the country.

House Bill 10678 or 'An Act Establishing the Clark National Food Hub, Appropriating Funds Therefor and for Other Purposes' was unanimously approved by the House Committee on Trade and Industry chaired by Rep. Ferjanel Biron (4th District, Iloilo). The bill's principal authors are Reps. Rufus Rodriguez (2nd District, Cagayan de Oro), Maria Angela Garcia (3rd District, Bataan), and Anna Victoria Veloso-Tuazon

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**HOUSE APPROVES**

## Vandals beware Kulong o Linis

Heritage District on social media. Angeles City Mayor Carmelo "Pogi" Lazatin, Jr. issued the "Kulong or Linis" ultimatum to individuals who purposely vandalized the Heritage District Walkway in Barangay Sto. Rosario on 20 August 2024. The move came after Kuliat Foundation, Inc. (KFI) Secretary Jing Torno posted a photo of the vandalized walkway around the

Heritage District on social media. Torno's post was followed by FB posts by Sto. Rosario Barangay Captain Renato Cosme and Barangay Kagawad Joana Joy Flores who immediately tried to restore the vandalized wall and coordinated the matter with the city government.

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**KULONG O LINIS**

## Angeleño products showcased in USA

Angeles City Mayor Carmelo "Pogi" Lazatin, Jr. fulfilled a long-time dream to promote Angeleño-made products to the world during the 27th Fiesta in America held on August 17 and 18, 2024 at the American Dream Mall in New Jersey, USA. Around 500 people visited the Angeles City booth during the two-day trade fair where they availed of various products brought by the Angeles City delegation which includes Kape Angeleño, the locally-grown coffee from Barangay Sapangbato, and t-shirts with 'kulitan' designs, the ancient writing script of the Kapampangans. Chief Adviser IC Calaguas and Executive Assistant IV Reina Manuel traveled to New Jersey



in their personal capacity to lead the official **SEE PAGE 4**  
**ANGELEÑO PRODUCTS**

## ₱1K minimum wage proposed



Businessman Rene G. Romero, president of the Romac Group, said that to earn a 'decent living', workers in Pampanga should have a daily minimum wage of Php1,000. Romero's proposal was formulated from persistent challenges such as inflation, escalating living costs, and other financial strains which continue to "negatively impact workers' effectiveness and morale, resulting in lower productivity levels in the workplace". Romero's Romac Group, one of the leading manpower service providers in the country, has been in operation for over 40 years with over 1,500 employees serving Central Luzon, Metro Manila and the Visayas. "Daily wage earners often struggle with financial stress due to insufficient wages which make it difficult for them to meet essential living expenses, based on my interviews with these workers

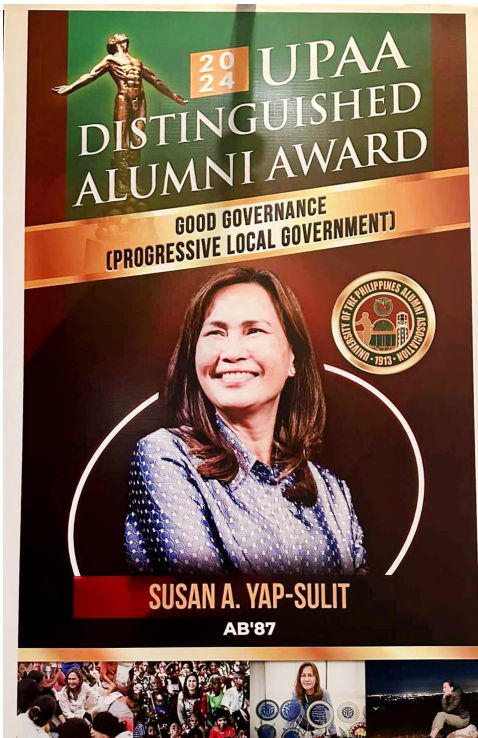
**SEE PAGE 4**  
**₱1K MINIMUM**



**STARLIGHT, STARBRIGHT.** Less than a week from now officially starts the "ber months" that begins the longest Christmas celebration in the only predominantly Catholic nation in Southeast Asia. Photo shows the Christmas lanterns that adorn the Abacan Bridge and the Friendship Bridge in what is probably the only structures that welcome the Yuletide season ahead of all others in the Philippines. This year, the two bridges display a row of flaming red, deep red and yellow Christmas lanterns that brilliantly shine in a row. Angeles City Mayor Carmelo "Pogi" Lazatin Jr. ordered the early installation of Christmas lanterns in the city to spread happiness and love. The Christmas lanterns were conceptualized and designed by Executive Assistant IV Reina Manuel. **(ANGELES CIO)**



## GSY is UPAA top alumni awardee



The University of the Philippines Alumni Association (UPAA) has named Governor Susan Yap as one of the distinguished alumni in the field of Good Governance (Progressive Local Government).

Yap received the prestigious UPAA Distinguished Alumni Award on August 17 at the Ang Bahay ng Alumni, UP Diliman, Quezon City.

Yap, who is on her third and final term as governor of Tarlac, joined 95 other outstanding graduates who, according to UPAA President and Alumni Regent Robert Lester Aranton, are exceptional individuals being recognized for their established leadership, significant achievements, tireless service, and substantial contributions to their professions and the

communities they chose to serve.

The UPAA Distinguished Alumni Award is one of the highest honors bestowed upon UP graduates who have made significant contributions to society through their professional achievements and dedication to public service.

Engr. Isidro A. Consunji (BSCE '71) led the roster of Outstanding Awardees for this year is. He is this year's lone recipient of the UPAA Most Distinguished Alumnus Award for his achievements in the real estate, construction, and mining industries.

This year's UPAA Presidential Awardees are Secretary Teodoro J. Herbosa, Undersecretary Benedito Ernesto R.

SEE PAGE 4  
GSY IS UPAA

## Pogi orders border checkpoint vs ASF

ANGELES CITY — Mayor Carmelo “Pogi” Lazatin, Jr. ordered the setup of livestock checkpoints across the city to ensure it remains free from African Swine Fever or ASF.

In Memorandum Order No. 1788, Series of 2024, Lazatin instructed Angeles City Police Office (ACPO) Chief P/Col. Amado Mendoza, Jr. and the Angeles City Traffic Development Office led by Francis Pangilinan to set up and man border checkpoints and

inspect delivery trucks entering the city that could possibly be transporting livestock from ASF-affected areas in Batangas and Bulacan provinces.

“This preventive measure aims to ensure that the city is free from ASF. Dahil nakasalalay po rito ang kalusugan, kaligtasan, at kabuhayan ng ating mga kababayan,” Lazatin stressed.

The mayor said the city government is one with the Department of

Agriculture (DA) in  
SEE PAGE 4  
POGI ORDERS

## BCDA subsidiaries meet

Subsidiaries of the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) Group gathered at the New Clark City on August 13 and 14, 2024 to align plans and co-create strategies to unlock the full potential and drive the inclusive economic transformation of special economic zones in Pampanga, Tarlac, Bataan, La Union, and Baguio.

Present during the two-

day planning summit, dubbed “Building Collaborative Development Agenda: Leveraging the Potential of the BCDA Special Economic Zones”, were BCDA Chairman Delfin Lorenzana, BCDA President and CEO Engr. Joshua Binggang, Clark International Airport Corporation (CIAC) President and CEO Arrey Perez, and CEO John Hay

SEE PAGE 4  
BCDA



**BCDA SUBSIDIARIES' SUMMIT** BCDA President and CEO Joshua Binggang, Clark Development Corporation (CDC) Corporate Planning Division Manager Ar. Tarcisius Toituyco representing President and CEO Agnes Devanadera, Clark International Airport Corporation (CIAC) President and CEO Arrey Perez, John Hay Management Corporation (JHMC) President and CEO Atty. Mario Ignacio Quadra, and Poro Point Management Corporation (PPMC) President and CEO Atty. Felix Racadio made presentations on their strategic priorities during the two-day “Building Collaborative Development Agenda: Leveraging the Potential of the BCDA Special Economic Zones” summit at the New Clark City. With them is the BCDA Board of Directors led by Chairman Delfin Lorenzana (seated, 3rd from left).

## NLEX, SCTEX rehabs done by holiday season

**BALAGTAS, Bulacan** — The rehabilitation of the North Luzon Expressway (NLEX) and Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway (SCTEX), that includes improvements to roads, bridges, and exit and entry points, is scheduled to be completed by September 2024 before the holiday season.

NLEX Corporation President J.

Luigi Bautista said the rehabilitation of the Bulacan portion of the NLEX covers Mabiga in Plaridel, the Tabang Toll Plaza in Guiguinto, the southbound lane from the Tabang spur exit ramp to Barangay Bural II in Balagtas and entry and exit ramps at the Bocaue Toll Plaza.

The priority for the Pampanga side of the NLEX is the completion of the raising of the road in

Barangay Tulaoc in San Simon.

Meanwhile, the roads on the SCTEX Spur Ramp or its connector from the NLEX and also from the SCTEX back to the NLEX is being repaired.

On the way to Subic, the Manuali part of Porac, Pampanga along the SCTEX is also being repaired.

SEE PAGE 4  
NLEX, SCTEX



**ROAD REPAIR.** Photo shows the ongoing rehabilitation of the North Luzon Expressway (NLEX) in Balagtas, Bulacan. The target date of completion for all the rehabilitation work along the NLEX and the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway is September 2024 before the holiday season. (PIA-3)

## Subic Freeport celebrates Feast of San Roque

**SUBIC BAY FREEPORT** — The community in this premier Freeport gathered recently to celebrate the 78th feast day of San Roque, its patron saint.

Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) Chairman and Administrator Eduardo Jose L. Aliño shared that the 78th Feast of San Roque culminated with the traditional karakol, a street dance where an image of the saint is paraded while dancing along the streets of the Central Business District in Subic Bay Freeport.

“It has been a while since we had a festive atmosphere in this Freeport. And I think the morale of the people here, as well as the tourism industry, will benefit from such festivities such as the Feast of

San Roque Karakol,” Aliño said.

The celebration kicked off with Holy Mass at the San Roque chapel, one of the oldest churches in the country, followed by the karakol which ended with the street dance competition at the Subic Bay Gym.

Three nearby schools participated in the competition: the Iram High School w/ Senior High School, the College of Subic Bay Montessori, and the Lyceum of Subic Bay, who competed for the best street dance performers at the Karakol Street Dance Competition 2024.

The Lyceum of Subic Bay emerged the grand winner of the Karakol Festival Dance Competition, followed by College of Subic Montessori in second place and the Iram High School in third.

St. Roch's Day or Pista ni San Roque is observed on August 16 every year. St. Roch, who was a Frenchman, is recognized as the patron saint of dogs.

The San Roque Chapel in the Subic Bay Freeport is considered as one of the oldest chapels in the region and was constructed sometime in the 1800s, back when Olongapo was declared a bayside settlement for the Spanish naval fleet.

The chapel became the center of spiritual life for the Spanish sailors as well as of the Filipino converts who resided within the vicinity of Subic Bay, then known as Subig.

The San Roque chapel was built in 1932, replacing the dilapidated mission church of the Spanish missionaries in Olongapo in the 1800s. (SBMA MEDIA PRODUCTION DEPARTMENT)



## Katatagan art exhibit opens at MCC

Katatagan, an art exhibit that depicts the resilience of the Philippines as part of the ASEAN Community, opened recently at the Mabalacat City College (MCC).

Katatagan features the works of artists Dodjie Aguinaldo, Angela Aguilar, Jer Bangeles, Mikael Basa, Rod Siron, Christian Dy, Jeffrey Q. Gabatin, Jonazs

Soriano, Art Sumalde, Kayl David A. ksuncion, Cy-Vi Bernice Ursal, Marinel T. Tungol, Erwin Dayrit, Chelsea Andrea Montibon, Kyle StewartV. Perreras, Emmanuel Adomado, and Kathleen Kate Zabala.

Get to see the works of the said artists at Katatagan which will run at the MCC Student Center until August 26, 2024.





# PINOY MARINO RIGHTS

ATTY. DENNIS GORECHO

## *A watered down Magna Carta of Filipino Seafarers due to the reinserted unconstitutional and discriminatory Execution Bond provision*

“Fairness and social justice demand that we give them all that they are due — as a Filipino seafarer who sacrificed and as a human being”.

A declaration by Supreme Court Senior Associate Justice Marvic Leonen in *Castillon vs. Magsaysay Mitsui OSK* (G.R. No. 234711, March 02, 2020) that should be equally applied in the current issues hounding the pending Magna Carta for Filipino Seafarers.

Leonen added: “The Court stood as a mute witness to the paltry amounts received — even for permanent and total disabilities — compared with the illness Filipino seafarers have to suffer or the deaths that their families have to endure”.

The “watered down” Magna Carta for Filipino Seafarers will penalize seafarers rather than protecting them as the contentious provision on the execution bond was reinserted despite issues on constitutionality and discrimination.

“The painful truth is this bill does not give Filipino seafarers any additional rights or benefits that they do not already enjoy by way of international agreements. On the contrary, this particular insertion even takes away a benefit that they already now enjoy,” according to Senate Minority Leader Aquilino “Koko” Pimentel III.

Senate Deputy Minority Leader Risa Hontiveros described the fight to delete the bond provision as “arduous” because both Houses of Congress through the bicameral committee convened three times (December 6, 2023 then May 23 and July 31, 2024) just to restore the provision. The House

contingent led the reinstatement of the said provision.

The Magna Carta was not signed into law by President Marcos Jr. last February 26, 2024 and was later withdrawn by the House of Representatives for review on some contentious issues, including provisions on disability claims and the inclusion of maritime education.

The debate on disability claims centered on the proposed provision that aimed to amend the Labor Code that will have adverse significant impact on the “immediately final and executory” nature of decisions issued by the National Labor Relations Commission (NLRC) and the National Conciliation and Mediation Board (NCMB).

Under Section 59, the seafarer may move for the execution of the monetary award pending appeal upon posting of a sufficient bond for the disputed portion of the award. And if the seafarer ultimately prevails in the case, he will be reimbursed with the cost of putting up the bond.

Sweepingly linked with ambulance chasing, proponents stressed that such move is necessary to ensure the restitution of monetary awards in case the appropriate appellate court annuls or partially or totally reverses the monetary judgment award.

The House version contains the controversial escrow/execution bond provision while this was omitted in the Senate version.

The bi-cameral committee in the first report omitted the escrow but contained a provision on execution bond. The whole provision was deleted in the second report but was reinserted in the third report.

Gabriela Rep. Arlene Brosas urged President Marcos, Jr. to veto the pending bill due to the “grossly anti-labor provision” because it incorrectly presumes that seafarers have the economic capacity — similar to their employers — to put up a bond.

Pimentel said that the insertion seeks to treat Filipino

seafarers less favorably than other Filipino workers as he described the bill was passed through “a very unusual and strange procedure”.

The provision violates the constitutional guarantee on equal protection. It will partake of the nature of class legislation because it singles out seafarer claims from other labor claims, both local and overseas. It is discriminatory against seafarers, as there lies no substantial distinction between the claims of a seafarer and any other laborer.

Hontiveros warned on using the DMW *Agarang Kalinga* at *Saklolo para sa mga OFW na Nangangailangan* (AKSYON) Fund as source of the bond, adding that public funds should not be used to help shipowners and manning agencies.

Hontiveros said that a seafarer seeks payment of monetary benefits because of the fact that he is in financial distress due to his medical condition. Many are jobless, sick, disabled and infirm who incur huge debts to sustain their medication while others die before the decision by the Supreme Court is released.

Instead of saving his earnings for his medication, he will be forced to redirect them to the execution bond, jeopardizing further his economic well-being.

“This is clearly discriminatory if not unjust to our seafarers. Let us all be reminded that the Magna Carta of Filipino Seafarers is meant to protect the seafarers,” Pimentel said.

The pending Magna Carta should expand, and not limit, their rights as it must be the translation into reality of President Magsaysay’s wisdom: “He who has less in life should have more in law”.

*(Atty. Dennis R. Gorecho heads the Seafarers’ Division of the Sapalo Velez Bundang Bulilan Law Offices. For comments, e-mail info@sapalovelez.com, or call 09175025808 or 09088665786.)*



# HOLISTIC LIVING

RIZA SHANTI LIM

## *Palitana: The city that prosecutes non-vegetarians*

**W**HEN my fellow holistic health healers from India learned that I am a pure vegetarian, they urged I go to Palitana. Thinking excitedly that perhaps this place is surrounded by sacred temples, holy ashrams, tranquil yoga spaces, and nature spots for quiet why it’s greatly recommended. I made my own diligent research. What a heavenly surprise with my interesting find.

Palitana is the first and only pure vegetarian city in the world. It is located in the southwest of Bhavnagar, Gujarat, India. The only place where non-vegetarian foods are considered illegal commodities and sellers of non-vegetarian get prosecuted.

This out of the ordinary law transpired after the Jain monks fasted for many days, in protest of the violent murders of innocent animals in their city. The event greatly impacted the heart of the population which resulted to the order of the state to shut down

more than 250 butchery shops and prohibits the admonishing of non-vegetarian items in stores.

The movement was also partly inspired from the honorable act of the globally admired Mahatma Gandhi when he fasted for three weeks for self-purification. An action which life-changing message is for people to spiritually reflect, to see the truth, and unite in peace and harmony.

Gandhi was a full-fledged vegetarian and a strong believer of “ahimsa” (non-violence). Honoring and respecting all sentient beings - recognizing that every creation has the right to live in peace in the land that God has created. This principle aligned to the policy of cause-no-harm in the state of Rajkot and Junagadh.

Many think that by not consuming animal meat will result to imbalanced body nutrients, low energy, and physical weakness. If this concept is true, how come vegetarian animals like the carabao,

cows, elephants display robust health, supreme strength, supreme energy — with calm and quiet nature. Look at the yogis, they can lift their bodies up, in different positions carrying their whole bodies weight, with effortless ease. Their diet is completely plant-based.

Observe carnivorous animals — tigers, lions, snakes. They are always resting and lazy because of the effect of their nutrition. Meat takes time to digest and takes a toll on the digestive system. On top of that, these animals are wildly aggressive and hot-tempered.

I am not trying to convince anyone reading this to convert to vegetarianism. Rather, I would like to promote a heightened awareness and consciousness — in your everyday choices — like your food.

Your body is the temple of your blessed soul or spirit. Choose well what you allow within. Namaste.

## Converge champions women-led MSMEs

Leading fiber broadband provider Converge ICT Solutions Inc. continues to underpin the growth of women entrepreneurs as it bared its programs and policies, both within the company and towards the community, that empower them.

At the recently-concluded Women Entrepreneurs Summit 2024 hosted by the Department of Trade and Industry-Region III, Converge Regional Sales Manager for Northern and Central Luzon Joy Enriquez spoke at length about how the company embodies the agenda of women empowerment.

“At Converge, tayong mga babae ay may lugar. Hindi kami naniniwala na lalake ang nangunguna when it comes to technology. We have fair gender policies

when it comes to hiring and promotion, plus an anti-sexual harassment policy in place,” Enriquez began.

Aside from these internal policies, Enriquez pointed out that Converge is a signatory to the UN Women Empowerment Principles and that it staunchly supports the DIWA Program, or Digital Innovation for Women Advancement, of the Department of Information and Communications Technology that promotes the representation of women in the digital sphere.

Moreover, Converge reaches out to SMEs — both women-led and non-women-led — in an impactful way through its Surf2Sawa Social Media and Livelihood Training, to upskill small businesses on how to improve their business models and

marketing approaches. These trainings are conducted both onsite and online with small business owners.

Moreover, with the launch of its micro-entrepreneur-focused product Micro Biz Max, Converge can further widen access to connectivity and include more women into the fold.

Micro Biz Max is the latest enterprise-level offering of Converge, a basic starter internet plan for micro enterprises. Priced at Php1449 with up to 75 Mbps speeds, these plans are designed to meet the connectivity needs and budget requirements for retail, service, small offices, franchisees, and other similar business types.

“We are providing the fastest and most seamless internet in the market today and at an economical price that allows MSMEs to take full advantage of digitalizing their business,” Enriquez said.

The DTI-3 summit theme is ‘Celebrating Region-3 Women in Business’ with various sessions aimed at equipping women entrepreneurs with the knowledge and tools needed to navigate the evolving business landscape and leverage digital advancements for growth and innovation.

A mini trade fair ran alongside the summit, showcasing products from women-led MSMEs and providing participants with the opportunity to explore and support local businesses.



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**THEVOICENEWSWEEKLY**

## HOUSE APPROVES... FROM PAGE 1

(3rd District, Leyte) while co-authors are Reps. Salvador Pleyto (6th District, Bulacan) and Mark Go (Lone District, Baguio City).

Rodriguez said there is an urgent need to address the country's food security issues through the systematic streamlining of the food distribution process.

"Establishing a national food hub in Clark will play a crucial role in shortening the supply chain from producer to consumer (and) will not only standardized logistics but also ensure the efficient movement of food products, enhancing overall efficiency. The initiative is further reinforced by the Philippines' development plan which includes food security measures (and) the Clark national food hub is designed to achieve these objectives for the Filipino people," Rodriguez pointed out.

The CIAC is tasked to develop, operate and manage the civil aviation complex surrounding the Clark International Airport and the site where the 62-hectare national food hub will be established.

CIAC President and CEO Arrey Perez said the committee approval is "a patriotic act that will benefit the country's agriculture sector and the nation".

"We're both grateful and honored to be recognized as this support from Congress aligns with the national government's initiative to develop the Luzon Economic Corridor which will position our country as a regional hub for agribusiness and logistics in Asia Pacific, and is consistent with the

Marcos administration's thrusts on agriculture development, particularly in the advancement of the country's aqua-cultural and agricultural industries," Perez said.

Earlier, President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr., U.S. President Joe Biden, and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida launched a steering committee to drive infrastructure development in the country's Luzon Economic Corridor (LEC), supporting connectivity between Subic Bay, Clark, Manila, and Batangas.

Secretary Frederick Go, Special Assistant to the President for Investment and Economic Affairs who chairs the LEC Committee, has identified food and agriculture as one of the priority industries for investments.

"We continue to pursue initiatives that contribute to increasing agriculture production, and improving the food logistical chain. The Clark National Food Hub is a step in this direction, and we look forward to its successful establishment as a sustainable food security solution," Go said.

"As soon as this proposal becomes a law, it will bolster agro-logistics as a support for our country's robust agricultural production. It will enhance freight transport services, mobility, and access to key economic zones toward seamless logistics and efficient supply chains. This means higher farm productivity and sustained agribusiness, and higher income for Filipino farmers," Perez added.

In attendance at the committee hearing was former President and now Pampanga's Second District Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo who expressed support for the proposed flagship project, citing the CIAC leadership's competence in promoting investments.

Perez noted the project will simultaneously address food security and logistics cost concerns by providing predictable, sustainable, and modern solutions for the demand and distribution of the agricultural produce of Luzon for domestic and foreign markets.

The approved measure will be referred to the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Ways and Means for the funding and tax incentives provisions.

The Clark National Food Hub features key components, including state-of-the-art food storage warehouses, cold storage-facilities, processing units, administrative offices, logistics infrastructure, and wholesale and retail market spaces.

The project will serve as a central hub for high-quality food products, catering to organized producers, collectors, retailers, supermarkets, suppliers, and regional producers. It offers an adapted consumption wholesale market to meet long-term fresh food requirements, facilitates the export of Filipino agricultural products, and includes an ambitious warehouse program for various food companies. (CIAC-PAD)

## ANGELEÑO PRODUCTS... FROM PAGE 1

delegation from Angeles City, composed of Angeles City Economic Development Officer Irish Llego, Gender and Development Officer Mina Cabiles, Angeles City Tourism Officer-in-Charge Anneleen Sugui, and Chief Technical Writer Sharmaine Gonzales.

"When we come home to the

Philippines, we will surely visit Angeles City," Vincent Medina, one of the emcees of the event, said.

Medina received a 'Lungsod ning Angeles' tote bag that contains Kape Angeleño coffee beans, a 'kulitan' shirt, and a copy of the Dateline Magazine 'One Town, One Product' (OTOP)

Special Issue.

According to Medina, his wife has not gone home to the Philippines since 1987.

The Fiesta in America is an annual celebration of Filipino products organized by the Fiesta in America Inc. founded by Fernando Mendez in 1997. (ANGELES CIO)

## ₱1K MINIMUM... FROM PAGE 1

who aim for a modest yet stable life," he said.

The businessman gathered from interviews that a family of four incurs around Php31,900 in monthly expenses. In the proposal he prepared, he listed down the essentials that include food at Php600 per day; house rent at Php2,000; utilities at Php2,000, excluding internet; transportation allowance at Php2,600; education at Php3,000; personal expenses that include clothing, health items, etc. at Php2,000; and, emergency funds/savings at Php2,000.

The total amount requires a daily wage of Php1,026.23 to cover monthly expenses for a decent living.

Romero stressed that his proposal is based on "real-life experiences rather than theoretical models".

The proposed minimum daily wage in Pampanga and nearby provinces is being pegged at Php1,000 that could be reached

primarily through government subsidies and in part by employers' pockets.

In his proposal to the Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Board, Romero hopes that government would bear the brunt of the 122-percent increase from the current Php450 minimum daily wage for non-agricultural workers in Central Luzon.

"I acknowledge that increasing the minimum wage in the region to Php1,000 daily could present significant challenges for businesses, particularly for micro, small, and medium enterprises. To address these, I propose a balanced approach: businesses would absorb 20 percent of the wage increase while government would cover the remaining 80 percent through subsidies," he explained.

He added that the cost sharing approach could be realized through legislative measures/reforms

by reallocating existing poverty alleviation programs to support wage subsidies rather than traditional aid programs or the traditional ayuda.

Romero also suggests that the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRRs) of this Government Wage Subsidy Program would be designed to address potential wage distortions and ensure the effectiveness of the proposal.

"Transitioning from traditional aid schemes to direct wage subsidy offers a transformative opportunity. It could empower Filipinos to achieve greater self-reliance and help reduce corruption by ensuring that government assistance is delivered directly to those in need. Under this plan, daily wage earners would receive their base salary from their employers and an additional subsidized amount from the government through direct methods like bank transfers," he furthered.

## KULONG O LINIS... FROM PAGE 1

Lazatin immediately ordered the Angeles City Police Office (ACPO) and the Angeles City Emergency Command Center headed by Michael Lising to locate and arrest the vandals, whose act was caught on city-installed CCTV cameras.

Upon their arrest, the three vandals were met and interrogated by Lazatin at the Angeles City Traffic Management and Enforcement Unit. The mayor instructed ACTMEU personnel

to monitor the clean-up of the vandalized area.

"Directly po na magre-report ang ating mga kapulisan sa paglilinis nila. Pinapabantayan po natin mismo sa Station Commander," Lazatin said.

The perpetrators of the vandalized walkway in the Heritage District in Barangay Sto. Rosario started to clean up the paint they used in their "work" on August 21, 2024.

They are being strictly monitored by Angeles City Emergency Command Center Head Michael Lising and the Angeles City Police Station 1 upon the orders of Lazatin.

The mayor stressed that vandalism is not allowed anywhere in Angeles City.

Also monitoring the clean-up are Barangay Sto. Rosario Captain Renato Cosme, and Kagawad Joana Joy Flores. (ANGELES CIO)

## NLEX, SCTEX... FROM PAGE 2

In Tarlac, parts of Old San Jose are undergoing rehabilitation. San Ramon and Pagalangang in Dinaluiphan, Bataan; Dampé in Floridablanca, Pampanga; and Margot in the city of Angeles.

The rehabilitation also includes maintaining good quality asphalt on both lanes of the North Harbor Link of NLEX.

The NLEX Corporation specifically handles the repair of

asphalt patching or compaction in perforated areas, roto-milling or grinding of worn asphalt, and asphalt overlaying that will serve as a road surface. (PIA REGION 3-BULACAN)

Republic of the Philippines  
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-versus-

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OF THE LOCAL CIVIL REGISTRY  
OF ANGELES CITY AND THE  
OFFICE OF THE CIVIL REGISTRAR  
GENERAL OF QUEZON CITY,

Respondents.

R-ANG-24-00803-SP  
For: JUDICIAL  
ENFORCEMENT OF  
FOREIGN DECREE  
OF DIVORCE &  
CANCELLATION  
OR CORRECTION  
OF ENTRIES  
IN THE CIVIL  
REGISTRY OF  
ANGELES CITY

X-----X  
AMENDED ORDER

A verified petition has been filed by the petitioner, praying that after due notice and hearing, judgment be rendered granting the petition by a decision be issued that the foreign divorce certificate obtained by the private respondent in Japan be judicially recognized and directing the public respondents Office of the Local Civil Registry of Angeles City and the Civil Registrar General of Quezon City to annotate the said Judgment of the Honorable Court and giving petitioner the legal capacity to remarry.

Finding the petition to be sufficient in form and substance, the Court hereby sets the hearing thereof on **November 21, 2024 at 8:30 in the morning** to be held at the Session Hall of this Court, 3/F Hall of Justice, Pulung Maragul, Angeles City, after this Order shall have been published in a newspaper of general circulation in Angeles City and in the province of Pampanga once a week for three (3) consecutive weeks at the expense of the petitioner and to submit proof of compliance thereof.

All persons interested in this petition may appear on or before the said date and show cause, if they have any, why the petition should not be granted.

The petitioner is hereby DIRECTED to furnish copies of the Petition and its annexes to the Office of the City Prosecutor, Angeles City; Office of the Solicitor General, Makati City; Philippine Statistics Authority/Civil Registrar General and the Local Civil Registrar of Angeles City; the Civil Registrar General of Quezon City, and respondent Toshifumi Tsugawa within ten (10) days upon receipt hereof and to submit to this Court proof of compliance thereof.

Furnish copies of this Order to the afore-mentioned government offices, the Office of the Clerk of Court, Regional Trial Court, Angeles City, the private respondent, the petitioner and her counsel.

SO ORDERED.

Angeles City, August 13, 2024.



RENE ESTRADA REYES  
Presiding Judge

THE VOICE NEWSWEEKLY August 25, September 1, 8, 2024

## GSY IS UPAA... FROM PAGE 2

Bitonio, Jr., and Rebecca F. Maronilla.

The UPAA Multigenerational Alumni Family Award is given to families with alumni in consecutive generations. In 2024, the Three-Generation recipients for this award are the Bernabe-Saddul, Bongco-Junio, Castrillo, Gonzales, Javelera-Bongco, Manalang, Navarro-Muego, Quimbo, and Sese families.

Recognized for four consecutive generations are the Allas, Bernardo, Fuentesbella, Javelosa, Kapunan-Abis, Luna, Serranon, and Torres families.

While the UPAA Distinguished Service Award for an Alumnus was given to Atty. Oscar P. Palabyab.

Lifetime Achievement Awards were also given to 12 individuals this year.

Yap said in a statement that it is an honor to be named as one of the outstanding alumni awardees of the University of the Philippines.

"I am flattered and honored to receive such an award from the UPAA. This award is dedicated to all Tarlaqueños," she said.

The lady governor is a graduate of AB Linguistics at UP Diliman in 1987. (TARLAC PIO)

## POGI ORDERS... FROM PAGE 2

combating the rapid spread of ASF as the department already put up checkpoints across Luzon borders.

In the same memorandum, Lazatin instructed that all hog dealers that will enter the city must present the necessary documents such as a Certificate of Free Status on ASF, Vaccination Record from a Veterinarian, and Shipping Permits.

In line with this, the City Meat Inspection Division headed by Executive Assistant IV Reina Manuel and the City Veterinary Office headed by Dr. Christian

Arcilla are also on standby to support the border controls.

Lazatin's Chief Adviser IC Calaguas said the City Slaughterhouse, which is also being supervised by Manuel, is also in strict compliance with the necessary documents needed for hog dealers having official transactions with the slaughterhouse.

"Mayor Lazatin is as vigilant as ever. Angeles City is ASF-free, and Mayor Lazatin wants to keep it that way," Calaguas stressed. (ANGELES CIO)

## NOTICE OF EXTRA-JUDICIAL SETTLEMENT OF ESTATE

Notice is hereby given that the heirs of the **SPS. ROBERTO DELA CRUZ ESCOTO & VIRGINIA DELA CRUZ ESCOTO**, who died on **June 24, 2015 and May 15, 2024**, respectively, executed a deed of **EXTRA JUDICIAL SETTLEMENT OF THEIR ESTATE**, covered by Transfer Certificate of Titles No. **042-2019004531, 042-2019004532, 042-2019004533, 042-2019004534, 042-2019004535, 042-2019004536, 042-2019004541, and 152721-R** all of the Registry of Deeds of Pampanga before Notary Public Arnel S. Santos, as per Doc. No. 461; Page No. 44; Book No. XLI; Series of 2024

THE VOICE NEWSWEEKLY August 11, 18, 25, 2024.

## Revolutionizing Education with Collaborative Expertise Sessions (CES) and Their Impact on Teaching in the Philippines

by **BERNALDO R. MACUGAY, JR.**

The introduction of Collaborative Expertise Sessions (CES) into the MATATAG curriculum marks a major development in Philippine education. Led by the Department of Education (DepEd), this project aims to elevate educational standards and support teachers' professional development. These workshops strive to create a more unified and productive teaching community by providing collaborative spaces where educators can exchange ideas, strategies, and resources.

One significant impact of these collaborative sessions is the emphasis on active learning. By working together to design curricula, teachers can share best practices, develop innovative teaching techniques, and reflect on their own practices. This collaborative approach enhances their understanding of the material and encourages a more student-centered teaching method. Research shows that such cooperative efforts can lead to substantial changes in educators'

perspectives and instructional methods, ultimately improving students' academic performance.

CES also support the MATATAG curriculum's focus on inclusive education and core skills. Teachers are provided with the tools and resources necessary to address the diverse needs of their students, ensuring that every learner has equitable access to high-quality education. The workshops promote discussions on instructional strategies and assessment methods, enabling educators to tailor their approaches to accommodate varying skill levels. This collaborative effort is crucial for creating a supportive learning environment where every student can succeed.

Moreover, the regular implementation of CES is vital for obtaining feedback and understanding from teachers about the program's effectiveness. This iterative process facilitates the ongoing enhancement and modification of instructional

strategies and resources based on real classroom experiences. By participating in these workshops, educators contribute to a culture of continuous professional development that not only improves their own skills but also enhances their students' educational experiences.

CES offers a transformative approach to teacher professional development in the Philippines. By focusing on collaboration, inquiry, and inclusivity, these workshops enable teachers to refine their methods and, consequently, improve student learning outcomes. As the MATATAG curriculum is implemented and refined, these collaborative efforts will be essential in creating a more responsive and effective education system.

*The author is Master Teacher I, Pata Integrated School, Claveria East District, Schools Division of Cagayan, Region 02-Cagayan Valley*

## The Importance of Developing Critical and Creative Thinking in Teaching Mathematics

by **CASELYN A. VICENCIO**

Fostering critical and creative thinking in mathematics is vital for preparing learners to tackle complex problems and innovate in a rapidly changing world.

Critical thinking encourages learners to analyze problems, evaluate different solutions, and make informed decisions. In mathematics, this means moving beyond rote memorization of formulas to understanding the underlying principles and logic. For instance, instead of merely applying a formula to solve an equation, learners learn to question why the formula works and explore alternative methods to achieve the same result. This deep understanding enhances their problem-solving skills and prepares them for more complex challenges.

Creative thinking in mathematics involves exploring unconventional approaches and devising novel solutions to problems. This can include visualizing problems in different ways, experimenting with new methods, or applying mathematical concepts to real-world scenarios in innovative ways. For example, when faced with a geometry problem, learners might use physical models, drawings, or digital tools to explore various solutions. Encouraging creativity helps learners develop flexible thinking and a willingness to experiment, which are crucial for innovation.

Engaging in critical and creative thinking helps learners build resilience and persistence in the face of challenging problems. When learners are encouraged to think critically, they learn to approach difficulties with a problem-solving mindset rather than being deterred by obstacles. Creative problem-solving also

teaches learners to embrace mistakes as learning opportunities and persist in finding effective solutions, which is essential for their overall growth and confidence in mathematics.

Mathematics is not just about abstract concepts; it has practical applications in various fields such as engineering, economics, and technology. Developing critical and creative thinking helps learners apply mathematical concepts to real-world problems. For example, learners might use their mathematical knowledge to design a budget, analyze statistical data, or develop a simple algorithm. This ability to apply math in diverse contexts prepares learners for future careers and everyday problem-solving.

Critical and creative thinking encourages learners to engage more deeply with mathematical concepts. Instead of merely learning procedures, learners explore why certain methods work and how they can be applied in different situations. This deeper engagement helps learners build a stronger conceptual foundation and a more enduring understanding of mathematics.

Incorporating critical and creative thinking into mathematics education is essential for developing well-rounded, innovative, and resilient learners. By fostering these skills, teachers can help learners not only excel in mathematics but also apply their knowledge effectively in real-world contexts and future careers.

*The author is Teacher II at Disiplina Village - Bignay National High School, Congressional I District, Schools Division of Valenzuela, National Capital Region*

## Promoting Fairness, Respect, and Care in the Classroom: Effective Strategies for Teachers

by **CASELYN A. VICENCIO**

Creating a classroom environment where fairness, respect, and care are prioritized is essential for fostering a positive and productive learning experience. These values help build a supportive atmosphere where learners feel valued and motivated. Here are some effective strategies teachers can use to promote these principles:

**Establish Clear Expectations:** Setting and communicating clear behavioral expectations from the start helps promote fairness in the classroom. Develop a set of rules and guidelines that emphasize respect and fairness, and involve learners in creating these rules to ensure they understand and accept them. Consistently applying these rules helps create an equitable environment where all learners know what is expected and can trust that they will be treated equally.

**Model Respectful Behavior:** Teachers serve as role models for learners. Demonstrating respectful behavior in interactions with learners, colleagues, and parents sets a strong example. Use polite language, listen actively, and show empathy in all communications. When learners see their teacher consistently modeling respect, they are more likely to adopt similar behaviors.

**Encourage Open Communication:**

Create an open and inclusive environment where learners feel comfortable expressing their thoughts and feelings. Encourage learners to share their perspectives and listen to their concerns without judgment. By valuing learners' voices and feedback, teachers show that they respect each individual and care about their well-being.

**Foster an Inclusive Environment:** Promote diversity and inclusivity by celebrating different cultures, backgrounds, and experiences within the classroom. Incorporate diverse materials and perspectives into the curriculum to reflect the varied experiences of all learners. This approach not only shows respect for learners' identities but also helps create a more equitable learning environment.

**Address Conflicts Fairly:** When conflicts arise, handle them impartially and with sensitivity. Ensure that all sides are heard and that resolutions are fair and constructive. Teaching learners conflict resolution skills and providing guidance on how to address disagreements respectfully helps maintain a positive classroom atmosphere and reinforces the value of fairness.

**Show Empathy and Support:** Demonstrating care involves

recognizing and responding to learners' emotional and academic needs. Provide additional support to learners who may be struggling, and celebrate their successes. Take time to understand individual challenges and offer encouragement and resources to help them overcome obstacles.

**Provide Constructive Feedback:** Offer feedback that is both constructive and respectful. Focus on the effort and progress rather than just the outcome, and provide specific suggestions for improvement. Positive reinforcement helps build learners' confidence and motivates them to strive for their best while knowing that their efforts are valued.

By implementing these strategies, teachers can create a classroom environment where fairness, respect, and care are integral to the learning experience. This supportive atmosphere not only enhances learners' academic success but also contributes to their social and emotional development, preparing them for future interactions both inside and outside the classroom.

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## Building Strong Partnerships: How Central Pasil National High School Transforms Education Through Parent-Teacher Conferences

by **FREEDIE B. BALANSI**

At Central Pasil National High School, parent-teacher conferences are more than just a routine event—they are a cornerstone of the educational process, acting as a crucial link between the school and the community. These meetings are designed to foster a collaborative relationship between teachers and parents, ensuring that every student receives the comprehensive support they need to excel both academically and personally.

Each parent-teacher conference at Central Pasil National High School is meticulously prepared. Teachers invest considerable time gathering detailed information on each student's performance, behavior, and participation. This thorough preparation allows teachers to offer precise insights and actionable recommendations during the meetings. The result is a focused and productive dialogue that addresses individual student needs and fosters an environment of mutual respect.

The school's approach to these conferences reflects its broader commitment to inclusivity and accessibility. Understanding that each family's situation is unique, Central Pasil National High School provides flexible scheduling options to accommodate busy lives. For families who speak different languages or have other communication needs, the school offers interpretation services. This dedication to meeting diverse needs ensures that every parent has the opportunity to participate fully in their child's educational journey.

Moreover, Central Pasil National High School goes beyond mere logistics. The school views these

conferences as an integral part of building strong, collaborative relationships between parents and teachers. This partnership is central to the school's philosophy of education, as it recognizes that student success is rooted in the collective effort of both the school and home environments. By actively engaging parents in meaningful discussions about their children's progress, the school not only enhances academic achievement but also strengthens the entire school community.

The impact of these conferences extends far beyond individual student outcomes. By fostering open communication and a spirit of cooperation, Central Pasil National High School is creating a supportive network that benefits everyone involved. The result is an environment where students are well-positioned to grow, equipped with the encouragement and resources they need to reach their full potential.

Central Pasil National High School exemplifies how parent-teacher conferences can be a transformative element of the learning experience. Through a commitment to respectful dialogue, inclusivity, and collaboration, the school demonstrates that when parents and teachers work together, students are the ultimate beneficiaries. As Central Pasil National High School continues to prioritize these vital interactions, it sets a powerful example of how schools can successfully bridge the gap between education and community.

*The author is Teacher III at Central Pasil National High School, Pasil District, Schools Division of KALINGA, Cordillera Administrative Region*

## The Critical Role of Coaching and Mentoring in the Department of Education

by **LEA D. MILLO**

In the Department of Education (DepEd), the journey of improving teaching standards and student outcomes is deeply intertwined with effective coaching and mentoring of teachers. These strategies are not just beneficial but essential for addressing the challenges faced in the education sector.

One concrete situation highlighting the necessity of coaching and mentoring involves the integration of new teaching methodologies. As educational practices evolve, teachers may struggle to implement innovative approaches effectively. For instance, the shift to blended learning models requires teachers to balance face-to-face instruction with online components. Without proper guidance, teachers may find it difficult to adapt, resulting in suboptimal learning experiences for students.

Coaching provides targeted support by pairing teachers with experienced mentors who offer personalized feedback and practical strategies. In this context, a mentor might observe a teacher's classroom, identify areas for improvement, and offer hands-on advice to enhance the integration of technology in lessons. This direct

intervention helps teachers build confidence and competence in using new tools and methods.

Another situation is the challenge of addressing diverse learning needs within a classroom. Teachers frequently encounter students with varying abilities, and without effective differentiation strategies, some students may fall behind. Through mentoring, experienced educators can share strategies for differentiated instruction, such as tailoring assignments or using varied assessment methods. This support ensures that teachers are equipped to meet the diverse needs of their students, promoting equity and inclusivity in education.

Coaching and mentoring also play a crucial role in the ongoing professional development of teachers. In DepEd, teachers often have to manage multiple roles and responsibilities, which can lead to burnout and stagnation in their teaching practices. Regular coaching sessions provide a structured environment for teachers to reflect on their practices, set goals, and receive constructive feedback. For example, a mentor might work with a teacher on improving classroom management skills or developing more

engaging lesson plans, leading to enhanced teaching effectiveness and job satisfaction.

Moreover, mentoring fosters a culture of collaboration and continuous learning. By creating a supportive network, DepEd encourages teachers to share best practices and learn from each other's experiences. This collective approach not only improves individual teaching practices but also contributes to the overall elevation of educational standards within schools.

Coaching and mentoring are indispensable components of professional development in the Department of Education. They address specific challenges such as adapting to new methodologies and meeting diverse student needs, while also fostering continuous professional growth. By investing in these strategies, DepEd ensures that teachers are well-equipped to deliver high-quality education, ultimately benefiting students and advancing the education system as a whole.

*The author is a Master Teacher I at Nipaco ES, Paniqui South District, Schools Division of Tarlac Province, Region III – Central Luzon*

## How the MATATAG Curriculum Enhances Literacy and Numeracy for Elementary Learners and the Roles of Teachers and Parents

by LORENA U. TARRAY

The MATATAG curriculum, introduced by the Department of Education (DepEd) in the Philippines, is designed to significantly improve elementary learners' literacy and numeracy skills. This curriculum emphasizes a comprehensive approach that integrates various subjects, ensuring that learners develop essential skills in a cohesive and engaging manner. By focusing on key educational principles and real-world applications, MATATAG aims to build a strong foundation in literacy and numeracy that supports learners' overall academic growth.

One of the primary ways MATATAG enhances literacy and numeracy is through its integrated learning approach. The curriculum connects literacy and numeracy with other subjects, allowing learners to apply their skills in diverse contexts. For instance, learners might read and interpret mathematical word problems or analyze data presented in reading materials. This cross-curricular integration helps learners see the relevance of their literacy and numeracy skills in various scenarios, reinforcing their understanding and making learning more meaningful.

MATATAG also places a strong emphasis on developing foundational skills in both literacy and numeracy. The curriculum introduces core concepts

such as phonics, vocabulary, and arithmetic operations in a structured and age-appropriate manner. By focusing on these fundamental skills, MATATAG ensures that learners build a solid base that will support their future learning. This foundational approach is crucial for helping learners gain confidence and competence in reading, writing, and mathematics.

Real-world application is another key component of the MATATAG curriculum. By incorporating practical activities into lessons, MATATAG helps learners understand how literacy and numeracy are used in everyday life. Activities such as budgeting, measuring, and analyzing data provide learners with opportunities to apply their skills in real-world contexts. This relevance not only engages learners but also demonstrates the practical value of their learning, motivating them to excel.

Teachers and parents play vital roles in the successful implementation of the MATATAG curriculum. Teachers are responsible for delivering the curriculum effectively by designing integrated lessons, assessing learners' progress, and providing targeted support. They create a positive and inclusive learning environment that encourages learner engagement and growth. Regular formative

assessments and constructive feedback are essential for tracking learners' development and making necessary adjustments to teaching strategies.

Parents, on the other hand, support the MATATAG curriculum by reinforcing learning at home. They can engage in reading activities, assist with homework, and create opportunities for practical math applications. Communication with teachers is crucial for staying informed about their child's progress and collaborating on strategies to support learning. Additionally, parents can foster a positive attitude towards education by celebrating achievements and encouraging perseverance.

The MATATAG curriculum enhances elementary learners' literacy and numeracy by integrating subjects, focusing on foundational skills, and applying learning to real-world contexts. The combined efforts of teachers and parents are essential for implementing this curriculum effectively, supporting learners' development, and creating a nurturing educational environment.

*The author is Master Teacher II at Panikihan Elementary School, Gumaca East District, Schools Division of Quezon, Region IV-A CALABARZON*

## Connecting the Dots: The Power of Integrating Knowledge Across the Elementary Curriculum During Classroom Observations

by MARISSA T. GARCIA

Applying knowledge content within and across the curriculum is crucial in elementary education for fostering a comprehensive understanding and engagement among young learners. Integrating subjects helps learners make meaningful connections, enhances their problem-solving skills, and prepares them for real-world challenges. Here's why this approach is vital:

Integrating knowledge across subjects helps learners see the connections between different areas of learning. For example, when a science lesson on plant growth is linked with math through measuring and recording data, learners gain a deeper understanding of both subjects. This integrated approach helps children grasp concepts more holistically, as they see how ideas from one subject support and enrich their learning in another.

When learners see the relevance of their learning in multiple contexts, they become more engaged and motivated. For instance, a project that combines social studies with art and language arts (writing reports) captures learners' interest by showing them how subjects are interconnected. This engagement not only makes learning more enjoyable but also encourages a more profound commitment to understanding the material.

Applying knowledge across subjects encourages learners to think critically and solve problems in multifaceted ways. For example, a project that involves designing a sustainable garden integrates science (understanding ecosystems), math (calculating space and resources), and language arts (creating a plan and presenting it). This type of

activity promotes higher-order thinking skills as students analyze, synthesize, and apply knowledge from different disciplines to address a complex issue.

Integrating curriculum helps learners see the real-world applications of what they are learning. By connecting classroom content to everyday experiences and practical problems, learners understand the relevance of their studies. For instance, learning about historical events through the lens of their impact on contemporary society helps learners appreciate the significance of history beyond the classroom.

A curriculum that spans multiple subjects supports the holistic development of children. It encourages them to make connections between different types of knowledge, fostering a more rounded educational experience. For example, combining physical education with health education teaches students about the importance of physical activity and healthy living in a more comprehensive manner.

Applying knowledge content within and across the curriculum in elementary education is essential for creating a rich, interconnected learning experience. This approach enhances students' understanding, engagement, and critical thinking skills while demonstrating the real-world relevance of their studies. By integrating subjects, educators help young learners develop a completer and more meaningful grasp of their education.

*The author is Teacher III at Aronar Elementary School, Aronar District, Schools Division of Caloocan City, National Capital Region*

## From Tolerance to Triumph: Best Practices for Educating Learners with Disabilities

by NESCY TABANGCURA PAGADUAN

Embracing and supporting Learners With Disabilities (LWDs) is not just about tolerance but about fostering an environment where all learners can grow. Transitioning from mere tolerance to genuine accomplishment involves implementing best practices that ensure inclusive, effective, and equitable education for every learner. Here's a best practice to achieving that goal.

Creating a classroom environment that values diversity and inclusion is foundational. Teachers should start by promoting a culture of respect and empathy, ensuring that all learners understand and appreciate differences. This involves integrating discussions about disabilities into the curriculum and encouraging positive interactions among learners. Classroom setups should be flexible, allowing for modifications based on individual needs, which helps in accommodating various learning styles and abilities.

Each learner with a disability has unique needs and strengths. Teachers should use individualized education plans and personalized learning strategies to tailor instruction. This might include differentiated instruction, where teachers adapt their teaching methods to suit different learning styles, or implementing assistive technologies or specialized

communication devices. By recognizing and addressing individual needs, teachers can enhance learning experiences and outcomes.

It is essential to include LWDs in talent show and Paralympic events. Their participation not only highlights their unique abilities and contributions but also fosters a more inclusive environment that values diverse talents and achievements.

Collaboration among teachers, parents, and specialists is crucial for the success of learners with disabilities. Regular communication and teamwork help in developing effective strategies and interventions. Special education teachers, speech therapists, occupational therapists, and other professionals can provide valuable insights and support. Engaging parents in the educational process also ensures that learning objectives align with learners' needs and home environments.

Ongoing professional development is essential for teachers to stay informed about best practices and new technologies. Training sessions should cover strategies for inclusive teaching, understanding different disabilities, and using assistive technologies. By continuously expanding their knowledge and skills, teachers can better support their learners and adapt

to evolving educational needs.

Empowering LWDs to advocate for themselves and develop independence is key to their success. Teachers should encourage learners to express their needs, set personal goals, and take ownership of their learning. Teaching self-advocacy skills helps learners build confidence and resilience, which are critical for their academic and personal growth.

Regular assessment and reflection on the effectiveness of teaching practices and accommodations are vital. Teachers should seek feedback from learners, parents, and colleagues to identify areas for improvement. Adapting strategies based on this feedback ensures that the educational experience remains responsive to the evolving needs of LWDs.

By adopting these best practices, teachers can move beyond mere tolerance to create a learning environment where every learner has the opportunity to succeed. Embracing diversity and providing tailored support not only enriches the educational experience but also prepares all learners for a more inclusive world.

*The author is Master Teacher I at Aparri East Central School, Aparri East, Schools Division of Cagayan, Region 02 – Cagayan Valley*

## Ensuring Academic Integrity in the Age of E-Learning: Strategies for Combating Cheating and Plagiarism

by VICTOR RUBIO MANDIGMA, PHD

Even with the return of in-person classrooms, recent school administrators and teachers face new challenges as e-learning becomes more widespread. Academic dishonesty is not a new phenomenon; students have historically used technology to gain illicit access to material. Exam cheating, intellectual property theft, and plagiarism in written tasks have been some of the most challenging issues we have encountered.

When students are online, they can cheat in various ways, some of which involve collaboration. Depending on the circumstances, cheating can occur on an individual or group level. The abundance of internet material makes students particularly susceptible to cheating. The top priority for educators,

administrators, and students should be to raise awareness of this issue. Academic integrity and a clear understanding of its importance must be steadfastly upheld to foster a positive learning environment.

Maintaining academic integrity in online education requires substantial ingenuity and effort from educators. This concern affects all educators, regardless of the instructional method used. Consequently, online exams require unique strategies and techniques compared to conventional models.

Educators and administrators can leverage technology to automate warnings, checks, and procedures to ensure that students complete assignments honestly.

When students understand the significance of academic integrity,

they are more likely to embrace its principles and be more satisfied with their academic work.

In a culture that emphasizes the development of each student's self-image, every opportunity should be taken to prevent and discourage unhealthy behaviors such as cheating and plagiarism. This can be achieved by designing tests and quizzes that elicit honest responses from students and applying positive learning principles to create an environment of academic honesty in e-learning. Nevertheless, face-to-face classes are still considered the most reliable means of assessing students' learning outcomes.

*The author is Principal II at Bansud Central School, Bansud District, Schools Division of Oriental Mindoro, MIMAROPA Region*

## Essentials of Effective Teaching in Meeting Educational Needs and Fostering Learners' Growth

by VICTOR RUBIO MANDIGMA, PHD

Teaching is all about using information, skills, and qualities to address both individual and societal educational needs. It's up to teachers to select the right activities that will help achieve the school's goals effectively.

Being a teacher involves more than just delivering lessons; it requires specific skills, which are developed through studying and hands-on practice. At its core, teaching is about encouraging learning and fostering growth.

No matter the method of instruction, the most crucial part of the educational process is the learners themselves, followed closely by the teacher. Teachers gain their expertise through a mix of formal education and practical experience. They provide modified and caring instruction by assessing learners' needs, planning lessons, and using various teaching and assessment techniques.

Teachers must also navigate legal and policy frameworks, ensuring their practices are inclusive and help students engage meaningfully with their education. This approach helps learners become active, accountable, and contributing members of society. Additionally, teachers need to continuously develop their skills, adapting their methods to meet the evolving needs of their learners.

To support this ongoing

improvement, administrators provide feedback and data from professional development plans, which helps teachers enhance their skills year after year. Teachers are expected to demonstrate professional growth and meet competency requirements outlined in their development plans.

Effective teachers foster collaboration, offer solutions, and contribute positively to their communities. They should be dedicated, knowledgeable, and take pride in their profession. Being a good teacher also means integrating into the community and actively participating in its daily life.

Teachers need to keep their knowledge and skills up-to-date to facilitate effective learning. The Department of Education supports this through events like the School Learning Action Cell (SLAC), which takes place monthly. These sessions are crucial for professional development, helping teachers stay current with new teaching methods and maintain a global perspective. Attending these seminars and trainings is a valuable opportunity for teachers to enhance their practice and improve the learning environment for their learners.

*The author is Principal II at Bansud Central School, Bansud District, Schools Division of Oriental Mindoro, MIMAROPA Region*

## PVAO enhances support for veterans in C. Luzon

**CITY OF SAN FERNANDO** — The Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO) has enhanced its support for veterans in Central Luzon through comprehensive programs that improved their welfare and access to benefits.

During the 13th episode of the Kapihan sa Bagong Pilipinas of the Philippine Information Agency (PIA), PVAO Field Service Office Pampanga Veterans Assistance Officer Joanna Mariz Manlapaz said the office has enhanced its commitment to the welfare and benefits of veterans through three core areas: Veterans Welfare and Benefits Administration, Veterans Affairs Management, and Veterans Memorial and Historical Preservation.

Under the Veterans Welfare and Benefits Administration Program, the office offers various pension benefits, including old age, death, disability, and total

administrative disability pensions. And in addition to pensions, PVAO provides essential non-pension benefits for veterans and their dependents.

"These benefits include veterans' hospitalization, medical care programs, educational assistance, and burial support," Manlapaz said.

The Veterans' Hospitalizations and Medical Care Program ensures veterans receive free hospitalization and medical services at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center (VMMC) and 382 accredited government and private hospitals nationwide.

The program also extended its reach by offering medical assistance to veterans for expenses incurred in non-partner hospitals, reinforcing PVAO's advocacy that no veteran should bear the costs of their own medical care.

Veterans Affairs Management Programs include the Veterans Empowerment Program, which strengthens veterans' organizations and fosters a unified Filipino veterans community, and the Reforms and Veterans Corporate Governance Program which increases veteran participation in corporate affairs and optimizes the management of veterans' assets for their benefit.

Meanwhile, the Veterans Memorial and Historical Preservation Program focuses on recognizing and memorializing sacrifices.

"We have spearheaded awarding ceremonies, including the one in Nueva Ecija and Bataan, for the conferment of the United States Congressional Gold Medals to World War II veterans," Manlapaz said, highlighting the importance of honoring those who served.

Veterans with concerns or questions can visit PVAO field service offices located at Camp Servillano Aquino in Tarlac City, the One-Stop Shop Processing Center in Clark Freeport Zone, or the Office of the Municipal Social Welfare and Development in Orani, Bataan.

Through these programs, PVAO continues to demonstrate its dedication to serving and uplifting the lives of Filipino veterans and their families.

Application forms for PVAO's various programs are available for download on their website at [www.pvao.gov.ph](http://www.pvao.gov.ph). (PIA REGION 3-PAMPANGA)



**PVAO PROGRAMS.** The Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO) has enhanced its support for veterans in Central Luzon through comprehensive programs to improve their welfare and access to benefits. (PIA-3)

## OCD marks strides in disaster preparedness

**CITY OF SAN FERNANDO** — The Office of Civil Defense (OCD) in Central Luzon has made significant strides in disaster readiness and response efforts, showcasing its commitment for the past seven decades to enhancing community safety, preparedness, and resilience.

During the 13th episode of the Kapihan sa Bagong Pilipinas of the Philippine Information Agency (PIA), OCD Regional Director Amador Corpus highlighted the agency's commitment to capability building and training, which he said is the "cornerstone" of their disaster preparedness strategy.

Over the years, OCD-Central Luzon has conducted numerous training programs aimed at equipping local government units (LGUs), community leaders, and volunteers with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively manage and respond to disasters.

"In 2023 alone, we trained 5,000 individuals across the region, enhancing their ability to conduct rapid assessments, emergency response, and disaster risk reduction and management planning," Corpus reported.

But he stressed that these efforts are not just about numbers but also about impact.

"Our small wins include the introduction of specialized training modules tailored for different community needs, leading to more localized and effective disaster management," he cited.

At the heart of the capacity-building efforts is the Information, Education, and Communication campaign, particularly through the Disaster Information for Nationwide Awareness project, or Project DINA.

Through the DINA initiative, thousands of citizens have been reached, raising awareness and equipping them with essential knowledge to prepare for and respond to disasters.

"From community seminars to educational materials, we are fostering a culture of preparedness," Corpus noted.

One of the OCD's flagship activities, the Nationwide Simultaneous Earthquake Drill (NSED), has seen growing participation across the region. Conducted quarterly, the drill engages schools, offices, and communities

to participate in life-saving exercises to prepare for seismic events.

"We laud the public's increasing involvement in the earthquake drill," he said.

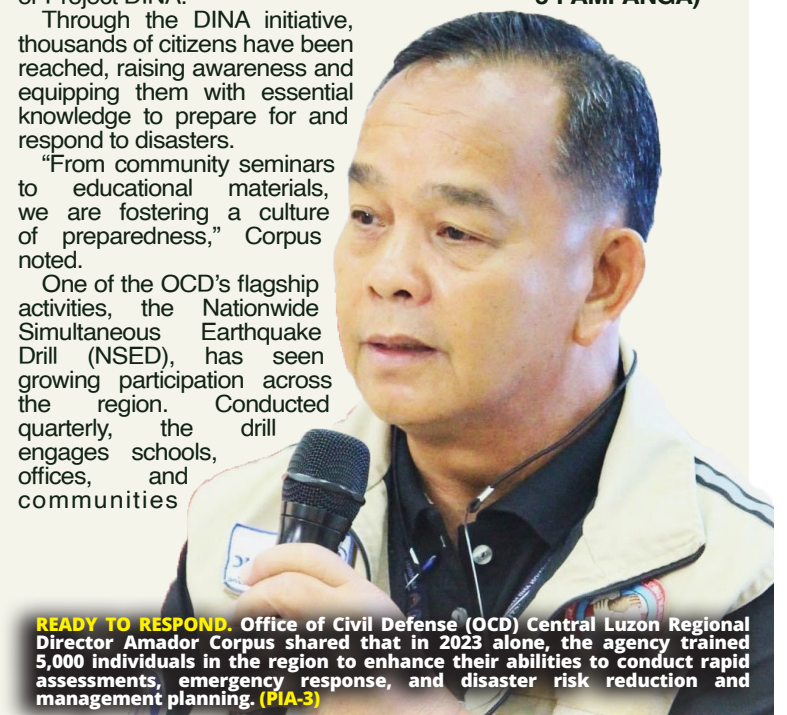
However, Corpus pointed out that the true test of preparedness is the agency's ability to respond swiftly and efficiently when disasters strike.

"We have enhanced our response capabilities by integrating new technologies, including mobile command and control vehicles, rescue quadcopter drones for rapid damage assessment, and real-time communication systems to streamline operations. Additionally, we maintain the Emergency Operation Center in a state of readiness for rapid deployment," he said.

In collaboration with LGUs and stakeholders, the agency has made significant strides in developing comprehensive disaster risk reduction and management plans, initiatives that have successfully integrated disaster risk reduction into local development plans across all provinces, cities, and municipalities in the region.

"As the secretariat of the Regional Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, the agency plays a vital role in coordinating efforts across the region. Our work ensures that council directives are carried out efficiently, fostering collaboration and ensuring that all stakeholders are aligned in their goals," Corpus stressed.

Those seeking assistance or who wish to partner with the OCD may contact the OCD Central Luzon hotlines at (045) 455-0033, (0917) 547-2805, or (0939) 939-3051. (PIA REGION 3-PAMPANGA)



**READY TO RESPOND.** Office of Civil Defense (OCD) Central Luzon Regional Director Amador Corpus shared that in 2023 alone, the agency trained 5,000 individuals in the region to enhance their abilities to conduct rapid assessments, emergency response, and disaster risk reduction and management planning. (PIA-3)

## Residents asked to get TB screening, X-rays

**CABANATUAN CITY, Nueva Ecija** — The Department of Health (DOH) Central Luzon Center for Health Development (CLCHD) is urging the public to undergo symptom screenings and chest X-rays to help detect tuberculosis (TB).

The call comes on National TB Day, observed annually on August 19 pursuant to Presidential Proclamation No. 840, series of 1996.

This year's theme "Pilipinas! Para healthy lungs, Pa-check ka lungs!", aims to address the significant number of undiagnosed and unreported TB cases in the region, estimated at approximately 12,000, with 2,300 of these being drug-resistant.

DOH CLCHD Infectious Diseases Cluster nurse Geliza Recede stressed the importance of early detection, citing that one person with TB can infect 10 to 15 others through close contact within a year.

"If we fail to identify and treat a person with TB, they can potentially infect 10 to 15 others in a year. And the next year,

another 10 to 15 others," Recede warned.

She highlighted that while the region's TB case detection rate have rebounded and surpassed pre-pandemic levels in 2023, addressing the remaining missing cases is crucial to preventing it from spreading further.

The DOH has identified three types of missing TB cases: those who do not consult healthcare providers, those who consult but are not properly diagnosed, and those diagnosed but not reported to DOH.

To combat TB, DOH encourages individuals to seek early consultation and screening if they exhibit symptoms which include a persistent cough lasting more than two weeks, unexplained weight loss, excessive sweating at night, or prolonged fever.

Recede specifically urged those in high-risk groups to get screened. These include close contacts of TB patients, individuals with a history of previous TB treatment, people

living with HIV, the elderly aged 60 years old and above, diabetics, smokers, healthcare workers, urban and rural poor or indigents, and those with other immune-suppressive medical conditions.

"If there are no symptoms, we encourage people to get a chest X-ray at least once a year," she advised.

Individuals may consult with the nearest health facilities in their respective areas that provide free TB services and medications, including barangay TB centers and rural health units (RHUs).

"All government RHUs or city health centers offer check-ups for TB. If one prefers hospitals, selected hospitals in Central Luzon also provide free services and medications for TB," Recede furthered.

For more information, the public may contact the CallKallungs Hotline at (0945) 268-0584, (0919) 330-2200, or (0919) 330-2205. (PIA REGION 3-NUEVA ECIIJA)

## Gov Ebdane gives ₱10-M aid to farmers, fisherfolks

Zambales Governor Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. recently distributed a total of ₱10 million of cash assistance to 1,000 farming families and fisherfolk affected by the El Niño phenomenon in thye province.

Ebdane said the assistance came from President Marcos who released a ₱10-million cheque allocated for Zambales last July 12 during an awarding ceremony at the Bren Z. Guiao Convention Center in the City of San Fernando, Pampanga.

"The funds came directly from the President and we have, in turn, allocated it to local farmers and fishermen who were most affected by El Niño," Ebdane said.

The beneficiaries, who were vetted by the Zambales Provincial Agriculture Office, received ₱10,000 each from the governor at the Botolan People's Plaza in Botolan, Zambales.

Present during the distribution were Regional Executive Director Eduardo Lapuz of the Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office III, Zambales Provincial Agriculturist Crisostomo Rabaca, Central Luzon Social Welfare and Development Regional Director Venus Rebuldela, Zambales Board Member Lugil Ragadio who

is chair of the Provincial Board's Committee on Agriculture and Fishery, and Botolan Mayor Jun Omar Ebdane.

El Niño, which creates conditions like long dry spells and warmer sea surface temperatures, result in agricultural damage and water shortages and was felt throughout the country.

Ebdane said President Marcos has distributed a total of ₱311.16 million worth of financial assistance to farmers and fishermen affected by El Niño in the provinces of Zambales, Pampanga, Bataan, Bulacan, Tarlac and Nueva Ecija.

"We are thankful to the President for this assistance, and we hope that this will help ease the loss of income among farmers and fisherfolk because of this weather phenomenon," Ebdane said.

Meanwhile, the governor also gave away a tricycle unit to the Municipal Federation of Senior Citizens Association (FSCAP) of Castillejos, Zambales.

The "Sulong Senior Tricycle Service" will make it easier for the FSCAP to deliver services to senior citizens in the municipality, said FSCAP President Leodegario Sagum. (TAKTIKOM)





# Vice Mayor Vicky Vega empowers Angeleños with “Kabuhayan Power”

Angeles City Vice Mayor Vicky Vega-Cabigting launched recently “Kabuhayan Power” livelihood program. The initiative is in partnership with Giada’s Meat Products, whose President and CEO is Luchie Lozano.

Vice Mayor Vega-Cabigting led the distribution of meat products to a total of 300 senior citizens, solo parents, members of the LGBTQ community, and 4Ps beneficiaries from City’s 33 barangays.

Through “Kabuhayan Power”, which has the full support of Mayor Carmelo ‘Pogi’ Lazatin, Jr. and Pampanga First District Representative Carmelo ‘Jon’ B. Lazatin II, the Vice Mayor hopes for the improvement of the economy of small-scale entrepreneurs and help in the reduction of unemployment in Angeles City.



# PIA lauds Pampanga Press Club for reliability, credibility



Philippine Information Agency (PIA) Central Luzon Regional Director William Beltran lauded Pampanga Press Club for “steadfastly upholding its reputation as a credible, relevant, and reliable source of news and information over the decades.”

<https://thevoiceweekly.com/PIA-lauds-Pampanga/>

Beltran said this is a testament to PPC’s commitment to journalistic excellence and its enduring service to the public.

“We have witnessed the PPC’s remarkable evolution, adapting to the ever-changing media landscape. Your resilience, bolstered by an openness to positive and beneficial change, has allowed you to navigate these challenging times successfully,” Beltran said, as he congratulated PPC on the upcoming celebration of its 75th anniversary this November.

Beltran said PPC’s Basic Journalism Training, which was launched earlier this year as part of the Club’s anniversary celebration, is

particularly commendable.

“It marks a significant milestone, as you mentor the next generation of journalists, instilling in them the values of credibility, truth-telling, and reliability amidst the proliferation of misinformation and disinformation in this digital age. In today’s era, where the internet and social media have empowered nearly everyone to create and disseminate content, your role as media mentors is crucial. This initiative will undoubtedly have a lasting impact,” he said.

“Please know that the PIA greatly values our collaboration, working together to serve our communities through the accurate, timely and relevant information we disseminate, and for this, we are deeply grateful and proud,” he added.

The PIA regional director assured the men and women of PPC that their partnership and friendship remain strong, as they look forward to continued growth together as sincere and empathetic purveyors of information.



Presidential Communications Office  
Philippine Information Agency  
Ahenayang Pang-inpormasyon ng Pilipinas  
Regional Office III



### MESSAGE TO THE PAMPANGA PRESS CLUB ON THE CELEBRATION OF ITS 75<sup>TH</sup> FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY

We, at the Philippine Information Agency (PIA) Regional Office III, extend our warmest congratulations to the Pampanga Press Club (PPC) on your 75<sup>th</sup> Founding Anniversary.

Over the decades, your organization has steadfastly upheld its reputation as a credible, relevant, and reliable source of news and information. This is a testament to your commitment to journalistic excellence and your enduring service to the public.

We have witnessed the PPC’s remarkable evolution, adapting to the ever-changing media landscape. Your resilience, bolstered by an openness to positive and beneficial change, has allowed you to navigate these challenging times successfully.

The Basic Journalism Training you launched earlier this year as part of your anniversary celebration is particularly commendable. It marks a significant milestone, as you mentor the next generation of journalists, instilling in them the values of credibility, truth-telling, and reliability amidst the proliferation of misinformation and disinformation in this digital age. In today’s era, where the internet and social media have empowered nearly everyone to create and disseminate content, your role as media mentors is crucial. This initiative will undoubtedly have a lasting impact.

Please know that the PIA greatly values our collaboration, working together to serve our communities through the accurate, timely and relevant information we disseminate, and for this, we are deeply grateful and proud.

Our partnership and friendship remain strong, and we look forward to our continued growth together as sincere and empathetic purveyors of information. This collaboration will surely contribute to the general welfare and well-being of our people.

Congratulations, PPC! Mabuhay!

Digitally signed by  
William Beltran  
Date: 2024.08.20  
12:45:51 -0800  
**WILLIAM L. BELTRAN**  
Regional Director  
PIA Region III

# Award winning Angeleño composer premiered by award winning Manila Junior Symphony Orchestra

Multi-awarded Manila Symphony Junior Orchestra (MSJO), under the baton of Jeffrey Solares, premiered Angelenor composer Conrado del Rosario’s composition “Mahal (Malugud)” for String Orchestra during its homecoming concert at the Ayala Museum in Makati City recently.

Angeleno native Conrado del Rosario’s musical odyssey began at the University of the Philippines. His mentors included luminaries like Lucio San Pedro and Francisco Feliciano, who helped shaped his distinguished career as a musician, composer, and arranger in Manila’s music scene.

Del Rosario’s versatility shines across genres, from orchestral to jazz. His String Quartet No. 1’s victory at the League of Filipino Composers Chamber Music Composition Competition in 1982 enabled him further studies at the Berlin University of the Arts where Isang Yun and Witold Szalonek refined his artistry.

Accolades adorned Del Rosario’s path. He won at International Composition Competitions like the Hambacher, Hitzacker and Irino and recognition from the Berlin Cultural Senate. His compositions

reverberated globally, and his educational influence extended to institutions like the Berlin-Charlottenburg Musikschule and Berlin University of the Arts.

In 1989, he co-founded BICE (Berlin Improvising Composers Ensemble), demonstrating his prowess as both composer and performer. His passion for jazz and

collective improvisation led to the KAPAMU Jazz Collective’s establishment and the Sunlag Bamboo Music Ensemble.

Awards continued to grace his journey, including the 2017 Most Outstanding Kapampangan Award in the Arts and the 2022 Aliw Award for Best Performing Group for KapaMu Jazz Collective.

