



DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY - NATIONAL CAPITAL REGIONAL OFFICE

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



MISSION

The government's main economic catalyst in enabling innovative, competitive, job-generating, inclusive business, and empowering consumers.

VISION 2022

A more inclusive and prosperous Philippines with employment and income opportunities for all.

VALUES

Anchored on the values of Passion, Integrity, Creativity, Competence, Synergy, and Love of Country.

ONE DTI QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM DTI QUALITY POLICY

We, the Department of Trade and Industry, commit to develop a more inclusive and prosperous Philippines. We shall endeavor to promote globally competitive, innovative and inclusive businesses, and foster informed and empowered consumers.

We embrace the agency's core values of Passion, Integrity, Competence, Creativity, Synergy, and Love of Country and commit to comply with appropriate statutory and regulatory requirements.

We shall strive for the continual improvement of our Quality Management System to meet the expectations of our clients.



The DTI National Capital Regional Office (DTI-NCRO), under the DTI Regional Operations Group (ROG), aims to contribute in realizing the country's goal of having competitive and innovative industries, and service sectors that lead to inclusive growth and employment generation in Metro Manila.

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It is my privilege to share with you the Annual Accomplishment Report of DTI – National Capital Regional Office (NCRO) for the year 2023.

The NCRO remained steadfast in addressing the needs of our Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). From conducting various trainings and seminars to organizing trade fairs, our MSMEs became more equipped in strengthening their business capabilities. We continued to implement the banner programs focused on the development and improvement of these MSMEs.

The year 2023 marked a significant turning point for NCR and its MSMEs, as the COVID-19 pandemic was officially declared over. With the end of the pandemic, this presented a valuable opportunity for our office to fulfill a range of activities and initiatives that are highly beneficial for the development and promotion of MSMEs.

For the Negosyo Center program, the office has successfully maintained its 19 Negosyo Centers across NCR which continues to be the hub for offering DTI services for MSMEs, including but not limited to, business name registration assistance, business advisory, business information and advocacy.

Through the training programs we implemented, we empowered our MSMEs with the knowledge and skills to optimize their operations, improve product quality, and develop their business strategies. In total, we conducted 234 training sessions, benefiting a combined total of 12,288 MSMEs and potential entrepreneurs.

In another note, our 16 Shared Service Facilities (SSF) have been continuously maintained and operated which has successfully assisted a total of 501 MSMEs. These facilities were able

to produced 685 prototypes, generated 403 jobs, and contributed to a total sales revenue Php 12,226,227.91.

Under the One Town One Product (OTOP) program, the office has also organized 11 trade fairs that have provided a platform for the assisted MSMEs to showcase and promote their products, which have cumulatively assisted 267 MSMEs generating Php 14,076,423.88 total sales. Additionally, the office has successfully conducted 1 product development session which aided a total of 100 MSMEs from the food and non-food sectors.

One of the most prominent events organized by the NCRO is the annual regional trade fair dubbed as the Metro Fiesta: Connect, Sustain Emerge 2023, which features the best and finest products from the food, wearable, homestyle, and health and wellness sectors in the region. The event serves as the culminating activity for the office's efforts and showcases the MSMEs that have been assisted through the regular programs that have been implemented by NCRO.

The 5-day regional trade fair was a resounding success providing a platform for 60 MSMEs to showcase their finest products. This event achieved an 8.61% increase in sales and demonstrated a significant impact on the promotion and visibility of our assisted MSMEs to the general public.

Additionally, our office has remained dedicated to the continuous improvement of our quality management system as we actively participated in the yearly National Internal Quality Audit (NIQA) and Third-Party Surveillance Audit. These internal and external audits have resulted in zero non-conformities, showcasing our commitment to maintaining high standards and ISO compliance.

These achievements serve as our driving force as we move forward, motivating us to continue

Message from the **REGIONAL DIRECTOR**



Ma. Sofia G. Narag, CESO V

empowering the MSMEs in the region. We are deeply grateful for the unwavering efforts and contributions of our trusted partners and other stakeholders, whose collaboration has been instrumental in the successful implementation of our programs and in fulfilling the mandate of our department.

Finally, I am sincerely grateful to everyone for your tireless support, as we reflect on the accomplishments of 2023, let us carry this momentum forward into the coming years. Together, we can overcome any challenges that come our way and continue to achieve greatness.

Here's to another year of success!

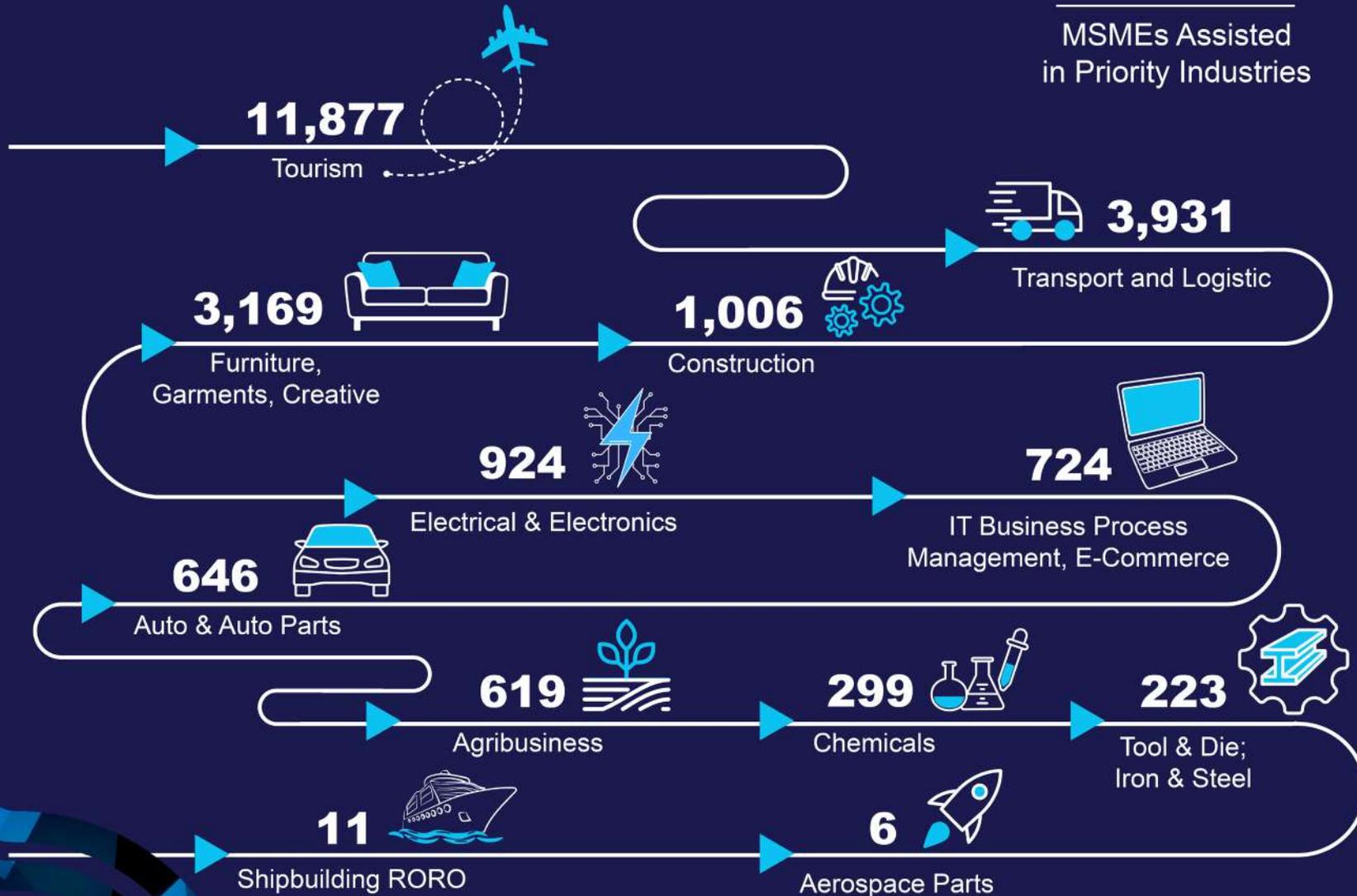
- **Ma. Sofia G. Narag, CESO V**

PERFORMANCE GOVERNANCE SYSTEM SCORECARD



23,463

MSMEs Assisted
in Priority Industries



NEGOSYO CENTER

19 Negosyo Centers Maintained
44,265 Clients Assisted
34,372 MSMEs Assisted

100% Percentage of Business
Registered Within 15 Days Through
Negosyo Centers

100% Percentage of BMBE Certificate
Issued Within Prescribed Time

17 Annual List of Business Permits
Issued by LGUs Gathered by DTI

PROTOTYPES DEVELOPED

993 Prototypes Developed



KAPATID MENTOR ME PROGRAM

96 Number of Mentees
100% Mentees Graduated

172 IP Applications Filed
15,998 MSMEs Doing E-commerce
100 % Employees Capacitated
1 Paperless System Implemented
1 Document Tracking System Maintained

SHARED SERVICE FACILITIES

100% Operational SSFs
16 Operational SSFs Maintained

INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT





NEGOSYO CENTER

Ms. Lady Katherine R. Puente | Regional Negosyo Center Program Coordinator

The Negosyo Center Program 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.

Negosyo Centers are found in strategic areas convenient for the existing and would-be entrepreneurs, such as DTI offices, Local Government Units (LGU), Academe, Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), and Malls.



Negosyo Center

The Department of Trade and Industry – National Capital Regional Office has consistently shown its support for micro, small, and medium enterprises. Through a comprehensive range of programs and activities tailored to the needs of MSMEs, the office has not only met but surpassed its targets. This amazing dedication and accomplishment demonstrate the department’s commitment to empowering and supporting these enterprises in the region.

In terms of Physical Accomplishments for the year, NCRO maintained 19 Negosyo Centers, aiding 34,372 MSMEs and 44,265 clients. The NCRO also registered 20,781 business names and issued 2,891 Barangay Micro Business Enterprise certificates.

MSMEs Assisted
34,372

Clients Assisted
44,265

No. of BN Certificates Issued
20,781

No. of BMBE CA Issued
2,891

Negosyo Centers Maintained

19

2
DTI Offices

13
Local
Government
Units

2
Malls

1
National
Government
Offices

Negosyo Center Business Counselors General Assembly

Jointly written by: Lady Katherine R. Puente, 2023 Regional Negosyo Center Program Coordinator and John Paulo P. Antigua, 2024 Regional Negosyo Center Program Coordinator

On December 1, 2023, the Negosyo Center Business Counselors (NCBCs) General Assembly was held at the 1898 Hotel Colonia En Las Filipinas, Makati City. This activity had been eagerly awaited by our NCBCs as it provided a platform for them to come together and address concerns related to the operations of Negosyo Centers and ways forward.

Firstly, OIC-Regional Director Ma. Sofia G. Narag warmly welcomed the participants and conducted a roll call to update on the current status of physical and financial achievements in each area. This was followed by BSMED Director Emma Asusano, who delivered a special message via video for our Business Counselors, commending them for exceeding expectations with their “Serbisyon Higit pa sa Inaasahan” and acknowledging the region’s notable achievements.



Next, the Negosyo Regional Program Coordinator, Ms. Lady Katherine Puente, presented the 2023 NC Accomplishments of the region and provided updates on the latest developments and initiatives undertaken by the Negosyo Centers.

Each Area Coordinator had the opportunity to showcase their best practices within their Negosyo Centers, highlighting innovative and effective strategies that could influence business counselors in providing efficient services.

Subsequently, the Business Name Registration Division (BNRD) outlined plans and policy adjustments regarding business name registrations, especially focusing on the transition to 100% online registrations through the BNRS website starting in 2023. An interactive Question and Answer session followed their presentation.

One standout moment during the event was the insightful and inspirational address delivered by Rev. Father Gaudencio Carandang Jr., SDB. His talk emphasized the importance of incorporating spiritual principles into the workplace environment; embracing spirituality can have a positive impact on one’s professional life, fostering a harmonious and purpose-driven work atmosphere.

In conclusion, the Negosyo Center Business Counselors Assembly played a crucial role in promoting cooperation, exchanging ideas, and addressing important aspects of Negosyo Center operations. The wide range of topics discussed, including financial matters, administrative issues, and client satisfaction feedback, demonstrates the assembly’s comprehensive approach to improving the overall performance and productivity of Negosyo Center.



Signing of Negosyo Centers Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)

By: John Paulo A. Antigua
2024 Regional Negosyo Center Coordinator

Negosyo Center Manila-LGU

On September 19, 2023, the Department of Trade and Industry – National Capital Regional Office and the City Government of Manila formalized their partnership as DTI-NCRO OIC-Regional Director Ma. Sofia G. Narag and Manila Mayor Maria Sheilah “Honey” Lacuña-Pangan signed the renewal of the Negosyo Center Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), signifying the continuous partnership between the organizations in supporting the growth of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises in the City of Manila for an additional five (5) years.

Also present to witness the signing event were the Secretary to the Mayor, Atty. Marlon Lacson, Concurrent LEDIP Officer and Bureau of Permits Director, Mr. Levi Facundo, and DTI-NCRO Area 1 Division Chief Corona Olivia Rivera.



Negosyo Center Caloocan

The Department of Trade and Industry - National Capital Regional Office and the City Government of Caloocan entered into an agreement for the renewal and establishment of Negosyo Centers last September 25, 2023.

Present during the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) were DTI-NCRO OIC-Regional Director Ma. Sofia G. Narag, Caloocan City Mayor Dale Gonzalo “Along” Malapitan, Caloocan City Economic Investment Promotion Office-OIC Alma D. Bucalen and DTI-NCRO Area 4 Head Rose Marie S. Berte.

The MOA signed by the two organizations aims to further implement the initiatives of the Negosyo Centers in facilitating MSME Development for businesses in Caloocan, including the establishment of a new Negosyo Center in North Caloocan.



A Struggling Business: Symbol of Resilience and Hope

By: Mary Joy B. Yngoc
Area 1 | Negosyo Center Business Counselor



The printing business was initiated by Ms. Merrylyn Autor's parents, and it continued until Oks Printing was established by her, prompted by her parents' and family's situation, thus carrying on her parents' printing legacy.

She was the fourth of nine siblings in a bustling household where her parents had once run a thriving printing business. However, as life unfolded, the family faced immense challenges, including the heartbreaking loss of Merrylyn's mother and financial difficulties that led to the downfall of their family business.

Amid these hardships, she found herself at a crossroads. In 2013, the same year she graduated from college as a scholar, she made a courageous decision. With her father's unwavering support, they decided to rebuild their printing legacy, and "OKS Printing Services" was born, bearing Merrylyn's name.

Initially, she was not sure if entrepreneurship was her true calling. She felt obliged to take up the mantle to support her younger siblings' education. She even ventured into employment in Makati City but soon realized her heart belonged to the family business.

Her life took a transformative turn when she crossed paths with PCCI-Parañaque and attended seminars in partnership with DTI-NCRO/Negosyo Center-Parañaque. These experiences broadened her horizons and changed her perspective on business. She embraced the challenge of managing the printing business wholeheartedly, gaining not only knowledge but also the capacity to help others.

They started their journey with a humble second-hand Riso machine due to a lack of resources. Yet, over time, they managed to acquire their own 1-color offset machine, a tarpaulin machine, a semi-automatic cutter, and a 2-color offset machine.

The path to entrepreneurship was far from smooth. They faced financial struggles, especially during the recent pandemic, when income often went toward paying bills. As technology reshaped advertising and promotion, they adapted and expanded their services, like creating stickers on Sintra boards for restaurant menus.

Throughout their journey, Merrylyn clung to a quote that inspired her: "Some people dream of success, while other people get up every morning and make it happen." These words by Wayne Huizenga became her guiding light, urging her to turn her dreams into reality.

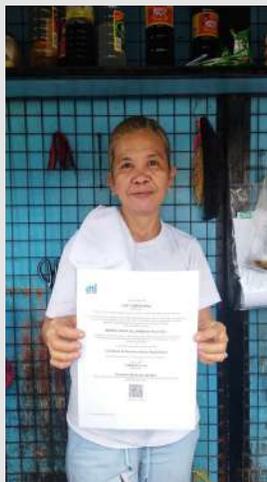
For her, the desire for a better life for her family was the driving force. She understood that success required not just dreams but unwavering action and determination. The support she received from DTI and Negosyo Center, including free seminars and programs like Kapatid Mentor Me and BMBE, proved invaluable.

She felt immense gratitude towards the DTI-NCRO, specifically Negosyo Center Parañaque for the unwavering support they have received. Their programs empowered Filipino entrepreneurs like her to overcome obstacles and achieve their dreams. With their guidance, she believed she could pay it forward and help fellow Filipinos by providing livelihood opportunities.

As Merrylyn's story demonstrates, challenges in business and life are inevitable, but it's our courage and determination that make our businesses steady and strong despite these challenges. Through perseverance and unwavering faith, Merrylyn Autor turned a struggling printing business into a symbol of resilience and hope, inspiring others to chase their dreams and make them a reality.

Lhet Carinderia in Makati City

By: Camille Kyla T. Tadeo
Area 2 | Negosyo Center Business Counselor



In the bustling streets of Makati City, amidst the towering skyscrapers and the crowded business streets are food stalls situated in almost every corner. These food stalls cater to the urban professionals who are in the lookout for quality, inexpensive, and traditional Filipino meals.

Along Jupiter Street, where classy restaurants are located, lies Lhet Carinderia, owned and managed by Maria Lolita Villanueva Villegas. This food stall is always busy as employees line up as early as 6:00 am for their favorite meals from breakfast to lunch, cooked just in time for their break time.

Ms. Villegas has her own “suki” or her loyal customers who never fail to purchase from her every day, and these loyal customers say that they should be early, as Ms. Villegas only cooks a little more than her usual volume to ensure that the meals are really fresh from the stove.

Her growing loyal customers prompted her to register her small business with DTI at the Negosyo Center Makati. She said that she has already attended several trainings with DTI and she likes most the training on food safety as this has improved the way she prepares and serves the meals for her customers.

Her Certificate of Business Name Registration is properly posted at her stall and her customers are also happy that she is now legally contributing to the economic growth of the city.



Gabrielle Mae Cruz: Testimonial

Interviewed by: Jamaica Loraine Macatiag
CITE Trade Promotion Officer



I am Gabrielle Mae Cruz, the founder of Luka Ferruccio Fashion Accessories Retailing. The company name originated from the Greek word LUKAS, which means illumination or “Bringer of Light,” while Ferruccio is an Italian word for iron or “Strength and Durability.” When combined, Luka Ferruccio means “Bringer of strength in the midst of darkness.”

After giving birth to my firstborn child, Lukas, I was diagnosed with colorectal cancer, and after 2 years in therapy, I was gifted with my second born child, Ferruccio. From that day forward, I devoted myself to help people as much as I could because I was given the gift of a second life and wanted to be an

instrument of God’s love and peace, I also knew the hardships of being in battle and having financial problems to survive.

In partnership with DTI-NCRO, we successfully conducted a livelihood and entrepreneurial training for the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) female inmates which aimed at giving hope and sharing of knowledge to Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL). This marks the start of my journey to further establish my business, Luka Ferruccio. Luka Ferruccio sells fragrances with an oil base for both genders. Luka donates 50% of its net profits to Pediatric Cancer Patients, Autism Community, and Abandoned Children.

I participated in the DTI’s Kapatid Mentor Me (KMME) Program in Batch 2 and graduated last October 2023. I also attended the Metro Fashion Fair 2023 from October 25–29, 2023, and One Town One Product ACT Session 2023 from July to October 2023. I began onboarding at the OTOP Hubs in Alabang Town Center and Ayala Mall Feliz in August 2023. Our market exposure was increased (branching out to SM Fairview, SM Bicutan, SM Manila, Glorietta, and SM Grand Central) and our company’s branding, product labels, and business structure were all greatly improved by these DTI programs and services.



Area 3 Negosyo Centers' Best Practices

By: Nerizza Valdez, Area 3 Trade Promotion Officer
and Shenna Jasmine Romero, Area 3 Information Officer

The DTI-NCRO Area 3, in its quest for excellence in public services, has continued to find ways how it can further improve its services to the public through the creation of new strategies and helping its personnel become more responsive to client's needs and concerns. The following measures are being implemented in all 4 Negosyo Centers under Area 3 mainly NC Mandaluyong, NC Lux, NC Quezon City, and NC San Juan:

- Assigning an automatic reliever per Negosyo Center. This ensures no disruption in the operations of Negosyo Centers in Area 3.
- Holding learning cum coaching sessions with the staff either face-to-face or via Zoom platform. This allows the Area Head to coach and interact with multiple staff at one time. Staff can also share their opinions and raise clarifications as necessary.
- Preparing printouts of requirements for Business Name-related transactions that can be readily distributed to clients
- Conducting regular interface (quarterly) with partner LGUs to strengthen partnership and create synergies
- Adopting convergence projects with partner LGUs and important stakeholders
- Adopting a buddy system. By using this, the newly hired staff or business counselors are guided in their assignments and the same also helps them navigate the complexity of the work and that of the organization or workplace
- Preparing monthly accomplishments per Negosyo Centers. By doing this, the office gets to see the contribution of each Negosyo Center vis-à-vis Area 3's overall accomplishments.
- Sharing events' information through partner LGU's social media pages for more mileage.

By employing the above-mentioned practices, the Area 3 Negosyo Centers continue to generate a positive rating from the public and private organizations/ LGUs.





Industry Cluster Enhancement (ICE) Program

Ms. Mary Joy S. Mojica | Regional ICE Program Coordinator

The Industry Cluster Enhancement (ICE) Program is an initiative by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in the Philippines aimed at enhancing the competitiveness and productivity of industry clusters in the country. The program focuses on fostering collaboration among various stakeholders within specific industries to promote growth, innovation, and sustainability.

Key Objectives of the ICE Program:

- Database development and Material inventory
- Capacity Building and Skills Development
- Improved Market Access
- Market Driven Product Design and Innovation and Technology Adoption
- Institutional Strengthening of Collaboration and Linkages
- Enhanced Productivity
- Improved Access to Finance

By offering a mix of financial, technical, and capacity-building support tailored to the specific needs of each industry cluster, the ICE Program aims to drive sustainable growth, enhance competitiveness, and promote innovation within the Philippine economy.

Bamboo Industry Cluster

By: Royal Jean D. Beraquit
CITE | Bamboo Industry Cluster Coordinator

DTI-NCRO contributes to the growth of the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) engaged in the bamboo industry by way of implementing and conducting activities ranging from product design, sample making, prototyping, production run, marketing, technology transfer, and skills training.

Domestic Sales
P 6,588,731.00

Investments
P 2.5 M

Jobs Generated
70

MSMEs Assisted
98

No. of Trainings Conducted
8

No. of Beneficiaries Trained
497

PLMAR Founding Anniversary: Hakbang Para sa Kalikasan “Nature Walk” at the CITE Bambusetum / Bamboo Propagation Seminar

March 1, 2023 | CITE Bambusetum, CITE-DTI-NCRO Compound, Brgy. Concepcion Dos, Marikina City
Beneficiaries: Students and Teachers of Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Marikina

In celebration of the 20th founding anniversary of the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Marikina (PLMAR), the Center for Innovation and Technology for Enterprises facilitated the Hakbang Para sa Kalikasan “Nature Walk” at the CITE Bambusetum and provided Bamboo Propagation Seminar to around 300 senior high school students held on March 1, 2023.

Mr. Ferdinand Angeles, Head of CITE-DTI-NCRO, briefed the students about the CITE Bambusetum: Kawayanan sa Kamaynilaan, highlighting its collections of different bamboo species and the importance of bamboo in climate change mitigation. Afterward, Mr. Eduardo Yabut and Mr. Baldomero Rollon, Jr., discussed and demonstrated how to propagate bamboo using bamboo cuttings. After the seminar, participants had their tour inside the CITE Bambusetum. Aside from the different species of bamboo, an exhibit of engineered bamboo products was also showcased at the Bamboo Multi-purpose structure.



Isang Libo sa Singko Kilometro: A La Mesa Watershed Reservation Bamboo Planting Activity

September 15, 2023
La Mesa Watershed Reservation, Quezon City



Around 200 individuals concerned with protecting and preserving the natural environment actively participated in the joint celebration of the DTI National Capital Regional Office's Philippine Bamboo Month and World Bamboo Day at the La Mesa Watershed Reservation in Quezon City. With this year's theme, "Buong Bansa Magtanim: Kawayan para sa Kalikasan, Kabuhayan, Kaunlaran at Kinabukasan!", one thousand bamboo propagules were planted in a five-kilometer stretch of land inside the watershed.

The collaboration between DTI-NCRO's Center for Innovation and Technology for Enterprises (CITE) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources - National Capital Region (DENR-NCR), along with the support of various organizations such as Delfi Foods Inc., Gibi Shoes, Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry-New Marikina, Bamboo Bikes Philippines, Bamboo Network PH, JCI Marikina Sapatos, JCI Marikina Marikit, JCI Navotas Pescadores, JCI Caloocan Northgate, Youth for IVC, 51st Engineer Brigade of the Philippine Army, and the Combat Support Brigade of the Philippine Marine Corps, led to the successful outcome of the event.



NCRO Bamboo Team Benchmarking Mission

October 20, 2023

- Las Piñas-Parañaque Wetland Park (LPPWP), Las Piñas City
- Villar SIPAG Bamboo Steps Factory, C5 Extension, Las Piñas City
- Villar SIPAG Farm House/Farm School, Las Piñas – Bacoor Farm, Bacoor Cavite

The benchmarking mission was participated-in by the DTI-NCRO Bamboo Team headed by Ma. Sofia G. Narag, OIC-Regional Director NCRO, and Mr. Ferdinand Angeles, NCRO's Regional Focal Person, Royal Jean Beraquit, CITE's in-house bamboo expert Mr. Eduardo Yabut, and NCRO's Area Bamboo Focal persons/representatives.

Ms. Nelia Marie "Ayie" Diaz and Ms. Lecel Alfaro Network Managers from the Office of Senator Cynthia Villar assisted the NCRO Bamboo Team all throughout the benchmarking mission. Aside from the learnings acquired from the places visited, the said mission forged knowledge-sharing, partnership, and collaboration with DENR NCR (LPPWP) and Office of the Senator Cynthia Villar.

Las Piñas - Parañaque Wetland Park



Las Piñas-Parañaque Wetland Park - Bambusetum



Villar Sipag Bamboo Steps Factory



Villar Sipag Bamboo Farm House / Farm School



Processed Fruits & Nuts Industry Cluster

By: Nehemiah Franz C. Susarno
Area 3 | PFN Industry Cluster Coordinator

The Processed Fruits and Nuts Cluster in NCR for CY-2023 has emerged as a vibrant and dynamic group as the same was able to create and conduct a lot of capacity-building programs and marketing activities that contributed significantly to the growth and advancement of its member-MSMEs. A total of six (6) trainings were conducted benefitting 148 MSMEs and 42 prospective entrepreneurs. The office also facilitated the participation of 148 PFN MSMEs in 20 marketing-related events generating a total sales of P11,297,233.73. It is also noteworthy to mention that the 1st PFN Conference cum Market Encounter with Big Players and Enablers was held last April 27, 2023, in partnership with Miriam College at Henry Sy-Innovation Center, Katipunan Quezon City. The activity opened new doors for selected PFN players to explore marketing arrangements with the invited big players.

Another milestone under the cluster is the participation of one NCR-based PFN MSME in the National Processed Fruits and Nuts Trail Mix Competition held last July 13, 2023. Of the 16 regional offices enrolled in the PFN Industry Cluster, only 6 regions were able to send participants, and NCR is one of them. This proves that PFN players in NCR are ready to face competition as the same are continuously harnessing research and product development to come up with breakthroughs and achieve marketing goals.

Domestic Sales

P 11,297,233.73

Jobs Generated

15

No. of Trainings Conducted

6

No. of Beneficiaries Trained

190

No. of Meetings/Conferences/
Fora Conducted

12

No. of Market Promotion Activities
Conducted/Participated by
PFN MSMEs

20

Unique MSMEs Assisted

128



Trainings Conducted for NCR-based PFN-MSMEs

Crash Course on Export Marketing and Free One-on-One Consultation with CESO Expert

17 MSMEs Beneficiaries

January 5, 2023



Briefing on FDA-LTO-CPR Documentary Requirements

18 MSMEs Beneficiaries

May 23, 2023



Webinar on Financial Management

37 MSMEs Beneficiaries and 18 Prospective Entrepreneurs

June 26, 2023



Training Workshop on Understanding Nutrition Labelling

20 MSMEs Beneficiaries

July 20, 2023



Seminar on Customer Service with Consultation

30 MSMEs Beneficiaries

October 18, 2023



Webinar On Business Model Canvass

26 MSMEs Beneficiaries and 24 Prospective Entrepreneurs

November 22, 2023



Crash Course on Export Marketing and Free One-on-One Consultation with CESO Expert (Jan. 5, 2023)



1st PFN Conference cum Market Encounter with Big Players (April 27, 2023)



The 5 VIP Guests during PFN Conference cum Market Encounter with the big Players (from left: Mr. Francisco T. Sevilla Jr. and Mr. Noel M. Paguia President and Chairman of Food Caterers Association of the Philippines; Mr. Steven T. Cua, President of Philippine Amalgamated Supermarkets Association, Inc. (PAGASA); Mr. Carlos V. Cabochan President of Philippine Consumer Centric Traders Association Inc. (PCCTA); Mr. Jorge T. Mendiola, SM Retail, Inc. Director and Vice Chairman of Philippine Retailers Association (PRA); Mr. Marvin Kim Tan, Sales and Marketing Director of The Manila Hotel)



Briefing on FDA-LTO-CPR Documentary Requirements (May 23, 2023)



National Processed Fruits and Nuts (PFN) Trail Mix Competition - Judging and Awarding Ceremony (July 13, 2023)



TRAINING WORKSHOP ON UNDERSTANDING NUTRITION LABELLING

Training Workshop on Understanding Nutrition Labelling (July 20, 2023)





Marketing Events Participated by NCR-based PFN MSMEs

| Title of Events | Date (2023) | Number of MSMEs | Amount of Sales Generated (P) |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| QC Fresh Market 2023 | February 14-15 | 2 | ₱14,311.00 |
| Kadiwa ng Pangulo para sa Manggagawa | April 30 | 15 | ₱165,471.00 |
| Kadiwa ng QC | May 2-3 | 1 | ₱12,900.00 |
| Mini Metro Fiesta: Mid-Year Edition 2023 | May 16-17 | 6 | ₱50,120.00 |
| Area 3 Mini Trade Fair: Fiesta de Mayo | May 18-26 | 16 | ₱635,802.85 |
| UP ISSI's BUYanihan sa Diliman 1st Pinoy MSME Showcase | May 25-27 | 5 | ₱75,190.00 |
| DOST-NCR's "Kain Tayo sa Science Food Festival!" | May 26-28 | 2 | ₱30,844.00 |
| International Food Exhibition (IFEX) Philippines 2023 | May 26-28 | 9 | ₱207,880.00 |
| Duty Free Fiesta Corner | January – May | 2 | ₱1,758,140.00 |
| Kadiwa ng Pangulo: 125th Philippine Independence Day Celebration | June 10-11 | 4 | ₱33,865.00 |
| National Food Fair 2023 | July 12-16 | 16 | ₱1,276,644.00 |
| Hybrid National Trade Fair 2023 | August 23-27 | 8 | ₱953,206.00. |
| Kadiwa ng Pangulo - DILG Quezon City | August 30 | 2 | ₱10,065.00 |
| Area 1's Mini Metro Fiesta Fair | August 31-September 1 | 1 | ₱5,230.00 |
| National Arts and Crafts Fair 2023 | October 4-8 | 2 | ₱900,560.00 |
| Metro Fiesta: Connect, Sustain, Emerge 2023 | November 22-26 | 25 | ₱4,054,998.88 |
| Kadiwa ng Pangulo at Malacañang Palace | December 2-3 | 6 | ₱114,229.00 |
| Miriam College Bazaar | December 6-7 | 9 | ₱139,568.00 |
| Mini Metro Fiesta 2023: Season of Giving with Local Delights | December 13-14 | 7 | ₱137,737.00 |
| Paskuhan sa GSIS 2023 | December 13-22 | 10 | ₱720,472.00 |
| Total | | 148 | ₱11,297,233.73 |

AnaVill Food Products

By: Nehemiah Franz C. Susarno, Area 3 PFN Industry Cluster Coordinator and Shenna O. Romero, Area 3 Information Officer



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KARE-KARE

Eva V. Anajao | Owner, Anavill Food Products
0995 966 2022
223-A Gen. Luna St., Brgy. Concepcion, Malabon City
anavillfoodproducts@yahoo.com
Fayenuts Peanut Butter

Mr. Roberto D. Anajao and Mrs. Eva F. Villasenor-Anajao launched in 2014 a home-based business in Navotas City, naming it AnaVill Food Products, and with nuts as their primary ingredient, they created the brand name “Fayenuts” which is also derived from the name of their daughters namely Andrea Faye, Dana Faye, and Kristine Faye. With fortune on their side, they were able to officially open in 2019 a small commissary in Malabon City which has since served as the main branch store and factory.

In the course of their business venture, Mr. and Mrs. Anajao faced some challenges such as consecutive price increases of raw materials in the market that have several implications for the business, including increased production costs, reduced profit margins, higher prices, and stiff competition. They knew that they needed to devise strategies to adapt or mitigate the impact of these challenges to remain competitive in the market. Thus, when they discovered the available training programs that the DTI-NCRO provides through email invitations and postings on its Facebook page, they grabbed the opportunity to join in the Processed Fruits and Nuts (PFN) Industry Cluster capacity-building programs by attending seminars such as the “FDA-LTO-CPR Documentary Requirements”, “Webinar on Financial Management”, “Training Workshop on Understanding Nutrition Labelling”, and “Seminar on Customer Service with Consultation”.

With their active participation in the PFN training sessions, Mr. and Mrs. Anajao gained additional knowledge, increased their confidence in communicating with clients, and widened their network. Further, they reevaluated and fine-tuned their business Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) based on the guidelines from the FDA-LTO-CPR Documentary Requirements Seminar that they had attended. With all of these combined, they became more equipped to tackle the roadblocks in their entrepreneurial journey, thereby improving their business.



With better business operations and an increased number of new customers, AnaVill Food Products sales increased by 35%. In addition, they hired 1 employee as their social media manager and trade fair salesperson.

As an expression of their gratitude, Mr. and Mrs. Anajao are enjoying other entrepreneurs to take advantage of the free training programs of DTI as these contributed to boosting their business which for them is life-changing as well.

Coffee Industry Cluster

By: Nathaniel Andre I. Cadampog
Area 2 | Coffee Industry Cluster Coordinator

At the heart of the NCR's coffee industry cluster lies a network of passionate growers, importers, roasters, and baristas who work tirelessly to ensure a steady supply of top-quality beans and brews. This commitment to quality and transparency not only elevates the coffee experience for consumers but also fosters a sense of connection to the origins of their favorite brews.

With the increasing demand for coffee shops in the National Capital Region, the Department of Trade and Industry would like to capacitate the potential micro and small entrepreneurs and their staff to be more knowledgeable on how to start and manage a coffee shop business.

The workshop is a comprehensive training program designed to guide aspiring entrepreneurs through the process of launching and managing a successful coffee shop. The workshop will cover essential topics, including market research, business planning, branding, operations, and customer service. Participants will gain practical knowledge, valuable insights, and actionable steps to turn their coffee shop dreams into reality.

Mr. Ramon Pedro (RP) Argonza CEO of Argonza Trading and Founders Donut, provided the participants with a comprehensive introduction to the world of coffee. Attendees gained practical skills in brewing techniques, equipment handling, and customer service, setting a strong foundation for aspiring baristas or coffee enthusiasts.

Also, Mr. RP equipped participants with the essential knowledge and tools necessary for initiating a successful coffee shop venture. Attendees gained insights into business planning, operational aspects, and effective marketing strategies crucial for establishing and managing a thriving coffee business.

Domestic Sales
P 1,055,191

Jobs Generated
9

No. of MSMEs Created
138

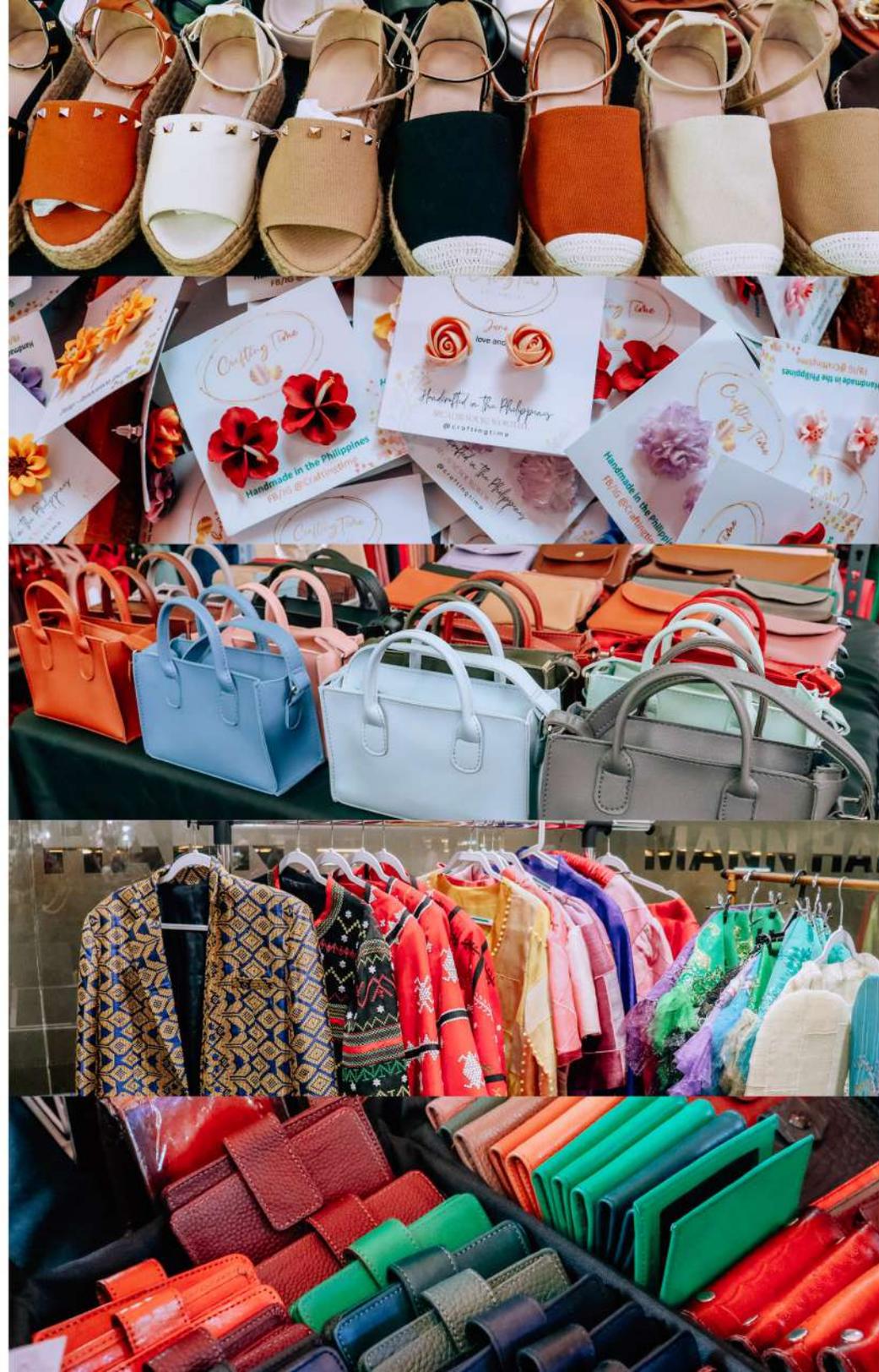
No. of MSMEs Assisted
209

No. of Trainings Conducted
7

No. of Beneficiaries Trained
71

No. of Brands Developed
8





Wearables and Homestyle Industry Cluster

By: Jamaica Loraine L. Macatiag
CITE | W&H Industry Cluster Regional Coordinator

Among the several programs and activities offered by DTI-NCRO to support the assisted potential and existing MSMEs within the Wearables and Homestyle Industry Cluster (W&H IC), 2023 was indeed regarded to be a very productive and creative year. These programs include but are not limited to, the conduct of webinars and skills training activities, endorsement of MSMEs to participate in trade fairs and exhibits, and continuous assistance through the use of shared service facilities.

Domestic Sales
P19,539,000.00

Export Sales
P 28,000.00

Jobs Generated
1,381

Assisted Exporter
1

No. of MSMEs Assisted
2,703

Trainings Conducted
29

Beneficiaries
783

Filipino Footwear Design Competition 2023: Paa-hon Championing Filipino Culture and Heritage

By: Jamaica Loraine L. Macatiag

CITE | W&H Industry Cluster Regional Coordinator

One of the remarkable attainments of the Region in 2023 was to represent the country at the long-awaited 12th International Footwear Designers Competition (IFDC) by the Confederation of International Footwear Association was held last September 4 in Guangzhou, China. Bringing global acclaim to the local footwear industry, “Sierra”, designed by Carla Apostol-Kleiner and made by Zapateria was awarded 1st Runner Up in the Ladies’ Boot Category. Inspired by the 2020 Mayon Volcano eruption and how tragedy can birth beauty, Sierra is a love song to Filipino craftsmanship.



Another accomplishment of the Region was the conduct of the 9th Filipino Footwear Design Competition (FFDC) Paa-hon: Championing Filipino Culture and Heritage, DTI-NCRO in partnership with the Philippine Footwear Federation, Inc. (PFFI), and the Department of Science and Technology-Philippine Textile Research Institute (DOST-PTRI).

On September 17, 2023, out of the more than 60 spectacular entries, the names of the top 9 finalists who distinctively nurtured Filipino culture and

heritage in their designs were officially announced. In no particular order, below are the nine (9) finalists:

- Reymart Dellomas - “AHON”
- Ira Louise Cayanan - “BAGONG BUKAS”
- Lee Villanueva – “BULAWAN”
- Gerald Farofaldane - “DOLZURA”
- Ritche Rodulfo - “MARIA CLARA DE FILIPINIANA”
- Ivan Fabia - “RAMBO”
- Chad Gabrielle Tanutan – “LIGUM DULOM”
- Ma. Daniella Borrero – “TUSOK-TUSOK”
- Andrei Benedict Garcia – “PATOK”

The Final Judging and Awarding was held at the KMC Solutions Armstrong Corporate Center, Makati City.



Among the nine (9) finalists, below are the recipients of the special awards and grand winner:

Special Awards:

Best in Construction – “Bulawan” by: Lee Villanueva

Mentored by: Unyx Sta Ana of Zapateria

Manufactured by: Roweliza Shoes and Bags Manufacturing

Best in Story Execution and DOST-PTRI’s Choice – “Rambo” by: Ivan Fabia

Mentored by: Unyx Sta. Ana of Zapateria

Manufactured by: Risque Designs

Grand Winner and Zapateria Artisanry Award – “Maria Clara De Filipiniana”

By: Ritche Rodulfo

Mentored by: Tal De Guzman of Risque Designs

Manufactured by: Nifty Shoes



The victorious designers earned the privilege of representing the Philippines at the esteemed 13th International Footwear Design Competition (IFDC) 2024 in Guangzhou, China, fostering global recognition of Filipino talent in footwear design.

Metro Fashion Fair: Innovation is the New Sustainability

By: Jamaica Loraine L. Macatiag
 CITE | W&H Industry Cluster Regional Coordinator

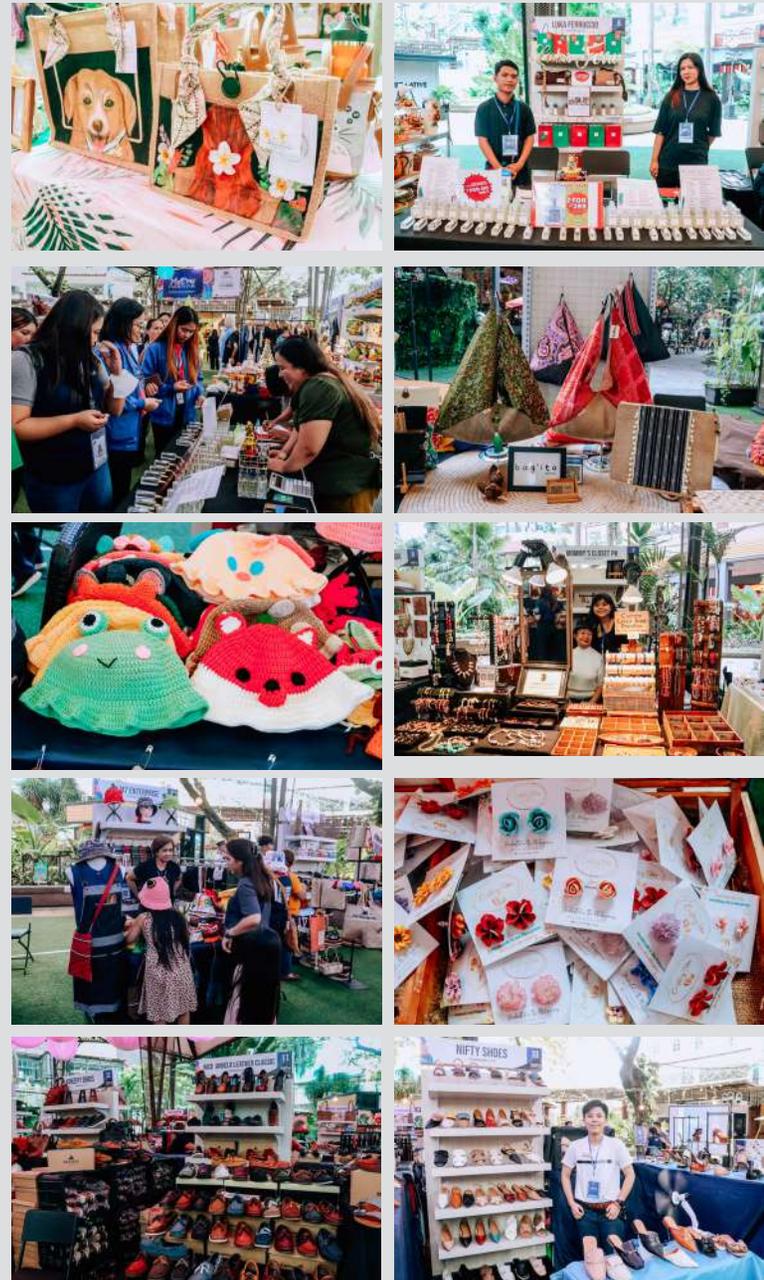


The conduct of the Metro Fashion Fair (MFF) 2023 was also one of the sought accomplishments exclusively for the wearables and homestyle sector. The Metro Fashion Fair was implemented on October 25-29, 2023, at the Central Plaza, Eastwood City, Quezon City, highlighting the 35 local MSMEs in the wearables sector showcasing their best and finest products as well as their ingenuity and craftsmanship. The MFF 2023 surpassed its target sales, garnering a total of P1,220,431.00 in booked and cash sales.

The Region was able to accomplish its specific performance indicators in 2023, such as jobs generated, domestic sales generated, number of MSMEs assisted, number of trainings conducted, and number of beneficiaries trained.

Sales Generated
P1,220,431.00

Number of Exhibitors
35



MSME DEVELOPMENT





Ms. Dahlia J. Nuñez | Regional KMME Program Coordinator

The KMME-MME Online is the practical delivery mechanism for the mentorship modules used to propel MSMEs to survive and thrive in spite of the unprecedented setbacks that now confront businesses of all types and sizes.

The program is designed to integrate the Money Market Encounter (MME) into the regular KMME Program. This is a Business Improvement Plan (BIP) to an expanded panel of evaluators composed of representatives from banks, online market platforms, and other business support organizations.

Further, coaching is added to the program to assist the mentees during the drafting of their BIPs and improve their materials and presentation skills. Coaching is envisioned to further develop their capacities in accessing CAPITAL and MARKET. Thus, enabling them to pivot and prepare for the new normal. KMME-MME Online will be implemented in the new normal using the online meeting platforms. It addresses the urgent need for the continued access of mentees to Money, Market, and Mentorship (or the 3Ms) without compromising the safety of the stakeholders involved and the overall effectiveness of the comprehensive KMME Programs.

Kapatid Mentor Me - Money Market Encounter (KMME-MME) Online Program 2023

By: Dahlia J. Nuñez
KMME Program Regional Coordinator

As the curtains drew on another chapter of entrepreneurial empowerment, the DTI-NCRO proudly concluded the annual run of its Kapatid Mentor Me-Money Market Encounter (KMME-MME) Online Program with 2 batches of MSMEs from various sectors. In a year fraught with challenges, the program emerged triumphant, leaving an indelible mark on the entrepreneurial landscape of the National Capital Region (NCR). Let's embark on a narrative journey through the accomplishments and milestones that defined the KMME-MME Online Program in 2023.

Empowering Entrepreneurial Spirits:

At the core of KMM-MME implementation was a strong dedication to supporting Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) owners and managers. In 2023, this commitment was evident as 96 mentees, divided into batches of 48, embarked on a transformative journey. They were guided by mentors and coaches from the Philippine Center for Entrepreneurship – Go Negosyo (PCE-Go Negosyo). Through knowledge exchange, shared experiences, and dedicated time, each mentee gained invaluable insights and skills crucial for navigating the entrepreneurial landscape. Topics under the program composed of the following:

- Entrepreneurial Mindsetting and Values Formation*
- Marketing Mindset*
- Business Model Canvas*
- Operations Management*
- Digitalization*
- Supply and Value Chain Management*
- Accounting and Finance for Small Business*
- Human Resource Management*
- Market Driven Innovation*
- Good Governance & Ethics*



Percentage of Mentees Graduated

2

Number of Runs Conducted

96

Number of Mentees Selected

96

Number of Mentees Graduated

Highlights of Accomplishments

| Batch | Batch 1 (Multi-Sector) | Batch 2 (Multi-Sector) |
|--------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Launching Date | April 19, 2023 | August 2, 2023 |
| No. of Mentees Enrolled | 48 | 48 |
| Graduation Date | June 30, 2023 | October 20, 2023 |
| No. of Graduated Mentees | 48 | 48 |
| % of Mentees Graduated | 100 % | 100% |

Unified Efforts, Collective Triumph and Support

The success of KMME-MME is a testament to the collaborative spirit that permeates every facet of the program. From the visionary leadership of DTI officials to the unwavering dedication of Area Heads, KMME coordinators, technical teams, and business counselors, every individual played an integral role in ensuring the seamless execution of mentoring sessions. Under the steadfast guidance of the Regional Coordinator, the synchronized efforts of the DTI NCRO KMME coordinators fostered an environment of support and camaraderie, ensuring a transformative experience for all participants.

The KMME-MME Online Program had a significant impact beyond its participants, receiving endorsements and support from respected figures in the DTI and its partner – the PCE-Go Negosyo. DTI ROG Undersecretary Blesila Lantayona, Go Negosyo Founder Joey Concepcion, Senior Adviser for MSME Development - Go Negosyo Engr. Merly Cruz, and DTI-NCRO Regional Directors Marcelina Alcantara and Ma. Sofia G. Narag provided unwavering support, highlighting the program's importance in fostering entrepreneurship and economic growth. Moreover, funding from the MSMED Council and Negosyo Center strengthened the program's sustainability and reach, extending its impact within the community.

Looking Ahead

It was indeed another successful iteration of the KMME-MME Online Program in 2023. With this achievement behind us, the future holds promise and opportunity. KMME-MME remains committed to fostering growth, innovation, and inclusivity within the business community. Mentees and mentors reflect on their journey, carrying valuable lessons and experiences to shape the entrepreneurial landscape of the NCR.

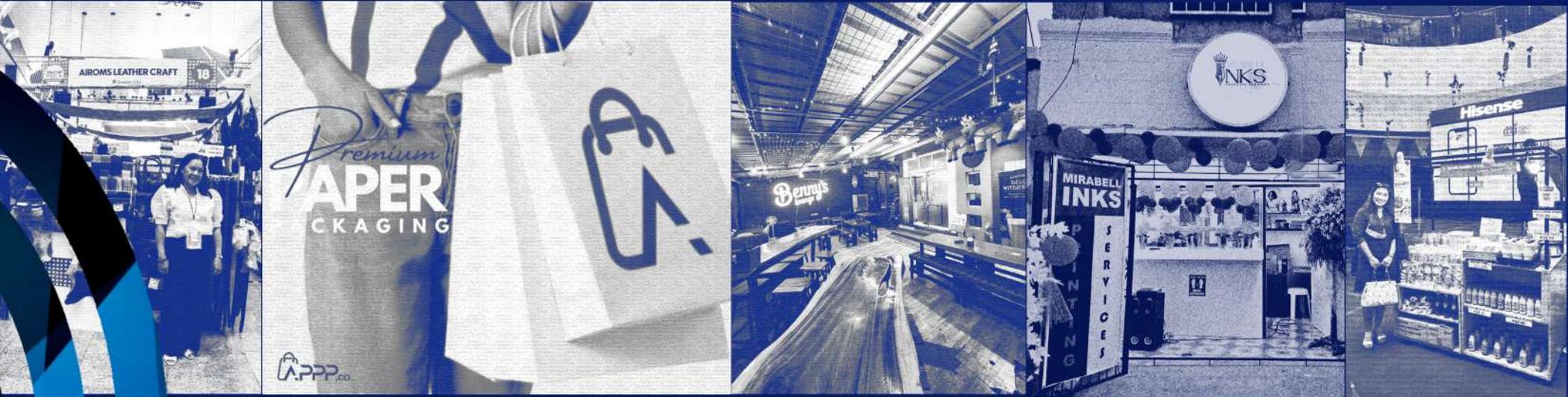
In conclusion, the achievements of the Kapatid Mentor Me Program in 2023 underscore the importance of collaboration, dedication, and empowerment. As we celebrate our mentees and mentors, let's embrace the future with renewed energy, working together for a brighter, more prosperous tomorrow.



Marcelina S. Alcantara, CEO IV
Regional Director
DTI NCRO
KMME-MME Online, Batch 1

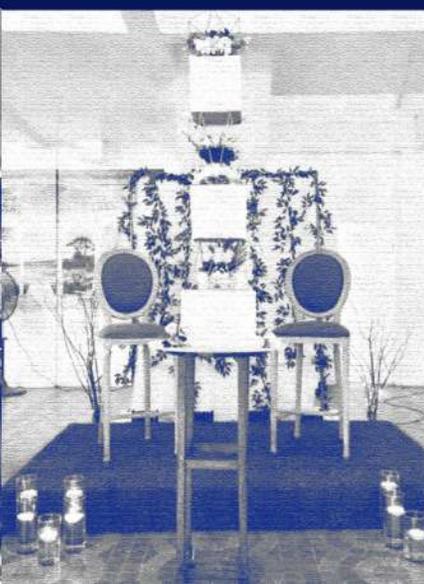


Ma. Sofia G. Narag, CEO V
OIC-Regional Director
DTI NCRO
KMME-MME Online, Batch 2



KAPATID MENTOR ME

Success Stories



Savoring Success: The Irresistible Journey of Big Daddy's Cup - Rising from Adversity to Franchising Triumph

By: Dahlia J. Nuñez
Area 1 | Regional KMME Program Coordinator

In the face of adversity, Big Daddy's Cup, a culinary venture born in the challenging year of 2020, not only weathered the storm but emerged stronger, turning obstacles into stepping stones for success.

Early Dreams and OFW Years: Engr. Gaspay spent his childhood in Leyte and later pursued his college education in Manila, where he has been based since 2003. Raised by his mother and sister, he experienced the common Filipino middle-class struggle of borrowing money for education, a challenge that the family successfully overcame. His father, an OFW and Civil Engineer by profession, played the role of the family's breadwinner, ensuring their needs were met. Despite the physical distance, the family maintained a comfortable life.

From his early years, the dream of having his own business captivated Engr. Gaspay. Throughout his time as an Overseas Filipino Worker (OFW), he consistently urged his wife to save their hard-earned money with the vision that one day, he would return to the country and establish a business. His desire stemmed from the hope of being present with his children, steering away from the childhood scenario he experienced when his father worked abroad, leaving the family behind.

Pursuit of Entrepreneurial Dreams: While childhood dreams of becoming a pilot were economically unattainable, Engr. Gaspay pursued a career in electrical engineering, continuing to practice it as a freelancer. However, his primary focus shifted towards his entrepreneurial journey, notably with his venture, Big Daddy's Cup. The pivotal moment came in 2013

when working abroad, his wife gave birth to their eldest child. Determined to create a different upbringing for his children, Engr. Gaspay formulated a plan during this period, giving himself three more years as an OFW. In 2016, after seven years as an OFW, true to his plan, he returned to the Philippines, marking the commencement of his entrepreneurial journey, and initiated ventures like a cybercafé and a magic mirror photo booth, later transitioning to the food business in 2019. His childhood in Leyte, upbringing with an OFW father, his yearning to be with his family, and the desire to provide a different life for them fueled his entrepreneurial aspirations.

“Being an entrepreneur is totally different from being an employee. We started from scratch and build it bit by bit. I lead my group along the way and at times I'm very strict on the processes and very particular on the output of each team. Also, I value the hard work my team puts in to our company.”

 **Engr. Josemartin Gaspay**
BDC Founder / Owner
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bigdaddyscup@gmail.com





Evolution and Offerings: The genesis of Big Daddy's Cup was a response to a customer need in a cybercafé. Observing guests seeking quick, complete rice cup meals, the brand evolved from six initial offerings to a diverse menu of 17. With an initial capital of Php 40,000, the brand invested in cooking equipment, packaging, and inventory, setting the stage for its culinary journey. Big Daddy's Cup is not just an ordinary silog establishment; it offers a unique culinary experience with its Modern Cheesy Silog Meals. Catering to the tastes of the millennial and Gen-Z population, the menu has evolved from its initial six offerings to a robust selection of 17 delectable choices. This innovation in culinary offerings has been a key factor in the brand's widespread appeal.

Big Daddy's Cup: A Brand with Values: Big Daddy's Cup core values are commitment to quality, integrity, honesty, and respect. The brand, starting as a small food counter in Engr. Gaspay's cybercafé, grew through community bazaars and pop-up stores during the pandemic.

Despite challenges, including the closure of the cybercafé and pandemic restrictions, the brand not only survived but thrived. As the world grappled with the impacts of a global pandemic, rather than stumbling, Big Daddy's Cup took a remarkable stride by extending a helping hand to the community. In 2020, amidst the sudden stoppage of economic activities due to lockdowns, the brand selflessly donated meals to frontliners, checkpoints, and those in need. This act of compassion showcased the brand's commitment to social responsibility. The brand played a crucial role in disaster response, providing warm meals during emergencies. The commitment to community well-being emphasized the power of a warm cup in challenging times. The most memorable times in the brand's history include serving communities affected by flash floods and landslides, leaving a lasting impact on the team.

Turning Challenges into Opportunities:

Acknowledging 2020 as the toughest year in the business world, Big Daddy's Cup used this period as a blessing in disguise. The forced pause prompted the team to re-think, reevaluate, and reconsider their options. This introspective phase led to a transformative decision – the inception of Big Daddy's Cup Franchising.

In 2021, the brand ventured into the realm of franchising, a bold move that proved to be a game-changer. Fast forward to 2023, and Big Daddy's Cup boasts an impressive growth trajectory, with 30 stores in operation, comprising 27 franchisees and 3 company-owned stores. This journey from a single idea to a thriving franchise network showcases resilience, adaptability, and a keen entrepreneurial spirit.

Strategic Expansion: Operating in two different locations strategically during the pandemic exemplifies Big Daddy's Cup's calculated risk-taking. While NCR faced constant lockdowns, the stores

in the provinces continued operations, capitalizing on vibrant economic activity. The brand established a foothold in Luzon, Leyte, and Samar, bringing its famous #sulitsarapmeals to the countryside. In 2021, franchising was introduced, and by 2023, the brand boasted 30 stores, with 27 franchisees and 3 company-owned stores. In 2024, with the economy opening up, plans are underway to open multiple stores in NCR, recognizing it as the biggest market.



“There is no perfect day but rather a satisfying day where all your commitments, workload are finished and overcoming challenges is what makes it special. Everyday is a hustle and grind day for us.”

“A memorable piece of advice from one of the mentors resonates with me: “Alagaan mo ang Negosyo mo kahit gaano ka liit, bandang huli ang Negosyo mo ang mag aalaga sayo.” (Take care of your business no matter how small; in the end, your business will take care of you). This philosophy reinforces my commitment to nurture my business, prioritize my employees, and persistently strive for success.”



“The Mentor Me Program, in my perspective, proved to be incredibly valuable and transformative. It felt like undergoing a mini-MBA in just 11 weeks, providing profound insights into business strategies and equipping me with the knowledge necessary for the continued growth of my business.”

KMME Program and Business Evolution:

As the leader of his company, Engr. Gaspay encountered a point of stagnation, prompting him to seek ways to propel his business forward, seek mentorship, and gain fresh perspectives. This led him to enroll in the KMME-MME (Kapatid Mentor Me Money Market Encounter) Online Program.

According to Engr. Gaspay, the KMME Program had a profound impact on him, imparting crucial lessons in Business Model Canvas (BMC), marketing strategies, and operations enhancement. Learning the BMC provided him with a comprehensive blueprint for Big Daddy's Cup's operations, elevating his understanding of the business for more efficient structuring and operation. KMME equipped him with a deeper understanding of marketing strategies, instrumental in enhancing the business's competitiveness. Additionally, the operations aspect, vital for Big Daddy's Cup, significantly improved post-KMME as Engr. Gaspay, armed with his Business Improvement Plan (BIP), streamlined operations, enhancing productivity, output, and efficiency while minimizing wastage.

Big Daddy's Cup added 9 stores, with more in the pipeline for 2024. The team actively pursued additional training, secured media coverage, and explored government funding opportunities. The brand's focus on quality, affordability, and a modern twist to traditional meals continues to cater to the millennial and Gen-z population. Plans include expanding to NCR, driven by calculated risks and a keen understanding of the market. The KMME program catalyzed growth, shaping Engr. Gaspay's perspective and guiding Big Daddy's Cup toward continued success.

A Vision for the Future: Big Daddy's Cup envisions itself as a household name, catering to diverse palates and expanding its reach across the Philippines. The brand's commitment to quality, affordability, and community welfare positions it as a beacon of success in the culinary landscape.

In the heart of Big Daddy's Cup's success story lies the resilience to transform challenges into opportunities, a dedication to social responsibility, and an unwavering commitment to offering innovative culinary experiences. From humble beginnings to a flourishing franchise, Big Daddy's Cup continues to leave an indelible mark on the Filipino culinary scene. Engr. Gaspay's journey reflects resilience, adaptability, and a commitment to community welfare.



From Sizzle to Success: The Journey of ‘Create Your Own Charcoal Grilled Hotdog and Burgers’ Where Every Bite Says ‘This is Yours

By: Dahlia J. Nuñez
Area 1 | Regional KMME Program Coordinator

“I would describe my entrepreneurial self as someone that likes to explore new things. I am a goal-oriented person who would do whatever it takes to achieve the things I want to achieve. In addition to that, I have no aversion of venturing into the unknown; if I develop an idea, I would plan to make it into action. I am a risk-taker, but I only take the risks if I see it as something worthwhile,”

The name of the brand is CYO Create Your Own Charcoal Grilled Hotdog & Burgers. The slogan is simple: “Sayo To!” in translation means, “This is yours!”. The most appealing feature of CYO’s products is that they allow you to create a burger to your exact specifications. Additionally, the name alludes to adaptability and variety of use.

The pandemic served as a primary impetus for Ms. Avellana to start her own business. In October 2020, CYO was founded in response to COVID-19’s significant effects on comfort food consumption worldwide, not just in the Philippines. When the pandemic broke out, Ms. Avellana had to figure out how to make ends meet in the absence of regular employment. She started selling online and she saw a lot of opportunities. She saw that while charcoal-grilled burgers were popular in other areas, there were no stores yet in Manila that sell the same products. As someone who loves to participate in different motorcycle charity rides, she saw the potential of the business to be appealing to motorcycle riders who love to eat something unique, smoky, and tasty food.

Additionally, she also wanted to incorporate her lifestyle, which is why the menu was also designed to cater to the people who are on a ketogenic diet (very low carb and high fat diet) because they can have as many veggies and beef patty as they want. She considers CYO as a reflection of herself.

While growing up, her family moved around a lot and she spent her formative years in a number of homes with different relatives. She learned how to live independently at a young age, which meant she never really got to enjoy a cushy childhood. She did not have anyone else to rely on but herself. Every day was a struggle to find ways on how to survive so she was not allowed to live a comfortable nor a lavish life. With the help of her father’s meager salary as an Engineer, alongside her own hard work, she was able to attend excellent educational institutions, which had a profound impact on shaping her character, outlook, and principles. Wanting to succeed in life stemmed primarily from the difficulties she faced as a teenager.

“My upbringing was a major factor in shaping my drive to succeed. I learned firsthand how challenging it was to get by without a regular income and a cushion of savings for emergencies. I didn’t want to be in that situation for the rest of my life, so I always work harder to change it. I yearned for a life free from constant anxiety about the future,” according to her.

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f [cyohotdogburger](https://www.facebook.com/cyohotdogburger)

She started with a P50,000.00 initial capital in putting up her first store strategically located at Tejeron Street, Sta. Ana Manila. She considers her employees as one of the reasons that keep her business going. She mentioned that she had once dreamt of becoming a doctor but practicality turned her to a different path. However, empathizing with other people was a constant in her life and that was why she hired caretakers, construction workers, and mostly the disadvantaged ones who are competent enough but lack necessary experience as her employees. However, she made sure that they'd be given experience through on-the-job training. As a business owner, she thought it is rewarding to know that she can provide opportunities for the underprivileged and out-of-school youth in her community.

She claims CYO as the only business in Manila that offers charcoal-grilled hotdogs and burgers making it a healthy alternative to typical fried burgers. In addition, CYO allows customers to experience and customize their charcoal-grilled hotdogs and burgers for a very affordable price of 200 pesos up to 1000 pesos. As of now, CYO offers a wide variety of creative, delicious hotdogs and burgers crafted with charcoal-grilled perfection in three branches with the addition of its 3rd and newest location in Zobel Roxas St., San Andres, Manila, last May 2023, after more than two and a half years since its inception.



She started out knowing very little about running a business, so things got off to a rocky start. The only thing in her mind then, was that she needed to sell to keep the business going. Additionally, CYO in the beginning was similar to a birthday party without guests – it was dull and lifeless as she did not know what was its value in the society. She still had yet to identify her target market before enrolling in the KMME-MME Online Program of the Department of Trade and Industry National Capital Regional Office (DTI-NCRO). Before enrolling in the program, she already had a feeling that she was going to have a great time.

She valued the opportunity to engage in in-depth conversation with owners of successful businesses. In addition to that, she was thankful that she was able to find people who could serve as good examples. She was grateful for several businessowners whom she had met who were very experienced, skilled, knowledgeable, and willing to share through the KMME program and the occasional 3Ms on Wheels. She saw all of these as opportunities to develop professionally and help her expand her business.

Having attended the program and met some of the mentors face-to-face fueled her desire to grow into someone who is capable of having the same influence for other people.

“In my everyday life, I have a lot of tasks to accomplish as someone who has a lot of responsibilities – as a mother, employee, and entrepreneur. It is important for me to continuously make progress and organize each day to make sure I accomplish something. However, I know that it’s not healthy to focus solely on work; doing so increases the risk of burnout, so I also schedule time to spend with my loved ones outside of the office and make an effort to foster positive relationships with my clients and colleagues. A perfect day for me is a day that ends with me feeling fulfilled and having a happy heart.” She added, “When I was starting out, a mentor told me, “Business is not by the book; the information that you will learn from other businessowners’ experience is much more valuable than any of the things you can learn in the books.” I’ve always believed this to be true; I’ve learned more from the successes and failures of others than I have from any book.”

She acknowledged the mentorship experience as very helpful in helping her grow her business. Acknowledging CYO's significance in the larger community is an important part of this. What she learned is that, it takes more than just a desire to make a profit in order to keep a business afloat. So, she determined CYO's value propositions, which include providing a healthier cooking option that is better than typical frying (charcoal-grilling), pricing products affordably while still making portions large that can be shared, guaranteeing that all ingredients used are fresh, and providing real-time delivery via in-house delivery person and/or third-party apps like Food Panda and Grab. As a result of her improved understanding of how to properly manage the financial aspects of her company, the charts and tables that she saw became much less intimidating. Having this information helped her determine where and how the budget should be allocated.

Another realization is that, they need to determine who exactly those customers were that CYO was aiming to attract. It was very crucial to zero in on their ideal customer. In addition, CYO teamed up with well-known delivery services, cutting-edge tech companies, public and private sector organizations, food bloggers, event planners, and trade groups. A lot of doors of opportunities opened up for the company as a result of her putting into practice what she learned from the program.

The KMME training helped her boost her confidence. By actively participating in a wide range of events, she is now more confident presenting her company's profile in the eyes of potential investors and business partners because of the experience and can now articulate the unique value proposition it offers.



CYO has reached several important benchmarks. She believes that keeping track of each achievement is important because it enables her to observe her company's development over time. Additionally, she keeps track of the milestones and target achievements by having an improvement plan – something she also learned from the program.

“It was important for me to learn what I still do not know about business because I wanted to improve myself and live my life in accordance with the values that I hold dear. I was aware that my company needed a structure that was more robust and comprehensive. Rather than having to figure everything out on my own, KMME provided me with the chance to learn from experienced mentors. I must admit that I knew very little about government resources available to business owners before I started attending Mentor Me. Discovering Mentor Me was the first time I became aware of the various programs that are made available to MSMEs by the government.”

The positive outlook plus her continuous hard work must have helped her to enjoy and reap the success of her entrepreneurial journey. After all, her sizzle for success is never-ending.

Freshness on the Go: Crafting Healthy Delights with Delicious Ajar

By: Nathaniel Andre I. Cadampog
Area 2 | KMME Program Coordinator

“We create delicious salad recipes to satisfy the local plate”

Delicious Ajar is a food-based business specializing in freshly made salads packaged in a jar based in Makati, Philippines. The business is owned by Monique Wilson who wanted to provide guilt-free meals that are healthy.

Ms. Monique started the business Match Merchandising in 2019. She noticed that the rise of apartments and condos leads to a fast-paced lifestyle. This lifestyle accumulates stress and leads to an unhealthy lifestyle. To manage it, sometimes there is a tendency for a person to have an unhealthy eating habit.

Ms. Monique saw this as an opportunity to start a business focused on providing a healthy option for people who want a healthy lifestyle. She wanted her customers to avoid eating rice and grains. Instead, she made her own recipes to make salad an enticing meal to eat. For the raw materials, Ms. Monique uses local produce like okra, ampalaya, and talbos to entice people that vegetables can be delicious and can for sure make them learn to love eating veggies all over again.

Delicious Ajar gives its customers a variety of healthy food to choose from. It's not only salad they provide but also healthy snacks, poke bowls, and ginger ales.

The COVID-19 lockdown made Delicious Ajar dynamic. Harnessing the power of social media, it made their home-based business thrive into the uncertainty of the pandemic. Their marketing efforts made them seen in the digital world.

However, having a strong social media presence is not enough, there is still something missing in their business that Ms. Monique can still improve on.

“Hulog kayo (DTI-NCRO) ng langit sakin. That is how I would say it. I didn't expect a lot from it I'm more than grateful”

This is where the Kapatid Mentor Me (KMME) was able to help Ms. Monique. When they were thinking about expanding, they were invited to the KMME program. It gave them the business structure they needed and a goal to move forward. She felt their confidence soar because after the program they had gained the knowledge that they used as a compass to navigate in the business world.

“Take the course and keep learning and be a sponge. That is all I can say kasi you are never too old to start something.”

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Transforming Spaces: Adapting Event Styling Services for Safe Celebrations Amidst the Pandemic

By: Nathaniel Andre I. Cadampog
Area 2 | KMME Program Coordinator

Karen A. Event Styling Services is a full-service event styling company based in Manila, Philippines. Led by Founder Karen Abrecea-Dela Cruz, the company specializes in creating unique, simple yet sophisticated events that capture the ambiance, style, and character of each client.

Ms. Karen grew up witnessing the entrepreneurial and corporate journey of her parents and that led her to have a keen interest in making money at a very young age. After living in New York for almost a decade, she realized the enormous potential of displaying one's talents and offering services to those who need them. This insight inspired her to become an entrepreneur.

The business idea came about when Ms. Karen moved to the Philippines after working as an Events Manager in NYC. She saw a gap in the market for high-end event styling services and with years of experience she ventured into the styling business.

Karen A. Event Styling Services helped customers by providing them with custom event styling that enhances their events and leaves a lasting impression on their guests. Whether it is a product launch, wedding, social gathering, or corporate event, we strive to create an experience that captures the essence of each client and reflects their vision.

During the pandemic, the biggest challenge Ms. Karen faced in running her business was the uncertainty of the situation. The impact of the pandemic on the economy, government policies, and customer behavior was unprecedented, and it was challenging to predict the future. Additionally, the lockdown measures imposed by the government severely affected her business operations, with the forced closure of malls and restricted movement of customers.



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According to Ms. Karen, it was all by chance that she was invited to be part of the Kapatid Mentor Me (KMME) program and she was intrigued by the opportunity to learn from experienced entrepreneurs and to be guided by mentors with a wealth of knowledge in various fields. The mentorship program provided Ms. Karen with guidance and support in all aspects of her business, but the biggest benefits were in marketing and branding, financial management, and team building. She was able to develop effective marketing campaigns that helped attract more customers and revenues.

One of the main milestones of Ms. Karen since she joined the KMME program is the increase in sales. Before joining the mentorship program, her business was struggling to reach high sales numbers. However, with the guidance and support of the mentors, she was able to analyze, target, and improve her marketing strategies. This milestone gave Ms. Karen the confidence and motivation to continue growing her business and expanding her customer base.

“As an entrepreneur, I aim to be a servant leader. I strive to learn from others by keeping an open mind and being willing to be taught. I also prioritize listening to feedback from my team and implementing effective change when necessary. I believe that effective communication and empathy are crucial for a positive work environment.”

- Karen Abrececa-Dela Cruz



Handcrafted Hope: Airom's Leather Story

By: Jezza Jae Dispo
Area 3 | KMME Program Coordinator

Ayalyn's love for leathercraft bloomed as a childhood fascination. Watching raw materials transform into objects of beauty and utility sparked a fire in her soul. Though life's challenges diverted her from finishing a college drafting course, drawing and design always remained her forte. As a mother, her dream of elevating her family's lifestyle became the driving force behind her passion.

Selling leather was their family's primary source of income. Her husband has been her partner in the business. As such, they need not look further into creating a new business. Even with the lack of knowledge in making leather items, they gave their best in studying the craft. They spent countless hours honing their skills, mastering the intricate techniques of cutting, stitching, and molding leather into timeless pieces. Ayalyn's undying passion for the arts and her husband's undying support for her soon blossomed into a small, home-based business. With a modest investment of Php 6,000 and a small sewing machine, the couple embarked on a journey to share their love for leathercraft in their community.

In June 2017, fate smiled upon Ayalyn. She was invited to join the DTI KMME program during its launch, where she embarked on a journey of knowledge and empowerment. Completing 10 modular sessions, including a triumphant Business Improvement Plan pitch, proved pivotal. Before graduating, the program guided them through formalizing their business, from registering the name to obtaining all necessary permits. This became the first stepping stone on Ayalyn's path to further DTI involvement, including entrepreneurial training and participation in trade fairs. The KMME BIP pitching, in particular, proved transformative, boosting Ayalyn's confidence to effortlessly market her creations.

“Nakaka-enjoy naman at madami akong nakilalang kaibigan na hanggang ngayon best friend kami, parang kapamilya na rin. Kaya wala akong absent no'n until naka-graduate ako ng first batch. Malaking tulong ang pag-aaral dahil nagkaroon ng direksyon ang aming negosyo pati sa paghawak ng pera.”

“Favorite kong module noong nag-aaral ako ay product development kasi doon ko na experience na pagkulang pala sa development ang product mo, malalamangan ka ng mga competitors mo. Atsaka dapat continues ang pag-innovate, more designs para laging may bago sa'yo at para masabik ang mga customers mo pag laging may bagong design experience.”

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The early days of the business were challenging, as Airoms struggled to gain recognition amidst a sea of established competitors. However, the couple's unwavering dedication and meticulous craftsmanship began to set their work apart. Their creations, imbued with their love for the craft and their deep understanding of leather, exuded an elegance and quality that resonated with customers. Word of Airoms' exceptional leatherwork gradually spread and began to attract a loyal clientele. Its reputation grew, and soon, its creations were gracing the hands and homes of people not only in Quezon City but across Luzon.

“Nag-increase ang aking sales productivity at nagkaroon ako ng kiosk sa Ayala Mall Fairview Terraces. Nagkaroon na ako ng sinusupplyan na clients in Mindoro. Dahil sa mga bazaars tumaas ang sales at dumami mga stocks ko. Sa ngayon, meron akong mga kapitbahay na walang trabaho, sila ang tinuturuan ng Mister ko pati ng mga anak at apo ko na gumawa ng leather products. Ayun din ang pangarap ko para sa kanila, ang mayroon silang trabaho at pang-gastos.”

“Lahat ng mga seminars ni DTI always present ako dahil gusto kung matuto pa. Bilang KMME graduate, malaki ang nagawa nito sa aking buhay. Utang ko lahat ng kung anong meron ako ngayon sa DTI. Atsaka ang mga tao pag sinabi mo under DTI tiwala sila sa produkto na binebenta mo.”

Even as Airoms flourished, Ayalyn remained rooted in her passion. Every piece crafted bore the same unwavering passion and attention to detail that defined her work from the very beginning. She meticulously sourced the finest materials, hand-stitching each design with the utmost care, ensuring every Airoms creation was a testament to her dedication. Ayalyn's success extended far beyond her own business. She became an inspiration to aspiring artisans, sharing her knowledge and expertise through workshops and community programs. Her belief in nurturing the next generation of leathercrafters fueled her commitment to ensuring the craft she loved would continue to thrive. This dedication was further recognized when she was chosen as part of the Kababaihan Dangal ng Bayan of the Socio Civic Society in her local barangay.

“I would recommend KMME to other micro and small entrepreneurs lalo na sa magsisimula palang. Laging lumahok sa mga seminars at sumali sa mga talakayan kung meron. Libre ito at panahon lang puhunan mo pero ang matutunan mo higit pa sa nag-aral ka ng buong taon. Hindi na rin ito maalís sa puso at isipan mo at para may kumpyansa sa sarili at matuto.”



For Ayalyn, the KMME program was more than just a source of knowledge. It was a gateway to opportunity and success, a roadmap that guided her journey from a shy entrepreneur to a confident business owner.

Through the program, she expanded her network, attracting collaborations with multiple government agencies like the Department of Agriculture, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and the Quezon City Government, showcasing Airoms' exceptional craftsmanship at their trade fairs. Airoms' success story is a heartwarming testament to the transformative power of the couple's passion, perseverance, and the power of handcrafted artistry. Their journey from a humble workshop to a thriving business exemplifies the enduring appeal of traditional craftsmanship in a world increasingly dominated by mass production. Through her dedication and artistry, Ayalyn has not only created beautiful leather goods but has also preserved a rich cultural heritage, leaving a legacy to her children that will continue to inspire generations to come.



Marc Daniel's Premium Soya Products: Soy Success!

By: Jezza Jae Dispo
Area 3 | KMME Program Coordinator

Lisa Zafra is a strong advocate of health and fitness. Her commitment to proper nutrition and a healthy lifestyle is expressed through Marc Daniel's Food Products, a business she started in 2009 with the support of her husband. Before she began working on her business idea, she was an avid consumer of chilled taho sold by a churchmate who later helped her in launching a business with the goal of providing healthy options in food and drink.

Willed and positive about her soy business, Lisa transformed the 25 square meters of their front yard in Quezon City into a commissary. Her spouse, who shares her enthusiasm for this cause, oversaw the production and operation. He studied and developed their soy products by trial and error. Persistent on their research and development (R&D), they were able to develop delectable and nutritious products such as Tofu, Chilled Taho, and Soy Milk. The business quickly became popular. People loved the taste of Marc Daniel's soy products and appreciated the fact that they were made with fresh, natural ingredients. Lisa and her husband also worked hard to build relationships with hospitals and school canteens, which helped them to grow their customer base.

Now, almost 14 years in the business, Lisa recalls their challenging journey during the pandemic. She revealed that along with most entrepreneurs, the economic crisis had hit them hard with the closing of schools. In 2020, Ms. Lisa enrolled in the KMME Program of the DTI NCRO wherein she met other entrepreneurs who were also struggling to keep their businesses afloat. During times of turmoil and uncertainty, she has found refuge and comfort in KMME. She was able to enhance her understanding of supply and value chain management, human resource management, accounting and financial management, and business law. She was also able to create a business model for Marc Daniel's and present her business improvement plan.

Thanks to the lessons they learned in KMME, Marc Daniel's Food Products was able to weather the storm of the pandemic. Lisa is proud to be able to share her love of soy products with others and she is committed to providing her customers with tasty and healthy food options. She testifies that through lessons she gained in KMME, she was able to increase their gross sales by 15% and now has 6 employees. With their deepened commitment to R&D, they were able to develop a variety of vege products and cold-pressed juices.

Thru DTI, they were able to tap DOST's SET-UP Program for improved production equipment. Today, the shelf life of their products has increased significantly. Some of their products are already FDA-registered and export ready. Marc Daniel's is also an exhibitor in various DTI trade fair programs showcasing their locally made healthy soy products.

Lisa is proud of what she and her husband have accomplished with Marc Daniel's Food Products. She shares her most unforgettable advice from a mentor. "Strive and maintain positivity toward reaching your goals as an entrepreneur." A powerful motivation for overcoming the dark days of the pandemic crisis.

Lisa's story is an inspiration to other entrepreneurs. It shows that if you follow your passion, take risks, work hard, and be persistent, you can achieve your goals.

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Dreams Really Do Come True!

By: Danny Mariano and Jheric Saracho
Area 4 | KMME Program Coordinators

It was around 2014 when a group of friends decided to put up a place where they could hang out, drink, and dine. This alcohol-induced idea was always on the table but no one really put things in motion. That is until JB Naval Prim took the lead to make their dream tambayan into reality.

Unknown to his peers, it was his lifelong dream to put up a restaurant. He was supposed to study culinary arts in college but took up Electrical Engineering instead. Along with Ash Constantino, Dave Ortega, Abryan Manalansang, Gem Manalansang, Neil Santiago, and James Prim, they searched for a cook willing to help them come up with recipes. It didn't take them long to find Ryan Reyes – who completed the team.

Recipe testing, also an excuse for them to hang out, occurred almost every night. The team was deep into recipe testing when the blueprint of the restaurant the team was presented to them. It served as a wake-up call, making them realize that this is not just a crazy idea anymore, this is now real business. With that, the pressure was on to complete the menu and jump-start the planning and construction. The team was pressured to come up with a dish that would serve as the foundation of Benny's Lounge. The team set up a small test kitchen. They purchased a small electric oven for cheap. They wanted to test it, but how? Cupcakes? Roast chicken? No. Boneless lechon belly. The initial test was a success, and they wanted to put it on the menu. Basic food won't cut it so they tried to find a balance in familiarity and innovation which resulted in their main product: The Benny Belly.

Being insatiable, the team pushed the limits of the product, marrying it with the concept of another. Theoretically, the idea would work. Moist interior with a chicharon-like exterior. That was the goal, but many kilos of pork later, no progress was recorded. The team was on the brink of giving up when their endless research and testing paid off. The Benny Belly was born. This was intended to be and is still the flagship product of Benny's Lounge. Upon the birth of this product, the team wanted to offer the product to the market as soon as possible, they started to market it pending the completion of the shop. The lack of a physical outlet didn't matter since they marketed using social media and also provided free delivery.

The restaurant opened its doors on August 24, 2016. Since then, they have been focused on the mission of the restaurant – To elevate the quality of food within Malabon. This does not start and end here. There is still a lot in store for Benny's Lounge. Watch out!



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A Delay is Not a Denial

By: Danny Mariano and Jheric Saracho
Area 4 | KMME Program Coordinators

Lea dreamt of becoming a fashion or interior designer but was influenced to take up a degree in accountancy for it always leads to a stable career, they say. She has a deep appreciation for design and a keen eye for color combinations. Despite her love for putting things together in a visually appealing way, she expresses frustration over not being able to draw proficiently. Throughout her journey of self-discovery, she had found it challenging to pinpoint a specific talent or passion – feeling like a jack of all trades. While unable to pursue her dream as a professional designer, she now channels her passion by creating designs for various items in their product line.

“The future is not something we enter.
The future is something we create.”

Having foreseen the future, her mother designated her as the Company President, intending it as a legacy passed down to her. Initially disinterested in paper bags and unimpressed by the existing designs, she took over with a vision to enhance the design portfolio – infusing personal style and taste. Leveraging tools such as Canva, she tried crafting their own paper bag designs, which proved successful as some of these creations are still being bought up to now.

“Hindi pinupulot ang pera.”



An unfortunate incident compelled her to venture into entrepreneurship. Her mother contracted an infection during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and passed away after a month-long battle with the virus. At that time, Lea was also expecting her first child and the convergence of these life-altering events meant navigating through profound changes while coping with the loss of her mother.

Amidst the challenges, she found herself thrust into the role of being a new mother, and took responsibility for managing her late mother's business to ensure the welfare of the employees who were part of the company that her mom had worked hard to establish. Her mom had diligently built two enterprises — a general printing partnership in Cubao and a paper bag company in Caloocan. Handling these responsibilities during the pandemic's uncertainty and volatility was exceptionally challenging. One of her regrets was not having the chance to seek guidance from her mom on how to run these businesses.

Taking the reins, she hit the ground running at the general printing business in Cubao, as it was her mom's primary enterprise and the cornerstone of all her possessions. The transition was far from smooth, and Lea had to rapidly learn the ropes, facing the absence of comprehensive work processes and documentation. Engaging with the staff, collaborating with paper suppliers for swatches, and gaining insights into their specific tasks became integral to her learning curve. Fortunately, an individual from the printing industry provided her with basics of cost estimation, enabling her to quickly understand the essential concepts and handle them independently.



Drawing from her background as a CPA and her affinity for cost accounting during college, she swiftly grasped the heart of the business. She acquired knowledge about various paper types, honed measurement techniques, and practiced cost estimation. Over time, she developed the skills to navigate the intricacies of the entire production process, from initiation to completion. The journey involved experiencing numerous rejections and engaging with customers to explain the reasons behind failures, providing her with valuable lessons learned through hands-on experience.

“I put my feet on the ground and learned the hard way.”

At times, Lea finds herself dreaming about her mom questioning the accuracy of her cost estimates. Through her learned experiences, she had come to understand and appreciate her mom’s constant reminder: “hindi pinupulot ang pera”. This sentiment has deeply resonated with her, emphasizing the challenges of earning money.

As a result of these experiences, Lea realized that her inclination was not towards the general printing business. She is not fond of working on printing jobs without control over their designs, constrained by their specifications. On the other hand, she also manages the paper bag business, albeit on a part-time basis, visiting once a week. In this aspect of the business, she has full control as the Company President. The operations are straightforward, involving the assembly of paper bags supplied to SM Stores nationwide.



Given her lack of control on the other side of the business, and the realization that general printing wasn’t her forte, a collective decision was made to withdraw their shares in the business partnership. Her focus shifted toward the paper bag and paper packaging. In 2022, Lea was fully immersed in the venture and began exploring diverse designs for paper bags and packaging. During this period, her husband joined her in managing the business – committed to nurturing its growth and unlocking its full potential. Despite not having backgrounds in printing and packaging, they leveraged their collective experience, expertise, and insights from previous careers to reorganize the business and propel it toward its maximum capacity. Their initial initiatives were to embark on a rebranding journey, establish an online presence through a website and social media, and set up e-commerce stores on platforms like Lazada and Shopee.

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Turning Beans Into Dreams: The BLAC. Coffee Shop Journey with Arlene L. Tulalian

By: Rizaldy Cantimbuhan
CITE | KMME Program Coordinator

Arlene Libao-Tulalian is the founder of BLAC. Coffee Shop, located at Lilac St., cor. Kanlaon St., Marikina City. BLAC. (Bad Latte Art Coffee) is a hybrid coffee-counter and fast dine-in concept that serves quality coffee, pastries, and sandwiches. They are known for serving quality coffee and at the same time, as an eco-friendly coffee shop in the city.

Arlene was born in Marikina City. Their family owned a neighborhood bakery that started in the late 90's and this was her first exposure to entrepreneurship. Her father would normally ask her to help out during peak hours of the day, especially the morning 'pandesal' rush. As a teenager, she started to learn business fundamentals from her parents as she saw them managing the day-to-day operations of the business.

This experience inspired her to take a degree in Hotel & Restaurant Management. She finished her course at the University of Santo Tomas, with honors (Cum Laude). After graduation, she got offers from hotels and restaurants but took the risk of joining an emerging industry during that time which is the BPO Industry. She started as a front-line agent and worked her way up as a Senior Operations Manager. She handled a diverse set of clients that expanded her expertise in Customer Service, Operations Management, and Quality. Her experience in managing a business in a corporate setting further strengthened her skills in entrepreneurship.



Arlene is a believer in continuous learning by acquiring new knowledge and skill sets. She took a Masters of Business Administration at UP Diliman but only completed a year. In 2017, she got a license as an Insurance Advisor, Certified Investment Solicitor and also upskilled herself as a Registered Financial Planner.

In 2020, she decided to pursue the career that she's been wanting to do since day 1 – which is to be an entrepreneur. Her great influence is her husband who supported her all throughout her entrepreneurship journey. Her trait of being conservative and her husband's trait of being a risk-taker strike a good balance in decision-making in their business endeavors.

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She received an invitation to join KMME (Kapatid Mentor Me) Program in 2022. She grabbed this rare opportunity to learn first-hand the experiences of well-renowned entrepreneurs who are successful in their fields. She finished the program in November 2022 with flying colors, being part of the top achievers in the batch. Her takeaways from this program are learning the importance of entrepreneurial mind-setting, values formation, and creating a business model canvas. She also had a great appreciation for the activity where they created their business improvement plan and received coaching from her mentor.

In just a few months since she finished the program, she implemented improvement plans and learnings from KMME brought sales growth through operations efficiency and increased profitability in her business. As of this writing, her team is now preparing to expand the brand by opening the business for a franchise. Aside from BLAC Coffee Shop, she also diversified her businesses – co-founding an auto detailing shop (Kleenlabel Car Care Center) and a start-up renewable energy company (East Cornerstone Development Corporation). Arlene continues to lead her businesses with compassion, integrity, grit, and eagerness for learning.





Threads of Triumph: Mira Angelica B. Asuzano’s Resilient Journey with Mirabellinks Printing Services

Jointly written by: Rizaldy Cantimbulan, CITE KMME Program Coordinator and Dahlia J. Nuñez, Regional KMME Program Coordinator

Mira Angelica B. Asuzano’s story stands as a testament to resilience and ambition in the vibrant city of Marikina, where dreams intertwine with challenges. As the driving force behind Mirabellinks Printing Services, Mira’s journey unfolds as a beacon of inspiration, marked by her relentless pursuit of dreams despite facing unprecedented adversities.

Growing up in a home shared by three families, Mira experienced the dynamics of a tight-knit community. During her formative years, financial challenges ebbed and flowed, with her mother, a dedicated government employee, serving as the family’s breadwinner. While life presented both comfortable and challenging moments, Mira’s upbringing instilled in her the values of faith, goodness, and a deep connection to her roots.

Mira’s childhood dreams of becoming a singer and a lawyer, like the verses of a ballad, shifted and evolved as she grew older. Mira’s mother shouldered the burden, taking loans to fund her studies. Mira persevered on her academic journey which led her to a Bachelor’s Degree in Entertainment Multimedia and Computing, Majoring in Digital Animation, and a pursuit of a Juris Doctor.

Mira found herself on a unique journey. Life took unexpected turns, and fate had a different path for Mira – a path that intertwined with her mother’s dream of establishing a printing shop. This led her to a new dream – to ensure the success of her family’s business. With an initial capital of Php 50,000, Mirabellinks Printing Services was conceived. Armed with her multimedia expertise, Mira played a pivotal role in realizing and nurturing this dream.

Mirabellinks Printing Services faced significant challenges, especially during the tumultuous times of the pandemic. Relocating the business and unforeseen equipment breakdowns pushed them to the brink as if fate were testing their resilience. Adding to the adversities, Mira’s life took a turn for the worse when she suffered a debilitating accident, leaving her physically and mentally strained. Despite the financial hardships and personal setbacks, Mira’s unwavering determination to fight for her dreams remained steadfast. In the vibrant city of Marikina, where dreams intertwine with challenges, Mira Angelica B. Asuzano’s entrepreneurial journey unfolds through the narrative of Mirabellinks Printing Services. A tale woven with threads of childhood dreams, family bonds, and unexpected adversities, Mira’s story is a testament to determination, resilience, and ultimate success.

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Mirabellinks Printing Services evolved to offer a spectrum of services, from tarpaulin printing to personalized items like T-shirts, mugs, and more. Expanding into graphic design and social media services, the business catered to a diverse clientele, including schools, organizations, and companies. Mirabellinks Printing Services has become a positive force in the community, meeting the printing needs of non-profit organizations, schools, and companies. Remarkable stories include printing T-shirts for election volunteers and creating “Makabayan” tote bags in honor of a national artist.

While Mira does not hold the title of the sole boss, her family’s collective effort exemplifies the strength of family-centric entrepreneurship. Mirabellinks Printing Services became a symbol of resilience, family unity, and entrepreneurial spirit. Despite facing adversity, Mira’s vivid vision for the business shines as a testament to unwavering belief and determination.

In 2022, Ms. Mira joined the DTI and PCE Kapatid Mentor Me Program – Money Market Online Program (KMME-MME Online Program), a catalyst for growth and knowledge. Mira’s decision to join the Kapatid Mentor Me (KMME) program was fueled by a thirst for knowledge in business. The program provided invaluable lessons, emphasizing the business model canvas, e-commerce, and digital marketing. Marketing functions and sales significantly benefited from the mentorship, propelling Mirabellinks towards sustainable growth.

Launching the business in the face of pandemic challenges was indeed a bold move and unwavering determination, presenting initial challenges in gaining customers. Despite the hurdles, Mirabellinks Printing Services survived the first year and successfully gained customers. Amid financial hardships and personal setbacks, Mira’s determination to fight for her dreams remained unshaken. In 2023, as Mirabellinks Printing Services faced the perfect storm, Mira applied lessons from the KMME Program, embracing e-commerce to navigate through tumultuous times to sustain the business during turbulent times.



As Mirabellinks Printing Services continues on the path to financial recovery, Mira’s resilience and unwavering commitment remain undiminished. Mirabellinks is not just a business success story; it is a source of inspiration for entrepreneurs daring to dream amid life’s trials. Mira’s vivid vision stands as a testament to the belief that success will be achieved in God’s perfect time.

In the face of adversity, Mirabellinks Printing Services remains a beacon of hope, symbolizing the triumph of resilience, family unity, and entrepreneurial spirit. Mira Angelica B. Asuzano’s journey encapsulates the essence of the KMME Program – a catalyst for growth, resilience, and success in the face of unprecedented challenges.





Ms. Sylvia M. Ron | Regional SMERA Program Coordinator

SME Roving Academy (SMERA) is a continuous learning program for the development of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to become competitive in the domestic and international markets. Its main strategies contain:

1. Integration of the business development services for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) at the national and local levels.
2. Establishment of the Provincial, Regional, and National Entrepreneurship Development Networks
3. Management of an inclusive promotion program.

SME Roving Academy

By: Sylvia M. Ron
Regional SMERA Program Coordinator

The important role of MSMEs in the economy cannot be discounted as they create jobs and contribute to economic growth significantly. With the increasing competition in the market, the DTI-NCRO has recognized that education and training provide key benefits in improving the skills, competencies, and knowledge needed by MSMEs to run their businesses more efficiently, make smarter decisions, and be able to adapt to technological and market changes including regulatory requirements. For CY-2023, a total of 234 trainings were conducted to make NCR-based MSMEs more productive, competitive and future-ready.

The Table below provides the number of trainings conducted and the beneficiaries trained per Area:

| Area/Division | No. of SMERA Runs | Total Number of Training Beneficiaries |
|---|-------------------|--|
| Area 1 (Pasay, Manila, Parañaque) | 52 | 2,280 |
| Area 2 (Makati, Pasig, Muntinlupa, Las Pinas, Pateros) | 47 | 1,602 |
| Area 3 (Mandaluyong, San Juan, Quezon City) | 58 | 3,353 |
| Area 4 (CAMANAVA) | 36 | 3,162 |
| CITE (Marikina) | 41 | 1,891 |
| Total | 234 | 12,288 |




Number of SMERA Runs
234

Total Number of Training Beneficiaries
12,288

Homeless Kitchen

By: Kwin Kehndee Arroyo
Area 1 | SMERA Program Coordinator



Dorothy C. Remegio
*Owner of Homeless Kitchen
Ermita, Manila*

Dorothy C. Remegio, the driving force behind Homeless Kitchen, was honored to share her journey of compassion and entrepreneurship. At 42 years old, her passion for serving others led her to establish Homeless Kitchen, nestled at Stall No. 14 in Senior Citizen Rizal Park, Ermita, Manila. Her business specializes in the production and distribution of honey lemon ginger tea, grilled delicacies, and assorted beverages. With a heart for serving others and a vision for social impact, her journey embodies resilience, compassion, and entrepreneurial spirit.

The discovery of the DTI NCRO Program came through the government's initiatives related to livelihood programs. Intrigued by the prospect of enhancing her business, she decided to utilize the resources available through the "Isang Libong Araw Tungo sa Kaunlaran ng Kabuhayan" program of her organization (Kilometro Zero Organization).

Through the DTI-NCRO, she received invaluable support in Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbago at Ginhawa (PPG) Program and participation in SMERA seminars. The knowledge gained from the seminars and assistance provided by DTI-NCRO immensely contributed to her business's growth and improvement.

Like many, she faced significant challenges due to the pandemic, making it difficult to sustain her livelihood. However, through the PPG and seminar initiatives, she gained crucial insights into growing her business amidst adversity. Despite the challenges, her business continued to strive and diligently implemented the knowledge acquired during the DTI training sessions.

A significant achievement was her contribution to the Kilometro Zero Organization and enriching the "Isang Libong Araw Tungo sa Kaunlaran ng Kabuhayan" program for small-scale vendors. The DTI-NCRO Program's contribution to her success cannot be overstated. The knowledge imparted has been instrumental in navigating the complexities of running a business.

To her fellow MSMEs, she would advise embracing patience, actively participating in seminars, and diligently implementing learned strategies for business success.

Looking ahead, she anticipates continuing to benefit from the partnership with DTI-NCRO through further seminars and ongoing assistance, ensuring sustained growth and development for her business.

The DTI-NCRO SME Roving Academy Program has been a catalyst for her business's success, providing invaluable support, guidance, and resources essential for thriving in today's competitive market landscape. She's grateful for the opportunities and looks forward to further collaboration with DTI-NCRO in her journey towards continued growth and prosperity.

In the aftermath of the pandemic, businesses worldwide faced the daunting task of rebuilding and adapting to a new economic landscape. Among the success stories that emerged during this period of transition is the inspiring journey of Ms. Floriza Herrera Sarmiento, the owner of “Flosarm Enterprises” or Flosarm Bag. A bag store located in the heart of Taguig City. Ms. Floriza always participates in the programs of DTI like the Kapatid Mentor Me (KMME), OTOP, and Regional Trade Fairs.

Flosarm Bag had weathered the storm of the pandemic with resilience and determination. Despite the challenges of lockdowns, supply chain disruptions, and shifting consumer behavior, Ms. Floriza refused to let adversity define her business’s future. Instead, she embraced innovation, creativity, and unwavering commitment to her vision.

With restrictions limiting in-person shopping experiences, Ms. Floriza swiftly adapted her business model to meet the demands of the digital age. Recognizing the potential of e-commerce, she boosted her social media allowing customers to browse and purchase her diverse array of bags from the comfort of their homes. Ms. Floriza cultivated a thriving online community, fostering connections with her existing and new customers. While embracing the digital transformation, Ms Floriza still found himself at a crossroads, grappling with the daunting prospect of keeping her business afloat.

Last September 26, the DTI-NCRO Area 2 under the SME Roving Academy (SMERA) program in partnership with Simbayanan Ni Maria Multi-Purpose Cooperative (SNMMP), came up with a seminar entitled “Entrepreneurial Mind-setting” that aims to reignite, empowering the members of the Cooperative to unleash their full potential as entrepreneurs and change-makers.

Ms. Floriza eagerly seized the opportunity to participate in the seminar and gained invaluable insights into the mental framework, attitudes, and beliefs that are characteristic of a successful entrepreneur. This seminar rekindled Ms. Floriza’s perspective in dealing with the challenges of her business.

As the dust settled on the tumultuous post-pandemic landscape, Ms Floriza’s story stood as a testament to the power of resilience, resourcefulness, and collaboration. Through the unwavering support of DTI-NCRO’s programs, transformed adversity into opportunity, emerging stronger, more resilient, and more determined than ever before.

Flosarm Enterprises

By: Nathaniel Andre Cadampog
Area 2 | SMERA Program Coordinator



Floriza Herrera Sarmiento
Owner of Flosarm Enterprises
Taguig City

Pinoy's Pride Kutkutin

By: Sylvia M. Ron
Area 3 | SMERA Program
Regional Coordinator



Mr. Jay-Jay L. Guiang
Owner of Pinoy's Pride Kutkutin
Food Products Trading
Brgy. Batasan Hills, Quezon City
09165125504 / 09663325299

With a positive mindset and strong determination to succeed, Mr. Jay-Jay Guiang, the founder and owner of Pinoy's Pride Kutkutin Food was able to grow and expand the business that he started in the midst of the pandemic last September 2020. He coined his business after the word "kutkutin" a Filipino word referring to chips and other finger foods. He started with 7 variants, and in three years, he was able to expand the same into 30 different variants ranging from nuts, dried beans, sampaloc candies, local jellies, crackers, and other local chips, which he is sourcing from 14 regions, thereby providing more business opportunities to budding and thriving entrepreneurs. He also has 300 re-sellers nationwide and abroad.

Mr. Guiang's background is in IT that is why he took advantage of all the seminars offered by the DTI-NCRO to capacitate himself and acquire the necessary business management skills and knowledge to run his business more efficiently and profitably. According to him, "simula po nag start kami ng pandemic, DTI na po ung naging guide sa amin kasi technical at finance po background namin, all business management skills sa DTI seminars na po lahat namin natutunan."

One of the seminars that he truly appreciates is the Design Thinking for Entrepreneurs conducted last June 29, 2023. Per Mr. Guiang, he is very thankful for the opportunity to learn new things and uncover new business ideas that will surely help him in creating new strategies that would further enhance his competitiveness and growth as an enterprise.

Mr. Guiang's persistent attitude sets him apart from the other entrepreneurs and his advocacy to support local products through his Pinoy's Kutkutin is truly admirable as he is aiming to make Filipinos' snacks be known worldwide.



Love Emmanuel Agudo
Owner
Nutraways Manufacturing Corp.
North Fairview, Quezon City
Fb: nutrawaysmanufacturing

"The SME Roving Academy Program of the DTI is a powerful program where MSMEs can get business information and learn essential skills which they can use as they navigate the complexities of growing and expanding a business. I was able to attend 3 DTI-NCRO seminars last CY-2023. The first one was the Packaging and Labelling Seminar, held on April 27, 2023. The seminar helped me understand the process of how to appropriately and legally label our products. I also attended the 7S of Good Housekeeping on May 11, 2023, where I learned how to create a more organized and efficient work environment. The 3rd seminar I attended was a briefing on FDA-LTO-CPR Documentary Requirements, which helped our company process the FDA documents of our clients without the need for a 3rd party consultant. From the seminars provided by the DTI-NCRO, we were able to improve our systems, including our sales performance.

Thank you so much, DTI!"



Jhen-MDQZ General Merchandise

By: Nerissa N. Saluib
Area 4 | SMERA Program Coordinator



Jenelyn De Quiros
Owner of Jhen MDQZ General Merchandise
Valenzuela City

Jenelyn De Quiros, a 35-year-old entrepreneur from Valenzuela City, owned a store registered with the Department of Trade and Industry in 2017, as JHEN-MDQZ General Merchandise, a school supply store. The business was established to support her family's daily expenses.

Ms. De Quiros' business was also affected during the pandemic, which is true for other businesses. Witnessing her business' financial loss had caused her so much stress, but this did not stop her from striving to sustain her business. Ms. De Quiros attended two trainings, namely Entrepreneurial Mind Setting and Business Planning, held on February 20, 2023, and June 14-15, 2023, respectively in Valenzuela City. The series of trainings is in partnership with DTI-NCRO (for the conduct of training), PESO Valenzuela (for the manpower pooling), and Humanity and Inclusion (H & I) under their Thrive Together Project, which aims to capacitate Persons with Disability (PWDs) through Self-employment or Entrepreneurship.

After completing the trainings, she was given a seed capital worth Php 15,000.00 by H & I for the application of her knowledge from the training and proposed business. Thus, she learned how to diversify her business by adding printing services to her school supply store, which led to an increase in her income.

Through the Small and Medium Enterprise Roving Academy (SMERA) program, Ms. De Quiros was armed with additional knowledge on how to plan and manage her business better.

She gained more confidence that her business will continue to make waves in the market through the knowledge acquired from the trainings, and future attendance to more trainings will further enhance her abilities as the manager/proprietor of her business.





Mr. John Paulo P. Antigua | Regional OTOP Program Coordinator

One Town, One Product (OTOP) Philippines is a priority stimulus program for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) as government’s customized intervention to drive inclusive local economic growth. The program enables localities and communities to determine, develop, support, and promote products or services that are rooted in its local culture, community resource, creativity, connection, and competitive advantage.

As their own ‘pride-of-place’ these are offerings where they can be the best at or best renowned for. It endeavours to capacitate our ‘OTOPrenuers’ to innovate and produce market-ready products and services.

OTOP Next Gen Program

In a bid to empower and uplift micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), the Department of Trade and Industry – National Capital Regional Office has been diligently working on various initiatives to support their growth and development. Specifically in the implementation of the One Town, One Product Program, the office has implemented major projects to further assist our MSMEs in terms of marketing, branding and promotions.

This year, the OTO Program has been very visible to the region, carrying out a range of initiatives like organizing several trade fairs, notably the largest event in the region, the Metro Fiesta Trade Fair, Assessment, Consultation, and Triage (ACT) Session, Brand Development Session, and Launching of New OTO Hubs. These efforts have led to significant achievements for the department, as shown by the following indicators:

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| 296 MSMEs Assisted |  | Food: 177 Non-Food: 119 |
| 227 Number of Prototypes Developed |  | Food: 143 Non-Food: 84 |
| 37 Number of Brands Developed |  | Food: 22 Non-Food: 15 |
| 374 MSMEs Participated in Trade Fairs (Cumulative) |  | Organized: 11 Participated: 11 |
| Php 34,919,115.32 |  | Total Sales Generated |
| Php 5,316,895.45 | | OTOP Hub Sales |
| Php 22,378,860.63 | | Trade Fair Sales |
| Php 6,781,543.24 | | Monitored Sales |



Assessment, Consultation, and Triage (ACT) Session

The department once again conducted its Product Development Activity, dubbed as “ACT Session 2023” from July to November 2023. For this year’s implementation, a total of one hundred (100) MSMEs benefitted in the program in transforming their products and labels to be aligned with the current design trends and required standards.

The program was successfully implemented by the office through the help of CJ Millare Design and Consultancy’s team. The participating MSMEs underwent sessions to enhance their knowledge by attending seminars related to Corporate Branding and Product Identity, Packaging and Product Label Development, Product Design & Development. In addition to the



seminars, one-on-one consultations were also facilitated by the design consultant to examine and provide necessary improvements for the products enrolled by the MSMEs.

The designs provided were initially checked and approved by the participating MSMEs before being executed. In conclusion, the executed prototypes developed summed up to 227. Below is the breakdown of accomplishments per area office:

| Area | Target | Prototypes Developed |
|--------------|------------|----------------------|
| Area 1 | 42 | 52 |
| Area 2 | 42 | 42 |
| Area 3 | 42 | 45 |
| Area 4 | 40 | 53 |
| CITE | 34 | 35 |
| Total | 200 | 227 |

An exit meeting was also organized on November 17, 2024, to hand over the deliverables of the design consultant to DTI – NCRO and to discuss the ways forward and improvements for the upcoming conduct of the program. A total of one hundred (100) flash drives and mock-up samples were given to the Area OTOP Coordinators present at the meeting.



To conclude the program, the executed design prototypes were highlighted and showcased at NCRO’s regional trade fair, dubbed “Metro Fiesta: Connect, Sustain, Emerge 2023,” from November 22 to 26, 2023, in a special setting area. This was done to test the marketability of the produced prototypes and expand the visibility of the OTOP Products.



Brand Development Session

The Department of Trade and Industry - National Capital Regional Office, in collaboration with Unionbank and Kalye Negosyo, held the Brand Development Program 2023 at Unionbank Plaza Bldg., Ortigas Center, Pasig City. The program, which is part of the DTI's OTOP Next Gen project, was able to support 46 MSMEs from various cities of Metro Manila.

NCRO's Brand Development Program, which ran from June 5 to 9 and 22 to 23, 2023, was a 7-day hybrid learning session that covered topics like marketing, business diagnosis, and IPO filing, among others.

| Date | Activity |
|---------------|--|
| June 5, 2023 | Seminar (Face-to-Face) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Diagnosis • Innovation Mindset |
| June 6, 2023 | Online <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Product Development • Branding for Small Businesses |
| June 7, 2023 | Seminar (Face-to-Face) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing/ Promotions • Digital Payments • Logo and Packaging Design |
| June 8, 2023 | Online <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trademark & Copyright • Business Plan Development |
| June 9, 2023 | Seminar (Face-to-Face) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Financial Management • Trade Fair 101 |
| June 22, 2023 | Negotiation Techniques Workshop |
| June 23, 2023 | Revalida |

In another note, the office has conducted a Pop-up Bazaar simultaneously with the Negotiation Techniques Workshop and Revalida sessions last June 22 to 23, 2023. A total of 12 MSMEs participated at the bazaar generating a total sale of **Php 320,005.00**.





OTOP Philippines Hub

The OTOP Philippines Hubs has continuously been a platform for marketing the products of our OTOPpreneurs. As a physical hub that showcase the locally-made products of our MSMEs, it definitely been a source for additional income for our assisted enterprises giving them an accumulated sale of Php 5,316,895.45. The breakdown of sales and assisted MSMEs per hub are as follows:

| OTOP Hub | Number of Onboarded MSMEs | Generated Sales (January to December 2023) |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| OTOP Hub Makati | 45 | ₱ 1,677,475.80 |
| OTOP Hub Marikina | 21 | ₱ 973,404.90 |
| OTOP Hub Alabang Town Center | 35 | ₱ 519,873.75 |
| OTOP Hub Feliz | 17 | ₱ 2,146,141.00 |
| TOTAL | 118* | ₱ 5,316,895.45 |

*Cumulative

Relaunching of OTOP Hub Marikina at Its New Location

After taking shelter at our DTI – CITE Marikina Office for a year and five months, the OTOP Hub Marikina finally moved to its new location at the Marikina Sports Center in Marikina City. This relocation was made possible through a partnership between the Department of Trade and Industry – National Capital Regional Office and the City Government of Marikina.

Last June 1, 2023, the office conducted a launching ceremony, graced by the presence of Marikina City’s First District Representative, Hon. Marjorie Ann A. Teodoro, Councilor Cloyd S. Casimiro, DTI-NCRO’s Regional Director Marcelina S. Alcantara, CITE’s Center Head Mr. Ferdinand O. Angeles, OIC-Head of Marikina LEIPO Dept., Ms. Lourdes dela Paz, as well as officials and members from the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) - New Marikina, Philippine Footwear Federation Inc. (PFFI), and Manufacturers of Bags and Leathergoods Association Inc (MBLAI).

The operations of the hub will be overseen by the Local Government of Marikina, as they are the co-operator for this hub.





DTI-NCRO Launches Its Second Ayala Mall OTOP Hub

The Department of Trade and Industry – National Capital Regional Office (DTI-NCRO) has established another physical OTOP Hub located at Ayala Malls Feliz in Pasig City. This initiative was made possible through a collaboration with Alagang Ayala Land, which offers rent-free spaces for entrepreneurs, marking the hub as the second store to be set up in the region under the partnership.

On May 10, 2023, a launching ceremony was organized which was graced by the presence of Ms. Marcelina S. Alcantara, the Regional Director of DTI-NCRO, along with Mr. Ferdinand O. Angeles, the Center Head of DTI-CITE Marikina, and Ms. Jinky Aguinaldo, Alagang Ayala Land Head.

Also in attendance were officials from the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) – New Marikina: President Mr. Noel Flores, Vice President for External Affairs Mr. Roger Py Jr., and VP for Internal Affairs Mr. Jundio Salvador. The OTOP Hub Feliz will be managed by its co-operator, PCCI-New Marikina which will showcase and sell locally-made shoes from the City of Marikina.

This newly launched hub is expected to expand the visibility and accessibility of the products of our OTOP-assisted MSMEs since malls provides significant foot traffic.



Trade Fairs Conducted and Participated

The year 2023 has brought significant impact to our MSMEs, especially with the relaxation of pandemic restrictions, leading to a multitude of trade fairs organized and participated by our office. All-in-all, the office has provided assistance to a total of 374 MSMEs (cumulative) which have participated to a total of 22 trade fairs; 11 organized and 11 participated trade fairs.

| Trade Fair | No. of Trade Fairs | No. of MSMEs Assisted | Sales Generated |
|--------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Conducted | 11 | 267 | P14,076,423.88 |
| Participated | 11 | 107 | P8,302,436.75 |
| Total | 22 | 374 | P22,378,860.63 |

Cumulatively, the generated sales of our assisted MSMEs have amounted to

Php 22,378,860.63



Empowering MSMEs: Highlights from the 7th Metro Fiesta Regional Trade Fair

By: John Paulo P. Antigua
Regional OTOP Program Coordinator

The Department of Trade and Industry – National Capital Regional Office successfully organized the highly anticipated Metro Fiesta Regional Trade Fair from November 22 to 26, 2023, held at the Glorietta Palm Drive Activity Center in Makati City. This marks as the 7th edition of the annual fair organized by the office, revolved around the theme “Metro Fiesta: Connect, Sustain, Emerge 2023,” emphasizing the importance of fostering connections, promoting sustainability, and emerging stronger in the business landscape.

This served as the culminating activity of the region featuring assisted MSMEs from different programs provided by the office. A total of sixty (60) MSMEs have showcased their best and finest products from the food, wearables, health and wellness, and homestyle sectors.

| Sector | Number of Exhibitors |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Food | 31 |
| Wearables | 17 |
| Health and Wellness | 8 |
| Homestyle | 4 |
| TOTAL | 60 |

To kick-off the 5-day selling activity, DTI-NCRO OIC-Regional Director Ma. Sofia G. Narag, officially opened the event by giving her warm welcoming remarks, emphasizing the resilience of our assisted MSMEs despite the challenges of the pandemic. She also recognized the partners and guests, expressing gratitude for their contributions to the event’s success.



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Following that, Assistant Secretary Dominic Tolentino Jr. from the DTI – Regional Operations Group (ROG) delivered an inspiring message to the participating MSMEs, urging them to persist in making their products known. He emphasized the importance of promoting and supporting local products, encouraging continued patronage. He then introduced the Keynote speaker, Undersecretary Blesila Lantayona from the ROG, who shared her message through a pre-recorded video.

Undersecretary Lantayona empowered the MSMEs by acknowledging their unwavering dedication and passion, especially in the time of the pandemic. She encouraged them to dream bigger, work harder, and strive for a brighter future. Additionally, she emphasized that the activity was a testament to their resilience and determination to overcome challenges.

Delivering her special message virtually, Senator Cynthia Villar emphasized the purpose of the program to provide assistance to MSMEs. She shared that her family business started as a small venture, highlighting the importance of supporting these enterprises. She extended her well wishes for their ongoing success and urged buyers to continue supporting these MSMEs to sustain the local business industry.

Subsequently, a promotional video featuring prominent government officials was presented, followed by a special performance from the Marikina Dance Guild and PLMAR Dance Troupe giving a festive mood for the MSMEs and for the audience. This was then followed by the ribbon-cutting ceremony and a walkthrough.



Aside from the fair itself, the office also conducted the Metro Siesta: Sit-in, Talk, and Learn program. It served as an additional sub-program held concurrently with the fair, aiming to inspire new and aspiring entrepreneurs by featuring successful MSMEs through sit-in interviews. The program ran from November 23 to 26, 2023, from 5:00 PM to 6:30 PM, focusing on four industry clusters: Processed Fruits and Nuts (PFN), Wearables and Homestyle, Bamboo, and Coffee. Below are the resource persons who shared their inspirational stories of how they strived for success:



Date: November 23, 2023
Industry Cluster: Processed Fruits and Nuts (PFN)
Resource Persons:
Ms. Baby Luningning Fontamillas | Owner of YZHNY Enterprise
Mr. Joselito “Joie” Cadorniga | Owner of Joie 80 Soap Manufacturing



Date: November 24, 2023
Industry Cluster: Wearables and Homestyle (W&H)
Resource Persons:
Mr. Franco Rañeses | Owner of Moonlight Handicrafts
Mr. Larry Evaristo | Owner of L. Evaristo Shoe Shop



Date: November 25, 2023
Industry Cluster: Bamboo
Resource Persons:
Ms. Lorie Jane Pascua | Co-founder of Bambuhay PH
Mr. Earl Forlales | CEO of Cubo Modular



Date: November 26, 2023
Industry Cluster: Coffee
Resource Persons:
Ms. Kezia Gene Orhen | Owner of Coffee Geney
Ms. Thelma Gecolea | Marketing Head of Starkaffea Corporation

After the five-day activity, the participating MSMEs have generated a total sale of Php 7,391,443.88 (Cash and Booked Sales) which translates to 146% accomplishment from its target, Php 5,060,000.00. This also indicated an 8.61% increase from last year’s edition of the fair.

Php 7,391,443.88

Total Sales Generated
 November 22-26, 2023
 Exhibitors: 60

The department continues to implement programs like this in assisting MSMEs to have additional platforms to showcase their finest products. OIC-RD Ma. Sofia G. Narag expresses her excitement for what’s in store for the MSMEs in the next years. She said that “May this program open a lot of opportunities for our MSMEs to better help them in sustaining their respective businesses.”

The participating MSMEs expressed their sincere gratitude for the support they have received and expressed hope that they will be included to the roster of participants for the next edition.



3 Runs of the Mini Metro Fiesta for Area 1 in 2023!

By: Erwin Joseph G. Cruz
Area 1 | Trade Promotion Officer



Area 1 conducted three (3) runs of the Mini Metro Fiesta for 2023 in the Cities of Pasay and Manila. Two (2) were in the City of Pasay and the other one (1) was in the City of Manila. Combined sales reached PhP2,473,638.00.

Php 2,473,638.00

Total Sales Generated
Area 1 Mini Trade Fairs

The first run in Pasay was launched on August 31, 2023 where fifteen (15) exhibitors participated in the 2-day fair. Due to the cancellation of work, the second was moved to September 4, 2023. Pasay City Councilor Joey Calixto Isidro, DTI-NCRO Area 1 Division Head Olive O. Rivera, and Pasay City Cooperative Development Office's Head Rowena T. Buenaventura led the opening and ribbon-cutting activities.



On November 14-17, 2023, the run in the City of Manila happened where eighteen (18) exhibitors participated in. The four-day physical trade fair was launched with an Opening Ceremony on November 14, 2023. DTI-NCRO OIC-Regional Director Ma. Sofia G. Narag, gave her Welcome Remarks and Opening Message and was followed by an Inspirational Message from the City of Manila Vice Mayor John Marvin “Yul Servo” Nieto and a Special Message from LGU-Manila’s Bureau of Permits Director Levi Facundo. DTI-NCRO Area 1 Division Chief Olive O. Rivera gave the Closing Remarks.



And lastly, the Paskuhan sa GSIS 2023, which had twenty-four (24) exhibitors participating in. The eight-day physical trade fair was launched with an Opening Ceremony on December 13, 2023. GSIS President and General Manager Mr. Jose Arnulfo “Wick” Veloso gave his Welcome and Opening Message during the event. Mr. Veloso also led the ribbon cutting and walkthrough, together with GSIS SVP George Ongkeko, GSIS-KMG President Jun Baiño, and DTI-NCRO Area 1 head Olive O. Rivera.



At a glance...

| Activity Partner | Dates | Actual No. of Exhibitors | Actual Sales Generated |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Pasay Cooperative Development Office | August 31 & September 4, 2023 | 15 | Php 140, 604.00 |
| LGU-Manila Bureau of Permits | November 14-17, 2023 | 18 | Php 467,181.00 |
| Government Service Insurance System | December 13-15 & December 18-22, 2023 | 23 | Php 1,865,853.00 |
| TOTAL | | | Php 2,473,638.00 |

Area 2 Mini-Trade Fairs

By: Joshua Paul V. Bartoline
Area 2 | Trade Promotion Officer

To bolster the growth of Micro and Small Enterprises in the National Capital Region (NCR), the Department of Trade and Industry - National Capital Region Office (DTI-NCRO) furthers its commitment in support of local entrepreneurs through the conduct of marketing activities that would expand the market base and boost domestic sales of local entrepreneurs.

Last 2022, the DTI-NCRO, particularly its Area 2 Office, spearheaded the conduct of the first mini-trade fair in the region. This was in response to the clamor of NCR-based micro and small entrepreneurs for more fairs and bazaars that would stir the interests of customers in local products.

The Mini Trade Fair, dubbed as Mini Metro Fiesta, a breakthrough of DTI-NCRO's regional fair "Metro Fiesta," aimed to promote the products of existing and new entrepreneurs in a smaller setting. The products were carefully chosen based on the identified demands in the area.

This initiative proved to be more beneficial for new entrepreneurs as they were able to experience how to join trade fairs, conduct product presentations, and do sales negotiations with prospective clients, on a smaller scale.

The mini fairs were conducted in government offices, local malls, and community parks/events centers where regular customers abound. The initial conduct of the Mini Metro Fiesta was a success considering the sales generated by the entrepreneurs and the new customers they have met that it was replicated in other areas in the region.

With the implementation of these Mini Metro Fiesta's, more entrepreneurs were given the chance to present their products in new markets and the entrepreneurs have become more confident in exploring new markets and in developing products demanded by the market. The Mini Metro Fiesta has become a beacon of opportunity for budding entrepreneurs across the region.



In 2022, the DTI-NCRO Area 2 Office successfully conducted two mini trade fairs, from entrepreneurs across Metro Manila generating a total sales of Php 344,169.00. This figure shows that small initiatives create ripples of significant economic growth through the promotion of homegrown enterprises.

Building on the momentum of the previous year, the DTI-NCRO Area 2 Office continues to champion the cause of MSMEs in 2023.

For 2023, the Mini Metro Fiesta evolved into a two-day event, providing exhibitors with an extended opportunity to connect with customers and showcase their offerings. The first edition of the Mini Metro Fiesta for 2023, titled “Mini Metro Fiesta – Mid-Year Edition 2023,” was held on May 16-17, 2023. Timed to coincide with the release of mid-year bonuses, the event attracted a diverse array of patrons, including DTI employees and those from different government agencies in the Buendia area. With 25 MSMEs participating, the fair generated an impressive total sales of Php 382,565.00, highlighting the creativity and innovativeness of local entrepreneurs.

Looking ahead to the festive season, the Area 2 Office hosted another edition of the Mini Metro Fiesta in December 2023. Titled “Mini Metro Fiesta 2023: Season of Giving with Local Delights”, the event took place on December 13-14, 2023, at the DTI-HO Parking Lot. With the holiday spirit in full swing, exhibitors had the opportunity to showcase their products to eager shoppers seeking unique gifts and treats. Spanning two consecutive days, the fair provided a platform for MSMEs to capitalize on the holiday rush, resulting in total sales of Php 415,906.00.

The success of the Mini Metro Fiesta underscores the vital role of government support in nurturing the growth of MSMEs. By providing a platform for local entrepreneurs to showcase their talents and products, the DTI-NCRO Area 2 Office is paving the way for economic empowerment and sustainable development in the NCR. As the Mini Metro Fiesta continues to flourish, it serves as a testament to the resiliency, creativity, competitiveness, and entrepreneurial spirit of the NCR MSMEs.



Php 382,565.00

Total Sales Generated

Mini-Metro Fiesta: Mid-Year Edition
May 16-17, 2023

Exhibitors: 25

Php 415,906.00

Total Sales Generated

Mini-Metro Fiesta: Season of Giving
with Local Delights

December 13-14, 2023

Exhibitors: 25



Area 3: Metro Fiesta de Mayo

By: Nerizza L. Valdez, Area 3 Trade Promotion Officer
and Shenna O. Romero, Area 3 Information Officer

Inspired by one of the Philippines' merriest festivals, the "May of Flowers", the DTI-NCRO Area 3, in partnership with the City Government of San Juan and Greenhills Shopping Center, conducted a mini trade fair dubbed as "Metro Fiesta de Mayo" to help MSMEs showcase their craftsmanship and ingenuity through their locally made products, increase their market reach, generate sales, and continue providing employment.

This nine-day long event which was held from May 18 to 26, 2023 at the Ground Floor, Shoppesville Pasilio, Greenhills Mall was participated by thirty-one (31) exhibitors based in Mandaluyong, Quezon City, San Juan, Pasig, Manila, Marikina, and Malabon and under the Processed Food, Health and Wellness, and Home Decors and Wearable Sectors. A special setting was also mounted to highlight and showcase the products of San Juan MSMEs' locally made furniture/home decor, and products from the processed fruits and nuts sector.

With the positive results of the first four days of the fair, the Greenhills Mall management requested a five-day extension to further allow MSMEs to meet new buyers and generate more sales. The nine-day activity was able to generate a total sales amounting to One Million Four Hundred Eighty Thousand and Seven Hundred Thirty-Seven Pesos (Php 1,480,737.00)



Php 1,480,737.00

Total Sales Generated

Area 3 Mini Trade Fair- Metro Fiesta de Mayo

May 18-20, 2023

Exhibitors: 31



Area 3: DTI-NCR MSME-Clients Join Miriam College Bazaar

By: Nerizza L. Valdez, Area 3 Trade Promotion Officer
and Shenna O. Romero, Area 3 Information Officer

With the success of the first mini trade fair of Area 3 last May 2023, the Area conducted another one in partnership with Miriam College. The two-day event held last December 6-7, 2023 at Miriam College school grounds in Quezon City, was participated by sixteen (16) MSMEs under the Processed Food, Health & Wellness, and Homecare Products and Wearable Sectors. The fair generated a total sales of Two Hundred Forty-One Thousand and Nine Hundred Ninety-Two Pesos (Php 241,992.00).



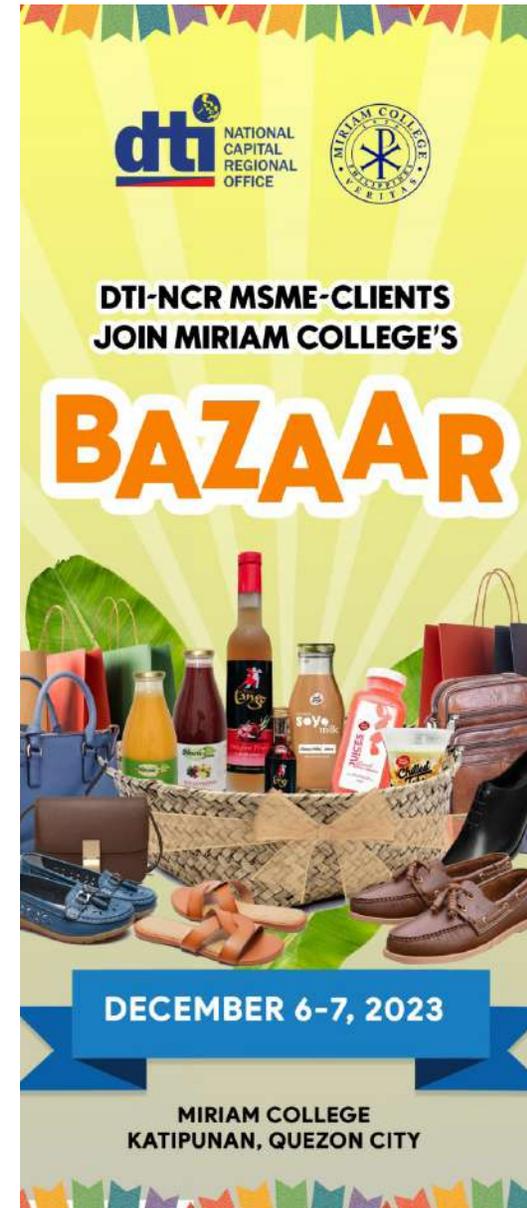
Php 241,992.00

Total Sales Generated

Area 3 Mini Trade Fair- Metro Fiesta de Mayo

December 6-7, 2023

Exhibitors: 16



Area 4: Mini Metro Fiesta Fair in November

By: Christine Bien D.S Castro
Area 4 | OTOP Program Coordinator

Twenty (20) exhibitors from the National Capital Region participated in the Area 4 Mini Trade Fair dubbed as “Metro Fiesta Fair in November” conducted from November 28 to December 01, 2023, at Fisher Mall, Quezon Ave Branch, Quezon City, in partnership with Mallers Investment Corporation (Fisher Mall). The product categories included Processed Food - 12, Health & Wellness - 4, and Wearables - 4.

The ribbon-cutting ceremony was held on November 28, 2023, with OIC-RD Ma. Sofia G. Narag giving the welcome message, while OIC-Area 4 Rose Marie Berte welcomed the guests. The event was graced by the presence of PCCI-Valenzuela officers, Ms. Delia Jimenez, Vice Chair-Affairs Committee of PCCI-NCR, and Ms. Yolanda Dela Cruz, President of PCCI Valenzuela; Ms. Alma Bucalen, OIC-CEIPO of Caloocan City; Mr. Andrew Beltran, Mall Manager of Fisher Mall; and Ms. Camille Miranda, Marketing Manager of Fisher Mall.

The Trade Fair is Area 4’s second edition since it started in November 2022 with the same partner, Mallers Investment Corporation. This year’s Trade Fair aims to explore a wider market reach for MSMEs by identifying other venues for this activity. The total sales generated for the 4-day Trade Fair amounted to PHP 312,351.00, which is 200% over its target sales of PHP 150,000.00.

The invited guests shared their insights with the exhibitors on the importance of listening to buyers or consumers, as they bring new ideas to address the needs of potential markets, such as improving products, packaging, and more. Similarly, exhibitors should seize every opportunity offered by the government to enhance or upgrade their businesses and consider aiming for the international market or globalization once they have established themselves in the domestic market.



Php 312,351.00

Total Sales Generated

Area 4: Mini Metro Fiesta Fair in November
November 28-December 1, 2023
Exhibitors: 20



Taking BYSMP Bless the Children Foundation, Inc. to Higher Ground

By: Siquem F. Fatalla
Area 1 | OTOP Program Coordinator

Ms. Eunice Cheng-Chua, the Executive Director of Bahay at Yaman ni San Martin de Porres (BYSMP) Bless the Children Foundation, Inc., shared her story on how DTI intervention helped the foundation's programs become sustainable and self-reliant.

The foundation started back in 2002 in the impoverished barangays of Binondo and Tondo with its mission to empower the communities through values formation, education, and holistic care to achieve a dignified way of life.

Through an endorsement from Fr. Gaudencio Carandang, Jr. of Don Bosco Tondo, BYSMP Bless the Children Foundation, Inc. was visited by DTI-NCRO Area 1 to identify their needs and align the programs of DTI-NCRO to address the gaps. Ms. Eunice eventually attended the KMME-MME 2023 Online Batch 2 and joined the OTOP Next Gen 2023 ACT Sessions for product development.



The mentoring program helped improve their system as well as how the livelihood programs are managed and implemented. Prior to joining the DTI-NCRO programs, marketing was lacking and was not part of their system and organization.

After participating in the OTOP ACT Next Gen program, they started making use of their scraps, turning them into functional items like cellphone holders, passport holders, and planners, among others. These pieces became unique, high-quality, and one-of-a-kind, as there is only one piece for each design.



Through their participation in the OTOP ACT Next Gen Program, they were able to produce and generate jobs and employment for the parents of their sponsored children. This inspired them to take BYSMP Bless the Children Foundation, Inc. to higher ground, opening doors to connect with resellers and participate in events and trade fairs.

Ms. Eunice encourages entrepreneurs to seek support from DTI through its services and programs as it adds networks and linkages to diversified MSMEs and support systems. She hopes to continue partnering with DTI in trade fairs and selling events to boost their market.

A Burst of Egg Tarts!

By: Samantha Yvonne R. Enriquez
Area 2 | OTOP Program Coordinator



Ms. Darren Tagle from Muntinlupa City is the proud business owner of Egg Tarts Manila, a well-known bakery focused on delicious classic and over 10 flavors of egg tarts in Metro Manila.

Her home-based food business started in 2020, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. As of 2023, she now has six (6) active branches in Metro Manila, with a total gross earnings of at least six (6) figures monthly.

Her journey to entrepreneurship began after her graduation from college when she started working with their family business. However, the business was financially hit hard by the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Ms. Tagle then decided to try her hand with business venturing into online selling, which was the trend then. She started with her savings of around Php 5,000 pesos. She sold almost every kind of food that the online market needs, and she admitted facing challenges in distinguishing her offerings from the plethora of food items being sold online.

One day, a friend craved for an egg tart and she requested Ms. Tagle to prepare one for her. Voila! A stroke of luck! She found her product! She realized that she has not seen any egg tart being sold online, and she felt it was worth it to try her luck on Egg Tarts.

She started baking in their kitchen and selling the Egg Tarts with her family, friends, and neighbors, and she was amazed and surprised with the positive feedback she received even when she was still in the process of perfecting the recipe.

She was immensely inspired with the positive feedback as friends and neighbors would ask her when would she bake again.

From there, her buyers increased, and the business started to grow. She then exclaimed, "Okay, this is it!" This is the product that I'm going to sell for the foreseeable future. The effort proved to be very worthwhile, especially when she decided to open a pop-up store in Alabang Town Center in the latter part of 2020, where numerous patrons lined up daily, resulting in egg tarts being sold out long before closing time.

She was surprised with the results. She never thought that this is now the result of the humble beginnings of her becoming an entrepreneur.

In February 2021, she took another bold step by opening her first physical store in a grocery store in Muntinlupa City. Unfortunately, business is not all roses as the store did not gain traction. This was followed by the closure of her stores in Alabang Town Center and SM Aura.

These setbacks did not stop her from pushing her dreams. She acknowledged that such setbacks are part and parcel of the business world, and she is fully aware that other people, like her staff are relying on her. These pushed her once again to ponder what went wrong and how the challenge can be addressed.



As they say, opportunities happen for those who seek them and through her perseverance and determination, she stumbled on DTI-NCRO's through the seminars of SMERA. DTI-NCRO became interested in her products and she was invited to participate in the marketing programs of the office through the OTOP's Assessment, Consultation and Triage (ACT) and trade fairs.

Moreover, Egg Tarts Manila once again ventured into another pop-up store at Alabang Town Center in (the latter part of) 2021. This initiative not only provided a platform for ETM to showcase its products but also facilitated its introduction into various clients and markets.

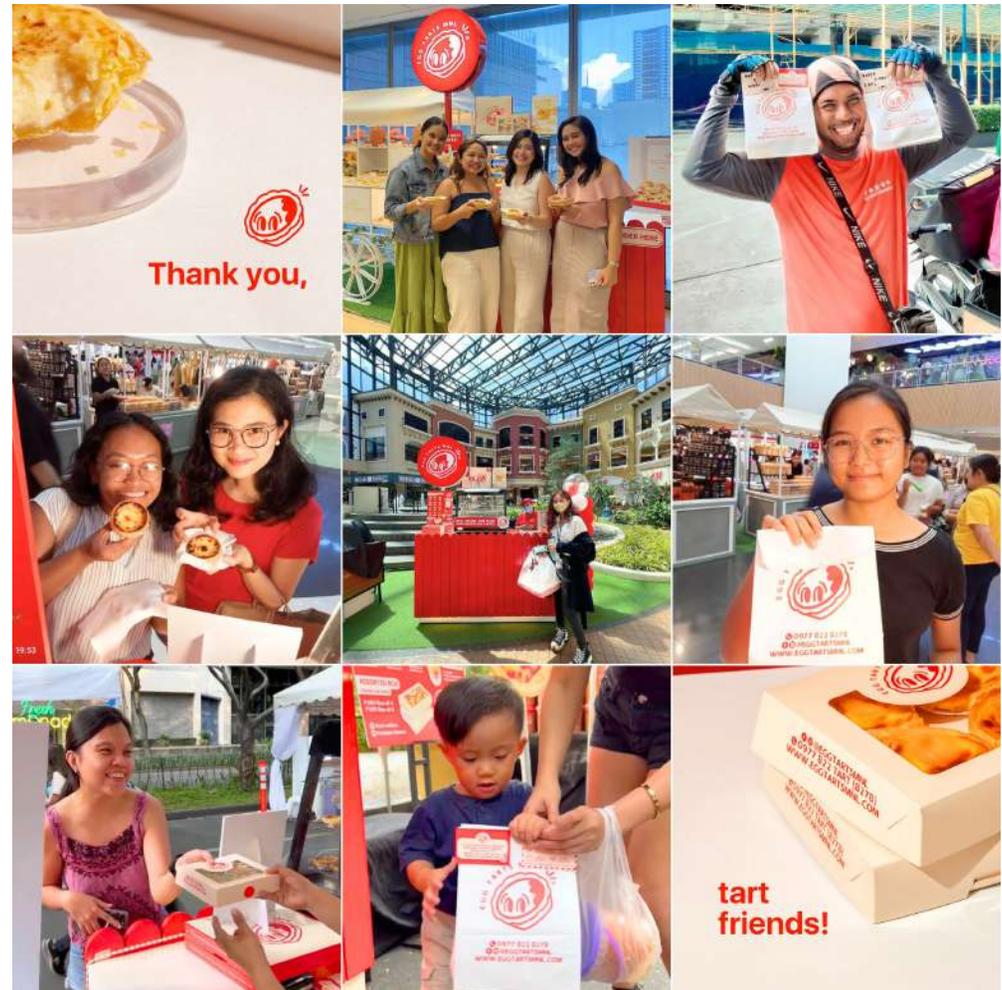
Moving forward, Egg Tarts Manila participated in the Metro Fiesta 2022 and 2023, the annual Regional Trade Fair held at the Glorietta in Makati City. This opportunity not only resulted in increased sales but also attracted loyal customers for the product.

Also, Egg Tarts Manila benefited from participating in different mini-trade fairs organized by DTI, which played a vital role in boosting sales and enhancing product marketing efforts.

Moreover, DTI's assistance enabled Egg Tarts Manila to identify viable markets tailored to their target clients through the establishment of local markets in diverse locations. Overall, Egg Tarts Manila's collaboration with DTI-NCRO proved instrumental in propelling the business forward and expanding its reach within the market.

What began with classic egg tarts has now expanded to include over 10 innovative flavors. With the acquisition of deck ovens, replacing the small old oven that could only produce fewer than 30 pieces of egg tarts, they are now able to churn out over 1000 pieces per hour.

And so the churning goes...



Bottled Passion: How Ms. Ivy Turned a Hometown Favorite into a Thriving Business

By: Catherine B. Pastorfide, Area 3 OTOB Program Coordinator and Jezza Jae B. Dispo, Area 3 KMME Program Coordinator



In 2021, a simple pasalubong request from her husband’s coworker sparked Ms. Ivy Ramirez’s entrepreneurial journey. Back then, delicious laing was confined to frozen microwavable tubs. Seeing a gap, she experimented with a bottled version, and within days, pre-orders poured in, validating the market potential. Quickly they reserved orders signaling that there was a market. The laing business used her husband’s office cooperative as its main distribution.

Like other businesses, Ms. Ivy also faced challenges initially of which was overcoming the perception of bottled laing as inferior. Her limited cooking equipment and distribution network further hampered growth. Undeterred, she used free samples and tastings as a strategic weapon, both to win over buyers and gather feedback to improve her products.

Starting with just pork laing and a Php 50,000 capital, Philipibs Homemade Food Trading has blossomed into a vibrant business. Today, its offerings extend beyond laing, boasting three spreads—chili keso, keso pimiento, and ube—and three delectable laing variants: pork, shrimp, and vegan. With a dedicated employee by her side, Ms. Ivy has doubled both her capital and workforce, her initial sales of Php 100,000 climbed to Php 250,000.

The keys to this success are perseverance, passion, and a timely boost from the DTI ACT program. The program’s guidance helped create eye-catching packaging that transformed Philipibs’ image from generic to “sosyal” and “elegant.” This, coupled with increased participation in free bazaars, fueled a remarkable sales surge. Witnessing this transformation through customer feedback—“ang ganda hindi nakakahiyaan iringalo,” “elegante”—filled Ms. Ivy with immense pride. Products from unknown brand to “sosyal and mukhang mamahalin,” “ang ganda hindi nakakahiyaan iringalo”, and no more “ang mahal naman nito”, these customers’ feedbacks really matter.

Ms. Ivy is truly an inspiration. She proves that if you enjoy the process, and align your business with passion nothing is impossible. Her advice to existing and aspiring entrepreneurs is to know and listen to your market; take calculated risks, and listen to the advice of peers. Learn to accept losses and to let go and everything will take into place. With these simple ingredients, any dream, like Philipibs Homemade Food Trading, can rise from humble beginnings and achieve success.



RLM7 Enterprise: Us and Our God

By: Mary Grace N. Mabutot
Area 4 | OTOP Program Coordinator

Ms. Remedios “Bot” Medina was born and raised in Concepcion Malabon. In 2007, her sister who makes coin bags for three (3) International Bank clients entrusted the business to her (Ms. Bot Medina). Having just resigned as a purchasing clerk from RBL Fishing company in 2008, Ms. Medina took the challenge and persisted in making the business grow.

With the goal of helping her mother and husband who is an OFW, Ms. Medina continued her passion for sewing and poured out her heart into making the business possible. Henceforth, RLM7 Enterprise came to light and was established in 2016.

Just like any other start-up, the journey of growing their business and making their products known to market was a bit of a struggle. It was a good thing, that they learned about DTI programs through the Negosyo Center Malabon and the journey of their product development began

According to Ms. Medina, “With the help of DTI thru the OTOP program, lumawak po ang nareach ng business and product namin. We got the chance to join and participate in the Metro Fiesta and other DTI trade fairs. And because of these trade fairs, we were able to get clients like Marigold Manufacturing/Mama Sitas and Two Scents who became our clients from 2017 up to now, and likewise, Sentinel/Jonathan Co from 2019 to present and more.” They have also increased their sales through participation in DTI-organized trade fair events.

To add, Ms. Medina said, “Dahil sa mga programa ng DTI mas nagkaroon kami ng lakas ng loob to create our own designs and experiments on different fabrics. We have also learned the value of discipline when it comes to events especially yung pagdating sa tamang oras, mga dapat isuot every event and how to handle clients.”

She also shared some insights and words of wisdom she learned during their Brand Development session. To quote, she said “I have learned the value of our product. Also, hindi dapat makontento sa meron ngayon because there is always a space for improvement. And that there is always a right place and time for your product to shine.”

With their growing business, Ms. Medina was able to employ students and housewives too. From selling coin bags, now, they ventured into creating more crafts like bags, key chains, aprons, crochet hats, and other wearables. Formerly, they catered to three (3) bank clients but now they have generated twenty-plus local bank clients.

When asked about her message to fellow MSMEs, Ms. Medina said, “Keep going through though with trials sometimes. And always remember to put your heart into everything you do. Kasi kapag mahal mo, tatiyagain mo.”

To end, Ms. Medina shared a valuable verse from the Bible; Romans 8:28 “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose.”



A Journey of Resilience, Hope, and Giving Back through Luka Ferruccio

By: Jamaica Loraine L. Macatiag
CITE | Trade Promotion Officer

Amidst the struggles we face, lies an opening for growth and success. This is exemplified by Ms. Gabrielle Mae Talam, a strong entrepreneur, devoted wife, and nurturing mother who overcame obstacles with determination and resilience. Ms. Talam worked in the BPO Industry for 12 years until she had to stop due to her getting sick making her unfit to continue working in the corporate world. At that moment, she thought that her life was a dimming light of lost hope.

However, as they say, even a shadow needs light to exist. In 2018, Luka Ferruccio was established as a hope-giving brand that sells Eau de perfume inspired by famous designer scents. “Lukas” Bringer of Light and “Ferruccio” strong, when combined they create a powerful name that means Bringer of Light and Strength to those who are in need. A portion of the net proceeds are given to Pediatric Cancer Patients, the Autism Community, Abandoned Children, and charitable organizations.

Gabrielle wanted whenever someone use Luka Ferruccio Perfume, they feel good about themselves and be more confident in their day-to-day lives no matter how hard life can be.

Their mission and vision is to have a united community that uplifts one another and to continuously devote helping people as much as they can, and be God’s instrument of love, hope, and peace. They aim to give back to the community through cause-oriented enterprises by selling affordable products.

As if the stars were aligned with her dreams, she discovered the DTI-OTOP Program when she had a project with JCI Marikina Marikit. DTI extended their help and introduced the OTOP Program. Accompanied with supportive words they said, “We are so happy to see that you are helping others especially those who are in need, let us help you.” She then decided to join the OTOP ACT session to improve their products, their marketability, and new packaging at no cost.

Through the OTOP ACT, numerous opportunities came up on their journey as the business continues to expand. They were able to register in IPO, get interviewed on a radio station, and able to join multiple Regional Trade Fairs such as Mini Metro Fiesta in DTI Parking Lot, Metro Fashion Fair in Eastwood, Mini Metro Fiesta in Fishermall, and many more. Most of all, join OTOP Hub in Ayala Malls Feliz, and OTOP Hub Alabang Town Center.

All of these opportunities blessed them with good experiences, profit, learnings, friends, and opportunities to grow the business and especially to help those who are in need.

2023 was a prosperous year as they were able to do several charitable acts, gifts given to the Pediatric Cancer patients, the autism community, the abandoned children, the PWDs, and the street children. Additionally, they were able to expand and open their very first store in SM Bicutan and optimistically soon to all SMs nationwide.

“Starting up a business is not that easy; it takes a lot of courage, faith, discipline, diligence, continuous learnings, and especially we all need to have a mentor. Luckily, we do have a DTI OTOP Program. They have tons of programs where you can join, learn, and earn new friends or co-business partners.” They have been truly grateful for the supportive acts DTI has shown to them. “Just enjoy every step of your journey, have courage and always be kind.” Ms. Talam added.

“Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed.” Proverbs 16:3.





Shared Service Facilities
"Shared Success for Filipino MSMEs"

Ms. Mary Joy S. Mojica | Regional SSF Program Coordinator

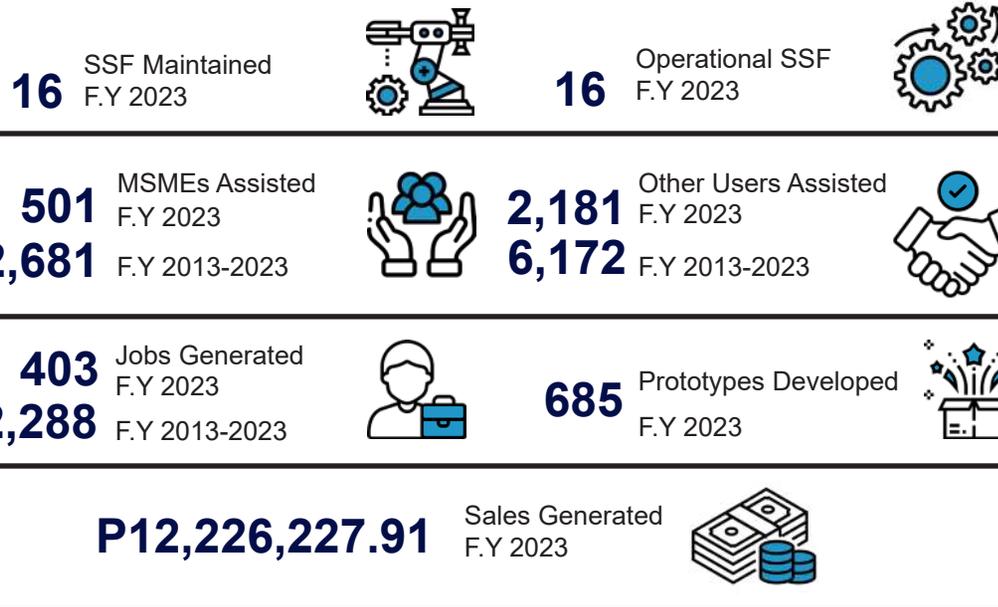
Shared Service Facilities (SSF) Program is meant to improve MSME competitiveness by providing machinery, equipment, tools, systems, accessories, and other auxiliary items, skills, and knowledge under a shared system. The facilities should help target beneficiaries increase their production capacities and improve product quality, resulting in increased markets, increased sales, and job generation. SSF is a public-private partnership initiative being implemented through cooperators who can house the machinery and equipment and make these accessible to MSMEs.

Shared Service Facilities

The Department of Trade and Industry-National Capital Regional Office SSF Project aims to empower micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the National Capital Region by providing them with access to shared service facilities and equipment that are otherwise financially burdensome for individual entrepreneurs. By offering affordable access to upgraded technologies and specialized equipment, these shared service facilities enable MSMEs to improve their productivity levels, increase their competitiveness in the market, and create job opportunities within local communities.

Moreover, the SSF initiative seeks to promote innovation and sustainability by integrating green technology into the operations of these shared facilities.

Overall, this program serves as a catalyst for economic growth and development while fostering entrepreneurship in a multitude of sectors across the country in a friendly way.

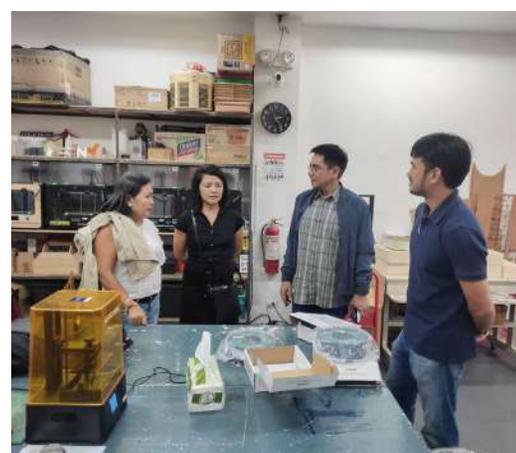


Distribution of SSFs Maintained as of December 31, 2023

| Area 1 | Area 2 | Area 3 | Area 4 | CITE |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|------|
| 4 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 5 |

Established Fablabs as of December 31, 2023

| Academe | NGO | NGA |
|---------|-----|-----|
| 1 | 1 | 1 |



2023 NCRO's Shared Service Facilities Regional Assembly

Jointly written by: Puallete E. Talion and Mary Joy S. Mojica
SSF Program Coordinators

The Department of Trade and Industry - National Capital Region Office (DTI-NCRO) held its 2023 Shared Service Facilities Regional Assembly on December 13, 2023, at the 1898 Hotel Colonia En Las Filipinas in Makati City.

The purpose of the event was to celebrate the achievements resulting from the collaborative efforts of the SSF Cooperators and DTI NCRO. It also served as a platform to evaluate the challenges and critical issues facing the project, share best practices, and explore opportunities within the SSF program.

The assembly was well-attended by current NCR SSF cooperators, area/center coordinators, and members of the DTI-NCRO Management Committee. Ms. Numen Lansangan from the Bureau of Small and Medium Enterprise Development provided updates and guidance on the SSF for the fiscal year 2024.

Furthermore, Mr. Kyrin Christian Pango from the Philippine Trade Training Center - Global MSME Academy (PTTC-GMEA) delivered an insightful presentation on the role of the SSF in the Creative Industries. He emphasizes the importance of utilizing the prototyping services of the SSF across various domains within the creative industries. The potential of the SSF in the era of digitalization and Creative Industry 4.0 was also highlighted.

A key outcome of the assembly was the agreement among SSF cooperators to establish a formal group or association. This initiative is expected to enhance the visibility and representation of the SSF program, as well as maximize the opportunities it offers.

In conclusion, the NCRO recognized and honored the SSF Cooperators by presenting them with a range of awards. These accolades included Small-Wins, Community Service, Most Resilient, and Top Performers for the years 2021, 2022, and 2023.

Overall, the assembly appears to have been a productive event focused on celebrating achievements, addressing challenges, and planning for the future of the SSF program in the NCR region.



SSF-PTTC's DigiFab: A Story of Collaboration

By: Ma. Leslie E. Cadalso
Area 1 | SSF Program Coordinator

Name of FABLAB:

Digital Fabrication for Training of Packaging, Labeling and Product Design for Food and Non-Food Products

Cooperator:

Philippine Trade Training Center - Global MSME Academy (PTTC-GMEA)

Location:

Gil Puyat Ave cor. Roxas Blvd, PTTC Building, Pasay City, Metro Manila

The Marikina Polytechnic College (MPC) and Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) are both cooperators of NCR-based SSF Food Processing Centers who worked on their FDA-LTO accreditation and product standardization. They have been assisted by one of DTI-NCRO's Cooperators, the Philippine Trade Training Center (PTTC) through a series of consultation meetings on their product packaging and labelling.

Through the support of DTI-NCRO to the Cooperators, the office coordinated with Engineer Kyrin Pango, the Manager of the SSF- PTTC's DigiFab who briefed both MPC and PUP with the mandatory labelling requirements and presented the different packaging materials that can be used for their respective products. Packaging designs and layouts were also developed for the 2 SSF cooperators.

In 2023, thru the collaboration with PTTC on the packaging and labelling requirements, PUP passed the inspection that was conducted by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on the former's initial FDA License to Operate (LTO) accreditation application and it may be expected for PUP to offer toll-packaging services in the future and cater to more beneficiaries. On the other hand, MPC is still waiting for the inspection and visit of the FDA.



Philippine Polytechnic College-Manila (PUP-Manila)
PTTC-DigiFab's Team, during their visit for SSF-PUP's Food Processing and Testing Center for Marine Products



Marikina Polytechnic College (MPC)
MPC and PUP, together with DTI-NCRO on their initial visit in PTTC for consultation

The Bloom Studio by Danielle Laia Del Valle

Jointly written by Sylvia Ron, Regional SMERA Program Coordinator, Maila Dabuet, Area 3 NC Quezon City Business Counselor, and Shenna Romero, Area 3 Information Officer

Ms. Laia Del Valle, a graduate of Fine Arts at UP Diliman was retrenched from her job back in 2020 during the height of pandemic. To be able to survive, she considered venturing into business. Her past experience during her college days has helped her decide what type of business she will initially put up to somehow generate an income. She resurrected the fashion accessory business that she used to do with her college friends but this time with a twist. She tried acrylic as a medium. With this venture, the Bloom Studio was born last December 2020. With a starting capital of five thousand pesos (P5,000.00), she was able to launch her first collection with 5 designs in varying colors per design with a selling price of Php 80.00 to Php 240.00 per design.



Laia Del Valle
Owner of The Bloom Studio
Quezon City

To reduce her costs of production, she availed of UP-Fablab services as soon as the facility re-opened its door to the public. She was able to save more than half of what she used to pay to her previous contractor. After 2 months of operating, she realized a gross profit of twenty thousand pesos (Php 20,000.00). From then on, she continues to launch one collection per month and currently, she is now earning twenty-five to thirty thousand pesos (Php 25,000.00 to Php 30,000.00) per month. She doesn't have a physical store yet but she is maximizing her reach thru different online platforms and participation to various bazaars and trade fairs.

Ms. Del Valle had said, "the UP-FabLab does not only assist her in producing new prototypes but as well as in availing free trainings." Through her participation to the Laser Cutting Workshop conducted by the DTI-NCRO in partnership with UP-CFA last August 2023, she realized that she can further expand her product lines other than accessories. She is now more confident that she can further grow her business and thrive in a very competitive modern business landscape as some of her products were being patronized by drag queens and few celebrities, not to mention that her works also got featured in an online article.

The story of Ms. Del Valle proves that success is taking one step at a time, coupled with constant desire to grow and improve plus knowing how to tap the available resources around you.



Seventhdot Furniture Shop (Industrial Manila): “Built with Hearts and Minds”

By: Sylvia M. Ron
Area 3 | SSF Program Coordinator

After trying the food business, Mr. Michael Mari V. Reyes has finally found the business that would pump out the creative juices in him. It was in 2019 when he took full control of the furniture business started by his brother. Realizing the potential of the business, he formally registered the same last CY-2021 as Seventhdot Furniture Shop. In October 2023, he filed his IP application using Industrial Manila Furniture as its trade name. His target market are middle class buyers, office managers, and owners of condos who want customized furniture and furnishings.

He operates his business following a people-planet-centered principle, guided by the belief that the customer is the most important part of his business. In his pursuit to continuously delight his customers, he always attends free trainings that would enhance his design skills and managerial competencies. He happened to chance upon the free training of UP-FABLAB and DTI-NCRO-Area-3 posted online. He wasted no time and immediately registered online to secure his slot. He attended the Lasercutting Workshop jointly organized by DTI-NCRO-Area-3 and UP-Fablab last August 11, 2023, and on the same month, he also availed of the CNC-lasercutting services of UPFABLAB. A repeat engagement with UP-FABLAB also took place last September 13, 2023.

All these have paved the way to improving his design and productivity which resulted in a 15% increase in sales and the provision of 1 new job in the community. To expand his market reach, he created his own website and social media pages with the mantra of “building with hearts and minds”.

Michael Reyes

Owner, Seventhdot Furniture Shop

Business Address:

73 Sampaguita St. Pasong Tamo, Quezon City

Website/Social Media Page:

<https://industrialmanila.com>

<https://www.facebook.com/industrialmanila/>



Making a Difference in the Lives of PWDs at Camarin, Caloocan City

By: Melchor O. Sotto Jr.
Area 4 | SSF Program Coordinator

BIGAY BUHAY (Building Lives) Multipurpose Cooperative (BBMC) has over 29 years working in the field of disability and social enterprise. BBMC's passion in this field is intrinsically driven by a fact that the organization is founded, owned, and managed by persons with cross disabilities.

BBMC's core business is school chair and assorted bag production. Also, the Cooperative is actively engaged in advocating for the Right to Employment, Health, Education, and Participation to Community of PWDs as well as research and capacity building of disabled people organizations.

The Department of Trade and Industry- National Capital Regional Office under Shared Service Facility Program provided additional equipment to Bigay Buhay Multi-Purpose Cooperative to strengthen the capacity to deliver the services efficiently and effectively to the market. Furthermore, the agency provided also series of trainings to capacitate the cooperator on how to handle or manage their business. Through this assistance, BBMC became more highly competent to sustain the needs of its market as well as its members. It has widened its engagement with the stakeholders and partners in planning and implementing the guidelines of the programs that can help them to achieve its goals.

The DTI-NCRO Conducted a total of six (6) trainings such as 1.) 5S of Good Housekeeping, 2.) Project Management, 3.) Basic Selling Price and Costing, 4.) Success Factors in Social Media and Marketing, 5.) Bag Design and Bag Development, 6.) Digital Embroidery Skills Training. The trainings helped the BBMC to be more competent on how to use the machine properly, how to market their products and services, and how to run their business competitively and successfully.



Based on the SSF report from January-December 2023 submitted, BBMC has generated a total sales amounting to PHP1,486,172 as well as employed 315 beneficiaries and assisted 44 MSMEs.



According to Mr. Richard Arceno the Cooperator of Bigay Buhay Multi-Purpose Cooperative (BBMC), the Shared Service Facility Program of DTI-NCRO has a huge impact to them as a member of vulnerable sectors especially in delivering their advocacy and commitment toward Person With Disability (PWD) members. The SSF increased the profile of BBMC enterprise particularly to Sewing and Printing. BBMC was accredited as a supplier of the biggest BPO in the Philippines and one of the largest insurance companies and drinks and beverages. The 25 years old sewing equipment was finally replaced through the SSF. The SSF promotes inclusive business which has a positive impact on the work environment and productivity of persons with disabilities and other vulnerable sectors. BBMC is continuously in the process of accreditation as a supplier to big companies. The SSF helps in the confidence building to prospect customers during the process of due diligence. Through the program, they were able to expand and establish additional projects which helped in alleviating and addressing the gaps and problems of the organization. Furthermore, they were able to expand their connections with other organizations which has been very helpful to identify the market, create roadmaps, and boost opportunities of these projects.

Through the collaborative efforts and initiatives of different agencies, the Bigay Buhay Multi-Purpose Cooperative has established a Coffee Shop and Bakeshop in Jose Rodrigues Memorial Hospital (TALA) which will also be a venue for other MSMEs to display their products. BBMC was given several recognition and awards due to their dedication and efforts in which it would not be possible without the help of DTI-NCRO for their unwavering support.

Barangka Credit Cooperative (BCC)

By: Jennifer M. Basul-Candelaria
CITE | SSF Program Coordinator



Established on August 11, 1986, the Barangka Credit Cooperative (BCC) stands as a cornerstone of socio-economic progress in its community. Dedicated to uplifting the livelihoods of its members, BCC has embarked on various initiatives aimed at fostering growth and development. Among these initiatives is the BCC Livelihood Program, which began with six traditional sewing machines operated by two skilled sewers. The program aims to provide additional income opportunities to its members through garment production.

The Department of Trade and Industry's (DTI) Shared Service Facilities (SSF) aim to boost the productivity and efficiency of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) through improved access to technology. Through this, on December 9, 2022, the SSF for "High-Quality Garments Making" was established at the BCC Livelihood Center, located at 4F No. 28 A. Paterno St., Parang, Marikina City.

Since then, the BCC-SSF for High-Quality Garments Making has been instrumental in producing quality garments and providing sustainable livelihood opportunities for the community. With the integration of nine modern sewing machines and advanced equipment, it revolutionized the garment production process, facilitating faster and more efficient bulk orders. Furthermore, the flexibility provided by modern equipment has led to the development of a wide array of products, such as leather pouches, sling bags, face masks, and personal protective equipment (PPE). This expansion not only widens the range of offerings but also fosters the growth of micro-businesses within the garment industry.

The impact of the BCC-SSF for High-Quality Garments Making is evident in the substantial increase in revenue generated by the BCC Livelihood Center. Comparing the total sales figures of ₱1,782,490.00 in 2022 to the remarkable ₱2,082,415.25 recorded in 2023, there is a notable 17% increase, emphasizing the project's success in driving economic growth and sustainability.

The BCC-SSF for High-Quality Garments Making has not only played a role in fostering economic prosperity but has also established five sustainable job opportunities for its members. The comprehensive training programs offered by the facility, it equips individuals with garment production skills, allowing them to significantly increase their income and achieve financial security. The success of this collaborative endeavor between BCC and DTI exemplifies the potential of shared service facilities in fostering sustainable development and empowering communities. Below are the testimonies provided by our sewers:

"Ako po si Susan A. Veloso, namamasukan sa kasalukuyan sa BCC – SSF na mag-iisang taon na dito sa Parang BCC Livelihood. Dati po ako sa bahay lang din nanahi hanggang sa sinubukan ko mamasukan sa BCC dahil malaking tulong din po para sa akin dahil malapit lang sa eskwelahan ng aking apo at kahit anong oras pwede ako pumasok dahil pakyawan ang aming tahi, kaya malaking tulong sa akin bilang isang biyuda at sana magtuloy tuloy pa rin ang garments ng BCC patuloy sa umunlad. Salamat po sa BCC."



"Ako si Judith V. Flores, nagta-trabaho sa BCC – SSF bilang isang mananahi. Nag umpisa akong magtrabaho manahi sa BCC noong 2nd week ng July hanggang kasalukuyan. Malaking tulong sa family ko mula no'ng mag-trabaho ako sa BCC. Dati wala akong trabaho sa bahay lang po ako. Sa ngayon ako ay isang member na sa BCC, Parang Marikina City. Maraming Salamat po sa BCC-SSF FOR HIGH QUALITY GARMENTS MAKING."



“Ako po si Marilyn T. Mudlong, isang mananahi sa BCC SSF Livelihood. Nag umpisa po ako noong June 30, 2023 hanggang sa kasalukuyan. Malaki ang naitulong po ng BCC sa aking pamilya, dahil nagkaroon po ako ng maayos na trabaho at sa tuwing lingo ay tumatanggap po ako ng sahod dagdag budget. Dati po ay umaasa lang ako sa asawa ko, at sa kasalukuyan ay isa na po akong member ng BCC.”



“Our successful collaboration with DTI on the BCC-SSF for High Quality Garments Making project has been transformative and has been a key driver of sustainable development for our members and the community. Through this program, we’ve connected business owners with training opportunities, machinery access, and employment generation initiatives, allowing them to develop their skills and achieve success. As an SSF Cooperator, we’re fortunate to be part of a program that aligns with our vision, mission, and goals. Looking ahead, we’re determined to utilize the DTI BCC Shared Service Facility for High Quality Garments Making to unlock even greater business potential for existing and aspiring MSMEs in the garment industry.

Maraming Salamat DTI!” - BCC-SFF Cooperator.

“Ako po si Levina Aquino, dahil sa BCC-SSF ay natuto po akong manahi at malaking tulong po ito para sa akin. Kahit papaano ay natutulungan ko ang aking asawa sa pang dag-dag sa gastos sa tatlong anak naming nag-aaral. Nag umpisa po ako matuto manahi noong May 2023, hanggang sa kasalukuyan andito pa rin ako sa BCC.”



“Ako po si Emetria Aquino, isang senior at 82 years old ngayong 2024. Noong August 28, ako ay pinalad na makapag-tahi sa BCC at malaking tulong po sa akin ang SSF dahil kahit papaano ay kumikita po pang-tulong sa pambili ng gamot ko at kahit papaano ay nakakapag-bigay ng pamban ng mga apo ko. Kaya ako po ay nagpapasalamat sa BCC at SSF. Kaya sa kasalukuyan mag-iisang taon na rin po ako sa February 2024.”



Mustard Seed Cooperative (MSC)

By: Jennifer M. Basul-Candelaria and Sheila Mae D. Guisalta
CITE | SSF Program Coordinators



The Mustard Seed Cooperative initially operated with traditional manual silkscreen printing, a legacy passed down from the Magnuson Family, former owners of Export Printing Corporation, spanning over 50 years. Presently, the cooperative has been serving for 15 years, with members collaborating to enhance service quality. Through the support from the DTI's Shared Service Facility program, the cooperative received new digital machines and printing equipment, augmenting their existing capabilities. Operating as an SSF for High-Quality Garment Printing, they now cater to renowned clothing brands found in malls. Evolving from manual silkscreen printing, the cooperative has diversified its equipment to include DTF and Sublimation, enabling it to meet the needs of customers and MSME beneficiaries effectively. Furthermore, the incorporation of advanced technology like the Direct to Film Printer ensures the cooperative remains competitive by offering trend-setting designs that bolster SSF sales.

Being among the SSF beneficiaries, the cooperative and its members have access to numerous opportunities for learning and advancement through the training sessions and educational programs provided by DTI. For the Mustard Seed Cooperative, being part of the Department of Trade and Industry's beneficiaries is seen as a blessing, as it not only contributes to the nation's economic growth but also fosters the development of small cooperatives like theirs. Ms. Maricel Gabahin and all other esteemed members of the Mustard Seed Cooperative extend heartfelt gratitude for the DTI's Shared Service Facility Project.





Mr. Marpaul S. Alao | Regional PPG Program Coordinator

The **Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa (PPG)** is a livelihood program of the Department of Trade and Industry that provides livelihood assistance to economic sectors affected by fire incidents and other calamities. It also serve sectors that are included in priority areas of the national government such as KIA/WIA and NTF-ELCAC, among others.

Through this initiative, DTI assists eligible beneficiaries through the provision of information materials on entrepreneurship, conduct of enterprise development training, business counselling and mentoring, and provision of livelihood kits to restart/recover their livelihood.



Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa (PPG)

By: Michael M. Arriego
Office of the Regional Director

The Philippines has experienced a series of natural calamities, fire incidents, and the COVID-19 pandemic, which has resulted in significant economic losses and hardships for many Filipinos, particularly those in the informal sector. These unforeseen events have caused the loss of jobs, reduction of incomes, and even the complete shutdown of businesses. To address this issue, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) has launched the Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa (PPG) program.

The Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa (PPG) program implemented by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) aimed at empowering individuals and communities to rebuild their livelihoods, particularly in the aftermath of crises such as natural disasters, pandemics, and economic downturns. By providing targeted support through training and resources, the program seeks to promote resilience, foster economic recovery, and ensure sustainable development for all Filipinos.

The program focuses on existing MSMEs whose businesses/es were affected or destroyed by calamities/disasters. This comprises individuals determined late last 2022 and early part of the year 2023. PPG program provides financial assistance in the form of a Gift Voucher to affected MSMEs for business recovery without the need to repay it, provides different avenues and platforms that will widen their perspectives in terms of selling their products and the program conducts training programs and workshops to enhance the entrepreneurial skills of individuals and MSME owners, including financial management, marketing, and digital literacy.

In 2023, DTI-NCRO was allotted a total budget of 6,720,000.00 for its Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa (PPG) Program. The said program was able to provide livelihood kits across 5 cities in the National Capital Region. Through the PPG Program, eight (8) training sessions were conducted, 672 microenterprises were assisted, and a total of 13,440 livelihood kits were distributed in the form of gift vouchers.

Breakdown

| Barangay | City/ Municipality | Trainings Conducted | Total Kits Awarded | Amount Released (PhP) |
|----------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Tondo | Manila | 2 | 420 | 4,200,000.00 |
| Binondo | Manila | 1 | 29 | 290,000.00 |
| Addition Hills | Mandaluyong | 1 | 54 | 540,000.00 |
| Don Galo | Parañaque | 1 | 11 | 110,000.00 |
| Pinagbuhatan | Pasig | 2 | 133 | 1,330,000.00 |
| Tatalon | Quezon City | 1 | 25 | 250,000.00 |

8

Trainings
Conducted

672

Total Kits
Awarded

Php 6,720,000.00

Total Amount
Released

DTI x Kalye Negosyo Training

By: Michael M. Arriessgado
Office of the Regional Director

In collaboration with Kalye Negosyo, DTI aims to provide capacity-building training and business development opportunities through the DTI-Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa (PPG) program. The DTI x Kalye Negosyo Training and Workshop aims to enhance their resilience and entrepreneurial mindset, ultimately leading to enhanced business performance and long-term viability. The program further advances the objective of the PPG Program to help MSMEs who have experienced difficulties and support them to stand on their own by providing support and technical training.

During the series of 12 face-to-face training sessions conducted every Thursday, a range of entrepreneurial topics such as Innovation Mindset, Logo and Packaging Design, Digital Marketing, Food Safety, to name a few, were covered with the guidance of expert mentors from different industries.

A total of 23 MSMEs successfully completed the DTI x Kalye Negosyo Batch 8 training program from July to October 2023. Nine (9) of the graduates had the opportunity to showcase their products at the Mini Trade Fair on October 18, 2023, in partnership with SM Megamall Activity Center.



Elizabeth Canapit: A Good Steward with a Creative Mind

By: Raven Aaron P. Anciano, Area 3 PPG Coordinator
and Shenna O. Romero, Area 3 Information Officer



Elizabeth Parohinog Canapit

Owner of Elizabeth Creation Curtain Enterprise
Mandaluyong City

Ms. Elizabeth Canapit, a former seamstress from a small sewing shop, knew that she wanted to have her own business. With only Php 385.00, she started selling curtains and quickly became known for her creative designs. Eventually, her dream of becoming a business owner began to materialize, and so Elizabeth Creation Curtain Enterprise was born. However, the business was not immune to the challenges brought by the pandemic and one of them was adapting to the new normal of operating a business, coupled with the limited purchasing power of her target market.

To help in restarting her operations, Ms. Canapit was considered one of the beneficiaries of the Pangkabuhayan para sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa (PPG) program, qualifying her to be awarded a Landbank cash card with a load of Php 10,000.00.

To be attuned to the demand for necessities brought by the effects of the pandemic, Ms. Canapit expanded her product line by adding staple consumer goods with a cooking service for pancit canton and coffee plus other beverages to complement her existing business. This was a new service in the area, and it quickly became popular. Her customers were grateful that they could save time and energy by buying their groceries and cooked meals from her store. She was also able to use the income from the new business to buy a new refrigerator, a big insulated bottle, and a new electric kettle for hot coffee offerings.

By exploring opportunities and maximizing her resources, Ms. Canapit was able to adapt to the new normal and grow her business even further. Elizabeth Creation Curtain Enterprise now has 6 stalls, 2 of which are owned by her. Aside from that, they now have 4 employees; their capital has increased from Php 200,000.00 to Php 250,000.00; and they have reached an estimated weekly sales of Php 40,000.00 to P45,000.00. As such, she is an inspiration to other aspiring entrepreneurs as she has proven that with hard work, creativity, and good stewardship, anything is possible. She shares this advice with other MSMEs:

“Be a good steward of your resources. With prudence and diligence, you can achieve your goal,”



PPG Success Story: Metrostyle's Salon

By: Shenna Jasmine O. Romero
Area 3 | Information Officer



Ms. Melanie Pototan
Owner of Metrostyle's Salon
Quezon City

At the tender age of 17, fresh out of high school, Ms. Melanie Pototan traded her hometown for the bustling dreamscape of Metro Manila. It was not long before she landed a salon job as a “shampoo girl,” Ms. Melanie chuckles with a hint of nostalgia. After a year, she enrolled as a working student and was promoted as a manicurist. Her dedication went beyond nails, for she readily jumped in as a substitute cashier when needed. Graduation ushered in a new chapter at another salon, where she honed her skills as an all-around stylist, pampering clients with pedicure, manicure, hair-cutting, and hair-coloring services to clients.

Armed with acquired knowledge and burning ambition, Ms. Melanie took the entrepreneurial plunge with her salon. However, things did not work out for her so she had to close it. A few months later, she tried her luck again by opening a salon in another location, but it did not go as planned and had to be closed like the previous one.

Despite the hurdles she encountered in her entrepreneurial journey, Ms. Melanie did not allow the difficult times to dampen her spirit and ruin her dreams of running her own business. Determined to provide for the needs of her children, she took her chances again, for the third time, by launching “Metrostyle's Salon” in 2013 in Quezon City.

As a PPG beneficiary in 2022, Ms. Melanie shared that the livelihood assistance enabled her to purchase additional salon tools and supplies, like

hair blowers and nail polish, which helped in run her business amidst the challenges brought on the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ms. Melanie's journey toward self-sufficiency was a long struggle, but with perseverance and optimism, she has overcome the obstacles. Now, in its 10th year, Metrostyle's Salon continues to support the needs of her family while serving the beauty care needs of their community.



PPG Success Story: Tea2licious Milk Tea Hub

By: Melchor O. Sotto
Area 4 | PPG Coordinator

Tea2licious Milktea Hub has started its business in 2021 while the country is still experiencing the COVID-19 pandemic. The retrenchment from work moved Mr. Reynaldo G. Santos to look for a business to become their source of income. Since the family loved to drink milk tea, together with his passion and dedication, the milk tea business came to light. He committed 100% of his time and effort to managing his business.

However, along the way he had to wrestle with the challenges faced to sustain it due to the effects of pandemic particularly the market, and logistics of his business. This has caused instability and financial problems.

According to Mr. Santos, he was very happy and grateful that the Department of Trade and Industry has a program like PPG because the assistance had helped him to recover and eventually addressed the gaps that they are experiencing - Financial stress. He was not familiar with the program but one of his friends encouraged him to apply as a beneficiary and was fortunate enough, to be chosen as one of the recipients of the program who received a Livelihood kit worth Ten Thousand pesos (Php 10,000) on January 31, 2023. The assistance had helped his business to increase his profit by about 5-10% since it gave him the opportunity to purchase additional stocks and products that he could offer to his customers.

Mr. Santos said that if he has an opportunity again to avail of other programs from DTI-NCRO like training, product development, and other opportunities, he will grab it to improve his business. A program like PPG was a big help to sustain as well as improve his business and was very grateful for the unwavering support of DTI-NCRO to his business.



“Ang message ko sa kapwa ko Negosyante ay wag na wag susuko sa hamon ng pagnenegosyo bagkus gawin itong inspirasyon. Katulad ko, dumaan man ako sa iba’t-ibang pagsubok pero natutunan kong bumangon sa tulong ng sarili at ng programa ng DTI.”

Reynaldo G. Santos

Owner of Tea2licious Milktea Hub
Caloocan City



PPG Success Story: JBLR Food Hub

By: Aira May M. Ramos, Area 3 Negosyo Center Business Counselor and Shenna O. Romero, Area 3 Information Officer

Mr. Jesus Lugar is a self-made entrepreneur armed with life experiences. As a great observer, he recognized the opportunity in the growing popularity of chicken wings. Hence, he ventured into the business world by establishing the JBLR Food Hub in 2017 in San Juan City.

The decision to focus on flavored chicken wings and being the first to introduce this concept in the area played a crucial role in the success of JBLR Food Hub. However, as with any business, JBLR Food Hub encountered its share of challenges. The unforeseen global pandemic added a layer of complexity, particularly affecting the dine-in aspect of the business.

While the shift to takeout and delivery services helped the business stay afloat, Mr. Lugar was identified as one of the beneficiaries of the Pangkabuhayan para sa Pagbanganon at Ginhawa (PPG) Program to further help his business.

Right after receiving the financial assistance, he used it to fund and open a kiosk in a different location in San Juan City. Within a short period of four months, the kiosk evolved into an official branch that included dine-in facilities. Seven months after the establishment of the second branch, JBLR Food Hub took another significant step by opening its third branch in 2023, this time in Sampaloc, Manila.

With discipline, continuous hard work, and strategic use of the assistance he received, Mr. Lugar was able to expand his business and provide new job opportunities in their community. Currently, JBLR Food Hub has 3 branches, 12 employees, and an estimated monthly sales amounting to Php 200,000.00 to Php 300,000.00 from their previous monthly sales of Php 80,000.00 - P100,000.00.

Mr. Lugar's journey as an entrepreneur is inspiring, and his advice to fellow MSMEs who are still figuring out their business or even the would-be business owners are the following:

"Discipline is important - it ensures that you stay focused on your objectives and navigate challenges with resilience."

"Continue to learn new knowledge - it allows you to stay updated on the trend/changes and be able to adapt to it."

"Consistency in the product or service - it is the key to building trust and loyalty among customers."

Indeed, Mr. Lugar's entrepreneurial journey serves as a powerful illustration of how a combination of essential entrepreneurial qualities can lead to significant business growth with positive implications for both the entrepreneur and the community.



Jesus Banga Lugar
Owner of JBLR Food Hub
San Juan City

Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa Testimonials



“Ako po si Nancy R. Uson, 56 years old, may asawa at dalawa pong anak. Ako po ay nakatira sa Bolante 1 Pinagbuhatan Pasig City. Kame po ay nasunugan noong last April 11, 2023. Bale po naapektuhan po ang aming kabuhayan dahil po sa sunog ilan buwan pong wala kaming income. Sa ngayon po ay medyo nakakabawi na po kami sa aming kabuhayan. Naibalik po namin ulit ang aming pinagkakakitaan sa awa po ng Diyos.

Nakatanggap po kami ng financial assistance mula po sa DTI noong nakaraang December 2, 2023. Labis po ang aming kasiyahan sa natanggap po naming ayuda. Nagpapasalamat po ako sa DTI sa napakalaking tulong po sa amin sa pinansiyal at pangkabuhayan. Naipangdagdag po namin sa aming maliit na negosyo ang ayudang naibigay nila sa amin. Salamat po sa programa ng DTI sa pagtulong po nila sa mga nasunugan. Napakalaking tulong po nito sa aming kabuhayan. Nawa'y patuloy pa rin po ang kanilang suporta sa mga nangangailangan. Maraming Salamat po!”



Nancy Reclosado Uson
Brgy. Pinagbuhatan, Pasig City



“December 21, natanggap ko ung assistance ng DTI malaking bagay din po at salamat kahit papaano ay nakatulong sa pagbili ko ng materials sa work ko. Salamat po sa DTI. God bless po sa inyo”

Noel Cañizares Lora
Brgy. Pinagbuhatan
Pasig City



Myla Cerbito Rubion
Brgy. 275, Binondo
Manila

“Nagpapasalamat po ako sa DTI sa pinagkaloob po na puhunan. Malaking tulong po ito sa katulad naming nasunugan unti-unti na po bumabangon at aalagaan ko po ang aking puhunan para lumago pa. Salamat po sa Diyos at sa inyong lahat ng staff ng DTI.”



yep!

YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAM

Ms. Lady Katherine R. Puente | Regional YEP Program Coordinator

The Youth Entrepreneurship Act mandates the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise Development Council (MSMEDC) through the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) to implement a national program to promote youth entrepreneurship development. Youth Entrepreneurship Program or YEP is a focused program to address the young demographics of the country to become productive individuals ages 18-30, through entrepreneurship. It will help young Filipinos develop their entrepreneurial skills by offering them a comprehensive package interventions.

Youth Entrepreneurship Program (YEP) You Can Be Your Own Boss (BYOB)

By: Lady Katherine Puente
Regional YEP Program Coordinator

Number of Youth Completers

32

Aspiring Entrepreneurs

16

Existing Entrepreneurs

16

YEP! You Can Be Your Own Boss! emerges as the remarkable outcome of integrating the USAID Opportunity 2.0 (O2) Program's initiatives with DTI's Youth Entrepreneurship Program. This pilot run, supported by MSMEDC, marks the beginning of a transformative journey. YEP, You Can! Be Your Own Boss is an enhanced curriculum designed to empower youth by sharpening their soft skills and equipping them with essential business acumen, including business planning, startup, and management. With this upscaled program, DTI continues to do its part in its commitment to empower, inspire, and shape the future of entrepreneurship.



The program's commitment to mentorship and coaching proved instrumental in the participants' growth. Accomplished entrepreneurs, graduates of the esteemed Kapatid mentor me program, generously shared their wisdom and expertise. Through personalized guidance, these mentors meticulously reviewed and refined the participants' business plans, infusing them with invaluable insights. The mentorship provided a safe space for exploration, fostering the participants' entrepreneurial mindset and resilience. Under the mentorship's transformative influence, the participants honed their strategies, strengthened their vision, and gained a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead.

A defining moment in the program came when 24 passionate youth took the stage to pitch their business plans to a panel of distinguished judges. With unwavering determination, they presented their entrepreneurial ideas, embodying the spirit of innovation and ambition. The judges, seasoned experts in their respective fields, offered constructive feedback that propelled the participants further along their entrepreneurial journey. These invaluable insights illuminated areas for improvement and growth, inspiring the participants to refine their ideas and strategies. The pitching presentations became a powerful catalyst for personal and professional growth, instilling a deep sense of purpose and resilience in the participants.

A total of 32 youth participants, exceeding the program's intended target of 30, actively engaged in the YEP, You Can Be Your Own Boss initiative. These young individuals hail from three prominent O2 Hubs located in the National Capital Region (NCR): Valenzuela, Pasig, and Quezon City. Their enthusiastic involvement demonstrates the strong interest and eagerness among youth residing in these areas to explore entrepreneurship and acquire the necessary skills to kickstart their own businesses.

The YEP program unfolded as a transformative journey, leaving a profound impact on its participants. Throughout the program, several key highlights emerged, shaping the experiences of the youth and fueling their entrepreneurial aspirations.



As the YEP You Can Be Your Own Boss Program progresses, it establishes promising collaborations with SBCDPO and LEDIPO Valenzuela. SBCDPO commits to supporting 12 YEP BYOB Quezon City graduates through the provision of Starter Kits and opportunities to showcase their products in QC bazaars, expanding their exposure. LEDIPO Valenzuela ensures ongoing support by connecting Valenzuela YEP BYOB completers to their LGU's "TUPAD" program. The program further enhances its impact by engaging external partners like the Philippine Young Entrepreneur Association's President, Ms. Charmaine Leong, and Sir Jaypee Morales, President of Association of Filipino Franchisers Inc. (AFFI, CEO (Rite Tea) , Co-Owner (Choco Monkey), who actively reach out to participants, fostering collaborations that inspire and amplify the program's impact.

These connections extend beyond the program sessions, providing participants with invaluable resources, guidance, and potential business collaborations, nurturing their entrepreneurial aspirations and fostering a vibrant network of support.



Casa de Tsaas "Milk-Tea" Business of Ms. Jana Mae Joaquin

By: Sylvia M. Ron, Area 3 YEP Coordinator and Shenna O. Romero, Area 3 Information Officer

Ms. Jana, a passionate young Out-of-School Youth entrepreneur, ventured into the milk tea business in 2020 and named it "Casa De Tsaas". Starting with a home-based business at the height of the pandemic, she collected and delivered orders to her customers using Facebook as her online selling platform.

As a Hotel Restaurant Management undergraduate of Metro Manila College in Novaliches, Quezon City, she capitalized on her food business knowledge coupled with the fresh insights she acquired from the Be Your Own Boss – Quezon City Youth Entrepreneurship Program (BYOB-QC YEP) held last June 7-9, 2024 in Quezon City Hall. Through the training, she learned the

principles of business management and the power of maximizing business presence on different online platforms. It has also led her to participate in the Proudly Original Products of Quezon City (POP-QC) program of the QC-Small Businesses and Cooperatives Development Public Office (SBCDPO), allowing her to showcase her business. Additionally, she learned the importance of the Business Model Canvas (BMC) and used this tool to pursue another business that complements her milk tea business, the "ihaw-ihaw" (grilled food) business. Utilizing her BMC learnings, together with her homegrown recipe which captured the taste buds of her neighbors, her newfound business became an instant hit, doubling her daily net income from Php 2,000.00 to Php 4,000.00.



This proves that capitalizing on your strengths combined with continuous learning will help you achieve what you want in life.



Quezon City Proclaimed as the Overall Most Competitiveness City for 2023

By: Beverly Jimenea
CMCI Focal Person for NCR

In the recently held Philippine Creative Cities and Municipalities Competitiveness Congress last September 28, 2023, at the Manila Hotel, it was another big win for Quezon City-LGU as it bested 1,634 LGUs nationwide who were competing for the most coveted overall competitive award. They also received awards in multiple categories of competitiveness pillars: top 1 under the categories of Infrastructure, Resiliency, and Innovation and top 2 under Economic Dynamism.

During the speech of Mayor Joy Belmonte of Quezon City, she mentioned that the competitiveness of a city is anchored on adherence to the principles of good governance, as investors like to work with a local government they can trust. Likewise, she proudly shared that their processes are simple, transparent, and business-friendly, thus the taxes are translated to better services for its people. She further said that under her leadership, they are investing resources to produce quality talent to support businesses in their locality through various education and training programs. Mayor Belmonte pointed this out to ensure that Quezon City is a government that fosters a healthy relationship with its stakeholders. No wonder, Quezon City stood once again at the top.

Aside from Quezon City, other NCR LGUs made it to the top 3 awards namely: Pasay City - 1st in Economic Dynamism and now for three (3) consecutive years, and 3rd both under government efficiency, and innovation pillars. It also received 2nd place under the overall rankings. Meanwhile, Manila City came 3rd under the overall rankings this year; 1st place under the government efficiency pillar, and 2nd both under the Infrastructure and Innovation pillars. Other awardees were Muntinlupa who ranked 3rd under the Infrastructure and Resiliency pillar and Makati City who received a special award being 2nd in rank for the number of IP creations/filings in NCR.

The result of this year's cycle was another toast to NCR-LGUs as they achieved all the top spots in the overall ranking for the most competitive cities and the awards from the different pillars under the highly urbanized category. Their continued commitment and passion to pursue excellence and competitiveness gave them something to be proud of.

The LGUs really accepted the challenge to be globally competitive and business-friendly. To quote on what the DTI Secretary delivered during his speech, "Together, let us traverse this exciting journey towards the Philippines imbued with creativity, competitiveness, and resilience. Let us weave our dreams and efforts into a tapestry of shared visions and aspirations."

The Cities and Municipalities Competitiveness Index (CMCI) program is an annual ranking of Philippine cities and municipalities developed by the National Competitiveness Council through the Regional Competitiveness Committees (RCC) with the assistance of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Local government units (LGUs) in the country are ranked based on the 5 pillars, specifically: economic dynamism, government efficiency, resiliency, infrastructure, and innovation.



NCR MSMEs Recognized Under the PQA Regionalization Program

By: Beverly Jimenea
CMCI Focal Person for NCR

During the deliberation made on December 1, 2023, two NCR MSMEs have been recognized to receive the Philippine Quality Award (PQA) under the Regionalization Program namely: Mori Creations and Adventist Medical Center-Manila. Based on the merits of the assessment, the awardees were given the Level 1 recognition for Quality Commitment and Level 2 recognition for Quality Proficiency, respectively.

Mori Creations, the company behind Mori Notes was founded and managed by Mitzi Chan. Located in Pasig City, the company is a social enterprise that designs and creates innovative storage solutions. They collaborate with artists from different walks and backgrounds to make distinct, stylish, and functional products, especially in Quezon City where they envision of making the city poverty-free by becoming a global brand of innovative purses. It has then expanded to other stylish containers and accessories. The term “Mori” is a variant name of Moriel that means, “God is my teacher.”

While Adventist Medical Center-Manila, is currently headed by its President, Elias Apacible, Jr. and it is located in Pasay City. AMCM is known as a premier wellness and lifestyle medical center and declared a Level 3 hospital by the Department of Health (DOH). Getting this level of status indicates that it is equipped to handle cases, from minor injuries to complicated issues requiring specialists. Likewise, the hospital was also declared a Center for Excellence, the highest level of accreditation given by the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation. On top of this, they were certified by the International Organization for Standardization for quality management. These highest accreditations a hospital can receive have something to be proud of.

The PQA is a program that democratizes the conferment allowing deserving organizations from the region the Level 1 (Commitment to Quality Management) and Level 2 (Proficiency in Quality Management) recognitions. The regional recognition is valid for two years, as per the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Department Administrative Order (DAO) 22-12, series of 2022. The program is being handled by the Bureau of Industry Planning and Innovation (BIPI) under the Department of Trade and Industry.

Now, these MSMEs can elevate their organization’s excellence by aiming for national-level recognition.



Green Economic Development (GED) Program - Green Information and Action Plan 2023

Theme: Supporting Green and Inclusive Businesses: A Pathway to Climate-Resilient, Energy Efficiency, and Zero Waste Economy in Metro Manila

By: Paul Jerome A. Sañez
Regional Planning Officer / GED Regional Focal



September 14, 2023 – The Department of Trade and Industry - National Capital Region Office (DTI-NCRO) conducted a transformative Green Economic Development (GED) Program on September 14th. The event, held in Metro Manila, aimed to bolster green and inclusive businesses, steering them towards climate resilience, energy efficiency, and zero-waste practices.

Open to NCR MSMEs, the program drew around 35 attendees who had the unique opportunity to network with industry experts and DTI officials. OIC Regional Director, Ma. Sofia G. Narag, set the tone with a warm welcome, offering insights into the program's emphasis on environmentally friendly, climate-smart, and inclusive strategies for Green Economic Development. OIC-RD Sofie specifically commended MSMEs that have already embraced green practices, acknowledging their proactive approach to sustainability.

The keynote speaker, Assistant Secretary Leonita T. Baluyut of the DTI Regional Operations Group, delivered an impactful opening message. Asec. Leni addressed various issues impacting Green Economic Development and outlined national-level initiatives to combat climate change. Encouraging MSMEs to delve into the full spectrum of greening the economy, she emphasized the importance of practical implementation over mere theoretical considerations.

The program offered a valuable platform for MSME participants and DTI personnel to glean insights from green experts and resource speakers, fostering knowledge that could benefit everyone. Interactive Q&A sessions followed each presentation, covering topics such as Introduction to GED, Climate-Resilient MSMEs, Energy-Efficient MSMEs, Zero-Waste Businesses, and Green Knowledge Product Sharing. Each presentation, lasting 50 minutes, was punctuated with background information and discussion questions.



Introduction to Green Economic Development (GED). Ms. Donna Lina of WomenBiz PH provided a simplified overview of GED, emphasizing its role in balancing economic prosperity, environmental protection, and social equity. The Green Economic Development Program, she assured, aims to create a harmonious relationship between economic growth and sustainability, benefitting MSMEs in Metro Manila.

Climate-Resilient MSMEs. According to Mr. Juan Alvarez, climate-resilient MSMEs are equipped to withstand and adapt to the impacts of climate change. Strategies discussed included investing in research and development for innovative climate-resilient products, utilizing digital solutions for climate monitoring, and educating customers about eco-friendly aspects. The focus was on enhancing climate resilience to ensure sustainability.

Energy Efficient MSMEs. Engr. Marionel Peralta highlighted the crucial role of energy efficiency in reducing operational costs and contributing to environmental sustainability. He emphasized the importance of understanding energy consumption patterns, detailed analysis, and technology gap analysis, especially in the context of Metro Manila's businesses.

Zero-Waste Businesses. Ms. Marian Ladesma explored zero-waste businesses as enterprises aiming to eliminate waste by redesigning processes and products. Sustainable practices such as recycling, reusing, composting, and waste reduction were emphasized. She concluded that commitment, creativity, and a holistic approach to waste management are essential for implementing zero-waste strategies in Metro Manila.

Green Knowledge Product – Eco Shift. Ms. Irene Villaespin, owner of EcoShift, shared her green knowledge products, promoting environmental awareness and sustainability. Embracing the principles of the circular economy, she inspired participants to adopt sustainable practices and contribute significantly to environmental conservation efforts.

The program concluded with MSMEs utilizing the learnings from the presentations for individual green action planning, fostering a proactive approach towards sustainable business practices in the bustling business landscape of Metro Manila.



Strengthening Disaster Resilience Initiative (SDRI) for MSMEs FY 2023: Capacity Building to Onboard MSMEs to GeoRisk Platform

By: Paul Jerome A. Sañez
Regional Planning Officer



In a two-day learning activity spearheaded by DTI-NCRO, participants were immersed in a comprehensive program focusing on digitizing building footprints and proficient database management using GeoMapperPH web. Facilitated by five experts from DOST-PHIVOLCS, the sessions covered an array of topics, including the GeoRisk Philippines Initiative, GeoRiskPH Web Services, HazardHunterPH, GeoAnalyticsPH, PlanSmartPH Ready to Rebuild Program, and Earthquake and Volcanic Hazards.

Practical applications and a hands-on activity allowed participants to digitize using GeoRiskPh and input geographic location data of existing MSMEs in Metro Manila. By the program's conclusion, DTI-NCRO offices were equipped with accounts and real-time database dashboards for MSME hazard mapping and other planning purposes.

The activity not only provided a platform for knowledge exchange but also empowered NCBC participants and DTI personnel with insights from PHILVOCS speakers. Interactive sessions covered topics such as Introduction to GeoRisk Philippines Initiatives, how to sign-in to GeoMapperPH, GeoMapperPH Web Application usage, Introduction to GeoMapperPH Database Management, and Earthquake and Volcanic Hazards.

Mr. John Harold B. Tabuzo initiated the discussions by introducing the GeoRisk Philippines Initiatives, emphasizing PHILVOCS' commitment to creating a safer and more resilient environment by mitigating geological and environmental risks. This collaborative effort between DTI and PHILVOCS integrates technology, community involvement, and policy integration to enhance MSME resilience in the face of natural hazards.





Ms. Trisha Marie D. Morado elucidated the step-by-step procedure for signing in to GeoMapperPH, an application designed to facilitate the collection and updating of hazards, exposure, vulnerability, and coping capacity data. Highlighting the application's real-time data dashboards, Morado stressed its role in making data-informed decisions for disaster risk reduction and response.

Following her, Ms. Ynna Patricia M. Aquino emphasized GeoMapperPH's role in building exposure geodatabases and supporting efficient hazards and risk assessment, data collection, sharing, and analysis for MSMEs' resilience. Participants learned that the application streamlines the collection of crucial data, directing it to the GeoRiskPH system for broader access and utilization.

Mr. Conrado Alfonso M. Favis conducted a training session on database management in GeoMapperPH, empowering participants to maximize the information through data query features. This practical aspect of the program equipped participants with the skills needed for effective database utilization.

The concluding speaker, Mr. Nicole Jean L. Mercado, delved into earthquake and volcanic hazards, providing insights into their distinct yet interconnected characteristics. Mercado emphasized mitigation strategies, including monitoring, early warning systems, land-use planning, and community education to enhance resilience in regions susceptible to these natural hazards.

Dr. Mylene Villegas, Deputy Director of PHILVOLCS, expressed gratitude for the active participation of the attendees, congratulating them on the successful completion of the program. Anticipating that the acquired knowledge would enhance DTI's capacity for effective program implementation, she concluded the ceremony on a positive note, emphasizing the collaborative efforts for a more resilient future.

Forum on Innovation and Digital Transformation: E-TAAS ang Pinay MSMEs

By: Paul Jerome A. Sañez
Regional Planning Officer

With the revival and adaptation of the Regional SMED Council in NCR approved through Resolution No. 001, Series of 2021, the objective was to provide support and assistance to micro, small, and medium enterprises in NCR. The focus was on improving their business environment, strengthening business capacity, and tapping into business opportunities to broaden access to markets. In pursuit of these goals, the council members organized a face-to-face seminar cum forum for MSMEs, aiming to enhance their knowledge and wisdom with insights from seasoned resource speakers in various fields of expertise.

The Department of Trade and Industry-National Capital Regional Office (DTI-NCRO), in collaboration with the Regional SMED Council members, undertook this face-to-face activity to better assist not only the MSMEs in NCR but also to support the implementation of the annual celebration of the National MSME Week. The event was also closely tied to The “E-TAAS ang Pinay MSMEs” Program, which provided comprehensive training, mentoring, and promotion support for Filipino MSMEs, with a particular focus on women entrepreneurs. E-TAAS, an acronym for Empowering Local MSMEs and Women Entrepreneurs (WEs), Train for Success, Access a Wider Market, Amplify Philippine-made Products, and Sustain Growth was carried out in coordination with the DTI Bureau of Small and Medium Enterprise Development (BSMED) and the Philippine Trade Training Center (PTTC).

On July 13, 2023, MSME Week 2023 unfolded as an enlightening exploration of business strategies, focusing on the realms of E-Commerce and Digital Marketing. Industry leaders, Mr. Gabriel Billones and Ms. Dorene Dimaunahan led dynamic sessions, providing profound insights into navigating the digital age. The event, themed “Upgrade, Upskill, and Upsize,” encapsulated a convergence of innovation, education, and empowerment.





Highlighting the integral role of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the first day showcased three thriving MSMEs sharing their growth stories. These narratives underscored the significant support provided by DTI in nurturing entrepreneurial aspirations, showcasing the potential of MSMEs in leveraging digital platforms for business enhancement.

Continuing on July 14, 2023, the second day of MSME Week 2023 focused on “Online Visual Merchandising” and aligning physical stores with their online counterparts. Expert Ms. Abegil Gozon provided invaluable insights into captivating online shoppers through strategic visual arrangements. The day epitomized the event’s theme, “Where Art Meets Commerce,” echoing the mantra of Upgrade, Upskill, and Upsize in every discussion.



The two-day learning activity delved into entrepreneurship as a dynamic and strategic pursuit. Speakers emphasized vision, adaptability, and risk-taking as core components of entrepreneurial success. Recognizing market gaps, developing unique solutions, and navigating challenges with resilience were highlighted as fundamental to thriving in the business landscape.

Digital marketing took center stage as a multifaceted strategy, encompassing SEO, social media marketing, email marketing, content creation, and online advertising. The importance of customer-centricity, coupled with analytics for assessing campaign effectiveness, was underscored. Marketers were encouraged to stay informed about emerging trends for crafting impactful, measurable, and adaptive digital campaigns.



The program’s focus on targeted training and support aims to enhance the capabilities of MSMEs and Women Entrepreneurs (WEs), fostering resilience and competitiveness. Access to a wider market is deemed crucial for reaching a broader audience and establishing a sustainable customer base. By amplifying Philippine-made products, the initiative contributes not only to local industries but also to national identity and pride.



THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGIONAL OFFICE

MANAGEMENT



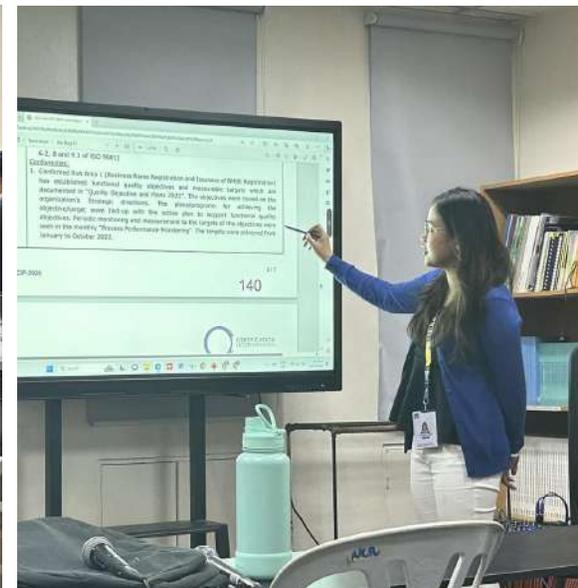
DTI- NCRO Quality Management System

By: Loude Mae Ducay
Regional ISO Quality Coordinator

DTI-NCRO once again proved its commitment to continuous improvement and stayed at par with global quality standards by passing the yearly conduct of the 2023 National Internal Quality Audit and Third-party Second Surveillance Audit with both zero (0) non-conformities found. This achievement highlighted DTI-NCRO's testament to upholding and maintaining an effective and efficient Quality Management System in accordance with the ISO 9001:2015 standard. The organization took pride in its dedication to consistently providing quality services and exceeding the expectations of our clients.

The scope of processes audited in the office included Top Management, Internal Audit, Nonconformity and Corrective action, and six (6) Core processes, including Trade and Industry Information, Business Counselling, Conduct of Trade Fair, Conduct of Training, Issuance of Barangay Micro Business Enterprises (BMBE) registration, and Business Name Registration.

To ensure the effectiveness of its Quality Management System, DTI-NCRO conducted a regular review of its strategic planning tools to determine if the current system being implemented was still suitable, adequate, and effective. This review included an assessment of the organization's directions, identification of risks and opportunities, determining the needs and expectations of the interested parties, establishing strategic objectives for each of the ISO-enrolled processes, an analysis of client feedback, and an evaluation of process performance. In addition, DTI-NCRO had initiated simulation audits and invited resource speakers from other DTI bureaus and regions to provide insights and recommendations for further improvement.



The NIQA was held last July 11, 2023. DTI-NCRO was audited by Region IV-B, headed by Ms. Haze Berlene Puno as their Audit Team Leader. The internal audit identified opportunities for improvement and recommended actions that were promptly addressed by the management.

The Third-Party Second Surveillance Audit was conducted on November 10, 2023, by Certification International Philippines Inc. (CIPI). During the audits, DTI-NCRO's adherence to the ISO 9001:2015 standard was thoroughly assessed through documentation review, interviews with DTI-NCRO process owners, and observation of the implementation of quality management practices.



The assessment results of both the internal audit and third-party surveillance audit highlighted that DTI-NCRO had successfully implemented and maintained an effective Quality Management System in accordance with the ISO 9001:2015 standard.



This success would not have been possible without the commitment and active involvement of our dedicated former Regional Director Marcelina S. Alcantara, current Officer-In-Charge, Regional Director Ma. Sofia G. Narag, Quality Management Representative Jay Acar, Area Heads, and all the NCRO employees who had consistently demonstrated their understanding and adherence to our quality management system. Their collective efforts and dedication to quality have enabled DTI-NCRO to effectively meet the needs and expectations of its interested parties, continuously improve its processes, and ensure quality delivery of services.





Team Building and Inauguration of the Center for Innovation and Technology for Enterprises (CITE) Basketball Court

By: Denise Anne S. Veluz and Mary Rose B. Dadia
Finance and Admin Support Division

On May 05, 2023, FASD hosted a team-building activity at DTI CITE Marikina. With the theme “Coming Together is Beginning. Keeping Together is Progress. Working Together is Success”. The activity improves employee engagement, teamwork, and organizational culture. It also fosters camaraderie.

A parade of colors kicked off the team-building activity. Afterward, RD Marcelina S. Alcantara, former Regional Director, presided over the opening of the CITE Basketball Court, with representatives from Philippine Footwear Federation Inc. (PFFI), Philippine Constructors Association (PCA), Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI), and an exhibition game by Philippine Basketball Association (PBA) Player, Mr. Gabe Norwood from Rain or Shine Elasto Painters.





Right after the inauguration, the Outdoor game started. The following games are: the balloon relay race, pen-ball battle, NCRO Lomba, basketball, volleyball, and a board pipeline game. Other events took place in the function room, including chant presentations by groups, a dartboard game, and a marshmallow-pasta tower. The winners of the Indoor and Outdoor games are the following team and their players:

Over-all Team Champion: Team Passion

Players:

1. Ferdinand O. Angeles (Team Leader and DTI CITE Head)
2. Siquem F. Fatalla
3. AJ Michael P. Matildo
4. Genesis V. Paez
5. Christian James Raquion
6. Edilberto M. Rivera, Jr.
7. Rowell DR. Permejo
8. Richard Galang
9. Thalia Rose Ann Salvador
10. Jennifer M. Basul-Candelaria
11. Jamaica Loraine L. Macatiag
12. Rachelle Ann O. Cruz
13. Rose Ann O. Cruz
14. Maila E. Dabuet



Ms. Renalyn Cantalejo from Team Creativity and DBP- SC won the Miss DTI-NCRO Sportsfest / Team Building. DTI-NCRO also recognized twenty-one (21) employees who contributed several years of public service by awarding plaques and certificates of appreciation. These are the names with their number of years in Public Service as follows:

2022 Loyalty Awardees

| | Awardee | Span of Years | Number of Years |
|-----------|----------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| PLANTILLA | RD Marcelina S. Alcantara | 1987-2022 | 35 |
| | Janice T. Teruñez | 1992-2022 | 30 |
| | Ferdinand O. Angeles | 1997-2022 | 25 |
| | Ruben Q. Cullamco | 1997-2022 | 25 |
| | Cesario E. Aloner | 2002-2022 | 20 |
| | Glenda S. Loloy | 2002-2022 | 20 |
| | DC Corona Olivia O. Rivera | 1995-2008; 2015-2022 | 20 |
| | Dahlia J. Nuñez | 2002-2022 | 20 |
| | Baldomero M. Rollon, Jr. | 2002-2022 | 20 |
| | Carmelita E. Cabang | 2012-2022 | 10 |
| JO/COS | | | |
| | Maria Sofia C. Francisco | 2012-2022 | 10 |
| | Joanna Marie C. Alao | 2012-2022 | 10 |



2023 Loyalty Awardees

| | Awardee | Span of Years | Number of Years |
|-----------|------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| PLANTILLA | Eduardo J. Yabut | 1977-2012; 2013-2023 | 45 |
| | Tierry G. Gigantone | 1993-2023 | 30 |
| | DC Jay A. Acar | 1998-2023 | 25 |
| | Edinelson T. De Castro | 1998-2023 | 25 |
| | Lourdes D. Rafael | 1998-2023 | 25 |
| | Nerissa N. Saluib | 1998-2023 | 25 |
| | Harold C. Marco | 2003-2023 | 20 |
| | Jheric A. Saracho | 2008-2023 | 15 |
| JO/COS | | | |
| | Ma. Agnes C. Pardo | 2013-2023 | 10 |



Organizational Cultural Activity and Send-Off Ceremony of RD Marcelina S. Alcantara

On July 27, 2023, the DTI-NCRO Organizational Cultural Activity was held at DTI CITE. The activity aimed to promote a work-life balance in the office and build a positive team culture. The event started with a short program, giving distinctive consideration to employees who exercised efforts to achieve outstanding accomplishments. DC Elma P. Viray and Mr. Joseph H. Dela Peña received and awarded tokens of appreciation for being part of the 2020 ROG-HO Mythical 5 while the DTI-NCRO Basketball Team received tokens and recognition for their outstanding performance.

Aside from recognition given to exceptional NCRO employees, we offered a brief send-off to RD Marcelina S. Alcantara, expressing our deepest gratitude for her leadership and guidance as DTI - NCRO Regional Director with more than 35 years of government service.



Training on Dashboarding 101

Training on Dashboarding 101 was a 2-day face-to-face training held in Metro House, Makati last September 21-22, 2023. The training aimed to refresh and update employees about individual dashboards. DC Jay A. Acar, Head of FASD as the Learning Service Provider (LSP), shared his knowledge on the subject matter.

The training empowered employees to track individual targets and accomplishments, assess their progress, and contribute meaningfully to DTI-NCRO's organizational targets.



Trick or Treat Spook-Tacular Halloween Bash

The DTI-NCRO celebrated Halloween on October 27, 2023, with a fun-filled event for the employees' children. It aims to provide an opportunity for employee's children to create lasting memories with their parents and peers, engaging in activities like costume contests, and fun games.

Children were invited to dress up in Halloween costumes for a chance to win prizes, while also participating in an array of activities such as trick-or-treating and party games. This event allowed employees to step away from work routines and enjoy the festivities with loved ones hence fostering stronger familial bonds.



Wellness Program: Flu Vaccine

As part of the Wellness Program of DTI-NCRO FASD, teamed up with the Department of Health – Metro Manila Center for Health Development, organized a complimentary flu vaccination program for its personnel on November 7 & 8, 2023. A total of 205 employees which encompassing permanent, contractual, and job order positions received vaccinations to safeguard their health during flu season after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Additionally, employees from other bureaus in DTI also availed of the vaccination opportunity. Strict adherence to health protocols was maintained throughout the vaccination process. This initiative highlights DTI-NCRO's dedication to maintaining high-quality public services while prioritizing the well-being and safety of its workforce.



Year-End Assessment 2023

As the year drew to a close, it was crucial that DTI-NCRO paused to consider both its accomplishments and challenges.

An excellent method to reflect on the agency's accomplishments and identify areas for improvement was through year-end evaluations. On December 21, 2023, DTI-NCRO officials and employees held a year-end assessment at the Metro House Building in Makati City. To obtain information and feedback regarding the office's performance, all NCRO employees were gathered for this activity.

The goal of the activity was to review strategic measures, proposed targets, actual accomplishments, and remaining balance to achieve the proposed targets. To achieve this, a presentation of all the data required from the individual performance of each program was held, and the corresponding catch-up plan was discussed.



Besides from the annual performance review, the intention is also to recognize the following employees for their exceptional performance:

Top 10% of Permanent Employees for CY 2021

- DC Jay A. Acar
- DC Elma P. Viray
- Mary Joy S. Mojica
- DC Corona Olivia O. Rivera

Best in Attendance of Permanent Employees

- DC Elma P. Viray
- Zenaida D. Biglang-awa
- Edinelson De Castro
- Thierry G. Gigantone

Top Negosyo Center Performers

- Negosyo Center – Lux Center Building, Mandaluyong City
- Negosyo Center – Manila LGU
- Negosyo Center – Valenzuela

Best Driver

- Christopher Roldan

Top 10% of JO/COS Performers

- Joan D. Santillan
- † Marpaul S. Alao
- Janine Doringo-Carrasco
- Jamaica Loraine L. Macatiag
- Melchor O. Sotto Jr.

Best in Attendance of JO/COS Employees

- Jennifer M. Basul-Candelaria
- Rizaldy Christian G. Cantimbuhan
- Jimmy G. Juano
- Jamaica Loraine L. Macatiag
- Janssen Hans L. Pascual
- Melchor O. Sotto Jr.

Best Utility Workers

- Jeanny C. Talaman
- Victorina Castañeros

The Year-End Assessment provided valuable insights into the organization's status and encouraged employee engagement through confidence-building opportunities. It served as a platform for learning, reflection, and improvement, ensuring DTI-NCRO remains focused on achieving its strategic objectives.



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Ma. Sofia G. Narag, CEO V
Regional Director
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Marcelina S. Alcantara, CEO IV
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