



Capitol grants Division Office P2 M for Senior High School

RUEL C. FERNANDEZ

(SEF).

With no given 'cold cash' from the national government to support the full swing implementation of Senior High School (SHS), the Provincial Capitol granted two million pesos to the Schools Division of Catanduanes through the Special Education Fund

This amount will be divided to 32 implementing secondary schools marking each share at Php 62, 500.00 which will be allotted to the purchase of tools and materials.

According to Mrs. Lydia T. Abundo, Division Senior High School Coor-

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ZLAC beefs up skills of Cat'nes mentors

MARIAN CLAIRE V. TULOD

Save one Friday every month to shape up.

To answer the call for teachers to be the best in their craft, the Division of Catanduanes launched this year's Zonal Learning Action Cell (ZLAC) August 7.

ZLAC is a monthly seminar conducted in each zone in the division to primarily address the training needs of teachers.

In addition, this Learning Action Cell is done to improve teachers' teaching competencies and strategies in the different learning areas, to equip them with competencies and strategies that are needed to address the 21st century teaching skills to tackle the least learned competencies per subject area, and ultimately to improve performance outcomes.

According to Dr. Josefa V. Zape, Chief of the Curriculum Implementation Division, training like this is not entirely new to teachers.

However, she also drew the line between ZLAC and Competency School Based Training Program (CSBTP) which is a former training attended by teachers.

"Unlike CSBTP which was only focused on Science, Math, and English subjects and had pre-determined least learned competencies, ZLAC follows the training needs assessment, caters all learning areas, gives professional development for teachers, enhances strategies and instructional material making skills, provides demonstration teachings, satisfies the need for Differentiated Instruction, and more importantly, is focused on key features of K to 12 program," Dr. Zape explained.

Teachers gather by subject area to tackle the identified

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HOW ABOUT A RAISE? A teacher, during the *Provincial Teachers' Day* parade brandishes her support toward the approval of the salary increase for government employees. *GOValledor*

JMAMES named Nat'l Best Brigada-Eskwela Implementer

RICKY V. TID

Juan M. Alberto Memorial Elementary School (JMAMES) is one of the 96 schools which was given recognition by the Department of Education for its exemplary performance in mobilizing community participation for the annual preschool opening maintenance activity Brigada Eskwela.

This year, according to Mrs. Irene M. Borja, Resource Mobilization Officer, the school has generated the total amount of P3, 441, 765.68.00.

From the accumulated amount, P2, 344,057.05 was donated by the external stakeholders; 316, 799.63 came from the donations by grades/sections and P777, 725.00 was the converted amount from volunteer services.

Borja also said that from the said amount, they were able to build and improve school facilities such as library, Home Economics building, orchidarium, botanical garden and herbarium.

"Our outstanding accomplishment this year, siguro yung

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OUT OF THE BOX.

ZLAC Facilitator Dave Tolentino injects element of surprise in his session by using mystery boxes as part of his motivational activity. *GOValledor*





Division Chorale gets limelight at CCP stage



TUNE OF SUCCESS.

The heartfelt performance of the Division Chorale depicts its bittersweet story of risks and triumphs as deduced in their singing rendition of “Tamis ng Tagumpay”. *GOValledor*

RUEL C. FERNANDEZ

Talent and hardwork brought the Division of Catanduanes Chorale at the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) for the Civil Service Commission (CSC)-sponsored choral competition-Grand Finals, Mrs. Myrna Arcilla-Aldea, trainer, said.

According to Aldea it was a rare opportunity for a small-scale choral group to have reached the national level for this kind of competition.

“But with hard work and the incomparable talent, we made it to the top,” she added.

Being the first placer in the regional elimination, the group advanced to the national level as semi-finalist representing Region V (Bicol).

“All regions sent their semi-finalists and the Commission conducted a screening until it came up with only eight Finalists to sing at the CCP” Aldea said, explaining the process of elimination.

“We are lucky to have been chosen,” she added.

The group is composed of 26 members, of which 13 are from Catanduanes National High School, including Aldea as the Trainer/Conductor.

According to one partici-

pant, it was an overwhelming experience to reach that stage. “If we are to be compared to other groups, we are beginners. The top four are actually veterans in such competitions and they are already an established one.”

“They have been performing for years, whereas, we are just newly-organized group and had it not been of the competition, we won’t get along to rehearse,” she added.

Aldea recalled the times when they had to rehearse at the very limited time. “The chorale members are teachers from different schools in the province. They have to attend

to their respective classes so they can’t just leave to attend rehearsals.”

Nevertheless, the group considered their battle a fruitful experience.

Meanwhile, the group was thankful to all ‘benevolent hearts’ who helped them with all the finances for transportation, accommodation, food, clothing and make-up.

It also commended the effort of the School Governance and Operations Division (SGOD) and the entire staff of the Schools Division of Catanduanes, with Mr. Romel G. Petajen and Mrs. Sarah T. Chiong in the frontiers, in organizing a FunWalk tagged as “Takbuhan at Kantahan” that enabled the team to accumulate additional funds for other expenses.

Immunization program hits 86% target rate

RICKY V. TID

To protect the students from tetanus-diphtheria (Td), measles-rubella (MR), the Division of Catanduanes-Health and Nutrition Section has served up the School-Based Immunization Program dubbed “Bakuna para sa Kabataan, Proteksyon sa Kinabukasan” among grades 1 and 7 students of the island from the month of August to September.

According to Mrs. Rosita A. Tabirara, in-charge of the said program, they have targeted 95 percent immunization rate to ensure immunity from the four diseases among the age group, but only 87% of the schoolchildren and 84% of teenaged-schoolers have been vaccinated

Out of 6, 127 eligible elementary pupils, only 2, 742 were given MR vaccine while 5, 352

of them were provided with Td vaccine.

In secondary, 5,302 students were immunized with MR and 5, 366 were vaccinated with Td.

With the combined percentages of both grade levels, the program has attained an average of 86%.

“There were delays in the immunization campaign, as some parents of schoolchildren refuse to give their consent. Dai ta man piya pilit pag habo,” Tabirara said.

She also added that the campaign for the program was extended until the end of September due to the incomplete attendance of students and pupils during the immunization schedules.

Prior to the immunization, the SDO-HNS conducted orientations to all school heads; grades

1 and 7 teachers; school nurses and school nutrition coordinators in four zones in the province.

The SDO has allotted P100, 000 budget for the conduct of orientation and information

dissemination.

This said program was through the initiative of Department of Health (DOH) in collaboration with the Department of Education (Deped) and Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) through their various local health units.



TEMPORARY ACHE. A Grade 7 student of Tubli National High School in Caramoran town braves several seconds of needle-inflicted pain in exchange of a lifetime health safety. *DSTolentino*



Cordial is nat'l finalist in outstanding teacher search

JEFFERSON S. ARCILLA

Successfully passing a number of thorough screening procedures, an elementary teacher of Catanduanes was named one of the national finalists in the 2015 Metrobank Search for Outstanding Teachers.

Myla B. Cordial, an elementary teacher of Bato Central Elementary School, bested other 447 aspiring teachers as she was qualified as one of the eight national finalists in the search.

From 467, the applicants were shortlisted to 127 in elementary level then further trimmed down to 40 regional finalists.

The Master Teacher I of Bato Central Elementary School had undergone screenings before she was selected in the final phase of the search.

Cordial initially accomplished Basic Information Sheet online then submitted two volumes of documents required by the organizing committee. After receiving the second notice, she went to Manila to have her on-the-spot demonstration teaching and interview.

A background investigation

was also done before Cordial had received a notification through email that she was qualified for final interview. They were also required to write an essay as part of the final screening.

Despite not making it to the cut as an outstanding teacher awardee, Cordial managed to be the sole national finalist from Catanduanes who received the notice in June from the award-giving body.

In an interview, Cordial said that the competition was very steep most especially during the final screening knowing that her co-applicants were very competitive and all deserving to win.

"Actually after the interview, I felt that I satisfied the judges. I was confident because marami naman akong achievements. But still I am very happy and thankful for having gone that far as national finalist," Cordial said.

Serving in her 11th year as public school teacher, Cordial has already numerous achievements.

She has been awarded as Division Outstanding Reading Teacher and Regional Outstanding Teacher.

She was also one of the



CORDIALLY RIGHT. For the hardworking elementary teacher Myla Cordial (second from the left), an outstanding leap toward success means perseverance, quality service and prayers. (Cordial's Facebook Photo)

Teacher Advisory Panel Representatives of Asia in International Reading Association in Florida, USA. .

Cordial said she learned many things from her experiences in joining the search.

"Magtiyaga ka lang talaga and share everything with others. Prayers and people around me really helped me," she shared.

Cordial and other national finalists were awarded a certificate of recognition on October-12 at Metrobank, Legazpi City

Branch.

They also received a cash prize worth P20,000.00.

The 2015 Metrobank Search for Outstanding Teachers was launched by the Metrobank Foundation, Inc. in partnership with the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED).

This year's search centered on the theme, "Empowering Dreams for an Inspired Nation."

Pilot-testing results positive say Senior High early implementers

RUEL C. FERNANDEZ

After a year of pilot-testing, Senior High School Early Implementers said they are positive about the results, making them 'more ready' for the full swing implementation this school year 2016-2017.

According to Mrs. Amelia R. Eusebio, Principal of San Andres Vocational School (SAVS), her school is optimistic and ready

to prepare the youth for life skills necessary for world of work, for entrepreneurship, and for higher education.

She said that the teachers are also ready, much so, the pieces of equipment to be used which were already upgraded to meet the needs of the students.

Moreover, she stated that the school still continues to make facilities even better.

"We continue to persevere to

improve and gratify everyone," she added.

The school which will offer four tracks next year with exemption to Sports, has now a two-storey building under construction for use of Grade 11 students.

Meanwhile, the Principal of Catanduanes National High School Mr. Rudy M. Tolentino assured that his administration had set the school for Grade 11 before he retired from government service.

He said that his priority goal of putting Special Programs in the Arts and Sports in addition to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), is a preparation for tracking in Senior High.

"We make sure students are also prepared for the track they have to take. It's their future that is at stake here," he said.

The school which will offer all tracks next school year has four

new buildings ready for construction.

The first of the four buildings is currently on-going for construction beside Grade 7-Begonia Room. It is a two-storey building with 6 7x9 classrooms costing to Php 8 million.

Another two-storey building with 10 classrooms costing Php 16 million will be built beside the first PAGCOR building.

Lastly, two 13x23 workshop buildings designed for the Tech-Voc will be built at the back of Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) Building, just beside the CVS Multi-Purpose Hall.

Meanwhile, the two other Early Implementers namely Bato Rural Development High School (BRDHS) and Pandan School of Arts and Trade (PSAT) are all 'gears up' for next school year, with buildings and facilities ready for use.



IN RUSH. Workers double their time to speed the construction of the newly donated PAGCOR buildings which will be used by Grade 11 students in CNHS next year. @JCstudio



SAVS' short film gets grace

Divina Gracia is Bicol's entry in national film fest



AS FEMALE PROTAGONIST, Lianne Mariette Sales stars as Divina Gracia, a typical teenager who learned that loving a campus heartrob (played by Mark Paul Villanueva) is, more or less, an ill-fated gamble. **LD Taule**

LORAIN D. TAULE

San Andres Vocational School's short film, "Divina Gracia" won first place among the 21 schools which submitted in the Regional Population Commission (PopCom) Short Film Screening on October

13, 2015 with the theme, "Ang pag-aaral ay para sa hinaharap, huwag ipagpalit sa sandaling sarap".

As first placer, the participants received P25,000.00 cash prize, trophy, and certificates in the awarding ceremony on December 2, 2015 at Legazpi

Capitol from pl

dinator, aside from the Php 150,000 given by the national government for the Early Implementation this 2015, nothing else has followed.

"Despite these constraints, we are ready for the Senior High next year. Wala tayong magagawa - tuloy na tuloy na 'yan, so we really have to be ready," Abundo said with optimism.

Abundo announced that 32 secondary schools will offer Grade 11 next school year with exemption to nine schools namely Codon NHS, Dariao NHS, Dororian NHS, Hawan NHS, Lictin IS, Mangaway NHS, Milaviga IS, San Vicente NHS, and Tinago NHS.

"Palumbanes Integrated School is also an exemption because its Junior High School is only at Grade 8," she added.

The schools that will im-

plement SHS were chosen on basis of a 'buildable space' within the premises.

She noted, however, that by 2017 these nine schools will have a 'stand-alone' Senior HS within its community.

Meanwhile, Abundo said that on-going building constructions are now done in different schools with budget given directly from the national government.

Moreover, the Schools Division of Catanduanes is preparing for the hiring of SHS teachers.

"Interested applicants already submitted their intents. We are just waiting for the Hiring Guidelines that will determine who shall qualify for the vacant positions," Abundo stated.

Despite all the fusses in the SHS program, DepEd-Catanduanes showed optimism that it will succeed in its full implementation next year.

City aired at ABS CBN TV Patrol Bicol. It was also the Bicol's entry to the National Adolescent Health and Youth Development (AHYD) Film Festival on November 26-28, 2015.

The actors and actresses were Lianne Mariette Sales, Mark Paul Villanueva, Jona May Arnaiz, and John Xernan Carlo Aldave.

The persons behind the film were Mr. Allan M. Benoyo as Director, Mr. Jessie James Tanael and Alvin Joseph Soliveres as camera men and cinematographers, and Mrs. Loraine D. Taule and Allan M. Benoyo as script writers.

The participants also attended the awarding ceremony on November 26, 2015 at Century Park Hotel, Manila although they had not got an award during the said awarding.

The contest was open to all Grade 9 and 10 students with only four members for each entry for a twenty-minute running time for the short film .

IT Officer: Recipients to spell DCP's success

ALVIN T. VARGAS

Despite the DepEd's aim towards advancement of technology, the success of the Department's Computerization Program (DCP) still lies in the hands of its recipients, Mrs. Jennifer B. Metica, Division IT Officer said.

This statement was emphasized during the Orientation-Workshop on Data Management and Information Technology last July 2015, following the grant of computer package to 178 elementary and 7 secondary schools in the division.

"There will be no advancement in technology if the users themselves will not be able to use it properly," Metica said.

"Teachers must be equipped with advanced computer skills through ICT trainings and seminars in order to maximize their computer-aided instruction in the integration of computer lessons in some subject areas," she added.

The recipient schools were given computer sets, including printers and projector screens.

The said grant becomes the Batch 26, 27 and 28 of the DCP which started in 2005.

Division medics shine in 6th Salud Bicol Awards

RICKY V. TID

Having the highest percentage of dewormed elementary pupils during the National Schools Deworming Day (NSDD), the Department of Health (DOH)-Bicol Region recognized DepEd-Catanduanes Division Health and Nutrition Section (HNS) during the Salud Bicol Awards held at Legazpi City on December 10, 2015.

Dr. Amylou Celso, officer-in-charge of HNS received the plaque of recognition with P200,000 cash prize.

Catanduanes had already hit the national target of 85%. Among the 13 divisions, it landed in 1st place with 85.90% accomplishment. It was fol-

lowed by Masbate Division (80.36%) and Tabaco City Division (78.90%).

According to Mrs. Maribel Samonte, Program Coordinator of Integrated Helminthiasis Control Program (IHCP), they had a massive campaign regarding with the said activity.

"Nagka-igwa kami ning orientation kada district. Gabos na maestra in-orient nimi tanganing aware sinda sa NSDD," Samonte said.

Health section also tapped the local health unit of 11 towns in the province.

"Naki-coordinate kami sa mga nurses, midwives at doctors sa Rural Health Units para mas madali ang pag-disseminate," Samonte added.



WORLD TEACHERS' DAY CELEBRATION 2015

Abcede thanks teachers for staying in profession

MARIAN CLAIRE V. TULOD

“Salamat sa pagpili na maging guro at higit sa lahat, salamat sa pananatili.”

These words of gratitude opened Regional Office V Director Ramon Fiel G. Abcede's message as the Department of Education (DepEd) Division of Catanduanes, together with education partners, celebrated 2015 World Teacher's Day, October 5.

The event, pursuant to Presidential Proclamation No.242 declaring National Teachers' Month from September 5 to October 5, aims to culminate the month-long celebration as recognition to the vital contribution that teachers make to education development.

Abcede, duly represented by Ms. Joan Lagata, Regional Education Program Supervisor for English, stressed his gratitude for teachers in staying in the profession despite the many hindrances that educators confront in the field.

He also urged teachers to be persons with time cards. “It



Gracefully Dancing in

Hispanic melody, teachers from Zone 2 fill the stage with glamor as they showcase their cultural presentation during this year's Teachers' Day Celebration at Plaza Rizal.

GOValledor

is this characteristic that will divide the line between mediocrity and excellence because we believe that excellent teachers in this modern day world are the ones who are willing to go out their way even beyond their job description definitely beyond the 7:30 in the morning

to 5:00 in the afternoon timeline,” he added.

Meanwhile, Dr. Nympha D. Guemo, Assistant Schools Division Superintendent, asked the teachers to remain as good teachers “because good teachers are the reason why ordinary students dream to do extraor-

dinary things.”

One of the highlights in the celebration was the presentation of awards for exceptional accomplishments of teachers and schools. Also, adding color to the event was the various cultural presentations of different zones in the division including Tigsik, Folkdance, and Kundiman.

The teachers also enjoyed the free health, beauty, and wellness services and raffle draw initiated by Education Program Supervisors and Program Specialists in partnership with private individuals and organizations.

More than 3000 public school teachers, non-teaching personnel and administrators from the 11 municipalities participated in the said celebration.

Among the attendees were Alliance of Volunteer Educators Partylist Rep. Eulogio Magsaysay, Vice-Governor Jose “Bong” Teves Jr., Congressional Office Chief of Staff Mr. Rudy M. Rojas who represented Cong. Cesar V. Sarmiento, Chairman of the Committee on Education PBM Edwin Tanael who represented Governor Araceli B. Wong, and Federated PTA President Dr. Joselito Urgel.

VPES, SAVS champ Nestle dancercise tilt



BUBBLY BLUE BATALLION. Blue is not the color of sadness for SAVS Nestle Dancercise Team as it grooves its way and emerges victorious in the competition's division level. (SAVS' Facebook Photo)

LORAIN D. TAULE

Virac Pilot Elementary School (VPES) and San Andres Vocational School were adjudged first placers in the Division Milo Champ Moves and Wellness Campus Dancercise respectively sponsored by Nestle Philippines through Greatfil

Team, Inc. in partnership with the Department of Education (DepEd).

VPES and SAVS received twenty thousand pesos (P20,000.00) cash from the sponsoring company with the presence of the Regional Nestle Coordinator, Ms. Leslie Go Alcantara, Mr. Nelson Sicio, the Educa-

tion Program Supervisor for MAPEH, Mrs. Sarah S. Chiong, the Division Coordinator for Music and the heads of schools. The participants perform the champ and wellness moves during the school awarding.

Milo Champ Moves and Wellness Campus Dancercise are national programs of Nestle Philippines to provide awareness to school children and students in advocating proper nutrition and physical activities to have wellness.

As division winners, they represented Catanduanes in the regional competition. The Wellness Campus Showdown was held on October 10, 2015 at Albay Astrodome in Legazpi City where 50 students of SAVS executed the Wellness Dance Exercise where they placed fourth while VPES ranked 13th in the regional showdown.



SHINE

BRIGHT LIKE A DIAMOND

The Superintendent's Gold Dream of Rebirth

RUEL C. FERNANDEZ

It must have been a dark world she entered in the dawn of 2015. The turmoil she caught herself into was undeniably irrepressible that she needed a bright vision to let light pass through...

She sat there scribbling – undetached, yet keen to what was happening. Abruptly craning her neck to see who came at that busy hour, she stood from where she was seated – not to shift attention, but to bring signed papers at the secretary's nearby post.

"Uh-huh?" she enthused as she came back to her seat, got the pen and continued to work. She seemed stuck into it that she never bothered looking as if time chases every moment of her life. To listen, to write, and to think are things she could simultaneously do just to save the precious time.

Her silence might mean, "What brought you here? or What I can do for you?" that without knack on reading non-verbal cues, one should've just left because this person has a lot of things to do, not for herself, but for the Division of Catanduanes.

SET FOR THE SEAT

It was in April, 2015 that the Division of Catanduanes was stirred up in excitement and sheer anticipation for the coming

of the new administrator who shall take the highest seat in the province's educational domain.

A decade has passed since a woman superintendent from the mainland Bicol handled this biggest agency, DepEd-Catanduanes, which is always at the frontier of any societal endeavor and feat.

Now, another lady has set her journey to the island to brave the seas and the tempests of the Pacific. And as her name suggests, what magical strategy will she use to turn things around and make them right?

SKIN-DEEP PROFILE

For this lady who refused to be interviewed, at least at first, a mystery embeds.

"Age? Childhood memories that serve as your beacon of light toward success?" – questions she would refuse to answer. She would prefer professional queries for personal ones that would create sensationalized stories more appropriate for showbiz personalities. Still, the story of success is indelible in her career.

"I rose from the rank," she said while busy signing papers stacked in a thick folder.

She was at first a

The concept is to serve and not to be served.

Mathematics teacher in Bacun District, Sorsogon City Division until she became a Teacher-in-Charge, Head Teacher, Principal, and eventually a designate Education Program Supervisor (EPS)-Math in the said Division.

After passing the Educational Management Test (EMT) or much known as the 'Superintendency Exam' in 2008, she was given a two-fold function of being the full-pledged Education Program Supervisor (EPS) – Math and at the same time, the Assistant to the Schools Division Superintendent.

On March 9, 2012 she became the Assistant Schools Division Superintendent of Camarines Sur Province. Her service in the said Division lasted until April 5, 2015 before she was transferred to Catanduanes.

SHINE Catanduanes!

When she started her career in Catanduanes, her main concern is to advocate 'servant leadership'.

"The concept there is 'to serve, not to be served', she said as she relaxed her grip on the pen.

With strong fervor toward service, she was able to coin the SHINE logo statement of the Division which stands for 'Serve with Humility and Integrity to Nurture Education'. This has been the beacon that guides her administration toward achieving its vision.

"My vision is for Catanduanes to become the best performing Division", again, she stopped writing. "I want people to do their work as expected of them, to have self-discipline, to set aside self-interests – think for the good of the organization."

She might have inherited dilemmas when she assumed the post, but she is positive that she can counter-attack those.

"Nand'yan na 'yan, we have to face them. We just have to do our job."

The woman whose value system influences subordinates to work from the heart is a shining gold in the dark. She makes the light out of herself to guide followers on the right track. It was a challenge for her to lead Catanduanes, so she challenges every personnel to aim for the gold.

"Put on top the organization," she said as she resumed on her paperworks.

It was a Monday afternoon, Dec. 21 – still three long days to work before the Holiday.



Dr. NYMPHA D. GUEMO



Students and pupils from far-flung barangays in the municipality of San Andres need not to walk several kilometers in going to school.

This is after the Pasada Eskwela Program was implemented in the said town, a project which aims to guarantee greater access to basic education for families in distant communities by providing free daily pick-up-drop-off transport facility for students.

In addition, it also intends to assist schools in improving its performance indicators by increasing the enrollment, participation and completion rate and reducing dropout rate as well as tardiness and absenteeism among students.

Furthermore, the program also aims to become instrumental in raising the level of cooperation and support among the local, government unit, education department, community members, and other stakeholders towards educational endeavors.

TRACING ROOTS

The program was launched in August 2013, two months after Mayor Peter C. Cua assumed in office when the mayor was informed that there are students from distant barrios of San Andres who endure walking several kilometers in going to school.

Because of this, the mayor and other personnel from the LGU went around the municipality to gather information and came up with a solution for the said dilemma—the Pasada Esk-

wela Program.

In its initial implementation, the jeepney type school shuttle served students from Lubas, Cabungahan, Hilaw-an and Barihay to Manambrag National High School and vice-versa.

To extend the number of beneficiaries, San Andres Mayor Peter C. Cua lent additional trucks and jeepneys which were modified to become school service of students from Bislig, Bagong Sirang, Catagbacan going to and from Cabcab National High School; San Isidro, Calumagon, Puting Baybay and Tibang, to and from Mayngaway National High School.

The LGU also identified schedule as well as pick-up and drop-off points in the different barangays. In addition, barangay officials facilitate the students.

IMPACT TO EDUCATION

School-beneficiaries of the Pasada Eskwela program have claimed significant improvement in their performance indicators.

The program's impact was front lined by Manambrag National High School whose most enrollees are from barangays Manambrag, Lubas, Hilawan, Cabungahan and Barihay, being the 1st cooperating beneficiary area in August 2, 2013.

According to a report from MNHS, through its principal Mrs. Lyra Tusi, in its first year of operation (SY 2013-2014), the project catered to 68 students, or about 18% 378 school's total population, which is 5% more than the previous school year. These figures further rose in SY

2014-2015, where the enrollment went up by 6.20% or 403 enrollees.

Meanwhile, the school's dropout rate decreased by 53% in SY 2013-2014 when the project was first implemented. From 15 student-dropouts, the number lowered down to 8.

In a report from Ang Pantalan, the official newsletter of the municipality of San Andres, the school principal attributed these positive results largely to the implementation of Pasada Eskwela. According to her, the program has played a huge role in the improvement of the school's performance indicators.

On the other hand, Mayngaway National High School, another beneficiary of the project, also claimed positive results of the project for having indicated 15.75% increase in enrollment, from 369 in SY 2013-2014 to 438 in SY 2014-2015.

Among these enrollees are kids from Barangay San Isidro and Sitio Calomagon, who used to cross the rough roads and rivers just to go to school in Mayngaway.

INTO THE LIMELIGHT

Because of this, Pasada Eskwela has caught the attention of Galing Pook Awards, a non-government organization giving recognition to best practices of Local Government Units in line with education, health and environmental protection among others, where it qualified in the semi-finals.

During the site inspection, Mayor Cua personally toured the representatives from the said

award-giving body around the service areas to show how the program benefits more than 300 students and pupils from 11 barangays in the municipality.

The group also met with the parents of the beneficiaries as well as other community leaders and talked about the benefits they acquire from the project as well as how they contribute to the implementation of Pasada Eskwela.

Aside from Galing Pook Awards, the program also caught the attention of Department of Education Secretary Bro. Armin Luistro.

In an article in Ang Pantalan, Bro. Luistro conveyed his appreciation to the program. "Magaling! Napakagandang proyekto... These are simple interventions that make a lot of difference. Dahil sa free ride, wala nang excuse para lumiban o ma-late ang mga estudyante sa klase," the secretary expressed.

PASADA'S FUTURE

Because of the successful pilot implementation of the program in Manambrag National High School, the LGU through the resources of the local chief executive, added more vehicles to cater more students.

At present, there are already four PASADA ESKWELA in the following areas Lubas, Cabungahan, Hilaw-an and Barihay to Manambrag National High School, vice-versa; Bislig, Bagong Sirang, Catagbacan to Cabcab National High School, vice-versa; San Isidro and Calumagon to Mayngaway National High School, vice-versa and Puting Baybay and Tibang to Mayngaway National High School, vice-versa

Meanwhile, the 5th vehicle serves as standby/back-up unit, in case one vehicle is unavailable.

On the other hand, in an interview with Mayor Cua, He said that the project will be a good legacy of his transformational leadership.

"We should always invest in nurturing the youth," he furthered.

WALK NO MORE

Pasada Eskwela benefits students in San Andres Town

CHRISTINE MAY PETAJEN



BUS (NON)STOP. Road bumps might deter underprivileged pupils from going further in their studies but a free school ride could somehow ease their live's daily hitches. *RTAldave*



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Illiteracy is one big hurdle which stymies the efforts of anybody to succeed in life.

Generally, every Filipino needs to have proper education in order to be equipped with apt knowledge and skills and be eventually productive in our country. This is the reason why going to school is imperative and why the government exhausts all its efforts to cater the necessary education to all Filipinos.

The Green Button

Alternative Learning System (ALS) is one of the avenues of learning created by the government. This program targets individuals who have lost opportunities to be formally educated in the past -the learners who quit school for various reasons: primarily, because of financial constraints

In support to the aims, Education for All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDG), the Department of Education (DepEd) and National Youth Commission (NYC), in coordination with various government agencies such as Department of Labor and Employment, Technical Skills Development Authority, Department of Trade and Industry, Department of Social Welfare and Development, Local Government Units and non-government agencies, crafted another way to bring the school to the very homes of these underprivileged people through ALS and the newly formed program, ABOT-ALAM.

This program is a shotgun approach to educate individuals aged 15 to 30 years old who have not yet completed the basic or higher education and are presently not enrolled, whether employed or not.

The Abot-Alam design is centered on the out-of-school youth (OSY) as they are the ones who will engineer the future. This program started in 2014 but formally im-

Profile of Division of Catanduanes

Number of Municipalities: **11**

Districts: **20**

Barangays: **316**

Status	Total
No. of Barangays Surveyed	314
No. of OSY Registered to Abot-Alam	13,637
No. of OSYs Who Actually Enrolled	6,801
No. of OSY Interested to Enroll in Basic Education	7,449
No. of OSYs Interested to Enroll in Higher Education	996
No. of OSY Interested to Enroll in Entrepreneurship	3,077
No. of OSYs Interested to Enroll in Employment	2,115

plemented in 2015 as it was initially under the Department of Interior and Local Government.

According to Mrs. Amelia Cabrera, Education Program Supervisor/ DepEd ALS, in this division, the process of selection started by surveying the number of OSY's. ALS teachers mapped and identified 13,637 OSY's. The OSY chose among Basic Education/ALS, Higher Education, Entrepreneurship and Employment on which their personal interest and/or priority fall in.

Trump Cards

Abot-Alam program paved way to a wide array of good points which indeed benefit the target clientele. Level of awareness with regards to the importance of education has positively increased among the barangays which were surveyed. In addition, OSYs have gotten newer chances to learn be it starting from the scratch or from something that they left off when they were in the heydays of schooling.

Furthermore, partnership among the government and non-government institutions have significantly become more active and fluid in general. The Department of Ed-

ucation has been at the rainbow's end with this fruitful change.

Red Flags

Like the coin with two faces, Abot-Alam program also has several problems encountered in starting up and implementing this program such as lack of ALS facilitators to handle all the Abot-Alam classes and lack of learning materials.

"The learners quit because they thought of quicker ways to earn as some of them already have families", said Mrs. Cabrera.

More so, ALS identified needs like provision of learning materials, additional items for mobile teachers/volunteers and enhancement trainings for the implementers which will address these issues and more.

In The Crosshair

Abot-Alam program, with the active and perpetual support of the consortium of agencies, will mitigate, if not solve downright, illiteracy on a wide scale. Learning has become more possible and good-paying jobs, the most common goal, will be closer to the OSYs' fingertips.

Abot-Alam Program

Home Delivery Education to Out of School Youth

NAPOLEON I. ARCILLA III



School-based Feeding Program

MORPHING INTO A BETTER PLATFORM

NAPOLEON I. ARCILLA III

Fueled by the need to learn, many children go to school in any way possible. Even with empty stomachs, some are still able to further their education. However, this is not the case for a great number of schoolchildren.

Hunger has become an omnipresent monster which children should battle in order to be free from ignorance. It is apparent that there are skeletons going to grade school thinking more of what will be on their dining table than the lessons their teachers are delivering.

While undernourishment is pinpointed as one of the hackneyed reasons why learners find difficulty in learning, the government, through the Department of Education, gave birth again to the School-Based

Feeding Program (SBFP).

With this, children who were categorized into severely wasted and wasted nutritional statuses are given a chance to have a better nourishment and to improve their learning as problems such as poor interest and inability to learn due to hunger will be reduced if not totally resolved.

In the Division of Catanduanes alone, there are 2,745 target beneficiaries this School Year 2015-2016 based on the actual beneficiaries in SY 2014-2015.

Anchored on R.A. 10651 or the General Appropriations Act of 2015, SBFP will roll out again. The amount of PhP 1,756,800.00 will be utilized to fund the program for 40 feeding days in two waves. This year has a total of 180 school beneficiaries much higher than that of last year which is 34.



This program receives positive response among schools who started to be benefited as learners, especially the less healthy ones, will have a better focus in their study as they will be more concentrated to their lessons than what their stomachs grind.

According to Mrs. Mari-bel Samonte, Nurse II of the

Division Health and Nutrition Department, what makes this year's SBFP better is the fact that it has a higher budget and an easier way to procure the funds as these are already directed to the Department of Education unlike in the previous year when it was still channeled through the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

JMAMES from p1

library namin wirth 1.7 million. Hindi talaga kami tumigil. Kinulit namin ng kinulit yung mga taga-LGU," Borja added.

Borja also shared that one of the strategies for the successful implementation of Brigada Eskwela is that their school encourages their stakeholders especially the alumni to share their resources.

"Intact ang Form I namin. Sinisiguro namin na nareach-out namin sila (alumni). Mayroon kaming Facebook account at doon namin sila tina-tap, lalo na yung mga nasa ibang bansa," Borja said.

Aside from that, she also added that the full involvement of the teachers and school personnel contributed a lot to the success of the said program.

"Wala naming imposible kung tulong-tulong di ba? Lahat kami ay may 100% cooperation, participation and

initiative. Sinisiguro naming kahit bakasyon, pumapasok kaming lahat para sa brigada," Borja stated.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Nympha D. Guemo, OIC-Schools Division Superintendent, has commended JMAMES for its achievement. In her message in Palarong Panlalawigan, she urged other schools to follow what JMAMES had been accomplished.

"I hope we will have more JMAMES in Catanduanes Division. This is the start because this is the first time that Catanduanes had a national awardee as best implementer of Brigada Eskwela," she said.



ARMED WITH BROOMSTICK, Dr. Nympha D. Guemo leads the entire Division in making this year's Brigada Eskwela Program a success. (DO File photo)

This year's best Brigada Eskwela implementers were adjudged according to the following criteria: 1.) scope of work, repair and maintenance completed based on School Improvement Plan (SIP) 40%; 2.) Volunteer diversity and participation 30%; 3.) Impact of Brigada Eskwela 20% and 4.) Resources generated 10%.

Brigada Eskwela is an annual maintenance program that engages the education stakeholders, both in the government and private sector, to contribute their time, resources, and effort to spruce up public schools before class opening.

ZLAC from p1

least learned competencies through demonstration teaching, suggest strategies, and share instructional materials that can enhance the teaching-learning process.

"Being new in the profession, I can say that ZLAC helped me witness how experienced teachers deliver a certain topic. It helped me understand the why's and how's of the processes and eventually made me realize that I still have a lot to learn," Marjorie Arcilla of Gigmoto Rural Development High School said.

Dr. Zape further said that because of the success of the previous ZLAC's conducted indicated in the monitoring tools of the supervisors, there are plans that next school year's ZLAC will start earlier possibly by June in order to give more time to enhance their capability and knowledge in teaching.

Falling Short

There is nothing as quite as distressing as a teacher selling garments, umbrellas, slippers, make-up kits, even hamburgers and ice candies they painstakingly prepare at home after class. Vending in working stations, though appears unseemly for professionals deemed prime movers of the country's educational system, is just one of the desperate ways to supplement our "meager salaries."

Thus, the unbridled demand to ripple the stagnant compensation scheme resonates louder as fundamental duties and responsibilities imposed by the 21st-century teaching profession become greater and indubitably arduous.

As several educators' groups and organizations intensified their call for pay increase, the Aquino administration answered the plea by adamantly pushing the passage of the Salary Standardization Law of 2015 (SSL 2015), a legislative measure which aims to modify the compensation and position classification system of civilian government

personnel including public school teachers.

EDITORIAL Proposing a wage adjustment strategy to be implemented in four yearly tranches (2016-2019), the said compensation package includes an average 27% salary increase for all covered employees; a mid-year 14th month pay equivalent to one-month basic salary; and an enhanced performance-based bonus (PBB) system.

Urgently endorsed by the President himself, SSL 2015 was initially construed as a shower of glittering generosity especially by those teachers whose take home pay has long been scant due to multiple loans taken out against their salaries.

The said pay hike, however, no matter how scintillating it may seem, does not truly compensate the teachers' agonizing wait. Compromising over one third of the government bureaucracy, we deserve more than the illusionary relief brought by this deception.

As embodied in SSL 2015, the P18,549 current salary of entry-level teachers or Teacher I will be raised gradually by P2,205 to make it P20,754 in 2019. ACT Teachers Party-list Representative Antonio Tinio, noted that this is just a mere 11.89% increase over the next four years. Concerned individuals even noticed that this increase amounts to a paltry P24.00 in additional money per day for an ordinary public school teacher. →

Anticipating public scrutiny, Budget Sec. Butch Abad expressed logic when he explained that the proposal did not focus on scaling up basic salaries, because raising them alone will entail an increase in GSIS premiums and PhilHealth contributions, as



well as increase in taxes. He implied that this move would temper the cost of benefits and teachers could secure a higher take home pay with the sweetness of PBB and 14th month pay atop their salaries.

This could have been a sound argument, but there is one problem – the majority cannot rely on petty bonuses whole year round. These additional benefits will not quench our thirst for a decent wage that could sustain a decent daily living. Likewise, they should consider that salaries and not bonuses are the basis of retirement pensions, making it a significant investment for low and middle-level government employees.

Much worse, with imminent inflation probably steeper in subsequent years, there is no guarantee that the cunning scheme they are presenting could even counter the decline in the purchasing power of peso.

With ASEAN integration lurking around the corner, we cannot shun comparing our pay scales with that of others. Statistical data empirically backs the ugly truth that Philippine teachers are some of the least paid teachers in Asia. Our Singaporean and Malaysian counterparts earn five times more than we do. With the high cost of rent, food, utilities, education and healthcare, a mea-

sly P2,205 increment per month will not go very far. All we are humbly asking for is a just compensation that would correspond to the services we devotedly render just to safeguard the nation's mental development, alongside the inculcation of moral and ethical values among the Filipino youth.

Hence, shrugging off these multitudes of sentiments proves to be anathema to the entire teaching force. Our very Constitution even upholds the idea that "the State shall assign the highest budgetary priority to education and ensure that teaching will attract and retain its rightful share of the best available talents through adequate remuneration and other means of job satisfaction and fulfilment."

As 2016 polls loom, expect national and local public servants to exalt the nature of our job, compassionately saying it's not a profession but rather a vocation — a truism so stale that some may find it meaningless. Yet true enough for we have long been condemned to the category of the 'working poor' despite selflessly consuming ourselves to light the way for others.

Nevertheless, if they really care and appreciate our endeavours, they should start pulling us up above the poverty threshold by proposing a much generous salary increase (or chewing over better bills aimed to improve the teaching and non teaching personnels' living and working conditions like those of Legarda's and Angara's) that could truly address our palpable plight, making the teaching job nobler and rewarding, financially rewarding.

We, teachers, must persist reminding our leaders that measly hikes and false extolments apparently fall short in unchaining us from the shackles of distress.

