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Mindanao-based restaurateur is top 2019 CMA recipient



IN PHOTO ARE ALL THE 8 WINNERS TOGETHER WITH THE ILLUSTRIOUS PANEL OF JUDGES THAT CHOSE THEM. (SEATED L-R) ROMUALDO BLANCO, JR., YOUTH MICROENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR; ROLANDO PEGA, AGRI MICRO-BUSINESS AWARDEE; CAROLINE JAMIAS, PRESERVATION OF TRADITIONS AWARDEE; EDUARDO AZORES, CMA NATIONAL WINNER; LEA MANCERA, REGIONAL AWARDEE FOR LUZON; ROSANNA SINAPILO, AGRI MICRO-BUSINESS AWARDEE; LUCRECIA NERI, REGIONAL AWARDEE FOR MINDANAO; AND MERLY DOMINGO, REGIONAL AWARDEE FOR VISAYAS. (STANDING L-R) BSP GOVERNOR BENJAMIN E. DIOKNO; SPARK! PHILIPPINES PRESIDENT IMELDA M. NICOLAS; AND CITI PHILIPPINES CEO AFTAB AHMED.

Eduardo Azores of Koronadal City, South Cotabato was named National Winner during the recent awarding ceremonies of the 17th Citi Microentrepreneurship Awards (CMA) held at the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) in Manila. This microentrepreneur successfully developed variants of a food product and wisely used his initial success to grow his business and brand.

The owner of Ali-Ali Pastil restaurant, Azores sells the popular pastil, a Muslim dish of steamed rice and shredded fish, chicken, or beef wrapped in banana leaves; and offers close to 30 other kinds of toppings including laing and seafood. From his restaurant's earnings, Azores was able to open a convenience store, a catering business, a lodging inn, and another restaurant branch. Azores credits his success to Rizal MicroBank that granted him loans to raise his capital.

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Also honored during the event were Regional Awardee for Luzon Lea Mancera, owner of Daniel's Handicraft Weaving and Metal Frame; Regional Awardee for Visayas Merly Domingo of Ebina Garment Manufacturing; and Regional Awardee for Mindanao Lucrecia Neri of Manna's Alternatives Herbal Products and AtiManna Organic Hub.

Romualdo Blanco, Jr. of San Pascual, Batangas and who owns PK Maja's Special, received the Youth Microentrepreneur of the Year Award. Two deserving

MCPI Conducts Poverty Probability Index Training

The Microfinance Council of the Philippines, Inc.'s (MCPI), in partnership with the Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA), and with support from the Responsible Inclusive Finance Facility of the Social Performance Task Force (SPTF), conducted a Training on the Poverty Probability Index (PPI) on November 12-14, 2019 at the Century Park Hotel, Manila. The PPI is a poverty measurement tool for organizations and businesses with a mission to serve the poor. With the PPI, organizations can identify the clients, customers, or employees who are most likely to be poor, integrating objective poverty data into their assessments and strategic decision-making.

The objective of the training is to provide participants with a robust understanding of the PPI's methodology and application. It is also part of MCPI's Responsible Microfinance Workshop Series and is a follow-up to the PPI orientation conducted by MCPI in 2018. The training was led by Mr. Hugo Salas Rodriguez, Senior Data Analyst, Poverty Measurement of IPA. 47 participants from 26 institutions attended the workshop.



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microentrepreneurs were chosen as Special Awardees for Agri-Micro business - Rolando Pega, a spring onion farmer in Pangil, Laguna; and Rosanna Sinapilo, owner of Coco Deli in Candelaria, Quezon Province. Caroline Jamias of Carol Line's Ethnic and Fashion won the Special Award for Preservation of Traditions for her enterprise that showcases the Kalinga culture.

In his keynote address, BSP Governor Benjamin E. Diokno said, "The CMA honors the men and women whose transformed lives and journey as entrepreneurs demonstrate the power of microfinance as a poverty alleviation tool. Most of these microentrepreneurs started with close to nothing, and yet were able to build and grow a business that support their families and even their communities. Theirs is a story of empowerment. And this is what microfinance is truly about."

Citi Philippines CEO Aftab Ahmed, in his welcome remarks, said, "The compelling stories of the CMA winners speak volumes about the winning spirit of the microentrepreneur. This highlights the need for recognizing and rewarding the journeys of these

outstanding entrepreneurs who have overcome a multitude of challenges to grow their businesses, improve the lives of their families, become catalysts for motivating other aspiring microentrepreneurs and contribute to employment and development within their respective communities. We are thrilled at having the opportunity to contribute to financial inclusion through the CMA program. Additionally, we would like to highlight that 76% of the awardees over the last 17 years have been women."

Since its inception in 2002, the CMA has recognized 141 outstanding microentrepreneurs who overcame struggles and showed determination to bring their businesses to a higher level of success. The awards program is a signature initiative of the Citi Foundation; and highlights the efforts of partners BSP, Citi Philippines, and the Microfinance Council of the Philippines, Inc. to strengthen microfinance and enterprise development, and financial inclusion in the country.

Azores and the seven other winners were chosen by the National Selection Committee co-chaired by

Governor Diokno and Mr. Ahmed. The committee members are: Mr. Jose Ma. A. Concepcion III, President and CEO, RFM Corporation; Ms. Teresita T. Sy-Coson, Vice Chairperson, SM Investments Corporation; Hon. Ramon M. Lopez, Secretary, Department of Trade and Industry; Ms. Imelda M. Nicolas, President, Samahan ng mga Pilipina para sa Reporma at Kaunlaran; Ms. Marixi Rufino-Prieto, Former Chairperson, The Philippine Daily Inquirer; Dr. Michael L. Tan, Chancellor, University of the Philippines Diliman; and Mr. Fernando Zobel de Ayala, President, Ayala Corporation.

The national winner received a cash prize of PhP200,000; while each of the regional winners and the special awardees were given PhP100,000. They also received a laptop and will receive a life and health insurance coverage for one year, access to grassroots entrepreneurship management and basic computer literacy training at the Citi Microenterprise Development Center, another Citi Foundation program in partnership with Bayan Academy. The winners' loan officers and microfinance institution partners were also given a plaque of recognition and cash incentive of PhP10,000 each.

Green Inclusive Finance Project Turnover and Learning Workshop held by MCPI

In 2016, MCPI adopted Green Inclusive Finance (GIF) as one of the main components of the MCPI Institutional Strengthening Program (MISP). Through this initiative, five MCPI members – Community Economic Ventures, Inc, JMH Microfinance, Kasagana-Ka Credit and Savings Cooperative, SEDP-Simbag sa Pag-Asenso, Inc., and USPD Savings and Credit Cooperative – were provided with technical assistance to develop their own green energy loan portfolio complemented with a grant facility. In a span of three years, four renewable energy loan programs and one project on energy efficiency and green architecture are being implemented by the participating MFIs.



As the GIF program comes to a close, a Project Turnover and Learning Workshop was held for the partner-MFIs on November 27-29, 2019 in Tagaytay City. Representatives of participating MFIs presented the milestones, key lessons learned and possible ways forward in their respective clean energy programs. During the workshop, participants also discussed emerging challenges and action plans as they move forward with their respective green energy programs after MCPI's technical assistance.



Have a Merry Christmas

FROM
The MCPI Secretariat

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Address all correspondence and inquiries to:
MCPI Secretariat
Unit 1909 Jollibee Plaza Condo.
F. Ortigas Jr. Road, Ortigas Center
1605 Pasig City.
Tel. Nos.: (+632) 8631-5920, 8631-6184
Email:
secretariat@microfinancecouncil.org
Facebook: Microfinance.Council
Website: www.microfinancecouncil.org