



# DOLE Good News

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

## Daylight amidst darkness

# Zamboangeño PWD achiever bags 2013 Apolinario Mabini Award

**F**or Teddy Kahil, 41, every individual, with or without disability, is unique. He believes every person has potential. And that potential should be fully or optimally developed.

Teddy, who hails from Zamboanga City, is a person with disability (PWD). An unexpected fate in 1995 changed his life when he woke up with blurring eyesight. In 1999, he completely lost his vision due to uviatis and optic atrophy.

It took him three years to finally accept a 'life in darkness'. Despite that, he resolved that he should not be left behind.

On 1 July 2003, Teddy got a contractual job as a massage instructor at the Department of Social Welfare and Development in Region IX. He pursued higher education, enrolling in a graduate degree in Social Work at the Western Mindanao State University (WMSU). Teddy never stopped to cultivate his immense potential and to live his life positively.

His hard work and perseverance finally paid off when he became the first PWD to obtain a masters degree at WMSU in 2009. The same year, he passed the board examinations and was appointed as head of the PWD Affairs Unit of the City Government of Zamboanga.

Sharing the same hope and dignity with other PWDs, Teddy invited other disabled Zamboangeños to organize an association which he dubbed, Vision Impaired Society Towards Advancement Inc. (VISTA). In 2009, the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) Regional Office No. 9 awarded Teddy's group livelihood assistance amounting to P101,380 for the purchase of materials and equipment as VISTA inaugurated its own massage therapy clinic to provide its members equal opportunity to earn decent income.

The DOLE Regional Office recognized VISTA as the region's Outstanding Visually Impaired Group in 2010.

With the DOLE's support, Teddy and his group were able to continue the daily operation of the massage clinic which now employs 48 Zamboangeño PWDs and still open doors of opportunities to other disabled people who aspire to become economically independent.

Teddy has always been a believer in the skills and competencies of PWDs. His fervor to advocate for the rights and welfare of PWDs has brought him to major frontline positions: incumbent council member for Region IX under the National Anti-Poverty Commission;

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## Teddy M. Kahil

Distinguished as the first ever visually impaired Registered Social Worker in the country with a Masters degree in Social Welfare. Well-liked among PWD leaders and serves a role model, Teddy has the quality of being able to articulate his advocacy through articles and position papers on behalf of other PWDs.



## In pursuit of Pres. Aquino III's labor and employment agenda, Baldoz transforms *Bahay Kalinga* into 'centers of care and service'

Saying it has never been done before, Labor and Employment Secretary Rosalinda Dimapilis-Baldoz issued an administrative order that seeks to transform Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Resource Center (MWOFRFC), or *Bahay Kalinga*, into centers of care and service by bringing on-site the national government's National Reintegration Center for OFWs.

"We have to admit it. The transformation into 'centers of care and service of our MWOFRFCs in DOLE's Philippine Overseas Labor Offices has never been pursued. This is the first time, considering the changing landscape of overseas employment, that we are doing this in earnest in accordance with President Benigno S. Aquino III's 22-point labor and employment agenda," said Baldoz after she issued Administrative Order No. 333, Series of 2013, detailing fresh directives regarding the preparation of distressed female OFWs for productive reintegration to the country.

"This is in line with the objective of enhancing and strengthening the operations of the POLOs as directed through Administrative Order No. 262, which sets specific measures in the operation of the MWOFRFCs, and 262-A, which itemizes clear-cut clear-cut supervisory rules in POLO operation," said Baldoz.

"These measures are designed to be gender-balanced and sensitive and values-oriented--in strong consideration of the plight of disadvantaged female migrant workers abroad," added Baldoz.

Related to this, the labor and employment chief last week ordered the on-site implementation of the *Balik-Pinay Balik Hanapbuhay* Program (BPBH), with priority for distressed OFWs sheltered at the MWOFRFCs in various Middle East countries. Under A.O. 333, "all requirements for entitlement of distressed female OFWs to the *Balik-Pinay, Balik-Hanapbuhay* Program shall be completed onsite."

"Distressed workers sheltered by the POLO at the MWOFRFC shall be trained on livelihood skills preferred by them, and on the fundamentals of entrepreneurship and business planning," the order stated.

The order also provides that the submission of a business plan by an OFW shall be a requirement for graduation and

issuance by the POLO of the Certificate of Training (COT) on Livelihood Skills and Fundamentals of Entrepreneurship and Business Planning. The National Reintegration Center for OFWs (NRCO) is already preparing a template of a business which shall be made available to the trainees for reference.

The other measures outlined in A.O. 333 are as follows:

- Heads of POLOs shall ensure the availability of livelihood skills training courses at MWOFRFC based on need and viability of livelihood activity. The training design for each course shall be submitted to the NRCO for review toward standardization;

- POLOs shall engage the services of trainers from the Filipino community, preferably female, either on voluntary basis, or subject to payment of modest honoraria. The liquidation of funds for honoraria shall require appropriate service agreement between the Labor Attache/Welfare Officer and the trainer, and acknowledgement receipt;

- Training expenses, including payment of trainers' honoraria shall be cost-shared by DOLE and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) as indicated in the POLO work and financial plan; and

- The NRCO, in coordination with the DOLE's Financial Management Service, the Administrative Service, and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, shall ensure the availability and issuance of claim vouchers for Livelihood Starter Kits as part of the airport arrival services for repatriated distressed workers;

To effect smooth coordination and fast implementation of the OFW's reintegration, Baldoz ordered the POLOs to email to the NRCO the list of Livelihood Starter Kit avalees/beneficiaries immediately upon completion of their training, which shall not be later than at least one week before date of expected repatriation.

"The list of the avalees/beneficiaries shall include their names; gender; age; civil status; OWWA membership; address in the Philippines; and the training course completed. Immediately upon their arrival, the DOLE and the OWWA shall issue them a Claim Voucher for the Livelihood Starter Kit, and their names shall be posted at the NRCO website," said Baldoz.

## In Bauang, La Union, DOLE releases P430-K in livelihood assistance to 48 farmers and 21 female vendors under bottom up budgeting approach

Regional Director Grace Ursua of the Department of Labor and Employment-Regional Office No. 1 reported to Secretary Rosalinda Dimapilis-Baldoz that the regional office has released P430,000 in livelihood assistance to 48 farmers who are in goat breeding and to 21 female ambulant vendors in Bauang, La Union under the government's bottom up budgeting approach.

"We have turned over the DOLE livelihood assistance to the recipients through Bauang Mayor Eulogio Clarence Martin de Guzman, who was very grateful to the DOLE on behalf of his constituents," Ursua said.

Ursua awarded the two checks to Mayor de Guzman in a simple ceremony held recently in the municipal hall which was also an occasion to pilot test the government's bottom-up approach in planning and budgeting in line with the anti-poverty thrust of the administration of President Benigno S. Aquino III.

Of the total amount, P120,000 will be used for the goat breeding and production project of four farmer associations in four Bauang barangays, namely, Sta. Monica, Casilagan, Upper San Agustin, and Cabalangayan.

"Initially, 48 farmers will benefit from the assistance, but we envision to eventually cover 359 farmers," said Ursua.



DOLE 1 Regional Director Grace Ursua hands over a mock-up check to Bauang Mayor Eulogio Clarence Martin de Guzman to signal the start of the projects funded under the government's Bottom-Up planning and budgeting.

The balance of the amount, or P310,000, will be for the *Negosyo sa Kariton* project intended for 21 female ambulant vendors from 17 Bauang barangays.

"This is the first bottom-up project of the DOLE in Region 1 and we consider it a major step towards attaining a poverty-free Bauang," Ursua explained.

Bauang is among the 300 pilot areas in the 609 "focus" cities and municipalities nationwide under the bottom-up approach in planning and budgeting which aims to ensure the inclusion of the funding requirements for their development needs.

## Five livelihood organizations in Baguio benefit from DOLE's P1M livelihood assistance

BAGUIO CITY - The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) awarded P 1,011,880 worth of livelihood assistance to five community organizations during the recent signing of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and distribution of livelihood checks at the Upper Dagsian covered court, this city.

The beneficiaries are the Gibraltar Pag-asa Livelihood Association and the Sto. Tomas Proper Women's Association for their Meat Processing and Trading Project; Mines View Integrated Livelihood Association for their Peanut Butter Production Project, United Dagsian Livelihood Association for their Bakeshop and the Dizon - Manzanillo Women's Organization for their Industrial Sewing Project.

The livelihood checks shall benefit 212 informal workers and their families. Majority of the beneficiaries are street vendors.

DOLE-CAR Regional Director Henry John Jalbuena said the DOLE awarded the financial grant to the beneficiary organizations in line with the thrust of Aquino Administration of generating community employment to ensure a better and dignified quality of life.

Jalbuena led the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to solidify its partnership with its Accredited Co-Partners (ACP) which include the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI); Office of Baguio Representative Nicasio

S. Aliping, Jr; Shontoug Foundation, Inc; and the City Government.

"Once the project becomes income-generating and the basic needs of the community and its individual members are met then the benefit of the community enterprise is expected to ripple and there will be a replicating effect on the surrounding communities." Jalbuena said.

In response, Eva Pitas, the representative of the five organizations expressed gratitude to the DOLE and its partner agencies. She said that the livelihood assistance will definitely help alleviate their plight leading towards the road to a more stable income and better life for the members and their families.



DOLE-CAR Regional Director Henry John Jalbuena joins Baguio Representative Nicasio Aliping, Jr. and Department of Trade and Industry Benguet Director Freda Gawisan in awarding the check to Ms. Adele Timoteo of Shontoug Foundation, Inc.

## DOLE Good News

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**MARKING A NEW MARITIME MILESTONE.** Labor and Employment Secretary Rosalinda Dimapilis-Baldoz (left) recognizes the efforts of all tripartite partners for the success of the Maritime Labor Convention (MLC), 2006 Entry into Force to promote descent work and ensure protection of Filipino seafarers. The ceremony was held at the AMOSUP Convention Hall, Seamen's Center Building, Intramuros, Manila.

## Stakeholders' commitment to ensure compliance in law and practice marks MLC, 2006 entry into force

The Philippines marks the entry into force of the Maritime Labor Convention, 2006 with expressed solid commitments from all maritime stakeholders to ensure compliance with the important Convention in law and practice.

Acknowledging the role of ship owners, manning agencies, international organizations, such as the International Labor Organization (ILO), Recognized Organizations (ROs), local seafarers' unions, such as the Associated Maritime Officers and Seafarers Union of the Philippines (AMOSUP), and seafarers themselves in the realization of the MLC, 2006, Secretary Rosalinda Dimapilis-Baldoz called for unity to ensure that the country and its more than 400,000 Filipino seafarers deployed overseas and almost 60,000 domestic seafarers will benefit from the Convention.

The MLC, 2006 entered into force last 20 August 2013, one year after the Philippines deposited its instrument of ratification in the ILO in Geneva on the same date last year.

Baldoz cited as backdrop of her call for unity behind the MLC, 2006 the recent tragic accident in Cebu City involving the passenger vessel, St. Thomas Aquinas, and a cargo ship of Sulpicio Lines that resulted to 50 deaths and 80 missing persons as of last count.

"We mark the entry into force of the MLC, 2006 even as we continue to grieve for the victims of the sea tragedy in Cebu City. Initial investigation by the DOLE Regional Office No. 7 showed

that both ships have no health and safety committee or safety officers. We have yet to ascertain the extent of compliance or non-compliance with labor standards and occupational health and safety by the two ships," Baldoz said.

"This accident, coming in the heels of the entry into force of the MLC, 2006, emphasizes the need for all stakeholders and the government to move fast and stop loss of lives at sea by observing the right balance between ensuring decent work for seafarers and securing fair competition; and ensuring a level playing field for quality ship owners by offering them protection from being undercut by ship owners operating substandard ships or substandard working conditions for seafarers," she explained.

**"Dubbed as the seafarers' international bill of rights, the MLC, 2006 is expected to provide protection to the approximately 400,000 Filipino seafarers deployed overseas, who comprise roughly 30 percent of the global maritime fleet, and to the almost 60,000 domestic seafarers."**

— Secretary Rosalinda Dimapilis-Baldoz

Baldoz said she will meet again with Transportation and Communication Secretary Joseph Emilio Abaya and MARINA Administrator Maximo Mejia Jr. to discuss the government's track on the matter just as they met on 4 June 2013 on the concern on competent authority implementing the MLC, 2006.

In that meeting, Baldoz said the DOLE's role in seafarers' working condition and welfare is dictated by the explicit authority vested by the Labor Code upon the Secretary of Labor and Employment to administer and enforce workers', including seafarers', labor rights.

Baldoz recalled that the Philippines' ratification of the MLC, 2006 was not only a big step for the global maritime industry, but also of tremendous importance to the country as a maritime nation.

"Dubbed as the seafarers' international bill of rights, the MLC, 2006 is expected to provide protection to the approximately 400,000 Filipino seafarers deployed overseas, who comprise roughly 30 percent of the global maritime fleet, and to the almost 60,000 domestic seafarers," Baldoz said.

The MLC, 2006 is a single, coherent international instrument that consolidates and updates fundamental principles and labor standards for seafarers, replacing 37 existing ILO maritime conventions and related recommendations adopted since 1920.

In connection with the implementation of the MLC, 2006 and its entry into force, Labor and Employment Secretary Rosalinda Dimapilis-Baldoz updated the maritime sector and all its stakeholders on what has been done so far to ensure the Philippines' compliance with the Convention.

"We already have nine authorized Recognized Organizations (ROs) to inspect and certify Philippine-registered ships (PRVs) engaged in international voyages. As of today, 103 ships, out of the 135 listed PRVs in the MARINA, have already been issued the DMLC Part I, and two vessels have already been issued the Maritime Labour Certificate by Bureau Veritas, one of the nine ROs," said Baldoz.

She further said the ROs are the government's and the maritime sector's partners in implementing the following tripartite process issuances on the MLC, 2006:

1. D.O. No. 129, the "Rules and Regulations Governing the Employment and Working Conditions of Seafarers Onboard Ships Engaged in Domestic Shipping";

2. D.O. NO. 130, the "Rules and Regulations on the Employment of Filipino Seafarers Onboard Philippine-registered Ships Engaged in International Voyage";

3. D.O. No. 130-A, or "Guidelines on the Authorization of Recognized Organizations to Conduct Inspection and Certification of Philippine-Registered Ships Engaged in International Voyages"; and

4. Labor Advisory No. 02-2013, the "Requirements for Compliance with MLC, 2006"; and

5. D.O. No. 132, the "Guidelines on Maritime Occupational Safety and Health".

Baldoz explained that for domestic ships, the DOLE's new Labor Laws Compliance System (LLCS) will take effect today, and the DOLE will conduct a consultation for the implementation of D. O. No. 129.

The MLC, 2006 entered into force on 20 August 2013, one year after the Philippines deposited its instrument of ratification in the ILO in Geneva on 20 August last year.

## Marking its entry into force, Baldoz updates maritime sector on implementation of MLC, 2006



**MLC ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATE.** Labor and Employment Secretary Rosalinda Dimapilis-Baldoz hands over the Maritime Labor Certificate (MLC) to Victoria Ship Management head Captain Eduardo Rogayan during the MLC Ceremonial Issuance of Certificates held at the DOLE conference room in Intramuros, Manila.

With its entry into force, the MLC, 2006 is now the "fourth pillar" of the international regulatory regime for quality shipping, complementing the key conventions of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), such as the Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, as amended (SOLAS); Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping, 1978, as amended (STCW); and Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 73/78 (MARPOL).

In marking the Convention's entry into force, the labor and employment chief paid tribute to the people who have been instrumental in realizing the important milestone, citing in particular the late Capt. Gregorio S. Oca, a key figure in the ratification of the MLC, 2006.

Capt. Oca, founding chairperson of the Associated Marine Officers' and Seamen's Union of the Philippines, or AMOSUP, had become a byword in

the seafarers' world in the last half century and it was under his leadership that AMOSUP grew to become the world's largest seafarers association with close to 90,000 members.

Oca initiated programs in seafarer training, health, and welfare. Under his stewardship, AMOSUP has established hospitals, housing and billeting facilities, schools, and training centers. He founded the Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific, a world-class maritime training institution.

"As a recognized maritime expert, he served as a presidential consultant on maritime affairs from 1999 to 2001. The DOLE

benefitted from his wise counsel when he represented the sea-based sector in the governing board of the POEA and in the boards of trustees of the OWWA, NMP, and the MTC," Baldoz recalled.

He also served as President of the Bagong Bayani Foundation, Inc., a private foundation that recognizes the excellence of overseas Filipino workers, and of the Philippine Maritime Education and Training Foundation, Inc.

Capt. Oca was awarded the Order of Lakandula with the rank of Bayani in 2010, the highest distinction given by the government to a civilian. He was also conferred the Papal Award Pro Ecclesia Et Pontifice in recognition of his support and services to the Catholic Church. His alma mater, the San Beda College, inducted him into its Hall of Fame for his achievements in shipping, while the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) posthumously accorded him an honor of international category in 2011.

**"I consider Capt. Oca not only as a maritime leader, but also a reliable partner of the DOLE and the government who labored hard in promoting seafarers' welfare and interest. Even while battling a long-time ailment, and until his demise, he championed the protection of Filipino seafarers against piracy in international waters which has become a menace to global seafarers. One of his last contributions was in developing the standard employment contract which contains pro-seafarer provisions, including those on social security benefits."**

— Secretary Rosalinda Dimapilis-Baldoz

## In Region 8, DOLE launches registration of *kasambahay*

Tacloban City—DOLE Region 8 Director Exequiel Sarcauga has reported to Labor and Employment Secretary Rosalinda Dimapilis-Baldoz that the regional office, together with its partners, namely, the Social Security System, PhilHealth, Pag-IBIG, and the Department of Interior and Local Government, has formally launched Republic Act 10361, otherwise known as Domestic Workers Act, otherwise as *Batas Kasambahay*, at the Robinson's Place, this city.

The local government of Tacloban City, through its Public Employment Service Office (PESO), supported the launching.

“The five-agency actors on the implementation of the *Kasambahay* Law are one in expressing active, positive support for the smooth implementation of the law,” Sarcauga reported.

At the launching, focal persons took turn in conducting an orientation on the new law, presenting and discussing the registration processes of the



agencies involved. Employers who attended the launch also registered their *kasambahay*.

“We have anticipated some concerns from employers, like their inability to present all documentary requirements on-site. We just accepted registration forms, but informed them they must comply with all of their requirements

at the respective offices of the SSS, PhilHealth, and Pag-Ibig,” said Sarcauga.

The two-day event is part of the year-round series of activities of the DOLE in Eastern Visayas to inform the public about the law. “We also aim to establish a regional association of *kasambahay*,” he said.

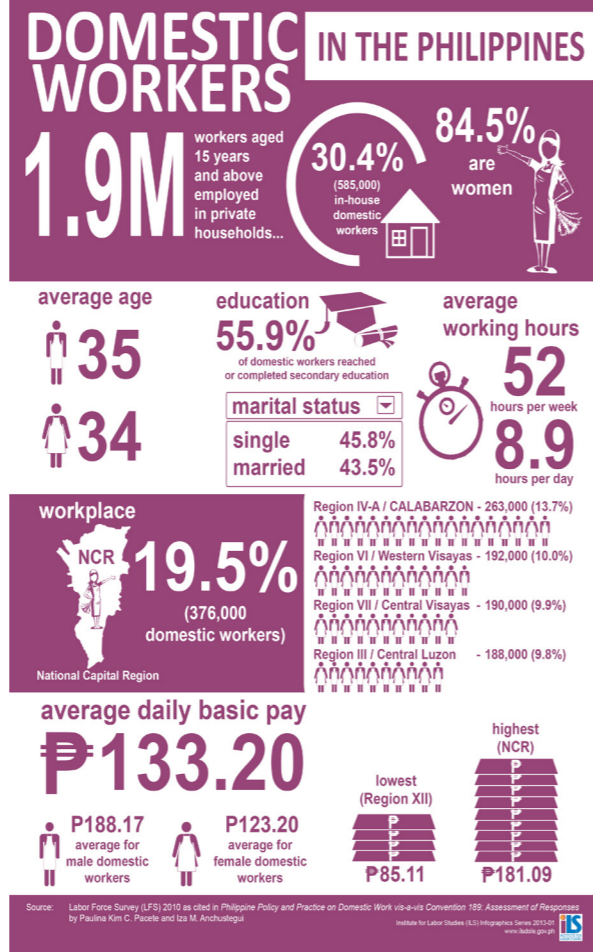
## In Caraga, 86 BESOs of Butuan City oriented on *Kasambahay* Law

The Agusan del Norte Provincial Office of the Department of Labor and Employment - Caraga collaborated with the Local Government of Butuan City in the conduct of the *Kasambahay* orientation and the awarding of certificates of recognition to the 86 BESOs (Barangay Employment Service Officers).

NCMB Director Atty. Ligaya Lumbay delivered the lecture as she recalled its processes and encouraged the participants to register all *kasambahay* within their respective areas. Various queries relative to the topic were also responded to by the speaker.



As a motivation and appreciation for the countless efforts poured by the BESOs in support of the Department's programs, DOLE Caraga handed over certificates of recognition to the 86 Barangay Captains of Butuan City who served as the DOLE's partners in translating into action its projects in the region.



## Baldoz turns over 30 computers, P1.6-M in livelihood grants to the youth, fishermen, and women workers in Cebu

Labor and Employment Secretary Rosalinda Dimapilis-Baldoz recently turned over 30 computers and released P1.26 million in livelihood grants to identified youth entrepreneurs, fisherfolks, and women workers in Cebu under the DOLE Integrated Livelihood Program.

The turnover coincided with Secretary's visit to Cebu as guest speaker at the National Wages and Productivity Commission's Area-Based Consultation on the Two-Tier Wage System aimed to intensify advocacy efforts and to discuss policy concerning the implementation of the wage reform being pushed by the DOLE. Members of the Regional Tripartite Wage and Productivity Boards of Regions 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 attended the consultation organized by the NWPC.

Baldoz, in turning over the 30 computers, lauded the Labor Tripartite Council in Education and the Industrial Tripartite Council-Business Process Management/Information and Communication Technology, as well as DASH Engineering Philippines, Inc., the ITC-BPM-ICT member that donated the computers, for their computer donation project.

“Your project is the highest exercise of corporate social responsibility and will go a long way in keeping child laborers in school,” she said.

The 30 computers will go to Northern Cebu Colleges in Bogo City and will specifically benefit the out-of-school youth of Barangay Calang, one of the target barangays of the DOLE Regional Office under its Child Labor Free Barangay Project.

Accompanied by DOLE Regional Office No. 7 Director Chona Mantilla, Baldoz also released P1,263,265.60 in livelihood grants to four workers associations for their various livelihood projects under the DILP.

One of the recipients, the Cebu City chapter of the Pro-Life Youth Philippines, received P400,000 for its event coverage and promotion business. Jhonar C. Montayre, President of Pro-Life Youth-Cebu, thanked Secretary Baldoz for the grant assistance, saying the amount will provide her members a source of income and opportunities for personal advancement.

The other livelihood grantees were the NKC Employees Multi-Purpose Cooperative, which received P400,000 for its small lending business; Pakna-on Multi-Purpose Cooperative, P300,000 for its fishing livelihood; and the Carmen Drivers and Conductors' Association, which received P163,265.60 for its motor spare parts enterprise.

“You have to make good in your livelihood because the grant assistance

you received came from taxpayers' money and is only entrusted to us. You were lucky to be the recipient of the government's assistance,” said Baldoz.

During the turnover ceremony, Baldoz also met with the members of the Sama Badjao Tribal Community Association who thanked the DOLE for its DILP grant of P272,487 which the group used to purchase fishing gears for its members.



## Zamboangeño PWD . . . from page 1

Regional President of the Zamboanga Peninsula Federation of PWDs; and active member of the Regional KALAHI Convergence Group and Regional Committee on Disability Affairs.

In recognition of his relentless work for PWDs, the Philippine Foundation for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled, Inc. named Teddy as the PWD of the Year in the 2013 Search for Outstanding PWDs and awarded him the Apolinario Mabini Award.

“The incomparable dedication to PWDs exemplified by Teddy makes him the finest model of public service, and his outstanding work and service not only to the PWDs, but to the government and to the country in general, makes him worthy of such national recognition,” Labor and Employment Secretary

Rosalinda Dimapilis-Baldoz said, in congratulating Teddy.

The Apolinario Mabini Award is conferred to an individual or group of Filipino PWDs in recognition of their exceptional or extraordinary contributions and noteworthy achievements in a cultural, educational, vocational, spiritual, athletic, or economic endeavor.

On 28 August, Teddy, together with DOLE Regional Office No. 9 Director Sisinio Cano, received his distinguished award for his exemplary feat as a PWD achiever and mover.

For Teddy, this achievement is just the start of a greater service - to enlighten his fellow PDWs with opportunities to fully develop and utilize their abilities - making them realizing the daylight of their full potential and effective social and economic participation on an equal basis with others.

# Baldoz optimistic of higher quality jobs in growing economy

Labor and Employment Secretary Rosalinda Dimapilis-Baldoz said she is optimistic for more high-quality jobs under a regime of sustained economic growth.

Baldoz expressed this observation after the Philippine economy accelerated in the second quarter of 2013, with Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growing by 7.5 percent from the 6.3 percent recorded GDP growth in the same period of 2012.

The second quarter of 2013 is the fourth consecutive quarter under the administration of President Benigno S. Aquino III during which the GDP had grown by more than 7 percent. GDP growth in the first quarter was 7.6 percent, up from 6.4 percent in the first quarter in 2012.

Baldoz said the official employment data of the National Statistics Office partly boost her optimism for higher quality jobs in an atmosphere where the local economy is growing rapidly despite a weak global economy.

“The results of the April 2013 Labor Force Survey of the NSO points to a considerably improving overall quality of employment, with persons in full-time employment growing by 15.3 percent, or 3.194 million, and persons in part-time employment decreasing by 18.9 percent, or 3.063 million,” said Baldoz.

“The increase in the number of persons in full-time employment in the April 2013 LFS survey rode on the back of the increase recorded in the January 2013 LFS survey, where 1.515 million, or 6.5 percent, were added to the number of full-time employed persons. This means regular, full-time employment can be sustained,” Baldoz added.

Baldoz also pointed out that the GDP growth of 10.3 percent in the industry sector, which overtook the 7.4 percent growth in services, is an indicator of a more stable, long-term avenue for employment generation.

“We have noted a rapid growth in capital formation. We know for a fact that industry, such as manufacturing, has the ability to generate higher-quality and more permanent employment. Our challenge is to be able to respond to industry’s demand for more skilled workers in the near- and long-term,” Baldoz observed.

The key, according to Baldoz, is to continually upgrade workers’ skills and qualifications and to intensify promotion of harmonious labor-

management relations at the plant-level to foster cooperative labor-employer relations.

She said that one of the DOLE’s strategies to promote employment is to intensify implementation of the Training for Work Scholarship Program in the so-called key employment generators (KEGS), namely, tourism; agriculture/fisheries/agri-busines; information and communications technology/business process management (ICT-BPM); electronics; automotive; general infrastructure/construction/housing; manufacturing; and logistics.

“For 2014, we have increased the budget for the TWSP to P1.4 billion from P563 million in 2013 to be able to upgrade the skills of some 186,667 workers across all these KEGs. We also target 159,000 apprentices under our apprenticeship program. For our other technical-vocational education and training program, we target 904,000 skills to be assessed and certified next year,” Baldoz explained.

The DOLE, through the OWWA, also aims to increase the number of its scholarship grants to 4,917 grantees in 2014, while the Bureau of Labor Relations intends to expand coverage of its Workers’ Organization Development Program training and educational grants to union members with focus on hard-to-fill jobs.

Meanwhile, Baldoz said the DOLE’s Bureau of Local Employment continues to promote among employers to post their job vacancies to the Phil-JobNet, the government’s online job search and job matching facility.

“The Phil-JobNet, because of the DOLE’s strong focus on advocacy, has recorded tremendous increase in job vacancies posted in recent months, topping a record of 268,278 vacancies in January before tapering off to 98,878 in July.

Baldoz also said the DOLE continues to strengthen Labor Market Information delivery and career guidance advocacy as part of its employment facilitation services.

