

PRESS RELEASE**Briones lauds Metrobank-MTAP-DepEd Math Challenge champions**

MAKATI CITY, April 1, 2019 – Department of Education (DepEd) Secretary Leonor Magtolis Briones lauded the national champions of the 2019 Metrobank-MTAP-DepEd Math Challenge (MMC) held at the Metrobank Plaza on March 30.

“Not all of you may become engineers and space scientists, but we look forward to you building a better world and a better Philippines for all of us,” Briones told the winners.

Together with Metrobank Foundation President Aniceto Sobrepeña and Mathematics Teachers Association of the Philippines (MTAP) President-Emeritus, Sr. Iluminada Coronel, F.M.M., the Education chief led the conferment of awards to the following math geniuses who came from a roster of 403,707 students from 27,089 elementary and junior high schools who competed in the nationwide elimination rounds:

Grade 6 Individual Competition

1st place: Mohammad Nur Casib from My Precious Child Learning Center, Marawi City (Coach: Michael Ike McMichael)

2nd place: Tracy Lauren Lei from Saint Jude Catholic School, Manila (Coach: Betty Marie Mijares)

3rd place: Miguel Cayetano of Tuguegarao West Central School, Tuguegarao City (Coach: Janet Canapi)

Grade 6 Team Competition

1st place: Tracy Lauren Lei and Nicholas Marcus Lua from Saint Jude Catholic School, Manila (Coach: Betty Marie Mijares)

2nd place: Francis Rafael Flor and Muhammad Farouk Tan II from Silangan Elementary School, Taguig City (Coach: Cheryl Laurente)

Grade 10 Individual Competition

1st place: Bryce Ainsley Sanchez from Grace Christian College, Quezon City (Coach: Owen John Laurent Reyes)

2nd place: Stephen James Ty from Zamboanga Chong Hua High School, Zamboanga City (Coach: Samuel Gayangos)

3rd place: Kiel Sam Talosig from Bataan National High School, Balanga City (Coach: Cherrie Bantay)

Grade 10 Team Competition

1st place: Stephen James Ty and Aiman Andrei Kue from Zamboanga Chong Hua High School, Zamboanga City (Coach: Samuel Gayangos)

2nd place: Paul Samson Topacio and Al Patrick Castro from Makati Science High School, Makati City (Coach: Arnel Olofernes)

3rd place: Charles Dwight Pelaez and Joerenz Espillardo from Quezon Science High School, Tayabas, Quezon (Coach: Hermenegildo Pineda)

“To our dear students, may you use your talents not just for personal glory but for a greater purpose, and may you become the *athletes* that will help build our

nation,” Sobrepeña told the MMC champions who were awarded with cash prizes, medals, and trophies.

Growing appreciation

In her inspirational message, Briones expressed her joy over the growing interest and appreciation of the general public in mathematics. She likewise shared the stereotypes and biases against math enthusiasts during her time.

“I’m very happy *na naabutan ko na* at my age, things have changed radically. We now know it’s not all about race, it’s not about gender,” she added, stating that she looks forward to the time when a math contest will just be as “overcrowded with fans as any basketball game.”

Briones further underscored the importance of mathematics in the daily lives of people: “We have to use reason to come to conclusions about what is happening in society, in our families, and in our personal lives. And we have to think logically, and that is exactly what mathematics tells us, shares with us. Also, the most beautiful creations of human beings are made by people who are trained in mathematics.”

The Education chief also recognized the teachers: “We give special thanks to the teachers and to the coaches who have made mathematics, geometry, algebra, and all the so-called hard sciences, interesting and exciting, and have taken our learners on journeys of discovery.”

Finally, she thanked Metrobank Foundation and MTAP for sponsoring and supporting MMC, as well as for “the assurance that there is good news” in education.

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