

PRESS RELEASE**Thousands gather, celebrate National Teachers' Day in Ormoc City**

ORMOC CITY, October 12, 2018 – In celebration of the National Teachers' Day (NTD) and World Teachers' Day (WTD), the Department of Education (DepEd), in coordination with the local government of Ormoc City, gathered and paid tribute to thousands of teachers in attendance at the Ormoc City Superdome on October 5.

Anchored on the theme "*Gurong Pilipino: Turo Mo, Kinabukasan Ko,*" the celebration aimed to honor teachers for their positive influences on Filipino learners and to build the image of teaching as an attractive and fulfilling profession.

"I am very happy and honored to be with all of you this morning as we celebrate and pay tribute to teachers. We are celebrating not just a Philippine event. We are celebrating a global event where we recognize the contributions of teachers all over the world, to society, and to humanity," DepEd Secretary Leonor Magtolis Briones said.

In his video message, President Rodrigo Roa Duterte greeted and thanked teachers for their significant role in every Filipino learner's life: "To all the Filipino teachers, may your commitment imbue the knowledge of all the ideals of our country as you spread hope for a better life for every Filipino, and the Filipinos to come. Happy Teachers' Day. May you continue to inspire and enhance knowledge and deep understanding of the Filipino youth and students. *Mabuhay kayong lahat.*"

Undersecretaries Tonisito Umali, Annalyn Sevilla, and Josephine Maribojoc; Assistant Secretaries G.H. Ambat, Alma Torio, Ramon Fiel Abcede, and Rhoan Orebia; Regional Director Ramir Uytico, Ormoc City Schools Division Superintendent Manuel Albaño, Metrobank Foundation Inc. President and NTM Coordinating Council (NTMCC) Co-Chair Aniceto Sobrepeña, Ormoc City Mayor Richard Gomez, and 4th District of Leyte Representative Lucy Torres-Gomez joined Briones in honoring the teachers.

Umali, in-charge of the DepEd External Partnerships Service (EPS) and Special Events Unit (SEU), emphasized the significance of partnership between the Department and the private sector in honoring teachers with a month-long celebration: "*Hindi lamang po ngayong araw, pero simula pa noong ika-lima ng Setyembre ay maraming mga aktibidad na ginagawa ang Kagawaran ng Edukasyon kasama ang pribadong sektor katulad ng [pagbibigay ng] freebies, free entrance sa mga museyo, at theme parks, discount privileges at marami pang iba.*"

DepEd EPS and SEU, together with Metrobank Foundation, spearheaded the organization and conduct of the national celebration of WTD.

National and global recognition

Briones also underscored the importance of recognizing the unparalleled contributions of educators not only nationally, but also globally: "We should encourage our teachers to participate in competitions not only in the country like the Metrobank Foundation, the original and number one recognizer of teachers

and other public servants like the policemen. There are many other institutions here in the Philippines, but we can also go regional, we can go global.”

The Education chief urged teachers to send entries to prestigious international award-giving bodies like the Global Teacher Prize of the Varkey Foundation.

“As I said, we very nearly made it because our nominee made it to the top 10 out of the more than 30,000 nominees from all over the world. We also have one from Region 5 who made it to top 50,” Briones shared, referring to Dr. Jesus Insilada of Region 6 and Ryan Homan of Region 5.

Briones also took the opportunity to report, before thousands of teachers in attendance, the significant developments in teachers’ compensation and benefits from 2016 to 2018. Among the expanded welfare and benefits of teachers are the P3,000 anniversary bonus teachers will receive in December; steady increase in the current P3,500 chalk/cash allowance; increase in the special hardship allowance and teachers’ honoraria; raise in the allocation for facilities, meals and snacks, and room accommodation for official activities organized and conducted by the Department; continuous review of policies on teachers’ workload; and the constant negotiation with the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) to give ample time for member-borrowers with past due loans to update their accounts with automatic waiver of penalties and surcharges.

Festive gathering

Fun activities, booths, games, and raffle draws filled the entire day. Celebrities like Nicole Cordoves, Lyca Gairanod, Sephy Francisco, Marcelito Pomoy, Markki Stroem, Richard Yap, and Jaya also entertained and serenaded the teachers.

Teachers from Regions 6, 7, and 8 also participated in the cheering competition and the Teachers Got Talent, where teacher John Leonard Malazarte performed a breathtaking aerial dance which won him the championship.

During the celebration, Metrobank also presented and recognized its 2018 Metrobank Foundation Outstanding Filipinos teacher awardees Mary Jane Ramo (Master Teacher II of Tonggo Elementary School), Alma Janagap, Ed.D. (Master Teacher II of Pavia National High School), Aimee Marie Gragasin, Ph.D. (Special Science Teacher V, Philippine Science High School-Cagayan Valley Campus), and Carla Dimalanta, Ph.D. (Professor X, University of the Philippines Diliman) for their invaluable contribution in nurturing and raising holistically developed and lifelong learners.

The Philippine Postal Corporation (PHLPost) also turned over its NTD special commemorative stamp, which features the cartoon-style colored postage stamp illustrating a teacher “patiently guiding and teaching her student for a better future,” designed by PHLPost graphic artist Rodine Teodoro.

“Let me express the gratitude of our President, of all our officials, and of the Filipino people for all that you have done and for all that you will do for our country and for our future citizens and leaders,” Briones concluded.

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