



SCHOLARS' VOICE

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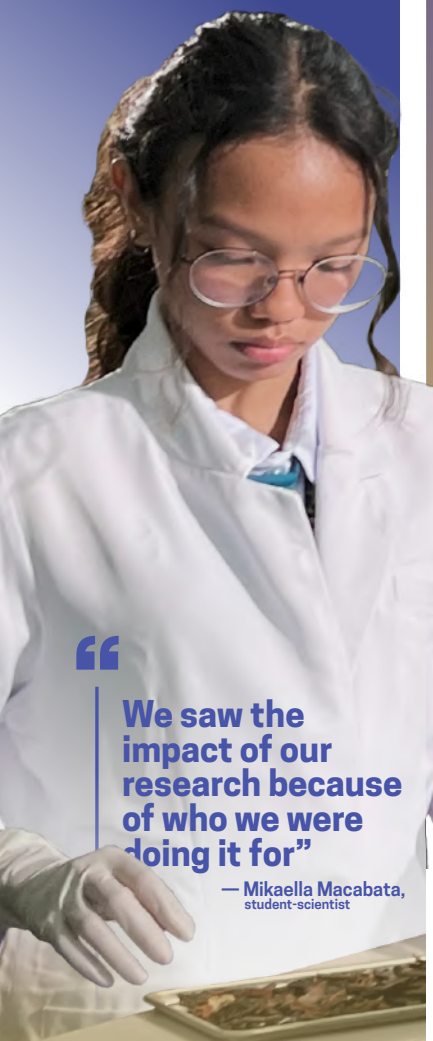
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by Ms. Reuth DELA VICTORIA



“We saw the impact of our research because of who we were doing it for”

—Mikaella Macabata, student-scientist

FRUIT OF LABOR.

Three scholars emerge victorious in the Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) for their biological study. It addresses the demands of natural anthelmintics for agricultural animals.

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OPTIMISTIC OPPORTUNITIES.

Eagle Scout Julian Philippe Signe engages with faculty and students of Special Needs Education for his initiative, Project TULAY.

Cebuano scout paves workforce path through Project TULAY

In a remarkable demonstration of instilling scout values and paving opportunities, Cebuano Eagle Scout Julian Philippe Signe has championed a nationally recognized community project entitled Project TULAY, addressing the gap between Special Needs Education (SNED) graduates and mainstream workforce opportunities.

“Project TULAY: A Program Bridging the SNED graduates to the work field,” seeking to enhance post-graduation opportunities for special needs students, gained national acclaim for the 2024 Gawad Juanito I. King Award for Community Service, at the Ten Outstanding Boy Scouts of the Philippines Association (TOBSPA) Awarding Ceremony on October 18, 2024.

With Zapatera Elementary School as his pilot beneficiary, Signe highlighted the project’s early success, reporting that three SNED graduates are currently employed, while five to 10 others are in the pipeline for job placements.

SNED in Need

The Department of Education (DepEd) has been working to implement inclusive education through Republic Act No. 11650, known as the Inclusive Education Act, including various programs like SNED, with 898 centers nationwide.

However, the policy under DepEd Order 44, s. 2021, imposing a cut-off age of 25 for SNED learners, combined with limited post-graduation opportunities, highlights a gap in the transition to

meaningful employment and further development.

Aileen Sablayan, a SNED teacher at Zapatera Elementary School for more than 18 years, acknowledges this gap and stresses the need for stronger government support.

“We’re not only giving education, but a chance. We were able to turn dreams into reality.”

—Julian Philippe Signe, TOBSPA Awardee

“The fact that there is no exit program implemented by the government for these special learners, even from LGUs (Local Government Units) to push in continuing vocational and livelihood skills, and with the lack of trained teachers in the Alternative Learning System (ALS), they [the government] should be the one initiating these efforts,” Sablayan pointed out.

323k

SPED LEARNERS
ages 2-17
S.Y. '23-'24

5k

SPED TEACHERS
SHORTAGE!

Source: The Freeman
by Kris LAPUZ

follow-up news

Cebu SciHi implements MRF, lifts environmental burdens

by Wesly SECUYA, Msha EGANO, Lia BALLESTEROS

Aimed at alleviating the environmental challenges the institution is currently facing, the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) of Cebu City National Science High School (CCNSHS) was installed on September 21, 2023, marking a significant step towards sustainability.

Headed by its Supreme Secondary Learner Government (SSLG), the institution successfully implemented the said facility in the school campus with amplifying cohesive adjustments to the institution’s practices, such as establishing a new policy in trash segregation, and adding a new classroom officer named ‘Environmental Safety Officer’ (ESO).

Mrs. Lilybeth C. Auxtero, the school’s SSLG adviser, emphasized that the MRF is more than just a structure—it is a vital tool for waste management and environmental education.

“MRF promotes awareness and encourages the community to take action on solid waste management issues,” Auxtero explained, adding that it serves as a platform to engage the school community in partnerships, such as their recent collaboration with Singapore School Cebu’s Project BALI (Basura Mo, Lingkuranan Ko), which addressed plastic waste.

Auxtero noted that activities like clean-up drives and waste inventory, led by SSLG officers and partnered organizations, promote recycling, upcycling, and policy-making to ensure sustainable environmental programs.

Eunice Berdette Capus, Barangay Assistant Secretary, expressed that the establishment of the MRF is highly beneficial, especially in terms of waste segregation. “It’s really important that schools like yours implement proper waste segregation. Unlike some other schools with unsegregated garbage, it’s beneficial for your school to really have a place for segregated materials,” Capus shared.

She also highlighted the importance of scheduled waste collection for Brgy. Labangon, noting that with the MRF, waste can be properly stored and monitored.



by Marian BACOCANAG
by Kris LAPUZ

International news

Filipino student-scientists shine in Int’l SciFair

by Qatarina AGBANLOG, Anna GOC-ONG

Three scholars from Cebu City National Science High School (CCNSHS) made history as they grabbed the 4th grand prize in the Cellular and Molecular Biology Category of the 2024 Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) held from May 11-17 in Los Angeles, California.

Grade 12 student researchers Michaela Rentuza, Mikaella Macabata, and Wesly Secuya addressed agricultural issues with their study titled, “In silico and in vitro evaluation of embryogenesis inhibition activity of ethanolic extracts of Chico bark against gastrointestinal strongyle eggs.”

Guided by their coach, Ms. Reuth Thessalonica Dela Victoria, their study

proposed chico bark as a potential alternative to anthelmintic solutions against parasitic roundworms in livestock by halting the growth of strongyle eggs.

This journey through competitions began as a Grade 10 project for the annual research congress at CCNSHS, a tradition that encourages students to develop innovative solutions to real-world problems.

Inspired by prior studies on indigenous plants’ anthelmintic properties, the team conducted extensive literature reviews, consulted with veterinarians and farmers, and refined their research methodology after every competition for almost a year.

“When we began, we wanted our research to address agricultural issues that were not just local but global in scale,” shared Rentuza, the team leader. “Visiting farms and hearing firsthand about the struggles with drug-resistant parasites strengthened

our resolve to find a solution.”

After winning 1st place in the Life and Science Category at the school research congress, the project proceeded to advance to the Divisional, Regional, and National levels of the Science and Technology Fair.

Winning 1st place for Best Project and Best Presenter in the National Science and Technology Fair secured their spots as contestants at the Regeneron ISEF.

Ms. Dela Victoria expressed her thoughts on the researchers’ performance, “Number one, their eagerness. They’re really eager to win and then they’re really eager to understand more on their study and to learn more. Number two, they’re dependable. When I instruct them with something, naa jud siyay (there really is a) result and they do it immediately. They would consult me on what possible things to do.”

Their victory on May 17, 2024, marked

the first time since 2018 that the Philippines achieved recognition on the ISEF stage.

Among 50 top-tier projects worldwide, the Cebuano scholars stood out for their innovative and practical approach to addressing a global agricultural issue, securing the 4th Grand Prize in the Cellular and Molecular Biology category.

Macabata reflected on their journey and emphasized the significance of their work.

“We saw the impact of our research because of who we were doing it for – farmers and veterinarians struggling with real problems. This journey has been challenging, but was worth it.”

Following their victory, the team called for greater government and institutional support for research initiatives, highlighting the potential of Filipino youth to contribute innovative solutions to national and global problems.

► CONTINUE PAGE 3

SOARING HIGH. Trygve L. Olaivar, Department of Education (DepEd) Undersecretary, visits Cebu City National Science High School in preparation for the upcoming Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) on January 9, 2025.

by Abby GARCIA

by Luffy DESCARTIN

DepEd Usec Olaivar visits SciHi for PISA readiness

In a strategic effort to elevate the Philippines' global academic performance, the Department of Education (DepEd) Undersecretary Trygve L. Olaivar visited Cebu City National Science High School (CCNSHS), a participating institution in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) last Thursday, January 9.

The visit forms a key component of DepEd's push to elevate the Philippines' preparedness for PISA, a global assessment that evaluates student proficiency in Reading, Mathematics, and Science, which the country ranked poorly in the previous years.

Undersecretary Olaivar emphasized the department's dedication to fostering critical thinking and problem-solving skills among Filipino students, prompting him to meet with school administrators and teachers to review educational strategies and ensure students are well-prepared for the international assessment.

A thorough inspection of the school's computer laboratories was later conducted to assess the suitability of the existing equipment the students will use for the assessment, which later identified several shortcomings, including connectivity issues, prompting immediate discussions on corrective measures to

ensure smooth test administration.

"We have been directed by Secretary Angara to visit PISA-participating schools to assess the challenges these institutions are facing," Olaivar shared in an interview.

The undersecretary further emphasized the DepEd's concern over the lack of essential resources, particularly laptops, in some participating schools, which hinders students' ability to fully engage in the assessment. "Fortunately, several private institutions have stepped in to donate laptops, providing crucial support to these schools," he added.

Accompanying Undersecretary Olaivar on his visit was DepEd Cebu City Schools Division Superintendent Dr. Nimfa D. Bongo, who outlined the ongoing initiatives aimed at enhancing the readiness of PISA-participating schools in the city.

"Our education program supervisors in

Mathematics, Science, and English have been closely monitoring the conduct of practice tests to ensure that students are adequately prepared for PISA," Bongo stated, emphasizing the need for intensive preparation to better equip participating students.

She further noted the division's efforts to address infrastructural challenges, particularly in providing technical support. "We are exploring ways to equip schools like SciHi with backup power generators and to upgrade their internet connectivity to support a smoother testing process," Bongo added.

Furthermore, school head Dr. Marilou T. Dela Cuesta expressed her excitement stating, "While it presents a challenge, it is an excellent opportunity to check the students' mental and critical thinking abilities—skills that are essential in today's global landscape."

news bit

Senior High scholar excels in "Ako ay Pilipino" national tilt

by Anna GOC-ONG, Zach DELOS ANGELES

by Ryamesei GOCO



CEBUANO PRIDE. Adrian Olaguer, donned in Barong Tagalog, displays nationalistic prowess as he competes in the "Ako ay Pilipino" contest on January 11, 2025.

Adrian Olaguer, a Grade 12 student from Cebu City National Science High School, has emerged as a shining example of Filipino youth patriotism, securing a top spot in the "Ako ay Pilipino" contest held on January 11, 2025, at Elan a Greenhills, Manila.

The competition challenged participants to showcase their knowledge of Philippine literature, education, and contemporary issues through impromptu speaking and essay writing, with the senior scholar guided by his coaches, Mr. Julius Bryan Yburan and Mr. Paul Caminos. Olaguer mentioned that the experience brought him joy as it was the first national competition he had competed in. "I realized that everyone has an equal chance of winning. In my case, I was one of only two Bisaya contestants among nine participants. Despite not being a native Tagalog speaker, I managed to secure second place in the essay writing category. This competition taught me that with hard work and dedication, anything is possible," he reflected. Olaguer's victory shows the relevance of promoting nationalism among today's youth, inspiring peers through showcasing the talent and potential of students from Cebu City.



news feature

SciHi alum shapes the future of literature

by Chaney BINOLIRAO

Giving back to his alma mater, Christian Andrei Laplap, a Cebu City National Science High School (CCNSHS) alumnus, donated copies of his recently published poetry book to encourage aspiring writers.

Accomplished author and part-time instructor at Cebu Technological University-Main Campus, Laplap, from Batch 2018, featured his poetry book "Yes, You" at CCNSHS during a turnover ceremony held at the school library with the school librarian, Joy Acre.

He shared how his time at the school inspired him to pursue writing and hoped his work would motivate students to explore their creative potential.

"This is my way of giving back to the school that helped shape my dreams," Laplap shared, reflecting on his journey.

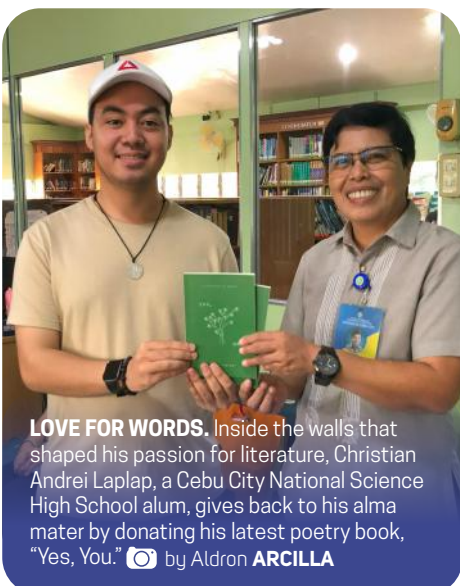
Looking back on the journey he persevered,

he encouraged students to acknowledge their strengths and weaknesses, focus on their strengths, and build upon them.

"Understanding that we all have our own uniqueness, embracing and believing in what you are capable of is very important in embracing what could mold you today," he added.

School officials thanked the donor, highlighting how the donation strengthens the school's literary resources and supports its mission to cultivate a thriving literary environment for its students.

Laplap has earned multiple accolades, being an Awardee of Excellence in the World Youth Essay Competition (WYEC) 2018 for his essay, "Schrodinger's Children," in Germany; a winner in the Editor's Choice of the Hammond House Literary Prize 2020 for his short story, "The Oddity That is Them," in the U.K.; and a regional winner in the CHED ASEANWave 2022 poetry category with his poem entitled, "Land, in the Philippines."



LOVE FOR WORDS. Inside the walls that shaped his passion for literature, Christian Andrei Laplap, a Cebu City National Science High School alum, gives back to his alma mater by donating his latest poetry book, "Yes, You." by Aldron ARCILLA

follow-up news

Budget crunch stalls SciHi's new building project

by Heather ANGUS, Luffy DESCARTIN

Once hailed as a transformative leap for Cebu City National Science High School (CCNSHS), the construction of a four-story building designed to house 14 laboratories and facilities for robotics and science education has come to a standstill.

While the first phase of the project is complete, which includes the foundation, the first floor and partial second floor, stakeholders now face a significant hurdle with phase two's construction frozen as funding awaits congressional approval amid election-related delays.

Initially promised as a groundbreaking step toward bolstering STEM education, the release of necessary funding for the new building is stalled, due to the ongoing election bans, exacerbating concerns about the school's ability to meet its growing educational needs.

"We're stuck in limbo," said Mr. Jonah Bacalso, head of the Science, Math, and ICT Department at CCNSHS, who has been handling the school's finances. "Although the first phase has been funded and is nearly finished, the budget for phase two is still pending approval from Congress, and the election ban has complicated the

release of these funds."

The ongoing election ban has restricted the release of funds, and the hiring of workers for the project, causing significant concerns for the school's administration, which is relying on Cebu City's South District Congressman Edu Rama to secure the necessary funding.

"We've been in constant communication with Cong Rama's office to expedite the approval process and we're hoping for an exemption to this prohibition of the release of funds to allow the project to continue, but until the funding is approved, the construction cannot proceed," Bacalso explained.

Aside from construction delays, the institution is also facing challenges with its operational budget, as utility costs have already exceeded current allocations, further straining the school's finances. "We need additional classrooms and facilities to accommodate the growing student population," Bacalso stressed, emphasizing the importance of the new building and the setbacks caused by funding shortages.

The school, which has long struggled with insufficient classrooms, laboratories, and other essential facilities, broke ground on the new building in 2023, aiming to create a more conducive environment for its STEM programs, seen as key to bridging the gap in the school's science and technology education.



PROJECT ON HOLD. School head Dr. Marilou T. Dela Cuesta, alongside Science and Math Department Head Jonah Bacalso and Supreme Secondary Learners' Government (SSLG) Julian Signe, inspect the current state of the once-promising new academic building.

by Hailey TOLENTINO

Cebu City SciHi eyes R7's 'RSHS' status amid SPS accreditation, NIR shift

by Justine CASTRO, Westly SECUYA

Cebu City National Science High School (CCNSHS) is now aiming for the "Regional Science High School" (RSHS) position in Region VII, following the announcement by the Department of Education (DepEd) recognizing the institution's Special Program in Science (SPS) curriculum and the creation of the Negros Island Region (NIR).

The shift comes as DepEd transitions Ramon Teves Pastor Memorial-Dumaguete Science High School (RTPM-DSHS), the current RSHS of Region VII, to the newly established NIR, opening the RSHS slot for Central Visayas.

During a visit on February 5, 2025, DepEd Region VII's Education Program Supervisor for Science, Dr. Bryant C. Acar, acknowledged the school's adherence to the Engineering and Science Education Program (ESEP) curriculum, which shares similar standards with the SPS.

Acar confirmed that the regional office is restructuring the accreditation process for SPS schools, shifting it to the Division Office, which will handle evaluations before automatic recognition by the Regional Office.

With NIR's dissolution, RTPM-DSHS will no longer serve as Region 7's Regional Science High

School, prompting Acar to encourage CCNSHS to formally apply for the RSHS position.

"You have to apply just like everyone else so that we can be fair to all schools implementing the SPS Curriculum. Around 12 SDOs will apply, however, I am confident of CCNSHS," Acar stated in an interview, expressing his encouragement for the school to apply.

To qualify for the RSHS status, which emphasizes a curriculum focused on science and math, a school must surpass the standards written in the primer, particularly by improving the school's equipment ratio and having specialized faculty with degrees in physics, biology, or chemistry.

Beyond the prestige, the status will bring benefits such as increased funding, foreign exchange initiatives, and priority in national programs.

Acar stressed that securing the title would be



BORN READY. Department of Education (DepEd) Region VII's Education Program Supervisor for Science, Dr. Bryant C. Acar, acknowledges Cebu City National Science High School's adherence to the Engineering and Science Education Program curriculum amid SPS accreditation.

beneficial for the school community, especially its stakeholders, but it would need the cooperation of everyone.

"It takes a village to raise a child. Raising brilliant students is quite challenging, but for sure your parents, LGU community, and alumni could be of great help. Collaboration will help this school be

better, more improved, and maybe, the best school in the future," Acar's message to the CCNSHS community during his visit.

As CCNSHS works towards meeting DepEd's standards, it aims to improve its academic standards as it secures its place as a leading science institution in the region.

pulse perspective

ROADBLOCKS AHEAD

A DAILY DISTURBANCE. Promised as a solution, the Cebu Bus Rapid Transit (CBRT) project has only shown opposition to its name. Drivers and commuters express concerns as the traffic issues persist, uncertain of the CBRT's future. by Jana MARINDUQUE

CBRT project struggles to stay on track amid controversies

by Westly SECUYA

Cebu City, PHILIPPINES— The Cebu Bus Rapid Transit (CBRT) project, once heralded as a solution to Cebu City's traffic problems, is now facing delays, disputes, and controversies, raising questions about its accomplishment and long-term feasibility.

Launched in 2010, the CBRT was envisioned as a cutting-edge mass transport system. Yet, over the years, it has been delayed by disagreements over routes, logistical mishaps, and shifting priorities.

Tensions escalated when heritage concerns about the Cebu Provincial Capitol prompted governor Gwendolyn Garcia to halt the construction of bus stations along Osmeña Boulevard.

This led to then-mayor Michael Rama filing an administrative complaint against the governor, drawing attention to the political issues surrounding the project.

Adding to the turmoil, unresolved issues

regarding land acquisition and resettlement for displaced residents have delayed key resolutions. Former Cebu City mayor Tomas Osmeña also critiqued recent design changes, accusing planners of prioritizing business interests over commuters' needs.

Jeepney driver Jomar Dimasuht, 51, shared his perspective on the ongoing project in an exclusive interview, highlighting the challenges drivers face due to the disruptions.

"It's hard to see what the project will bring to us citizens. The construction is currently causing traffic, so it's important for it to be finished soon. Traffic has become worse in some areas, and we're the ones who have to deal with passengers' complaints. It's hard to see the benefits when everything just feels more chaotic," stressed Dimasuht.

As the CBRT struggles with these challenges, stakeholders remain divided, leaving Cebuano commuters uncertain about when—or if—the project will deliver on its promises.

news convergence

SHAPING FUTURE JOURNALISM: Sunstar launches Junior Journos Program, empowers Cebuano student journalists

by Justine CASTRO

In an effort to empower student journalists and celebrate press freedom, Sunstar Cebu officially introduced its Junior Journos Program during the Reaching Out to Future Journalists Forum on Saturday, September 21, 2024.

Led by Sunstar's Executive Publisher, Dr. Nestor Ramirez, the Junior Journos Program aims to equip student journalists with essential skills through training and exposure to real-world journalism to help young journo understand the field and build future journalists through the program, which has so far trained around 60 Cebuano junior journalists on its initial launch.

The launch took place at Don Carlos A. Gothong Memorial National High School (DCAGMNS), where over 200 invited students from 14 public, private high schools, and universities gathered to celebrate Cebu Press Freedom Week.

The forum featured notable speakers, including Khin Thandar Htay, Director of Southeast Asia of Women in News, who discussed the relevance of journalism in today's landscape, and Jan Gultiano, PLDT and Smart Stakeholder Management Specialist, who addressed how to keep junior journalists safe in the cyber world.

A panel discussion later followed with reactions from Melanie Ng of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Calvin Cordova of the Manila Bulletin, Carmelle Estenzo of the Archdiocese of Cebu, Nathanael Flores of DCAGMNS, and Reina Aureo, editor-in-chief of Cebu Normal University's school publication.

Ramirez highlighted the significance of the Junior Journos Program and the forum in today's society. "Our ultimate objective is to develop a community that understands how the media works because only when the community understands what we are doing, that is only

when we consider our work as relevant," he stated.

Ramirez also shared the importance of engaging high school students in the celebration of Press Freedom Week, noting that their involvement ensures the continuity of such celebrations

"In our point of view, pushing journalism—letting everybody know how journalism works, and how to become responsible messengers on social media, is something we have to do. We need to institutionalize this project as part of our social responsibility," emphasized Ramirez.

Mildred Galarpe, Associate Publisher of Sunstar, expressed her confidence and enthusiasm in the future of journalism with the recent success of Sunstar's forum and launch of the program. "The reason we're reaching out to the junior journalists is because you guys are the future. Sunstar is doing this as a way of building our community of journalism and that's really part of our goal and vision," she said.

Armi Ilumba, a pioneer of Sunstar's program, highlighted how the program shaped her as a journalist and encouraged campus journalists to join. "The hands-on training and guidance from the Sunstar team boosted my confidence and developed skills that still influence my work today," she shared.

The activity was held as part of the Cebu Press Freedom Week 2024 celebration, coinciding with the 52nd anniversary of former President Ferdinand Marcos Sr.'s signing of Proclamation 1081, which placed the Philippines under martial law.

VOICES OF TOMORROW. Dr. Nestor Ramirez, Sunstar's Executive Publisher, introduces the newly-formed Junior Journos Program on September 21, 2024. Its mission is to cultivate the minds of student journalists to become the next harbingers of change.

by Hailey TOLENTINO



by Hansine MAGLASANG

continuation from page 1

BRIDGING SNED CHALLENGES:

Cebuano scout crosses challenges in special needs education, paves workforce pathways through Project TULAY

by Justine CASTRO

Ability in every disability

Oplas, who currently handles the transition class and aids special learners with pre-vocational skills, expressed her gratitude upon knowing Project TULAY and how it empowered the department and its learners.

"It was really unexpected, but we felt very privileged and appreciative of it, especially our school head for SNED, Mary Ann Soriano. Fortunately, I am handling the transition class so it coincided with the purpose of giving them livelihood skills that they will need when they graduate," Oplass explained.

Oplass shared how the project was able to offer such an opportunity with the same passion of helping these learners.

"Project TULAY made them feel that they had a purpose, that they were capable, and that boosted their self-fulfillment despite their disabilities. Actually, when these learners knew about the project, they were very eager to ask what were the updates and if they could join the program so it was really a testament of how it sparked an impact among them," she shared.

Ezekiel, a 24-year-old SNED learner graduating from the special education program, shared his eagerness to be part of the workforce to help his family.

Other SNED learners, such as Johnmark, 20, and Jameson, 21, have also expressed their enthusiasm to enter the mainstream workforce.

Signe encouraged these learners by

enhancing post-graduate skills and employment opportunities through reaching out to service companies and Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

Steps to Bigger scale

In a virtual press conference, Cebu City Mayor Raymond Garcia commended Project TULAY for its 'noble' effort in providing learners opportunities, and assured to amplify efforts in collaboration with the city government.

Signe shared that Garcia pledged his commitment to the project following the TOBSPA awarding ceremony, and is on the underway to collaborate with the Cebu City Government and the Department of Manpower Development and Placement (DMDP) to ensure more SPED

learners gain access to proper job opportunities.

Signe also hopes to actualize his ultimate goal—for his project to become a non-government organization (NGO) with the aim of serving as a platform in advocating for special education and inclusive workplace practices.

"We're not only giving education, but a chance. We were able to turn dreams into reality and I am glad I was able to give those learners a home outside SNED, and I also thank them for giving me a home within it," reflected Signe on his success towards the ongoing project.

Advocating for governmental support and curriculum changes, Signe hopes to provide equal opportunities and inclusivity, especially to these sectors, impacting lives of the underprivileged.

SEASONED SPECIALTIES Cebu City National Science High School (CCNSHS), nown for its top-performing curriculum in the Special Program in Journalism (SPJ), showcases its academic prowess in the discipline.

by Hailey **TOLENTINO**

CCNSHS unveils SPJ best practices as R7 enhances programs through benchmarking

by Luffy **DESCARTIN**, Justine **CASTRO**

Since 2009, Cebu City National Science High School (CCNSHS) has been at the forefront of the Special Program in Journalism (SPJ) education in Region 7, consistently producing top-performing students in campus journalism competitions.

Further solidifying its role, CCNSHS showcased its best practices as 37 education supervisors, heads, and teachers across the Department of Education (DepEd) Region 7, conducted a benchmarking event on October 15, 2024 in a move to revolutionize campus journalism throughout the region.

Led by Regional Education Supervisors Dr. Eduardo Omaña and Dr. Elaine Perfecio, the delegation observed classroom sessions, and experienced firsthand the fruits of

the program's objectives, witnessing the talents of the school's victors at the 2024 National Schools Press Conference (NSPC). SciHi's young radio broadcasters and TV broadcasters.

Dr. Elaine Perfecio, the Region VII Education Program Supervisor in Filipino, recognized the value of journalism in the education spectrum, sharing that the SPJ and the Department of Education (DepEd) are a testament to the dedication and commitment to enhancing the skills of campus journalists.

Paving the way for a journalism-bound program in different schools, the visit served as an opportunity for schools to immerse themselves in SciHi's campus journalism system, where one school following SciHi's footsteps is Talisay City National High

School, which launched its SPJ this school year.

According to Candice Grace Maque, the school's head of Journalism, the institution aims to nurture young learners interested in journalism while battling misinformation and developing a diverse skill set among students exposed to the curriculum through the program.

Maque acknowledged the challenges faced during the inaugural year of the SPJ program and highlighted significant hurdles in managing class sizes. "We are grappling with issues such as inadequate classroom space and the necessity to uphold instructional quality," she stated.

Despite these obstacles, Maque expressed her perseverance in implementing SciHi's best practices to enhance the SPJ program at her

institution. "It's clear that maintaining smaller class sizes and securing a dedicated classroom for the program, as demonstrated by SciHi, are critical for delivering high-quality education," she remarked.

Such success in implementing the program at SciHi is only possible with the school administration's dedication and the leadership and commitment of the Journalism Coordinator, Rex Ebarle, together with the SPJ teachers across grade levels in the junior high school.

“Journalism is not just about writing and reporting; it involves a responsibility to the community. That's why it's important to acknowledge each student's accomplishments as they contribute to our collective progress.”

— Dr. Elaine Perfecio,
Region VII Education Program
Supervisor in Filipino

by Hailey **TOLENTINO**

news feature

Community sanitation project brings scout to national top GSP award

by Luffy **DESCARTIN**,
Msha **EGANO**

GIRL IN GREEN. After 12 years of being a girl in green, Cdt. Sgt. Mary Chloe Belarma is finally a Chief Girl Scout Medalist. On November 24, 2024, Belarma received her award in the Plenary Hall of Philippine International Convention Center.

by Hailey **TOLENTINO**

Addressing restroom shortages through a community sanitation project in Barangay Lorega, Cebu City, has propelled SciHi scholar Cdt. Sgt. Mary Chloe P. Belarma to national acclaim as one of the awarded seven Chief Girl Scout Medalists from the Cebu Council and one of the 919 awardees nationwide.

Belarma received the prestigious award on November 18, 2024 at the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) in Pasay City during a ceremony attended by First Lady and Chief Girl Scout Liza Araneta-Marcos.

The Chief Girl Scout Medal is the highest recognition in the Girl Scouting movement, awarded to those who implement service projects with significant and lasting community impact.

Guided by Troop Leader Loen F. Luchavez, Belarma led "Project ChloSiLYAS: Kasiyas Alang sa Katawhan sa Barangay Lorega," an initiative addressing sanitation challenges in Barangay Lorega, Cebu City, involving the construction of restrooms, which improved hygiene and living conditions for people in the area.

Belarma's journey to the achievement is rooted in her early involvement with scouting, which she joined as a young girl, tagging along with her older sister.

Though initially drawn to the Fun of overnight camping trips,

it was during her time in high school, that she began to understand the deeper purpose of scouting. "It was in that moment that I discovered the true meaning of scouting, where it taught me leadership, resilience, independence, and the value of sisterhood."

She credits her involvement in scouting for shaping her into the leader she is today. "Even as my term in the GSP positions comes to an end, my scouting journey is far from over. Once a Girl Scout, always a Girl Scout," she added.

Belarma's decision to pursue the award was initially separate from her plans. "I never really thought about it at first. But as my term was nearing its end, I realized it wasn't about what I wanted, but about whether I could do it," she explained.

With encouragement from mentors and guidance from fellow cadets, Belarma embraced the challenge. "The greatest reward for me would be knowing that my actions and initiatives made a real impact in my community," she said.

In addition to the construction, the project also included seminars like the "PropHER Hygiene Seminar," which educated the community on maintaining proper hygiene practices.

Her leadership and commitment to service have continued the SciHi Angels' legacy, marking their second consecutive Chief Girl Scout Medalist after Franthony Gelig, who earned the same distinction in 2023.

DepEd Cebu City honors SciHi Journ program, faculty via Adlaw sa Pasidungog 2024

by Qatarina **AGBANLOG**

Cebu City National Science High School (CCNSHS) excelled at the Department of Education (DepEd) Cebu City Division's Adlaw sa Pasidungog, earning "Most Outstanding Program Implementer - SRJ" on November 20, 2024, at Marco Polo Plaza Hotel.

This annual event honors exceptional contributions to DepEd's mission and vision, with Mr. Rex Ebarle, the school's journalism coordinator, and Mdme. Marilou Dela Cuesta, the school head, receiving recognition.

Since 2009, Ebarle and fellow SPJ co-teachers have nurtured the program through newsroom simulations, film reporting, hands-on multimedia work, real news coverage, and participation in press conferences, boosting students' skills, confidence, and knowledge.

Mrs. Allyssa Galdeza-Bautista, an SPJ teacher, was also recognized as the Scholars' Voice Radio Broadcasting Coach. Her team won multiple awards at the 2024 NSPC, including 3rd place in Best Overall Production, Best News Reporter, and Best Script.

In an interview, Ebarle outlined his vision for SPJ's future: "I aim to strengthen ties with multimedia, stakeholders, and media professionals to enhance programs, secure funding, and provide better resources for students while inspiring them and showcasing the program's excellence through impactful projects."

Ebarle was further honored as Most Outstanding School Paper Adviser and Most Outstanding Teacher in Key Stage 4 (Senior High School).

Other faculty members, Mrs. Lilybeth Auxtero and Ms. Reuth Dela Victoria, were recognized as Outstanding SSLG Advisors and Exemplary Contribution Coach at the 2024 Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF), respectively.

CCNSHS was also named the Most Outstanding Secondary School in Cebu City, underscoring the faculty's dedication to academic and professional excellence.

LA wildfires prompt PH's call for disaster preparedness

by Heather **ANGUS**, Gabriel **RUSIANA**

A series of wildfires—Palisades, Eaton Canyon, and Hughes Canyon—blazed through Los Angeles in January and has alarmed the Philippine government in their efforts to focus on the safety and well-being of the Filipinos.

These fires wreaked havoc in residential areas and remote wilderness, impacting locals with 28 fatalities, 13 injuries, and damages worth thousands of dollars.

The Palisades Fire ignited on the afternoon of January 7, 2025, and had quickly escalated due to high winds and dry conditions, spreading across 23,448 acres of land, and in the evening of the same day, the Eaton Fire expanded to 14,021 acres of land in Eaton Canyon near Altadena.

On January 22, 2025, the Hughes Fire broke out in northern Los Angeles County. Within three days, it extended across 10,425 acres of land.

It has been reported by Consul General Adelio Angelito Cruz, the Philippine Consulate General in Los Angeles, that 150 Filipinos have sought assistance from the consulate, and many are seeking

refuge in evacuation centers.

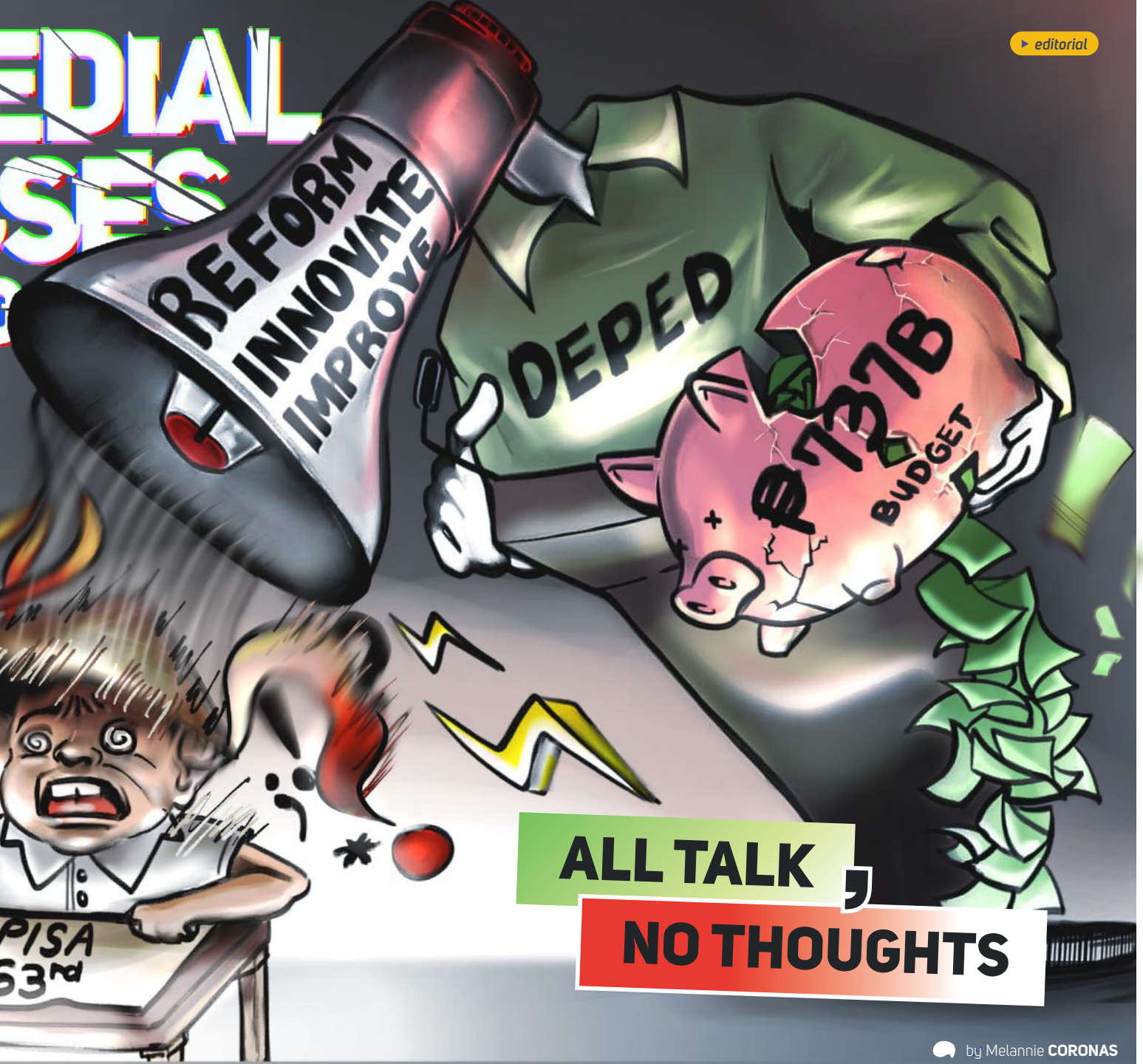
Here in the Philippines, the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) has implemented several strategies to enhance fire prevention and response. This includes the fire safety awareness seminars and drills across the country and the release of a series of standardized manuals covering fire safety for all age groups and institutions last year.

"These efforts will equip Filipino citizens with essential knowledge of fire safety and emergency response. By strengthening preparedness, these can serve as the best defense against potential disasters," shared Alyssa Tolentino, a student from Cebu City National Science High School (CCNSHS), who has attended a fire safety seminar hosted for the said school.

The BFP is also undergoing a modernization program that aims to procure new fire equipment, expand manpower, and conduct specialized training for firefighters in order to enhance the agency's capacity to respond effectively to fire-related incidents like the recent LA wildfires.



REMEDIAL CLASSES OF DEPED



ALL TALK NO THOUGHTS

by Melannie CORONAS

The Philippines has a newly found issue for its youth: they cannot think creatively. For the first time, the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) reports results of students based on their ability to harness imagination and creativity to develop and enhance ideas under the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) PISA.

This is the mere result of the nation's existing predicament—the flimsy educational system. Take a look at the Philippine PISA score history: last out of 78 countries in 2018 and 4th to last among 81 countries in 2022 for core subjects, and now the latest addition to our titles—the weakest critical thinkers in the globe. And very likely, those titles will stack on top of each other higher and higher. However, why is that?

"Next to Lebanon, the Philippines has the largest proportion of students (94%) who speak a language other than the PISA test language (i.e., English) at home most of the time" – World Bank. Over 30 languages for the 2022 creative thinking exam, except Filipino and Lebanese, were offered as found on the OECD's website. This makes sense, as "English will be used as the primary medium of instruction in all public and private institutions of learning at the secondary level," as noted by Executive Order No. 210. Arguably, this is to cater to Western countries, as one of the main exports of the Philippines is labor. However, the superficial implementation of

teaching English results in learners who may speak it but not necessarily speak with substance. Therefore, should the OECD adjust to the Philippines and offer Filipino?

The PISA will only be adjusted if the Philippines adopts Filipino as the primary mode of instruction. Since the country voluntarily joined PISA, improving English proficiency should be a joint effort among the Department of Education (DepEd), schools, parents, and students. Let's say the exam will be translated; which language out of the 182 (according to the Manila Times), then? How would DepEd integrate it into instruction, without making deeper knowledge (of the language or dialect) a prerequisite,

while not hindering comprehension? Actual comprehension, learning dynamics, and the learning of the students will be compromised if the mode of instruction shifts abruptly

to a different language. Imagine the struggle of learning Math and Science solely in Filipino or Bisaya—there are only so many local terms for the wide variety of concepts.

Regardless of whether exams include Filipino, the Philippine education system

deserves better support from the government. Despite DepEd's PHP 737 billion budget in 2025, issues like mismanagement, overcrowded classrooms, inadequate materials, and poorly trained teachers persist.

To truly improve, the curriculum must focus on critical thinking, and teachers, the second mothers and fathers of our students, must receive proper training and support to educate effectively.

The current curriculum emphasizes memorization and lower-order thinking, as noted by UP professor Lizamarie Olegario, neglecting critical skills with significant economic implications. Without prioritizing reforms, DepEd risks a working population earning low wages to compensate for the lack of critical thinking skills, attracting foreign employers but perpetuating stagnation. By focusing on short-term gains and appearances over meaningful change, the department harms the nation's future.

This is not merely about obtaining a higher score. It is about creating a Philippines where success is not determined by which family you were born into but by how hard you are willing to work. To dear DepEd, take the time to listen to the concerns of our staff and students. Work around the differences and struggles, and make proper use of that budget.

“What we should be teaching them is solving real-life problems. We should teach them about authentic learning.”

— Lizamarie Olegario, UP professor in an interview with Rappler

photopinion



ACADEMIC BLUES.

To address the increasing academic gap, the Mu Alpha Theta Club of Cebu City National Science High School (CCNSHS) leads a peer-guided review that teaches Mathematics after class. Despite the additional Math subject under the MATATAG Curriculum, students still struggle to keep up with its requirements. In spite of best efforts, this begs the question: will this be the bridge that lessens the academic gap among learners?

by Keefe CATUBIG



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▶ midnight paragraph



Behind Closed Budgets

by Juliet HAYLO

I lay in bed, watching the Office of the Vice President's (OVP) budget hearing, expecting little more than routine proceedings. But as the discussion on confidential and intelligence funds (CIF) unfolded, I was left with a bitter taste. Millions of pesos were being allocated without clear justification—how could a largely ceremonial office warrant such spending without specifics?

Vice President Sara Duterte's responses were frustratingly vague, deflecting questions with "national security concerns." By the third or fourth dodge, my patience wore thin. It was even more infuriating when peacebuilding and anti-insurgency tasks for other government agencies—were cited as justifications. It felt like handing someone money for groceries, only for them to buy unnecessary items without explanation.

One brave lawmaker questioned the legal basis for these allocations, but the discussion quickly pivoted, speaking volumes about the administration's lack of transparency.

For a country grappling with poverty, education, and healthcare crises, how could the government justify keeping these funds in secrecy?

But the real nail in the coffin for me was the realization that transparency seems almost disregarded in our current system. To think that public officials can call "confidentiality" to avoid public scrutiny stung. If this can happen in one of the highest offices, then what's going on in the less covered side of our government?

The hearing ended, and the budget was approved. And all I had were questions, left without many answers to take away from them. I sat in silence, lamenting, thinking of

struggling Filipinos—the ones who bear the brunt of government mismanagement. Governance isn't about speeches or promises; it's about trust, transparency, and accountability. As citizens, we cannot afford apathy—because if we stop holding our leaders accountable, who will?



by Mary INOCIAN

Dear Editor,

As artificial intelligence (AI) continues to integrate into classrooms, students and teachers have used the technology to their advantage. However, I have noticed that other educators have become too dependent on AI. From using it to evaluate research papers to creating lecture materials, this reliance has left my classmates and me with mixed emotions on how to approach their classes. Any advice on how we could remedy the situation?

Sincerely,
Lost in Lecture



Dear Lost in Lecture,

Your concerns about the growing dependence on AI in education are completely valid. As much as we want to integrate the "work smart, not hard" mindset, overreliance on this technology could affect students' trust in their teacher's capabilities. With this, it is best to openly discuss with your teacher and advocate for a proper balance between using AI in their lectures and sticking to traditional methods. It should be used as a supplement, not as a replacement in their teaching approach. The integration of AI in classes should also be examined critically to know its limitations and to not overshadow the work of a true educator.

AI may be present in our everyday lives, but it should not overrule humans. Ultimately, it should be used to enhance, not diminish, the capabilities of each individual.

Sincerely,
Editor

▶ silent ink



by Cheska GONZALEZ

Anxiety is a Woman

I am an anxious soul. Whether it be walking down the streets in broad daylight or sitting idly in my locked car, I will always tense up if the passerby is a man. Not all men, sure, but enough to be a victim.

The Philippines is lacking in many areas. However, in gender equality, the country ranked 16th among the 146 countries in 2023—as reported in the Gender Gap Index Report. Filipino women have emerged into the scene, breaking through the fragile scaffolds men have built in many sectors of the country. Without a doubt, on paper, it looks as if everyone is on equal ground, yet it seems as though the Philippines has unfinished business with gender inequality.

One specific case haunts me in my sleep as a woman. In an episode of Raffy Tulfo in Action that aired on April 30, 2021, a couple came to the show seeing Senator Raffy Tulfo as their only means to solve their problem. The woman, pregnant at the time, had a c-section operation. During the operation, she had her breasts groped by a janitor who came in to assist the staff in the clean-up. They were entertained by the higher-ups of the hospital when they came forward with their concern, and the janitor got suspended as he was under investigation. Later on, they realized the hospital welcomed him back to work for them once again. It truly makes anyone think how many more cases have occurred



but went unreported due to lack of resources.

Bringing a new life into the world is a precious and sacred right each woman has. To ruin and cause devastation in a safe place like a hospital and desecrate the sanctity of giving life? The fact that it is even a possibility is disturbingly inhumane. Women face this reality on a daily basis. Although I have never been in such extreme situations, womanhood is a lived experience where you must keep checking behind your back when you are walking at night.

Though the female gender in and of itself is historically oppressed, changes should still be brought to prevent more mishaps from occurring. Hope will always prevail, as each generation will continue to break the vicious cycles. And in ours, let's create a safe space, not just for women, but for men too. Let's not raise our sons to be the "nice guy" or to be "man-children." Let's teach them that it is not cowardly to shed some tears or to communicate with each other.

It is not enough to be satisfied with the mere recognition of gender inequalities. Never restrict our voices. Our voices are the medium to transform this recognition into becoming concrete action. As UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said, "Gender inequality remains the 'unfinished business of our time.'"

by Julie SUSVILLA

▶ thoughts unbound



The New Age of Dullness

by Marco MACASERO

Technology is built on the concept that it can meet human needs or solve problems. However, isn't it ironic that in today's world, where technology is the backbone of society, more problems seem to arise from the very innovations that are supposed to solve humanity's challenges?

In a world crowded with artificial intelligence (AI), access to creative work has never been easier. Yet, the producers of such work, the people who pour their heart and soul into every painting and illustration, are increasingly overshadowed. Artists have long struggled to receive fair compensation for their work, and artificial intelligence is only exacerbating this issue.

The underappreciation of artists most especially in my case was highlighted in Coca-Cola's Christmas advertisement, which sparked controversy after becoming one of the first widely publicized AI-generated ads. Coke's decision to use AI was met with significant backlash on social media. Similarly, Toys "R" Us experimented with AI generated advertisements, only to face the same negative response. There is also an abundance of posts on social media naming the different generative AIs and the burden they lighten when doing your creative work such as essays and art. I myself have tried these—Gencraft AI to be specific—and no matter the prompt or the specific style I wanted it to generate in, it only gave me art that seemed to be similar to the last one. No matter how specific the prompt, AI cannot give justice

to the ideas that a human can create in their own head.

Companies have also sued AI developers for copyright infringement especially in image generative AI engine developers. Organizations like Imgur and Google have filed lawsuits over the training methods of AI models, which rely on scraping publicly available data from the internet. However, with most lawsuits failing, the widespread use of generative AI for commercial purposes could be the final nail in the coffin for struggling artists.

Despite widespread complaints about erroneous images and distorted faces, why do companies continue to use the dull art of artificial intelligence as a replacement rather than a tool? While AI-generated ads might seem like a cost-effective solution for startups and major companies alike, the recognizable style of AI art often fails to resonate with audiences. Instead, it can make a company appear cheap and unable to afford human artists for their advertisements.

Even though many online forums unanimously agree that AI-generated art is unethical, the voice of human creativity persists. For those willing to support struggling artists, consider investing in artwork that expresses an individual's unique identity and vision.

▶ photopinion



YOUR VOICE MATTERS.

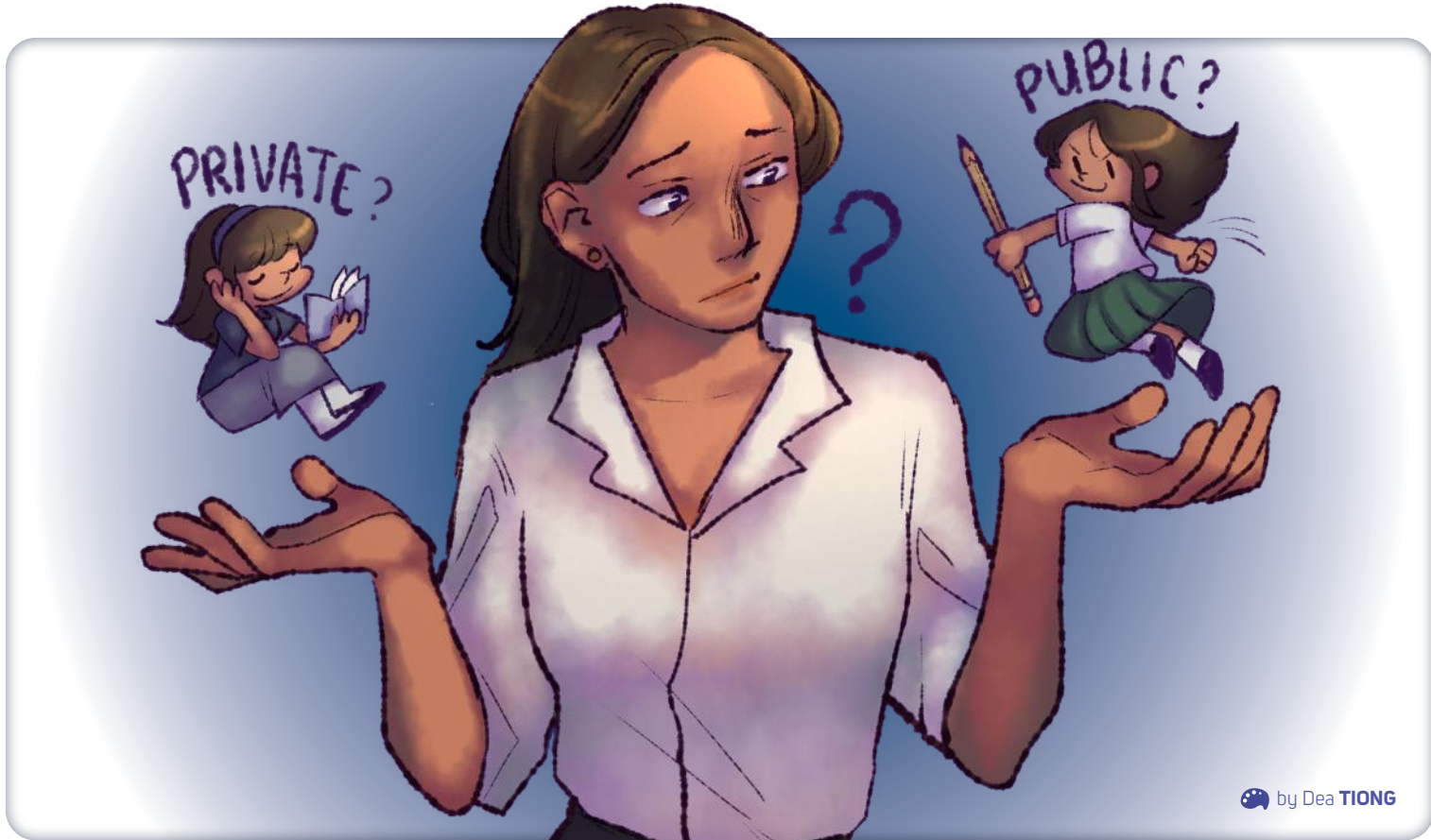
As the school year approaches its end, students from Cebu City National Science High School (CCNSHS) go through the electoral process of choosing its new set of officers of the Supreme Secondary Learners' Government. With the Senatorial Elections upcoming, one can't help but wonder: will they practice their right to vote the same way they chose their student leaders?

by Hailey TOLENTINO

Supporting real artists is not just buying art; its preserving the future of genuine human creativity.



by Melannie CORONAS



by Dea TIONG



▶ **fleeting thought**

The Education Dilemma

by Mia TARIMAN

Education shapes not just our knowledge but also our values, perspectives, and opportunities. The decision to choose between public and private education may feel overwhelming. The decision often comes down to factors like cost, curriculum, extracurricular activities, class sizes, and academic quality. But beyond these practical considerations, there's also the question of what kind of learning experience will best prepare a child for the real world.

Public schools are the backbone of education, offering learning opportunities to students regardless of background. Funded by taxes, they provide access to education for all, fostering diversity by bringing together students from different walks of life. They follow a set curriculum and offer extracurricular activities, though issues like overcrowding and limited resources can sometimes pose challenges. Having attended a public school myself, I saw firsthand how teachers and students struggled with budget constraints. But despite these challenges, public schools offer something invaluable: exposure to different people, experiences, and social skills that are essential for life.

Private schools, on the other hand, are often seen as the gold standard in education. With smaller class sizes, specialized programs, and better-funded resources, they create an environment where students receive more individualized attention. Teachers are well

compensated, and modern facilities provide a comfortable learning space. However, the financial barrier is steep. Tuition alone can be a heavy burden for families, and additional costs for uniforms, extracurriculars, and supplies only add to the expense. Beyond affordability, there's another concern—exclusivity. The selective admissions process means students may not experience the same diversity found in public schools, potentially limiting their exposure to different perspectives and real-world challenges.

Of course, the public-versus-private debate is not black and white. In well-funded districts, public schools can rival private institutions in quality. Meanwhile, families in underserved areas may opt for private schools in search of better opportunities. Charter and magnet schools, as well as homeschooling, have also emerged as alternative options, blending the best of both worlds.

Having already experienced the best and worst

of both worlds, my favor leans more towards public schools, as they offer an education beyond textbooks. While private schools provide undeniable advantages, public schools help students build resilience, adaptability, and independence. Navigating limited resources teaches problem-solving skills, and interacting with diverse peers fosters an understanding of different cultures and backgrounds. Education is not just about what happens in the classroom—it's about preparing for the realities of life.

Granted that education is not a "one-size-fits-all" sort of scenario, the best choice depends on family's values, priorities, and financial situation. But one thing is certain: education should equip students with not just academic knowledge but also the skills and experiences to thrive in an ever-changing world. Public or private, what matters most is that students leave school ready to face the future with confidence.



▶ **fractured dreams**

Doomed to Choose

by Zakhia PAÑARES

In ancient Greek mythology, sailors faced a dreadful choice: navigate between the monster Scylla or risk being swallowed whole by the whirlpool Charybdis. Today's American electorate finds itself in a similar bind. On one side, there's Kamala Harris, a vice president with little substance, whose foreign policy aligns with global powers at the cost of human rights. On the other, Donald Trump, a man who delivered economically but now brings the baggage of felony convictions and a dangerous authoritarian streak. In both cases, voters are being asked to choose between two evils.

What's the point of voting when it feels like there's no real choice? In theory, suffrage is a right, a chance to select a leader who reflects the values and needs of the people. But increasingly, Americans are asked to pick the "lesser evil"—a decision that feels more like damage control than genuine democracy. What's the use of voting when neither option inspires confidence? When both candidates are deeply flawed, is there really any difference between them?

Take Kamla Harris, for instance. She's been hailed as a trailblazer for women and minorities, but in practice, her tenure has shown little beyond political symbolism. While she's made history, her record speaks volumes about her lack of leadership. On issues like foreign policy, particularly her unyielding support for Israel in the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict, she has sided with global powers rather than human rights. Is this the kind of leader the country needs? One who prioritizes geopolitical maneuvering over the moral consequences of war? It's hard to feel inspired by a politician who seems more concerned with the optics of power than with the substance of change.

And then there's Donald Trump, who, for all his economic achievements, brings a troubling history that can't be ignored. Trump's presidency brought record-low unemployment and tax cuts, but it also fueled division, undermined democratic institutions, and emboldened white nationalist movements. Worse still, he was a convicted felon—a fact that's often glossed over as we debate his potential return to office. For all his claims of being the "law and order" candidate, Trump himself has been convicted of crimes that would disqualify anyone else from holding public office. Yet, here we are, forced to confront the reality that, for many, he remains a viable option. How is it that someone with such a checkered past is still a contender?

When voting becomes an exercise in choosing the least damaging option, it undermines the very idea of democracy. It's a hollow process, one that fails to reflect the true will of the people. Instead of leaders who inspire trust, voters are forced into a corner, where the only option is to accept the lesser evil. But in doing so, we're left with a bitter reality: no matter who wins, the system itself remains broken.

The Scylla and Charybdis dilemma of the ancient world is alive and well in 2024. We're stuck, navigating a storm of political failure, and in the end, no matter which way we turn, it seems we're all headed for disaster.



▶ **fractured verse**

Politics: The New Retirement Plan

by Carmelli YBANEZ

In shading a ballot lies the quiet yet profound power in shaping a nation's future and defining its democracy. What may seem like a high school multiple-choice questionnaire is, in fact, the ultimate decision-maker that charts the trajectory of a nation.

May 12, 2025, is the day that everyone devotes their time to the midterm election, where all seats for the Senate will be contested. And said seats are set to be sat on, not by worthy politicians-to-be, but by 11 famous entertainment and sports personalities.

They have apparently decided it's time to set aside their celebrity careers to graciously serve the country through the noble art of politics. Logical move if you ask me, to dive headfirst into politics right after showbiz or sports.

Six of the 11 are television entertainers, namely Robin Padilla, Vicente Sotto, Willie Revillame, Ramon Revilla, Jinggoy Estrada, and Lito Lapid. One is a sports personality, Manny Pacquiao, and seven are part of political dynasties, specifically Raffy Tulfo, Erwin Tulfo, Ben Tulfo, Jinggoy Estrada, Ramon Revilla, Maria Imelda Marcos, and

Lito Lapid.

It's disheartening to see that political candidacies are slowly getting infiltrated by people who think several years in the entertainment industry magically qualify them to govern. How could they think so shallowly and belittle politics, treating it as their retirement plan?

According to the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ), seven additional celebrities are on track to secure senate seats, assuming the current pre-election surveys hold true until the 2025 election. When did we collectively start thinking that people wearing a famous name would be our choice of leaders?

I am a student who has religiously memorized Philippine history by heart and past struggles that shaped our country today. What a blatant insult all this is to our hard-fought democracy. How we allow

all of this to unfold right in front of us, right in our very hands.

It is frustrating to sit and watch all this happen while all I can do is allow my pen to bleed and write columns such as this in hopes of being heard, wishing for a better country.

If all it takes is a shiny name and face, politics will seriously be a convenient retirement plan for personalities. However, it certainly would not be convenient for us, the citizens, to be led by individuals unqualified for the role. Job experience and competence have become underrated qualifications these days. If this goes downhill, we have no one to blame but ourselves, leaving us burdened with regret.

Each shade on a ballot carries the weight of our future. Ask yourself, "What kind of leaders do I truly want?"

▶ **commentaries**

Insight Tales

The Department of Education (DepEd) has been striving for inclusive education, ensuring equal learning opportunities. However, limited government support has hindered its implementation, especially in Special Needs Education (SNED). Recognizing its importance, the academe advocates for curriculum improvements to better support SNED learners.

“ SNED education offers hope by providing opportunities and a sense of belonging for children with disabilities. It helps them reach their potential academically, socially, and emotionally. Despite challenges, it remains a beacon of hope for parents, fostering growth and values in their children.

– Reno Camporedondo, Grade 11 student

“ I definitely think it is effective as a mother of a SNED student. My daughter often slapped and screamed at her “ates” during her meltdowns. However, after enrolling her into class, it has become rare for her to do these things. It takes time, but it was worth it knowing that not only can she regulate her actions, but also her emotions.

– Amor P. Pantuan, mother

“ Special education is effective when individualized programs (IEPs) and proper supports are in place. It promotes equity, but limited resources can make it challenging. Collaboration among stakeholders is key to its success. While SNED has strengths, its impact depends on ongoing improvement and commitment to equity.

– Marilyn Jane G. Calungsod, SNED educator



by Lorraine CABALLES

LGBTQ

Loudly Gratified But Threatened Quietly

by Uriel AGUILAR

A he beat of drums and resplendent hues filled the streets of Mandaue, yet amid the vociferous march, Reg Lyn Agbay Bihag couldn't shake off a troubling reality that reverberated from within. As president of the Kaabag LGBTQ+ Federation, he is privy to the struggles of his fellow LGBTQ+ members—not just against societal discrimination but also against each other. "Some may come off as jokes or 'binayot,' but others get hurt," he said. The irony stung. A community built on love and acceptance still harbored wounds inflicted by its own members.

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE

Despite decades of fighting for equality, members of the LGBTQIA+ community continue to face discrimination—not only from outsiders but from within their own circles. On Saturday, June 15, 2024, Bihag joined the Mandaue Pride March alongside 57 organizations and barangays to call for change. The march, led by the Kaabag LGBTQIA+ Federation and the Mandaue Investment Promotions Tourism Action Center, was not just a celebration but a reminder that discrimination can exist even in unexpected places.

The LGBTQIA+ acronym—standing for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer—encompasses diverse identities. However, acceptance within the community itself remains a wound difficult to heal. Bihag emphasized the importance of unity, stating, "Everyone, including members of the LGBTQIA+, should have the opportunity to live free without the fear of discrimination and denial."

FROM HIDDEN STRUGGLES TO PUBLIC MOVEMENTS

The issue of internal discrimination is not new. Historically, LGBTQIA+ individuals have fought for recognition, legal protection, and acceptance. However, biases based on sexual orientation, gender identity or expression (SOGIE) have long simmered beneath the surface.

In the Philippines, progress has been made through local ordinances like Mandaue City's Anti-Discriminatory Ordinance for People of Diverse SOGIE. Yet, policies alone cannot heal divisions prompted by the community per se. Change must begin from within.

A NATIONWIDE STIGMA

While Mandaue takes steps to address discrimination, the issue is not confined to one city. Across the Philippines, LGBTQ+ individuals still face judgment based on stereotypes and hierarchies. Brent Esarzá, an employee at Innodata Knowledge Services, emphasized the importance of events like the Pride March, saying, "These advocate for equal rights and push for greater acceptance in the Filipino community."

A FUTURE OF TRUE INCLUSIVITY

The challenge now is ensuring that LGBTQ+ spaces are genuinely inclusive. If internal discrimination persists, how can the fight for broader societal acceptance be won? Community leaders like Bihag are on a relentless mission to continue to push for open discussions, urging members to uplift one another instead of tearing each other down.

The rise of LGBTQ+ representation in media, politics, and businesses shows progress, but true equality starts with self-awareness. By addressing biases within the community, members can build a stronger foundation for advocacy and support.

THE FIGHT CONTINUES

As the streets of Mandaue return to their daily rhythm, the echoes of Pride remain. The movement is not just about parades and celebrations—it is about creating safe spaces in a world that often feels uninhabitable.

The question remains: How can a community demand respect from the world if it struggles to respect itself? Bihag's message is clear. As the LGBTQ+ movement pushes forward, true progress lies not just in policies or public acceptance but in genuine unity among its members. Only then can the fight for equality be truly won.



by Marian BACOCANAG

by Gazelle CHUA

PRIDE! MARCH
MANDAUE 2024

4000 ESTIMATED PARTICIPANTS
57 ORGANIZATIONS

SOURCE: SUNSTAR CEBU (2024)

by Aizen BACAYAN

Distance from certain areas of Cebu to Carbon



ATO NI

CEBU BAY (BITE)

by Pavy **CARINO**, Paolo **EAMIGUEL**, Aisley **ALCUINO**, Sakura **DELA RAYA**

I venture through the streets of Cebu, under the heat of the Philippine sun and the joyful warmth of the Filipinos. I have visited historical landmarks, places I have seen on the internet, and activities I have always wanted to try. But the Queen City of the South is not just meant to be explored; it has to be tasted.

When sightseeing the beautiful and modern-day structures of Cebu, the city's local tastes surely cannot go unnoticed. The inviting aroma of the dishes brings you to a diverse festival of flavors, showcasing the culture of Cebu. With different refreshments and delicacies lined up waiting for you, the city attracts more and more to visit and feast on Cebuano cuisine.

Touring Cebu, the living cookbook, where every diner has its own story, we delve deep into the dishes made by Cebuanos, especially for you. Walking in the bustling streets as jeepneys pass by, I witness a sense of culture as the inviting scent of the abundant amount of food awaits me from across the road. That was when I decided my well-planned road trip was about to become a spontaneous food trip.

The city's market is a go-to for finding authentic dishes, the perfect start to this spontaneous trip. The streets are lined by colorful stalls and restaurants looking to fill up your appetite to the brim. The cheerful, hospitable vendors of the market are well-experienced and genuine—having tendered their skills in cooking for decades, aiming to perfect their craft.

First stop—"Balbacua," a Filipino beef stew, feasts my taste buds with a collagen-rich and savory flavor. Waiting an adequate amount of time before the dish was prepared, my eyes wandered upon its orange color as it was served. The color adds to its colorful visuals, making it tastier. Truly being a Cebuano staple, some businesses in the food industry add peanut butter, enhancing its taste while adding sweetness and flavor. Sold along the streets of the Cebu Carbon Market, this dish offers an affordable and fulfilling experience. This Visayan comfort food is perfect for days that feel like missing home.

Next on this succulent journey is "Bakasi," a sweet and sour stew known for its main ingredient most wouldn't expect—small, baby eels. This delicious dish is then topped off with 'kamunggay,' tomatoes, onions, and salt to complete the palette. Bakasi is indeed an adventurous dish. The eels are truly a special part, as they are harvested from the nearby town of Cordova before they sail their way to Cebu's Carbon Market to indulge our cravings. An exotic delicacy, it is one to try for those who are adventurous enough.

Another one to cross off the list—"Kinhason," a rich soup brimming with clams. Freshly harvested from the salty seas, the clams, usually mixed with seasonings such as garlic and tomatoes, slowly open ajar as they are brought to a boil, completing the stew and releasing its underlying taste. As I sip down the broth, I recall the city's warmth, the shells a reminder of the vast seas around the island. Coming in all flavors and aromas, every street-side restaurant has its own distinct stew of colorful shells. It is a must-try to look out for when roaming the streets of Cebu.

Now with my hunger quenched and my desires satisfied, I look back on the day trip to the vibrant Carbon Market. From savory seafood on one corner to a set of iconic delicacies on the next, I began to appreciate what the city has to offer. The city's bustling downtown area shows visitors the best of the best, truly a centerpiece of the city.

The Queen City of the South rightfully claims its crown, not only for its rich history but also for its expansive cuisine. Triumph over your hunger in the heart of Visayas. It is a bustling city with a flooding river lined with dishes and a welcoming festive atmosphere and culture. Welcome to a festival of flavor that leads you to a culinary adventure

exhibiting the unique Cebuano culture. Each diverse meal taken is a quest of its own, attracting thousands of hungry taste buds across the world.

the residents— find themselves caught in the undertow. Twelve days of struggle, of navigating through a labyrinth of congestion, await them.

Commuters bear the brunt. Their daily routines intersect with the Palarong Pambansa chaos. The bus driver inching forward, the student clutching textbooks, the weary office worker—all share the same

asphalt canvas. Their patience wears thin as minutes stretch into hours. This segways into the question: is Cebu City ready? The answer reverberates through the honking horns and stalled engines. No, not if every resident clasps their hands in prayer, hoping to escape the clutches of standstill traffic. The city's arteries strain, its pulse erratic. The Palarong Pambansa is not just a celebration, but is also a test of our resilience.

Governments, take heed. Beyond medals and records, prioritize accessibility. Not just for the athletes, but for the everyday heroes—the parents rushing to work, the vendors peddling their wares, the elderly seeking solace. Invest in more efficient transport systems, widen the lanes of possibility, and ensure that Cebu City thrives without suffocating.

by Mary **INOCIAN**

LABANGON TO CARBON MARKET: 2.8 km

GUADALUPE TO CARBON MARKET: 5.2 km

LAHUG TO CARBON MARKET: 6.2 km

BUSAY TO CARBON MARKET: 11.1 km

How far is Carbon Market from the different areas in Cebu?



by Melannie **CORONAS**

by Aldrom **ARCILLA**

Sinug

THE FLOW OF FAITH AND TRADITION

by Shamira VELOS

Have you ever wondered why a festival renowned for its vibrant, pulsating energy in the hearts of streets draws its name from the gentle sway of water currents?

The term “Sinulog” itself whispers a secret. Derived from the word Sinug, which describes the rhythmic movement of water, Sinulog offers a metaphorical link to life itself—flowing, vital, and deeply rooted in the community’s identity. While Sinug often evokes the iconic “two steps forward, one step backward” dance performed near churches and streets, it also mirrors the tide of history—the ever-dynamic flow of time and how it has shaped our religious culture.

As the third Sunday of January approaches each year, excitement thunders across the island for the Fluvial Procession - a grand spectacle that is more than a procession. It is a vivid reenactment that transports participants and spectators alike back to the moment Ferdinand Magellan and his crew stepped onto Philippine shores. It serves as a tribute to the pivotal event that made the Philippines a predominantly Christian nation.

Beyond its historical significance lies a more profound meaning woven into the tapestry of the Fluvial Procession. The people’s unwavering commitment reveals the true spiritual essence. With each cheer, each shout of praise, and each word dedicated to Señor Santo Niño, the event transforms into a powerful expression of faith, culture, and heritage.

Lyra Malaki, a Scihiyista who has witnessed the event in its raw, magnificent glory, shared that the Fluvial Procession gives her a chance to reflect on her faith and give thanks for all the blessings in her life. It also deepens her bond with Santo Niño and her spirituality.

The magic of Sinulog lies not merely in its historical roots but in its enduring spirit. It becomes a bridge connecting the physical and spiritual, the past and present. It’s a reminder that faith, much like water, has the power to nourish, transform, and sustain life. So the next time we witness Señor Santo Niño grace our seas again, let it serve as a powerful call to embrace the enduring significance of our faith and



by Mary ATWEL

the unity it inspires.

Hello, World:

HOW A THESIS PROJECT BECAME A NATIONAL SENSATION

by Sakura DELA RAYA

Time ticked fast as I stared cluelessly at my computer screen. The word problem was written so simply, yet when I attempted to solve it, I was greeted with a Code Syntax Error. My brain went haywire. My heart beat faster. My vision started to blur. I couldn’t figure out where my solution went wrong. It was too long and detailed—I couldn’t finish in time!

And then, it happened. My heart dropped. Written on the screen was red, telling me that I had failed another coding test. I sighed, feeling discouraged. Will I ever get better at this?

What had first started as a thesis project back in college, Jude Maranga, a SciHi alumnus of Batch 2014, saw potential in his craft. A Bachelor of Science in Computer Science graduate, he explored the world of computer programming and realized that his work was not just something you submit for the grade. It had a future—one that was beyond its wildest dreams. Soon, that thesis project became known among universities nationwide and is called, CodeChum.

In high school, Maranga had never thought of starting a company. But, he had a goal—a bold one. Before reaching his third year in college, he would be starting to earn money and at least Php 250,000 per month. For the first part, he was able to achieve this by working as a freelance web developer. In the second part, he knew he couldn’t attain that if he were only to stick with a 9-5 corporate job. He knew deep down he wanted something different.

CodeChum was not something that became a success overnight. Maranga’s thesis-turned-company website almost did not see daylight as funds were low and employers’ salaries were not met. However, this did not stop Maranga from giving up. He persevered, and through this, he and his team were able to gain the money

they needed to continue with their start-up company.

After a tough beginning, CodeChum started to gain recognition locally. Introduced to schools like his alma mater and Philippine Science High School, the website became a learning platform for computer programming. With its instant feedback feature, students have engaged with the site more often, solving countless problems and understanding where they went wrong. Now, not only is it accessible to Cebuano schools, but it has also partnered with universities and colleges nationally.

Looking ahead, Maranga plans on launching new products that are not limited to programming, helping others unlock their full potential. He sees CodeChum will not only be known as a coding website but also one of the most successful Cebuano tech setups in the country.

After a week, during our Computer Programming class, I was ready for our next test. I did not just know it; I felt it. As I sat in front of my computer, I typed and coded with ease. As others were struggling, I simply felt like I was having a stroll in the park. With the new profound skills I have gained, I had an epiphany.

“Hello, world!” This class may not have been my favorite but I think I would be seeing more of this in a few years.



by Dea TIONG, Mary INOCIAN

Balik Batik:

HOW FILIPINO HERITAGE CAN BE WORN, NOT JUST DISPLAYED

by Maegan PACOLI, Shamira VELOS

The rhythmic hum of sewing machines melds with the faint chatter of artisans, their hands performing a delicate ballet over vibrant weaves. The air is imbued with the rich aroma of freshly brewed coffee and the crisp scent of newly pressed fabric—this is the world of Veronica Baguio.

Once a SciHi alumna, now the illustrious founder of Balik Batik, she has ingeniously threaded Filipino heritage into every stitch.

But how did a psychology major emerge as a formidable champion against fast fashion while simultaneously fostering cultural pride?

The spark came during Veronica’s business trip to Mindanao. While casually wandering through a bustling local market, she spotted a T’boli-embroidered jacket that stopped her. “Pasa-buy, anyone?” She exclaimed, snapping a photo and sharing it on social media. What followed was nothing short of a digital wildfire. A cheeky tweet—“Pasa-buy, anyone?”—was all it took to unleash a flood of messages from strangers eager to jump on the cultural fashion train.

“Who knew so many people were desperate for culture-meets-modernity?” Veronica chuckles, still amazed by the unexpected response. She may not have known of it then, but that one viral moment sparked more than just mere excitement; it sparked an epiphany.

This unexpected demand for authentic, culturally rich clothing fueled something from within her. There was a hunger for wearable heritage, and she could be the one to feed it. And just like that, Balik Batik was born—an idea to seamlessly blend traditional Filipino craftsmanship with modern fashion, making heritage both stylish and accessible.

In an industry full of treacherous hurdles and heaps of fellow competitors, ‘Balik Batik’ has distinguished itself by prioritizing more than just aesthetically pleasing designs. Beyond the company’s ingenuity lies how ‘Balik Batik’ thrives on the philosophy of steady, high-quality craftsmanship.

“These aren’t just clothes,” Veronica emphasizes. She believes they are living narratives. Balik Batik’s mission is to reimagine tradition for modern life. The brand’s success proves that cultural pride can be fashionable, accessible, and sustainable. Veronica added, “Through our clothing line, we like to educate people on slow fashion, sustainable, and responsible consumerism.”

This company makes more than just clothes. It weaves and sews connections between local artisans all across the country, all while celebrating unique craftsmanship with the showcasing of indigenous groups.

As the sewing machines harmonize as one and the kaleidoscope of heritage-rich fabrics comes to life, Veronica remains resolute in her mission: to offer not just garments, but the rich, living essence of Filipino culture. With each carefully crafted piece, Balik Batik tells a story, blending history with modernity in a seamless dance of design.



Barking Up the Right Tree:

The Fight Against Parasites

by Arabella CAJILIG

Sometimes, it starts with three high school students, a good question, and a whole lot of determination.

If you think science fairs are just about volcano models and electric circuits, think again. Three high school students from Cebu City National Science High School have shaken up the global stage with a groundbreaking discovery—armed with curiosity and the bark of a chico tree, they have uncovered a natural solution that could transform livestock health.

Livestock farming is at a crossroads. Strongyle parasites, tiny but devastating foes, are wreaking havoc on ruminants, leading to stunted growth, decreased productivity, and mounting financial losses for farmers. Worse yet, years of reliance on synthetic dewormers have fueled a growing crisis: anthelmintic resistance. These once-powerful drugs are losing their edge, leaving farmers scrambling for alternatives. Enter Michaela Rentuza, Mikaella Macabata, and Wesly Secuya—three high school researchers who dared to ask: Could nature hold the answer?

Their study, “In silico and in vitro evaluation of embryogenesis inhibition activity of ethanolic extracts of Chico bark against gastrointestinal strongyle eggs,” did not just earn them the 4th grand prize in the Cellular and Molecular Biology category at the 2024 Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF). It also thrust them into the global spotlight as pioneers of a potential breakthrough.

What began as a 10th-grade research project for their school’s science fair has blossomed into an internationally recognized breakthrough. Initially, they were drawn to the topic simply because it sounded unique. But when they spoke with farmers and veterinarians in Cebu, they realized the urgency of the problem—parasites weren’t just a nuisance; they were a full-blown crisis, leading to sickly animals and crippling financial losses.

The team took a two-step approach. First, they used a computer simulation to see if chico bark’s natural compounds—called tannins—could block key proteins that parasites need to grow. The virtual results looked promising, so they moved on to real-life experiments.

Next, they tested the chico bark extract on actual parasite eggs. The results were astonishing: at higher doses, over 90% of the eggs failed to hatch—on par with commercial dewormers. In short, Chico bark was swiftly proving its mettle as a formidable, natural parasite deterrent.

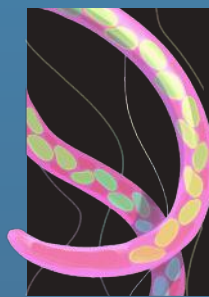
So what makes chico bark effective? The secret lies in its tannins, bioactive compounds known for their antiparasitic properties. They work by binding to proteins in the parasite’s body, interfering with their growth and development. The team employed a computational simulation to predict how these compounds interact with the proteins called tubulin alpha-1b, a protein crucial for developing strongyle eggs. The results showed that tannins from chico bark have a high binding affinity to this protein, effectively disabling it.

To confirm these findings, the researchers conducted in vitro experiments or tests done in a controlled lab environment. They tested the ethanolic extract of chico bark at varying concentrations on strongyle eggs collected from goat feces with distilled water and ethanol serving negative controls and water-soluble ivermectin, an antiparasitic drug, as the positive control. Over a 24-hour period, they found that at the highest concentration of chico bark extract stopped 90.06% of the eggs from hatching, matching the efficacy rate of commercial synthetic dewormers.

As parasites continue to develop resistance to synthetic drugs, farmers are left scrambling for alternatives. Chico bark extract could be a game-changer—offering a natural, cost-effective way to keep livestock healthy. Moreover, its plant-based origin aligns with the growing demand for sustainable agricultural practices.

The team’s research has sparked a buzz about future possibilities, including potential live animal trials to see just how well this chico bark extract holds up on the farm, ensuring the extract’s safety and efficacy under real-world farm conditions. Could this high school project evolve into a commercially available, eco-friendly dewormer that transforms the livestock industry? Only time will tell.

The achievements of these student scientists underscore the impact of youth-led scientific inquiry and highlight the potential for local research to address global challenges. They transformed a classroom assignment into an internationally acclaimed breakthrough, demonstrating that with curiosity, perseverance, and rigorous methodology, significant contributions to science and society are within reach.

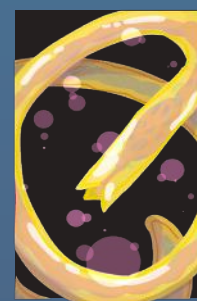
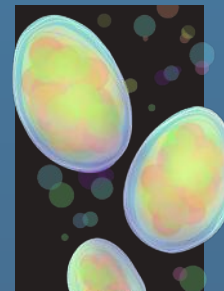


Trichostrongylus

Small intestinal worms causing diarrhea, weight loss, and appetite loss in ruminants. Can also infect humans in poor sanitation areas.

Ostertagia

Infects the abomasum of cattle, leading to weight loss, diarrhea, and poor digestion. A major concern in young cattle.

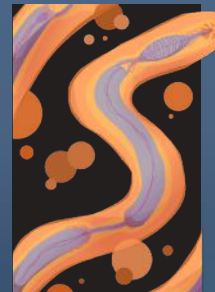


Nematodirus

Affects young lambs, with eggs hatching seasonally. Causes severe diarrhea, dehydration, and stunted growth.

Haemonchus contortus

A blood-sucking parasite in ruminants, causing anemia, weakness, and bottle jaw. Common in warm, humid climates.



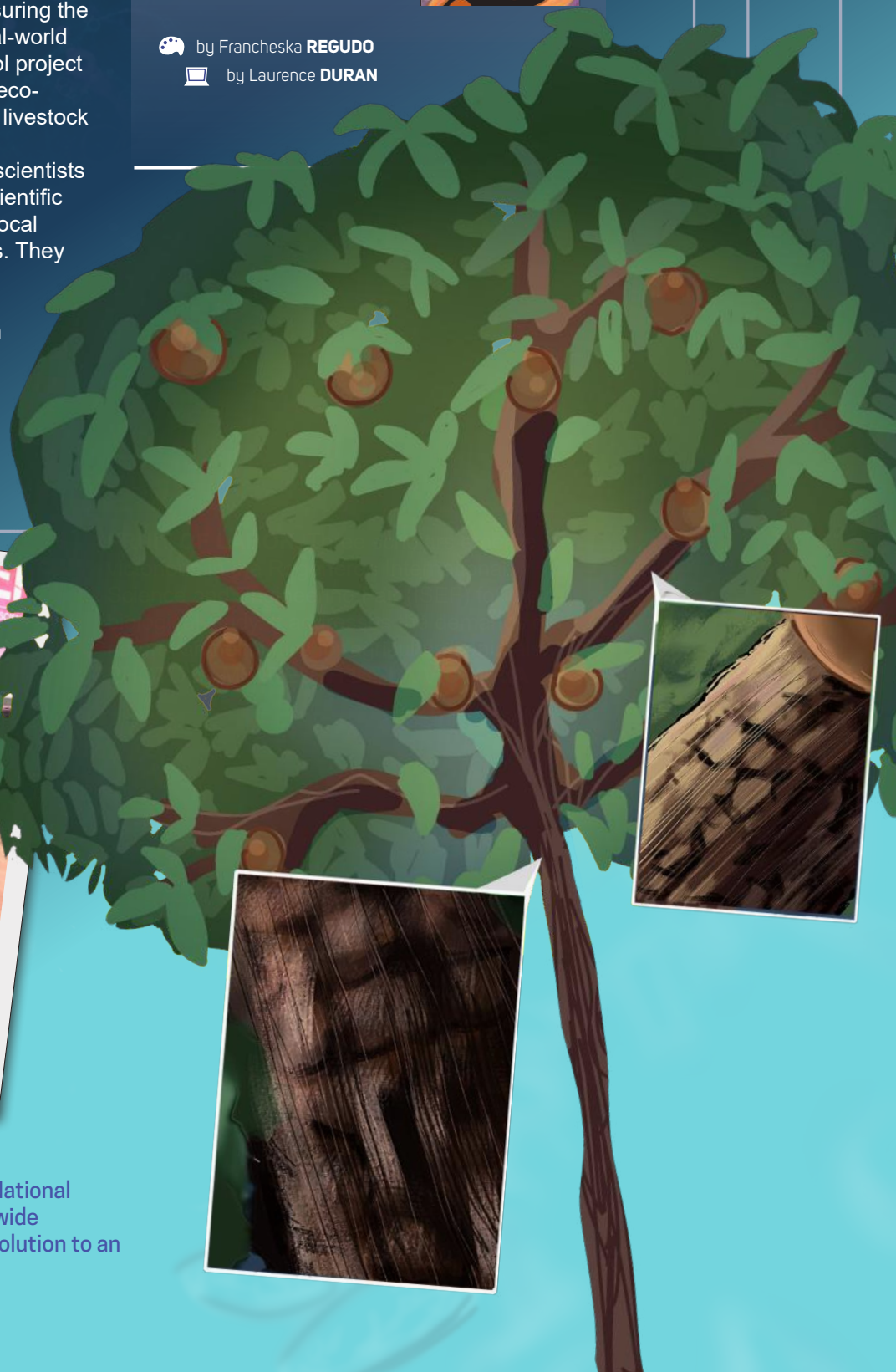
by Francheska REGUDO
by Laurence DURAN



RESEARCH DEFENDED.

Three scholars from Cebu City National Science High School gain worldwide recognition as they unveiled a solution to an agricultural parasitic fight.

by Ms. Reuth DELA VICTORIA



▶ science feature

CODECHUM: Debugging Flaws in Traditional Programming



by Michaela RENTUZA
by Francheska REGUDO

To the typical programming teacher in the late 90s to early 2000s, taking two whole weeks to check and provide feedback on their student's work simply was the norm. For the typical student, downloading a PDF file containing practice problems and inputting their code into local machines was a daily practice. These processes were painstaking for both parties, urging the need for a more seamless platform for learning programming.

Enter CodeChum. This EduTech startup is an educational platform that provides programming exercises, automates the checking of students' code, and gives teachers the ability to monitor students' performance.

I realized that CodeChum had the potential to help develop other programmers as well.

— Jemar Jude Marange,
CodeChum Founder

Starting as a college thesis for the Cebu Institute of Technology-University (CIT-U), founder and CEO Jemar Jude Marange saw the potential in CodeChum to revolutionize the educational and technological space and decided to make it his startup venture after graduating college.

Since then, CodeChum has been used by over 1000 teachers and 14,000 students in 100+ schools in the Philippines. Notable ones include the University of San Carlos (USC), Mindanao State University (MSU), Cebu Technological University (CTU), Philippine Science High School (PSHS), Batangas State University (BSU), and even his high school and college alma maters, Cebu City National Science High School (CCNSHS) and CIT-U, respectively.

So, why do so many institutions trust CodeChum? Built using Python—a versatile and powerful programming language known for its efficiency and robust web framework—and MySQL, a widely trusted database management system (Maranga, 2019). Aside from the backbone of this platform, it also provides a user-centric design and features that make it a favorable option for educators and students alike. At its core, the software contains an Integrated Development Environment (IDE) and a Teacher's Panel, which together work in harmony to create an engaging and efficient learning experience, fostering skill without sacrificing academic success.

The IDE part of the system lets students solve programming problems created by their teachers using the C programming language. It includes features like a problem description, a code editor, a playground to test code, test cases for automatic scoring, and leaderboards to track rankings. The design is similar to competitive coding platforms like HackerRank, providing an interactive and engaging experience for students.

On the other hand, the Teacher's Panel in CodeChum helps instructors monitor their students' progress and manage their classes. It includes tools to create and track courses, design programming problems with test cases, and assign tasks.

CodeChum changes how I teach, allowing me to personalize support for every learner.

— Gran Sabandal,
USC IT Program Coordinator

Teachers can also review detailed student performance, including individual coding attempts, errors, and test case results, making it easier to identify and address learning gaps.

With a 99% annual renewal rate, an 89% recommendation rate, and 40 hours being saved by teachers on checking per month, it is safe to say that CodeChum's impact cannot be understated. It continues to open doors and make programming accessible for learners and teachers all over the nation.

The success story of CodeChum is not just about technological innovation, it is also about addressing a critical need in education. The platform has freed up valuable time for both students and teachers, allowing them to focus on more personalized learning and valuable lessons. CodeChum is set to inspire the next generation of programmers and educators, proving that technology can truly transform the way we learn and teach.

▶ science feature



A Storm-worn Windbreaker

by Arabella CAJILIG

The howling winds of seasonal storms hound Southeast Asia each year. The tropical weather proves merciless, destroying homes, leveling forests, and severely disrupting ecosystems, which are forced to heal from these inflicted wounds. In 2024, four super typhoons made landfall in the Philippines, crashing like waves crashing against the shore. These storms blew away entire villages, destroyed forests, crossed mountains leaving them bare, and caused unprecedented damage, resulting in millions of pesos in losses and countless lives affected, many of whom are still struggling to recover.

Climate change is a dominant factor in how both the climate and weather patterns in the region are intensifying, with stronger storms being recorded every year. The islands of the Philippines and their people, serving as a natural storm barrier to much of coastal Southeast Asia, are particularly affected by these seasonal typhoons. To Filipino families, typhoons, no matter how strong or devastating, are an expected part of life.

The late months of 2024 saw cause for concern, as the Philippines experienced six typhoons almost consecutively. These "typhoons," tropical cyclones formed over water with wind speeds exceeding 33 meters per second, devastated the nation in a matter of weeks. Between late October and early November, four super typhoons simultaneously existed near the Philippines, making landfall. Categorized as level four or five storms, with maximum wind speeds exceeding 185 kilometers per hour (kph), these typhoons demonstrated immense destructive potential. The series began with Typhoon Trami (Kristine) on October 20–25, followed by Typhoon Kong-

Rey (Leon) on October 27–30, Typhoon Yinxing (Marce) on November 5–8, and Typhoon Usagi (Ofel) on November 9–16.

This series of typhoons was deemed an unprecedented season by several international meteorological agencies, including Japan's Meteorological Agency. However, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) disputed these claims, stating that similar phenomena occurred nearly four years prior in 2020. This contradiction highlights differing perspectives between international observers and local experts. Additionally, the World Weather Attribution (WWA) service discovered that warm seas and high humidity, exacerbated by climate change, increased the likelihood of frequent and stronger storms by approximately 25%. Attribution, a rapidly growing field in meteorology, explores climate change's impact on extreme weather events like typhoons. WWA findings indicate that the Pacific Ocean near the Philippines is experiencing a 1.7-fold increase in potential typhoon intensity due to climate change, with maximum wind force estimated

to be 2 meters per second higher than in a pre-climate change scenario. Another factor contributing to the intensification of typhoons is the Kelvin wave, a sizable band of rising air across the ocean, which interacts with warm sea temperatures to trigger more powerful storms.

The latest storm, Typhoon Ofel, rapidly intensified into a super typhoon with winds exceeding 185 kph before making landfall in Baggao, Cagayan, on November 14, 2024. Ofel worsened the damage caused by its predecessors, bringing heavy rains that devastated agriculture and fisheries, further endangering food security.

The damage inflicted on the Philippines and its people underscores the challenges of adapting to back-to-back extreme weather events. The resilience of the islands and their people is being tested by the intensifying effects of climate change. These worsening storms prompt urgent discussions on how to mitigate their impact or begin gradual recovery efforts. While the Philippines serves as Southeast Asia's storm barrier today, these intensifying weather patterns are a stark warning for the rest of the world.

▶ science feature

Hitting All The Right Keys

by Ethan PANILAG,
Raniell TORREON



DIGITAL INNOVATION. Cebu City National Science High School (CCNSHS) has introduced a new club made for aspiring web developers and information technology students. The Coding Technology and Robotics Club or CTRL C has garnered members from both junior high school and senior high school. PHOTO BY HAILEY TOLentino

Cebu City National Science High School (CCNSHS) always took pride in its STEM course. Clubs were created as outlets for students interested in these fields, and as the new school year begins, a fresh focus where everything is just a keypress away enters the scene.

Earlier this year, the Korea Advanced Institute of Science & Technology (KAIST) came to CCNSHS for a collaborative effort to expose technology to its Grade 11 students. Though this visit lasted only 2 weeks, they left behind a token of goodwill in the form of new laptops and gadgets.

With these newfound capabilities, Deanne Flores of Grade 12-Leibniz took the flag and made a leap. She led the formation of CCNSHS's newest club, the CTRL+C.

"The club was founded to create a space and build a community where CCNSHS students can enhance their ICT-related skills, including, but not limited to, programming, robotics, and graphic or video design," Flores commented on her motivations for the club.

But with everything, no man can run a country alone. With her stands her vice chancellor, Laurence Duran, and the rest of her cabinet. Not only that, but also as an innovation of the structure itself, the club itself was broken into committees.

Each committee is dedicated to its own field of

expertise and its own projects.

In programming, there's an upcoming game development seminar, which will have a game jam to match that will help members learn how to create their own games.

As for robotics, the club is hoping to explore the leftover machines provided by KAIST.

Finally, most of the club members, particularly the web development team, are focused on "revamping" the CCNSHS website. The club's goal is to have a new, updated, and consistently managed official school website by the end of the year. One that is made for the Schiyyistas, by Schiyyistas.

As the new year unfolds, the students of CCNSHS find themselves on the brink of a digital revolution, where every problem has a shortcut and every innovation is at the touch of a button. With the launch of the CTRL+C club, the future of technology has never seemed closer—proving that sometimes, the simplest solutions are just a keystroke away. And who knows? Maybe the next big breakthrough is already sitting in their clipboard.

▶ by the

NUMBERS:

by Laurence DURAN

by Mary INOCIAN

OF THE PH'S

57% ARE

SMALL-SCALE FARMERS

SOURCE: Agaton and Guno (2024)

► nova paradox



Cultivating Curiosity

by Jaeda GUINANOY

Research has been steadily improving in the Philippines as of recently, thanks in part to the Philippine Commission on Higher Education (CHED). Many schools, such as Cebu City National Science High School, have been implementing more research-based projects and assignments into the curriculum, helping us spark a new flame for learning. This shift towards research-driven education not only enhances our academic experience but also sparks intellectual curiosity and cultivates critical thinking skills.

While I find that conducting research can sometimes be stressful, I also find it incredibly rewarding. As students of a science-focused school, we have a unique opportunity to engage in research that expands our understanding of the world around us. To us, research should be an enjoyable process to satisfy our hunger for knowledge.

However, compared to most ASEAN countries, our research productivity is still low. But I believe that if we push for more student engagement in research activities, we can foster a sense of learning and innovation amongst students like ourselves. I believe that fostering a stronger research culture among students can significantly improve our situation. By actively engaging in research projects, we can create a deeper understanding of scientific principles, develop essential research skills, and experience the thrill of discovery firsthand.

Research has always been important to us as students; we use research in our day-to-day activities. We can apply this research in simple ways like outreaches, solving problems within our communities, and more.

But this cannot happen through institutions alone. We as students need to start advocating for more research opportunities in our schools so we can contribute to improving research in the Philippines. Actively finding ways to contribute to research, participating in science fairs and workshops, as well as engaging in seminars about research can help us contribute to the culture surrounding research as a whole.

Ultimately, the progress of research in our nation depends on us. By embracing research's importance in our development, we push for a brighter future in scientific and technological fields. Let us take this opportunity to contribute to a brighter future for Philippine science, one research project at a time.

by Dea TIONG

by Laurence DURAN

L.A. WILDFIRES

- est. \$20B in DAMAGES
- 200,00 EVACUATED
- 40,588 acres LOST

Infernos Blazing Through L.A.

by Julien NOEL

On January 7, 2025, the skies over Los Angeles, California, turned an ominous shade of orange as a series of catastrophic wildfires erupted, consuming entire neighborhoods and forcing thousands of residents to flee their homes. What began as a seemingly ordinary day quickly descended into chaos, as three major wildfires: Palisades, Eaton, and Hughes, raged across the county, leaving devastation in their wake.

The Palisades fire, the largest and most destructive of the three, ignited in the area of Palisades, just west of downtown Los Angeles. What started as a small bushfire quickly spiraled out of control, fueled by the dry land and strong winds. Within days, the fire had grown to over 23,000 acres, reducing more than 6,800 structures to ash. Entire neighborhoods were wiped out, leaving behind nothing but the remains of structures.

Not far behind, the Eaton fire erupted just hours later, tearing through the dense forests north of downtown L.A. This fire, which grew to 14,000 acres, proved especially destructive, damaging or destroying over 9,400 structures. Meanwhile, the Hughes fire, which ignited a day later in the northern part of L.A. County rapidly expanded to 10,000 acres before firefighters managed to contain 90% of it within three days—a rare sight of hope in an otherwise dire situation.

More than 200,000 residents were forced to evacuate, many with nothing but the clothes on their backs as the wildfires engulfed homes, businesses, and communities in a matter of hours and days. The economic impact is equally

alarming, with initial estimates placing damages at nearly \$20 billion (around Php 1 trillion) in damages and economic losses that could reach \$50 billion (around Php 3 trillion). This financial burden will weigh heavily on the county of L.A. for years to come, highlighting the severe consequences of catastrophic events such as this one.

There has yet to be an official cause of the fires to be reported, however, the weather conditions throughout the region may have been a catalyst to its wide spreading—the combination of drought-like conditions, less than 10% rainfall since October 1, and powerful offshore winds has all increased the risk of a fire spreading.

Breaking this cycle of destruction starts at every level, from each individual to international policies. Reducing carbon emissions, transitioning to renewable energy sources, and implementing sustainable land management practices should be implemented to better prevent disasters.

Each individual can make small but meaningful changes to make an impact. More sustainable practices like recycling and choosing eco-

friendly alternatives are steps everyone can take. Communities also have the opportunity to play this vital role, by encouraging advocacy for climate awareness, green spaces, and promoting climate action. Initiatives that start from the individual have proven to be powerful forces for change, and this collective effort can better push for a change in society.

On a larger scale, governments and corporations alike must take action to address climate change. This means setting stricter regulations, investment into renewable energy infrastructure, and international cooperation. Every nation is susceptible to climate change, since it is not bound by borders. Agreements like the Paris Accord should be pushed more, as well as support to developing countries who are vulnerable to climate-related disasters. Only through a unified, global effort can we hope to mitigate the escalating threats posed by a warming planet.

For the residents of Los Angeles, the scars of this disaster will linger for years to come. But for the rest of the world, the message is clear: The time to act on climate change is now, before the next inferno strikes.

► science feature



FARMING SOLUTIONS. Three scholars address the issue of the lack of farming technology for small-scale farmers. With precision and determination, they create a prototype that makes the perfect mixture to fertilize agricultural crops. PHOTO BY WISHA TAN

Naturally, Precisely, Yours Kinetically,

by Venice BABAO

For years, farming technology has mostly focused on large commercial farms, leaving small-scale farmers at a disadvantage. This has become the norm in the industry, but it raises an important question: How can we use innovation to help smaller farmers thrive?

Martina Lourdes Balmeo, A'en Marco Enriquez, and Gian Kyle Laurito—all Grade 11 students of Cebu City National Science High School (CCNSHS)—enforced a prototype that aims to tailor NPK mixtures for individual plants. Through this, a particular mixture needed for each plant is being produced. But the question is, how?

Their solution lies in combining technology and precision. The team's prototype begins by analyzing the soil's current nutrient content using an NPK sensor, which detects the levels of nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium present in the soil, identifying what's lacking. Next, the system cross-references this data with an NPK requirement chart from the Department of Agriculture to determine the ideal nutrient balance for the specific plant being grown. Once the nutrient requirements are calculated, the system takes it a step further. Unlike existing fertigation systems that rely

on premixed solutions, their prototype uses individual sources of N, P, and K. This allows the system to create a custom fertilizer mixture on the spot, tailored to the plant's exact needs. With just a few inputs from the farmer—such as the type of plant and the area to be fertilized—the system automates the entire process, ensuring both accuracy and efficiency.

"In the particular lies the universal." By addressing the unique requirements of each plant, the study was able to propose adaptable solutions to the problems involving large-scale and small-scale farming. The "particular" (referencing the specific mixture of the plant) leads to the "universal" (a more innovative method of solving this dilemma). This approach could be a game-changer for farmers worldwide. This mechanism of a tailored solution showed how even the most specific innovations can have far-reaching impacts in transforming agriculture as a whole.

► science news

Cebu City SciHi rises in Astronomy Quiz Bowl 2024

by Westly SECUYA

In the recent intellectual tilt, Cebu City National Science High School (CCNSHS) clinched second place in the Astronomy Quiz Bowl 2024, held at Rigney Hall in the University of San Carlos - Talamban Campus on October 24, 2024.

Featuring the brightest minds from 13 schools across Cebu, CCNSHS was represented by Grade 12 scholars Jabez De La Victoria, Krystoff Arth Midel, and Rainier Joseph Quiñones, along with their coach, Mr. Melchizedeck Rudinas.

The event kicked off with an elimination round that tested participants with 30 questions divided into easy, average, and difficult sections. As concepts became progressively harder, the team from CCNSHS navigated through the elimination rounds and ranked second, with 65 points, earning them a spot in the final round.

The final Lightning Round then commenced with the top four teams starting with 100 points, where a wrong answer led to a steep 15-point deduction. The addition of unique "gambits" added a strategic twist, giving teams the power to impact the points of their competitors.

The CCNSHS team expertly navigated these new mechanics, balancing careful gambit use with quick calculations, which allowed them to hold onto second place with -68.25 points, even as the competition escalated.

Sacred Heart School - Ateneo de Cebu (SHS-AdC) claimed the top spot with an impressive 170 points, followed by CCNSHS with -68.25 points and Cebu Institute of Technology - University securing third with -145 points.

De La Victoria shared his thoughts on the event, saying, "It was very fun and enjoyable, and we actually learned a lot of new things from the questions. We worked hard and got through the elimination round and the lightning round despite the challenges."

Though they finished just behind SHS-AdC, the event proved to be an invaluable learning experience for the CCNSHS team, highlighting the strength of Cebu City National Science High School's academic program and dedication to scientific intellect.

57%

AGRI. SECTOR

WHO STILL USE

TRADITIONAL FARMING TECHNIQUES

sports news

SciHi's Scrabble prodigy shines against Asia's best word wizards

by France ESCOPETE

CEBU CITY, Philippines—Lord Garnett Talisic, Cebu City National Science High School's scrabble prodigy, showcased his prowess in the Asia Cup Youth Scrabble Championship held on November 10-12, 2024, in New Delhi, India, finishing 8th overall in the youth division against some of Asia's best word wizards.

Talisic shared in an interview that he occasionally plays Scrabble on an online platform to sharpen his mind and to not forget both the playstyles and strategies.

Whenever a major tournament draws near, Talisic consults and trains with the best scrabblers in Cebu, like Lear Jet Dela Cruz, who has mentored him ever since he entered the international scrabble scene.

"The competition was fierce," Talisic admitted, describing the intense atmosphere of competing against top players from across Asia, all aiming for a coveted top-10 finish.

However, his journey to success was not without challenges. Talisic faced e-visa complications upon arriving in India, making him lose two games by default, putting him at an early disadvantage.

Despite the setback, Talisic regained his footing and barely squeezed into the top 10 with a 14-10 record and an impressive +830 spread points.

"My main weakness is the lack of knowledge when it comes to Scrabble words," Talisic said, adding that he plans to study and train harder to turn his weaknesses into strengths.



MASTER OF WORDS. Garnett Talisic proves that challenges are no barrier to success, excelling in extracurriculars and triumphing in international competitions.

by Garnett TALISIC, Loreahna BALLESTEROS



BLOCK TOUCH. The CCNSHS Volleyball boys team showcases resilience and determination as they compete for gold in the 2024 Cebu City Olympics.

by Savannah LLENES

sports analysis

DIG TO UPHOLD SMASH TO STRIKE

by Kiersten SY

As the sound of volleyballs echoed across the court, the Cebu City National Science High School's (CCNSHS) boys' volleyball team entered with determination and confidence, ready to face an intense battle in a court full of smashes and digs in the Cebu City Olympics (CCO) against other Unit Meet champions from Binaliw National High School (BNHS) and Abellana National High School (ANHS). The CCNSHS Team and the competing schools filled the court with cheers as they gave the audience a game of a lifetime, regardless of who brought home the trophy. BNHS and ANHS claimed victory with scores of 2-0. The game was held at the University of Southern Philippines Foundation (USPF) volleyball court on December 13-15, 2024.

The Science High Team consisted of 12 players: namely Harry Eran, Richmond Bacusmo, Shannon Miñoza, Juvani Eñego, Matthew

Dela Cruz, Jess Cabañero, Kent Bacarissas, Gibo Eran, Karol Tesio, Mikhael Garcia, Charlz Camerino, and Bo Bellester.

Led by their exceptional team captain, Harry Eran, a Grade 10 student, the CCNSHS team displayed remarkable power and agility in their matches against BNHS and ANHS, resulting in an intense and nerve-wracking game, showing their might and perseverance to win as a team.

Despite the intensity and tension of the match, BNHS and ANHS brought an equally fierce spirit to the court, pushing themselves harder against their opponents.

During the warm-up sessions, Gibo Eran, the team's setter, showcased a quick attack with Harry Eran, his older brother, and did quick sets with the other players. Early on in the game, Gibo Eran served and got an ace, giving the team an advantage; meanwhile, Camiño, the libero, made sure that he would catch and dive for the ball. The other players, including Dela Cruz and Eñego, displayed their spikes and blocks to overpower the opposing team.

"This is a whole new feeling for us since we are the second team from Science High that made it this far," said team captain Eran. "We took pride in it and knew we had nothing to lose. We do not usually have a prepared plan, but we decide weekly on what skill we will focus on."

Binaliw National High School secured victory in the first-day game against CCNSHS with a set score of 2-0, 23-25, and 22-25 on the first day, and Abellana National High School took another win on the second day game with a set score of 2-0, 18-25, and 22-25.

Charlz Camino, the libero, stated, "I feel regrets for not doing some things that I should have tried in-game, and

"Dive for every ball, fight for every point, and play with heart until the final whistle."

— Harry Eran, CCNSHS Volleyball Team Captain

I feel frustrated because of small and easy mistakes we make, but as a player, I should be mature. Every championship game or just a set we win is already a big achievement to celebrate as a team." The team captain, Harry Eran, added, "We were not able to give it our all due to personal issues, but we knew we could have done better, and we aim to improve much more for the upcoming years."

Though CCNSHS didn't take the win, the three teams delivered breathtaking and nerve-wracking matches for the audience. The Science High team, proud of how far they have come, looks forward to the next challenge.



by Aliyah DELOS SANTOS

by Jamela ALVIOLA

sports editorial

Struggling for Glory

On the international scene, Filipino athletes' potential and desire often shine clearly. However, the stark reality is that many of them succeed in spite of, not as a result of, government backing. A lack of facilities, training, and resources causes dedicated athletes to struggle due to systematic neglect and chronic underfunding.

Consider the path taken by Hidilyn Diaz, the first-ever Olympic gold champion from the Philippines. In spite of her historic Olympic triumph in Tokyo 2020, Diaz disclosed on social media that she had to look for financial assistance while training. The harsh reality for many athletes who, without adequate finance, turn to outside resources or make personal sacrifices in order to fulfill their aspirations was highlighted by her 2019 sponsorship request.

Due to a small budget that is inadequate when compared to neighboring countries, sports development in the Philippines suffers. In 2023, the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC) was given a sports budget of about ₱750 million, which is significantly less than what Thailand and Indonesia give their athletes each year. In comparison, Thailand spent more than ₱2 billion on sports in 2021, while Indonesia spent over ₱1.5 billion. Filipino athletes face disadvantages when competing on the international scene as an effect of this financing disparity.

Poorly maintained facilities, like the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex, which has long-needed improvements, are clear examples of the neglect.

Training in substandard facilities presents difficulties for athletes, which makes preparation even more difficult. Due to a lack of government support, programs designed to identify and develop talent—particularly in rural areas—also suffer, depriving the nation of the chance to develop future champions.

Prominent athletes from the Philippines, such as Asian pole vault record holder EJ Obiena, have publicly voiced their dismay with the lack of continuous support. Obiena and the Philippine Athletics Track and Field Association (PATAFA) had financial issues, which caused funding for his events and training to be delayed. These cases of poor management draw attention to structural problems that extend beyond the budget.

The role that sports play in promoting national pride and solidarity must be acknowledged by the government. Consistent support through appropriate finance and infrastructure is vital, in addition to the financial incentives given to athletes once they win a medal, such as the ₱10 million cash prize granted to Olympic gold medalists. In order to identify young potential early and give them the chance to succeed, grassroots initiatives should be brought back.

Collaboration between the public and private sectors could ease pressing concerns, as demonstrated in the cases of Diaz and Obiena. However, this shouldn't replace the government's obligations to give athletes equitable and regular support. Policies that emphasize transparency, effective budget distribution, and comprehensive sports development programs can help close the gap.

World-class athletes from the Philippines consistently demonstrate their abilities against opponents with greater resources. However, a strong foundation that prepares people for success should characterize their journeys rather than systemic barriers. In addition to acknowledging their accomplishments, the government owes its athletes the means necessary to do so in an ethical and sustainable manner. Only then will the country be able to honor its heroes on and off the global stage.



MAKING WAVES



by Vera CABUSAO

UNYIELDING STRENGTH. SciHi Athlete Veritas Cabusao showcases strength, precision, and power as she conquers the competition with a formidable breaststroke.

Journey from setbacks to swimming glory at just 13

by Mia TARIMAN

At just 13 years old, Cebu City National Science High School (CCNSHS) student Veritas Cabusao has already demonstrated remarkable resilience and dedication in competitive swimming. Her journey in the sport has been a testament to perseverance, overcoming setbacks, and celebrating triumphs.

Cabusao's swimming journey began with learning the basics in 2018 when she was just six years old. Her love for swimming was clear from the start, but her progress was put on hold when the COVID-19 pandemic interrupted her training. Despite the interruption, she resumed training four years later.

In 2022, Cabusao began training under Coach Rolando Alvarez, who played a significant role in her development as a competitive swimmer. "I had to go back from the start and relearn swimming," she remembers her early days back in the pool. That year was supposed to mark her first competition, the Sandugo Meet, but tragedy struck with the passing of Coach Alvarez. However, Cabusao's determination remained. Cabusao honored her late coach's legacy by competing in the Silliman University Invitational Swim Meet, where she secured her very first medal—silver.

She found a new mentor in Coach Karen Indaya, whose guidance has been essential in her development. Under Coach Indaya's expert guidance, her swimming career grew rapidly. In 2023, she earned her first gold medal at the Ateneo de Cebu Invitational Swim Meet. From there on, she continued to excel and secured seven gold and eight silver medals at the MMIS Invitational Swim Meet in 2024.

These victories showcased her growth, skill, and dedication to her swimming career, leading her to her most recent competition, the Cebu City Olympics (CCO) held last December 2024, where she competed in the Secondary Girls 100-Meter Freestyle event. Although Cabusao finished 10th and did not win any medal, she showed resilience and learned from the experience to improve. "I fell short and didn't win a medal," she admitted.

Veritas Cabusao is a young rising star in the world of competitive swimming. Her journey highlights the importance of persistence, adaptability, and commitment to growth. From relearning the basics of swimming to winning awards with the help of two great coaches, Cabusao has shown that challenges can lead to success. With her talent and determination, this is just the start of her amazing journey.

by Ralph BORBON by Mary INOCIAN



Scholars' Voice dives into the world of eSports, surveying 121 students from Cebu City National Science High School on their preferred games, revealing the sport's growing popularity in the country.

► international sports

Cebuano olympians hailing from UC take stage in Paris Olympics 2024

by Christine NABUA

Elreen Ann Ando and John Februar Ceniza, two outstanding weightlifters from the University of Cebu (UC), stood tall at the 2024 Paris Olympics. The podium may have remained just out of reach, but their journey was not defined by medals but by the sheer courage it took to represent their country on the world's grandest stage.

The Paris Olympics was a redemption long time in the making for Ando. Coming back to the platform in the women's 59-kilogram category after an Olympic heartbreak couldn't have been easy for her—she had something to prove not just to the world, but to herself. Despite her best efforts, the podium eluded her once again. But the roar of the crowd, the pride of Cebu, and the respect she earned worldwide spoke louder than any medal could.

Ceniza's Olympic debut was one of grit and perseverance, a story of a young athlete who had spent years in the shadows. Competing in the men's 61-kilogram category with his shoulder injury, Ceniza was not able to completely showcase his raw talent acquired through years of hard work at UC. His nagging shoulder injury took its toll on Ceniza as he

endured a quick end to his Olympic run after he failed the snatch portion.

While neither Ando nor Ceniza left Paris with an Olympic medal draped around their necks, their performances extend well beyond the numbers on the scoreboard. Coming to Paris itself was a victory for the Cebuano athletes, and that capturing moment expressed how true-blooded fighters they are, always forged in fire, molded by courage.

Ando and Ceniza's Olympic experience, though not marked by medals, has set the stage for future successes. Both athletes are determined to continue pushing their limits, with Ando focusing on nurturing the next generation of weightlifters in Cebu and Ceniza eager to improve his talent and

advance even higher in future international competitions. The true measure of their success is not in the gold they missed but in the legacy they're creating—one that will inspire the next generation of Cebuano champions.

It is free to dream big so why not dream for a medal in the LA Olympics?

— Elreen Ann Ando, Filipino Olympic Weightlifter

by Grace JAKOSALEM



► intramurals 2024

Valorix Cardieci volleybelles spike back-to-back title

by Kennea PABORA

Valorix Cardieci hauled another comeback after conquering the girls' volleyball against Etero Videntes, 2-0, in the Intramurals 2024 held at the Cebu City National Science High School Oval.

The full-spirited team showcased their dominance and determination by defending their title last year.

"I feel very exhilarated, and I was very happy with our performance as a team—that we were able to communicate as one despite our short practice time and preparation; we were still able to win," uttered Lyra Malaki, the team captain of Valorix Cardieci.

As the scorching heat gradually transformed into dusk, the players exhibited a gritty display, preparing to capture the title as champions in the girls' volleyball Intramurals 2024.

In the first set, Etero Videntes showed prowess over Valorix Cardieci by continuously rounding up the score. However, Valorix Cardieci dragged them as they advanced through their strong offensive strategies.

Maxene Berongoy, the team captain of Etero Videntes, countered Malaki's service aces with powerful receives while maintaining defense in the

first set, 7-6. Despite the efforts of Etero Videntes to maintain their score, they were demolished by Valorix Cardieci in the first set, 25-12.

Valorix Cardieci mercilessly dumped Etero Videntes in the final set with relentless attacks and powerful spikes, leaving their opponents breathless as they struggled to keep up, 18-1.

The defensive errors of Etero Videntes bargained as they capitalized on a series of mistakes in the final set. These errors gave Valorix Cardieci an advantage to execute their game plan flawlessly, sealing the final set with a score of 25-3 and finishing the match with a 2-0 standing.

FOCUSED AND READY. Valorix Cardieci's Ashantal Celmar prepares to deliver a powerful serve in the intense intramurals game.

by Savannah LLENES



The **FINAL STRETCH**



Running made me reach for 'DA-GUN'

— Janylle A. Montecina, Grade 12 Athlete

I will always carry the discipline I've learned from table tennis.

— Ryan Paulo T. Wacan, Grade 12 Athlete



FROM PRESSURE TO PASSION. Aevincere athletes strive to end their final year in high school with a bang, rising from the struggles

Aevincere Athletes Bow Out in Style

by Shannen ESTIPULAR

As this school year unfolds, a bittersweet chapter begins for the Grade 12 Aevincere athletes as they approach their final year to leave a legacy in their respective fields. From humble upbringings, student-athletes like Janylle A. Montecina and Ryan Paulo T. Wacan ended their careers by ensuring their legacy is one to remember by bringing pride through representing the school in the Cebu City Olympics (CCO), held last December 13, 2024.

The Pressure to Perform

Many competed in their last interschool tournaments, with each match carrying the weight of years of effort. Janylle A. Montecina, a talented and powerful student from Gauss, has been a standout player on track and field since she first set foot on the oval in Grade 7. Now in her final year, she reflects on her experience of running in her last competition as a high school student-athlete.

"I tried relieving myself from the pressure, but the fact that this would be my last competition as a student-athlete hit me once more when I stood on the track, set to sprint. I felt nervous because I couldn't train well. I also contemplated whether I should do my best because this was my last or just take it easy. Nonetheless, I believed in God and myself that no matter how this would end, it was for the best," she said.

A Late-Blooming Passion

The senior year is pivotal for these athletes, filled with high stakes and emotional significance. Ryan Paulo T. Wacan from Riemann discovered his burning passion for table tennis relatively late, and it was not until he started his senior high school journey that he felt a surge of inspiration fueled by his brother, who was also an avid table tennis player in his high school years.

Despite his late start, Wacan quickly made up for the lost time as his athleticism and instincts propelled him to become one of Aevincere's best table tennis players, eventually leading him to represent the school for CCO.

"Representing SciHi in CCO felt like a dream, and it made me feel a mix of excitement, pride, and nervousness. It felt amazing to know I was competing not just for myself but also for the entire school."

Looking Ahead

As this season comes to an end, the Grade 12 athletes find themselves caught between stepping away from the spotlight of sports and anticipation for the future as the next stage of life approaches.

"Only time will tell, as playing table tennis is merely just a hobby for me, and I have no plans to pursue a career as an athlete. However, I will always carry the discipline I have learned from playing table tennis," said Ryan Wacan as he chose to depart from competitive sports.

Montecina, on the other hand, plans to explore other opportunities. "Though it's unclear if I'll still join school contests since I'll be busy in college, I must keep on running. I plan to guide younger runners and watch them grow into their fullest potential, hoping they'd also find passion in this sport."



by Shahara SALIMBOT
by Kris LAPUZ

TOP SPORTS STORIES



STRUGGLING FOR GLORY



DIG TO UPHOLD SMASH TO STRIKE



RAISING THE BAR

▶ sports feature

SciHi stude kicks his way to historic bronze in CCO 2024

by Kennea PABORA

CEBU CITY, Philippines — In a fiery display of formidable guts and exemplary showdown of striking kicks and attacks, Miguel Cabaero clinches a bronze medal in the 32nd Cebu City Olympics Taekwondo Championships last December 15, 2024, held in City Mall.

"After the game, I felt alive but also frustrated with the results, but despite all of this I am grateful to compete in the first place," uttered Cabaero.

At just six years old, Cabaero began his taekwondo journey, inspired by his older brother and motivated by the support of his parents. His passion for the sport underwent a series of minor events which later turned into major competitions.

"Taekwondo isn't just self defense but it is a way of life. There are certain philosophies it teaches, such as control, discipline, and patience," Cabaero shared.

The tense atmosphere was observed in the gymnasium as players prepared to advance for their matches. Despite

the high stakes, the liveliness of the crowd was displayed as the crowd cheered for their teams.

Guided by his coach, Mrs. Wilma Igay, Cabaero demonstrated fortitude and skill, earning him a well-deserved spot on the podium.

With this accomplishment, Cabaero is recognized as the first Scihiyista to ever compete in a taekwondo competition carrying the school's name and winning an award, showcasing his remarkable skills and talent in the sport.

Cabaero excels not only in academics but also in extracurricular activities, embodying the principles of a true Taekwondoist.

"As for the techniques, it is more of predicting the kick your opponent will use," Cabaero said. He added, "You also need to have endurance because if you run out of energy, your mind is gonna be foggy and you will be more vulnerable."

Cabaero will be training rigorously for his upcoming matches in the future while also continuing to advance his skills and techniques.

THUNDEROUS KICK.

Exemplifying the spirit of a true Taekwondoist, Cabaero makes history as the first Scihiyista to compete in a Taekwondo competition.

by Hailey TOLENTINO

Taekwondo isn't just self defense but it is a way of life. There are certain philosophies it teaches, such as control, discipline, and patience

— Miguel Cabaero, CCO 2024 Taekwondo 3rd Place Winner

