



## *Kabuhayan Awards 2022 highlights hard work and social responsibility*

Mr. Juancho Mirasol and Ytabuk Agri-Growers Association's stories of success

The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) has been granting livelihood assistance through the DOLE Integrated Livelihood Program (DILP) or best known as the Kabuhayan Program, as an initiative to reduce the vulnerability to risks of the poor, vulnerable, and marginalized workers.

The program also contributes to the national agenda of poverty reduction and job generation by granting assistance on livelihood ventures either by individual or group undertakings.

Through the years, the DOLE saw the hard work and perseverance of the beneficiaries to sustain their projects, and to exemplify their accomplishments, the Kabuhayan Awards was born.

Since 2015, the DOLE has been recognizing exemplary beneficiaries, who not only sustained their livelihoods, but also generated employment through their community.

For 2022, it was Mr. Juancho Mirasol from Malamawi Island in Isabela City, Basilan and the Ytabuk Agri-Growers Association from Tabuk, Kalinga.



Mr. Mirasol, a former overseas Filipino worker (OFW) learned the ins and outs of glass cutting through his aunt, as he worked as a cutter of glass and aluminum for the latter.

Then, he went to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia and still hustled on a glass and aluminum company for seven years.

"I realized that my income was never enough, so I decided to work abroad," he added.

In 2015, he opened his own glass supply shop from the little savings he got from his overseas work.

All is well until the pandemic happened, and everything swooped down in a blink of an eye.

"In 2020, during the pandemic, I closed the shop. Then, as we were about to open, the problem is all my tools were unserviceable," he said.

But, as the saying goes, "If it is for you, it will come to you", and the Kabuhayan Program came to him through a radio advertisement.

He went to the Barangay Employment Service Office (BESO) to apply for an assistance, which was then endorsed to the Public Employment Service Office (PESO) of Isabela City, Basilan.

Mr. Mirasol was given a carpentry starter kit specifically a plainer, glass cutter, and tools like an L-square, hammer, tox, handsaw, and trimmer router.

With the DOLE livelihood intervention, he was able to recruit his former employees, and even expand his services to glass installation, plaque production, and cladding installation as well.

As he became the Kabuhayan Awards 2022 National Winner for the Individual Category, Mr. Mirasol only has good words for the DOLE.

"Thank you to DOLE and PESO for I have received





a Kabuhayan Starter Kit. It has supplemented my tools needed for the shop's operation," he added.

In one of his interviews after the awarding ceremony, he encouraged his fellow Filipino to apply to the programs of the government as they are readily available for everyone.

He stated, "Nagpapasalamat po ako sa DOLE sa pagtulong sakin. Para sa mga kababayan po natin, kung gusto n'yo po umangat ang buhay n'yo, lapitan n'yo po ang DOLE, at samahan n'yo po ang tulong nila ng pagsisikap."

On the other hand, social responsibility has pushed the Ytabuk Agri-Growers Association to form their group and started their mushroom production.



Ms. Alma Mae Bangelan-Cortez, President



Ytabuk Agri-Growers Association during the Kabuhayan Awards



Mr. Juancho Mirasol during the Kabuhayan Awards

Established in 2019, the association, aside from producing their own mushroom products, has been promoting the Philippine mushroom industry by collaborating with various enterprises. In 2020, the group sought the assistance of the DOLE for additional equipment worth ₱602,601.00.

Tools such as a heavy duty cast iron gas stove, autoclave, weighing scales, strainers, pots, beakers, chillers and coolers, a spin dryer, powderizer machine, inoculation chamber, electric vacuum sealer, food processor, a glass cabinet, water pump and a generator were provided to them,

Ms. Cortez added that during the pandemic, group was among the first ones to initiate trainings in mushroom production and employ at least 51 mushroom growers composed of farmers, fisherfolks, youth, solo parents, senior citizens, members of the LGBTQIA+ community.

As they won National Group Category of the Kabuhayan Awards 2022, the Ytabuk Agri-Grower Association committed to continue what they have started.

"Maraming salamat po sa DOLE, lalo na kay Secretary Bello at Regional Director Lacambra sa kanilang tulong sa amin. Napili kami dahil na rin siguro nakita nila na dito, hindi ka lang dapat money-oriented, dapat during pandemic, ang titignan mo ay kung papaano papakainin ang mga tao," Ms. Cortez said in one of her interviews.

DOLE Secretary Silvestre H. Bello III also acknowledged the beneficiaries hard work especially during this hard time.

He said, "Your stories of diligence and resilience truly inspire us to work and intensify our efforts to create more responsive and inclusive labor and employment programs to improve the lives of every Filipino worker."

### EDITORIAL BOARD

Chairperson: **Director Ma. Karina Perida-Trayvilla**

Editor-in-Chief: **Elisa A. Cruz**

Content: **Maria Geneva R. Bassig**

Photos: **DOLE IX, CAR**

Design: **Maria Geneva R. Bassig**

### Bureau of Workers with Special Concerns

9/F G.E. Antonino Bldg., J. Bocobo St.,

Cor. T.M. Kalaw Ave., Ermita, Manila

8527-5856, Telefax: 8527-5858

mail@bwsc.dole.gov.ph

www.bwsc.dole.gov.ph

<http://www.facebook.com/bwsc.dole>