

THE JCI MANDAUE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION

MANDAWE

Celebrate Culture
ISSUE



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EDITOR'S NOTE

Join us in celebrating the vibrant tapestry of culture and explore the power of shared experiences as they bridge divides and ignite connections.

As we turn the pages, you will discover captivating features that delve into the heart of our culture, celebrating our unique traditions. We aim to shed light on the countless ways in which culture defines our identities, shapes our communities, and fosters a sense of belonging and action. Through this issue, we invite you to expand your horizons, embrace new perspectives, and deepen your appreciation.

Let us celebrate our culture with pride and gratitude. Let us celebrate our country, the Philippines, with love and loyalty; and our people, the Filipinos, with respect and solidarity; our ourselves, kita mismo mga Bisaya! Padayun ug Sidlak Bisaya!

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Message from The President

Greetings My Fellow JCI!

Our country is a diverse tapestry woven with threads of various traditions, languages, art forms, and belief systems. It is this rich cultural heritage that makes us truly unique and strengthens the bonds that hold us together as a society.

Culture encompasses more than just the arts and entertainment; it encompasses the essence of who we are as JCI Members and as a collective. It shapes our identities, influences our values, and provides us with a sense of belonging. Whether it be the music that stirs our souls, the stories that ignite our imagination, or the customs that guide our interactions, culture is the heartbeat of our nation.

It is crucial for us to recognize and appreciate the cultural diversity that exists within our chapters. When we embrace different cultures, we open ourselves up to new perspectives, experiences, and ideas. It fosters empathy, understanding, and unity among our fellow citizens, creating a society that is stronger and more resilient.

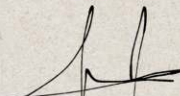
Artistic expressions, in particular, have the power to transcend boundaries and go beyond the deepest parts of our humanity. Whether a song by the Wonggoys that moves us to tears, street art along Archbishop Reyes Ave. that evokes emotions we can't put into words, or a Sinulog dance performance that mesmerizes us with its grace, the arts have the ability to bridge gaps, build bridges, and heal wounds.

Moreover, our cultural heritage should not only be celebrated within our own borders but also shared with the world. By showcasing our unique traditions, languages, and artistic achievements, we can promote cross-cultural understanding and develop friendship and cooperation with other nations. Through cultural exchanges, we can learn from one another, appreciate our differences, and find common ground in our shared humanity.

Thank you, and may we continue to cherish and nurture the beautiful tapestry of culture that defines us as an organization.

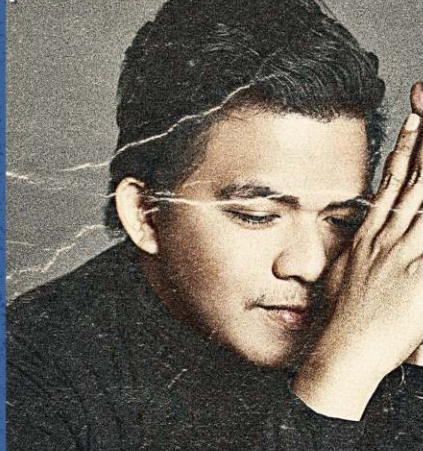
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Sidlak Bisaya


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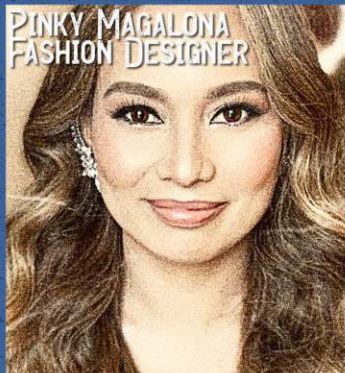
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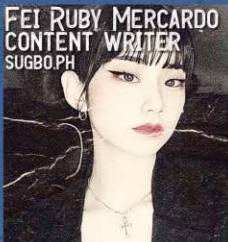
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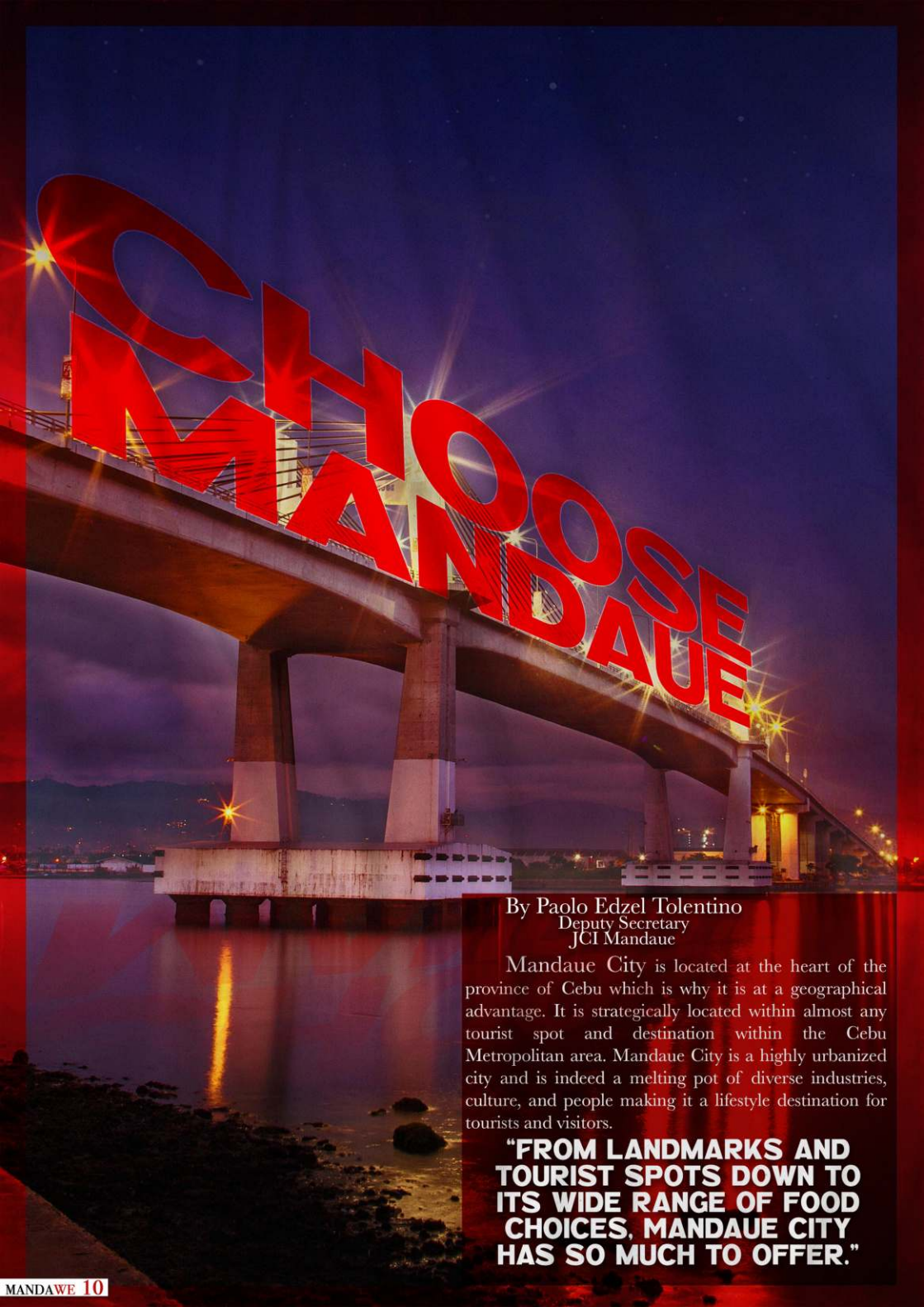
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By Paolo Edzel Tolentino
Deputy Secretary
JCI Mandaue

Mandaue City is located at the heart of the province of Cebu which is why it is at a geographical advantage. It is strategically located within almost any tourist spot and destination within the Cebu Metropolitan area. Mandaue City is a highly urbanized city and is indeed a melting pot of diverse industries, culture, and people making it a lifestyle destination for tourists and visitors.

**"FROM LANDMARKS AND
TOURIST SPOTS DOWN TO
ITS WIDE RANGE OF FOOD
CHOICES, MANDAUE CITY
HAS SO MUCH TO OFFER."**

As progressive as Mandaue City has been, it is still in fact deeply rooted to its traditions. Every barangay offers a variety of activities with different traditions and backgrounds that evidently contribute to its colorful cityscape. Every 8th of May, Mandaue City celebrates its fiesta in honor of St. Joseph, their patron saint. There will be a week long worth of activities like sports competitions, fairs, and the Miss Mandaue pageant in which all barangays are participating.

Another highly anticipated celebration that Mandaue City observes is the "Panagtagbo sa Mandaue", a part of the religious Simulog Festival that commemorates the union of the Holy Family - Sto. Niño from the basilica Minore del Sto. Niño, Birhen sa Guadalupe, and St. Joseph in Mandaue. This is solemnly practiced every third week of January.

**MANDAUE CITY IS
RECOGNIZED AS THE
"INDUSTRIAL CITY OF THE
SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES"
AND THE "FURNITURE CAPITAL
OF THE PHILIPPINES".**

Such titles come from the fact that this city is comprised of varied factories and warehouses of goods such as furniture, wood, packed meals and bottled beverages. These industries contribute to about forty-percent of Cebu's export companies which indeed promotes economic growth within the city. And with the rise of large-scale high-end developments such as Mandani Bay and Global City Mandaue, this city is set to be a world-class lifestyle destination.

For 60 years, JCI Mandaue has been proactive in organizing sustainable activities and projects that create impact in the community. One of which includes the promotion of Mandaue City's Tourism through food tourism and its historical places. With the help of the Mandaue Investment Promotions Tourism Action Center, JCI Mandaue successfully organized the event. Mandaue is the home and heart of JCI Mandaue. And with the continuing growth of the city's tourism industry, it is the goal of the organization to help and support this cause.



**"EXPERIENCE JCI MANDAUE
& BEYOND" - AN EXCLUSIVE
AND IMMERSIVE TOUR
OF MANDAUE CITY**

Our brothers and sisters from JCI were able to experience the history of Mandaue by going to historical places like the Mandaue Presidencia, National Shrine and Parish of St. Joseph and the Bantayan sa Hari. Part of the tour was also to experience the local food and delicacies that Mandaue has to offer. We have only the best BBQ places and home of the best dried mangoes, where the delegates especially our Korean guests were able to experience the manufacturing process first-hand. Overall, it was indeed a fun-filled experience with the participation of the guests especially during the traditional dances and *silhig*-making process.

Through events like this, where JCI Mandaue's commitment to create positive and impactful projects are realized, we can showcase what Mandaue can offer not only to our Filipino delegates all over the Philippines but also to the world. This is still a start-up project with the hope that it could become a long-term program that could potentially increase not only the tourism but also the livelihood of local vendors and business owners in Mandaue City. This activity has demonstrated that there is a promising future for Mandaue's tourism, and it is evident that tourists from around the world are able to appreciate our city even more.

Mandaue's rich history, geographical advantage, technologically-advanced economy, highly diversified industries, and high quality of living are among the reasons why it is still best to **CHOOSE MANDAUE.**



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WITH MARI INTERIOR DESIGN STUDIO

MARI is deeply inspired by the diverse art and artisanal ateliers of the modern age transfused with renaissance elements. Our team, with excellent skills and in-depth knowledge, combining immense passion for design with practical experience, provides total solutions and full services from concept, planning, design, and construction supervision. We believe that the service of design is a process that should be enjoyed from start to finish. The result is truly a refreshing collaboration between Mari and the client.



MARI INTERIOR STUDIO is a Cebu-based interior design firm providing various types of design solutions for all types of spaces including – but not limited to - residential spaces, condominium units, workplaces, retail shops, food & beverage outlets, hospitality and multi-purpose facilities. Established by two design visionaries in 2015, Mari cultivates designs with empathy and optimism to bring out each client's traits and personalities into their interior design.



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MEMBERSHIP AND ACCREDITATION



Life on an island can be a unique and rewarding experience. The beauty of the natural surroundings, the slower pace of life, and the sense of community can be very appealing. However, island life also poses some challenges such as limited resources, isolation, and the potential for natural disasters, to name a few.

Despite these challenges, people living in coastal areas, particularly in the vibrant province of Cebu in the Philippines, have cultivated a rich culture and set of traditions that reflect their harmonious relationship with the sea. The coastal communities in Cebu have developed a deep appreciation for the ocean, incorporating it into their daily lives and preserving its resources for future generations.

“Their unique customs and practices not only reflect their resilience in the face of adversity but also highlight the profound bond between the islanders and the vast ever-changing sea that surrounds them”

Sunlit Advantages

Basking in a warm and sunny climate, living on an island offers an exceptional opportunity to immerse oneself

in breathtaking landscapes. The island's mesmerizing beaches, flourishing forests, and crystal-clear azure waters create a captivating backdrop for residents. From tranquil sunsets on the shoreline to invigorating hikes through lush greenery, the natural beauty of the island becomes an integral part of daily life.

Also, the pace of life on an island is much slower than in the city. No need to rush around, so one can enjoy a more relaxed and laid-back lifestyle – a great way to escape the stresses of everyday city life. Not to forget, the peace and tranquility that comes with living in a place with less noise and pollution.

Living on a small island cultivates a tight-knit community where neighbors become friends and support one another. The intimate size of the island fosters a familiarity that brings residents together, allowing for genuine connections and a profound sense of belonging. The shared experiences, celebrations, and challenges create a cohesive communal bond that ultimately enriches the islander's lives.

“The sense of togetherness and support adds depth and meaning to one's daily interactions.”

ISLAND

LIFE

Living in Harmony with the Sea

By Atty. Darlon Serenio
Vice President for Community Devt.
JCI Mandawe

Tropical Troubles

Living on an island presents a unique set of challenges that can impact the daily lives of its inhabitants. One such challenge is the limited availability of resources. Due to their geographical isolation, islands often rely heavily on importing goods and services from the mainland or other neighboring regions. This dependency can lead to higher costs for basic necessities, making it more difficult to find specific products or services that one may be accustomed to. The scarcity of resources can sometimes create a sense of inconvenience or frustration for residents, as they may have to adjust their lifestyles or make do with alternatives.

“ Another significant challenge of island life is the inherent sense of isolation.”

The geographical distance and limited connectivity to mainland areas can result in limited access to crucial services such as medical care, education, and other essential amenities. This can be particularly challenging for families with young children or elderly relatives who require specialized care or regular access to medical facilities. Island dwellers may need to travel long distances or rely on intermittent transportation options to access these services, which can be time-consuming, costly, and potentially affect the quality of life for individuals and their families.

Living in Harmony with the Sea

In recent years, however, the effects of climate change have made it increasingly difficult for island communities to live in harmony with the sea. Disrupted by climate change, the sea becomes more unpredictable, and it is becoming more difficult for our coastal communities to fish and farm.

Despite these challenges, coastal communities are innovating and adopting sustainable practices, such as rainwater harvesting, renewable energy, and organic farming. They are also working to protect their coastal ecosystems, such as mangrove forests and coral reefs.

“ By living in harmony with the sea, island communities can be more resilient to the impacts of climate change.”



Sagop Bakhaw

Sagop Bakhaw (Adopt-A-Mangrove) program of JCI Mandaue was launched way back in June 2021 at Santa Rosa, Olango Island, Lapu-Lapu City, Cebu led by its project proponent Atty. Darlon Serenio.

It is an initiative to build, rehabilitate, and restore the diminishing *bakhaw* or mangrove forest and coastal ecosystem of Cebu. To ensure its sustainability, the coastal communities – the primary stakeholder in the rehabilitation of our *bakhaw* forest – were involved.

In partnership with the local government of Santa Rosa, a community-based, *bakhaw* growers cooperative was established to grow *bakhaws* for adoption and maintain the *bakhaw* forests of Olango Island. This is a novel initiative improving the lives of our fisher folks in the coastal communities, through their collective efforts and by working together.

Sagop Bakhaw actively looks for sponsors who will adopt a fully-grown *bakhaw* propagule for Pesos 100. To date, around 2,500 *bakhaws* have been adopted under the program. Through adoption, sponsors can help build a forest and more importantly, sustain a community. They help rebuild the local economies of Santa Rosa, Olango Island by empowering and strengthening the community of fisher folks as the world collectively faces the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“ Let’s protect our *bakhaw* forest to ensure a sustainable future. Adopt a mangrove, build a forest, and sustain a community.”

“

No country can ever truly flourish if it stifles the **potential of its women** and deprives itself of the contributions of half of its citizens.

MICHELLE OBAMA



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Mandaue City in the Philippines is celebrating its annual Pride event every Month of June. The event is a time for the LGBTQIA+ community to come together and celebrate their diversity and strength. It is also a time to raise awareness of the challenges that the community faces and to advocate for equality. The city has a long history of supporting the LGBTQIA+ community, and the Pride event is a testament to its commitment to creating a safe and inclusive environment for all people.

It was also a monumental year as the city passed it's the LGBT Code of Mandaue City, the passage of which was a significant victory for the LGBTQIA+ community. It sent a clear message that the city is and will continue to commit to creating a more inclusive and equitable home for all its residents.

There has been several positive impacts on the LGBTQIA+ community in Mandaue. Off the bat, an increase in the number of queer individuals participating in civic activities, while a significant decline in discrimination.

A History of PRIDE

In the early 1960s, the city hosted the first Miss Gay Mandaue pageant, which quickly became a popular event. The pageant helped to raise awareness of the LGBTQIA+ community and to promote acceptance and tolerance.

In 1973, Mandaue City hosted the Miss Gay International pageant, which was the first of its kind in the Philippines. The pageant was a huge success and helped to put Mandaue City on the map as a safe haven for the LGBTQIA+ community. In 2016, Mandaue City passed the LGBT Code of Mandaue City, which was the first of its kind in the Philippines. The code prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity and provides for

A PRIDE Story

Hezekiah Diaz, a 21-year-old transgender woman, made history when she was allowed to march and graduate as a woman at her graduation ceremony at Cebu Doctor's University (CDU) in Mandaue City, Philippines.

PRIDE Rise!



Mandaue City delivers Equality!



Ms. Hezekiah Diaz

By **Dwight Mozo**
Local Organization Secretary
JCI Mandaue

the protection of the rights of the LGBTQIA+ community.

Mandaue City is a leader in the fight for LGBTQIA+ rights and continues to be a safe haven for the community. The city's Pride celebration is a testament to its commitment to equality and acceptance.

Diaz's success is a testament to the power of the city's LGBT Code Ordinance, which prohibits discrimination against people of diverse sexual orientation and gender identity. She had to fight for her right to march as a woman. She was initially told by school officials that she would have to march in her birth gender, which is male. However, Diaz refused to give up. She attached a copy of the city's LGBT Code Ordinance to her letter requesting to march as a woman. The school eventually relented and allowed her to march as her true self.

Diaz's victory is a major step forward for the LGBT community in the Philippines. It shows that the city's LGBT Code Ordinance is working to protect the rights of transgender people. It also sends a message to other schools and businesses that discrimination against LGBT people will not be tolerated.

Diaz's story is an inspiration to all LGBT people who are fighting for their rights. It shows that it is possible to overcome discrimination and achieve your dreams. Diaz is a role model for all LGBT people, and her story will help to pave the way for a more inclusive future.

A Victory for EQUALITY

The Mandaue City LGBT Code Ordinance, which was passed in 2019, prohibits discrimination against LGBTQ+ people in all areas of public life, including employment, housing, education, and public accommodations. The ordinance also establishes a number of programs and services to support LGBTQ+ people, including a helpline, a resource center, and a training program for law enforcement officers.

Project Ally: Educate . Advocate . Support

PROJECT ALLY an initiative initiated by the JCI Mandaue that hopes to empower and uplift the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) community. Since its launch in 2022, the program has made significant strides in its second year, 2023, by focusing on the mission of educating, advocating, and supporting the LGBT community.

One of the key aspects of PROJECT ALLY is its commitment to education. The program offers various educational initiatives aimed at promoting awareness and understanding of the rights of the LGBTQIA+ community. Through SOGIE (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Expression) and Pride talks, participants are provided with a comprehensive understanding of their rights and the importance of embracing diversity and inclusivity. Additionally, educational sessions on HIV and HIV testing are conducted to promote health and well-being within the community.

Advocacy plays a vital role in PROJECT ALLY's efforts. The program actively empowers the drag queen community. By also organizing friendship games and other inclusive activities, this helps foster a sense of camaraderie and friendship among the LGBTQIA+ community and their straight allies.

Moreover, PROJECT ALLY extends its support through a unique initiative called P.U.L.S.E. (Promoting Unique Livelihood Skills for Equality). This aspect of the program aims to provide economic opportunities and livelihood skills to the community. By offering workshops on various skills such as sewing and welding, individuals from the LGBT community are equipped with practical skills that can enhance their employability and economic independence.

For our PRIDE to RISE, this program continues to evolve and expand, it promises to make a lasting impact by fostering a society that celebrates diversity, equality, and respect for all.



Pride Champion of Mandaue City - Transgender Lawyer Regal Oliva Makes History as First President of Cebu Lady Lawyers Association.

In a historic move, transgender lawyer Regal Oliva was elected as the first president of the Cebu Lady Lawyers Association (CELLA). Oliva, who is also the current treasurer of Mandaue City, is the first transgender woman to lead a lady lawyers' organization in the country.

"I consider this breakthrough to be a challenge to break more glass ceilings, while I am guided by women legal luminaries in Cebu," Oliva said. "We aim to promote more advocacies to protect women and girls, as well as focus on the urgency to push for more equal rights and safe spaces for all."

Oliva's election is a major victory for the LGBTQ+ community in the Philippines. It is a sign of progress and acceptance, and it sends a message that everyone has a place in the legal profession.

Oliva's election is a major step forward for CELLA and for the LGBTQ+ community in the Philippines. It is a sign of hope and progress, and it shows that the fight for equality is far from over.





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From Tourist To Advocate

Embracing the Filipino Culture

By Kristoffer Jun Yurong
EVP External
JCI Mandaue

William Brownfield, the man who coined and pioneered the JCI creed in 1946 had this to say:

"Man-made boundaries have been drawn and redrawn, separating the human race into many nations. But across these unnatural divisions there has been an intercourse in art, science, commerce and religion; evidence of man's universal brotherhood; proof that man himself, not his territorial divisions, is of basic worth."

-William Brownfield

We Filipinos have been so engrossed with a lot of foreign phenomena such as South Korea's KPop and KDrama domination. We are also enthralled with travelling internationally with Hong Kong and Taiwan being two of the Filipino's top tourist destinations in the Asia Pacific Region.

JCI Mandaue, who has fostered international brotherhood and camaraderie from three international sister chapters for half a century was up for the challenge in looking into the minds and hearts of these international sister chapters about the Filipino and our homeland in Cebu – Mandaue.

Up to today, JCI Mandaue continues to foster a deep, relationship with its three international sister chapters namely: JCI Sanchung of Taiwan, JCI Kowloon of Hong Kong and JCI Samecheonpo of South Korea. Negotiations with two international chapters from Japan and Indonesia are in progress to further the reach of JCI Mandaue across the continent.

We interviewed two of our closest members from two of our international sister chapters and here's what they have to say...



CK Lee

JCI Kowloon Past President and one of the most revered 'elders' by the Merry Men

What do you like about Mandaue and Cebu's culture?

I always prefer the second largest city over the capital of countries particularly those in Asia. Cebu is no exception. My personal favourites are the signature Cebuano friendliness, the Sinulog Festival and the rich history of Cebu, to name but a few.

What in JCI Mandaue appeals to you in terms of community and business-related projects?

Community projects for the needy and under-privileged, and leadership development programmes got a lot of potential of collaboration.

What is it that you want to experience in Cebu when you visit?

I would love to see the City's latest developments and meet the community leaders apart from enjoying the sun, sea and sand.

What do you want JCI Mandaue members to experience when they visit your chapter?

The dynamics of the international financial and trade centre that we call home and her business and community leaders. The authentic Chinese cuisine is also not to be missed.

“The founding fathers of Kowloon and Mandue tied the brotherhood knot about half a century ago before most of us were even born. The good cause is for all of us to succeed and sustain in the many years to come. Let's keep going.”



James Lee

**JCI Samcheonpo South Korea member
– the everyone's 'Tagay Patay' favorite**

What do you like about Mandaue and Cebu's culture?

Cebu is like my second home. It would be disturbing to go to a strange foreign country where there are only people who don't know, but Cebu is a comfortable place because there are always eternal brothers in JCI Mandaue. And there are many great places to rest in the evening after working hard during the day on weekdays. A restaurant with delicious food, an exciting live café with great songs. On weekends, there is a wonderful sea that makes our mind and body feel at peace after a week of work. Cebu is lovely place to enjoy all this with brothers in JCI Mandaue.

What in JCI Mandaue appeals to you in terms of community and business-related projects?

There are so many collaborations that we want to do with JCI Mandaue. First of all, volunteer work for low-income people is the first priority, and we want to build friendship and maintain health by doing sports activities together. However, the time we stay in Cebu is so short that it is impossible to do all realistically. The most realistic need for a short period of time is to build our friendship and become close. But we have considerable difficulties because we are not good at English. The biggest reason why our English is not good is that we don't usually use English. Therefore, in order to improve our English skills, we hope that there will be a spare time for us to greet each other, ask after each other, and use English frequently every day in the group chat window.

What is it that you want to experience in Cebu when you visit?

Local restaurant tour, island hopping, night market, live café with great songs., famous tourist attractions.

What do you want JCI Mandaue members to experience when they visit your chapter?

Various Korean food, visiting the workplaces of JCI Samcheonpo members, homestay of JCI Samcheonpo members, and sports activities to enjoy together.

What is it that you want to experience in Cebu City when you visit?

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What do you want JCI Mandaue members to experience when they visit your chapter?

Various Korean food, visiting the workplaces of JCI Samcheonpo members, homestay of JCI Samcheonpo members, and sports activities to enjoy together.

“My eternal brother JCI Mandaue. We always miss you guys. Don't forget that we are always by your side even though we are far away. I wish you good health and prosperity in your business.”

Culture That Extends Beyond Borders

JCI Mandaue has made it a core thrust that international sisterhood becomes an opportunity to promote cultural and professional exchange among all its international sister chapters.

Being in a country that is deeply rooted in its colorful past and fascinating history, JCI Mandaue has also sought for cultural enrichment from their sister chapters. The opportunity to travel and immerse in each country's culture has brought upon lifelong insights on how people from these cultures thrive. Year on year, it has been a tradition for JCI Mandaue to visit South Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan to visit their sister chapters to attend various special occasions and visit their brothers and sisters. These sisters also return the favor by visiting us here in Mandaue during our Induction and turn over ceremonies. Cultural gifts are presented on both occasions and cultural tours and culinary overload (which is everyone's favorite) is a staple in every visit.

Being a Sustainability Advocate

‘We want to donate money for your primary school building construction.’

‘We are so glad to be part of this life changing project for the kids of Mandaue City.’

‘We hope we can provide more for the fire victims and alleviate the sad situation of the victims in Mandaue City.’

‘When we visit, we will volunteer in your community projects.’

These are the common but very humbling words we always get from our sister chapters every time we present to them our activities and projects during our joint board meetings and fellowships.

This is a testament that JCI Mandaue has had steadily imparted to their sister chapters the values of community service and paying forward.

Beyond the pleasure of hosting them when they visit us here in Cebu, beyond the fellowship and cultural immersion and tours, it is in successfully embodying in them the virtue of service that we are most ecstatic and grateful about.

JUNIOR CHAMBER INTERNATIONAL SAMCHEONPO

KIM HYO YOUNG

2021 President

JCI Samcheonpo

PASAPORTE & CO.

was founded on November 12, 2020 and has made significant progress and accomplishments since it entered the market. P & Co. is a one-stop-shop business solutions company – a creative marketing powerhouse that aims to revolutionize how you reach your target audience. With fast-paced business innovations, the company adheres to the perpetual need for adaptability and creativity in providing business solutions. With years of experience, we know how to strategize, implement, and deliver the results you need to propel your business into its best version.

Elevating Organizational Trends

P & Co. is trajecting toward a brighter and better world where organizations can depend on us for reliable business intervention. Our values have remained steadfast through the years as we gear toward where we envision ourselves to be. We ensure to put our best foot forward, offering services that transform our client's visions into realities.

Reimagining Industry Standards

Our unmatched attention to detail makes us capable of delivering these services to our clients. Despite being relatively new to the industry, P & Co. is more than grateful to have served and to serve more satisfied clients.

EMPOWER YOUR BUSINESS WITH OUR COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES:

- Business Strategy Consultation
- Software and Systems Development
- Staffing Solutions
- Graphic Design and Digital Marketing
- Content Writing



P & Co.

LIGA WAGA!

THE SPIRIT OF FILIPINO SPORTING COMPETITION

By Peter Paul Cababahay
VP for Membership Devt.
JCI Mandaue

Sports have always held a special place in Filipino culture, serving as a source of national pride and identity. From basketball courts in barangays (villages) to grand arenas hosting professional leagues, Filipinos have a deep appreciation for athletic endeavors and strive for excellence in various sports. One unique aspect of Filipino sporting culture is the concept of "liga-style" tournaments, which are organized by barangays, schools, and community organizations. These leagues provide a platform for players of all ages and skills to participate in friendly matches, showcase their talents, and nurture a sense of community and camaraderie.

THE LIGA-STYLE COMPETITION ALSO EXTENDS BEYOND THE FIELD OF PLAY AS IT BECOMES A PLATFORM FOR SOCIAL INTERACTION, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, AND CELEBRATION OF FILIPINO CULTURE.

It brings people together to celebrate their shared love for sports, fostering a strong sense of community spirit. The competition becomes a source of pride, not only for the athletes but also for the entire community, as they come together to support their representatives in a spirit of friendly contention.

Over the years, inter-barangay and interschool leagues have gained widespread approval and admiration. They have become more than just recreational events; they have become institutions that contribute to the development of sports and the promotion of social cohesion and national pride in the Philippines. The success stories of Filipino athletes in international competitions, such as the victories of boxing legend Manny Pacquiao or the achievements of the Philippines in basketball, volleyball, weightlifting, and gymnastics, evoke a sense of national unity and boost the country's morale. These accomplishments also serve as inspiration for young athletes and contribute to the overall growth and recognition of sports in the Philippines.

TO FURTHER SPREAD THE SPIRIT OF SPORTSMANSHIP AND NATIONALISM, JCI MANDAUE ORGANIZED A LIGA OF ITS OWN CALLED MERRY LEAGUE.

JCI Mandaue's Merry League consists of some of the most popular sports in the Philippines, such as basketball, badminton, and the rising esports Mobile Legends. The inaugural season of the Merry League took place in April as part of JCI Week 2023 and has received an overwhelming response. Participants from various JCI chapters in Cebu, as well as invited guests, showcased their skills, strategies, and teamwork, making each match a thrilling spectacle. From intense dribbles on the basketball court to quick smashes on the badminton court, and even amazing triple kills in Mobile Legends, everyone celebrated their favorite sport with fairness and sportsmanship.

In recent years, local barangays and various organizations have been actively promoting sports and investing in sports facilities, grassroots programs, and athlete development initiatives. This concerted effort towards sports development further enhances the spirit of sporting competition in the country. It provides aspiring players and athletes with opportunities to excel in their chosen disciplines and nurtures a culture of sportsmanship and healthy competition.

The spirit of sporting competition in the Philippines is driven by passion, resilience, unity, and the pursuit of excellence. Sports hold a special place in Filipino culture, embodying the values of determination, camaraderie, and national pride. Whether it's a friendly basketball game in a neighborhood or a high-stakes championship match in a professional league, sports bring people together, instill a sense of belonging, and create lifelong memories. It creates an inclusive and vibrant environment where people of all backgrounds can come together to celebrate sports, foster social bonds, and experience the joy and happiness that sports bring.

WHAT'S YOUR LIGA-YAH?

Answer the following questions to gain insight into the sport that best aligns with your personality. Choose the option that most accurately represents your preferences and traits. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers. Let's begin!

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR OVERALL LEVEL OF PHYSICAL FITNESS?

- a) Extremely fit and active
- b) Moderately fit, but could improve
- c) Not very fit or active

WHEN FACED WITH A COMPETITIVE SITUATION, HOW DO YOU TYPICALLY REACT?

- a) I thrive on competition and strive to be the best.
- b) I enjoy competition but also value sportsmanship and fair play.
- c) I prefer non-competitive activities that focus on personal growth.

WHAT TYPE OF SKILLS ARE YOU MOST INTERESTED IN DEVELOPING?

- a) Physical strength, agility, and teamwork.
- b) Hand-eye coordination and precision.
- c) Strategic thinking, problem-solving, and quick reflexes.

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING ENVIRONMENTS DO YOU FIND MOST APPEALING?

- a) I enjoy being outdoors and embracing nature.
- b) I like a mix of indoor and outdoor settings.
- c) I prefer indoor activities in a controlled environment.

HOW IMPORTANT IS TEAMWORK TO YOU?

- a) It's crucial. I enjoy collaborating and working with others towards a common goal.
- b) I prefer a mix of individual and teamwork, depending on the activity.
- c) I find more satisfaction in individual achievements rather than relying on teamwork.

WHAT KIND OF PHYSICAL EXERTION DO YOU FIND MOST ENJOYABLE?

- a) High-intensity activities that require endurance and strength.
- b) Activities that involve precision and finesse.
- c) I prefer mental exertion over physical exertion.

HOW DO YOU HANDLE PRESSURE AND STRESSFUL SITUATIONS?

- a) I thrive under pressure and perform my best when challenged.
- b) I prefer a balance of challenge and relaxation.
- c) I feel comfortable and focused in high-pressure situations.

WHAT TYPE OF ATMOSPHERE DO YOU PREFER WHEN ENGAGING IN ACTIVITIES?

- a) I enjoy high-energy and lively environments.
- b) I prefer a balanced atmosphere with some excitement but also room for calmness.
- c) I enjoy calm and quiet environments that allow for concentration.

WHAT APPEALS TO YOU ABOUT THE ACTIVITY ITSELF?

- a) The physicality, athleticism, and camaraderie of the sport.
- b) The precision, technique, and finesse required.
- c) The strategic thinking, mental agility, and global competitive nature.

WHAT KIND OF ROLE DO YOU PREFER IN A TEAM OR ACTIVITY?

- a) Being an integral part of the team, contributing to the collective success.
- b) Being in control of my own performance and relying on my own skills.
- c) Being part of a global network, competing against individuals or teams worldwide.



If you selected mostly (a) answers

BASKETBALL

KEEP DUNKIN'!

ITS PHYSICALITY, TEAM-ORIENTED NATURE, AND ENERGETIC ATMOSPHERE WILL LIKELY APPEAL TO YOUR COMPETITIVE AND SOCIAL PERSONALITY.



If you selected mostly (b) answers

BADMINTON

SMASH AWAY!

THE PRECISION, FINESSE, AND INDIVIDUAL FOCUS REQUIRED IN BADMINTON ALIGN WELL WITH YOUR PREFERENCE FOR INDIVIDUAL SPORTS OR ACTIVITIES.



If you selected mostly (c) answers

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MIKE
YAPCHING BRIDAL



"It's my chance now to tell the other chapters that the "Zugs" are really focused on the heart of service.."
-Pres. Jessica
JCI Zugbuana

"...so when a Merry Man walks inside a room, he carries with him the Mandaue brand and becomes a reflection of the Mandaue culture."
-Pres. JM
JCI Mandaue

"Cebu Inc may be "pasaway" but we practice tolerance and ultimately, respect."
-Pres. Marc
JCI Cebu

Sidlak Rizaya

Celebrating Culture: A Path to A Shared Destiny

By Earl Thomas Corregidor III
VP for Organization Dev
JCI Mandaue

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MATT PINGKIAN
STYLING BY JOSEI CUIZON
GROOMING & GLAM BY TATIANA AGUSTIN
& JON DOMINIQUE ROA

A way of life is how Cambridge defines culture. It transcends mere words and abstract ideas – so encompassing of a definition that it’s even considered a vibrant force that permeates every aspect of our existence, molding our identities, influencing our beliefs, and fueling our ambitions.

In this edition we bring out the unique and lived cultural experiences of eleven JCI Philippines’ Sidlak presidents hailing from a diverse and heritage-rich region of Central Visayas. Each piece of their shared stories forms part of who they are and the brand of leadership they carry out today as heads of their respective local organizations.

Wearing unique masterpieces of Cebuano fashion designers, let’s see through the lens of these servant-leaders who, halfway through their terms, have been making waves in creating positive change across the region and among their adopted communities. In an impromptu interview, we found out how celebrating culture means to them and its relevance in today’s world.

What Visayan culture are you most proud of? Why?

Pres. JM, JCI Mandaue: For me it, it’s the religiosity among the Visayans especially that two of the biggest religious festivals are celebrated in the area. We have Sinulog in Cebu and Ati-Atihan in Aklan. Through these festivals people get to experience the other facets of culture such as food, music, literature and Visayan hospitality.

Pres. Jessica, JCI Zugbuana: I should say I am proud of our strong foundation in terms of religion. In terms of showing our beliefs, we are really fair among all religions and it’s eminent by the support or tolerance each faith shows towards others. Catholics are naturally free to celebrate but so are Muslims here in Cebu.

Pres. Marc, JCI Cebu: I think the common culture in the Visayas is socializing over drinks. We’re quite social butterflies yet our feet is always on the ground – meaning we connect with other people based on their likes and dislikes so people can easily open up to us.

Can you share with us a unique culture that your hometown is known for?

Pres. JM, JCI Mandaue: I am from Mandaue and it’s really known to be a business/industrial hub in the country. I can say that the Mandauehanon’s drive to innovate and develop its industry has already become a culture of the city.

Pres. Jessica, JCI Zugbuana: Growing up in Cebu City, we fell in love with the island...I know there’s traffic and all because we’re living in a city but if we want to relax or get into an adventure we have very accessible islands, nearby mountains, and beautiful beaches as well. It’s really just easy for us to put ourselves in a culture of a balanced lifestyle.

Pres. Marc, JCI Cebu: Well I think it’s how we party! It’s very evident with how we drink, how we socialize with other people. If you want to know where the party is, it’s always in Cebu City.

Similarly, can you share with us a unique culture in your local organization that is worth keeping?

Pres. JM, JCI Mandaue: JCI Mandaue has a lot of practices and traditions that up to this day are being observed and I can’t even pin point a specific one. I’ve been to multiple inductions already and without any bias or anything, just my own opinion... I think JCI M has somehow and at some point, set standards on certain practices. But more importantly, we value our members in the chapter... we may have disagreements but we are one and we look after each other. We value discipline, thus, we’re strict with protocols and branding so when a Merry Man walks inside a room, he carries with him the Mandaue brand and becomes a reflection of the Mandaue culture.

Pres. Jessica, JCI Zugbuana: You know there are a lot... You may brand us to be prim and proper, plus our defined gestures but for me, I want expose what I really love from our internal practice. I’m in love with how balanced the [Zugbuana] girls are and on how we communicate our passions and advocacy, which is the love for service. It’s my chance now to tell the other chapters that the “Zugs” are really focused on the heart of service... I feel the need to highlight service because we often forget that it’s our common ground and not the recognition or the rewards system at play. So hopefully we can enlighten everyone that JCI is not just an ordinary organization – we’re pushing for the quality of our service.

Pres. Marc, JCI Cebu: On our end, we are a group of varieties in our local chapter. What I really value in JCI Cebu is we are very respectful to other people... their mindsets, their ideas... and regardless of who we talk to, we treat them with respect. Cebu Inc may be “pasaway” but we practice tolerance and ultimately, respect.

In this day and age, do you think it is still important to celebrate culture? Why so?

Pres. JM, JCI Mandaue: It is really important to celebrate culture. It’s affiliated with people and even if cultures change or evolve, knowing and understanding where we come from and the people who created the culture we celebrate now, should humble us down.

Pres. Jessica, JCI Zugbuana: Of course! I think it shouldn’t even be a question anymore. [In the context of JCI] It’s our way to acknowledge those that came before us – members, BODs, past presidents and appreciate their efforts; for if not for them, the chapter wouldn’t be thriving.

Pres. Marc, JCI Cebu: I think it is very important because it will portray who we truly are...it is celebrating where we came from, and also celebrating what we want to do in the future.

How do you celebrate culture?

Pres. JM, JCI Mandaue: We have a lot of ways to do so. People can participate in forums, visit exhibits. Actually now [as a local organization], with our photoshoot, we are already celebrating culture. We invited presidents of LOs in Central Visayas in the hopes of appreciating and understanding their cultures better.

Pres. Jessica, JCI Zugbuana: There’s a lot of aspects in culture but if I’ll relate this to JCI, for me, the starting point of celebrating our culture as a chapter is through our induction. It’s the biggest expression of showing others our brand and culture.

Pres. Marc, JCI Cebu: JCI Cebu is celebrating its 75th year this year. Next month [June], we will be showcasing and appreciating what JCI Cebu has truly built over the years and what we can still do in the years after.

What Visayan culture are you most proud of? Why?

Pres. Matt, JCI Cebu Lakan Bahaghari: Actually, the Visayan culture that I am most fascinated with is the culture of collaboration. When one need needs something, it is available within our network – there's that sense of family.

Pres. Lara Mariah, JCI Bohol Limestone: I think as a Boholana and as you have known Bohol, we have so many fiestas especially this May. This is very reflective of the Visayan hospitality.

Pres. Lara Tricia, JCI WoMandaue: It's definitely the religious culture. I'm a devout Catholic myself and I'm the type who doesn't easily open up when I have problems. It's the faith that helps me a lot. No matter how partygoers Cebuano are, people here will always be drawn to faith.

Can you share with us a unique culture that your hometown is known for?

Pres. Matt, JCI Cebu Lakan Bahaghari: Basing on the community I belong to in Lapu-Lapu City, it's the ability to judge things before integrating it to our lives. When new things arrive in Lapu-Lapu, we don't automatically embrace it but we go back to our traditional self and see if it is something we want to pursue or move forward with, or we go back to where we are loyal to. The culture of Lapu-Lapu exists and focuses on not jumping into the modernity and sparkles of innovation.

Pres. Lara Mariah, JCI Bohol Limestone: I am from Garcia Hernandez, that's an hour away from Tagbilaran. Aside from being hospitable, we are a very friendly and helpful people. There was even a vlogger who went to our town asking for help from a person who happened to have less in life and received help. I was so happy seeing that video and it made us Garcianhons proud..

Pres. Lara Tricia, JCI WoMandaue: I grew up in a coastal barangay in Mandaue so I've known our area for its culture in fishing even if it's not that big of an industry. Also, Mandaue is also into sports.

Similarly, can you share with us a unique culture in your local organization that is worth keeping?

Pres. Matt, JCI Cebu Lakan Bahaghari: Everything is worth keeping in my local organization, but one thing that we decided and focused on...is the culture of being unapologetic. There is truth, there is freedom, there is self-worth when you are unapologetic. Although as negative as it may sound, but being unapologetic means that you know yourself. We are strong because we know ourselves.

Pres. Lara Mariah, JCI Bohol Limestone: You know our local organization is not as big as Mandaue. We are a small LO and has even died and was revived twice, yet we are now

thriving. What I noticed is that we have developed a culture of showing up. Even in group chats you'll see meager to no response but in the actual activity, there will be members who will show up – you need not push so hard but our members will really participate.

Pres. Lara Tricia, JCI WoMandaue: For me it's sisterhood and empowering women. Had I not joined WoMandaue, I would not have met like-minded people at some point. We may not have unique interests but we are an empowered bunch who can really stand on our own feet.

In this day and age, do you think it is still important to celebrate culture? Why so?

Pres. Matt, JCI Cebu Lakan Bahaghari: Oh yes! I think culture encompasses time. I think culture encompasses age. To answer your question, knowing, understanding and accepting your true self and belonging to a community who has that culture is something people of this age should learn to do because when you have a community that has a culture that is accepting of you, it's so easy to grow, it's easy to embrace yourself as you embrace others.

Pres. Lara Mariah, JCI Bohol Limestone: Yes! I think celebrating culture is also celebrating the people within the organization. It's important for the next generation to maintain it otherwise it will be forgotten.


Pres. Lara Tricia, JCI WoMandaue: Empowering women is a culture in WoMandaue. So yes, it is important that we celebrate it to show others that we can stand alone regardless of our backgrounds. It will also inspire other women and send a message that we can thrive with or without partners in life.

How do you celebrate culture?

Pres. Matt, JCI Cebu Lakan Bahaghari: Oooh! Just be yourself! There would be other flowery words to celebrate culture but culture is who we are; how we live; how we talk, we embrace, we understand, we learn, we do things. So, by just being who we are and belonging to people who are also themselves, that's already celebrating culture.

Pres. Lara Mariah, JCI Bohol Limestone: Celebrating culture in general means you have to apply it within yourself and then share to others to have a domino effect. I always believe that things should always start from one's self.

Pres. Lara Tricia, JCI WoMandaue: Just by being a member in our organization alone is already celebrating culture much so in inspiring other women to be empowered.



*“.. one thing that we
decided and focused on...
is the culture of being
unapologetic. There is truth,
there is freedom, there is self-worth
when you are unapologetic.*

-Pres. Matt

JCI Cebu Lakan Bahaghari

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*“We are a small LO
and has even died
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culture of showing up.”*

*-Pres. Lara Mariah
JCI Bohol Limestone*

*“..we are a women
and LGBT chapter...
We are very fun,
creative, and colorful.
That’s our brand.”*

*-Pres. Deb
JCI Boholana Kisses*

*“..we also practice by heart
all the cultures and traditions
of JCI Cebu Sinulog.
More importantly
we always believe in God.*

*-Pres. Nel
JCI Cebu Sinulog*

*“JCI Cebu-Mactan Channel is
a local organization for everyone...
we have maintained it
in our culture to accept members
so long as they are committed
to become a better person.*

*-Pres. Abby
JCI Cebu-Mactan Channel*

What Visayan culture are you most proud of? Why?

Pres. Deb, JCI Boholona Kisses: For me, it's the food. Visayas is known for a lot of delicacies like Bohol has "matam-is nga kinapay". Our culture here is mixed but we meet in the middle through food.

Pres. Nel, JCI Cebu Sinulog: To me, teamwork is embedded in our culture even in the colonial past. In modern times and in the context of JCI, JCI Mandaue alongside JCI Cebu Sinulog and other partners espouse teamwork by helping communities in the area.

Pres. Abby, JCI Cebu-Mactan Channel: I really think it's the religion. As you can see, in Cebu alone, we have so many devotees of Sr. Sto Niño and Mama Mary and this, too, is reflective in all of the Visayas.

Can you share with us a unique culture that your hometown is known for?

Pres. Deb, JCI Boholona Kisses: I won't go far from our chapter name, Boholona Kisses. It was derived from Bohol's famous delicacy which is the peanut kisses that is produced in Tagbilaran City. It is a staple pasalubong when you go to Bohol aside from kinampay.

Pres. Nel, JCI Cebu Sinulog: What's unique about people in Moalboal (paternal hometown), is that they don't put their money in the banks. They store it at home, say in a box. So whenever there's direct selling for example, they can easily get that money in that box. One proof of this is that they don't believe in the banks. What they believe is they can use the money quickly to help the poor for example or buy necessities.

Pres. Abby, JCI Cebu-Mactan Channel: I grew up in the city center of Cebu so I can say that it's the party culture that's unique here.

Similarly, can you share with us a unique culture in your local organization that is worth keeping?

Pres. Deb, JCI Boholona Kisses: Maybe it's the members and people in the chapter because in Bohol, we are a women and LGBT chapter. Knowing the LGBT people, we are very fun. But for the record, I'm an ally. LOL! We are very fun, creative, and colorful. That's our brand.

Pres. Nel, JCI Cebu Sinulog: This is so good to share because we also practice by heart all the cultures and traditions of JCI Cebu Sinulog. More importantly we always believe in God. I think this is pretty much evident in our chapter's name, and Sinulog by tradition is a celebration of God because historically the source of our belief is the Sr. Sto. Niño, the baby Jesus. We believe in the divine providence that even if we suffer as a nation, we can rise from it through faith.

Pres. Abby, JCI Cebu-Mactan Channel: We can say that JCI Cebu-Mactan Channel is a local organization for everyone. Regardless of your personal or professional background and gender, we have maintained it in our culture to accept members so long as they are committed to become a better person.

In this day and age, do you think it is still important to celebrate culture? Why so?

Pres. Deb, JCI Boholona Kisses: Yeah, because as time goes by there are some parts of our culture that we tend to forget. We celebrate it to remind everyone, to remind ourselves of our identity and what we are fighting for.

Pres. Nel, JCI Cebu Sinulog: Yes, it's always essential to celebrate culture because we are a product of the different accomplishments of our forefathers, of our parents. This also goes to say that this is also to rekindle the spirit and the products of the different leaders of the past.

Pres. Abby, JCI Cebu-Mactan Channel: For me yes. Our cultures in JCI as different LOs may differ, but in celebrating each, we also celebrate diversity. It's nice to know how we differ in terms of our branding or culture in general but in a way that celebrates our identities.

How do you celebrate culture?

Pres. Deb, JCI Boholona Kisses: Culture is very broad and I could think of several ways on how to celebrate it. But as a Boholana, we should start with ourselves and our hometown. We have to promote what we have and instill to the next generation the culture that we practice. I personally don't want lose the practice of Bohol's month-long fiesta celebrations come May.

Pres. Nel, JCI Cebu Sinulog: I celebrate culture by making people aware of the unique traditions and culture of our organization, and of course JCI as a whole.

Pres. Abby, JCI Cebu-Mactan Channel: For me it's about adaptability; the way you adapt to the environment. Whether in JCI or not, I feel that we can celebrate each other's culture when we're welcoming and adaptive.

What Visayan culture are you most proud of? Why?

Pres. Nick, JCI Bohol Sandugo: I think we Visayans are known for our hospitality – how we take care of others, how we take care of our visitors especially that the Visayas is a tourism hub in the Philippines. We always want to extend that welcoming spirit to our visitors.

Pres. Anna, JCI Cebu Tycoons: I would say it's the warmth; the warm experience that you'll get here in the Visayas especially in Cebu since it's the center or heart of the Philippines. It's a hub for anything and everything.

Can you share with us a unique culture that your hometown is known for?

Pres. Nick, JCI Bohol Sandugo: Tagbilaran is known to be the city of friendship so I think we're known to be a really friendly city and of course our food and fiestas from April to May.

Pres. Anna, JCI Cebu Tycoons: I'm born and raised in Cebu City and I think it's the food. The diversity in the culinary experience of Cebu, because the nice thing about it is that we have our own delicacies, the local cuisines, the local way of cooking things. But then Cebu is very much welcome to doing explorations and we have a wide variety of food.

Similarly, can you share with us a unique culture in your local organization that is worth keeping?

Pres. Nick, JCI Bohol Sandugo: I dare say it's our brotherhood and how we bond. As a revival organization, we are still trying to build up that culture wherein we don't have that much projects yet, we don't have lots of projects yet, but we're trying to concentrate in building camaraderie in our brotherhood.

Pres. Anna, JCI Cebu Tycoons: We realized that our chapter is keen on making our local organization going global. That's why even on our first year now, we're really highlighting and working on international cooperation and international collaborations. We're very happy that just last week we signed our sisterhood with JCI Malaysia.

In this day and age, do you think it is still important to celebrate culture? Why so?

Pres. Nick, JCI Bohol Sandugo: Yes, I think it is. By celebrating culture, we can preserve it. And maybe by showing it to others maybe they can see what best practices to copy or adopt... Bohol chapters are really friendly and

chill to be with and it's nice if we can preserve and even share it.

Pres. Anna, JCI Cebu Tycoons: Yes, it's very important to celebrate culture because it's always the heritage and the knowledge of where you come from so you can move forward better. If you'll forget your past and how you became as a person or a local organization, it will still be useless later on. It also helps you become grounded too.

How do you celebrate culture?

Pres. Nick, JCI Bohol Sandugo: I think in order to celebrate your own culture you should be practicing it as well -- learn and teach by doing. We shouldn't be afraid to get our hands dirty but just be an example to others. It's difficult if we won't walk the talk.

Pres. Anna, JCI Cebu Tycoons: We celebrate culture, number one, by enjoying and sharing what we have. It's always being proud and being happy of where we come from... I think in the little details, in the small conversations that we have, we ourselves are the best representations of our culture.

After these conversations, it's really easy to conclude that we indeed live and breathe culture. It is the lifeblood that flows through communities that nurtures our collective spirit as an organization and society in general.

Indeed, culture is a treasure trove of wisdom, creativity, and connection – values that are developed, JCI members or not, across the globe. The late Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago once said "...our country needs really is a sense of shared destiny." It is by sharing the same mission and vision that we accomplish scaled results in addressing the communities' never-ending needs. And by appreciating, embracing, and understanding culture, we unlock the doorways to empathy, mutual respect, and a promising future.

It is said that no culture can live if it attempts to be exclusive. Thus together, let us celebrate and preserve the rich tapestry of cultures that adorn our world. For in so doing, we embark on a remarkable journey of self-discovery, appreciation, and ultimately shape a shared destiny.

A man and a woman are posed against a dark blue background. The man, on the left, is wearing a cream-colored zip-up jacket with intricate gold embroidery on the front and dark trousers. The woman, on the right, is wearing a white dress with a vibrant floral pattern and a sheer, light-colored skirt. She is smiling and resting her chin on her hand.

*“We realized that
our chapter is keen
on making our
local organization
going global.”*

*-Pres. Anna
JCI Cebu Tycoons*

*“Bohol chapters are really friendly
and chill to be with and it’s nice
if we can preserve and even share it.”*

*-Pres. Nick
JCI Bohol Sandugo*



From left
JCI Boholana Kisses LO President *Deb Jomarleh Uchang* in *Alejandro Godinez Jr.*,
JCI Cebu Simulog LO President *Atty. Nel Ediza* in *Mike Yapching*,
JCI Cebu-Mactan Channel LO President *Abby Setenia* in *Edward James Castro*,
JCI Cebu Tycoons LO President *Anna Maglasang-Yared* in *Bree Esplanada*,
JCI Bohol Sandugo LO President *Nicklous Batausa* in *Alejandro Godinez Jr.*



From left
JCI Cebu LO President *Marc Peterson Ng* in *Mike Yapching*,
JCI Zugbuana LO President *Jessica Resch* in *Pinky Magalona*,
JCI Mandaue LO President *Josemaria Ylaya III* in *Edwin Ao*,
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THE FILIPINO SMILE: more than the usual

By Ignatius Borromeo Jr.
Local Skills Development Director
JCI Mandawe

One of the most used nonverbal communication technique among humans is a smile. It is a common and most noticeable facial display associated with various social and cultural functions. A smile universally and directly connotes feelings of happiness or joy. However, smiles can also be observed in various life situations. A smile influences how people interpret events that makes them happy or how they make of the situation. But one thing is for sure, people smile for various reasons and whatever that motivates them to do so remains to be a subject worthy of study by social anthropologists.

The smiler's motivation may be genuine friendliness or an intent to establish friendly relations. Social smiles appear to be direct behavioral expressions of positive emotional engagement.

" In the Filipino context, a smile is not only a facial display or expression, but a testament of one's humanity, a symbol of warmth, of hospitality and to aptly put it, a smile represents the heart of each Filipino. "

As our flag carrier puts it – the heart of the Filipino, worldwide. The smile is characteristic of many Filipinos. It has been assimilated in our culture that, even in most difficult situations, the Filipino smiles. The Filipino smile is as cultural as when a Japanese bows or a Thai clasps his hands. The Filipino smile does not always seem to signify happiness or pleasure, sometimes it is meant to show empathy or an

understanding of the person's situation. In fact, the Filipino smile is a sort of a mannerism.

In contrast, various countries around the world which have far achieved greater material prosperity than Filipinos, seem to have lost "humanity" – a decreased sense of togetherness and compassion for others, but never for Filipinos.

" Filipinos are generally happy people. We can smile in whatever situation. "

Our happy-go-lucky nature and positive mindset allow us to bounce back from the most dire of circumstances; from disasters, wars, and surely from any other situation. Because many Filipinos are non-confrontational, we use smiles to lighten the mood when discussing sensitive and controversial issues. Many Filipinos have indelible smiles on their faces so when foreign visitors get to meet Filipinos, we are always smiling even when sometimes it is deemed inappropriate. In ways more than one, Filipinos use a smile so as to "mask" our actual emotions. And we seem to get away with this all the time, having mastered such in our lifetime.

In fact, the Philippines having one to many festivals has a festival that "masks" the expression of its people – the MassKara Festival in Bacolod City. The festival was born in the 1980's during the time when the prices of sugar, the province's main agricultural crop and livelihood source, were at a record low following the introduction of sugar alternatives into the market.



The MassKara Festival was then created to bring back smiles and uplift the locals' spirits during those difficult times. The smiling masks used in the festival were a declaration of Bacolod locals' resilience in the face of challenges and tragedy, prompting the city to become known as the "City of Smiles." The festival name is a portmanteau of the words 'mass' (many) and 'kara' (faces), thus forming 'MassKara,' or the Festival of Many Faces. (Muzones)

" When smiles are used as an indicator of happiness, Philippines would never fall behind the world. "

In the 2023 survey of happiness by the World Happiness Report, the Philippines ranked 76th happiest – the second happiest people in Southeast Asia after Singapore. The list is led by Finland followed by other Scandinavian countries.

Since smiles play an integral part of Philippine society, one would surmise that smiles are here as a "one cure that fits all". A good set of teeth has never been an issue to a smiling Filipino. Every corner, every sitio you can find "tambays" smiling, all ready to help and aid. But what if the capacity to smile is hampered by a physical deformity?

The value Filipinos place on smiles calls for urgency on physical deformities associated with smiling – dentures and braces for teeth; surgery for cleft lip and palate to name a few.

While a smile may mean a lot of things, having a good one is associated often with happiness. And as a happy people, many Filipino philanthropists and volunteers work tirelessly during surgical missions to correct physical deformities that affect smiles – mostly, the cleft lip or palate.

MandaWe Smile

Non – government organizations such as the Cranio-facial Foundation of the Philippines, gathers a set of operating room staff to conduct such operations throughout the country. They are aided also by a wide spectrum of organizations such as Smile Train and Mabuhay Deseret Foundation, to mention a few.

As an organization which entrusts itself to develop future leaders, JCI Mandaue has taken steps to inculcate and expose its members to the rigors of community work and establishing working relationships with various non –

government, volunteer-based groups launched the MandaWe Smile program.

The main thrust of the program is to bring smiles to the cleft lip and palate patients who could potentially be scarred for life due to bullying later as they grow and go to school. Because afterall, an unimpeded smile is the best accessory one can carry.

" The MandaWe Smile Program is one also that springs to life the bayanihan spirit of the Filipinos. All with the aim to bring brighter smiles to all. "

The MandaWe Smile program is a testament that Filipinos have always had that sense of human enrichment through volunteer work resulting to happiness. This is most likely explained by our resilience and sense of contentment – sometimes to a fault. And yet, it is true that genuine happiness is derived from a life well-lived.

" What hides behind the Filipino smile? Who knows? Perhaps the diversity of our culture, the complexity of being a Filipino - the melting pot on this side of the world can help explain. "

Afterall, the Filipino
Smile
is nothing but
more than the usual. "



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IBP CEBU ANG BAHALA..

A SUGBUANON'S Faith

By Randolph Alburo
JCI Mandaue Member
Photos by Robo Godinez Formacion




Six years ago, I embarked on a life-changing journey to the United Kingdom, leaving behind my homeland in search of new opportunities and experiences. As an international educated nurse, I was filled with both excitement and trepidation as I prepared to join the renowned National Spinal Injuries Centre in the picturesque province of Buckinghamshire. Little did I know that this path would lead me on a profound personal and spiritual journey, forever intertwining my story with the unyielding faith of the warm and caring Cebuanos.

Reflecting on my days as a nursing student at the USP Foundation in Lahug, memories of a vibrant and devout community come flooding back. During my time there, my friends and classmates introduced me to the rich religious traditions of the Cebuanos. One such tradition was the 9-day novena in honor of the *Senyor Santo Niño de Cebu*, a time when we would gather at the Basilica to pay homage to this beloved figure. The culmination of this spiritual celebration was a solemn foot procession on a Saturday, where nursing students from across the province would join together, united in faith. The atmosphere was electric, with every faithful heart in Cebu coming together during this festive week that culminated on the third Sunday of January.

To truly appreciate the depth of Cebuano faith, we must travel back five hundred years to the year 1521. It was then that Ferdinand Magellan, a Portuguese explorer, arrived on the shores of Sugbu, accompanied by a Spanish fleet, with the intention of bringing Catholicism to this unknown corner of the world. During this encounter, a religious icon of immense significance, the *Ecce Homo*, was presented to the native Queen in exchange for her idols.



Ecce Homo
This iconic image, depicting the suffering Christ, remains as a testament to the enduring faith of the Cebuanos and stands as the second oldest religious icon in the Philippines.



Another symbol deeply intertwined with the spirit of Cebu is Magellan's Cross, which stands proudly between the Basilica Minore del Santo Niño de Cebu and the seat of power of Cebu City Government. For centuries, the Cebuanos have reverently worshipped this cross, believing it to have withstood the test of fire. It is interesting to note that during those early days, it was simply known as the "Cross of the Spaniards," yet it would later be referred to as Magellan's Cross.

The arrival of the Spanish explorers marked the beginning of Cebu's remarkable history as the birthplace of Catholicism in Asia.

The Cebuanos' devotion to the Mother of Our Redeemer has earned them the endearing title of

"pueblo amante de Maria" OR
"people in love with Mary."

Every Wednesday, devout worshippers flock to Ramon Aboitiz Street in Cebu City to express their reverence and love for the Blessed Mother. I still vividly remember accompanying my mother and grandmother on those Wednesday afternoons, entering the church filled with faithful men and women, but predominantly strong, resilient, and loving females. Their presence was a living embodiment of resilience, fortitude, and unwavering love.

The *Cebuano faithful*
are often likened to the
Child Jesus -
gentle, modest, and kind.

These qualities beautifully reflect the spirit of the people of Sugbu. Moreover, the stories of their resilience echo throughout the generations. Super typhoon Ruping's devastating impact in 1990, claiming countless lives and leaving a trail of destruction, showcased the unwavering strength of the Cebuanos as they rose from the rubble. Similarly, the recent onslaught of Bagyong Odette, which ravaged the Queen City of the South and unleashed unimaginable flash floods in the province, proved the indomitable spirit of the Cebuanos once again. Despite the immense suffering and loss, the Cebuanos refused to let these calamities extinguish the joy and celebration of the birth of Christ during the height of Christmas. Their unwavering faith allowed them to find solace in the darkest of times.

A definitive testament to the Cebuano faith and devotion lies in the vibrant Simulog Festival, celebrated shortly after Christmas and New Year. The festive atmosphere that engulfs the city during this time beckons Filipinos from all corners of the country, and even overseas balikbayans like myself, to return home and join in the annual Simulog revelries. It is during this festival that the Cebuanos pay homage to the Solemnity of the Child Jesus. The streets of Cebu come alive with an unimaginable energy and vibrant spirit. Vividly colored banners of yellow and red adorn every corner, marking the beginning of the highly anticipated and cherished Fiesta Señor.



Have you ever heard the
resounding chants of "*Pit Señor*"
that echo throughout the land?
Or witnessed the collective waving
of hands as we sing the
Bato Balani sa Gugma?

*These unique expressions of faith distinguish us as a people
amidst a nation with a fragmented past.*

Faith, as I have been taught, is believing even when we have not seen or touched. Faith is showing respect to every person we encounter, regardless of social class or stature. Faith, for me, is loving without expecting anything in return. The faith of the Cebuanos is simple, yet at times, it may get drowned out by the cacophony of daily life. Nevertheless, we persist as a beacon of hope for one another, letting our narrative serve as a clarion call for success and optimism. ***We continue to hope, pray, and proudly exhibit our unwavering devotion and FAITH to the world.***






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A man with short dark hair, wearing a black t-shirt with a yellow and red graphic that says "Padayon Bisaya", is sitting in the center of the frame. The background is white with black musical notes and a treble clef scattered around. The title "THE MAN BEHIND OUR FAVORITE BISAYA JAMS" is written in large, bold, yellow capital letters at the top. To the right of the man, there is a byline and a quote.

THE MAN BEHIND OUR FAVORITE BISAYA JAMS

BY Fei Ruby Mercado
Sugbo.ph Writer

“Behind some
of our beloved
Bisaya songs,
one man
stands as the
composer.”

In the world of music, there are stars who take center stage and captivate audiences with their voices, while others prefer to stay behind the scenes, pouring their hearts and souls into the melodies and lyrics that touch our very core.

Jude Gitamondoc, the brilliant mind behind a lot of our favorite Bisaya songs, is one such individual who chooses to let his music speak for itself. But what mysteries are hidden by this musical genius whose songs can speak to our souls and ignite our emotions?

Tracing the roots of the spark

At just six years old, Gitamondoc's fascination with art ignited when his brother brought home a keyboard. Little did he know that this humble instrument would set him on a lifelong journey to compose melodies and lyrics cherished by many.

Fueled by his musical dreams, Gitamondoc joined the Don Bosco Missionary Seminary in Talisay, Cebu. Under the guidance of musically inclined Salesian administrators, he refined his songwriting skills and delved into the intricacies of the craft. The spark grew stronger in him, and it became the bedrock of his future contributions to the vibrant Bisaya music scene.

After leaving the seminary, Gitamondoc sought further musical education and enrolled in the College of Music at the University of the Philippines. However, he soon realized that the curriculum leaned heavily toward avant garde music while his passion lay in the pop genre.

“Not one to conform to the norm, he made the courageous decision to follow his heart and venture into the vibrant world of Bisaya music.”

What is music to Gitamondoc?

For Gitamondoc, music is deeply personal.

For him, Bisaya music encapsulates the very essence and spirit of the Bisaya people, which he believes sets it apart from other genres and what makes it a genre itself.

Despite potential language barriers, there's an undeniable resonance within these songs, connecting listeners to the core emotions and experiences of the singers.

The songwriter did acknowledge that in recent years, there has been a decline in songs composed in the language, as many artists strive to create music in English, believing it to be more universally appealing and likely to gain more attention.

However, Gitamondoc stresses the importance of young artists taking risks and embracing their true selves. By crafting songs that reflect personal experiences, they forge a genuine connection with their audience, fostering authenticity and fulfillment.

Gitamondoc's contributions to the Bisaya music scene cannot be overstated. Despite his preference for staying behind the scenes, his talent shines through the melodies and lyrics that have become embedded in the hearts of countless fans.

His work is a testament to the fact that success in the music industry is not solely measured by fame and fortune but by the profound impact one's music has on the lives of others.

The composer's final verdict.

In the music industry, where the road to success is not definite, and the path requires you to take risks, Gitamondoc remains steadfast in his belief that as long as artists stay true to themselves and create music that resonates with their souls, they can never truly fail.

Through his dedication, humility, and unwavering passion for Bisaya music, Jude Gitamondoc has become a significant contributor to the industry, shaping the landscape and leaving an indelible mark on the hearts of listeners.

So the next time you find yourself having a muni-muni session to the comical but captivating melodies of "Hahahasula" by Kurt Fick or "Pero Atik Ra" by Jacky Chang, remember that behind these songs lies the genius of Jude Gitamondoc —

a man who has dedicated his life to crafting music that speaks to our souls, even if he chooses to remain in the shadows.



A man in a yellow suit is shown from the chest up, smiling slightly. He is wearing a white shirt and a yellow tie. Overlaid on his chest and torso is large, bold, 3D red text that reads "ONE BIG STEP AT A TIME". The text is arranged in four lines: "ONE", "BIG", "STEP", and "AT A TIME". The letters are thick and have a slight shadow, giving them a three-dimensional appearance. The background is a plain, light-colored surface.

**ONE
BIG
STEP
AT A
TIME**

2024

SUGBUANONG LILAS: GARBO UG PAGLAUM

By Dan Sy Lopez
Actor | Writer Director

In the vibrant landscape of the Philippine film industry, Sugbuanon Lilas, or Cebuano Films, have emerged as a significant cultural force. Hailing from the beautiful province of Cebu, these films embody the unique essence of the Cebuano people and their stories. With their distinct flavor and compelling narratives, Sugbuanon Lilas has become a source of pride for Cebuanos and a testament to the artistic prowess of the region. From its humble beginnings to the present, Cebuano films have carved a niche in the industry and continue to captivate audiences with their authenticity and resilience.

The history of Cebuano films is indeed rich and diverse.

Visayan-language movies saw two golden ages: From 1947 to the late '50s. It was ushered in by the rise of the Cebuano language as medium of popular culture with the 1970s Cebuano blockbuster, "Ang Manok ni San Pedro." "Ang Manok ni San Pedro" provided a valuable roadmap for contemporary Cebuano filmmakers. The first Cebuano-language film, "Kasalanan ni Pudong," was produced in the early 1940s and directed by Carlos Cabanos. In the following decades, Cebuano films continued to flourish with notable productions such as "Gimingaw Ako" and "Kilabot sa Sugbo," capturing the hearts of audiences and establishing a distinct identity for Cebuano cinema.

The 1980s marked a turning point with the emergence of Cebuano filmmakers like Kidlat Tahimik, whose film "Mababangong Bangangot" garnered international recognition. The advent of digital technology in the late 1990s further opened doors for

Cebuano filmmakers to explore new storytelling techniques and reach wider audiences. With the rise of independent film festivals and the support of local organizations, Cebuano films have gained momentum, showcasing the region's unique narratives and cultural heritage.

The Cebuano film industry is home to a talented pool of individuals who have made significant contributions to the world of cinema.

Among the notable personalities in the contemporary Cebuano film industry are a group of visionary directors who have been instrumental in shaping the local film landscape.

Remton Siega Zuasola, known for his critically acclaimed film "Ang Damgo ni Eleuteria," has garnered international recognition for his thought-provoking storytelling and unique cinematic style.

Victor Villanueva, another esteemed director, has made a name for himself with films like "Patay Na Si Hesus," which earned him accolades for its refreshing blend of humor and poignant narratives.

Kenneth Dagatan, **Sam Constanilla**, and **Direk Bee** are also revered directors in the Cebuano film scene, each known for their distinctive directorial approaches and ability to capture the essence of Cebuano culture in their works.

In addition to the talented directors, the Cebuano film industry boasts a talented group of actors who have graced the screen with their remarkable performances.

Dan Sy Lopez, known for his versatility and natural acting ability, has impressed audiences with his portrayals in films such as "The Last Push" and "Bahandi." Lopez who is also an award winning actor with vast local and international recognition.





Elena Jurado, the first Filipino star in Hollywood, has left a lasting impact on Cebuano & international cinema with her powerful performances in films like "White Hands" and "What Price Glory."

Gloria Sevilla, an icon in Philippine cinema, has showcased her acting prowess in numerous Cebuano films, earning her the title of **Queen of Visayan Movies**.

Chai Fonacier, a rising star in the industry, has captivated audiences with her unique charm and exceptional acting skills, as seen in her notable performances in films like "**Patay Na Si Hesus**" and "**Nocebo**".

These actors, along with many others, have played a vital role in bringing Cebuano cinema to the forefront and showcasing the rich storytelling traditions of the region.

However, the journey of Cebuano films has not been without its challenges.

In today's age, these films face various obstacles that hinder their growth and recognition. Limited access to funding, distribution channels, and mainstream platforms pose significant hurdles for Cebuano filmmakers. Additionally, the dominance of Manila-based productions in the Philippine film industry often overshadows the talents and stories originating from the regions. Despite these obstacles, Cebuano filmmakers remain undeterred, determined to overcome the odds and bring their unique narratives to the forefront.

Despite the challenges, there is hope for the future of Cebuano films.

The industry is experiencing a resurgence, with filmmakers and organizations striving to revive and promote Cebuano cinema. The rise of independent film festivals, such as the Sinulog Film Festival and Cebu International Film Festival, has provided platforms for Cebuano filmmakers to showcase their works and gain recognition. Additionally, the increasing support from local audiences and the rise of online platforms offer opportunities for wider distribution and accessibility. With a renewed sense of pride and determination, Cebuano filmmakers are breathing life back into the industry, ensuring that Sugbuanong Lilas continues to shine as a vibrant cultural gem.

Cebuano films, or Sugbuanong Lilas, hold a special place in the Philippine film industry. Despite the challenges faced, the industry is evolving, and notable personalities are making their mark, highlighting the rich tapestry of Cebuano culture.

Through their resilience and creativity, Cebuano filmmakers are regaining the spotlight, instilling hope for a future where their stories will be cherished and celebrated.

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Eat, Pray, Love Local:

Cebu Businesses That Promote Local Identity

By Patricia S. Cruz
Sugbo.ph Managing Editor

What does it mean to truly *"love and support local?"*

The phrase "Mahalin ang sariling atin" resonates deeply within our Filipino hearts. However, in the midst of a globalized world, it's essential to pause and reflect: Are we truly living up to this mantra? Loving and supporting our own go beyond purchasing locally made products – it's also about supporting the livelihood of others and embracing our cultural heritage.

In today's era, where international products monopolize the market, it's high time we shed light on our homegrown gems. Join us as we delve into the realm of Cebuano-made businesses and services that embody the true essence of loving and supporting local. These stories are of those who have passionately devoted themselves to showcasing the beauty and uniqueness of Cebu.

Balik Batik:

Making Traditional Filipino Designs
Wearable Any Day, Every Day

"What we wear is an extension of who we are. Clothing is not just about fashion, it is also part of our tradition."

Thus, it is time to slowly bring back what was an integral part of Filipino traditions — Filipino Traditional Clothing, and this time, making it wearable any day, every day.

Balik Batik, a Cebuano clothing business, is reintroducing the beauty of Filipino Traditional designs. This social enterprise collaborates with indigenous groups and weaving communities to create modern clothing pieces and accessories, showcasing the traditional and cultural designs of indigenous artisans.

Each piece is made from handwoven and embroidered fabric, including their recent denim jacket with traditional embroidery. Veronica Baguio, the founder, and owner of Balik Batik, started the business during the pandemic, driven by her background in education and the desire to raise appreciation and awareness of traditional weaving.

"Fashion is a way to express yourself. For us, it's important to promote the idea that you express oneself as a Filipino with Filipino fabrics."

- Veronica Baguio, Founder

Balik Batik not only sells products but also supports and promotes the livelihoods of indigenous communities. Fashion holds great significance for Filipino indigenous people, as their clothing represents their identity.

With global orders from the Netherlands, the US, Singapore, and Italy, Balik Batik is successfully bridging cultures through the promotion of designs.



Introducing Cebu's first Hawker Center, The Barracks. The open-air complex is home to different vendors showcasing unique products and services. No matter which way you turn your heads, you are greeted by tons of food options.

The Barracks is a new favorite spot where Sugboanons and tourists gather for great meals with a live band performance every night.

"Yes, makita jud nga mahimo ning suod nga tourist stop kay tungod daghan ug mga stalls. Dako kaayo nig tabang namo sa mga nag start palang mag food business", one of the vendors expressed.

Aside from food stalls, there are also booths that sell bamboo-made products, handwoven baskets, fans, bags, and more.

"The Barracks is indeed shaping Cebu's local food scene as different food entrepreneurs take advantage of the area to introduce what they have to offer to the customers."



The Barracks: Cebu's First Hawker Center



Tig Saulog: Preserving Tradition and Livelihood All-Year Round

If you have been to Cebu, particularly to the Basilica Menore del Sto. Niño de Cebu, you've probably seen ladies walking around with candles asking, "Pa sayaw mo, ma'am, sir?" These ladies are called "tindera Simulog." They perform "Sinulog" to those who ask for their service. The tindersas chant and dance the favors people pray and ask from Senior Sto. Niño.

Ate April, a Tindera Simulog and a single mom, expressed that what they do is already a tradition in Cebu, especially during simulog. She also said that Simulog is the most-awaited event for Tindersas because many people ask for "pasayaw".

Tindera Simulog goes far beyond just tradition; it is also the livelihood of the women who perform it. It is even the livelihood that's passed from one generation to another.

"Ang akong Lola, nipuli niya ang akong mama, unya ang ni puli sa akong mama kay ako. Sunod ani ang mupuli sa akoka kay ang akong mga anak puhon." - Ate April.

"Ang among services murag ug dagat, naay hunas naay taob", this was what Ate April said when asked about their livelihood.

"Loving local means supporting the livelihood of those keeping traditions alive."

Sugbo.ph Well deserving of the spotlight,



Taking pride as a top online magazine company in Cebu that promotes Philippine tourism through engaging content, Sugbo.ph has become an avenue for the promotion of what's truly local.

With a Facebook following and monthly readership of over 1 million, Sugbo.ph echoes the voices of those that are proudly Cebuano by showcasing various landmarks, cultures, products, businesses, and personalities. Through the platform, people can appreciate and immerse themselves in the beauty that Cebu has to offer.

"I'm humbled by the extraordinary success that Sugbo.ph has achieved over the years. Through the team's dedication to showcasing Cebu's finest, Sugbo.ph has become a transformative force, inspiring and empowering our community. This is just the beginning of our remarkable journey in helping elevate the local scene to the world." - Ram Mancelita, Founder

By creating captivating content that sparks conversations, Sugbo.ph has established itself as the premier digital magazine in Cebu as it continues to share the magnificence of the Queen City of the South, one content at a time.

"To love and support local means to love and support our people."

Purchasing and using locally-made products is one step closer to helping vendors, businesses, and fellow Filipinos. And, of course, our love for our own is the thread that weaves the tapestry of our cultural identity.

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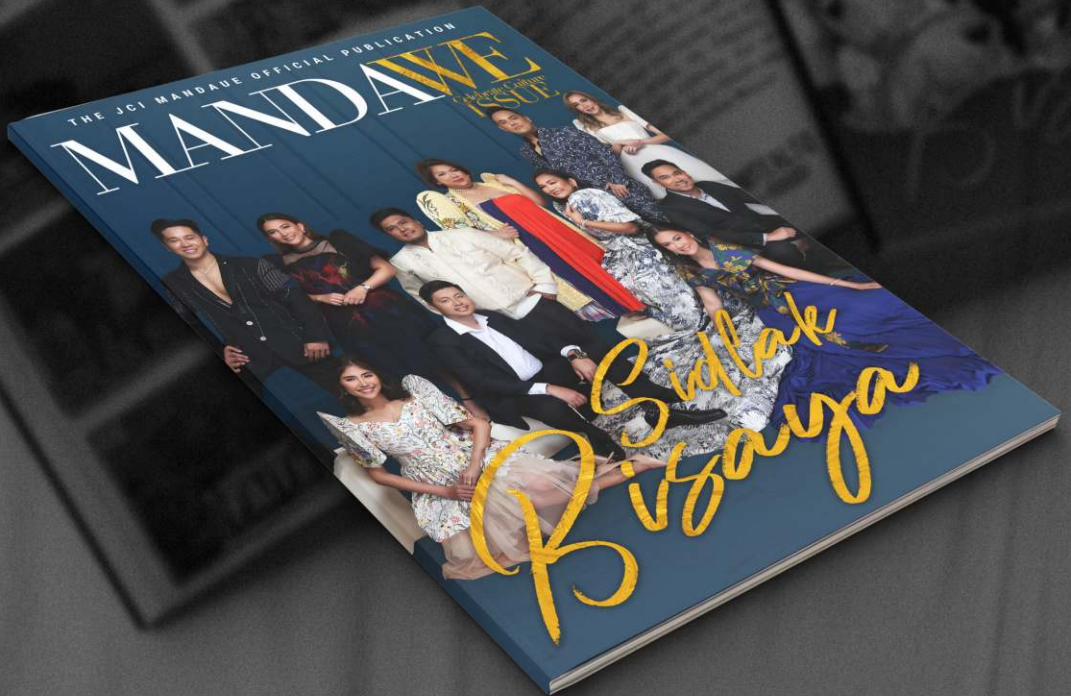
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That faith in God gives meaning and purpose to human life;

That the brotherhood of man transcends the sovereignty of nations;

That economic justice can best be won by free men through free enterprise;

That government should be of laws rather than of men;

That earth's great treasure lies in human personality;

And that service to humanity is the best work of life.

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