



BSU celebrates class of 2023, Sets New Record in Number and Latin Honors



A total of 1,502 graduates were conferred their diplomas at Benguet State University Gymnasium during the university's 98th Commencement Exercises on July 20-21, 2023. Apart from exceeding the previous year's total number of graduates, the '23 Class also surpassed the previous year's tally of 318 Latin honor recipients.

Since its founding, the university awarded this year 371 cum laude, 51 Magna cum laude, and the lone Summa cum laude of BSU in the person of Ms. Vjnhyl Zam A. Pondivida from the College of Information Sciences – Department of Development Communication, resulting in a total of 423 Latin honor graduates.

With the theme "Proceed with Passion, Progress in Precedence, Preside for Prosperity," BSU President Felipe Salaing Comila conveyed his shared delight and excitement in this momentous event in the lives of all the graduates.

"Tomorrow, the job is looking for you. You have made yourselves more marketable, more winsome, and more beautiful because you've dreamed about this some years ago and now, it has come to pass," he remarked.

Throughout the two-day event, distinguished speakers

shared life lessons, insights, and hard-earned truths derived from their personal journeys, which encompassed challenges, unexpected circumstances, and moments of adversity.

Ms. Kristine Molitas, representing Benguet Congressman Eric Go Yap, underscored three pivotal principles essential for navigating life: Passion, Perseverance, and Compassion.

According to her, it is crucial not only to fall in love with something but also to be able to look at it with admiration and constantly remind one's self why they fell in love with it in the first place. "Passion won't survive without perseverance," she said. She further stressed the importance of compassion in the way we deal with people and of linking our purpose to everything we do and not merely focusing on the work itself.

In addition, Senator Juan Edgardo "Sonny" M. Angara,

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First published in 1996, *Shamag* is one of the official publications of Benguet State University. It was named after the Ibaloi word for news. It is a medium for employees, clients, students and partners to disseminate their programs, achievements and advocacies. *Shamag* aims to help the University goals in developing proactive programs for quality service by developing effective and efficient innovative platforms for cascading information and strengthening public-private partnerships.

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VISION

BSU as an International Smart University engendering graduates to walk the intergenerational highways.

MISSION

BSU CARES to: **C**hallenge innovation, **A**dvance technology and facility, **R**evitalize administration, **E**ngender partnership, and **S**erve intergenerational role.

DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Goal I. Challenge Innovation in the four fold functions of the University

Objectives:

1. **(Instruction)** To provide quality education responsive to the needs of time;
2. **(Research)** To enhance research productivity contributing to sustainable development;
3. **(Extension)** To disseminate relevant research outputs and other scholarly activities consistent with BSU's mandated programs;
4. **(Production)** To promote sustainable and appropriate resource generation strategies for the implementation of development plans; and
5. **(Administration)** To advocate for resource management and effective energy efficiency in addressing the demands of climate change.

Goal II. Advance Technology and Facility by shaping the University become responsive to modern needs.

Objectives:

1. **(Instruction)** To use information and communication technology learning resources to sustain and enhance quality of alternative teaching - learning continuity endeavors;
2. **(Research and Extension)** To upgrade facilities and enable researchers/extensionists to conduct activities using specialized facilities;
3. **(Production)** To acquire and upgrade state-of-the-art facilities in the projects innovation; and
4. **(Administration)** To upgrade facilities and establish modern physical infrastructures.

Goal III. Revitalize Administration by harmonizing performance monitoring, information, and reporting systems.

Objectives:

1. To elevate the BSU PRIME-HRM to a level of excellence for good governance and efficient public service;
2. To reinforce transparency, integrity, and objectivity in the delivery of service;
3. To regenerate instruction, research, extension, production, linkages, governance, management, and policies; and
4. To streamline operations to be efficient, effective, and responsive to challenges and changes.

Goal IV. Engender Partnership by proactively strengthening linkages

Objectives:

1. **(Instruction)** To establish academic partnerships with local, regional, national, and international institutions providing educational opportunities for faculty, staff, and students;
2. **(Research)** To increase and sustain university relations with academe, industries, GOs, NGOs, and LGUs for research funding;
3. **(Extension)** To increase and sustain partnership with academe, LGUs, NGOs, Industries, and others; and
4. **(Production)** To comply with existing laws, policies and other requirements.

Goal V. Serve Intergenerational Role by revitalizing the Spiritual, Physical, Economical, Cultural, Intellectual, Emotional, and Social (S.P.E.C.I.E.S.) state.

Objectives:

1. To offer programs that embody social, cultural, economic and developmental needs both for local and global markets;
2. To champion local culture and languages in the University context through research, extension, and academic programs;
3. To document best practices of the University.

AdCo Action No. 03, s.2021

Quality Policy

Benguet State University is continuously committed to improve its Quality Management System, satisfy requirements of relevant interested parties and provide excellent service for quality education and innovative research aligned with sustainable development and client satisfaction.

Board Resolution # 2847 S.2016

BSU Bokod Recognizes Achievers and Marks 49th Commencement Exercises

Benguet State University-Bokod Campus recognized its achievers for the year 2023 and marked its 49th Commencement Exercises on July 11-12, 2023 with the theme "Proceed with Passion, Progress in Precedence, Preside for Prosperity."

The 56 achievers with their parents and guardians proudly took the stage during the Student Recognition and Achievement Program 2023 on July 11, 2023, at the Cosalan Covered Court, BSU Bokod Campus. The event was graced by Bokod Vice Mayor Hon. Erik Donn Ignacio.

In his message, Hon. Ignacio congratulated the students for their dedication and hard work. *"The award you received today is a recognition of how willing and determined you are to learn, and so strive to learn more because education is for life,"* he said.

"Remember that only you can stop you from achieving your dreams. Disappointments will come your way but they should strengthen you rather than lead you away from your dreams," added Ignacio. He further encouraged the students by sharing stories about his

academic journey.

He ended by thanking the BSU Bokod Campus and the students for the opportunity to share his life during the occasion. *"You also inspired me to pursue my dreams and endeavors that I perceive right now,"* ended Ignacio.

In response, Gwyneth Jhersy L. Amino, a first-year Bachelor of Secondary Education, extended her gratitude to everyone who has contributed to their achievement. *"Thank you for guiding us and helping us mold ourselves into who we are to achieve what we achieved at this moment. Thank you also for being part of the bridge we took towards our goals. Sala-salamat,"* she said. To end, Amino quoted Eleanor Roosevelt who said *"The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams."*

On July 12, 2023 BSU Bokod Campus honored 42 graduates during

the 49th Commencement Exercises also at the Cosalan Covered Court with the theme *Proceed with Passion, Progress in Precedence, Preside for Prosperity."*

In the momentous event marked by achievement and inspiration, BSU president Felipe Salaing Comila proudly confirmed the graduation of 42 candidates. A message from Benguet

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Executive Assistant Dr. Ryan Guinaran sharing Benguet Governor Hon. Melchor Diclas' message to BSU Bokod graduates.

BSU Buguias Honors Graduates and Academic Achievers

The air was charged with excitement and pride as Benguet State University Buguias held its 26th Commencement Exercises and Student Recognition and Achievement Program. Against the backdrop of the BSU - Buguias Gymnasium, 53 graduates were honored for their dedication, while 69 achievers basked in the spotlight for their outstanding accomplishments.



Mr. David Cabuten sharing Benguet Governor Hon. Melchor Diclas' message to BSU Buguias graduates.

The commencement ceremony served as the conclusion of the graduates' years of unflinching resolve and unrelenting pursuit of knowledge, and it served as a watershed point in their lives. The thunderous applause from loved ones, teachers, and friends resonated with pleasure as they ascended the stage to accept their much-deserved diplomas.

These graduates, representing diverse academic fields, showcased not only academic excellence but also a profound commitment to personal and community development. The ceremony underscored the university's

mission to mold well-rounded individuals equipped with the skills, values, and attitudes needed to make a meaningful impact on society.

Additionally, 54 academic achievers and 15 special awardees were recognized for their exceptional contributions to academics and sports. Their stories served as an inspiration to their peers, proving that with determination, effort, and purpose, success is well within reach.

In his heartfelt commencement address, Benguet Governor Melchor D. Diclas, represented by Mr. David Cabuten, praised the graduates and achievers for their resilience in navigating the challenging academic journey. *"The education you've received in this institution has armed you with the tools to effect change in society. As you venture into your respective fields, carry with you the torch of dedication to service, the*

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Benguet State University Buguias Campus graduates with BSU officials during their 26th Commencement Exercises and Recognition Day on July 13, 2023 at BSU - Buguias Campus Gymnasium.

BSU Buguias Honors Graduates... from Page 3

spirit of compassion, and an unwavering commitment to excellence. Congratulations, graduates," Diclas conveyed.

In her valedictory address, Ms. Yvone Rhea Oro Bolcio shared her academic odyssey and expressed her gratitude to BSU Buguias for empowering her to confront

her fears. "I stand before you today, not just with a degree in hand, but with the friendships forged through challenges and the fearlessness to embrace failure," Bolcio declared, inspiring her fellow graduates with her words.//OGdacocoTr.

TESDA Inks Partnership with BSU



BSU President Felipe Salaing Comila and BSU-OSS Director Angeli T. Austria with TESDA-CAR Regional Director Balmayrson M. Valdez and TESDA-Benguet Provincial Director Jimmisio S. Daoaten during the signing of Memorandum of Agreement on July 4, 2023 at the BSU Office of the President.

Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with Benguet State University (BSU) for the launching of the Project "TuTuKK Danggayan: Sustainable Livelihood for Economic Stability" last July 4, 2023 at the BSU Office of the President.

The said project is about conducting TESDA training for interested students of BSU who are currently enrolled including community stakeholders to enable the participants to acquire foundation skills and competency toward employability and income-generating opportunities.

"This is a very good activity. We need to have more entrepreneurs in our

country." BSU President Felipe Salaing Comila stated in his response to the MOA overview.

BSU, through the Office of Student Services-Student Wellness Service-Guidance and Counseling Unit (OSS-SWS-GCU) and Students with Special Needs and Persons with Disabilities Unit (SSN/PWD) planned and worked out the project with TESDA.

The MOA was signed between TESDA-Cordillera Regional Director Balmayrson M. Valdez and by University President Comila. Moreover, present as witnesses at the said occasion are TESDA-Benguet Provincial Director Jimmisio S. Daoaten, Dr. Sarah M. Palaw-ay, Dr. Angeli T. Austria, and Decimae D. Gayaso.

"Thank you for being our partner. I hope

we will have a fruitful and meaningful partnership through the years. Hindi sana matapos ngayon, ituloy-tuloy natin at palawigin pa natin. Not only on those areas [entrepreneurship] but we'll try to cover as many skills requirement ng ating mga trainees para mas prepared sila sa pagharap sa 21st-century requirements ng mga industry natin," Valdez stated in his remarks.

"We will have more. We also expect the other campuses [Bokod and

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retired Language, Art, and Special Education Teacher Teacher Bly once said, *“Striving for success without hard work is like trying to harvest where you haven’t planted,”* she said.

Finally, Senator Lorna Regina “Loren” Bautista Legarda, in her virtual message for the College of Teacher and Education and Open University (OU) graduates, lauded their commitment to a noble path.

Senator Legarda emboldened future Licensed Professional Teachers to contribute to the unresolved education problem in the country which requires a multi-faceted approach to its resolve. *“Together, let us strive to build a nation that boasts*

an unparalleled education system,” she said.

She also praised the graduates from the OU in their demonstration of genuine commitment to personal and professional growth which are necessary to unlock new opportunities and new prospects.

“Learning is a lifelong journey and your time at the Open University is just the beginning. When you receive your diplomas, continue to embrace the power of open education, never cease your quest for knowledge, and strive to make a positive impact in your chosen field,” the senator ended. //CANapiloy



Benguet State University La Trinidad Campus 98th Commencement Exercises on July 20-21, 2023 at BSU Gymnasium.



BSU enters a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Department of Education schools and the Municipal Local Government Units (MLGUs) of Benguet and Mountain Province to address the issue of continuous degradation of watersheds and the environment. The partner schools are Tapapan Elementary School, Tadian School of Arts and Trades, Tipunan National High School (NHS), Lubon NHS, Pingad NHS, and Sabangan NHS in Mountain Province, while in Benguet are Kamora NHS, Adaoay NHS, Daclan NHS, Ambangeg NHS, Balili NHS, and Mankayan NHS. The partner MLGUs include Bokod, Kabayan, and Mankayan in Benguet, while Tadian, Bauko, and Sabangan are partner MLGUs in Mountain Province. The MOA signing with DepEd schools and MLGUs was held on June 23 and 26, respectively, at BSU. //EMBawayan

BSU's First Summa Cum Laude Continues to Dare the Tide for Ripples of Change

Born humbly in the province of Pangasinan, a simple and ordinary girl with nothing but her ardent passion and advocacy-driven ambition, came to the Cordilleras four years ago to take Bachelor of Science in Development Communication.

Finally reaping the fruit of her labor, Vjnhyl Zam B. Pondivida's name will forever be etched in the tablet of BSU's history as the first Summa cum laude.

“Life Never Stops Teaching”

“I started as a very timid person. It was only when I reached high school that I realized my passion for learning,” she said.

Describing herself as a late bloomer, it was at that point of her life when she recognized that learning never stops as life never stops teaching. It was also when she came to understand the real Vjnhyl. Someone who is not only passionate about learning but also an advocacy-driven person.

According to her, being the first Summa cum laude of Benguet State University does not end with the title or the award, it is also a testament to hard work and the things she holds dear to her heart.

“I always tell people that you do not count the medals, the trophies, or the awards but the impact you left on the people and the communities you have served,” she explained.

She further shared that taking Bachelor of Science in Development Communication shaped her into the person she has become. *“It*

molded me to become a person who has this civic and social responsibility, discovering my niche in serving and loving the people.”

True to her words, Ms. Pondivida has been juggling her studies with her community, organization, and volunteer work for the past years. When asked about her top three advocacies, she listed: Community Journalism, Disaster Risk Reduction Management (DRRM), and Youth Empowerment.

She firmly believes that pen and words remain powerful as a tool in enlightening the community. She further stated that being part of the Pangasinan Youth for Disaster Risk Reduction and Management taught her to combat the inclinations of mainstream media toward romanticizing the resilience of the people.

And while she would agree that the famous line by Jose Rizal *“Ang kabataan ang pag-asa ng bayan”* is already cliché, she still believes that its substance remains true to this generation.



Her Legacy: “How do I want to be remembered?”

On the afternoon of July 21, before hundreds of graduating students anticipating to receive their diplomas and those people who were watching live, Vnhyl Zam B. Pondivida delivered her valedictory speech, daring her fellow graduates to one crucial question in an intricately elaborated metaphorical illustration.

“You are a beautiful fish in the aquarium. But who are you in the ocean?”

Using the ocean as her main analogy, Ms. Pondivida shared three pivotal lessons through her journey of daring the angry tides and waves of the challenges and experiences borne out of her four-year study at the university.

As if resounding the common refrain of Greek philosophers, her first lesson centers on knowing one’s self. *Kaya ko bang lumangoy at lumayo sa pangpang?* (Do I have what it takes to swim away from the shore?)

“I want to see the version of me who does not give up,” she said.

According to her, mustering all courage to swim far from the shore toward the center of the ocean led to her *“constant adventure of self-discovery,”* deepening her advocacy and learning to dream deeply.

Taken as an excerpt from an article by Daryl Pasion who wrote *“Turuan natin ang iba na mangarap ng malalim,”* Ms. Pondivida explained that to dream deeply means to give people roots to grow apart from wings to fly.

Second, the strength to face the ebbing tides of the ocean. *“Pinilit nating languyin kahit na ang dagat ay nag-aalimpuyos”* (We dared to swim in spite of the turbulence).

Through this, Ms. Pondivida shared that the second lesson taught her to go beyond the limitations set by society, forgive herself for all the dreams that did not turn into reality, and never put a limit on what she can achieve.

Finally, the constant tenacity of dreaming. *“Ang hayaan at panatilihing dumadaloy ang sarili sa lipunan”* (To let and keep oneself flowing within society).

For Ms. Pondivida, graduating as a Development Communication student led her to discover a deeper purpose in applying all the theories within the four corners of the classroom to the society and communities we belong to and serve.

Going back to the question she raised, this is her answer: *“I want to be remembered not just as the first Summa cum laude of Benguet State University but as someone who has impacted many of the communities that I have served... someone who helped and who is being helped by my community, family, friends, and classmates and someone who stood with the multitude I represent.”*

“Continuing the Ripples of Change”

“As a Development Journalist graduate and also an alumna of BSU, I realized that I have to give back to the community where I belong,” she stated.

Part of this is her aspiration to contribute to creating a generation of advocacy-driven young people, understanding that books do not merely exist in written forms but also within society which is able to teach beyond the content of our textbooks.

So, what’s next for Ms. Pondivida?

“I will further my understanding of things, elevating my competency and skill sets because I believe there’s still a lot of room for growth and improvement. We should not limit ourselves to what we know because we won’t surely excel if we choose to stay there,” she ended.

written by: Cherry Ann Napiloy

Photo by: Vjnhyl Zam B. Pondivida

BSU Bokod Recognizes Achievers... from Page 3

Governor, Hon. Melchor Diclas was relayed by his Executive Assistant, Dr. Ryan Guinaran.

"My journey is a witness to achieving tasks that can be attained through hard work, resilience, and unwavering commitment to improving the lives of others," conveyed the governor to the graduates. He emphasized the significance of education as a transformative force and encouraged graduates to make a difference within their society. He underscored that education empowers them to effect change in various spheres, encompassing resilience, social consciousness, and proactive engagement.

Gov. Diclas further enlightened the audience with three pivotal mindset shifts, aptly titled *"The Three Ways to Greatness,"* urging graduates to transcend ordinary boundaries and embrace a path of distinction. First, he advocated

for the transformation from being a simple *"Shy Mangu,"* a local term meaning shy and reserved to becoming a *"Shiyayak Mangu,"* which means *"I will stay here,"* signifying a profound commitment to service for the province of Benguet and the greater homeland. This transformation embodies a sense of duty and responsibility to uplift communities and effect positive change.

The message next introduced the concept of *"Shiyayak ak Kanggu"* which translates to *"Upgrade Yourself."* This principle encourages graduates to continuously elevate their quality of life and actively pursue personal growth. Embracing a journey of self-improvement and learning allows for not just individual enhancement, but also contributes to societal progress.

This was followed by the notion of *"Shiyayak ak Sanggu,"* which

encapsulates the call to leadership, innovation, and trailblazing. Graduates were urged to step forward as pioneers and initiators, leading the way in their respective fields and spheres of influence. This mindset shift empowers them to drive change, carve new paths, and inspire others to follow suit.

Finally, Dr. Guinaran, a renowned figure known for his humility and numerous accolades, left graduates with an enduring message: *"E-benguet ak Sanggu."* This encapsulates the essence of their education journey – not just acquiring knowledge, but also becoming catalysts of change and leaders who contribute to the betterment of their communities and society at large. As the graduates embark on their next chapter, they carry with them these transformative mindset shifts, poised to make a profound impact on the world around them.//OGdacocotJr.



Benguet State University Bokod Campus graduates with BSU officials during their 49th Commencement Exercises on July 12, 2023 at the Andres A. Cosalan Covered Court.



Municipality of Bokod Vice-Mayor Hon. Atty. Erik Donn Ignacio during his inspirational message to the student achievers on July 11, 2023 at the Andres A. Cosalan Covered Court.

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Buguias] to respond to our invitation for more engagements," Daoaten added.

This project aims to address some of the pressing issues besetting the region given this time of pandemic where there is a rising number of out-of-youth, learners who did not continue their studies due to troubling experiences and graduates who are unemployed. Furthermore, this project aims to uplift the motivation of

the learners and participants to pursue and succeed in life.

"It would provide skills enhancement training in entrepreneurship for students and the [BSU] community as well. So, part siyang developmental activities for students who are in need financially and who would like to enhance themselves so that they can be more self-sustaining sa studies nila and also contribute to the community," Austria ended.//JDJacob, SMACurato, MTCatubing, JLPangwi (DevCom Interns)