



ISSN 0118-0304

VOL. XXXV NO.4





COVID-19 crisis brings out good deeds from BSU constituents



ATBI/IC incubatees and staff facilitate donation of vegetable relief packs



How BSU rewired teaching and learning because of quarantine



BSU students and



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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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Benguet State University

VISION

A PREMIER UNIVERSITY delivering world-class education that promotes sustainable development amidst climate change

MISSION

To provide quality education to enhance food security, sustainable communities, industry innovation, climate resilience, gender equality, institutional development and partnerships

CORE VALUES (SLIDES)

Student-centered Leadership Integrity Diversity Efficiency Service

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Goal I. To develop proactive programs to ensure relevant quality education Objectives:
 - 1. To benchmark curricular and co-curricular programs with national and international standards
 - 2. To develop alternative learning experiences to enhance skills
 - that match industry needs
 - 3. To develop innovative and relevant curricular and co-curricular programs
 - 4. To enhance proactive student welfare and development programs
- Goal II. To develop proactive programs for quality service

Objectives:

- 1. To enhance relevant human resource development programs
- 2. To develop effective and efficient innovative platforms for cascading
- information
- 3. To enhance and develop employee welfare programs
- Goal III. To enhance responsive systems and procedures for transparent institutional development
 - Objectives:
 - 1. To enhance and develop innovative financial management systems
 - 2. To ensure transparency in all transactions in the university
 - 3. To ensure inclusive and consultative decision making
- Goal IV. To develop relevant and gender sensitive research and extension programs for institutional development, sustainable communities, climate resilience, industry innovation, and partnerships
 - Objectives:
 - 1. To develop relevant multimedia tools in disseminating technology,
 - knowledge and information generated from RDE programs
 - 2. To develop relevant RDE activities that will address current problems and support cultural advocacy
 - 3. To partner with strategic local, regional, national and international entities
- Goal V. To strengthen and expand public-private partnership

Objectives:

1. Sustain and pursue functional University-relation with the alumni and other organizations both in the government and non-government entities

2. To strengthen the linkage among academe, industries, LGUs and community *Board of Regents Approved Resolution #2494, s. 2016.

Revised Quality Policy: Board Resolution #2736, s. 2018

"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."

Talk to us!



COVID-19 crisis brings out good deeds from BSU constituents

The declaration of an Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) in the entire Luzon in adherence to President Rodrigo Duterte's Presidential Proclamation 922 has drastically affected the University especially its students. Even so, this crisis caused by the Corona Virus Disease of 2019 (COVID-19), has evoked the commitment, resourcefulness and compassion from BSU constituents.

BSU employees and volunteers extend assistance to stranded students

When the ECQ was declared on March 17, 2020, many students were not able to go back to their hometowns. Some students started informing their instructors and schoolmates that they were running out of supplies. To get hold of the situation, the Office of Student Services (OSS) and Supreme Student Government (SSG) launched the Sagip Kapatid survey on March 19, 2020 through Google Forms. The result of the survey along with the messages received by instructors revealed that there were 874 students who responded to the survey. Another 435 stranded students were later identified based on surveys submitted by colleges/institutes.

BSU officials then had a meeting on March 23, 2020 to address the situation. The list of stranded students was also forwarded to the La Trinidad Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction Management Office (MDRRMO) for coordination to their respective hometowns. of the stranded students.

Two ways to help stranded BSU students were opened. One was through a donation drive. The donation drive supplied 252 food, hygiene and vegetable packs; and cash assistance to 352 students who received



Relief packs being distributed to stranded students and Job Order Personnel.//Photo from VPAF



PhP 500.00 each. The food and hygiene packs consisted of rice, canned goods, condiments, strawberries, eggs, bread, fruits, vegetables and facemasks. The donations came from BSU employees, BSU Poultry, BSU-OES farm, BSU Alumni Association Inc., BSU Multi-Purpose Cooperative, Adlaine Bakery, CATDAVES tailor shop, incubatees or farmers from the BSU-ATBI/IC, alumni and private individuals. The University Health Services (UHS) also provided medicines for the students who needed it. The relief packs and cash assistance were distributed in three waves. The first wave was received by 153 students, the second wave by 242 students and the third by 206 students.

The College of Agriculture, College of Arts and Sciences, College of Home Economics and Technology and the Institute of Human Kinetics also initiated their relief operations. Not only students were given assistance but also their Contract of Service (COS) and Job Order personnel were given rice packs.

The other way was through the Adopt-a-BSU Student scheme where volunteer foster guardians can make arrangements so that the student will not have to go to the BSU Administration Building to get supplies. This also helped in the social distancing.

COVID-19 crisis...page 4



Free seeds were distributed by the University R&E sector during the quarantine.//Photo from R&E sector

COVID-19 crisis...from page 2

Most of those who volunteered to be foster parents or guardians are employees of the University and members of the Sangguniang Bayan of La Trinidad. There were 92 stranded students who were adopted.

BSU assists community with various services, facilities and donations

Aside from being donors to students, BSU employees, students and partners also volunteered their services.

Despite numerous memoranda allowing employees to work from home, staff of the BSU Clinic led by Dr. Florence Poltic volunteered to conduct triaging at the Benguet AgriPinoy Trading Center. Employees at the Gladiola Center also continued to report as the center was opened to Benguet General Hospital health workers who would want to rest after their work hours. An area at the BSU-IHFSA was allotted as Community Quarantine Center. Faculty members of the CAS-Department of Chemistry also produced one carbouy of spent ethanol from research plant extraction as disinfectants to walls, floors, sinks and 12.5 liters of scented 70% ethanol as hand sanitizers.



IEC materials were given to the Agricultural Service Unit of Baguio City://Photo from R&E sector

Employees of the OSS, Administration offices and Men's Dormitory along with their students also participated in the harvesting, repacking and distribution of the food and hygiene packs to the students. Salaries and benefits were also released to employees on time as skeleton workforce of the Administration and Finance sector continued to report.

Likewise, a group from the University Business Affairs and Human Resource Management Office heeded the call for help from farmers in harvesting their crops to be donated. The group not only assisted in harvesting but also in distributing the vegetables to the municipality, the barangays, in the BJMP and in the checkpoints in Balili in partnership with the La Trinidad LGU.

Other services and donations by the concerted efforts of BSU constituents include: shuttle service for Benguet General Hospital frontliners; one employee volunteered as COVID- 19 Triage Nurse; distribution of PPEs from donations through the Cordillera Nurses Brigade; distribution of planting materials to La Trinidad and Baguio City and IEC materials to Agricultural Service Unit of Baguio City; and provision of venue for the Rolling Market/Store (Tiongsan La Trinidad) organized by the Municipality of Bokod.// We asked several students about their thoughts on COVID-19 and being quarantined. The following are some of the answers we got.



"Our country is facing food insecurity because of this pandemic that's why the national government is advising us to produce our own food and to do urban gardening. I took online classes and began planting to address the food insecurity starting with myself" -JM Cruz, CAS



"Avoid listening and spreading fake news especially in social media. Instead, spread good news and facts about the virus. Always pray for healing and guidance from the Lord" -Michael Borillo, CVM



"Nang dahil sa ECQ ay mas napalawig ang komunikasyon sa aming pamilya. Mas nagkaroon kami ng oras upang makasama at mas makilala ang isa't-isa. Natuto kaming mag 'self learning'. Sa negatibo naman ay naapektuhan ang pagaaral kaya may mga aralin na kami ay nahuhuli. Nagkaroon rin ako ng takot na lumabas at makisalamuha sa ibang tao dahil sa panganib na maaaring mangyari." -Stephanie Suzanne Valdez, CF



Hopefully after this pandemic, a lot of plans and goals will push through so I can achieve my dream. -Roschan Escalera, SLS

ATBI/IC incubatees and staff facilitate donation of vegetable relief packs

The Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) imposed in the whole of Northern Luzon due to COVID-19 has caused further losses to farmers who have been dealing with low prices of their produce since the start of 2020. The situation is no different for the farmer-incubatees of Benguet State University's Agribased Technology Business Incubator (BSU ATBI) stationed at the La

The initiative began with the idea of the possibility that the ATBI incubatees might not earn a decent income for the current season and that their produce will go to waste.

Trinidad Strawberry Farm. The ECQ limited mobility and tourism activities in the Strawberry Farm. This condition did not hamper the ATBI farmerincubatees and employees from doing their part in helping those who are also greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

ATBI has reached out to stranded students and job order personnel of BSU; fisherfolks, women vendors and barangay frontliners in Ambuklao; an Indigenous Peoples Organization in Ucab, Itogon; frontliners of Kapangan; a community in Bolaoen, San Fabian, Pangasinan; Barangay Balili frontliners; Baguio General Hospital frontliners; Benguet General Hospital Frontliners; PWDs of Naguilian La Union; fisherfolks of San Fernando City La Union; and DA-RFO-1 skeleton force. Some farmer-incubatees and employees of BSU ATBI also volunteered in the packaging and delivering

of various vegetables, herbs and strawberries to nearby locations. Food packs were also transported to other provinces with the help of different coordinating groups.

Later on, farmers from Atok, Benguet and Bauko, Mt. Province also donated vegetables in coordination with ATBI. Most of the beneficiaries expressed their gratitude through





Farmers and staff of the BSU ATBI/IC prepare to distribute relief packs.//Photos from ATBI/IC

social media posts at the BSU ATBI Facebook page. "We will surely be healthy and lively with your donations," stated one group while another wrote that the donations will help them avoid COVID-19.

But how did the ATBI group make this possible? Dr. Ruth C. Diego, Director shared that the initiative began with the idea of the possibility that the ATBI incubatees might not earn a decent income for the current season and that their produce will go to waste. "I was alarmed by the sudden stop of our farmers' earnings when the Strawberry Farm was closed to all visitors. This was compounded by the fact that the duration of the ECQ was also the peak season of strawberry and we expected a good harvest just in time for the tourist season," said Dr. Diego.

"I then called for a meeting with the farmers to determine the average production cost of their crops so we can prepare what we called a COVID price at which amount we can buy these to be donated as food relief packs. Next, I had to find funds to support the activity. I thank DOST PCAARRD for allowing the use of some of our ATBI Project funds for the purpose. We help our smallholder farmerincubatees while providing food to our community," she added. The ATBI farmer incubatees are now back in their farms strictly adhering to the guidelines set by the Department of Agriculture. Some of their strawberry harvest were frozen to be further processed when the ECQ was lifted.// JSTabangcura

How BSU re-wired teaching and learning because of quarantine



Benguet State University was just in the first half of the Second Semester, School Year 2019-2020 when classes were suspended on March 17, 2020 in adherence to President Rodrigo R. Duterte's Executive Order that placed the entire North Luzon under Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ). This served as a precautionary measure against the COVID-19 Pandemic that was then starting to spread in many countries including the Philippines.

Being under ECQ did not only suspend in-campus classes but also suspended public transportation. Going outside of one's residence for essential purposes is only allowed during certain hours.

For BSU, this took a toll to students and employees alike. Students whose hometowns are not in La Trinidad were stranded in their apartments, boarding houses and dormitories while some of their parents or guardians could not send allowance or supplies from their hometowns. Employees dubbed as the 'skeleton workforce' of offices led by BSU officials continued reporting for work risking themselves of being infected with COVID-19 while



faculty members grappled with devising ways on how to teach a curriculum not designed for an online platform.

For the BSU community, the "new normal" began at the start of the ECQ as series of actions were done by the University administration in

For the BSU community, the "new normal" began at the start of the ECQ as a series of actions were done by the University administration in order to continue delivering the education of students.

order to continue delivering the education of students. University employees and stakeholders also collectively extended aid to help other sectors affected by the ECQ.

Work from home arrangements were implemented and a series of advisories and memoranda issued by the University administration instructed faculty members to 'use alternative learning modes.'

In the views of Paul Joseph A. Nuval, a faculty member of the College of Agriculture, alternative learning modes do not only



mean online classes, it is also blended learning. Nuval reached out to students by texting, calling, using Facebook Messenger and email. He also made sure that the formats of the files he sent out is considerate of the student's resources. It is common knowledge that most students rely on data connection. Since MS Office and PDF files could not be downloaded or easily downloaded in data or free data connection, Nuval converted his Powerpoint slides into JPEG and plain text to make them easier to access for the students. Then, he followed up through text messages and calls.

In the case of Gretchen C. Ablaza of the Institute of Public Administration, she revealed that less than half of her undergraduate students responded to text and online messages while there is 100% response from her graduate students. When asked about the challenges of the sudden and unexpected shift to alternative learning modes, Ablaza pointed out several issues.

"Our curriculum, our syllabus, lessons and activities are not designed to be administered *How BSU re-wired...page 7*



A screenshot of an ongoning online defense at the BSU Graduate School.// Contributed by Angeli Austria

How BSU re-wired...from page 6 online. Even if faculty members have internet connectivity, majority of undergraduate students do not. In fact, iyong mga nagrerespond na students data lang gamit nila hindi talaga internet connection. Also, not all faculty members are familiar with conducting online classes, kaya kailangan ng capability building," she said.

...the situation is a bigger challenge for graduating students who, at the time of ECQ, were conducting their thesis or dissertations. The Graduate School and Open University adjusted by facilitating online defenses of students. As of this writing, 52 students have defended their thesis online..

"Ang isa pa, iba pa rin ang learning pag face to face hindi pa rin maipagpapalit ang interaction sa loob ng classes kaysa online purely. Kaya sa akin lang maganda rin na hybrid sana, may online at may face to face," she added.

Marifel, a BSU student echoed these issues. She also struggled with getting her classmates to cooperate with group projects. "We have 29 units and we're pretty loaded. Sometimes quizzes from our subjects pop up altogether in a single day. I just wish that it just ends. However, as I have been reflecting about them the past days, these things are meant to teach us a lesson that school is challenging but we must still deal with it," she said. Another student interviewed welcomed school requirements during the ECQ because they served as distractions from her anxieties. She even took up additional online classes.

But the situation is a bigger challenge for graduating students who, at the time of ECQ, were conducting their thesis or dissertations. The Graduate School and Open University adjusted by facilitating online defenses of students. As of this writing, 52 students have defended their thesis online. Graduation ceremonies are still discouraged as emphasized in the CHED Covid-19 Advisory No. 7 released on May 15, 2020. The Office of the University Registrar and other auxiliary offices continued providing services throughout the ECQ following Department of Health protocols.

During the ECQ and as of press time, BSU has continously provided the following online services and resources: thesis/dissertation oral Defense; enrollment for Open University students; and classes using various platforms. E-copies of Instructional Materials such as course manuals at the Open University, forms and brochures including

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"I agree ijay ibagbaga ti schools nga dapat continuous ladta ti learning uray nu awan ti klase. In my experience, maymayat nu maususar day brain mo nga agpanunot nu agararamid ti requirements. Day lang, narigat nga agpaysu nu awan ti stable internet connection ta haan maansweran day activities nu awan ti YouTube ken Google nga taga-explain day concepts. I still prefer face-to-face nga discussions. Ngem awan maaramidan sunga to keep our brain cells alive ah ket I suggest reading encyclopedias or other books nalang gaya ng ginagawa natin nung wala pang gadgets." -Clyde Steven Cawid Wayagwag, CAS



I'm so thankful sa mga frontliners kasi sila ung mga taong nagbibigay ng tulong sa atin tulad ng nurses, soldiers, brangay officials at sa mga taong tumutulong o nagbbgay ng mga donations. I hope mawala na po ito para bumalik na sa dati ang ating buhay na may payapa. -Joseph Kiwas Llamido, CTE



COVID-19 made me be aware and cautious of what I eat to become a healthy person. The best part would be I had all the time to self reflect which greatly affected my views of life. It made me appreciate everything and be thankful for what life gives. It made me even closer too to my family and relatives. -Marifel Lopez, CAS

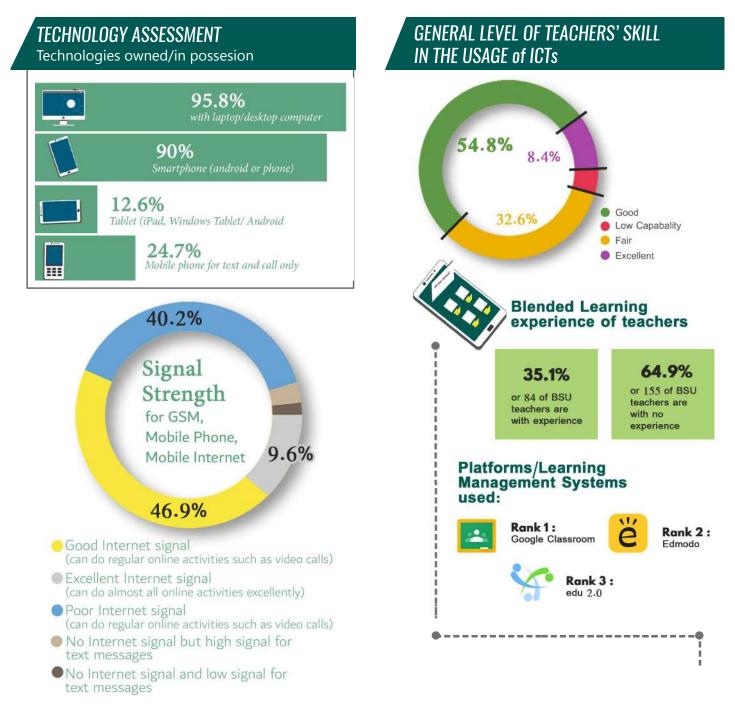
BASELINES: A Survey for BSU Faculty Members on Blended Learning

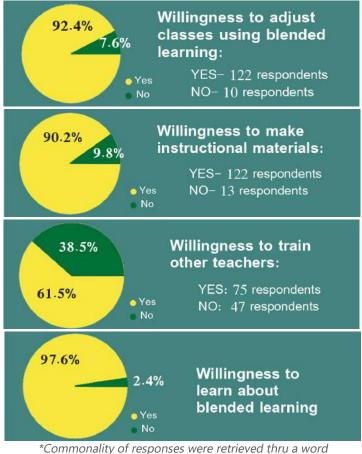
The COVID-19 pandemic has brought a lot of changes in the academe. Classes have been cut short, requirements were made flexible and interaction has greatly decreased among students and teachers.

The call for the transitioning to flexible learning is a challenge for the University especially for the teachers and the students. Benguet State University conducted a quick survey to its faculty member to determine their technological capacities, willingness and suggestions for the possible implementation of learning in the University for SY 2020-2021.



*discrepancy in the total no. of respondent is due to blank entries by some respondents





ommonality of responses were retrieved thru a word. cloud generator

*How do teachers define blended learning?

Words that are common are combination, online, face/ face to face/ teaching approach and methods.

*General Impression of Blended Learning

Common words generated are internet, access, connection, online, effective, good.

*Factors to make the teachers try blended learning:

Common words generated are: internet, connection, learning, pandemic, students, crisis, situation "situations like the present pandemic crisis (COVID 19 pandemic) where face-to-face interaction is a risk or danger to both students and the teacher"

*Suggestions to make blended learning effective:

Provision of Teacher Training
Availability of fast and free internet connection
Provision of Instructional Materials
Try out on a particular platform
University ICT to make a learning platform
system

BSU students and employees take steps to beat Cabin Fever while in quarantine

Aside from its economic costs, the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) and General Community Quarantine (GCQ) is also taking a toll on the mental health of people.

Angeli Austria, a guidance counselor of BSU confirmed that these reactions are normal. Cabin Fever is characterized by discomfort at home, boredom, irritability, restlessness, and needing to break routine (Rosenblatt, Anderson, & Johnson, 1983).

BSU employees and students are not



exempted from this risk so to address this, the University Human Resource Development Office (HRDO) and the OSS- Guidance and Counseling Unit launched their programs "Alwad ken Aywan ti Kabsat" and "Tumulong Ken Tumarabay Kenyam Kabsat" respectively. *BSU students and employees...page 10*

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COVID- 19 affects not only our health but also our finances, business operations stopped and workers had to stay home. By volunteering in our barangay, I was able to have a first-hand experience in distributing relief goods. I believe that we can be responsible in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic by becoming more considerate of human and economic behaviors. -Jezzrelle Labiaga, CAS



Before the pandemic came, I was so restless. I spent almost all my time and energy to the things I thought are most valuable to me such as academic goals, achievements, excellence and peoplepleasing. Although I firmly believe that those things that I have always pursued are not totally bad, the COVID-19 crisis made me realize that yes those that I pursued are not destructive but it will be if they are at the expense of quality time, healthy relationships, spirituality, health and relevant impact to the society. -Shanerise Tamondong, CHET



Garden pea planted by a student, Jm Cruz while on quarantine.



One of the Administration Council meetings held during the ECQ.//

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The onset of Cabin Fever

The students related various kinds of worries they had at the start of the quarantine such as how they will replenish their supplies, their individual and their family's safety, the plight of those who are sick with COVID-19, and concerns on possible cut-off of city services. Some students also noticed a change in their temper. Likewise, the HRDO reported that some responses in their Aywan Kapanunutan module reflected feelings of sadness, boredom and anxiety. Most are stressed with the sudden changes and having to adapt to these.

"Cabin Fever is normal especially when a person has stayed inside the house for a long time and has been deprived of social interaction and physical mobility. The Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) is the first time in the experiences of these students and it is likely that they manifest these reactions like any other person who have been used to doing their everyday routines in a highly physical and social setup," said Austria.

Actions by BSU offices to protect students and employees

Aside from keeping their communication lines open, the BSU-OSS-Guidance and Counseling Unit launched a poetry writing contest and an audio-visual competition at the start of the ECQ to reach out to students. The winners received cellphone loads as prices. The winning entries were also shared to selected hospitals as a tribute to frontliners. All the entries were compiled in a literary folio.

On the other hand, the HRDO program "Alwad ken Aywan ti Kabsat" is a two-pronged program that provides: mitigation measures on how an individual can stay safe and healthy holistically (Panag-alwad); and various essentials through donation drives and existing or newly crafted policies and programs (Panag-aywan). The program also involved the University Health Services (UHS) and the University Library and Information Services (ULIS).

Other activities included: a donation and Adopt-a-student drive; assistance to BSU students are in immediate need of medicines; relief drive for University Job Order and Contract of Service (JO/COS) Personnel; and provision of modules that provides some relevant knowledge on cabin fever and some activities which may help in avoiding or in coping with its effects.

To help implement the ECQ, alternative work arrangements were

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adopted. As civil servants, the University also set up a skeleton workforce to ensure the continuity of vital services and provision of assistance to the community in this time of need. This is how even with the ECQ, employees continued to receive their salaries.

In support to national and local efforts to combat the spread of COVID-19, the University Health Services personnel also volunteered at the Benguet Agri-Pinoy Trading Center (BAPTC) to check temperatures of the people. Sanitation booths and health gears were also distributed at the University Administration Building and medical check-ups are also provided based on the availability of BSU Medical Clinic personnel.

Employees and students' resilient mind and gratitude helped cope with Cabin fever

BSU students and employees dealt with their anxieties by keeping a strong mind, being productive and by being grateful. Some of the stranded students interviewed acknowledged the kindness of donors in helping them survive. For instance, Christwarren admitted that he relied on relief packs for three weeks until he was able to go home to Tuba. Meanwhile Marifel, a BA Communication student, attested to the importance of having a strong mind not only in enduring the ECQ but to whatever life may bring.

"COVID-19 pandemic is a test of faith for everyone-- from the youngest to the oldest, poorest to the richest and weakest to the strongest. Yes, it is very alarming since the case rates are drastically rising in every part of the world as well as it is deadly. However, this should not make us panic, let us always remember that behind this pandemic is a Father that protects us as long as we call unto His name and keep our faith burning," shared Leo, a freshman.

Ramon, an employee, appreciated that he is paid despite the Work From Home Arrangement. "Sana, we continue the kind of trust and confidence between employees and employers kahit wala ng ECQ," he said. In order to cope, Ramon shared that he maintained a routine by logging in at his virtual office before 8:30 am and discussing with his colleagues then taking his breaks. For Joan, another employee who felt down after seeing news about COVID-19 avoided watching TV and just relied on LGU pages to be updated on straight facts only.

Shanerise, a BSND student, thinks the COVID-19 pandemic is a re-start button, a thought that resonates among the other students interviewed. They mentioned the environment, world peace and



(Above) Rice packs being distributed during the ECQ and (below) hand washing stations fabricated at CEAT using the funds donated through Atty. Andres Arnold Lampacan and BSUGEA President, Mr. Richard H. Kinnud. The hand washing stations were set -up in various BSU buildings.



order, spiritual health, leadership and family ties as those that are re-starting. They also shared their changed views of things ranging from the profound to the mundane such as being able to study within the premises of the University, agriculture, health, the economy, employment and politics.

Most of all, they also took advantage of the ECQ to 're-start' their skills, hobbies and knowledge. JM of the College of Agriculture actually welcomed school requirements because

BSU students and employees...page 12



Sights within BSU La Trinidad during the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) showing the empty campus roads and walkways. Migratory birds too found sanctuary in the empty athletic field at the IHK.// Photos above by Michael Borillo and below by Rex Bawang.



How BSU re-wired...from page 7

Application Forms, Students Handbook, Faculty Handbook, Thesis Writing Guide, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and Manual of Operations were also made available online. In order to do this online stations in the Graduate School and Open University were set up and skeletal force manned the GS/OU to receive and release thesis drafts.// JSTabangcura

BSU students and employees...from page 11 it distracted him from his worries. Jezrelle of the College of Arts and Sciences found the time to do volunteer job in her barangay by organizing her schedule thoroughly. The rest started learning new hobbies.//JSTabangcura ***Thirteen students and two employees were interviewed for the purpose of this story. The answers of the 18 people which included five employees who accessed the Aywan Kapanunutan module of the HRDO are also integrated here.