

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **Innovative public school teachers honored by Microsoft**

Two public school teachers from Iligan City and one from Makati City won in the 4<sup>th</sup> Innovative Teachers Leadership Awards (ITLA 4) organized by Microsoft Philippines' Partners in Learning (PiL).

In collaboration with the Department of Education (DepEd), ITLA celebrates and honors Filipino educators for contributing to the enhancement of students' learning experience through the imaginative and efficient use of information and communications technology (ICT) in classroom teaching.

Julius Gregory Hechanova, Mathematics teacher in Iligan City East High School, Iligan City (Region X) won with his "Right Triangle Trigonometry (An Application Approach)." Fedelyn Gomez, a Makabayan teacher in Tomas Cabili National High School, Iligan City (Region X) won with her lesson plan which is tailored to teach the students to design an Animal Production Project Proposal and make students realize that successful business endeavors always start with a business plan.

Ma. Noemi Bagayaua, an English teacher in CEMBO Elementary School, Makati City (NCR) won for her Literature-Based Approach in Teaching Reading where lessons are prepared through PHOTOSTORY.

The three top winners of ITLA 4 will represent the Philippines in the annual Asian Regional Innovative Teachers Conference in Vietnam this April.

Education Secretary Jesli Lapus said: "Technology has become a global standard even for developing countries like the Philippines. If we are to empower our students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, our schools must become truly creative and innovative organizations."

Meanwhile, DepEd Assistant Secretary Dr. Teresita Inciong added that there is a need to ensure that our teachers are prepared and equipped with the skills to effectively utilize technology and integrate it in the curriculum. Inciong represented Lapus during the ITLA 4 Awards Night held recently at Legend Villas Hotel in Mandaluyong.

"We are updating and honing the expertise of our teachers in ICT integration because they remain our most important asset in the classroom," she stressed.

For her part, Michelle Casio, Academic Programs Manager, Microsoft Philippines emphasized: "In the ITLA, we're not only giving an award to dedicated teachers who have demonstrated ingenuity. ITLA is also about forming a community of educators who are interacting and sharing best practices with each other."

The three national winners came from the *Potensyal* top 30 DepEd school divisions who were encouraged to join the ITLA 4. Another Microsoft PiL project, *Potensyal* is a recently concluded search for “driven DepEd school divisions, which yielded entries from all over the Philippines.”

Contenders for ITLA 4 submitted a digital portfolio of work containing their profile, personal essay, learning materials, samples of students’ works, and abstracts of their projects, at the Partners in Learning Online Community.

Ten semi-finalists flew to Manila to attend a teambuilding seminar and compete in the last phase of the search. As ambassadors of PiL, these teachers participated in activities such as Educator Community Development, peer coaching and training. They also took part in promoting other PiL programs.

Each semi-finalist received a medal in recognition of their achievement in teaching and an Acer laptop powered by Windows Vista. The laptop will enable them to further their innovative practices as they return to their respective schools.

According to Casio, the strength of the PiL program lies in the relationships formed by Microsoft and its allies. “In Partners in Learning, Microsoft Philippines collaborates with government agencies like the DepEd, and other educational institutions to improve student performance and build the capability of the Filipino to be a global competitor,” shared Casio.

Asec. Inciong enthused: “DepEd is eager to embark on more initiatives with Partners in Learning to allow more educators and students to experience how technology can transform lives.”

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