

PRESS RELEASE

DepEd honors former chief

“This school is a testament of the pursuit of the people of San Juan and the rest of Apalit for better education and opportunities for its youth and the community,” said Education Secretary Armin Luistro during the inauguration Br. Andrew Gonzalez Museum and formal renaming ceremony of the Brother Andrew Gonzalez Technical and Vocational High School (BAGTECH) organized by Pampanga 4th District representative Anna York Bondoc.

While Br. Andrew Gonzalez only spent a few years as Secretary of Department of Education, Culture, and Sports (DECS), he was able to leave a legacy when he initiated the establishment of Apalit Technical High School (ApTech) that caters to high school students in San Juan, Apalit, Pampanga. The school offers arts and trade subjects such as automotive, machining, refrigeration, air conditioning, and garments.

ApTech was established in 2001 when Br. Andrew was then Secretary of DECS (now the Department of Education). The school stands on a 1 hectare lot donated by the Gonzalez family in the town of Apalit, hometown of Brother Andrew. ApTech was renamed by virtue of Sangguniang Bayan Resolution No. 54, series of 2008.

In 2003, the school opened its doors to receive its first batch of enrollees. Its first 116 students that time rose to 1,245 students to date.

BAGTECH has 12 regular classrooms and five laboratories for tech-voc subjects.

Principal Cora Ayson shared that, “in 2008, the De La Salle University (DLSU) College of Education established a linkage with BAGTECH to conduct teacher and student trainings. Currently, the school has a teaching work force of 25 permanent teachers.”

Ayson added that BAGTECH is now among the recognized 282 members of Tech-voc Task Force of the department.

During his term as Education Secretary, Gonzalez was able to cut down the price of textbooks. He also helped in the reduction of corruption inside the biggest department in the country by making uniform purchases unprofitable to corrupt suppliers.

Using both government money and money from private sector donors, he was able to build more than 14,000 new classrooms. He led the department in crafting what is now known as the 2002 Revised Basic Education Curriculum (RBEC).

Gonzalez was a President of the DLSU System in 1987-1991 and 1994-1998 before his post in the government under the administration of President Joseph Estrada. He died due to complications of diabetes on January 29, 2006. **END**

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