



Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION COMMISSION
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FEBRUARY 2013 GOOD NEWS

GOOD NEWS	WHY GOOD NEWS
GOOD GOVERNANCE, TRANSPARENCY, AND ACCOUNTABILITY	
From Despair to Hope: A Midwife's Rise to Action	<p data-bbox="574 510 899 539" style="text-align: center;"><u>The KaGabay Beneficiary</u></p> <p data-bbox="537 573 1372 827">Mrs. Evelyn Ruth Soriano of Pasig City, was then the picture of a contented wife and mother, while working professionally in a private hospital. She was happily married to Mr. Melvyn Soriano and blessed with 3 kids all of minor ages. Her husband worked at a private company before but decided to get a chance at overseas work, so he resigned. Unfortunately, Mr. Soriano's plans did not push through due to disagreements with the final terms & conditions laid down by the supposed employer, so he was left jobless.</p> <p data-bbox="537 861 1372 953">On the other hand, Mrs. Soriano has been a staff midwife for close to 19 years at the Lourdes Hospital in Sta. Mesa, Manila before that fateful day in 8 August 2007.</p> <p data-bbox="574 987 732 1016" style="text-align: center;"><u>The Incident</u></p> <p data-bbox="537 1050 1372 1562">Lourdes Hospital was abuzz with people on 8 August 2007, a Sunday, which is the regular general cleaning day. Mrs. Soriano was then on duty from 6:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. She was in the Operating Room at about 10:00 a.m. carrying some materials for duty, oblivious to the wet floor at some parts of the room. She accidentally stepped on a wet and slippery part, causing her to fall heavily on her bottom at a sitting position. Complaining of severe pain in the affected area and difficulty of standing up, she nonetheless carried on slowly with her work. She reported for work the next day, taking only medicines to assuage the pain. When she finally woke up one day to numbness of her right side of the body, she underwent medical consultation and laboratory examinations. Her CT-scan revealed L3-L4 dislocation in the lumbar area, so she was advised operation not only by her doctor but few other physicians. She refused this option so she was advised to go into regular therapy and medication.</p> <p data-bbox="574 1596 821 1625" style="text-align: center;"><u>Painful Moving On</u></p> <p data-bbox="537 1659 1372 1850">Mrs. Soriano was eventually granted disability benefits for 15 months under SSS and EC laws. She continued to work as staff midwife at the hospital, but was besieged by so many leaves of absence and debts in order to get regular therapy, medication, professional consultation, and rest. Her husband was jobless while her take-home pay reached nil level several times. For close to 2</p>

years from the accident, this was the situation. Her employer accommodated her that long but also explained the exigency of a midwife's regular delivery of work.

Mrs. Soriano finally decided to resign in December 2009, her body no longer robust and feeling the decline already. She was granted the usual benefits but a big part had to be applied to her outstanding debts. Whatever was left she planned to invest in a small business like a sari-sari store. But this did not help as their bills and necessities piled up in days and months. Her father and brother-in-law helped in some ways, but the long-term scenario of having to sustain a family of 5 and to educate her kids, brought her a sense of hopelessness. Christmas of 2008 and 2009 were extremely sad days with nothing to buy for her family. A relative finally lent her P20,000.00 as start-up capital under partial payments-when-able basis. She and her husband then opened a sari-sari store, utilizing the front part of their house. Few months into the business, she realized how small the income is, with the 3 children in school, the utilities bills, food and other necessities.

The Letters and Visit of Hope

In January 2010, she received a letter from the Employees' Compensation Commission (ECC). She received 3 other letters thereafter on separate months. They invited her to come to the agency to avail of free therapies, free vocational and/or livelihood seminars and trainings. She ignored all of them, harboring a distrust on government agencies after her bad experience with the SSS. But a visit on August 2011 changed all that. Ms. Nancy Bonto and Ms. Anne Misa of the ECC's Work Contingency Prevention and Rehabilitation Division (WCPRD) visited Mrs. Soriano to further explain about the KAGABAY Program. The latter agreed to take the free start-up kits for the dishwashing liquid, fabric conditioner, and soap powder. She also agreed to take as she did take the trainings at the Ultima EntrePinoy, sponsored by the ECC. She eventually made the liquid, fabcon, and powder from the kits received, and sold the same to neighbours on a house-to-house basis. She bought more materials from Ultima and proceeded to make and sell her products.

Mrs. Soriano decided to attend a series of seminars from 3 October 2012 to 6 February 2013 entitled "Curriculum Based Training: Start Your Own Business Enterprises" (CBT-SYOBE) conducted by the Center for Small Entrepreneurs (CSE), again under the auspices of the KAGABAY. This opened her eyes further to the many possibilities of entrepreneurship.

And while taking the above seminar, she took training sessions on meat processing (i.e. longganisa, tocino, embutido, breaded pork chop, siomai, among others) from Ultima. She was also given free kits containing powders and spices.

At present, she is into the making and selling of burger patties, pork & chicken ham, siomai, chicken sandwich, peanut butter, biko, maja blanca. She is applying the principles learned from the CSE

and Ultima seminars/trainings through diversifying her products. She has also joined the ODWs (Occupationally Disabled Workers) Cooperative, Inc. which was formed under the auspices of the ECC. She became friends with the other ODWs under the KAGABAY program. Her husband also helps in the business.

On 6 February 2013, Mrs. Soriano graduated from the CSE seminar, taking the award as one of the “Most Promising Entrepreneur” under the ECC’s KAGABAY Program.

This story only shows that the institution must actually and closely work with the ODW in order to bring out his/her potentials in productive activities. Their reduced abilities and/or skills notwithstanding, the ODWs can still learn new things and engage in more endeavours than the usual employment setting.



Evelyn Ruth Soriano (middle) flashes her Certificate of Completion during the graduation ceremony of the “Curriculum Based Training: Start Your Own Business Enterprises” (CBT-SYOBE) conducted by the Center for Small Entrepreneurs (CSE) on February 6, 2013. Flanking her are Dr. Melba Y. Sacro (left), Chief of ECC’s Work Contingency Prevention and Rehabilitation Division (WCPRD) and Nancy Bonto (right), ECC Social Welfare Officer II. Mrs. Soriano graduated from the CSE seminar, taking the award as one of the “Most Promising Entrepreneur” under the ECC’s KAGABAY Program.

ECC has opened livelihood doors for me, says worker

On January 4, 2010, on his way to work on the first working day of the year, **Wilito Tulio**, a 58 year- old resident of Calocan City, met an accident while on board a passenger bus which resulted in the amputation of his right arm.

Tulio had been working at the ECCO Printing Press for around 36 years until the day the unfortunate incident occurred. His employer entrusted him the general operations of the printing business. He started his employment for the same company as a helper and had been assigned to different areas of the business, to eventually an operations supervisor.

Due to his disability, Tulio resigned because he felt, at that time, that without his arm he would be worthless.

However, he was able to claim a lump sum cash income benefit

from the SSS and a monthly amount of P8,800 per month for 50 months for his EC permanent partial disability benefit under the Employees' Compensation Program (ECP).

In addition to the monetary benefits, he was also enrolled under the ECC-KAGABAY Program (Katulong at Gabay sa Manggagawang may Kapansanan) as one of its beneficiaries. The KAGABAY Program is a special economic assistance program for occupationally-disabled workers (ODWs) who suffered a work-related sickness or injury.

The program granted him a right arm prosthesis coupled with physical therapy sessions. The therapy sessions were conducted at the Philippine General Hospital, intended for him to get accustomed to the use of his newly attached artificial arm.

Tulio was also able to take advantage of the KAGABAY sponsored entrepreneurial trainings, equipping him with basic business management knowledge, and a series of livelihood trainings like hog raising, soap making, among others.

At present, he is working as a supervisor in an intermittent basis to his former employer. He is likewise engaged in rag making, which he regularly supplies to printing press establishments and other retailers. At the same time, he is an active member of a cooperative managed and organized with other ODW beneficiaries of the KAGABAY.

He further added that although the accident was devastating, the ECC, through its various programs, opened several livelihood doors for him and his family.



Wilito Tulio proudly shows his prosthetic arm to Gene Franco Galicia, a staff of ECC Information and Public Assistance Division (IPAD). Wilito was granted a right arm prostheses coupled with physical therapy sessions under the ECC KaGabay Program.

ECC does not only provide benefits, but also hope, says worker

Marcial Rodaje, a 39 year-old resident of Caloocan City, was employed as a mechanic at the Solid Tech. Services, an engine rebuilding company in Caloocan City, when the beam of the fixed crane he was repairing accidentally fell, severing his right arm.

The incident happened on October 2, 2009, when Rodaje, together with a fellow mechanic, was instructed by his employer to do some repair works on a crane which broke after it had been partially submerged by the flood, caused by typhoon Ondoy. It was during the repair when the beam of the crane fell and caught the arm of Rodaje.

This resulting disability shattered his dream of someday working abroad or even being employed in big local companies. He went into a deep depression and even to the point of being suicidal. It was very hard for Rodaje, at that time, to accept the unfortunate thing that happened to him.

While he was still at the hospital recuperating, his wife processed his SSS and EC claims. According to him, it only took several days after submission of the complete documentary requirements for the SSS to evaluate his case and grant him the benefits due. A monthly benefit amounting to P10,000 for 50 months, 4,000 of which is from SSS and 6,000 from the ECP, was given, he added.

Rodaje was thereafter enrolled as a beneficiary of ECC-KAGABAY Program (Katulong at Gabay sa Manggagawang may Kapansanan). The KAGABAY Program is a special economic assistance program for occupationally-disabled workers (ODWs) who suffered a work-related sickness or injury.

The program provided him counseling services and a right arm prosthesis with physical therapy sessions. The therapy sessions were conducted at the Philippine General Hospital, intended for him to get accustomed to the use of his newly attached artificial arm.

At present, he is putting up a small canteen near his residence as an additional source of income apart from his regular employment at Solid Tech. Services, and monthly benefits from SSS and ECP.

He is also attending the ECC-KAGABAY sponsored livelihood and entrepreneurial trainings, and is a member/founder of a cooperative organized with other ODWs, pooling their resources together in putting up viable businesses.

According to him, the programs of the Employees' Compensation Commission is not limited to monetary benefits, it also provides hope to ODWs who have lost faith in themselves after being disabled.




*Wearing his prosthetic arm granted under the ECC KaGabay Program, **Marcial Rodaje** tells **Mr. Eroll Dacame**, host of the PTV4 program **Special Report**, how a tragic accident which resulted in his disability shattered his dream of working abroad. Marcial is currently employed at **Solid Tech. Services**, and receiving monthly benefits from **SSS** and **ECP**.*

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