

# TEENPRENEUR

Observations, Reflections, and Ramblings



The Entrepreneur School of Asia in cooperation with Go Negosyo recently concluded the Teenpreneur Challenge last March 3 & 4 at the Mall of Asia.

Various high schools from all over the metro participated in this Challenge.

Schools such as Xavier, Lourdes QC, International Christian Academy, Immaculate Heart of Mary, Tabernacle Christian Faith Academy, San Beda, Philippine Science High School, to name a few, participated eagerly.

The challenge was comprised of high school students. ESA decided to use high school students due to the fact that these teenagers are very creative. They were able to come up with out-of-this-world

ideas, with the goal of redesigning, repackaging, and recreating the products assigned to them. Some products were capiz lanterns, boxes, candles, peanut butter, etc.

To ensure that the students' ideas were feasible, each school and group were assigned a mentor and an ESA student mentor, to help coordinate with the various Gawad Kalinga sites (the GK sites created the assigned products.)

ESA, being a school for entrepreneurs, does not aim for sole profits. Instead, they put a social value to it, in order to help for the betterment of society.

The profits from March 4th and 5th's bazaars, were for the

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By Gwen Albaraccin

benefit of Gawad Kalinga, a Philippine-based anti-poverty movement, to care for worse-off Filipinos and survivors of natural disasters. The winners for highest sales went to: Xavier (Peanut Farm Peanut Butter) - 1st place; Tabernacle Faith Christian Academy group B (Peanut Butter) - 2nd place; and Tabernacle Faith Christian Academy group A (Box made out of mashed paper) - 3rd place.

The winners for best product innovation went to: Tabernacle Faith Christian Academy group A (Box made out of mashed paper) - 1st place; Xavier (Peanut Farm) - 2nd place; and San Beda (candles) - 3rd place.

The 2-day event was not just all about selling these products. There were also various performances to entertain the crowd. There were rappers and breakdancers from Gawad Kalinga, who certainly wowed the audience with their breaking and rapping. There were also GK kids who performed a traditional Filipino dance, to the music of the Pinoy Big Brother theme song. Students of ESA also boasted their musical abilities, through a band from ESA's Music Pool.

The high school students from the various schools also showed us their talent for dancing through a mini dance competition. 1st place went to Immaculate Heart of Mary, with their interpretative dance from the play Peter Pan. 2nd place went to the hip hop dancing boys from Tabernacle Faith Christian Academy. 3rd place

went International Christian Academy, with their ethnic ballet performance. The performances certainly showed us how talented Filipinos are no matter what age or what background.

To sum up, the event was a big success. We were able to come up with funds to help the Gawad

Kalinga, as well as hone the social entrepreneurial skills of these teenagers who are the future of our country. Everybody truly worked hard for this event to be a success. If we had enough trophies and prizes to give away, everyone would have went home with one. Everyone who participated in this project is definitely a champion.

## REFLECTIONS OF A PARTICIPANT

By Steffi Blair Ong

My experience as a student participant in the Teenpreneur challenge was very memorable. I learned many things that can lead me to success. Representatives from second year to fourth year were selected by our teachers to participate in the Teenpreneur challenge. The seniors were divided into two, half teamed up with the second year, and the remaining half teamed up with the third year.

During the first challenge, many of us were already having a hard time. Our job was to improve a GK product. Of course we didn't get to choose our own product. As for my team ( Tabernacle of Faith Christian Academy team A) they assigned us to improve a Christmas box. Our initial reaction towards the box was pretty much negative but we started being creative and we wanted to come up with something different and unique. The next step was to make prototypes so the GK community can get started on producing our new and improved product. We named our new product EXTRA ORDINARY BOX or "EXBOX". Exbox is a famous game console worldwide, so we thought that it

would be a catchy brand name. We wanted to achieve results that never had any recorded accomplishments, so we wanted



to try methods which were never attempted before. We started to have goals to keep us from being frustrated by short-range failures. Worrying about becoming successful on our project was something we didn't want to do. We came up with so many unique ideas but failed to produce it. Our passion elevated our team spirit. Most of us were being pulled out of class so we can discuss about the materials that we have to use, designs, logos and every little detail needed to make our plan work. It wasn't easy. In fact, it was stressful and challenging. The experience was very exciting

though for we had to sell and promote our own product plus the fact that competing with other school was not an easy task. We

all did our best and we were satisfied with the work that we did. Achieving 1st place really felt great when you least expect it to happen. Our teacher and mentors really provided us the confidence, and with our trust in God, offering everything up to Him was perhaps the most important ingredient that made our recipe for the Teenpreneur challenge the best. We did our best for Him.

Working with our mentors was a privilege as well. They shared insights and great values that reconditioned our minds to think positively. Being an entrepreneur was about working hard, being focused, learning to accept failures, and realizing that excellence was not being the best but doing your best. Our decisions had to be firm to pursue excellence. And with this experience already inputted in our consciousness, we are right now still savoring the moments as we gear up for yet another task the world gives in the future.

## FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF A STUDENT APPRENTICE

By John Louie Castro



It was in the second Saturday of Teenpreneur in ESA wherein mentors and apprentices were assigned to their respective school groups. I was then assigned to Tabernacle of Faith Christian Academy-Team A together with two other mentors: Ms Kamela Seen of Platowraps and Mr. Paulo Tibig of Vintel Logistics. On that day, I can feel the spirit of competitiveness and enthusiasm among the teenpreneur participants. I, myself was uplifted too as I see their eagerness to help improve the products their Gawad Kalinga Communities.

They were asked to make a 5-minute commercial or presentation that would market their product. And in the preparation of that activity, I easily saw in them the teamwork and camaraderie among the members of the team. Despite of the short time given to them, they were able to make it because of their ability to

delegate the tasks equally to the members to make their time productive. I, together with the mentors are very much surprised as we see them work like professionals and not like ordinary highschool students.

Weeks after, I set mentoring sessions together with the students and mentors. During our mentoring sessions, the group meets and brainstorms their ideas on how they will improve the GK product given to them. It was out of my expectation that with their resourcefulness and innovativeness, they will come up a very great idea for the product. Although there are some ideas which are not feasible, we, the mentors make it a point that those ideas will be improved and still apply it to the product, so as not to disappoint the student. After a series of mentoring sessions, we went to the GK community site to present our product proposal. The community accepted the

proposal, however, there I not enough manpower to make the product. Because it has been several months since they last produced the product. Actually, the production of the product already stopped because of the fact that it was seen as a product that didn't have any profit-generating value.

The team is about to give up because of this unexpected problem of the GK community. I, together with the mentors, didn't allow them to concede but instead, we asked to think of another concept that they can apply to their product. One week left for the production and yet we still didn't have a final product. At last, after a series of brainstorming, the group came up with the Dot Dot Art being applied to their box.

Indeed, it is in the youth that we can see the energy that generates creativity. Thinking outside of the box made the group created the ExBox (Extraordinary Box). Being an entrepreneur is, I believe, not an easy profession. It takes a lot of patience for you not to give up easily, resourcefulness for you to optimize what you have so as not to spend much, flexibility in a sense that you are willing to do everything for your business, innovativeness so that you will not be left out in the market, and courage to take calculated risks. Believing the youth possesses these characteristics, I am doing my part as an ESA student to nourish them to become socially responsible leaders in the future.

## MUMBLINGS OF TWO ORGANIZERS

By Gian Aguinaldo and Caroline Burns

Gosh is it really over! No it's just beginning...

It's just the beginning for our creative and diligent Teenpreneur participants who have just shown to everyone that despite the challenges they faced, they have gone beyond themselves. They have taken a very different path, a path towards discovery of their talents and skills in the face of pursuing something new, something noble. At a young age, they have experienced the beginnings of entrepreneurship.

It's just the beginning for the Teenpreneur Challenge and our hardworking ESA Community. The maiden voyage of the Teenpreneur Challenge is now over and as all ESA students, ESA staff, mentors, and high schools take a deep breath, rumblings of another are underway! Word has it that the Teenpreneur Challenge is to expand nationwide, and even worldwide! Lots of plans and adventures and new possibilities at stake!

But before we start preparing for another, it is good to sit back and relax in true Filipino style and prepare a little something to eat, perhaps a sandwich made up of the bread donated by a certain baker from France, with lashings of peanut butter, packaged in a Christmas box, to be eaten under the light from a capiz lantern? Or maybe not?!

And lastly, it's just the beginning for our Gawad Kalinga Communities. More than the income earned at the Teenpreneur Bazaar in SM Mall

of Asia, the GK communities also received advice and strategies on how to improve their products, which will lead to more sustainable income, which in turn will create more sustainable communities. For Gawad Kalinga, this is a new beginning.

For all these beginnings, there are many to recognize.

Teenpreneur really wouldn't have been the success it was without the committed dedication of our ESA students and staff, our mentors from the Association of Filipino Franchisers Inc. (AFFI) and Philippine Center for Entrepreneurship (PCE), and all the participating high school students who were all united in their desire to help Gawad Kalinga communities improve their livelihoods. All in all almost 600 people participated in the Teenpreneur Challenge which spanned over almost 6 weeks.

For all the mentors, wow! In the midst of running your own businesses you committed yourselves to the vision of Teenpreneur. You gave your time and expertise to your high school team, and the fruits shared with GK. I think each of you have inspired many young people who may in the future become social entrepreneurs because of your influence. Without all of the mentors we could not have had Teenpreneur Challenge!

Teenpreneur Challenge was a challenge for all that it touched, for our ESA students we pushed

them and demanded levels of work and commitment which they had not expected. Yet, they stood steadfast and constant even when things did not go as we had hoped. To all of you, especially the Organizing Committee (OrCom) and student apprentices, thank you very much for your enthusiasm, your laughter, your energy and sheer hard work. (Not sure of the singing!) You made yourselves and the school very proud.

To sum up the Teenpreneur Challenge:

**T** = TEAMpreneur: No one gets left behind!

**E** = Entrepreneurial in spirit and vision

**E** = Energetic and committed to helping GK communities

**N** = No is not an option: innovate and recreate

**P** = Product: the peanut

**R** = Race against time

**E** = Enriching experience for all its participants.

**N** = Nocturnal: for all the sleepless nights

**E** = Exhausted: to the core at the end of every day

**U** = Upstart: Sell, Sell, SELL!!!

**R** = Get Ready, Get set - GO!