

NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)



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SENATE
P.S RES. No. 993

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Introduced by Senator SONNY ANGARA

RESOLUTION
CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING THE OUTSTANDING YOUNG MEN (TOYM) 2023 AWARDEES FOR THEIR EXEMPLARY CONTRIBUTION TO THE COUNTRY

1 WHEREAS, it is the duty of the State to recognize and commend exemplary
2 contributions of Filipinos in nation-building;

3 WHEREAS, since 15 October 1959, the Junior Chamber International (JCI)
4 Philippines, with the support of the "The Outstanding Young Men" (TOYM) Foundation,
5 as well as their other partners and stakeholders, has annually been giving the TOYM
6 Awards to young Filipinos between the ages of 18 to 40 years old who exemplified
7 professional excellence through significant contributions in their respective fields
8 and/or communities, resulting to positive changes in the nation;

9 WHEREAS, throughout its 64-year history, the TOYM Awards has developed a
10 reputation for its selectiveness in awarding distinctions to outstanding young active
11 citizens upon whom the award is conferred;

12 WHEREAS, with the theme "*Passionate leaders, embracing innovations*", the
13 2023 TOYM Awards chose the best ten (10) Awardees, who have demonstrated
14 unparalleled commitment, innovation, and leadership embodying the spirit of positive
15 change and progress;

16 WHEREAS, these ordinary Filipino-turned-heroes are notable individuals from
17 the fields of agri-entrepreneurship; OFW empowerment; economics; sustainable
18 energy; global excellence in sports; literature, culture and the arts; education and the
19 academe; humanitarian, civil society or voluntary leadership; food technology
20 innovation and entrepreneurship; have shown exemplary service to others, exuded

1 excellence, exemplified our culture of *bayanihan*, and displayed outstanding
2 leadership, making significant contributions to the country;

3 WHEREAS, **Mr. Kenneth Isaiah Abante**, the TOYM awardee for Socio-Civic
4 and Voluntary Leadership, is a UP President Edgardo J. Angara Fellowship (UPPEJA)
5 Fellowship awardee, who has distinguished himself among members of academe,
6 researchers, and scholars in Philippines and abroad in connection with policy research
7 and has shown leadership potential, experience, and commitment to service and the
8 improvement of the education sector. Mr. Abante is the founder of WeSolve
9 Foundation, a youth-powered coalition bridging people and structures in the
10 government, civil society, and communities to harness collective action for sustainable
11 impact. He was also a Rotary Peace Advocate Awardee in 2021; Tatler Asia Generation
12 T Asia Leader of Tomorrow in 2021; and World Justice Challenge 2021 Honorable
13 Mention in 2021;

14 WHEREAS, **Mr. Ruel Amparo**, the TOYM awardee for Agri-Entrepreneurship,
15 Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Agrilever, the leading digital technology platform used
16 to positively impact small plot farmers, farming communities, and agribusinesses. At
17 22 years old, Mr. Amparo also founded Cropital, the largest Peer-to-Peer lending
18 platform who helped 65,000 farmers in financing and marketing their products. He
19 graduated Cum Laude and was a recipient of Garrick Yao Student Excellence Award
20 for Service; a national finalist of Procter and Gamble Student Excellence Award; Trend
21 Micro Big Data Innovation; and Unilab Foundation Ideas Positive;

22 WHEREAS, **Ms. Khrista Francis Desesto**, the TOYM awardee for OFW
23 Empowerment Advocate, is a proud Filipina born and raised in Davao City who is
24 currently making waves in the creative industry in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).
25 Desesto, also known as Hyku, is the owner of Hyku D Photography and Videography,
26 a creative studio specializing in photography and videography production catering to
27 big names in the fashion industry – Vogue Arabia, Burberry, Kenzo, Tory Burch, and
28 Dolce & Gabbana, among others. Ms. Desesto was also commissioned and featured in
29 Netflix's Girl Boss Campaign for Ramadan;

30 WHEREAS, **Mr. Mark Gersava**, the TOYM awardee for Agri-Entrepreneurship,
31 founder and chief executive farmer of Bambuhay, a social enterprise focusing on eco-
32 friendly innovations which simultaneously empower marginalised communities. He

1 was awarded as Go Negosyo Philippines Most Inspiring MSME 2023; Gawad Banyuhay:
2 Social Entrepreneur of the Year 2022; Entrepreneur of the Year 2022: Circle of
3 Excellence Asia CEO Awards; Impact Entrepreneur of the Year; and Injap Sia
4 Outstanding Young Entrepreneur awarded by the Philippine Chamber of Commerce.
5 One of his innovations, The First Plantable Toothbrush in the world that can be grown
6 into a tree after use was recognized as the Product Innovation of the Year by Go
7 Global Awards 2022 of the International Trade Council in Estonia from more than 8,
8 000 entries around the world;

9 WHEREAS, **Mr. Jan Carlo Punongbayan**, the TOYM awardee for Economics,
10 is an assistant professor at the University of the Philippines School of Economics
11 (UPSE) and a Rappler resident economist. In 2021, he obtained his doctoral degree
12 from UPSE, where he previously excelled as summa cum laude and valedictorian in
13 2009. Punongbayan's achievements include being the recipient of academic accolades
14 such as the José Encarnación Jr. Award for Excellence in Economics and the Gerardo
15 P. Sicat Award for Best Undergraduate Thesis. Alongside his academic pursuits, he is
16 engaged in fostering economic literacy and discourse. Punongbayan is a co-founder
17 of UsapangEcon.com and co-host of the Usapang Econ podcast which seeks to make
18 economics fun and relevant, helping its listeners understand economic concepts and
19 connect these to current events;

20 WHEREAS, **Mr. John Mark Napao**, the TOYM awardee for Sustainable Energy,
21 is the President and Founder of Solar Hope, an NGO that aims to provide solar and
22 sustainable solutions to marginalized communities in the Philippines. To support his
23 daily living and his advocacy, he also works as an Engineer in the National Grid
24 Corporation of the Philippines as his day job. Napao has dedicated over 9 years to
25 NGO involvement, focusing his expertise on Rural Electrification, Renewable Energy,
26 and Community Development. Additionally, he serves as a Climate Reality Leader,
27 advocating for change and delivering inspirational speeches;

28 WHEREAS, **Mr. Ernest John Obiena**, the TOYM awardee for Global Excellence
29 in Sports, is a Filipino Olympian pole vaulter currently ranked World No. 2 according
30 to the World Athletics Organization. Obiena has solidified his position as Asia's pole
31 vault champion by clinching gold medals and shattering records in various prestigious
32 competitions worldwide. In fact, the 28-year-old athlete from Tondo has secured his

1 third consecutive SEA Games gold while setting a new tournament record of 5.65
2 meters. He further elevated his performance on the continental stage, clearing heights
3 of 5.9m in the Asian Games and 5.91m in the Asian Athletics Championship. Such a
4 stellar performance even reached unprecedented heights when he successfully cleared
5 the bar at 6-meters during the Bergen Jump Challenge in Norway, becoming the first
6 and only Asian athlete to achieve this feat. Obiena also made history as the first Filipino
7 athlete to qualify for the 2024 Paris Olympics, surpassing the 5.82m mark during the
8 Stockholm Diamond League-Bauhaus Galan in Sweden;

9 WHEREAS, **Ms. Ma. Regaele Olarte**, the TOYM awardee for Education
10 Leadership, is the officer-in-charge-chief education supervisor of the Muntinlupa
11 School Division Office's (SDO) School Governance and Operations Division. Olarte has
12 been in the education sector for 19 years. For 10 years, she was a teacher at the
13 Muntinlupa National High School and was later promoted as Department Head of
14 Science in the same school. Continuing her trajectory of professional growth, Olarte
15 assumed the position of Education Program Supervisor at SDO-Muntinlupa, before
16 assuming her current leadership role as the OIC of the School Governance and
17 Operations Division;

18 WHEREAS, **Mr. Tor Sagud**, the TOYM awardee for Heritage Promotion, is one
19 of the founders of the Pasa-Kalye Group of Artists, which played a major role in getting
20 Baguio recognized as a UNESCO Creative City in 2018. Sagud is also a comic book
21 artist and the creator of the educational illustrated book about Cordillera culture,
22 Igorotak. He was inspired to create Igorotak mainly to debunk misconceptions about
23 the Cordillera culture and heritage, seeing the need to educate both Filipinos and
24 foreigners about the beauty and richness of Cordilleran culture;

25 WHEREAS, **Mr. Stephen Michael Co**, the TOYM awardee for Food Technology
26 Innovation and Entrepreneurship, the Co-Founder and CEO of Worth The Health Foods
27 (WTH Foods), a food tech startup that produces plant-based meat alternative products
28 made sustainably with local ingredients. WTH Foods aims to commercialize science in
29 the Philippines through food innovation, and showcase Southeast Asian flavors on the
30 global stage. Mr. Co was able to help low-income families, and small-scale farmers.

1 NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED by the
2 Senate of the Philippines to congratulate and commend The Outstanding Young Men
3 2023 Awardees namely:

- 4 1. **Kenneth Isaiah Abante**, the TOYM awardee for Socio-Civic and Voluntary
5 Leadership;
- 6 2. **Ruel Amparo**, the TOYM awardee for Agri-Entrepreneurship;
- 7 3. **Khrista Francis Desesto**, the TOYM awardee for OFW Empowerment
8 Advocate;
- 9 4. **Mark Gersava**, the TOYM awardee for Agri-Entrepreneurship;
- 10 5. **Jan Carlo Punongbayan**, the TOYM awardee for Economics;
- 11 6. **John Mark Napao**, the TOYM awardee for Sustainable Energy;
- 12 7. **Ernest John Obiena**, the TOYM awardee for Global Excellence in Sports;
- 13 8. **Ma. Regaele Olarte**, the TOYM awardee for Education Leadership;
- 14 9. **Tor Sagud**, the TOYM awardee for Heritage Promotion; and
- 15 10. **Stephen Michael Co**, the TOYM awardee for Food Technology Innovation and
16 Entrepreneurship.

Adopted,


SONNY ANGARA ^{TR}