

"Og-ogfon si MPSPC": It's more than just an institution



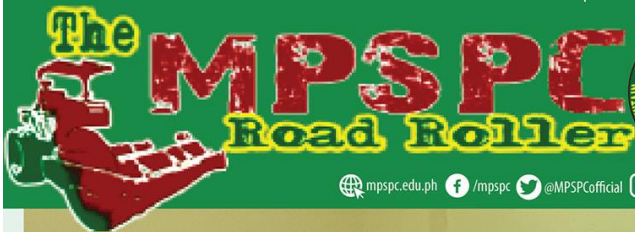
MPSPC Finance Advisory Council mulled over NBC No. 580;



Captivating Student Volunteerism



The Official Publication of MPSPC Administration | March, 2020 to April, 2020 | Volume VII | Issue VIII



ISO 9001:2015  
Quality Management System  
CERTIFIED



mpspc.edu.ph /mpspc @MPSPCofficial /mpspc1969 MPSPC YouTube Channel



**SPIRIT OF VOLUNTEERISM.** Faculty members and non-teaching personnel volunteered in the sorting of the learning modules for MPSPC students

## MPSPC ADOPTS FLEXIBLE LEARNING AMIDST THE COVID-19 CRISIS

by Dr. Mark Preston S. Lopez

For the first time in the history of the College's academic undertakings, the Mountain Province State Polytechnic College implemented a flexible learning scheme for the remainder of the 2nd semester, academic year 2019-2020. This alternative mode of delivery of instruction emerged as a result of the polytechnic's compliance to the directives of the Commission on Higher Education to ensure that students will not undergo face-to-face classroom learning in the last four weeks of the semester. This method of instruction was also the most viable fashion against the mass promotion of students which other state universities and colleges in the country opted to adopt.

In some of the meetings with the Higher Education sector of the College, Dr. Rexton F. Chakas, the College President emphasized, "We are not about to implement mass promotion... Continue on page 3

## COLLEGE COMMITTEE DISTRIBUTES LEARNING MODULES TO STUDENTS, CONTENTS WITH VARIOUS ISSUES

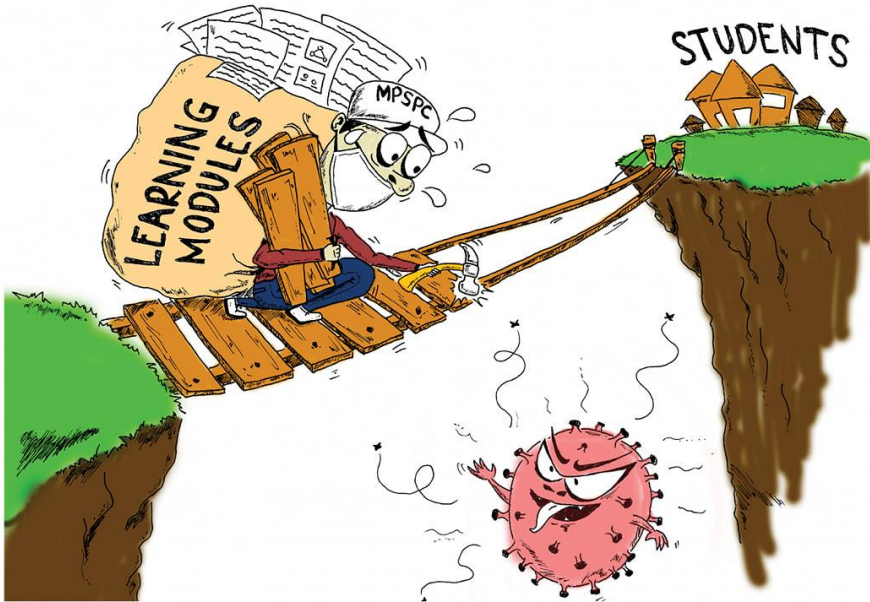
The committee on learning modules comprised of MPSPC faculty members, non-teaching staff, and student-volunteers from all satellite campuses distributed more or less 4,500 learning packets to students in their respective places from May 7-9, 2020. Based on the committees' strategic plans, the distribution of the learning modules was carried out through various means, which include: (a) house to house distribution, including the streets or roads where students opted to meet with MPSPC personnel; (b) coordinated distribution through the municipal LGU and identified barangay stations or barangay halls; (c) endorsement of learning modules to designated coordinators

along major highways and roads leading to distant areas; (d) physical shipping of learning modules through available freight services, especially in COVID19-stricken places like Benguet, Baguio City, Abra, and Isabela, among others. Faculty members and non-teaching staff who served as volunteers embraced the challenge of bringing the modules even in remote areas, including the fields and far-off places where students are currently working on a day-to-day basis.

Volunteers traveled through college vehicles to the province of Kalinga – Pasil, Tinglayan, Tabuk, among others; Tubo, Abra; and Cervantes, Ilocos Sur and to distant barangays... Continue on page 3



**EVEN** in their workplaces in the farm, MPSPC students received their learning modules from instructors who volunteered to distribute them



## WHY FLEXIBLE LEARNING MATTERS FOR MPSPC

*A conversation with a friend who teaches in a state university in Mindanao unveiled that in view of the COVID-19 crisis, their university administration decided to implement mass promotion of students after a 4-hour deliberation. He also learned that MPSPC will not implement the same, instead the College Management decided to adopt a flexible learning scheme. He asked, "How will you guys do it?," and he further said, "Pero wow, bilib naman ako sa inyo, you chose to take the unpopular and difficult path", at least for him.*

With MPSPC's decision to implement a flexible learning method as an alternative mode of the delivery of instruction for the remainder of the second semester, questions emerged: "How will the college implement flexible learning and ensure that all students will equitably access their learning materials?" "Will the modules be distributed to the students right to their doorsteps or at least close to where they reside?" These questions transpired because of the present yet unpredictable conditions of the pandemic.

In the last few weeks, flexible learning was the name of the game, so they say. The implementation of flexible learning in MPSPC was not a smooth sail for everyone concerned. Well, it is the first in the history of the College to implement such mode of distance learning, thus, the mechanism seemed to be a test of everyone's ingenuity and acumen, an imperfect approach, yet, there's much room for improvement. The discourse on flexible learning in MPSPC could be seen from different perspectives.

On one hand, it was an eye-opener for the management, the faculty and the non-teaching staff, and of course, the students.

Eyes were literally opened, but the mind and soul were equally unlocked. The academic community had to embrace an innovation, a first-of-its-kind that stimulated a wide array of actions, reactions, and mere nods by those who didn't want to make things more complicated. Perhaps few instructors affirmatively accepted the challenge that came with this mode of instruction and they transcended the limitations of their self-confessed limited knowledge on designing modules for students under the principles of flexible learning. Others made quite a good impression with their *obra maestra* that they never thought could be done within a limited time. It was a history in the making.

Additionally, the process of facing the gargantuan task of printing, collating, and sorting the modules of more or less 5,000 students from all the satellite campuses of the college gave birth to another historical feat – many employees, including those from the non-academic sector came out to help in preparing and packaging the printed modules. The spirit of volunteerism among many in MPSPC was cultivated despite the limitations that the ECQ/GCQ and the Covid-19 pandemic in general

brought forth to everyone's life. Needless to say, the distribution of the modules to more than 50 barangays, municipalities, and nearby provinces by volunteers who are unmindful of the risks of traveling during the current crisis is worth commending. There was looming tension in the atmosphere in the academic building for a week, but this unavoidable strain was subdued by each one's concern for sustainability of delivering instruction despite the crisis. Well, this was a distinct "MPSPC way".

Still, from a different angle, challenges emerged during the consummation of the packaged modules for students. During the first day, the risograph machine of the College did not work well but it was remedied until the last page was printed;

there was a small number of manpower but as days went by, more faculty members and non-teaching staff came to help. Some instructors submitted their modules for printing and reproduction quite late, and this circumstance delayed the efficient packaging of the materials. Furthermore, the sustained curfew hours in Bontoc caused restrictions for overtime work.

In view of these challenges, resolutions need to be considered. Faculty members should work for the conscientious delivery of their expected functions by strictly complying to deadlines. The members of the MPSPC community might need to continue fostering the unprecedented sense of volunteerism when many limitations impede critical, urgent situations. Lastly, this would be the best time to anticipate and prepare for uncertainties ahead. While the flexible learning scheme has really challenged most instructors' discernment, it also paved the way towards more aggressive development of instructional materials that can take the place of face-to-face classroom instruction. With the new normal under flexible learning, it is time that faculty members will indeed embrace innovations in higher education instruction with open minds and hearts. They have to learn to be adaptable, accommodating, and acquiescent to multiple student needs and learning styles, too. Equally, the same level of understanding and respect from the students, the community, and even colleagues who are cynical with this method is solicited.

from page 1 (MPSPC ADOPTS FLEXIBLE LEARNING) ... of students because this approach entails serious consequences and implications not only to students' academic standings but also to the culture of quality instruction that the College sustainably fosters." He further posited, "We shall adopt a very flexible mode of learning that is both equitable and compliant", which implies that while MPSPC prioritizes the safety of students from the dreaded Covid-19, the institution does not also compromise the quality of sustainable education that is explicitly defined in the Administration major thrusts and goals, particularly on attaining and sustaining quality and excellence in education. He further affirmed during the Monday flag ceremony, "For as long as faculty members will have a basis for assigning grades to students, we shall be able to rationalize the flexible learning scheme that we chose to implement."

As an initial step in the flexible learning process, the College Management advised all faculty members in all the satellite campuses to utilize a research-based flexible learning template to guide them in developing their learning modules or packets for a

4-week duration. Dr. Chakas emphasized that faculty members should exercise utmost flexibility in the midst of the pandemic. After this, they were further advised to submit their learning modules to their respective department chairpersons for printing and packaging. Students who opted to obtain their learning materials online were advised to communicate directly with their instructors who provided them 2 options: first, they could either download them from the college's website or second, their instructors could send the materials through email.

The Office of the Executive Deans in both campuses, together with faculty members who were requested to report to the campus, facilitated the packaging of the learning materials. On May 7-9, 2020, the College worked with a group of volunteers from the faculty and the non-teaching staff, in coordination with the local and barangay

LGUs to distribute the learning packets to the students in their respective places. Volunteers distributed the learning packets to identified barangays within the 10 municipalities of Mountain Province, including Benguet, Kalinga, and Cervantes, Ilocos Sur where MPSPC students currently reside. The provinces of Ifugao and Abra were not


included as areas to be visited because there are confirmed cases of COVID-19 in these provinces. Nonetheless, the Office of the Executive


Dean coordinated

with students from these areas, including those from outside Cordillera for them to avail of their learning packets. Because of the unforeseen conditions of the ECQ and GCQ after May 15, 2020, students were advised to anticipate another advisory regarding the systematic mode of submission of their learning packets until July 24, 2020 for evaluation by their instructors.

**"We shall adopt a very flexible mode of learning that is both equitable and compliant"**

Dr. Rexton F. Chakas





The Official Publication of MPSPC Administration | March, 2020 to April, 2020 | Volume VII Issue VIII

[mpspc.edu.ph](http://mpspc.edu.ph) | 
 [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/mpspsc) | 
 [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/mpspscofficial) | 
 [MPSPC YouTube Channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMPSPC)

## EDITORIAL BOARD AND STAFF

**Editor-in-chief**  
Dr. Mark Preston S. Lopez

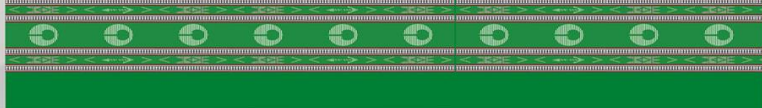
**Associate Editor**  
Chuwaley L. Taguba

**Staff Writers and Contributors**  
 Carolyne Dale A. Castaneda | Mirasol F. Sumerbang | Nicole Bryle F. Gut-omen | Raymund A. Sagudin | Rachel Fagyan | Christie Lynne C. Coddol | Dixtie Caranto | Willow Pangket | Sylesia K. Pangasan

**Page Layout and Design**  
Raymund A. Sagudin

**Consultants**  
 Elvin P. Rosario, Director for Management Information System Unit |  
 Dexter C. Lingbanan, Chief of Staff | Dr. Rogelio Balcita, Vice President for Administration and Finance |  
 Dr. Annie Grail F. Ekid, Vice President for Research Development and Extension Unit |  
 Dr. Rexton F. Chakas, College President

**For queries and more information:**  
 Main Campus: Bontoc Campus, Poblacion, Bontoc, Mountain Province | Satellite Campus: Tadian Campus, Poblacion Tadian, Mountain Province |  
 Tadian Campus - Paracelis Extension, Bacarri, Paracelis, Mountain Province | Tadian Campus - Bauko Extension, Mounata Data Bauko, Mountain Province |  
 Congressman Victor S. Dominguez Research Development and Extension Center, Ba-ang, Banao Bauko, Mountain Province



from page 1 (COLLEGE COMMITTEE DISTRIBUTES LEARNING) in various municipalities of Mountain Province like Betwagan, Sacasacan, Bekigan, Saclit in Sadanga; Mayag, Bangnen, Lesseb, Data, Madepdepas in Bauko; Pandayan, Banaao, Lenga, Daducad, and Cadad-anan in Tadian and many more.

Throughout the 3-day distribution of the learning modules, the committee has also confronted some issues and concerns that are deemed inevitable, considering that this mechanism was designed as a quick response to a flexible delivery of instruction amid the crisis. Some emergent issues include the following: (a) some students are stranded in places other than their addresses provided in the student database; (b) some students' learning packets were not complete; and (c) internet connectivity and network signal which hampered efficient coordination between students and faculty members regarding their modules. Anent these concerns, the College Management will convene early this week to address all the emergent issues. In addition, the Administration is consistently providing regular and daily advisories and updates through its website, official social media accounts and text messaging.

Overall, the distribution of learning modules was carried out as planned, and a great majority of students have availed of their learning packets. Yet, a consequent set of strategies to address the problems shall be crafted by the Higher Education sector in the next few days. *MPSL (see photos in page 11)*



Medical frontliners from the Luis Hora Regional Memorial Hospital received pasteurized milk donated by the Mountain Province State Polytechnic College.

## “Og-ogfon si MPSPC”: It’s more than just an institution

by Chuwaley L. Taguba

*The COVID-19 pandemic has emerged in this current era as probably the most vicious of its kind, having killed more than a million people around the world. In the Philippines, 637 died due to this virus, 9,684 were tested positive but 1,408 thankfully recovered. The world economy has also apparently suffered with people losing their jobs and with businesses ceasing their operations. Schools closed and students had to receive instruction through alternative modes. One thing is clear - this pandemic has ushered a new era which we now know as the “New Normal”.*

Another thing is clear. Behind this virulent virus emerged people’s sense of “bayanihan” or more popularly known in Bontoc and Mountain Province as “og-ogfo” or “ob-obbo” in Applai. The Mountain Province State Polytechnic College (MPSPC), through its President Dr. Rexton F. Chakas, took upon itself to give life to this cultural notion to cater to the needs of not only the students but even to the needs of the personnel. Thus, “Og-ogfon si MPSPC” was born.

In the past weeks, MPSPC has consistently sustained its initiatives amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. These initiatives were regularly disseminated through the infographics and the executive reports that were uploaded in the College’s official website and official Facebook and Twitter accounts. The publication of these initiatives was not to show off what the College has done, but technically to provide oversight agencies with evidence of the institution’s involvement in flattening the curve.

Below is a highlight of the “Og-ogfon si MPSPC”:

- The College President, Dr. Rexton F. Chakas, issued various memoranda and advisories regarding the guidelines in implementing directives from oversight agencies such as CHED and the Civil Service Commission, among others. Such initiatives were not limited to providing information to students, faculty members, and the non-teaching staff of the hazards brought by COVID 19 but were also relevant and responsive to the welfare of its students, employees, and the community in general;

- Donating and distributing a total of 363 liters of pasteurized cow milk to front liners, different agencies, barangays not only here in Bontoc but in other municipalities as well; Donating more or less 1,300 face masks and 40 liters of alcohol to the frontliners of various local and provincial agencies;

- Providing assistance in transporting a total of 331 students to their respective municipalities in Mountain Province and Benguet;

- Facilitating the distribution of assorted vegetables and cavans of rice donated by Congressman Maximino Y. Dalog, Jr. and 3 waves of food packs to stranded students in Bontoc, procured through cash donations from faculty members and the non-teaching staff of the college through President Rexton F. Chakas’s Social Action Program;

- Sewing and distribution of improvised faced masks by faculty members, non-teaching staff and volunteers from the Tadian campus, and “adopting” students who opted to stay in Tadian during the lockdown; currently, volunteers in the Tadian campus are targeting the production of 5,000 face masks.

- Initiation of a social research on the lived experiences of COVID-19 frontliners in Bontoc. The Bontoc LGU, the Mountain Province Provincial Government and the PNP Provincial Office endorsed the study. Results of the study served as basis for the development of a policy brief that offered recommendations for the local government addressing the problems on

the implementation of the ECQ and the lockdown orders that emerged from the empirical research

The initiatives of the College highlighted here only goes to show that MPSPC is more than just a college, or an institution. It transcends the four corners of the school and is ready to strip down and give back to its students and the community for which it represents. These initiatives yielded significant outputs that are backed by concrete and relevant evidence, which include the following:

- A responsive approach to management, promoting the welfare and needs of employees amidst the crisis;
- Fortified information campaign to increase the awareness of students and employees towards the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Compliance to executive orders and national orders promoting the welfare of the students and the faculty members amidst the crisis;
- Provision of assistance to stranded students and employees and cultivation of responsiveness and responsibility during health crisis within the College and the sustained relationship of the College to the community particularly during times of crisis;
- Provision of assistance to community front liners implementing the ECQ and lockdown orders and nurturance of the College’s relationship with the community through meaningful and relevant initiatives;
- Production of a policy brief that outlines relevant policy recommendations for the local government.



Republic of the Philippines  
Mountain Province State Polytechnic College  
Bontoc, Mountain Province

Dr. Rogelio K. Balcitra Jr., Vice President for Administration and Finance met with the Finance Sector to discuss the implications of National Budget Circular No. 580 to the budget of the College.

## MPSPC Finance Advisory Council Muled Over NBC No. 580; College Prexy Convenes VPs to Streamline College Budget Amidst COVID-19

by Dr. Rogelio K. Balcitra Jr.

*The College President Dr. Rexton F. Chakas ordered the VP for Administration and Finance Advisory Council (FAdC) of the College on April 23, 2020 to discuss the implications of the latest Department of Budget and Management (DBM) National Budget Circular (NBC), No. 580 dated April 22, 2020, re: Adoption of Economic Measures in the Government due to the Emergency Health Situation. The salient part of the Circular which is provided in 4.1 stated that:*

*“To partially generate the required amounts to implement the national policy to address the COVID-19 situation, while observing the overall expenditure program for FY 2020, government instrumentalities concerned are advised that the thirty five percent (35%) of programmed appropriations of the FY 2020 GAA shall no longer be available for release effective April 1, 2020. Likewise, at least ten percent (10%) of the total released allotments to covered entities for Maintenance and other Operating Expenses (MOOE) and Capital Outlays (Co), shall no longer be available for obligation.”*

In view of the guidelines, the members of the FAdC in attendance discussed the different items specified for discontinuance and the possible adverse effect of such restrictions in the College's capacity to carry out its mandates throughout the remaining period of FY 2020. The VP for

Administration and Finance expressed his concern that all budget cuts will obviously affect the success of attaining the physical targets pegged by the College unless the DBM will allow modifications to accommodate the necessary adjustments. The said DBM Circular provided among others, restrictions on foreign and local travels, the conduct of celebrations and all sports and athletic competitions. The rest of the members present were Ms. Leticia D. Napat-a, the Executive Director for Finance Services; Mr. Rexon T. Damayan, the Director for Accounting Services; Ms. Norma W. Akilith, the Director for Budget and Fiscal Planning; and Mr. Dexter Lingbanan, the Director for Planning and Development.

Meanwhile, Dr. Chakas advised that given the scale of the economic implications of the pandemic, the College must adopt stringent austerity measures as conscious counterpart in the national government's desire to maintain balance between survival and relevance.

In relation still to the NBC No. 580, Dr. Chakas convened the Vice Presidents of the College on April 27 to rationalize spending in the different sectors of the College in view of the budget cuts and restrictions as a measure of the National Government to source out funds in response to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.

In the meeting, it was agreed that all foreign and local travels are to be restricted

within the period the Bayanihan to Heal as One Act is in effect which is until June 25, unless extended. It was further agreed that all forms of sports and athletic competitions will be suspended until December 31, 2020. The VP for Research Development and Extension, Dr. Annie Grail F. Ekid was cautioned regarding requests forwarded to the Office of the President on paper presentation abroad. Dr. Chakas reiterated foreign and local travels are to be restricted until further notice. He stressed that the College has no control over the quarantine regulations of other provinces, the national government, and of foreign countries.

The VPs will be given the details of the budget cuts per expense item for consideration and for their sector to plan the re-prioritization and adjustments in their PPAs after the Finance Advisory Council shall have submitted their report to the Office of the College President.

On the sideline, the VP for Administration and Finance reports to the President that the assessment of the damages to the Nursing Building caused by the fire that gutted an adjacent house on Saturday April 25 is being done by the Office of the Engineering Services and the General Services Office. The estimates costs of the damages will be submitted on Monday, May 4.



MPSPC volunteers facilitate the sorting of goods obtained from donations through the Social Action Program of the Office of the College President for the victims of the fire which gutted at least two houses behind the college on April 25, 2020.

## MPSPC initiates Social Action Program for Bontoc Fire Victims

by Nicole Bryle Gut-omen

*The Mountain Province State Polytechnic College, thru the Events Management Office (EMO), collaborated with the Bontoc community to provide assistance to the victims of the fire which ravaged the neighboring houses along the Fr. Jules Sepulchre Road, Poblacion, Bontoc, Mountain Province on April 25, 2020. MPSPC volunteers aggressively initiated a donation drive as part of the mandates of the Social Action Program (SAP) of the College President, Dr. Rexton F. Chakas.*

The College Management has designated employee-volunteers to serve as official contact persons who are responsible in collecting, sorting, and packaging the donations from the four central barangays of Bontoc. The team collected cash and material donations from employees of the college and from kind and compassionate community people. The material donations that were received included beddings (pillow, blankets, pillow cases, bed sheets, and foams), kitchen utensils (burner, plates, mugs, cups, bowls), hygiene kits (bath soaps, toothbrushes, towels, toothpastes, laundry detergents), and ready-to-wear clothes.

On the other hand, a total cash of P45, 890.00 was collected as donations which were used to purchase additional materials such as single burner gas stoves, knives, plates, mugs, cooking pots, frying pans, water jugs, pillows, and hangers. All expenses from the cash donations are all accounted for.

This initiative targeted a total number of 17 fire victims who were gravely affected by the incident, mostly the tenants in the boarding houses and their respective owners. Among the fire victims, 12 are students of MPSPC while one of them is a College Instructor.

The estimated total of damages is P3,000,000.00 according to the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP). The collection of donations is ongoing and the list of necessities includes:

1. Beddings (pillow, sleeping foam, bed sheets, pillow cases, blankets)
2. Kitchen Utensils (plates, spoons, cups/mugs, bowl, pan, kettle, cooking pot)
3. Hygiene Kit (laundry and bath soaps, toothbrush, towels, toothpastes)
4. Ready-to-wear clothes and underwear
5. Footwear (shoes, slippers)
6. Cash





Stranded students of Mountain Province State Polytechnic College who are members of the Reserved Officers Training Corps (ROTC) helped in the repacking of goods to be distributed to the local government of Bontoc.



## Captivating Student Volunteerism Amidst the COVID19 Pandemic Situation

by Nicole Bryle Gut-omen

*Nine (9) students of Mountain Province State Polytechnic College (MPSPC) who are reservists of the 1043rd Community Defense Center ARESKOM capitalized on their innate compassion and showcased true volunteerism during the blitzkrieg of the Covid19 pandemic. They are: C/2nd LT Via Bangiwahon, C/2nd LT Cristy Cas-oy, C/2nd LT Dante Cherwaken, C/2nd LT Jansen Lubang, Sgt. Petra Agrong, Sgt. Julius Bawagan, Sgt Brandon De Leon, Sgt. Rycalyn Gonzalo, and Sgt. Carlos Pilpiling.*

The Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) students voluntarily helped the employees of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Provincial Office and the Bontoc LGU in repacking assorted relief goods for families affected by the crisis. Accordingly, without the ebullient help of the student volunteers,

the repacking and distribution of relief goods would not have been efficiently consummated.

By volunteering, the students also enhanced their skills which are fundamental to their scholastic stability, workplace, and their personal lives, including opportunities for collaboration and problem-solving.

"I had gained self-confidence, met new people and felt the essence of lending a hand to help our community in times of crisis", shared Ms. Cristy Cas-oy, one of the ROTC student-volunteers who was also stranded in Bontoc during the crisis.

Even though it was a series of exhausting days for the ROTC student-volunteers, a strong spirit of volunteerism emanated from their inner selves. As students grow, they develop a better and improved sense of awareness to self and to others. From their stories, it is evident that some MPSPC students have a strong sense of volunteerism seen through various forms of their community involvement which help them build their own well-being.

**"I had gained self-confidence, met new people and felt the essence of lending a hand to help our community in times of crisis"**

## TALES OF COVID-19: REFLECTIONS & REALIZATIONS OF MPSPC PERSONNEL

The MPSPC Road Roller solicited stories from faculty members and the non-teaching staff about their significant experiences, realizations, lesson learned, and some quite interesting narratives about the COVID-19 pandemic. We compiled these stories that are worth reading and learning from. Here are their stories.

**WILLOW PANGKET,**  
*Graduate School Faculty*

The community quarantine brought by the pandemic is taking a heavy toll on everyone, and our government is doing its best to stop the spread of the virus in our country by implementing strict measures. Because of this, we are left with no choice but to stay at home and hope for a vaccine to be available in the coming months.

For almost two months of being in community quarantine, I tried to busy myself so as not to be stressed on things that I don't have any control of such as the effect of this pandemic to our economy, livelihood, food systems, and other social concerns. I also see people doing the same to not get bored. I see on their social media posts that they have become instant chefs, online sellers, or "tiktokers".

For me, aside from checking outputs submitted by my students through email, answering student questions through group chats, or uploading learning materials in our Google classroom, I also spend my time reading Facebook posts from my news feed and just really reading anything that catches my interest that Google wants me to read or just watching trending videos brought by this pandemic. I thought that if this Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) is to continue, I might also try "tiktok" for fun and post it on my social media account. But I guess, I have to learn a thousand ways on how to cook sardines first before I do that.

What's more interesting for me to see though during these times are the words or expressions, new or old, that have become popular everywhere whether on television, social media, the Congress, the Senate, or in people's daily conversations. These words that we use now in relation to the pandemic seemed to be part of our new normal, and almost everyone seemed to have added them in their vocabulary.

New words or expressions are created every year and their meanings may change over time or they may be forgotten. During this time of pandemic, we have already heard some new words, but they are actually not so new because they were derived from the old ones. In linguistics, this process is called word formation. Another interesting point here is how people use these words in their sentences in different situations, and how the meanings of these words change, either from stronger to weaker meaning, from superordinate level to subordinate level, or from specific going to general. Like when I asked my students on the progress of their papers, one answered, "*na-covid, mam*". Or when you ask other people how they are doing during this period, they would respond saying that "even their buttons are practicing social distancing or physical distancing" to connote their weight gain.

On information, we usually hear people saying 'fake news' especially if it's not based on actual data. This is common on television or internet where everyone becomes an expert on whatever pressing issue is at hand. We have seen the best example of this on the Covid pandemic, and some people are called covidiot because of the information they release or they believe is true.

Flattening the curve is also commonly used now among reporters, politicians and healthcare providers. All nations are trying their best to flatten the curve on the Covid infection. Hence, leaders as well as the frontliners everywhere are asking people to stay at home. For schools, especially in our country, blended learning or other alternative learning/ teaching methods seem to be the trend since there is no physical attendance required from the students. Other agencies also turned to work from home. Even church leaders turned to live stream masses.

In times like these, it brings the best and worst in us. Doctors, nurses, police officers and other frontliners have to be creative on the ground, especially that there is a scarcity of personal protective equipment (PPE). We see doctors and nurses use plastic bags as their protective suit in place of hazmat suit. We see celebrities helping the poorest of the poor through food or monetary donations. Even those who have little but can still survive on their own waive their food packages or social amelioration subsidies thinking that it is their own way of helping those who need them more. In times like this, we form a mindset of scarcity and mindset of abundance. And of course, there are always those who take advantage of this situation to profit from others. A lot of things are happening, and many changes are observed. But it doesn't stop people from doing new things and discovering things. What can we say, necessity is the mother of invention.

**DIXTIE CARANTO**  
*Non-Teaching Personnel*

I wasn't scared until it hit me. COVID-19 was just something I've been hearing on the news during the past months. I was too relaxed to think it would not reach our country. March came and COVID-19 shook the Philippines. People were panicking because of fear. I was still a bit relaxed by then. But not until I became one of the PUIs (Persons Under Investigation). My doctor said I had some of the symptoms and so I had to undergo Home Quarantine for 14 days. I was strictly advised from going out of the house, from making any physical connection with my family, and advised to take care of myself. It was during my home quarantine when I realized life's worth. I was scared. I started to imagine lots of "what ifs". I was also panicking. Even if I was not sure of my condition back then, I honestly feared for my life. I started to think about the things I wanted to do for family and for myself. I had a lot of plans for them. This would be one of the worst ways to end human life. No one can hug me to comfort me. My close friend who became one of the PUMs (Person Under Monitoring) because we were constantly together cannot even hug me or pat my back every time I cough. And when I do, it's like I would cough my lungs out. I wanted to get better



really quick. Thankfully, the zero record of Mountain Province comforted me.

And so when I recovered, I thought of my plans and dreams that I wanted to pursue. I wanted to be more productive. I don't wanna waste any more time. Thousands of people around the world have unfortunately died because of this virus. Thousands of people have lost their precious ones. Thousands of dreams were also killed. And so I wanna make mine come true.

If I were to share a lesson I learned from this pandemic, I think it would be a deep realization that life is really unpredictable. We cannot control what would happen next. We might be living today and just die tomorrow with no warnings. And so we have to live life to the fullest. Thousands of frontliners are sacrificing their lives just for us to be able to do so. This pandemic also made me realize we have to be with our family and loved ones while we can. Since we also cannot control time, we have to live like everyday is the last day of our lives.



### CHRISTIE LYNNE C. CODOD

*Executive Dean – Bontoc campus*

My ECQ experience is summarized in the same acronym which I wanted to give a different meaning: E – Enjoyed the following: healthy walk from Samoki to Poblacion, Bontoc to buy essential needs; eating a variety of food ordered from different sellers and having a chance to taste food which is rarely sold during regular days; bonding with kids like outdoor and indoor camping, eating breakfast at the rooftop, gardening, playing, among others, which we seldom do because of busy schedules. C – realized the importance of Communication. Group chats were created for various groups to keep in touch and to keep oneself abreast of vital information. However, this mode is not true to everyone, especially for those who do not have access to the internet. Q – Quarantine Pass which I needed to obtain from the barangay hall and which had authorized me to go out of the house to buy necessities and learning my lesson the hard way when I realized that I changed my bag where my quarantine pass was kept and I was not allowed to cross the Samoki-Poblacion border. The ECQ has really taught me some life's lessons, but it was also a perfect opportunity for me to fortify my bond with my family. That's all the matters to me.



### RACHEL FAGYAN

*Department Chairperson, Accountancy Department*

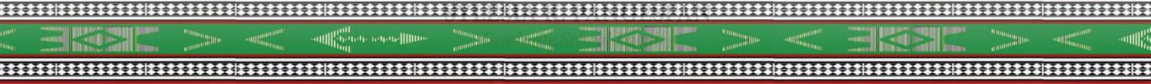

Staying at home for more than a month allowed me to realize a lot about life. Since I don't have my own television set, I get updates through the internet despite the fluctuating internet connectivity in Bontoc. My social media newsfeeds are saturated with the news about people questioning why they were not included in the list of those who will be receiving cash or material subsidy from the government during the COVID-19 pandemic. Above all, the lockdown made me become thankful for a lot of things.

First, I was grateful to have a permanent job as a government employee. Before, each time I get to see my pay slip, my eyes directly gazed into the tax deductions from my salary and thought that this is the "misfortune" of becoming a government employee. Your compensation will have its corresponding tax deductions automatically. But hey! Now we are enjoying the taxes we are paying before. The government takes care of us even though we are "working from home" with comfort and ease. This is the fruit of the taxes being deducted from our pay slips. This is without discounting, of course the private companies and individuals who graciously help.

Second, I am grateful that at least, I have my savings. Staying in the province, particularly in Bontoc, makes savings easier since there are fewer things to spend on versus living in the city. However, getting yourself a personal savings despite the level of income you earn, the place you leave in, or the obligations you have all boil down to your spending and savings attitude. It always pays to have the attitude of maintaining one's savings even though how small one's income is, but the consistency of doing it will make things work.

Lastly, we need to embrace the "new normal" and try to keep up rather than going against the tide. We just ended our online classes in my DBA class. At first, there were hesitations and negative thoughts on each student's mind. Yet the courage of our professor to push through with the class ended up with a very good learning experience. We might not have perfectly carried out our online class but we certainly learned a lot and we were able to finish our course content. This sense of flexibility is also true with how business people adjusted their channels of distribution. A lot of people are now selling not only RTWs through the internet but also food items. At the end of the day you see their posts in social media that all of their products were sold out and they are accepting reservations for the next production.

We might not be able to go back to normal anytime soon. But this does not mean that we cannot do anything. Filipinos are known for being creative, and in this time, we really need to unleash our creativity and live the new normal.



**SYLESIA K. PANGESFAN**  
*Graduate School Faculty*

Since the start of the enhanced community quarantine in mid-March, quite a number of us have had opportunities we never had in frankly a very long time to do things we had to do, given the time in our hands.

The week before the ECQ, things were just the way they were. Instructors planned for the lessons the following week and the students had no plans of going home so suddenly. I was thrown for a loop when we were placed in strict quarantine measures. Because it's one of the things we don't have control of, all we have to do is to comply.

But with our compliance also came a number of positive and a few negative corollaries. These are things that I have realized in so far as this COVID-19 pandemic is concerned.

When the online classes became the alternative for two weeks in March, it was a challenge to reach out to students. Not only that, it was a challenge to give the "message" of our lessons clearly across the virtual world. Some students may have had taken pleasure from the online option and thought that online classes are "easier" but they did not see the dilemma of their teachers thinking of ways to make lessons, especially the very technical ones, as comprehensible as they could be. The preparation of modules for online and home-school was twice the work than that of the regular classes, yet all was surpassed in the hopes that our students would still be able to learn during the crisis. I realized that in the discharge of our duties, we go the extra mile to make it work.

The initial two-week suspension which eventually led to almost two months of quarantine endowed us with time we haven't had in such a long time. I realized that the simplest and most basic of things are those that matter. The quality time we spend with our families during this time is even longer than any break we have been given in our work-life. Moms and dads in our institution have had time to play with their children or grandchildren. Each one has had time to "properly" cook a meal, eat with the family, and share stories, because there isn't any reason that would compel us to do these all in a breeze. We finally had the time to do the chores which were set aside for the longest time such as folding clothes and putting them in their proper places, cleaning the household and taking our time to do it, or preparing pots or plots for backyard gardening. We may even have had the time to finally watch that K-Drama that stayed too long on the to-watch-list. These tasks seem menial, but being able to finally do them gives even just a bit of accomplishment.

On the other hand, I also realized that while we may have had time to do all that was stated above, it also means that the exact same things are those that our front liners are unable to do or experience alone or with their families. This makes me all the more appreciative of and grateful for the services they render to ensure that we follow and abide by rules to keep us safe. I have siblings who also work 6 days a week, with only a day's off. What is harder is their sacrifice not to see their motivation – their children, yet they push through.

Values taught to us when we were younger have been put to test during this pandemic – patience, faith, charity, kindness and empathy. I've learned to wait for what is to come from the national to the local and barangay government, in addition to directives coming from our college. What is challenging is to still have faith because of the uncertainty the future holds. The pandemic has definitely affected all, thus kindness and empathy bring a glimmer of hope in us when we see people doing acts of kindness. These charitable acts, whether we've done it ourselves, contributed to it, had it known or anonymous, are proof that at times when we are hard hit, we are ready and are willing to go beyond ourselves to reach to others who need help.

I am sure we have plotted plans or goals to reach for this year and the years to come. I surely did. But I realized that even the grandest of dreams and most meticulous of plans may not be fulfilled – at least not now. As I was starting to doubt whether my dreams would come to a fruition anytime soon, I came across a quote in Facebook. The passage's point is that this pandemic has put many dreams on hold, not destroyed them or made them unreachable. It doesn't mean our dreams will not come true. When we get past this global crisis, we can start taking the steps towards achieving our goals, plans or dreams. The feeling is also lightened with the Lord's assurance, "For I know the plans I have for you...". Again, the Lord has proven that His plans are better for us. In relation to virtues that we keep intact during this crisis, we must keep the faith – even when we don't see the whole staircase.

This pandemic was unexpected and unprecedented, to say the least. Never did I anticipate that such a global crisis like this would come and hit us so hard. And so, despite everything that has happened and everything that will be, this made me realize that I, and we, should be grateful for life in general. That even when we are faced with life's adversities, there are still plenty of reasons to be thankful for and that there is always something bigger than ourselves.

There are a number of other realizations probably most of us have had for the past two months. And with these realizations, we arm ourselves to become more prepared of what will be in the coming months.

The final lesson that this pandemic has taught me is the value of prayer, praying for each one of us affected, but most especially for those who need help the most, our front liners combatting this unseen enemy, and our leaders in the government and in our respective institutions. I pray that we may remain steadfast even if we falter along the way. Together, we look forward for that day when this disease shall no longer takes lives and we can have a semblance of that normal life we used to have.

# WE CAME, WE SAW, AND WE CONQUERED

On May 7, 2020, a new dawn has come, and thick piles of a thousand folders containing MPSPC students' learning modules sat on tables mounded together inside the classroom and along the corridor. These stapled sheets of paper are waiting to be transported and distributed to their rightful owners, full of anticipation to learn from them or enveloped with anxiety for the looming stress to work on what the sheets shall force them to do. But days before, these reams of paper were nothing but idle stocks accumulating dust. But today, they turn into very important goods not for economic survival amidst the pandemic but for that long-awaited erudition that was cut short by the COVID-19 crisis that came like a thief in the night.

One by one, the volunteers arrived, clad in their College shirts, a brand that imposed MPSPC's presence but shall soon evolve into a modest, selfless concern for students and a strong sense of volunteerism. They came with a battlecry, "Everything is for our dear students", and as they silently mumble these words, the tiny fixes of hair in the skin stand up, and the intense gush of shiver that accompanies the goosebumps shocks the body's veins.

That same day, MPSPC arrived in places where students reside, from the streets, dirty, unpaved roads to their houses, and from the fields and the plow to the creek where constant water flows. These pictures tell their story.



Alab-Dantay



Balili



Banao



Barlig



Besao-Sagada



Bontoc III



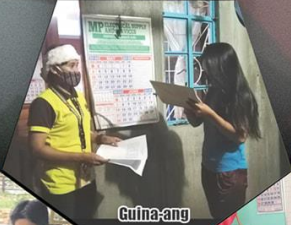
Buglas-Mankayan



Dalican



Gonogon



Guina-ang



Kalinga



Lagawa, Bauko



Natonin-Paracelis



Poblacion Bontoc



Sadanga



Samoki



Sinto, Bauko



Sunny Side, Tadian



Upper Bauko