



# COVID-19 Pandemic Initiatives

A special E-Newsletter highlighting the contributions of the University in the fight against COVID-19



## The President's Message

With the recent development of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Region, the University Administration is sending a message of light and hope to everyone. In this tough time, we should rise together in unity above adversity and face this challenge head-on.

The University Administration is doing its best to extend help in support of our national and local governments in the fight against COVID-19. Rest assured that USEP will stand unshaken in its intention to secure the safety of its constituents.

This newsletter is a special edition that highlights the University's initiatives supporting our government in the fight against COVID-19. The University, through its different Offices, crafted and implemented measures to prevent the acquisition and spread of the virus and to help alleviate its effects. The strong leadership of the Top Management and Middle Managers and the support of the rank and file employees made all these initiatives possible. We believe that only by fighting together can we win this battle. Through this newsletter, the University is sharing to everyone the message of hope in unity.


On behalf of the Administration, I would like to thank all of those who have gone beyond the call of duty to ensure the health and safety of our students, faculty and staff at our campuses in Obrero, Mintal, and Tagum-Mabini.

I thank all University personnel for keeping our core educational mission intact as much as possible by exercising flexibility in adapting to the alternative measures in the delivery of instruction and administrative services and in strengthening the spirit of resilience as one USEP community.

I am also grateful to the students who remain understanding of the University's imperfect response to some of their circumstances. Rest assured that the Administration is, first and foremost, mindful of these situations. With our collective efforts, we will be able to respond better as new developments and recommendations emerge due to the COVID-19 crisis.

I also give my sincerest gratitude to all those who unselfishly shared their blessings – in cash and in kind – which enable the University to reach and be of service to its constituents and to more front line workers in the Davao Region.

We believe that it is not long until we find the light in the end of this seemingly endless tunnel of darkness. Until then, let us uphold optimism. May we come together as one and win for all.

  
LOURDES C. GENERALAO  
President







## USEP COVID-19 INITIATIVES



### Launching of COVID-19 Action Center

To facilitate and accommodate concerns of the University constituents and to be of service to the community, USEP launched its COVID-19 Action Center.

The Action Center has been rendering medical assistance to students who are experiencing flu-like symptoms or have been identified as Person Under Monitoring (PUM) or Person Under Investigation (PUI). Aside from this, the Action Center also worked on the monitoring of undergraduate students to extend needed assistance through food relief and medicine packages and free transportation to their respective municipalities. The Center also assisted in the distribution of PPEs to frontline workers.

Prior to the launch of the Action Center, the Administration constituted the COVID-19 Task Force also known as the Committee on Dissemination, Implementation, and Monitoring of the University Measures on COVID-19. Through the University's COVID-19 Task Force, the creation of Relief Response Team was also established.

The Action Center with the Task Force and Response Team have accomplished the following:

- Launched the COVID-19 Task Force Hotline;
- Conducted simultaneous University-wide disinfection in various campuses;
- Monitored and delivered food relief packages to USEP undergraduate students who are still staying in their boarding houses; and
- Transported a total of forty-one (41) undergraduate students to their respective municipalities in close coordination with their respective Provincial Health Offices and Emergency Operations Centers.
- Dispatched/Distributed face masks, face shields, and aerosol boxes; and
- Other tasks assigned by the Top Management in response to COVID-19 concerns.

The Center is a proof of the University's proactive efforts in the fight against COVID-19 and to better provide a safer environment for its constituents. (DLMatugas)







## USEP COVID-19 INITIATIVES



### Food relief and medical assistance to student-boarders

Last March 19, 2020, Sara Z. Duterte, Davao Region COVID-19 Task Force Chairperson and Davao City Mayor, issued a region-wide order on the Prohibition and Exemption on Movement of Persons within Davao Region. Despite the effort of going home before the implementation of region-wide lockdown, a number of USEP students were not able to go home.

The University Administration, through the USEP COVID-19 Task Force, monitored the students who were still staying in their boarding houses. The Task Force created a database to ensure immediate response and delivery of assistance.

On March 24-25, 2020, the COVID-19 Task Force and external campus counterparts distributed the relief food packages to affected USEP students in Davao and Tagum Cities.

Included in the food package are rice, canned goods, packs of noodles, hand sanitizers, and hygiene products. Some medicines were also provided to the students. The USEP COVID-19 Task Force has distributed already a total of 215 relief food packages to student-boarders as of March 31, 2020.

The Task Force also has an on-call Medical Team which is monitoring all PUMs in the campuses.

The USEP Administration is doing its best to support all efforts exerted by the national and local government to fight COVID-19 and to serve others, especially its students, in these difficult times. (*RBMolina*)







## USEP COVID-19 INITIATIVES



### Provision of free transportation for skeletal workforce

Due to the minimal seating capacity of public utility vehicles in observance of the social distancing practice, workers encounter difficulty in commuting to and from offices. Although the University has adopted work-from-home scheme for most of its employees prior to the implementation of enhanced community quarantine in Davao Region, there are still employees who serve as skeleton force. With this in mind, the University initiated to offer free transportation for its skeleton workforce during their scheduled days to report on duty.

Respective University vehicle drivers were dispatched to transport skeleton workforce to the University and back to their respective areas/residences.

Designated stops were also in place and employees waiting for the vehicles outside these stops were instructed to hail to the driver to indicate that they are USEP employees.

For Obrero Campus, this initiative took effect on March 23, 2020. The same arrangement has also been set for Tagum-Mabini and Mintal Campuses, in coordination with the Chancellor and Campus Dean.

Aside from providing vehicle for skeleton workforce, the University prepared the early release of salaries for employees for the mid-month salary of March as well as the whole monthly salary for April and May. (DLMatugas)







## USEP COVID-19 INITIATIVES



### Production and distribution of face shields, aerosol boxes, and washable face masks

In its effort to help the frontline workers in their fight against the spread of COVID-19, USEP, through its Digital Fabrication Laboratory (a shared service facility (SSF) of USEP, DTI-XI, and DOST-XI), has fabricated a total of 3,101 face shields as of May 4, 2020. The FabLab also fabricated 24 aerosol boxes that will shield doctors while intubating patients.

There are two types of fabricated face shields made available for distribution. The type varies on the material used for the headband or bumper. The first type is 3D printed and the other one is made of foam. The University, through Asso. Prof. Amiel B. Marata, FabLab Manager, and Dr. Alma Mae G. Salinas, Dean of the College of Technology, has successfully turned over face shields to public and private hospitals, Doctors to the Barrios (DTTB), government agencies, LGUs, nearby barangays, boundary checkpoints and private organizations in the Region.

Specific recipients of the face shields are as follows:

- Government hospitals that cater COVID-19 positive cases such as the Southern Philippines Medical Center (SPMC) and the Davao Regional Medical Center (DRMC)
- Government agencies such as DOH-XI, DTI-XI, LTO-XI, GSIS, DSWD-XI, DCWD, City Health Office of Davao, and City Health Office of Digos
- Municipal Local Government Units (MLGUs) of Digos, Davao del Sur; and Pantukan and Mabini, Davao de Oro
- Barangay Local Government Units (BLGUs) of San Roque, Aquino, 13-B, 17-B, 18-B, Davao City
- Boundary checkpoints of municipalities in Davao del Sur, Davao Occidental, Davao de Oro,

- Davao del Norte and Agusan del Sur.
- Doctors to the Barrio (DTTB) of Lupon, Davao Oriental, Kapalong and Asuncion, Davao del Norte.
- Private Hospitals such as Brokenshire Hospital and Davao Medical School Foundation, Inc.
- Private organization like the Gawad Kalinga Foundation.

After fabrication of more face shields, the University will share some to DOST-XI, Office of the Presidential Protocol, Central 911, MLGU of Sto. Tomas, San Pedro Hospital, Davao Doctors Hospital, and more. The University is expecting more demands for face shields especially with the implementation of the Enhanced Community Quarantine.

The 24 aerosol boxes were distributed to MLGU of Digos (12 pieces); SPMC (nine pieces); and DRMC (three pieces). Nine (9) more will be given to DRMC once the materials are available.

Along with the distribution of face shields and aerosol boxes is the distribution of 1,000 washable face masks to the frontline workers and other residents in Davao Region.

The University is indeed grateful to everyone who shared their blessings in cash and in kind (materials for the fabrication of face shields and aerosol boxes). As of April 6, 2020, the University, through PASUC XI, has generated a total amount of Php 194,798.65 pesos for this endeavor. (*JMPSual and JRLapayag*)







## Conduct of online music therapy sessions

The World Health Organization (WHO) released a brief of the Mental and Psychological Considerations during COVID-19 outbreak and one of the most highlighted issues is the mental health and well-being of the frontline workers.

Dealing with stress is not linear as it is different for every person. Interestingly, there is growing body of research that supports the positive effect of music to relaxation and healing from distress and devastation. Music is medicine and music therapy contributes more to healing than we can possibly imagine.

The University, in its desire to be of service to the community in this difficult time, decided to conduct Online Music Therapy Sessions to provide comfort and encouragement through music. The first online music therapy session was an online violin concert by Asst. Prof. Alshamir Bryan Barrera Aripuddin, Deputy Director of Cultural Affairs Unit and College of Education

Faculty, on March 29, 2020 at 7:30 PM. An online piano concert by Ms. Carmencita E. Zamora, Institute of Languages and Creative Arts Director and College of Arts and Sciences Faculty, was held on 5 April 2020 at 7:30 PM. Both very talented musicians believe that by sharing their music they are helping the community rise above the crisis we are facing. With hopes of positive results of this endeavor, more members of the USEP family are expected to share their talents in the coming days.

Last April 12, 2020, Mr. Nielroy C. Medina, USEP Bislig Alumnus and a Tawag ng Tanghalan contender showcased a Facebook Live session for Lenten Season. The session is dedicated to all frontliners who have sacrificed their safety during this crisis.

These efforts are initiated by the University to give a message of hope to everyone and to encourage the spirit of unity amidst adversity. (EMRBardoquillo)





## USEP COVID-19 INITIATIVES



### Assistance to student-boarders in going home to their respective municipalities

To help the students of the University, especially those who were affected with the community quarantine and the Region-wide lockdown, the University took the initiative to assist student-boarders in going home to their respective municipalities.

Last March 23, 2020, the University Administration, through its USEP COVID-19 Task Force, started monitoring all the USEP students who were still staying in their boarding houses. Along with this monitoring is an extended support for students who were in need of food and medical attention during this COVID-19 outbreak.

On March 27, 2020, the Administration, through its official Facebook Page, called the attention of all these USEP students who wished to go home to their respective provinces. In this post, they were informed that the University prepared a vehicle for them.

On the same day, with proper assessment and coordination with these provinces, the University started the assistance of the departure of these students who were not able to go home (for various reasons) after the implementation of the Davao Region lockdown. Prior to departure, the Medical

Team of the Task Force took a medical profile of each student, a copy of which is given to the respective receiving units in the boundary check points or municipalities/barangays.

A total of 13 students from Davao region were sent home on March 27, 2020 – one (1) to Davao del Norte; two (2) to Davao de Oro; and ten (10) to CARAGA Region.

On March 30, 2020, another batch of USEP students has been assisted in going to their respective municipalities with a total of nine (9) students from Davao region. Seven (7) of them are from Davao del Sur, and two (2) are from Davao Occidental.

On March 31, 2020, the last batch was assisted, with a total of six (6) students – one (1) is a resident of Davao del Norte and five (5) are from Davao de Oro.

A total of forty-one (41) USEP students were assisted to their respective municipalities in close coordination with their respective Provincial Health Offices and Emergency Operations Centers. All these students had their medical profile taken by the Medical Team of the Task Force. (*JRLapayag*)







## About the Survey

This is a survey about your experience with the situation happening related to COVID-19.

This will help us in the **University Assessment and Guidance Center (UAGC)** to provide appropriate assistance to your current condition.

Rest assured that information provided to us will be kept with utmost confidentiality.



## Conduct of Mental Health Survey

The University of Southeastern Philippines (USEP), through its University Assessment and Guidance Center (UAGC), launched the Mental Health Survey on 24 March 2020 which aims to track and assess the impact of the 2019 Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) pandemic on the mental health of the students, faculty, and staff in the University.

All USEP constituents are encouraged to share their experience related to COVID-19 by answering the survey questionnaire at <http://guidance.usep.edu.ph/> once in every week until the State of Public Health Emergency is lifted.

The UAGC identified, in the survey questionnaire, the following potential negative mental health effects of the COVID-19 crisis based on the American Psychological Association (APA) and Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM)-5th edition:

- Restlessness
- Being easily fatigued
- Difficulty concentrating
- Being irritable
- Tension in muscles
- Difficulty sleeping
- Depressed mood most of the day/nearly everyday
- Loss of interest or pleasure

- Significant weight loss when not dieting or weight gain
- Feelings of worthlessness
- Recurrent thoughts of death or recurrent suicidal ideation without specific plan

Taking the survey helps the University in monitoring the mental and physical condition of its constituents. The survey serves as a significant input in the provision of appropriate intervention or assistance to those who are in need.

Based on the report provided by the UAGC Director, Dr. Jennifer M. Arbiol, there are two (2) staff and seven (7) students who took the survey as of 07 April 2020 and each respondent received online counseling based on their responses on the survey. Moreover, these individuals will undergo a face-to-face counseling and psychotherapy once the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) imposed by the City Government of Davao is lifted.

The UAGC clarifies that the survey result does not imply diagnosis of certain mental health condition but rather provides information to the respondents about their capacity to respond to current condition in the face of COVID-19. Further, the office assures everyone that the information provided by the participants will be kept with utmost confidentiality. (CMRubia)







## USEP COVID-19 INITIATIVES



### Fund-raising to help fight COVID-19

The University, through the Philippine Association of State Universities and Colleges in Region XI (PASUC-XI), has raised a total of Php 301,298.65 in donations as of April 5, 2020.

Of the total amount gathered, Php 160,298.65 is allocated for the production of face shields, aerosol boxes by the USEP Fabrication Laboratory (FabLab). The Php 136,000.00 sourced from the University officials and personnel is intended for the protective clothing, face masks, and shoe covers. The remaining Php 5,000.00 was added to the University's budget for the food packs that were distributed to the

students who are still in their boarding houses due to various reasons. Aside from monetary donations, the University also received in-kind contributions such as rice, canned goods, and noodles.

Receipts of cash donations and disbursement are posted on the USEP Official website. With this initiative, the University aims to help contribute to the fight against COVID-19. (KMCDavid)







# USEP COVID-19 INITIATIVES



## CIC students design IEC materials on how to protect one's self against COVID-19

Students from the College of Information and Technology designed Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials that contain friendly reminders on how to avoid from getting the Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

The students who designed the IEC materials aimed to provide awareness to the USEP students, faculty, staff, and its nearby communities in properly following the steps provided by the World Health Organization (WHO). Five (5) IEC materials were designed by Fritzie Lor, Hughan Cagape, Curth Matthew Obando, John Mark Diacono, and Novem Terante from Bachelor of Science in Computer Science, and Hersie Jean Caparas and Kent Charles Cutamora from Bachelor of Science in Information Technology.

Aside from posting the materials on the USEP website and FB page, 50 pieces of each design were also printed at the University Printing Press. The printed materials were distributed to the nearby barangay local government units (BLGUs) in Davao City and some of their residents.

This kind of participation from the students exemplifies stewardship – one of the core values of a USEPian - by giving importance to information and education through awareness initiative like distribution of IEC materials. This makes people from the community be completely informed, knowledgeable and safe in times of pandemic. (JMPSual)







## Financial assistance to stranded OJT students in the province of Bukidnon

The University of Southeastern Philippines assisted fourteen Bachelor of Science in Agriculture (BSA) On-the-Job Trainees who were stranded in the province of Bukidnon. Seven of these were deployed at AGRO ECO PHILS, Barangay Maluko, Manolo Fortich and the remaining seven were deployed at NMCLRC, NOMIARC, Dalwagan, Malaybalay City.

With the University's desire to keep the stranded OJT students safe and healthy, each group has received financial assistance. The group in Malaybalay received 18,400.00 pesos cash assistance intended for their rental fee for the dorm and for their food supply until May 15, 2020. Also, the group in Manolo Fortich received 10,000.00 pesos cash assistance intended for food supply. The latter

no longer need assistance for accommodation. The amount which was sent last April 28, 2020 was sourced out from the donations given by the Administrative Council.

Aside from the cash assistance provided, the University, through COVID-19 Task Force, coordinated with the barangays for monitoring and other assistance for these OJT Students. The Task Force is also constantly monitoring these students especially on their medical and mental needs. (JMPSual)





## USEP COVID-19 INITIATIVES



### Temporary housing of medical and allied health workers in the University facility

With the University's intention to help the local and national governments on its actions toward safeguarding the medical and allied health workers, who are our modern-day heroes in our fight against COVID-19 pandemic, USEP offered its hostel in Obrero Campus to be a temporary shelter of the frontliners.

On April 14, 2020, a coordination meeting was set by the University's COVID-19 Task Force with the representatives from Infectious Control Unit of SPMC and DOH-XI. The result of the meeting was a memorandum of agreement between both parties on the temporary stay of the frontliners in the University Hostel.

An orientation was conducted to all medical and allied health workers on the preventive measures to be observed while in the University facility.

This kind of initiative manifests the University's gratitude to the frontliners who continuously and selflessly sacrifice their safety and security for the ongoing fight against COVID-19. (JMPSual)

