

# GAS MO, BUKAS KO II

## ROLLS OUT FOR THE TRANSPORT SECTOR

by Margaux F. Diaz



On June 2, 2009, Pilipinas Shell Foundation (PSFI) and Public Transport Workers Foundation (PTWF) began recruiting for Gas Mo, Bukas II (GMBK II). Testing and interviews were conducted at the PTWF office located in Cubao, Quezon City where 16 youth applied. On June 6, 2009, another batch of 26 aspiring scholars were entertained by the partners in Dagupan City.



The launching of GMBK II was made possible by a partnership among PSFI, PTWF, and Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corporation (PSPC). PTWF is the social development arm of partylist, 1-UTAK, and its membership consists of public utility vehicle drivers, operators, and workers. GMBK II offers technical-vocational scholarships for dependents of public transport workers. The program aims to improve the livelihood and employment skills of members and dependents of public transport drivers as part of Shell's Customer Loyalty Program. GMBK II is an offshoot of the successful conduct of GMBK, a scholarship program for Shell station crew previously launched.



PSFI Executive Director Edgardo Veron Cruz explains to applicants and partners that "the ultimate purpose of GMBK II is to provide young people the opportunity to become productive at the soonest possible time. He adds, "that PSFI has institutional partners where scholars could apply what they learned and immediately earn from their skills".

Asked how GMBK II came about, PTWF President Marieto "Mar" Garvida recounts, "with the occurrence of successive oil price hikes, we sought for various forms of assistance from industries affecting the transport sector". "Of all the companies we approached, only Shell opened its doors to listen to our concerns." Alliance of Concerned Transport Organizations (ACTO) President Efren de Luna shares, "Shell was quick to respond to our requests and did not have second thoughts in offering the scholarship program".



(L-R) PTWF Rep. Chey Capulong; Pilipinas Shell VP for Communications Roberto Kanapi, PCDO-ACTO-Dagupan Chapter President Efren De Luna; PJODAF Rep. Orlando Marquez Sr.; SciP Country Chair Edgar Chua; PSFI Exec. Dir. Edgar Veron Cruz; FEJODAP Rep. Zeny Maranan; PTWF President Mar Garvida; ALTODAP National Chairman Boy Vargas; and, Pasang Masda Rep. Obet Martin.

"Initially, we had doubts that GMBK II will push through," says Mar, "first, because we were concerned that our sons and daughters may not be able to meet PSFI's criteria, and second, because we thought the offer was nothing but 'talkies' to appease the transport sector". Asked why they pursued to make the program work despite their doubts, Mar responds, "Shell insisted for us to get applications from among our members so that now, more than ever, we believe that Shell is sincere in running GMBK II because we are already recruiting". He says that their members were pleased to hear about GMBK II since many of them could not afford to send their children to obtain further education. He adds, "once the first batch of scholars begin attending their classes, I'm sure that more of our members will inquire about GMBK II and refer their sons and daughters to join the program".

"At Shell, we value education not only as a ticket to improve one's life but, as an investment towards national development," says Shell companies in the Philippines Country Chair Edgar Chua. He expressed his gratitude for the cooperation, trust, and patronage of the transport sector in holding GMBK II.

Gernelyn Vertolazo, Boy George Junta, and Kenneth Valdez, are all high school graduates who have been out-of-school. They were present during the first GMBK II recruitment because they want to continue studying but, their parents could no longer afford to send them to school. They are motivated by their eagerness to help their parents earn money. Gernelyn hopes to take up a course on either Hotel and Restaurant Management or, Caregiver; Boy George hopes to attend a Bookkeeping and Accountancy course; while Kenneth hopes to take up a course on animation.

Alliance of Transport Operators and Drivers Association of the Philippines (ALTODAP) National Chairman Melencio "Boy" Vargas advises the pioneer GMBK scholars "to perform well in the program and use the knowledge and skills that you will gain as instruments to improve your lives and the lives of your families as well". Boy thanks Shell and PSFI for coming up with GMBK II and says, "I hope we will be able to sustain the program and help more youth and jeepney drivers attain a more convenient way of life".

## GMBK I: *made to move people*

Since 2005, 'Gas Mo, Bukas Ko' I (GMBK I) has reached out to more than 400 Shell station crew with the participation of more than 150 Shell station dealers nationwide.

Shell companies in the Philippines (SciP) emerged as the most awarded company in the 44th Anvil Awards of the Public Relations Society of the Philippines, bagging a total of 11 awards. The 'Gas Mo, Bukas Ko' (GMBK) Scholarship Programme received an Anvil Award of Excellence for the Employees and Families Category. The public relations program of GMBK was launched to encourage Shell retail station staff and dealers nationwide to partake in the scholarships offered under GMBK.

On July 8, 2009, GMBK will be honored also by the Management Association of the Philippines (MAP) as a finalist for the Best in Education category in the "MAP CSR Leadership Challenge".

PSFI Project Officers Marifel Somera, Gary Aliggayu, and Ria Comsti share their experiences in rolling out GMBK in Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao.



(L-R) Association of Pilipinas Shell Dealers, Inc. (APSDI) President Ria Campos, APSDI VP for Luzon and GMBK Management Committee Chairperson Terry Valladores, Pilipinas Shell Batangas Communications Manager Daday de Leon, PSPC Downstream Communications Manager Mylene Santos, and Pilipinas Shell VP for Communications Roberto Kanapi



"In implementing GMBK, I always make it a point to communicate regularly with the scholars to discuss the status of their training and their work or casually talk about other things. By doing so, scholars become more open and honest about how they're doing with their training which, in turn, helps me spot and solve concerns early on."

Marifel C. Somera  
PSFI Project Officer



"Everyone has a role to play in building our nation. GMBK, for one, was brought about by a collaboration among dealers, scholars, PSFI, training partners, and PSPC to be able to make this program a success."

Gary T. Aliggayu  
PSFI Project Officer



"The GMBK program 'sold' itself among the retailers. The positive disposition of the scholars, despite the challenges and hindrances, serves as an inspiration for me to do better in what I do."

Ria Comsti  
PSFI Project Officer