**Filipino teacher keeps folk dance alive in Stockton**

(*http://www.goodnewspilipinas.com/filipino-teacher-keeps-folk-dance-alive-in-stockton/*)

*A folk dance teacher-choreographer has decided that one of the best ways to celebrate his birthday is to do something incredible for the community, especially for the preservation of the culture.*

California’s elementary school teacher Brian Batugo decided to re-establish a sense of Filipino culture, tradition and identity for his 26th birthday by putting up the #SaveFolkDance [crowd sourcing campaign](https://www.crowdrise.com/folkdancestockton/fundraiser/briananthonybatugo) to help in creating the Little Manila Dance Collective.

Along with the Filipino-American history class and Eskrima martial arts programs offered at Little Manila Center, the [LMDC](http://littlemaniladance.weebly.com/) lists its offering as a program for Filipino folk and indigenous choreography, music, and costumes open to the whole community of San Joaquin County.

This dance collective program is part of the [Little Manila Foundation](http://www.littlemanila.org/) in Stockton, an organization which advocates for the preservation of Stockton’s Filipino-American history and heritage.

In an interview with Good News Pilipinas, founder [Brian Batugo](https://www.facebook.com/batugo) described LMDC as “a coalition of various community organizations and dancers passionate about making connections to the cultures of the Philippines through dance and music.”

Batugo also said the greatest challenge they face is funding because “a dedicated space, authentic folk and indigenous attire from the Philippines, and instruments are very costly.”

“Presently, our community space and budget for daily operations exists only through generosity of donors who have become Friends of Little Manila,” he added.

LMDC continues to perform for church organizations and family, community and school events. Batugo shared that by 2016 they are planning to expand their Youth and Adult Program to include a Kulintang music program with Master Danny Kalanduyan in the lead.

They also plan to welcome more members of their community who are greatly interested in taking folk and indigenous dance class.

Brian Batugo and the [Little Manila Dance Collective](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Little-Manila-Youth-Dance-Collective/1387149841609842) will be performing in a cultural presentation on August 8 at Stockton’s 42nd Annual Barrio Fiesta which also serves as a celebration for their first year in action.

Batugo encourages everyone to support LMDC in preserving the Filipino folk dance and culture in Stockton. “Supporting the efforts of the Little Manila Dance Collective will establish a central space where the community’s youth and elders can connect to the art practices and cultural knowledge that exists beyond our city. In order to sustain this program for generations to come, I urge the Filipino community to donate and support a dance space where people can properly train and learn about folk and indigenous dance forms so that we may be able to represent our Pinoy and Pinay identity through respectful and authentic cultural art in Stockton.”

Donations to the Little Manila Dance Collective can be processed through [littlemanila.org](http://littlemanila.org/).

**Filipino choir groups triumph in Vietnam choral competition**

(*http://www.goodnewspilipinas.com/filipino-choir-groups-triumph-in-vietnam-choral-competition/*)

*Two category wins, one conductor prize, and 11 gold level diplomas were brought home to the country by different Filipino choir groups who figured prominently at the recent 4th Vietnam International Choir Competition, Hoi An 2015.*

The Filipino entries bested others in the [13-country annual competition](http://www.hoianworldheritage.org.vn/en/news/New-notice/result-364.hwh) across most categories save for three.

[Coro San Nicoleño](https://www.facebook.com/SanNicolasMaleChoir) from San Nicolas town in Ilocos Norte was adjudged Category Winner for the Male Choirs Difficulty Level II. The group of professionals and students from the parish town of Northern Philippines under the direction of Ferdinand Tolentino and Sherberk Cabrales also received the Conductor Prize in the Sacred Choir Music category.

[Colegio de Sta. Rosa Makati’s Himig Roseña](https://www.facebook.com/himigrosena) won the Youth Choirs of Equal Voices category and also received the Gold level diploma in the Chamber Choirs of Mixed Voices and Sacred Music Choir categories.

Several choirs also received gold level diplomas in their own categories. Mapua Institute of Technology’s official resident choir, the [Mapua Cardinal Singers](https://www.facebook.com/mitcardsingers%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank), was the second Philippine choir to reach the Gold level at the Chamber Choirs of Mixed Voices category. The chorale also received two more golds, one in the Mixed Youth Choirs and another in the Sacred Music Choir categories.

[Himig Sanghaya Chorale](https://www.facebook.com/himigsanghaya) from San Pedro, Laguna received two gold level diplomas, one in the Chamber Choirs of Mixed Voices and another in the Female Choirs Difficulty Level II.

[Urdaneta City University’s Music Ensemble](https://www.facebook.com/UCU.MusicEnsemble) added another Philippine Gold in the Chamber Choirs of Mixed Voices category while picking up Gold in the Mixed Choirs Difficulty Level II category.

[University of Asia and the Pacific Chorale](https://www.facebook.com/uapchorale) reached the gold level in the Mixed Youth Choirs category.

[Anima Christi Chorale](https://www.facebook.com/animachristichorale) from Lucena City in Quezon province received their gold in the Sacred Choir Music category.

The Philippine Veterans Affairs Office also fielded their choral ensemble the [PVAO Chorale](https://www.facebook.com/pvao.chorale) and received the silver diploma level in Mixed Choirs Difficulty Level II category.

The Hoi An annual [international competition](https://www.facebook.com/vietnam.international.choir.competition.hoian) determines the choirs that would qualify for the World Choir Games – The Champions Competition, World Choir Championships – The Champions Round, and the Grand Prix of Choral Music.

**5 Filipino greennovations for a sustainable lifestyle**

(http://www.goodnewspilipinas.com/5-filipino-greennovations-for-a-sustainable-lifestyle/)

*Mother Nature would surely love these Filipino inventions which were exhibited at the National Science and Technology Week held at SMX Convention Center.*

These 5 Filipino-made greennovations from the exhibit organized by the [Department of Science and Technology](https://www.facebook.com/dost.stii?ref=hl) (DOST) picked by a Rappler feature, could help Filipino industries with their business while taking care of the environment.

1. **Aquaponic Urban Vertical Garden**

This very green invention will allow anyone to grow their own garden of leafy vegetables within a space of one square meter. Designed by [Chito Sace](https://www.facebook.com/chitofsace%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) from [Central Luzon State University](https://www.facebook.com/CLSUPH?fref=ts) in Nueva Ecija, it has a submersible pump in a water-filled cylinder that lifts water to the hose pipes running through the vegetables shelves. Freshwater fish swims in the cylinder making the water being pumped in the system filled with nutrients. Meanwhile, the manure of the fish serves as the fertilizer for the vegetables.

1. **Watershed Information Portal for the Philippines**

If you don’t know anything about watersheds, this is the perfect site to look into. This is a collaborative project by the leading state universities, [DOST](https://www.facebook.com/pages/DOSTPh/403131613182017) and [Department of Environment and Natural Resources](https://www.facebook.com/DENROfficial?fref=ts) (DENR). [Philwatershed.org](http://philwatershed.org/) intends to provide everything that you need to know about a particular watershed in the country. However, the portal has available data for 3 watersheds only as of the moment but it hopes to cover every watershed in the country.

1. **Naturecast: Forest waste turned to classy furniture**

[Nature’s Legacy](http://natureslegacy.com/) only proved that wastes can be turned into gold. The group’s [Naturecast](http://natureslegacy.com/naturescast%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank), a wood-like material made of twigs and other debris that can be found on the forest ground, is used to create lamps, vases, chairs, even walls and ceilings. Filipino furniture designer [Ito Kish](https://www.facebook.com/kishmanila?fref=pb&hc_location=profile_browser) features some of their products in his store while [The Body Shop](http://www.thebodyshop.com.ph/) used Naturecast as their packaging box for some products.

1. **VERMAC (Vitro-Engineered Restorative Micro-cellulose Absorbent Covering)**

Denver Chicano, a Filipino nurse, found a way to treat burns on a cheaper price through the use of nata de coco. Produced by [Xyderm Corporation](http://xyderm.com/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank), [VERMAC](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Vermac/110176975720514) is composed of coconut milk, which can be turned into cellulose, giving the tissue-like properties of the treatment which can be applied to burns and other skin wounds. It has a high water holding capacity and cooling effect, easing the pain of the patients.

1. **Coconut fronds to wood**

Another score for coconuts! Palwood from Zamboanga del Norte uses coconut fronds or palapa, which are considered as agricultural wastes, to make wood. The wood is 70 percent made of palapa- leafstalk of the coconut tree- which is said to be harder than coco lumber. However, Palwood cannot yet mass produce these engineered woods because of the lack of machinery.

**Martinez successfully defends Triglav figure skating title**

(http://www.goodnewspilipinas.com/martinez-successfully-defends-triglav-figure-skating-title/)

*Michael Christian Martinez proved once more that he is the Philippines’ Prince of Ice.*

Olympian figure skater Martinez just won his second championship at the [Triglav Trophy](http://www.dkjesenice.si/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) International Figure Skating Competition in Jesenice, Slovenia.

This is the 2nd consecutive win of Martinez under the Senior Men’s event of the [annual international competition](https://www.facebook.com/triglav.trophy), making him its reigning champion.

However, [Martinez](https://www.facebook.com/michael.martinez.9847)‘s defence of his title did not come without difficulties. During the short program of the competition, he ranked fifth because of the points deducted for several falls.

During the free skating phase, [Martinez](https://twitter.com/MichaelOlympian) recovered from his short program performance and showed why he is a top-ranking world figure skater as he demonstrated his Triple Axel, Single Axel-Double Twist and Triple Lutz-Double Twist moves consecutively.

As he gained enough momentum, [Martinez](https://instagram.com/martinezfrost3/) wowed the judges with his “level 4 flying change-foot combination spin with 3 positions” which was also given significant points. The figure skating champion was also given an award “credit for highlight distribution” for his Triple Lutz, Triple Twists, Triple Loops, and Double Axel moves.

To finish his turn in the solid free skating phase, Martinez showed his fancy “flying change-foot combination spin with 3 positions” which earned high scores from the judges.

By the end of the competition, Martinez garnered 181.84 points which gave him a 1st place finish in this year’s event, coming home with the gold medal for the 2nd time.

Korea’s representative June Hyoung Lee placed second, and Italy’s Maurizio Zandron, third. This is Martinez’s last skating competition for this season. A campaign to support and send off the Filipino Athletes Ice Prince for the next Winter Olympics is on Facebook: [Michael Christian Martinez – Road to Olympics](https://www.facebook.com/supportmichaelmartinez).

**Retired General invents solar-powered road marker**

(http://www.goodnewspilipinas.com/retired-general-invents-solar-powered-road-marker/)

*He may have retired from the police force but that does not mean that he will stop protecting the public from possible dangers, especially in the road.*

Retired Philippine National Police (PNP) General Percival Gammad Barba invented the Barbalite Solar-Powered Road Marker presented during the National Inventors’ Week organized by [Filipino Inventors Society Producers Cooperative](https://www.facebook.com/FilipinoInventorsSocietyProducerCooperative?fref=ts) (FISCP) last November 2014.

This Barbalite world-class device was also awarded a gold medal during the British Invention Show in London on October 26, 2013.

The former PNP deputy director for Western Mindanao and owner of [Barbalite Technologies](http://www.barbalite.com/barbalite.php%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) has created his own version of road markers, a road safety device which is a feature of modern highways that enhances road delineation and guides vehicles at low visibility state.

Barba’s version of these road safety devices is solar-powered, glows at night without using electricity and can also supplement street lights.

It is made of aluminum alloy, polycarbonate and photovoltaics and flashes red, white and yellow lights for 12 hours that can be seen up to 400 meters. Barba’s invention is composed of lithium ion battery, a solar panel, control board, light emitting diode and a reflector and according to Barba, it is “shock-proof, water-proof and scratch-proof.”

The reason why Barba created his own version of the road safety device is his own experience while driving at night.  “The reason why I saw a need for self-illuminating road safety devices is when I was assigned as the provincial director in Pangasinan, I would go home to Fairview in Quezon City every Friday night. When I reached Fairview via Commonwealth Ave., it was difficult to drive and follow the ordinary road paints. When it rained, you could not see the lines,” Barba told media.

Barba added that Barbalite could be the solution to many road problems that the motorists and commuters are experiencing when they drive at night at poorly-lit roads. “This is a solution and it is more affordable than ordinary road markers.  Ordinary road markers cost P3,511.15 and they do not have lights.  The Barbalite solar-powered road marker costs only P2,800.”

Barbalite Solar-Powered Road Marker was also recognized by the [Department of Science and Technology](http://dost.gov.ph/) (DOST) and is the reason why the department awarded Barbalite Technologies with the FILIPINNOVATION award.

Aside from the solar-powered road marker, other energy efficient and environmental-friendly products made by Barba which are also patented and copyrighted are the Typhoon-Proof Billboard, Floating Garbage Collector and Portable Hot Tub.

**Filipino franchises conquer overseas markets**

(http://www.goodnewspilipinas.com/filipino-franchises-conquer-overseas-markets/)

*Filipino franchisers are making their presence felt in the international business scene,expanding their customer base across the continents to the rest of Asia, in the United States, in Europe, and in Africa.*

In a report by [Philippine Franchises.com](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Philippine-Franchises/1405725056391739), eight local businesses were listed as successfully entering overseas markets with their uniquely Pinoy brands.

Home-made Filipino food brands, Potato Corner, Fiorgelato, Sweet Corner, Aquabest, Figaro Coffee Company, Julie’s Bakeshop, and non-food service brand Lay Bare Waxing, and Philippine television’s Eat Bulaga were presented as “[Filipino Franchises to be Proud Of](http://philippinefranchises.com/filipino-franchisers-to-be-proud-of/).”

These local franchisers are members of the [Association of Filipino Franchisers Inc.](http://affi.com.ph/) (AFFI) a trade organization that promotes Filipino micro, small, and medium enterprise businesses through franchising.

In an interview with GoodNewsPilipinas, [AFFI](https://www.facebook.com/affiempoweringentrepreneurs) Chairman of the Board Armando Bartolome explained that there are two implications of this worldwide set-up of franchise by local franchisers to the Philippines’ economical status and local entrepreneurs.

“First, it tells the global community the Filipino entrepreneurs are world-class and may compete on any level with any business. The second is the ‘Filipino Creativity’ is always at its best and as such, bring honor to the country. Foreigners now see the Philippines as the hub of franchise businesses,” says Bartolome.

One of the inspiring stories cited is that of AFFI founding member [Potato Corner](http://www.potatocorner.com.ph/) which is dubbed as the home of the original flavored French fries in the country. It opened its first international outlet in Indonesia in 2006 which has since expanded into 57 outlets. Potato Corner today has 31outlets across the United States, and is also found in Malaysia, Australia and Panama. Next in line for the potato company are outlets to open in Canada, Singapore, Russia, Botswana and Mexico.

Famous for its authentic Italian ice cream made out of “100% pure fresh milk”, [Fiorgelato](http://www.fiorgelato.com/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) has opened outlets in Japan and the U.S.

The [Sweet CORNer](http://www.sweetcorner.com.ph/) food cart can now be seen in Australia and will soon open outlets in the Middle East.

Water franchise [Aquabest](http://www.aquabest.com.ph/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) has also began operating in Saipan.

[Figaro Coffee Company](http://www.figarocoffee.com/) now serves coffee lovers in China, Saudi Arabia, Papua New Guinea and Malaysia with its flavored coffee beans.

Cebu pride [Julie’s Bakeshop](http://www.juliesbakeshop.com.ph/), known as the largest bakeshop chain in the Philippines, has opened in

Jakarta and will soon be in Abu Dhabi and Canada.

Non-food franchising has also conquered the overseas market with [Lay Bare Waxing](http://www.lay-bare.com/) opening three branches in the U.S, all in one year.

Even the popular and longest-running noontime TV program [Eat Bulaga!](https://www.facebook.com/EBdabarkads) is franchised and can now be viewed in Indonesia. This is the first Philippine variety show to be franchised by another country.

**Ateneo 1st PHL school in UN virtual academic network**

(http://www.goodnewspilipinas.com/ateneo-1st-phl-school-in-un-virtual-academic-network/#sthash.9MFRYyQs.dpuf)

*Ateneo de Manila University now holds the distinction of being the very first Philippine university to join the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development Virtual Institute (UNCTAD Vi).*

[UNCTAD Vi](http://vi.unctad.org/home-mainmenu-1) welcomed [Ateneo](http://www.ateneo.edu/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) in March to its circle of 54 core member universities.

Members of the Vi academic network include world-renowned educational institutions with strong trade and development programs such as the [World Trade Institute](https://www.facebook.com/World.Trade.Institute) in Switzerland, France’s [Pierre Mendès France University](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Facult%C3%A9-dEconomie-de-Grenoble-UPMF/149690815222464), Canada’s [Carleton University](https://www.facebook.com/carletonfuture) Centre for Trade Policy and Law, and China’s [University of International Business and Economics](http://www.uibe.cn/app/en/), among others.

The [United Nations](https://twitter.com/UN) Vi will work together with the Department of Economics of [Ateneo](https://www.facebook.com/ateneodemanila%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)‘s School of Social Sciences to help the university educate future policymakers and business leaders, and to offer empirical research required for informed policymaking and negotiation.

In its members’ profile, the Vi referred to the [Ateneo](https://twitter.com/ateneodemanilau%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) department as “producing economists and leaders who make sound analyses of socio-economic phenomena.”

Ateneo offers academic programmes in economics, including Bachelor’s, Master’s and PhD degrees. These programmes feature many courses related to trade and development, such as international economics, development economics and international monetary economics.

Other courses includes economics of multinational enterprises, economics of agricultural development, as well as economics of natural resources and environment, economics of technology and technological change, and transportation economics.

Faculty members of the department are also involved in research on trade policy, international financial flows, international migration, regional economics, environmental economics, and monetary and exchange rate policy.

The [UNCTAD](https://www.facebook.com/UNCTAD) Vi website emphasized the Ateneo’s interest in joint research and training seminars on trade and development with Southeast Asian universities, as well as other developing countries.

As a core member of the [UNCTAD](https://twitter.com/UNCTAD) Vi, the [Ateneo](http://www.ateneo.edu/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) can help facilitate exchanges with faculty members and graduate students interested in the Philippines. The core university status also allows the Ateneo to endorse participation of additional members in the country to be subsequently given the title “affiliate members.”

Ateneo professor and director of European Studies Programme Marissa Maricosa Paderon will serve as the university’s Vi coordinator, supported by Ateneo lecturer Philip Arnold Tuaño.

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