

		ASSA 2017 RECOGNITION AWARD
CATEGORY	:	Customer Service Recognition Award
ORGANIZATION	:	Employees' Compensation Commission (ECC)
CONTACT PERSON	:	Stella Zipagan-Banawis Executive Director
NAME OF PROJECT	:	Organizing Clients through the Establishment of a Cooperative for Persons with Work Related Disabilities (PWRDs) <i>Biyaya sa Pagkakaisa</i>
WHY SHOULD IT BE RECOGNIZED	:	In order to bring together workers who have benefitted from the EC program, the ECC in 2012 established the Occupationally Disabled Workers Association of the Philippines, Inc. (ODWAPI). It should be recognized because it is the first ever organization whose members are workers who suffered from work-related contingencies and have benefitted from ECC's KAGABAY or the Katulong at Gabay sa Manggagawang may Kapansanan Program. Its members are from both the private and public sectors. The efforts of its members have sustained self-employment and livelihood undertakings for its growing number of members proving that disability is not a hindrance to productivity. Being an organized entity, livelihood assistance to the members are prioritized by the Department of Labor and Employment through its DOLE Integrated Livelihood Economic Enhancement Program.

SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT	: The Occupationally Disabled Workers Association of the Philippines, Inc. (ODWAPI) was formally organized in March 2012 by the Employees' Compensation Commission (ECC) through the guidance of the Center for Small Entrepreneurs (CSE). It is a non-profit organization of persons with work-related disabilities (PWRDs) which obtained its Security and Exchange Commission registration on April 13, 2013 and recognized by the National Council on Disability Affairs on April 24, 2013. The ODWAPI is under the supervision of the ECC. The members have benefitted from ECC's Kagabay Program. The Kagabay Program is an economic assistance program for persons with work-related disabilities (PWRDs). The program includes free rehabilitation services and skills/entrepreneurial training. Recently, a return to work program under Kagabay has been initiated. Kagabay aims to facilitate the PWRDs' re-integration into the economic mainstream as productive members of society by providing them with equal access to livelihood or employment opportunities. As recipients of the Kagabay Program, the members of ODWAPI have been provided with various trainings related to livelihood undertakings including the provision of starter kits, transportation and meal allowance for the duration of the trainings, as well as other services from DOLE's livelihood assistance projects which have helped sustain the association's activities for their members. The organization is now into the rug making business using scrap cloth materials aside from maintaining a store within the ECC's premises showcasing the PWRDs products and providing other services patronized by nearby offices. From the proceeds of its income generating activities, the organization has increased its assets that enabled them to acquire a second hand service vehicle, two photo copying machines, two freezers, as well as other office and kitchen equipment which are very useful in sustaining their livelihood undertakings in the coming years. Continuing its commitment to help PWRDs in different parts of the country, the ECC plays an important role in organizing the branch of ODWAPI in Region IV-A, Region VI and Region IX.
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