

Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi)

6,687.85 ▼ 58.48 PTS. ▼ 0.86%

MONDAY, MAY 23, 2022
BusinessWorld

PSEi MEMBER STOCKS

AC Ayala Corp. P680.00 -P0.50 -0.07%	ACEN AC Energy Corp. P7.10 +P0.04 +0.57%	AEV Aboitiz Equity Ventures, Inc. P48.20 +P0.20 +0.42%	AGI Alliance Global Group, Inc. P10.66 -P0.22 -2.02%	ALI Ayala Land, Inc. P28.50 -P0.50 -1.72%	AP Aboitiz Power Corp. P31.50 ---	BDO BDO Unibank, Inc. P126.80 -P2.10 -1.63%	BPI Bank of the Philippine Islands P94.50 -P3.50 -3.57%	CNVRG Converge ICT Solutions, Inc. P26.30 -P1.75 -6.24%	EMP Emperador, Inc. P18.78 -P0.22 -1.16%
GLO Globe Telecom, Inc. P2,550.00 +P44.00 +1.76%	GTCAP GT Capital Holdings, Inc. P527.50 -P1.50 -0.28%	ICT International Container Terminal Services, Inc. P210.00 -P0.20 -0.10%	JFC Jollibee Foods Corp. P210.00 -P2.40 -1.13%	JGS JG Summit Holdings, Inc. P52.10 -P2.10 -3.87%	LTG LT Group, Inc. P8.61 +P0.20 +2.38%	MBT Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co. P52.20 ---	MEG Megaworld Corp. P2.77 -P0.08 -2.81%	MER Manila Electric Co. P350.00 -P10.00 -2.78%	MONDE Monde Nissin Corp. P15.92 -P0.06 -0.38%
MPI Metro Pacific Investments Corp. P3.82 -P0.07 -1.80%	PGOLD Puregold Price Club, Inc. P33.45 -P0.30 -0.89%	RLC Robinsons Land Corp. P18.78 +P0.08 +0.43%	SECB Security Bank Corp. P93.75 -P0.75 -0.79%	SM SM Investments Corp. P848.00 +P3.00 +0.36%	SMC San Miguel Corp. P105.00 +P0.10 +0.10%	SMPH SM Prime Holdings, Inc. P37.95 +P0.15 +0.40%	TEL PLDT, Inc. P1,960.00 -P22.00 -1.11%	URC Universal Robina Corp. P106.00 -P2.00 -1.85%	WLCON Wilcon Depot, Inc. P27.70 -P0.05 -0.18%

Computer retailer Upson files for P4.9-billion IPO

UPSON International Corp. (UIC) announced on Monday that it had filed an application for an initial public offering (IPO) that is expected to raise P4.88 billion.

The company, a retailer of personal computers and information technology (IT) products, submitted on May 17 its registration statement with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

UIC plans to offer up to 888,157,800 common shares comprising up to 789,473,600 primary shares and up to 98,684,200 secondary shares. The net proceeds will be used for store network expansion and general corporate purposes.

"There are rapid technological developments in computers and other IT products matched with growing market segments like educational needs

and computer and IT-related jobs in all 17 regions. These are compelling opportunities that fuel the need for an aggressive expansion of our retail network nationwide," UIC Chief Executive and President Arlene T. Sy said.

The company offers its products through outlet brands including Octagon Computer Superstore, Micro Valley, and Gadget King.

"We plan to open 250 branches over the next three to five years to add to our existing 183 branches as of 2021. We pride ourselves with Certifications of Authentic and Untampered products awarded by leading suppliers of computer and IT brand," she added.

The company tapped First Metro Investment Corp. as the sole issue manager, bookrunner, and lead underwriter for the offering. The proposed offer period

and target listing date on the main board of the stock exchange is in September, subject to regulatory approvals.

First Metro President Jose Patricio A. Dumlaog said UIC "has a long-standing presence in the retail industry and has been consistently growing and performing so well in the Philippine market."

"With restrictions slowly easing up, UIC has been taking strategic initiatives to adapt to

the constant change in behavior amongst its consumers and to ensure that they're able to cater to more customers by providing a complete, quality, and an up-to-date suite of IT products both through their physical stores and online platforms," he said.

In 2021, the company's net income increased by 95% to P403.6 million from P206.7 million in 2020. — **Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jocsos**

Fruitas swings to profit despite no seasonal uptick

FRUITAS Holdings, Inc. reported on Monday that its first-quarter earnings reached P6 million, improving from a net loss of P16 million in the same period the year before.

Net sales were up by 26% to P330 million from P261 million in 2021.

"This was achieved despite the lack of seasonal uptick from the Christmas season, including *lechon* sales, in the first quarter of 2022 and the Level 3 restrictions imposed in January 2022," the company said in a disclosure.

Earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization (EBITDA) also improved to P53 million from P15 million.

In 2021, the company trimmed its net loss to P16 million from a loss of P48 million in 2020.

In February, the registration statement for the initial public offering (IPO) of Balai

ni Fruitas, Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Fruitas, was formally received by Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

It is targeting to list on the small, medium and emerging board of the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE), subject to compliance with SEC and PSE requirements.

"We are fully committed to deliver value to our shareholders by improving operations and profitability. The potential IPO of Balai ni Fruitas will be an important exercise for us, which we expect to complete in first half of 2022," Fruitas President and Chief Executive Lester C. Yu said.

At the stock exchange on Monday, Fruitas shares closed higher by 0.91% or P0.01 at P1.11 apiece. — **Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jocsos**

Megawide posts net loss as expenses rise

MEGAWIDE Construction Corp. swung to an attributable net loss of P112.76 million for the first quarter of the year from a profit of P2.85 million in the same period a year ago.

Despite its total revenues increasing by 12% during the quarter to P4.16 billion from P3.72 billion previously, Megawide incurred a net loss due to higher expenses, its first-quarter report showed.

Its net loss after tax widened to P278.89 million from a loss of P137.92 million in the same period last year.

"The impact of additional expenses from other charges net and tax expense resulted in the higher net loss in 2022," the company said.

In terms of revenues, the company's construction businesses contributed P2.79 billion, an 11% improvement from the previous year's construction revenue.

"The construction segment has maintained its momentum in delivering projects on time despite quarantine measures at the start of the year," the company said.

"With a healthy orderbook, the company is in the position to work on its order which are earmarked to be completed within two to three years from various projects such as Suntrust Home Developers' Suncity West Side City project, Megaworld's Newport Link project, and the Department of Transportation's Malolos

Clark Railway Phase 1 Project," it added.

At the same time, the company said its landport operations delivered revenue of P131 million from office towers and commercial spaces during the period, and contributed 3% to the total consolidated revenues.

"Due to the restrictions in foreign travel, Philippine Offshore Gaming Operators experienced indefinite disruption on their operations, resulting in lower office occupancy levels and translated to 30% or P56 million lower revenue from the same period last year."

Meanwhile, its airport segment showed "slight recovery" with an increase in revenues by 93% or P106 million. The company's airport business "remains optimistic of a turnaround as global vaccination program has been effectively rolled out and consumers are starting to travel," it said.

Revenue for the first quarter reached P220 million, 93% higher than the same period last year and contributed 3% to the total revenues.

The company said passenger volume more than doubled from last year's pandemic level "although not enough to breach the pre-pandemic level" with domestic passenger volume of 590,000 from last year's 190,000, and international passenger volume of 60,000 from last year's 2,000. — **Arjay L. Balinbin**

LBC Express net income drops to P48.9 million

LBC Express Holdings, Inc. on Monday said its attributable net income for the first three months of the year decreased by 65% to P48.87 million from P139.73 million previously, mainly due to lower revenues.

Revenues for the quarter fell 9.17% to P3.96 billion from P4.36 billion in the same period a year ago, the company's first-quarter results showed.

"After the nationwide community quarantines in 2020, the retail sales surged due to increase in demand and this continued up to the first quarter of last year. There is also a downturn of revenue from corporate clients by 11%," the company said.

Its total expenses for the period fell 5.15% to P3.68 billion from P3.88 in the same period in 2021.

The decrease is "largely from reduction in cost of delivery and remittance by 12% relative to the decrease in volume and improved productivity that resulted in decline in the cost of contractual employees," the company said.

This is partially offset by a surge in the cost of freight-air relative to the increase in air freight and fuel prices hike.

Meanwhile, the company's non-operating expenses for the period grew 14.84% to P247.41 million from P215.43 million previously.

Its income before tax dropped 78.78% to P59.89 million from P282.29 million in the same period last year.

LBC Express Holdings shares closed 0.22% higher at P23.05 apiece on Monday. — **Arjay L. Balinbin**

Wilcon Depot's William Belo recognized with The Outstanding Thomasian Alumni award



The photo shows the 2022 Outstanding Thomasian alumni awardees (L-R) representative of The Calimag family [Thomasian Family Award (Special Award)]; William T. Belo [Outstanding Thomasian Alumni for Accountancy, Business, and Management (Business)]; Jeffrey O. Tarayao, MS [Outstanding Thomasian Alumni for Service to Humanity]; Prof. Ma. Minerva P. Calimag, MD, PhD [Outstanding Thomasian Alumni for Medicine]; UST Rector Very Rev. Fr. Richard, G. Ang, O.P., PhD; Crispin C. Maslog, PhD [Outstanding Thomasian Alumni for Media and Entertainment]; Saturnino P. Javier, MD [Outstanding Thomasian Alumni for Health Allied]; Nemesio R. Miranda, Jr. [Outstanding Thomasian Alumni for Music, Arts, Literature, and Design]; Atty. Nilo T. Divina, LI. B. [Outstanding Thomasian Alumni for Law and Justice]; and DTI Sec. Ramon M. Lopez, MDE [Outstanding Thomasian Alumni for Accountancy, Business, and Management (Management)].

Wilcon Depot Founder and Chairman Emeritus William T. Belo was recognized by the University of Santo Tomas (UST) as The Outstanding Thomasian Alumni (TOTAL) awardee for Accountancy, Business, and Management (Business) on May 14, 2022, held at UST Manila.

Mr. Belo was awarded with The 2022 TOTAL Award for Accountancy, Business, and Management (Business) for his commitment to leadership, compassion for humanity, and endless strive for competent, high-quality service. These qualities have been acknowledged by the university as worthy of being conferred this year's award.

The TOTAL Award is the highest honor bestowed by the UST in recognition of the significant and exemplary contributions of its alumni in various fields of specialization and expertise.

Mr. Belo is a graduate of UST in 1973 with the degree of Bachelor of Science in Electronics and Communications Engineering. After graduating, he decided to start his own hardware store in Quezon Avenue in 1977 and through his commendable leadership, Wilcon Depot is now recognized as the Philippines' leading home improvement and construction supply retailer.

This is Mr. Belo's second honorary from UST after being inducted into the Thomasian Engineer Hall of Fame for Entrepreneurship in 2018 and included in the list of the UST Faculty of Engineering's most outstanding alumni and engineering professionals.

For more information about Wilcon, you can log on to www.wilcon.com.ph or follow its social media accounts on Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok. Subscribe and connect with it on Viber Community, LinkedIn, and YouTube.

Coca-Cola teams up with SBCorp. to offer MSME loans

COCA-COLA Beverages Philippines, Inc. (CCBPI) has recently partnered with the Small Business Corp. (SBCorp.) to help the recovery of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) across the country by expanding the access to loan programs.

The CCBPI said in a statement on Monday that the partnership will allow SBCorp. to expand the reach of its RISE UP Tindahan loan program to CCBPI's partner retail stores, dealers, distributors, and other MSMEs.

Loans under the RISE UP Tindahan project seek to help businesses adjust to the realities of doing business in the new normal. The project offers loans ranging from P300,000 for micro-tindahan loans to P5 million for SME loans, with three years repayment term inclusive of a grace period of up to 12 months and no collateral required.

"The process in RISE UP Tindahan is simple, which is key to reaching more MSMEs. We need to overcome the challenge of inaccessibility, and part of this is making sure that procedures aren't overly complicated — that MSMEs don't feel intimidated or overwhelmed," CCBPI General Trade Director Chris Pesigan said.

"The partnership with SBCorp. manifests the collective, urgent goal of helping the MSME sector recover, stabilize, and progress," he added.

SBCorp. Chief Operating Officer Santiago S. Lim said the project allows the project to reach more entrepreneurs in the metro and the rest of the country.

"Reaching out to the far ends can be a daunting task, but since we have Coca-Cola now as our partner, with your seasoned experience on the

ground, we are confident that this project will be successful," Mr. Lim said.

Those that will be eligible for the loans are micro, small, and medium businesses such as *sari-sari* stores or family-run convenience stores, retail stores, distributors that are under the partner, which is CCBPI.

"Applicants must also be ready with documents such as their barangay business permit, and government-issued IDs among others. The loan application will undergo credit, business, and financial assessments. Applicants will then be contacted via e-mail regarding the results of each stage," CCBPI said.

The CCBPI is the bottling arm of Coca-Cola in the Philippines while the SBCorp. is the financing arm of the Department of Trade and Industry. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**