

MyTown offers affordable accommodations for young professionals

MYTOWN PROPERTIES continue to offer affordable co-living spaces for young professionals who prefer staying near key central business districts (CBDs), transportation hubs and commercial centers.

"MyTown's target demographic typically includes young professionals, expats, students, and individuals seeking convenient, community-focused living arrangements in Metro Manila. Our offerings cater to individuals who value a hassle-free living experience with the added benefits of a supportive and engaging community," Jogie Arellano, chief executive officer of MyTown Co-living, said in a press release.

MyTown properties are developed by Philippines Urban Living Solutions, a part of the SM Group. It has 14 strategically located properties in Metro Manila, including in Bonifacio Global City and Makati CBD.

"Our strategic locations in key areas of Metro Manila underscore our commitment to ensuring hassle-free daily commutes and easy access to essential services," Mr. Arellano said.

MyTown properties offer more affordable cost of living versus staying at a dorm, and more amenities such as roof decks, a basketball half-court, a boxing gym, and fitness gyms to KTV rooms, a music room, indoor cinemas, lounges, and worklabs.

Green is in: Regulations influencing sustainable building development in Philippines

By Daniel Salapong

IN THE PHILIPPINES, there are various financial regulations in place that encourage the development of green and sustainable buildings. These regulations incentivize businesses to adopt sustainable business practices and contribute to the country's efforts to mitigate the impact of climate change.

In the previous Congresses, lawmakers have proposed a measure that would update the country's Building Code, and mandate the implementation of green building practices in all new buildings and major renovations.

Other government agencies and business organizations have also proposed and enacted green initiatives to assuage the impact of climate change.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) has also implemented sustainable finance regulations that encourage financial institutions to support green initiatives. The BSP's Sustainable Finance Framework requires banks and financial institutions to integrate environmental and social considerations in their lending, investing, and risk management activities. The framework

incentivizes the issuance of green bonds and green loans, which fund projects that have positive environmental impact, such as renewable energy and sustainable infrastructure. This regulation promotes the development of green finance and encourages sustainable investments, which can contribute to the country's sustainable economic growth.

The Securities and Exchange Commission has issued guidelines on the establishment of Green Bonds and Social Bonds, which promote sustainable and socially responsible

investments. These guidelines require issuers to disclose the environmental and social benefits of the bond proceeds and report on the use of proceeds and impact achieved. This regulation encourages the issuance of green bonds and social bonds, which fund projects that have positive environmental and social impacts, such as clean energy, affordable housing, and healthcare. These bonds attract socially responsible investors and promote sustainable development.

The Department of Energy (DoE) also implements financial regulations that encourage the adoption of green and sustainable workspaces. The DoE provides financial incentives, such as tax exemptions, reduced fees, and subsidies,



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to businesses that use renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind power. This regulation promotes the development of renewable energy, reduces reliance on fossil fuels, and contributes to the country's efforts to mitigate the impacts of climate change. These incentives make renewable energy more affordable and attractive for businesses, leading to cost savings and environmental benefits.

Moreover, the Philippine Stock Exchange has launched the Sustainability Reporting Guidelines, which require listed companies to disclose their environmental, social, and governance (ESG) practices. This initiative encourages companies to adopt sustain-

able business practices and provides investors with ESG-related information to make informed investment decisions. The guidelines also promote transparency, accountability, and good governance, which can contribute to the country's sustainable development.

The implementation of these financial regulations is crucial in promoting the development of green and sustainable buildings. Developers and building owners must embrace sustainable design and create structures that are greener and more efficient. Not only can they take advantage of existing regulations, but also use these to attract tenants that have ESG targets to meet. Moreover, the adoption of green and sustainable workspaces can lead to cost savings to building tenants, job creation, improved reputation, and contribute to the country's efforts to mitigate the impact of climate change. Different government agencies are working hand in hand to influence greener construction, projects, and investments so that the Philippines can reap the advantages of an ecologically sound tomorrow.

Sustainability should be every Filipino's responsibility.

DANIEL SALAPONG is the associate director for Colliers Philippines.

Origami-inspired medical facility wins grand prize at EDV competition



PHOTO COURTESY OF DONNA ANGELIQUE BIHASA

THE PROPOSED origami-inspired design concept for a medical facility by Donna Angelique Bihasa won the grand prize at the 20th Estilo De Vida competition.

AN ORIGAMI-INFLUENCED design proposal for a medical facility for abused women and children recently nabbed the grand prize at the prestigious 20th Estilo De Vida (EDV) competition.

Folding Spaces is the title of the proposed design concept for the medical facility by Donna Angelique Bihasa, a De La Salle-College of Saint Benilde Interior Design student. It was inspired by the Japanese art of traditional paper folding.

"Similarly, in rehabilitation, every small step, every moment of progress, contributes to the transformation of the individual's well-being. It is not a procedure that can be rushed, just as you cannot fast-track the creation of a beautiful piece," Ms. Bihasa said.

Ms. Bihasa used soft and warm neutral colors for the facility to impart a calm atmosphere.

EDV is an annual inter-school competition established by businessman Jorge Con-

sunji, and serves as a platform for college students to showcase their talents to industry professionals, contractors, and practitioners.

It challenged students to create multifunctional and efficient environments for a 28.8-square-meter (sq.m.) container van clinic and 24.5-sq.m. healthcare infirmary, which will be used as protection units for abuse survivors on their path to recovery.

Ms. Bihasa received a P150,000 cash prize for sub-

mitting the winning entry.

Carl Valdez from the University of the Philippines was named the first runner-up, while Clarisse Abrera from the Eulogio "Amang" Rodriguez Institute of Science and Technology was the second runner-up.

The top 3 winning works will be donated to Amang Rodriguez Memorial Medical Center, National Children's Hospital, and Ospital ng Makati for their renovation projects.

Monde CEO sees strong sales growth

MONDE Nissin Corp. said on Monday that it anticipates a high single-digit year-on-year sales growth for the full year of 2023.

The gross margin is expected to be in line with the 2022 margin, the listed food and beverage manufacturer said in a regulatory filing.

"The gross margin expansion in Asia-Pacific Branded Food and Beverage (APAC BFB) was offset by the decline in meat alternative gross margin in 2023," the company noted.

"We expect core net income to grow by mid-teens for the full year 2023," it added.

Monde Nissin said that the projection is based on "certain preliminary unaudited financial results for the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2023," adding that all figures are "approximate due to the preliminary nature of the announcement."

"I am pleased to share that our preliminary fourth quarter results reflect the continued strength that we saw during

the third quarter driven by our APAC BFB business," Monde Nissin Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Henry Soesanto said.

"This led to another all-time high revenue for the quarter and for the year," he added.

According to the company, its APAC BFB business saw a "strong top line growth" both year over year and sequentially during the fourth quarter, which was supported by better performances of the noodles and beverages segments.

"Our noodles market share improved by 140 basis points (bps) to 67.3% and 380 bps to 67.5% for the past 52-week and 12-week periods as of December 2023, respectively," it said.

"The fourth quarter sales growth in the domestic business was backed by all-time high volumes, which grew by more than 5% year over year and 2% sequentially," it added.

"We saw continued margin expansion of over 400 bps year over year in the fourth quarter. Our commodity lock ins for wheat and palm oil until

the second quarter and third quarter of 2024, respectively, are lower by a low double-digit percentage compared to the same period last year."

Monde Nissin also said its meat alternative business is expected to have a single-digit decline for the fourth quarter as it continues to "navigate in a challenging environment."

"While the United Kingdom retail market has remained weak and continues to affect the top line, we anticipate being at least earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization (EBITDA) neutral in the fourth quarter," it said.

"The annual impairment test in our meat alternative business is ongoing; however, we also believe the family's financial support will largely cover any potential impairment at the parent level," the company added.

On Monday, shares of Monde Nissin rose by 15 centavos or 1.84% to P8.30 apiece. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**

Xiaomi eyes entry into Philippine EV market

CHINESE technology giant Xiaomi is considering introducing its recently launched electric vehicle (EV) into the Philippines, pending a market feasibility study.

"We have to study a lot of market trends and data if EVs will be a hit in the Philippines before we actually sell it," Xiaomi Philippines Head of Marketing Tomi Adrias told reporters last week.

"We have to make sure our processes are basically cleared before we launch in the Philippines," he added.

Xiaomi unveiled its EV, the Speed Ultra (SU) 7 sedan, in

China in late December, with Chief Executive Officer Lei Jun expressing aspirations for Xiaomi to be among the world's top five automakers in the next 15-20 years.

While Xiaomi has not specified the exact timeline for introducing the SU7 in the Philippine EV market, Mr. Adrias indicated that the launch would likely coincide with other global markets.

Highlighting Xiaomi's diversified business portfolio beyond smartphones, Mr. Adrias underscored the company's commitment to various sectors, including smart home

appliances, smart manufacturing, EVs, and robotics.

"We always say Xiaomi is more than just a smartphone company, we have other devices such as smart home appliances, smart manufacturing, EVs, even robotics... but no exact timeline when that will be available globally, outside China, and more so for the Philippines," he said. — **Aaron Michael C. Sy**

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