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### Blind masseur gets "Hwaran nga May Kasablagan" award

Iloilo (6 December) -- He is a blind masseur whose kind heart led him to adopt an abandoned one-year old blind and autistic boy whom he treats like a son. That is Daniel G. Jarencio, this year's "Hwaran nga may Kasablagan" (Model Person with Disability) in the search conducted by the Iloilo City Social Welfare and Development Office, Office of Persons with Disability Affairs in cooperation with handicap International-HI UMWAD Project and the International fellowship Program Alumni Association, December 3.

Daniel has been blind since he was six years old when he contracted measles. He was always bullied about his blindness that he decided to drop out of elementary school in their village of Lagdungan in the mountainous area of Tapaz, Capiz. Daniel, however, did not despair and tried to learn skills as masseur. He moved to Iloilo in 1991 where sooner he married a fellow blind masseuse Irene de la Cruz with whom he has two children, other than his adopted blind son Ricor.

Daniel is now 45 years old and currently serves as treasurer of the Philippine Blind Union-Iloilo Chapter, where he has been a member since 1992. In 2006, Daniel was a guest presenter of an investigative report on alternative medicine at Central Philippine University. His paper "Strategic Intervention for the PBUIC Inc." was among the finalists in a presentation organized by the University of the Philippines in the Visayas in 2009.

Daniel was among the six finalists who competed for the "Hwaran" award. The others were Meldy P. Horario, a junior at the Associated Computer systems Institute taking up bachelor of Science in Information Systems. Who goes around with one leg amputated because of a tumor; Victoria Pedrajas, a 49-year-old blind massage therapist from Molo; Celona Villahermosa, an accounting graduate from the University of San Agustin, afflicted with polio but manages a sari-sari store to support her parents; John Kin Lambuson, a 26-year-old athlete from Jaro, third place winner in the Wheelchair Marathon in Nagoya Japan in 2008; and, Cid Henry Ericson Tampo, known as "El Cid," 21 years old, diagnosed with "Pervasive Developmental Disorder" but a BA Hotel and Restaurant Management student.

Jasper Rom, Project Manager of Handicap International, said The PWDs being honored in the event, were among the 10 percent global population of PWDs, and often belong to the poorest. He said in his message that the many accomplishments attributed to the PWDs through the help of various agencies show that these people, despite their disabilities, are capable of contributing to progress.

The search was in observance of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities carrying the theme: Keeping the promise: Mainstreaming disability in the Millennium Development Goals towards 2015 and beyond." (PIA6/ESS) [\[top\]](#)

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