

280 QC residents complete tech-voc skills training

SOME 280 Quezon City residents completed technical-vocation (tech-voc) courses under the Special Training for Employment Program (STEP) in a recent graduation ceremony led by Vice Mayor Joy Belmonte at Robinsons Novaliches.

STEP is a program of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda) that Belmonte adopted through the Quezon City Skills and Livelihood Training Center as one of her poverty alleviation programs.

It seeks to provide free skills training and livelihood programs to disadvantaged individuals,

specifically out-of-school youths (OSY), high school dropouts, senior citizens and solo parents aged 15 and above.

"I am proud of all of you because, with technical and vocational skills training, there are no limitations. Now you know that you can study as much as you can and generate as many skills as you want to, whether as a mechanic, massage therapist, make-up artist, or cook," Belmonte said as she congratulated the recent graduates.

"Sa tech-voc, siguradong hindi kayo magugutom kapag masipag kayo (With tech-voc, you will

never go hungry when you are industrious)," she added.

The graduation ceremony marked the completion of the fifth group of graduates of STEP. For this group, 244 trainees finished the Motorcycle and Small Engine Servicing program while 36 trainees finished the Hilot Wellness Massage National Certificate II (NCII) course. Each graduate received a Certificate of Competency from TESDA.

The 280 graduates also received starter kits to jumpstart their new livelihood.

A long-time advocate of skill training for the city, Belmonte in her speech also called on graduates not

to think that "tech-voc education is any less than a college education" due to its versatility and relevance to the latest skills required by companies and customers.

She also reiterated the city government's end-to-end support for those seeking employment in the city, saying: "With our partnership with Tesda, our help extends beyond awarding you with a diploma. That's why we have our partners here with us because our role is to help you — from learning a new skill until getting a job. For us in government, our job is not successful until you have a source of livelihood."