

Milk bank among QC's Gawad Pook finalists

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Three programs in Quezon City — a milk bank, a backyard planting initiative and a therapy service for children with disabilities — are among the finalists in this year's Galing Pook Awards.

Forced by the pandemic into a hiatus in 2020, the award this year will recognize the best practices of local government units in dealing with Covid-19.

There were 200 nominees for the 2021 relaunch of the program, the highest since its launch in 1993.

For Quezon City, emerging finalists were the provision of nourishment to infants by the **Quezon City Human Milk Bank (QCHMB)**, its GrowQC community-based food security program, and Kabahagi Center for Children with Disabilities (KCCD).

With 8,658 pre-screened donor mothers, QCHMB has already helped 5,023 infants survive, including those whose mothers were under quarantine due to Covid. It has, so far, provided 979,624 milliliters of pasteurized human milk to babies across the country.

KCCD, on the other hand, has provided therapy and educational aid to 1,163 children with disabilities and also livelihood assistance and workshops to their respective families.

With millions having lost their jobs, GrowQC launched in April last year has already provided 52,374 starter kits and seedling for 37 communities.

GrowQC has also repurposed into garden spaces 41 school plots under the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program, while helping establish 49 gardens for civil society groups and providing 1,166 displaced workers livelihood opportunities.