

Nagkahiusang Magsusulat sa Cagayan de Oro

by Abigail James

It all began with a single poetry reading at a small café.

What sprouted from a small event continuously grows into the hopes and dreams of young local writers known as *Nagkahiusang Magsusulat sa Cagayan de Oro* (NAGMAC). This group is yet small but it thrives on its vision and determination to represent budding writers from the grassroots. From the start, NAGMAC has aspired to provide a venue for artists and writers who may have found it difficult to gain the exposure they deserve.

Inspired from a group of students holding a poetry contest at Xavier University, founders Mai Santillan and Daryl Labial decided to host poetry readings open to anyone from Cagayan de Oro. After a few months, the news spread of what would be known as CDO Poetry Night. Being hosted every month at various different locations, the event seemed to attract people of all ages. Writers would perform their pieces, musicians would provide added entertainment, and listeners were treated to a multifaceted artistic experience. Since February of 2014, CDO Poetry Night has been a regular activity of NAGMAC.



December 2014 CDO Poetry Night

The core group of NAGMAC is composed of writers from all over Northern Mindanao, also having linkages with different schools in the city namely Xavier University and Capitol University. Its mentors include established writers such as Raul Moldez, Zola Macarambon, and Roger Garcia. Thanks to the growing popularity of the group, NAGMAC has also been able to connect with other groups such as BATHALAD-Mindanao.

As a group, NAGMAC's objectives are as follows:

1. Provide a venue for local writers, artists, and musicians to showcase their talents to an audience composed of creative enthusiasts who appreciate their work;
2. Give opportunities for local writers to enhance their skills and receive further education about their craft through workshops hosted by the group; and,
3. Create an open artistic community within the city that recognizes deserving resident talents.

It has been a continued wish for the group to open its membership to more people in the region. NAGMAC is currently in the process of securing an official validation from the SEC, as well as recognition by the NCCA. Most of all, *Nagkahiusang Magsusulat sa Cagayan de Oro* seeks to provide more opportunities for local writers such as workshops and continued representation through its projects.