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Caraga conducts training for journalism mentors

IVY M. ARADO

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This is the leading group of regional trainers of the Caraga Regional Journalism Academy.

-Regional Journalism Coordinator Dr. Gladys S. Asis



Photo by Roxanne Cabilin

To further enhance the knowledge and skills of division mentors in teaching and coaching, the **Regional Enhancement Program for Campus Journalism Mentors** was held at **Amontay Beach Resort, Nasipit, Agusan del Norte** on **November 26-29, 2025**.

A total of 134 school paper advisers, journalism coaches, school heads, and division personnel attended the event, showcasing their excellence in online masterclasses, the Regional Schools Press Conference, the National Schools Press Conference, and other journalism-related activities in the

Caraga region.

“This is the leading group of regional trainers of the Caraga Regional Journalism Academy,” said Dr. Gladys S. Asis, Regional Journalism Coordinator, in her opening message.

The first batch is composed of 8 mentors for News Writing, 9 for Editorial Writing, 20 for Column Writing, 8 for Science and Technology Writing, 8 for Copyreading and Headline Writing (CRHW), 10 for Photojournalism, and 9 for Editorial Cartooning.

For group events, there are 15 mentors for Collaborative Desktop Publishing (CDP), 10 for Online Publishing (OP), 14 for Radio

Broadcasting, and 14 for TV Broadcasting.

“I am sincerely grateful for the tips and the high level of instruction in this training,” said Vaneza Novo, a participant from the CDP team of Tandag City Division, in an interview.

She added that she has been training students in CDP for 17 years in their school and that this program provides thorough and critical training.

This training-workshop is also considered a preparation for the upcoming Caraga Regional Schools Press Conference to be hosted by Agusan del Norte Division in January next year.



Photo by Genalyn T. Conta

Caraga Regional Journalism Academy aims to produce more NSPC champs

JAKE D. FRAGA

After dominating this year’s **National School Press Conference** as **overall champion**, **Caraga Region** has recently established its first ever **Regional Journalism Academy**.

Regional Journalism Coordinator Dr. Gladys S. Asis said the regional academy for journalism aims to produce more NSPC champions by honing the coaches and student journalists across Caraga.

Media specialist highlights story planning in crafting quality outputs

VANESSA P. BOLAMBOT

“Planning is not optional, it is essential,” emphasized Multimedia Specialist Alvin B. Hizon during his session with the Collaborative and Online Desktop Publishing groups of Campus Journalism mentors as he underscored the critical role of a well-structured story-planning table and timeline in producing high-quality publications.

The story-planning table includes potential topics, angles, themes, story treatments, headline types, and possible titles and leads—elements that the team is expected to brainstorm and refine following a press conference.

“Synergy and coordination among team members are key to producing clear, coherent, and high-quality outputs,” Hizon added. *“Everyone should approach their tasks efficiently.”*

Hizon also delved into the fundamentals of strong storytelling, emphasizing mastery of content development, headline formats, lead structures, and essential story elements that provide depth and direction. He highlighted different story-ending strategies, noting, *“A good ending reinforces the message and leaves the reader satisfied.”*

CARAGA gears up for NSPC with renewed focus on growth, not just rivalry

JAKE FRANCIS LUMBRES

As defending champion, DepEd Caraga has launched a “long and deliberate” preparatory program ahead of the upcoming National Schools Press Conference (NSPC), said Bernabe L. Linog, Chief of CLMD.

According to Linog, the region’s aim is not simply to outshine other regions this year — but to surpass its own past performance.

“There will be no narrowing of our lens just to defeat other regions,” Linog said in a recent regional briefing. *“Our mindset will always be: ‘defeat our previous performance.’”*

The CLMD chief emphasized that true winners are made through time, effort, and continuous honing of competence.

To support that vision, CARAGA has instituted a one week intensive training for both students and coaches.

Coaches, Linog explained, will undergo a series of workshops and “write shops” to update their craft and share best practices.

Caraga’s selection strategy begins early: from the divisional level (DSPC) through successive elimination phases. Mentors for the program were carefully chosen based on their proven dedication and outputs during online discussions.



“Our mindset will always be: ‘Defeat our previous performance.’”

—Bernabe L. Linog
CLMD Chief

Photo by Jake D. Fraga

‘Create quality materials,’ division journalism mentors told

IVY M. ARADO

As part of the four-day intensive training in the field of journalism, the division mentors were tasked with creating session guides and slides as speaker materials on November 28-29, 2025.

“To teach effectively, you need to create quality [speaker] materials,” Dr. Gemma B. Espadero, Education Program Supervisor and Learning

Resource Manager of Tandag City Division, emphasized in her virtual discussion on Creating High-Quality Speaker Materials.

The mentors were assigned topics to craft a material aligned with their fields of expertise, under the supervision of the Resource Speakers in the different journalism events, together with the learning facilitators.

“The process [of crafting the]

material is tedious yet enjoyable,” said Ms. Arlene G. Abacajen, MT-I, of Kitcharao Central ES, Agusan del Norte. *“This is the way we were guided to properly impart the topics to the field... to improve our way of teaching our kids in the CDP,”* she added.

The materials developed will undergo thorough evaluation from a set of experts in the region.

EDITORIAL

Clinging Tight to Gold



Fresh from its triumph as the overall champion of the 2025 National Schools Press Conference (NSPC) in Vigan, Ilocos Sur, Caraga refuses to rest on its laurels. Instead of settling into comfort, the region presses on—determined to strengthen its legacy in campus journalism.

Recently, selected school paper advisers and coaches from various divisions across Caraga gathered at Amontay Beach Resort, Nasipit, Agusan del Norte for the Regional Enhancement Program for Campus Journalism Mentors. Their presence signaled a collective commitment: victory is not won by chance, but by intention, preparation, and relentless pursuit of excellence.

Throughout the sessions, mentors were not only equipped with technical skills but were also immersed in emerging trends, evolving standards, and innovative strategies in journalism. Such learning

is crucial as they guide young campus journalists who will soon inherit the responsibility of truth-telling in an era clouded by misinformation.

Yet the program's mission extends beyond reclaiming gold medals. It underscores the region's deeper obligation—to nurture youth with critical minds, empathy for truth, and a strong sense of duty to their communities. These are the values that distinguish a true journalist from a mere content creator.

Ultimately, the Regional Enhancement Program stands as a reminder that success is a shared endeavor. When mentors grow, students excel. When teachers are empowered, the entire region advances.

As Caraga sets its sights on NSPC 2026, one thing remains clear: champions are not born—they are made through dedication, unity, and an unyielding grip on excellence.

INTO
THE
CORE

Quiet Perseverance

ARLENE G. ABACAJEN

Behind every well-written news story, every feature that strikes the heart, and every school paper that emerges victorious in competition are people who are seldom seen onstage—the journalism coaches who tirelessly work to elevate the skills and values of young campus journalists.

Their task is far from easy. Amid stacked teaching loads and endless school programs, they still carve out precious time to guide their student writers. In every late night spent editing draft after draft, in every moment they strengthen a child who has grown weary and doubtful, there lies the true essence of being a coach.

What many fail to see is the emotional weight they carry. Coaches celebrate every small breakthrough, worry over every struggle, and stand firm through every setback their young journalists face. Their support is both a shield and a foundation: quiet, steady, and steadfast—shaping not only better writers, but more confident, thoughtful individuals.

The work of journalism coaches goes beyond teaching the craft of writing. They cultivate integrity, discipline, and a deep respect for truth. Behind every trophy, every certificate, and every victory earned by a young journalist stands a mentor who has quietly instilled the principles of responsible journalism.

At a time when the voice of truth is needed more than ever, they remain the steadfast pillars upholding quality, integrity, and excellence. For their unwavering perseverance, they deserve our deepest gratitude and highest respect.

BIDA CARAGA | EDITORIAL BOARD**Editor-In-Chief/Layout Artist:** Jake D. Fraga**Writers:** Ivy M. Arado, Arlene G. Abacajen, Vanessa P. Bolambot, Sheila Mae T. Seraspe, Jezza Beth M. Rezare, Vaneza Y. Novo, Jake Francis Lumbres, Tokue T. Ueda, Jr.**Cartoonist:** Maylyn J. Dua**Adviser:** EPS Gladys S. Asis, PhD**Consultant:** CLMD Chief Bernabe L. Linog, PhD

CHORUS OF CARAGA

A Rising Built from the Heart

SHEILA MAE T. SERASPE

“We were once a whisper, now we are a song.” The words are simple yet reach deep. This rise did not happen overnight. It grew from steady effort, open communication, and hope for new beginnings. The win felt like a soft note that slowly gathered strength until it filled an entire hall, steady at first, then full and bright, shaping a chorus that carried the pride of a region.

Vividly, I recall a Facebook interview featuring EPS. Gladys S. Asis, Regional Journalism Coordinator of Caraga Region, on a campus journalism social media page. I cannot begin to fathom how my heart listened with admiration as she spoke with sincerity. Gladys Asis stands out, brave, sharp, firm, and a leader who guides with compassion. Then, I remembered my experience being one of the delegates of NSPC 2025 in Vigan. I remember the rush of joy and the loud cheers filling the stadium. The beginning was intense, yet full of drive. No one saw it coming. For the first time, Caraga earned the title of Overall Champion. This victory became a

memory for every learner who tried, every teacher who gave strength, and every Caraganon who believed that their moment would arrive.

Flashback to today during our Regional Enhancement Program for Campus Journalism Mentors Phase 2, Dr. Gladys then reminded us, *“This is a collective effort, not a one-man show.”* Because of this shared push, Caraga marked its place in the history of Campus Journalism, a story no one expected to unfold. My realization as an SPA is this: **WE ARE NOT ALONE.** Behind us stand the pillars of our department. From our Regional Director Maria Ines C. Asuncion who set the direction, to Assistant Regional Director Pedro T. Escobarte who offered steady guidance, to Every Chief, Superintendent, Education Program Supervisor, School Paper Adviser, Coach, And Resource Speaker. Each one helped lift the young journalists who carried our banner. Each of us steered the wheel

as we pushed towards success, slowly, but steady and surely.

Above all, the learners remain the heart of this triumph. They brought together words and dreams. Through every article written and every idea shared, they proved that they have a rightful place in this field. The entire nation hears them now.

More than trophies, the victory of Caraga is a chorus of brave hearts. It reminds us that when dreams are nurtured, strength grows and achievement follows. A small voice once hidden for years has become a full orchestra, now embraced by every Caraganon. May this symphony continue to grow in every learner, adviser, and advocate who believes in progress shaped by unity. May the journey ahead stay guided by purpose and shared hope, and may every Caraganon carry this triumph with quiet pride and a steady heart.

“More than trophies, the victory of Caraga is a chorus of brave hearts.”



Photo by Genalyn T. Conta

ARIES Leadership

The Blueprint of a True Champion

JEZZA BETH M. REZARE

Being a School Paper Adviser is more than teaching students how to write, it's about shaping character, igniting passion, and building leaders.

In a powerful session led by Sir Aries Oliveros, one truth stood out: "Champions are made, not just born." So, how do you lead like a champion? Follow the **ARIES** Leadership Style, a five-step guide that transforms ordinary mentors into extraordinary leaders.

A – Acknowledge Your Role
Leadership begins with clarity. Know your purpose and wear your role with pride:

- Coach: Focus on short-term goals and sharpen skills.
- Mentor: Guide long-term growth and nurture relationships.
- Formator: Inspire through vision and values that unite the team. When you understand your role, you lead with confidence and direction.

R – Rank Your Goals A leader without a plan is like a ship without a compass. Set priorities, map out strategies, and define milestones. Clear goals create momentum—and momentum creates success.

I – Inspire Your Team True leaders don't just manage tasks; they spark hope. Share a vision that connects

everyone to a bigger purpose. When people see the "why," they'll give their best to achieve the "how."

E – Empower Through Sharing
Knowledge grows when shared. As Oliveros says: "Through sharing, I help others to learn. Through sharing, I help others to achieve excellence." Empower your team by passing on wisdom, skills, and experiences. Great leaders multiply greatness.

S – Strive with a Champion Mindset
Live the mantra: "Champions are made, not just born." Success is forged through dedication, resilience, and vision. Lead with grit, and your team will follow with greatness. The Bottom Line Leadership is not about titles- it's about transformation.

The ARIES style is more than a framework; it's a story of growth, from knowing your role to striving with a champion's heart. Behind every winning team is a leader who inspires, empowers, and uplifts.

When you lead with ARIES, you don't just create writers-you create visionaries. You don't just manage a team-you mold champions. Every article published, every story told, becomes a testament to leadership that uplifts and transforms. So, ask yourself: Are you ready to lead like a champion? The blueprint is here. The choice is yours.

"Champions are made, not just born."

-Regional Trainer
Aries Oliveros

Photo by Genalyn T. Conta

Sharpening Pens

TOKUO T. UEDA JR.

The one who wears the crown bears the crown!

In the realm of campus journalism, National Schools Press Conference is an avenue of excellence - a stage where the finest journalists from across the country

converge to uphold the integrity and ethics of campus journalism. For years, Caraga region only dreamt to carve its name in this prestigious platform not only as a competitor but as a formidable champion - and this dream became a reality as the region hailed as champion in the 2025 NSPC. Today, as Caraga once again rallies to safeguard the crown, its effort is a testament to dedication, perseverance and commitment to journalistic excellence.

Caraga showed the entire country that with effort, a small region can be a champion! If

everyone moves in unison towards the goal, winning is possible!

The region's journey towards the crown is proof that with passion and dedication nothing is impossible. The collective efforts of the school paper advisers, coaches, student-journalists and regional office focal persons contributed to this triumph. Thus, region XIII has risen from a quiet contender to champion no one has ever expected.

Caraga is not only defending the crown - it is defending the value it upholds to continue sharpening the pens of every journalist in the region!



Regional Enhancement Program for Campus Journalism Mentors

November 26-29, 2025
Amontay Beach Resort, Nasipit, Agusan del Norte



Photos by Genalyn T. Conta