



Cebu's... from p15

His advocacy is to empower the youth and be their role model, strong in his belief of investing on the young ones first so they may be channels of blessing for others. "You cannot give what you do not have," he surmises.

The Filipino-Chinese looker who towers at 6'2 was born in Manila, grew up in Bacolod and has only been a resident of Talisay City for the last four years. A graduating student of Bachelor of Science in Information Technology at the AMA Computer College, McBilly is a tech enthusiast who foresees a gold mine in his freelance web design venture. He designed the official website of the Sinulog Foundation, and is currently closing deal after deal on web design

services. Not bad for a 19-year-old.

We listen to him discuss Stephen Covey's "7 Habits of Highly Effective People" and watch him beam proud while talking of a book he is completing, "How to Become a Hip Parent," a project he wishes to finish before turning 20, and then we momentarily forget that we are talking to a 19-year-old of this generation.

The next months are definitely turning up to be exciting for McBilly after his memorable stint in Mr. Cebu. We might be seeing him soon in one local TV show. He is now a regular fixture in runway fashion shows. He may be prepping himself to be a lucrative internet marketing guru, but for the moment, he is Cebu's 'it' guy.

How are you after joining Mr. Cebu 2008?

I'm really happy with the reception and reviews I got from people. A lot have been asking me why I didn't win. I just tell them that I might not have gotten the title, but I feel like a winner because I saw how passionate the Cebuanos are. I'm really okay. All in all, I'm really happy because I gave my best. With or without the title, I will continue to do what I have been doing even before the pageant. Others who join pageants... they say they do it to develop their personality. I joined Mr. Cebu not to develop my personality -- of course, it added -- but I joined because my idea of Mr. Cebu was it being a search for a role model for the youth, someone who will represent and promote Cebu to the Philippines and the rest of the world. After everything, I'll just continue to empower others to be role models. I want to contribute to the definition of a global Cebuano. If we can develop the youth and inspire them to be role models, we can really go a long way.

What did you get out of the experience?

PLAY!
Vanessa Balbuena

PHOTOS BY
Iste Sesante-
Leopoldo

LOCALE
Yap Sandiego
Ancestral House
(Parian, Cebu City)

MAKEUP BY
Dexter Bucog

Special thanks to:
*Didi Araneta for the *sapot* (white Chinese-inspired long sleeves)
*Mr. Val Sandiego
*Mr. Gavin Sanson Bagares and
*Mr. Orly Cajegas

I'm getting more exposure and publicit, which I really didn't expect. All this support from the press, from strangers, and fashion designers, it's very overwhelming. I appreciate the trust. I got more offers for web designs, modeling, hosting, and I'm getting more interest about my book. I'm very excited, I'm prioritizing to finish my book early. Of course, I'm keeping my feet on the ground and not let it get to my ego.

Aside from Mr. Cebu, have you previously joined other contests?

I joined "The Next Internet Millionaire" where I got in the Top 50 finalists. It's a reality show, kind of like "The Apprentice" but instead of real life, it all happens on the internet where we try to make money. I got to Top 50 by submitting a video of myself on why I should be included and at the same time, I promoted Cebu in the video. My first pageant was Mr. Ticao 2008, a tourism pageant that promoted Ticao island (in Masbate), which I won. Then I got to join the Bench Blackout fashion show earlier this year. I also became part of Cosmopolitan Philippines magazine's 69 hottest bachelors, then I got to join several other modeling gigs here in Cebu.

What brought your family to Cebu?

I was born in Manila but grew up in Bacolod. For college, I transferred to Cebu since the opportunities here are great and I also wanted to try out new things. I love it here! I really plan to work here, especially with all the offers I have now.

You're a prolific web designer now. How'd you manage to get your clients?

My big break was when I made the website of Rotary Club. They were satisfied with my work and since one of the members of Rotary was the president of the Sinulog Foundation, I was offered to make the Sinulog website. After that, more offers came in, mostly from small and medium businesses.

You've been raised by a single mom. How was it growing up without a father?

I have three siblings. I'm the eldest. Three guys and our youngest is a girl. Ever since, I was trained to be a role model in our family. Everything I do and every decision I make, I think of the consequences and how it would look to my siblings. My dad is in the United States. We still do communicate, but I'm the father figure that they see at home. So most