

Groot-Bijgaarden, October 28th 2021

Puratos announces opening of next Bakery School - in the Philippines



About Puratos

Puratos is an international group, which offers a full range of innovative products and application expertise for artisans, industry, retailers and food service customers in the bakery, patisserie and chocolate sectors. Its headquarters are located on the outskirts of Brussels (Belgium), where the company was founded in 1919. Puratos counts 9.500 employees. Products and services are available in over 100 countries around the world. In many cases, they are produced locally by our subsidiaries. Above all, we aim to be 'reliable partners in innovation' across the globe to help our customers deliver nutritious and tasty food to their local communities.

More information
www.puratos.com

The Puratos Group today announces it has opened its sixth Bakery School, providing life-changing opportunities for young people in developing markets, and introducing more skilled baking expertise into the industry.

"As Puratos approaches its thirty-third year in the Philippines, we're extremely proud to open this bakery school and are truly excited to see more local students grow into the next generation of great bakers," comments Daniel Malcorps, CEO of Puratos Group.

Twenty scholars have begun a two-year training programme at the Bakery School Philippines, an initiative brought to life in collaboration with Consuelo "Chito" Madrigal Foundation (CCMF), a well-established Filipino organisation that aims to alleviate poverty and promote social entrepreneurship. Despite the potential delays that the coronavirus pandemic could have caused, building work was accelerated and the school opened less than two months after the partnership was agreed. Across all the Puratos Bakery Schools, 250 students are currently on the way to becoming professional bakers, pâtissiers and chocolatiers, with another 241 already graduated.

Worldwide, there is an increasing demand for breads, cakes and pastries, and yet a significant shortage of skilled people to produce them. As a leader in the bakery, patisserie and chocolate industry, Puratos understands the importance of maintaining tradition and heritage for this fine craft. The Bakery School Foundation addresses these issues, with its mission to make a significant impact on the lives of younger, underprivileged generations by providing more opportunities within the baking industry.

Puratos Philippines has a history of corporate social responsibility (CSR) projects in partnership with the well-established Consuelo "Chito" Madrigal Foundation (CCMF), so collaborating again to establish the Bakery School Philippines was an obvious choice, according to Bernard Poplimont, president and general manager at Puratos Philippines. The partnership helped expedite the project's progress and enabled the conversion of a vacant building at the CCMF compound into a fully equipped bakery school with capacity for 20-25 students.

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The Bakery School Philippines is Puratos' sixth Bakery School, as the company has successfully opened one every year since the Bakery School Foundation was inaugurated in 2016. 25 students joined the Romanian school, opened last year at the peak of the pandemic, which followed schools being founded in India, Brazil, Mexico and South Africa. By 2030, Puratos aspires to always have 1,000 young people from developing countries in its schools, on the way to achieving their career aspirations.

Bakery School students undergo an intensive programme over two years. Diving into 36 subjects amounting to approximately 1,600 hours of training, they first learn about equipment, ingredient interaction and commodities before technical and practical lessons such as chocolate tempering, sourdough baking, decoration and finishing. Importantly, courses on food safety, food labelling, sales management and basic finance are key aspects of the learning programme, ensuring that students maintain valuable knowledge across all parts of business and giving them a good grounding for their future employment.

"Just as Puratos is committed to the Filipino bakery market, the entire Bakery Schools team remains dedicated to its mission to provide equal opportunities to underprivileged young people and train skilled bakers to uplift our industry. As a leader in our sector, we feel it's important to make jobs in bakery, patisserie and chocolate attractive -in any country – and maintain the unique histories, heritages and skills of those crafts," comments Malcorps.

Poplimont adds: *"The opening of our Bakery School was wholesome and intimate, with the planting of cacao trees outside to symbolise new beginnings, and the blessing of our building in line with local tradition. We are thrilled to be able to offer our students the training they require, followed by support with internships and jobs within Puratos or with our valued customers and partners. Senior baking professionals, as well as our brand ambassadors and social media influencers have offered free special sessions and mentorships as well. We couldn't have wished for a better start and are looking forward to these talented students becoming exceptional bakers over the coming years."*

To find out more about the Bakery School Foundation, please visit www.bakeryschoolfoundation.com