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**Feet on the Ground: A Narrative Report on Interview
with a Young Leader from Morong, Bataan**

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Part I & II : Preparation and Interview the Subject

Introduction:

This report narrates our interview with Hon. Jayson Reyes Topasi, the Sangguniang Kabataan Chairperson of Barangay Sabang, Morong, Bataan. The purpose of the interview was to understand how young leaders serve their communities and how youth leadership contributes to nation-building. Through this conversation, We aimed to learn about the values, challenges, and motivations that shape effective public service.

Objectives:

- ❖ To understand how government and community leaders serve the public through responsive and meaningful programs.
- ❖ To explore how youth leadership contributes to nation-building by promoting participation, accountability, and empowerment at the community level.
- ❖ To learn the personal values, challenges, and motivations that drive public servants to lead with purpose and integrity

Methods:

The interview was conducted on October 21, 2025, via Google Meet. Before starting, we asked permission from the interviewee and explained the purpose of the interview. We also provided a confidentiality agreement and letter of approval to ensure ethical conduct. The interview lasted about 40 minutes and focused on his experiences as an SK Chairperson, his community programs, and his leadership journey.

Part III: Writing the Paper

Feet on the Ground: The Story of Hon. Jayson Reyes Topasi

The barangay hall in Sabang, Morong, Bataan is alive with laughter and chatter. Youth leaders crowd around plastic tables, talking about their next community project. At the center of the noise sits Hon. Jayson Reyes Topasi, calm but alert, listening more than he speaks. At just 23, this Psychology graduate from Bataan Peninsula State University has already learned that leadership is not about being the loudest voice in the room, rather it's about understanding the people around you.

Elected SK Chairperson of Barangay Sabang in 2023, Jayson entered public service with a clear sense of purpose. "One thing that always motivates me to work is that I want the time to come when we will no longer ask for help that is supposed to be for us," he said, his words firm but hopeful. To him, leadership is not power but it's responsibility.

Unlike many who start with plans, Jayson began with questions. "We had our profiling, Katipunan ng Kabataan profiling... we always go down to the community to ask them what they need," he explained. For him, listening is the real foundation of every successful project. Each program under his term was born from real conversations with farmers, students, and even young mothers in the barangay.



One of the projects he treasures most is the Psychological First Aid Training held in 2024. It wasn't a grand event, but it mattered deeply to him. "We were able to introduce psychological first aid which helps people manage stress and emotional urgency," he said. He believes that

mental health isn't just a school topic but rather a life skill that every young person should learn. Even small efforts, he said, can help build emotional strength and awareness.

But Jayson is honest about the weight that comes with leadership. "Once you enter public service, you no longer have a private life," he admitted. Every move is noticed; every mistake, magnified. Instead of letting criticism break him, he uses it to grow. "When I see a group of youth criticizing a program, I reflect—maybe something was wrong, or maybe it didn't really help. Next time, I adjust."

It's not always easy. Limited resources and small budgets often test his patience and creativity. Yet, he refuses to let money be the measure of success. "We always try to collaborate and coordinate, so we can implement programs without sacrificing personal money or other needs," he said. Partnerships, he believes, are the key to sustainable change.

When asked what kind of leader he strives to be, Jayson doesn't hesitate. "Some think leadership centers on them, which is wrong. We should always look up to the people," he emphasized. He leads with accountability, transparency, and a firm belief in equity.



"At first, I believed in equality," he reflected, "but later I realized we need equity. We should know who needs it more and bring programs to those areas first." His words show a maturity that's rare for someone his age, a quiet understanding that fairness

sometimes means giving more where it's needed most.

Jayson believes trust in government can be rebuilt, not with grand speeches, but with small, sincere gestures. "Let's go down there, have coffee with them. Sometimes people don't need much help—they just need someone to ask them how they are," he said. For him, leadership means being human first.

In just his first year, Jayson's team reached the Top 40 SK programs in the Philippines, representing their municipality in Cebu. "We didn't win, but we were in the top 40. For me, that's already a win," he said, smiling. Recognition matters less to him than the spark he sees in others. "Those are my proudest moments because I think I did my job," he added, recalling how more young people now want to run for leadership positions.

When he talks about role models, he often mentions Pasig City Mayor Vico Sotto. "Be Vico Sotto. If you're ready to make sacrifices, it means you're ready to be a leader," he likes to tell aspiring youth leaders. To him, the first person a leader must learn to lead is themselves. "You can't give to people what you don't have. Build yourself first, focus on your growth, and when you're ready to sacrifice, you're ready to lead."

At the end of the day, Jayson doesn't see himself as special. He's

Abante, paa sa lupa.
—Jaysontopasi



just someone who wants to make things a little better than he found them. His motto, "Abante, paa sa

"lupa" move forward but keep your feet on the ground. That captures who he is perfectly, which is a young man with big dreams but a humble heart.

As the noise in the barangay hall dies down, Jayson gathers his things, pausing for one last chat with a group of volunteers. He listens, smiles, and nods the same way he's always led. His kind of leadership may be quiet, but it's the kind that stays.

Key Findings:

- ❖ Leadership starts with listening. Programs are more effective when they are based on real community needs rather than assumptions.
- ❖ Service requires sacrifice. Entering public service means giving up some privacy and comfort to serve others wholeheartedly.
- ❖ Equity builds fairness. Equal treatment is not always fair. However, true leadership means understanding who needs more help and acting on it.
- ❖ Trust is built through connection. Small gestures like talking, listening, or having coffee with residents help rebuild people's trust in government.
- ❖ Self-leadership is essential. A leader must first lead themselves, develop discipline, and be emotionally ready to guide others.

Reflection:

This interview helped us see that leadership is not measured by age or position but by sincerity and purpose. Hon. Jayson reminded me that serving the community starts with empathy and respect. I also realized that effective governance means being close to the people, understanding their struggles, and leading by example. The process taught us patience, preparation, and confidence in communicating with a leader. Despite the

challenges, it was inspiring to see how someone young can make a real difference.

Conclusion:

Interviewing Hon. Jayson Reyes Topasi made us realize that true leadership is grounded in humility, compassion, and responsibility. His story proves that even small actions can bring big changes when done with heart and purpose. "Abante, paa sa lupa" means move forward but keep your feet on the ground , which perfectly captures what it means to be a servant leader.

Documentation Photos:



Questions:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/12vBxxbppJi47J0tWq5uKpzV2PBC03HTG/view?usp=sharing>

Confidentiality Agreement:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/10wc9qhTTZbk_sPMx8hBIYHxn4p5X-ONt/view?usp=drive_link

Letter of Approval:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1r3cUkxObYCG8QkQ00R_RI3D1OzfQZPr/view?usp=drive_link

Recorded Interview:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1G0WQFwP4-Z1TiVkJ3IceepUzg5kcFu8jy/view?usp=drive_link

Minutes of the Meeting:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BTmO9cUvLFj-xP2JjjM2yWSpC2MrsPW/view?usp=drive_link

Part IV: Final PowerPoint Presentation

PowerPoint Presentation:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1i3E9AIP5miZ-Q4T0Ak0TUvBhQpRHGMm4/view?usp=sharing>

Recorded Presentation:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xp8VpvuAhk-ARxWm3hdYNyQFYMwiMTzv/view?usp=sharing>

Part V: Peer Evaluation

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-8ZPyNB9CNYv0mc4Zu-MVjmnGVoOjMT1/view?usp=drive_link