

LGBTQ+ Employees' 'Best Me' Shines at McDo

CITY OF MANILA, METRO MANILA, PHILIPPINES, August 25, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- At McDonald's Philippines, inclusivity is more than just a promise but a reality that is experienced by its employees. Regardless of their gender or sexual orientation, they are given the space to grow personally and professionally. Their voices are heard and their efforts are seen. Support for its LGBTQ+ employees is not seasonal; it is an everyday reality.

Finding Belonging From Day One

For 42-year-old Rachelle David, Restaurant General Manager (RGM) at McDonald's Karuhatan, walking into McDonald's marked the start of something life-changing.

"I had grown my hair long, not just for style, but honestly to hide parts of who I was. I wasn't sure if I could be myself, or if I'd have to keep pretending. But the moment I stepped in, something shifted. It felt like home. I felt safe just being me," said David, who used to work in a call center as an administrative assistant before joining McDonald's Philippines.

David's advocacy extends beyond her community; she is also an advocate for the environment. Her passion for positive change is not only reflected in the causes she supports but her own personal journey. Through her work at McDonald's, she not only found a job but a "space to grow into myself, to feel seen, and to start feeling proud" of who she was. In her downtime, she enjoys exploring places out of town and watching movies.

Yober Leonardo, McDonald's People/Training Coordinator and QA Partner, felt the same feeling of belonging. His career began at the Golden Arches, working as a member of McDonald's local store marketing team.

"I was both nervous and excited when I first joined McDonald's. I remember on my first day, I was warmly greeted by my coworkers, which made me feel comfortable right away. As days went by, I was amazed by how supportive everyone was. They patiently guided me and taught me how to improve at my tasks. We worked together with trust and respect to ensure everything ran smoothly. What I love most about being here is the welcoming atmosphere. I feel accomplished and truly able to be myself, which has given me a strong sense of belonging," the 34-year-old said.

Leonardo loves hosting parties and dancing and is glad that he is able to express his true self at his place of work.

A Safe Space to Be Your True Self

McDonald's Philippines believes in providing a safe and welcoming workplace where employees feel empowered to be their 'Best Me'.

"Everyone is treated with utmost respect and belonging. I am treated fairly, given equal rights to showcase my potential and possibilities. And because of the acknowledgement I feel in McDonald's, I gave it back to the company and to the community by providing exceptional service to all customers," said 39-year-old Mark Jason Armintia, the RGM of McDonald's Nueno.

A former guest relations officer in Kuwait before joining the company, Armintia said that entering a global company is a great opportunity, and his journey at McDonald's exceeded his expectations as it furthered his knowledge and honed his skills. "I grow as the company grows," he said.

David shared that she didn't realize how important it was to be accepted for who you are in the beginning.

"Over time, I've come to see that being in a workplace where all identities are celebrated makes a huge difference—it allows you to grow, feel safe, and truly belong," David said.

This sentiment is echoed by Leonardo. "McDonald's has been a comforting place where I can truly be myself. It's a place where I don't feel judged but rather accepted and loved. It's not just about the food—it's about the memories I've made there. The bonds that turned into friendships, and the friendships that grew into a sense of family. When I'm here, it always feels like they're saying, 'You belong here'," he said.

Empowered to Be "The Best Me"

By empowering their employees to bring their authentic selves to work, McDonald's Philippines supports the continuous improvement of its people.

"Working in McDonald's, which has been supportive of my individual growth, is very important to me. It brings out the best in me, increases my productivity, and boosts my job satisfaction. The company also molded me to become a morally upright individual," Armintia said.

David shared a similar feeling of liberation and acceptance, saying "Loud and proud — Yung feeling na hindi mo kailangan mag-make up, mag-dress, o magpahaba ng buhok just to fit in or pretend to be someone you're not. Sa McDonald's, I felt accepted for who I really am. That kind of freedom and support empowered me to be confident, proud, and to truly become THE BEST ME—at work and beyond."

By sharing the stories of its employees, McDonald's Philippines amplifies its Love Ko All, Welcome All even further. For the company, it is more than just a tagline; it is a truth embodied every day.

McDonald's Philippines

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