

NEWSLINKS

Hear! Hear!

“Teacher!” John 20:16

“Teacher!” is the theme of this year’s annual retreat held at Maryridge, Tagaytay City. Mars Benavente shares her experience:

LINK had a retreat last August and I really enjoyed and learned a lot. And because of this retreat, I really felt that I became closer to God. It feels good working in LINK because it does not only focus on the work in the office but also it helps me spiritually. What strikes me most was the verse from Matthew 28, 20 that says “Go and teach



them to follow what I have told you.” As a teacher of the Deaf, we need to open the gift that God gave us, a gift to communicate with the Deaf. Let’s teach the Deaf with all our hearts. Let’s not think of their disability but what they can do. And let’s share this gift to other people because God gave us this gift to share and not to keep for ourselves only.



How do you signal a jeepney driver to stop? How do you order food in a restaurant? Or transact with bank tellers? Or cope with people’s insensitivity, labeling you “pipi” or mute or even dumb? Our world, certainly, is designed to have our complete set of senses. But two admirable ladies proved that deafness is nothing more than just the inability to hear. Jerene Justiniano and Dianne Salazar, both working in LINK Center for the Deaf, share their story to a group of deaf and hearing students of Miriam College in an event entitled The Deaf CAN: Stories of Resilience and Optimism of the Deaf

Jerene Justiniano :

I thought before that all hearing people don’t like to communicate with me...that’s why I was quiet and shy. I became open and entered hearing world when I joined Youth for Christ. They asked me to teach them sign language while I learned more English from them.



In my [college internship], the human resource officer asked me to bring magic slate for communication. Communication was smooth and I had no problems in work even if I was the only deaf person.

I just started working but allow me to give you some advice based on my experience—be courteous; be respectful and friendly; know your strengths and weaknesses. In doing so, you can develop more your strengths and do something to turn your weakness into something positive.

Disability Inclusive Elections Project

A two-day strategic communication planning seminar-workshop was given to stakeholders as part of LCD’s Disability Inclusive Elections project with The Asia Foundation and AusAID. COMELEC Commissioner Rene Sarmiento gave an input on COMELEC’s efforts to increase PWD participation in the election. The planning was facilitated by Professors from Miriam College and attended by 19 participants from different organizations.



Dianne Salazar:

I had embarrassing moment during my first time to take public transport on my own. I was helpless not knowing how I can say “STOP” because I was getting off. There was no button that I can press, nor rope to pull and signal “STOP”.



I shouted. I did not know how I sounded. The people looked and laughed at me. I did not care. I just got off and ignored them.

In our office, we have a doorbell and lamp that aid deaf people like me. When I see the lamp lights, it means there is somebody at the door. The visitors would automatically talk to me, but I gesture to them and tell them to wait. I will call my co-worker who is hearing to attend to their needs. If I am left alone, I communicate to them thru writing.

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School visits in Visayas



On September 27 -30, 2011, Mr. Balagtas Himigbayan Q. Santiago with the assistance of the Department of Education Bureau of Elementary Education SPED Division successfully conducted a series of SPED Program monitoring and school visit in Central Visayas (Region VII). The school visits were conducted to document the progress of SPED programs in the different schools established or expanded as a result of the teacher training program supported by BOEING Global Corporate Citizenship and the Philippines-Australia Community Assistance Program (PACAP).

The activity also provided the opportunity for teachers as well as deaf students to echo their concerns and significant issues regarding the SPED program in their schools. Also, teachers and students were very grateful for the visit, especially in the high schools because monitoring activities like these do not occur regularly. They were very grateful to know that organizations like LINK Center for the Deaf appreciate their efforts and are willing to provide support in their worthwhile endeavor of ensuring that suitable and quality education for deaf children are made available in their communities.

LCD is part of ACECYD

LINK Center for the Deaf represented by its President Carolyn Ui, is part of the 8 core members of the Advisory Council for the Education of Children and Youth with Disabilities or ACECYD. DepEd has organized ACECYD to strengthen its bid for an inclusive education and to provide all children access to quality basic education.

The council will work closely with DepEd and meet regularly with the DepEd Secretary to have an exchange of ideas, draft plans, shortlist priorities with regards to inclusive and special education.

For more information about ACECYD, refer to DepEd Order No. 77, series of 2011 at www.deped.gov.ph