

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND DIRECTIONS

In January 2002, De La Salle-College of Saint Benilde School of Deaf Education and Applied Studies became an official member of PEN-International.

It's been a fruitful partnership.

The first two years involved us in dynamic learning. As we learned from others, we simultaneously addressed the very problems, issues and concerns we faced. Our set up became learning labs: the SDEAS core faculty and administrators were participants, initiators and implementers; the ideas and insights of our students and industry partners were taken as guideposts and solutions. We all gained from these experiences. Targeted outcomes were met, graduates found jobs; partners met their objectives; and many found fertile venues upon which they can pursue personal or corporate social responsibility.

For our educational partners, their representatives gained insights and inspiration from regular gatherings focused on the Training Modules on Learner-Centered Education of the Deaf or TM-LED. This became an important venue for individual teachers from different institutions to talk about their experiences teaching the Deaf. Like the experience of SDEAS, the classroom setting of the teachers quickly turned into their own learning labs as they started to apply what they have learned, and became more observant of their teaching, and the learning ways of their Deaf students.

On our 3rd year, which is actually the 4th year for most of the partners; we have become more driven and focused. Together with what we have learned from our own experiences and contributions, PEN-International has also helped us to gain confidence to be more self-sufficient and directed in the following areas:

- A. Expansion of Career Advancement Opportunities
- B. Strengthening of Partnership with post-secondary institutions and NGOs for and of the Deaf
- C. Expansion of PEN-International for greater impact in local setting

Expansion of Career Advancement Opportunities

Under this initiative, three major areas were addressed: first, improve career preparation through academic training and internship; second, increase partners for internship and employment; and third, improve work place accommodations.

Career preparation through academic training and internship started in Year 1. This resulted in greater understanding and some level of results in Year 2 and clarity of direction and outcomes in Year 3. Our improved efforts in these areas yielded the following results:

- Our baccalaureate degree in Applied Deaf studies was upgraded and approved by the government. Emphasis of change was focused on strengthening both the value orientation of graduates to become leader advocates in their areas of specialization (Multimedia Arts or Entrepreneurship) and greater competence in the field.
- A more organized internship set up within their specialized academic subjects. This led to some non-academic volunteer set-up outside the classroom, and eventually to actual deployment in work settings.
- Bolder efforts to explore entrepreneurial involvements of our business students. A group of our students recently won top honors and a guaranteed cash fund prize for their business capital. This was from the National Business Plan Writing competition funded and supported by the Dutch National Commission for Sustainable Development, The Dutch National Youth Council and local partners from the Philippine Resources for Sustainable Development and National youth Commission of the Phil Government.

Partners for internship and employment also increased, either as a product of Memorandum of Agreements or referrals of independent employers satisfied with the performance of Deaf students in an internship set-up. Many of the companies who hired our Deaf graduates started off working with us under the internship arrangement.

Work place accommodations became a natural interest of most of our partners. They have become more keenly aware of the need for workplace accommodations. They have worked with us in various stages of internship and employment to come up with better arrangements to ensure that their work environment is barrier-free and supportive of their Deaf interns or employees.

Our collaborative partnership improved the chances of Deaf people to have greater employment opportunities. This has led us to write a manual for employers. It aims to increase their confidence in hiring and working with Deaf people through information, simple how-to's, and references to other schools and NGOs of and for Deaf people. It is now being finalized and will be submitted to PEN-International this year for comments and additional guidance. This is tentatively titled "*Employer Education Manual*" and we hope to publish and distribute the manual to as many employers, schools and NGOs for and of Deaf

people, and others that may eventually play a role in improving career opportunities of Deaf people on a national level.

The Second area of accomplishment is in the

Strengthening of Partnerships with Post-secondary institutions and NGOs for and of the Deaf

Teacher-training opportunities continued with the active participation of representatives of post-secondary institutions of the Deaf. On the screen you will see the summary of these opportunities, the different post-secondary institutions and NGOs who participated in these opportunities and the percentages of Deaf and hearing participants who attended these opportunities (Table 1: summary data on teacher-training opportunities).

Three of these learning opportunities identified in this slide were developed and facilitated by Filipino experts on particular areas of interests. (Table 2: Summary data on teacher-training opportunities handled by Filipino experts)

PEN supported the participation of teachers in two specialized international conferences. The International Conference on Learner-Centered Education (ICLCE) was conceptualized and organized by DLS-CSB, of which two (2) NTID Experts presented pre-conference workshops for the PEN-Philippine partners. They also presented a paper during the conference held in Manila. These experts who came to the Philippines were Dr. Jeff Lewis and Dr. John Albertini. (Table 3: Summary data on special topics presented in ICLCE given by American experts from NTID)

The 2nd International conference was the *The first Philippine Multiple Intelligence Convention featuring Dr. Howard Gardner – Discover and Develop Every child's Multiple Intelligence*. A total of 22 faculty and administrators were supported by PEN-International to attend this gathering. This provided the teachers of the Deaf another means of understanding the Deaf learner.

DLS-CSB also participated in the PePNET Conference held in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania in April 2004. Our executive vice-president, Dr. Rose Marie Clemena, and two of our SDEAS Faculty, Ms. Joy Cristal and Ms.

Floris Punsalan attended the affair. Ms. Punsalan is one of the 17 Deaf faculty members of SDEAS

Through the PEN-International, DLS-CSB was able to take the lead in supporting the collaborative efforts of the leaders and key members of post-secondary educational institutions and non-government organizations for and of Deaf people to develop a *"Collaborative Paper on Issues and Concerns in Philippine Deaf Education."* This was presented to the key government and private leaders participating in the UNESCO Consultative Forum on Deafness in the Philippines held in Manila in November of last year. The same set of Deaf and hearing representatives also participated in the consultative forum.

Partnerships with Tsukuba College of Technology in Japan were also strengthened. Consultative relations between key SDEAS and TCT leaders in teaching and administration have led to learning sessions (via e-mail) among students of Japan and the Philippines. These cyber-exchanges resulted in actual cultural exchange visits that PEN-International fully supported. TCT teachers and students visited SDEAS in November 2004 while SDEAS participants traveled to Japan in February 2005. Exposure to each other's Deaf culture, natural language of the Deaf and educational philosophies were areas of significant learning for the participants.

The 3rd area of accomplishment is in the

Expansion of PEN-International for greater impact in the Philippines

PEN-International initiatives in the Philippines continued to be in the news for Year 3. These initiatives have been published in the following publications. Table 4: Summary data of Publications with articles on PEN-International

Aside from providing relevant and up-to-date information, PEN-International continues to provide support to DLS-CSB SDEAS thereby enabling us to see the possibilities of our role in further improving Deaf lives through the expansion of career opportunities in De La Salle Schools. In October 2004, top key administrators of the DLSU System, DLS-CSB, and Provincial of De La Salle Brothers of the Christian Schools visited the PEN-International headquarters at NTID. During their visit they had week-long meetings with experts and conducted site visits of NTID's excellent programs and services for Deaf college students.

Ten years before our involvement with PEN-International, DLS-CSB has already made headways in Deaf education by being the 1st tertiary level institution to open a Deaf program with appropriate academic and support team to run it. It gave full support for needed interventions to help prepare our Deaf students have better lives than the older Deaf adults in our country. The Office for Academic Programs (O-AP) and the Office for Deaf Esteem and Formation (O-DEAF) of SDEAS are two major offices that improved and evolved through the years. They specifically address the needs of the Deaf students in academics and non-academics particularly in areas of leadership, social, psycho-emotional and spiritual development.

We have learned much from PEN-International. Our involvement in the last 3 years has enriched our learning and direction. As an external organization that has facilitated the initiatives of DLS-CSB SDEAS to move forward, it has greatly helped us become more systematic in our efforts, directive in our decisions and responsive in our interventions.

To ensure our direction and future initiatives continue to bear fruits, institutionalization of these efforts was imperative. As a culmination of our Year 3 with the network, we have formalized the importance of building partnerships to develop and further enrich initiatives towards improving Deaf lives. Our organizational structure was improved and the Office for Partnership & Development (O-PD) was added. This was recently approved by the DLS-CSB academic council as the 3rd official office of SDEAS.

The 3rd office shall address the development of partnerships with hearing and Deaf decision-makers as well as with colleagues and friends in the mainstream who also play a major role in advancing the career opportunities for the Deaf within the industry and society.

Our partnership with PEN International is now on its fourth year. Now, more than ever, we see an even greater need to build upon past accomplishments. Aside from the continued expansion of our partners in the industry, educational institutions and organizations for and of Deaf people, we seek positive outcomes in the following areas:

- Gain greater ground in collaborative work with institutions and organizations for and of Deaf people to facilitate greater

access to various learning opportunities that shall benefit the teachers, administrators, Deaf students, and other types of partners.

- Take the lead in organizing data and resources through published references, articles, and special topic kits that shall make access to information and learning opportunities easier and within reach;
- Pursue competencies in formal research and contribute to the advancement of knowledge of greater society in the areas that will have impact on improving career opportunities, and learning and teaching experiences of Deaf people in the Philippines.