

Culture Exchange Program for deaf colleges (KNU & DLS-CSB)

Dr. You (Korea Nazarene University)

This is a report about the recent trip to the Philippines involving De La Salle-College of Saint Benilde (DLS-CSB) and Korea Nazarene University (KNU). The trip focused on the Culture Exchange Program for deaf college students sponsored by PEN-International at National Technical Institute of the Deaf (NTID) at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) in Rochester, New York. KNU faculty and students visited and stayed at DLS-CSB for five days (08.02.2009~12.02.2009).

At CSB in the Pen-International office, DLS-CSB faculty gave an individual presentation and Dr. You gave a presentation about KNU and our major, Universal Design. It was a great opportunity for all of us from both DLS-CSB and KNU. This includes students and faculty as we shared our experiences regarding higher education. Some Korean students acted as interpreters for us in the Philippines.



<Fig1-3. Three faculty gave a presentation about their education.>

Several faculty who presented and explained about School of Deaf Education and Applied Studies which has been around since 1991. It is referred to as the Education Development Department (EDD). One of the presenters explained the details about the Intensive Academic Training Guidance and Counseling Certificate Program in Accounting for the Deaf. It is a very strong academic program for the deaf at DLS-CSB in the Philippines.

The vision statement was also discussed. School of Deaf Education and Applied Studies (SDEAS) is a leading learner-centered educational institute. There is a Deaf Learners' Preparatory Course (DLPC) which has four cluster areas of study that should be completed in two terms. The four areas include Formation, Filipino Sign Language, English, and Math. The faculty informed us that the breakdown of languages used are 70% American Sign language (ASL) and 30% Filipino Sign Language (FSL). We were all very surprised that most of the Filipino faculty and staff are required to be able to communicate in Filipino and ASL at DLS-CSB. The reason for this is because it gives more opportunities for deaf students to communicate between faculty or staff and students at CSB. There are many different ways that sign language can be utilized. For example: Filipino students who come to school at DLS-CSB are encouraged to use only one language: American Sign Language which they learn at DLS-CSB. We would like to learn from their model to be able to help the faculty at KNU to learn sign language to give the best opportunity for the deaf or hard of hearing students. KNU Professors and students also learned that DLS-CSB has to approve all deaf students who pass the

SDEAS Admission Bachelor of Applied Deaf Studies which is given by the government in the Philippines.

A faculty member gave a presentation about the Deaf Studies Track and Electives–Multimedia Arts/Filipino Sign Language Learning Program (FSLLP). FSL provides Levels 1,2,3 Seminars on Visual–Gestural Communications. We learned that the Office for Deaf Esteem and Formation are geared to make students prepared and stronger so they can get better jobs after graduating from college. The office also provides job support by DLS–CSB for deaf youth. This is through a Partnership Advocacy program to help find jobs and internships for deaf youth needing support, such as the Deaf Project, Business Mentorship and Loan Support. Right now, KNU does not have a similar type of program, however this would be an excellent opportunity for our students. Filipinos who are deaf and finish with a high school diploma only, find that securing employment is not easy. It is a great opportunity for those who can go to college and successfully graduate from college. They will find the job search much easier. Company expectations are high and usually require a college degree in the Philippines. We think that we need to help and give better services to our KNU students KNU needs similar positions like the Deaf Life Skills and Development Program coordinator and La salian Miristy for the Deaf coordinator. DLS–CSB has also provided a Leadership and Involvement Program coordinator and a Social Responsibility and outreach program coordinator. DLS–CSB has provided three main areas of importance:

- 1) Setting direction for the office for Deaf Esteem and Formation.
- 2) Monitoring the activities and projects of the different deaf programs.
- 3) Coordinating with the DLS–CSB office of students behavior regarding discipline.



<Fig.4-5 KNU and DLS–CSB together discuss about our school policy.>

DLS–CSB and KNU faculty discussed our experiences (Deaf Culture). DLS–CSB faculty explained their knowledge about the deaf and their goal is for the students to feel proud of who they are. The deaf community is a heterogeneous group. There are a variety of deaf people depending on their situations. For example, there are those who have struggled with language and sign language and therefore, may be communicating on a different level than their peers. In the Philippines, it is believed that a strong education provided to the deaf before and after graduating from college is very important. This experience has helped us to see that KNU needs deaf people to be understood better by all faculty at our university. More deaf students, regardless of their hearing status, inside or outside the college, to have a quality program. KNU is a facility that wants everyone to be equal. This is a great start, but we need to have a better understanding about deaf culture to continue to succeed at this. DLS–CSB seems to be a strong institution which communicates well with students and uses sign language whenever possible as well as provides a good education. At DLS–CSB, a faculty member and three students gave a presentation about their deaf culture and Filipino

culture and history. There was a lot of good information and material for our KNU students and faculty. Our KNU students gave presentations about their own individual Universal Design skills they have acquired and also displayed an exhibit for three days which was shared with DLS-CSB students. One KNU student gave a presentation about Korean Deaf Culture. This was beneficial for the staff and students as DLS-CSB to have an opportunity to learn about Korean Deaf Culture. DLS-CSB and KNU students gave a cultural show and participated in the Student Sports Tournament Exchange. Students participated while learning about different sports which gave them more respect for each other. Also, there was a cultural show which involved both the DLS-CSB and KNU students and was an excellent opportunity to learn from each other and respect each other.



<Fig.6-7 KNU gives us an opportunity our activity and visited to the Philippines School for the Deaf.>

KNU and students visited the Philippines School for the Deaf (kindergarten to high school) and were involved in a tour. There were about 619 students at the Philippines School for the Deaf and a few students stayed in the dorms. There were some deaf teachers as well as hearing teachers who are required to know sign language. We learned that there are a greater number of deaf people in the Philippines than in Korea. The number of deaf people has decreased through the years due to factors such as modern medicine.



<Fig.8 DSL-CSB give the KNU Certificate of Participation by DSL-CSB president.>

Lastly, we were surprised to learn that there is more service support provided for adult and young deaf people in the Philippines than in Korea. For example, one

organization that was established was the Philippine Federation of the Deaf. The President who is deaf and a woman, informed us that before it was named the Philippine Association of the Deaf in 1990. Today, the name has changed to the Philippine Federation of the Deaf and World Federation of the Deaf. The General Assembly was attended by Deaf youth from different organizations in the Philippines. There is a larger number of members in the Korean Association of the Deaf which includes both hearing and deaf members. Philippine Federation of the Deaf is only for the deaf. We have learned from this trip that we need to improve our leadership, education, and activities for the deaf population. We need our faculty at KNU to continue to grow stronger and continue to learn sign language to be able to communicate better with our students so they can be successful in any endeavors they choose to do.