

## PRESS RELEASE

**DepEd's Brigada Eskwela bags an Anvil award**

The Brigada Eskwela or the National Schools Maintenance Week of the Department of Education won an Anvil Award of Merit given by the Public Relations Society of the Philippines, the only government line agency to win an award this year in the prestigious search.

The award was received by Education Secretary Armin Luistro together with former DepEd Secretary Edilberto de Jesus and Undersecretary Mike Luz who were pioneers of the program.

Brigada Eskwela which started in 2003 enjoins the participation of the whole community to do repairs and clean up of schools prior to the opening of classes thus effectively reviving the dying bayanihan spirit.

Luistro said the award brings home the point that private sector participation is important in improving the quality of education in the public school system.

"The award is very timely since three months from now we will once again call on the community stakeholders for another round of Brigada Eskwela and we hope for a more enthusiastic response," said Luistro,

Brigada Eskwela was awarded as a public relations program on a sustained basis under the education category. PRSP cited it "for successfully engaging the participation of community stakeholders in repair and clean up of schools reminding them that educating our youth is a responsibility of the community."

The Brigada Eskwela is DepEd's model of public, private and community partnership but it does not accept cash donation. What it solicits are cleaning/repair materials and other non-cash assistance for the repair and maintenance of the school. The volunteers composed of parents, students and members of the community do the repairs and sprucing up of schools.

The activity is done a week before the opening of classes so that, on the first day of school, children can buckle down to their lesson. Prior to the institutionalization of Brigada, teachers and students had to do the cleaning themselves, eating much of their time before they can start their classes. By working with other community stakeholders in preparing the school, the students are able to experience a sense of community and the bayanihan spirit together with other education stakeholders.

It is now participated in by 100% of public elementary and secondary schools nationwide.

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