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BRIGADA ESKWELA AWARDS

DepEd cites top implementing schools, hall of fame awardees

As a fitting tribute to schools that generated active community support for Brigada Eskwela, the Department of Education (DepEd) awarded top implementing schools who have mobilized the most number of individuals, local government units, and non-government organizations for the repair and maintenance of schools before classes resume in June.

Education Secretary Jesli Lapus led the awarding of 96 schools, each conferred with the Best Brigada Eskwela Implementer awards. Six special awards were also given in the event held at the Cebu International Convention Center in Mandaue City, Cebu.

From only 31 percent participation rate in 2003, the Brigada Eskwela is now being participated in by all public elementary schools nationwide.

“This is indeed a milestone worthy of celebration – we have reached the peak. We have hit a record. We have started a trend. All of our public schools are now Brigada Eskwela converts,” Lapus declared.

The Brigada Eskwela is an annual activity where school officials solicit and engage the support of the whole community in sprucing up schools in time for the opening of classes in June.

For each of the 16 regions, three elementary schools and three secondary schools were selected as awardees. The school-awardees were categorized as Small, Big or Exceptional school based on their enrollment size.

For the first time, DepEd gives hall of fame awards to schools which won best implementer for three consecutive years. Sixteen schools were bestowed such honor. Awardees received plaque of recognition.

Brigada Eskwela was spearheaded by DepEd’s Adopt-A-School Program (ASP) that facilitates DepEd’s partnership with the private sector.

Lapus noted that the increasing trend in the participation of schools in the Brigada Eskwela reached its peak in 2008.

“From 12,533 schools or 31% in 2003, we witnessed complete participation rate in 2008 – all 44,619 schools have joined the Brigada bandwagon. In other words, a total of 44,619 communities and their stakeholders gave time, talent,

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and resources to repair and clean up the school in time for the opening of classes," Lapus shared.

According to the Education Chief, the partnerships amounted to some P2.9 billion-worth of Community Maintenance and Operating Cost; P1.6 billion-worth of volunteer time and labor man-hours; and P1.2 billion-worth of donations-in-kind.

Lapus enjoined all public schools to observe Brigada Eskwela. He noted that 5,479,319 volunteers in 44,619 communities have been mobilized to improve the school in time for the opening of classes.

He likewise lauded the principals who are the school managers that can create a ripple effect of the *Bayanihan* spirit in the community.

He urged them to "engage all sectors of the community –the local businesses, the parents, the local government units and non-government organizations. Inform them of your current efforts and needs."

END

For more information about the Brigada Eskwela Awards please contact Adopt-A-School Program Secretariat at 638-8637/638-8639.

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