

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 25, 2008

Give back: Lapus tells UP graduates

Education Secretary Jesli Lapus exhorted graduates of the UP College of Education to give back to the country because much has been given to them. "Give back to the community, to the university and to the country that nurtured you. Give back without holding back."

Lapus told the graduates to demonstrate Rizal's exemplary life of service to the Filipino nation. "Yours is the opportunity to exhibit your creativity in molding the minds of a new generation of Filipinos worthy of the struggle and sacrifice of our national heroes"

Referring to the importance of technology in education, Lapus said "Technology plays a major role in creating new and improved models of teaching and learning."

According to Lapus, the world today is so dependent on innovations and technology that to ignore them will not only prevent one being competitive globally but may even render one incompetent and powerless. "Without doubt, we can transform education through technology," he said.

Lapus told the graduates of the need to evolve from the teacher-led instructional model where learners are mere consumers of information and knowledge to a learner-led personalized model where learners are also producers of information and knowledge.

Lapus also spoke on some of the headways the DepEd has made during his watch. He said there has been a marked increase in enrollment in preschool, elementary and secondary schools with figures nearing the 20 million mark.

On the Food for School program, Lapus said the incidence of malnutrition among pre-school to grade six pupils was reduced from 21 percent in 2006 to 17 percent in 2007. This resulted to an improved school attendance from 90 percent in 2006 to 95 percent in 2007.

Another successful project is the 14,600 new classrooms constructed and 10,600 classrooms repaired in 2007 which is a giant leap from the usual target of 6,000 classrooms per year.

Moreover, the number of new teacher items created also recorded a high of more than 16,000 in 2007, the highest number in years. Also, the number of principal items opened totaled 3,479 in 2006-2007.

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On book procurement, there was a reduced cost of textbooks by half and is expected to further go down. DepEd's 5-level procurement program has been cited in international circles including the World Bank as a best practice.

"In view of these accomplishments, DepEd has received a record positive 61 percent approval rating from Pulse Asia surveys. DepEd is now recognized as one of the top performing departments of the government" Lapus said.

Lapus told the graduates that this is how he is trying to give back. "When we give back to where they came from, we are coming back to our kilometer zero - the place where we always return from a long journey in life."

He said graduates of UP also obtain quality education. "Quality education is indeed both a great power and a privilege. We have a responsibility of rebuilding our nation from the quagmire of underdevelopment through education," Lapus said.

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