

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Campus journalists join fight vs. extreme poverty

Student journalists will push their pens to heed the government's call to fight extreme poverty.

As this year's National Schools Press Conference (NSPC) focuses on the 2015 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) particularly the MDG 1 (Alleviate Poverty and Hunger), the Department of Education (DepEd) mobilizes schools support by advocating and integrating them in related school-community initiatives.

Education Secretary Jesli Lapus said, "There is power in the pen and we highlight this in our school journalists and their publications. We enlist their active participation in this advocacy because our young journalists know how to optimize the power of communication."

"We can also expect that the government will find more community stakeholders who will be our partner in overcoming poverty and hunger," he added.

The annual NSPC draws a thousand campus journalists from public and private elementary and high school students from the country's 16 regions. This year, it will be held on February 22-26, 2010 in Tagum City, Davao del Norte.

Individual and group writing contests in English and Filipino will carry the conference theme: "Campus Journalism as a Catalyst for Change: Achieving the MDGs by 2015 (Pampaaralang Pahayagan bilang Instrumento ng Pagbabago: Maisakatuparan ang MDGs ng 2015).

The group contests comprise of five categories: editorial page or pahinang editorial, feature/literary page or pahinang lathalain, news page or pahinang balita and sports page or pahinang sports.

High school and elementary students will participate in the individual contests such as editorial writing, news writing, feature writing, sports writing. There will also be competitions in copyreading and headline writing, photojournalism, editorial cartooning, and scriptwriting and radio broadcasting.

This year, digital journalism contests will also be introduced in the NSPC. The 2010 NSPC Overall Chair Dr. Lolita Andrada sets direction for campus journalism in the secondary level. An online essay writing contest was pilot tested last year, and this year, digital radio broadcasting contests will be lined up.

PRESS RELEASE

October 17-23 of every year is declared the National Week for Overcoming Extreme Poverty as stated by Presidential Proclamation No. 717 Series of 2004.

Andrada added that regions are encouraged to conduct their regional press conferences on October 16-18 to coincide with global “Stand Up, Take Action (SUTA)” against poverty activities. “They are also enjoined to craft and align their regional themes with NSPC theme,” she added.

In 2008, the Philippines topped the world record in participation to the United Nation's annual observance of the International Day of Poverty Eradication when some 35 million Filipinos took part in the SUTA campaign against poverty. Of this, over 18 million were students and teachers from public and private schools nationwide.

DepEd mobilized the biggest participation, with some 12.6 million joining in gardening and tree planting activities organized from 3:00 to 5:00 pm in October 17. This year, DepEd will strive to surpass the number of participation last year.

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