

Accomplishment Report

11th World Autism Awareness Day Philippine Celebration

Theme: *“Empowering Women and Girls with Autism”*

April 2, 2018

A number of activities highlighted the country’s 2018 WAAD celebration, each aimed at specific objectives and target audience. The major activities included were Seminar on Autism, Awarding of Autism Advocates, “Light It Up Blue” Ceremonies, Art Exhibit featuring the works of children with autism and Art Workshop, among others.

The traditional **“Light It Up Blue” ceremony** served as the main activity highlighting the annual WAAD celebration. This was held at three different locations namely at the iconic Globe of the SM Mall of Asia in Pasay City, the green gate of the SMART Araneta Coliseum in Quezon City and the Liwasang Aurora, Quezon City Memorial Circle.

In addition, three (3) main universities in the country also participated in the LIUB ceremony. These are the University of Sto. Tomas and De La Salle University, both in Manila and Ateneo de Manila University in Quezon City.

- **Light It Up Blue Ceremony at the SM Mall of Asia**



Committee delivered the Welcome Remarks on behalf of Engr. Bien C. Mateo, SM Vice-President of Operations and Director of SM Disability Affairs Committee.

Officials from national government agencies and non-government organizations such as the National Council on Disability Affairs, Autism Partnership Philippines, SM Disability Affairs Committee, and SM Cares led the 11th World Autism Awareness Day celebration at the Music Hall, SM Mall of Asia in Pasay City.

Ms. Rodora Tolentino of SM Disability Affairs

Mr. TJ Manotoc, news/sports anchor of ABS-CBN acts as master of ceremony during the celebration.

Chief Information Officer Mr. Rizalio R. Sanchez of NCDA highlighted his message the overview and importance of why we celebrate the World Autism Awareness Day annually and that is to increase people’s knowledge about autism, and eventually enhance their understanding of people affected with it. He also thanked everybody for taking time to participate in the celebration and acknowledge how significant it is to join hands in the advocacy for persons with autism.



Mr. Sanchez expresses his appreciation to the members of the National Working Committee and sponsors for making the celebration a success.

The half-day activity at the Music Hall includes talk on autism by Mr. Raymond Fung, ribbon-cutting/opening of art exhibit, art workshop by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts and the oath-taking of officers of Autism Society of the Philippines-Pasay City Chapter.



Mr. Raymond Fung, Clinical Director of Autism Partnership Philippines gave a brief talk on autism.



Officers of ASP-Pasay City Chapters after the oath-taking ceremony led by Councilor Ioev Calixto.



The closing message was delivered by Ms. Rhoda Amurao-Abaluna, Managing Director of Autism Partnership Philippines, the co-organizer of this

Ms. Abaluna in her closing statement appeals for understanding, care and support for persons with autism, especially those children with autism.

event.



Members of Autism Partnership Philippines, representatives from DPWH, NEDA, City Governments of Pasay and Manila walk as they parade for Light It Up Blue ceremony in the Iconic Globe of SM Mall of Asia.



The Philippine Coast Guard marching band renders musical entertainment to the participants and lead the parade to the Iconic Globe of SM Mall of Asia.



The Iconic Globe of the SM Mall of Asia was lit colored blue along with the logos of major partners that include NEDA, Autism Partnership Philippines, Autism Speaks, SM Cares, and SM Mall of Asia.

- **Light It Up Blue Ceremony at the SMART-Araneta Coliseum**

For the second year in a row, the iconic SMART Araneta Coliseum green gate in Quezon City was illuminated with blue lights as it joined the international community in observing World Autism Awareness Day last April 2. Present during the lighting of the blue lights are the reigning Bb. Pilipinas 2018 Queens led by Catriona Gray Miss Universe Philippines, Atisha Manalo Bb. Pilipinas International, Jehza Mae Huelar Bb. Pilipinas Supranational, Eva Psychee Patalinjug Bb. Pilipinas Grand International, Karen Gallman Bb. Pilipinas Intercontinental, Michele Gumabao Bb. Pilipinas Globe and second runner-up Samantha Mae Bernardo.

Key government officials who were also present during the LIUB ceremony at the SMART Araneta include Undersecretary Ma. Lourdes Turalde-Jarabe of the Department of Social Welfare and Development, Assistant Secretary Tinggagun A. Umpa of the Department of Public Works and Highways, Director-General Harold A. Clavite of the Philippine Information Agency and Officer-In-Charge Carmen R. Zubiaga of NCDA. People living with autism, their families, local government units and non-government organizations witnessed the event.

Undersecretary Jarabe urged support groups of persons with autism and other disabilities to reach out to poor communities who have family members that are suffering from the same condition. "Together let us take it upon ourselves to advocate so that those who are disadvantaged brothers and sisters who have family members suffering from intellectual disabilities and other disabilities can also receive intervention expertise which will help empower them to improve their lives," she said.

Undersecretary Jarabe also cited how hard it is for parents to cope with and find solutions in handling their children with autism which could be doubly difficult to those who belong to underprivileged members of the community. "We ourselves should work together to remove the barriers that are disabling us. We ourselves must reach out to them," she added.



DPWH Assistant Secretary Umpa and DSWD Undersecretary Jarabe speak during the celebration of the 11th World Autism Awareness Day at the Araneta Center, Quezon City.



For her part, Director Carmen R. Zubiaga of NCDCA cited the importance of creating an enabling and protective environment and to promote the rights of persons with autism and other children suffering from different intellectual disabilities. She said that it is important that different sectors down to the barangay (village) levels of local government unit are active in making the rights of persons with disabilities real. "We really have to educate the community. Sometimes they mix autism to

those with psychiatric conditions, psychosis. But this is different. Persons with autism are high achievers and they are capable of taking a future at their hand if given the right rehabilitation and proper raising by the whole family," she said.

She added that the seminars are also a way for different sectors of society to understand on how they will handle or deal with persons with autism and other intellectual disabilities to better serve them in a society that promotes inclusiveness.



On the other hand, Director-General Harold Clavite of the Philippine Information Agency, who was present at the event, stressed the importance of early detection of autism so people living with this condition will be given the proper treatment. He also vowed to use the agency to empower women and girls with autism, the theme echoed in this year's celebration as well.



The closing remarks were delivered by Ms. Christine Diane C. Romero of Executive Director of J. Amado Araneta Foundation.



The 2018 Binibini queens were the special guests during the "Big Dome Light Blu" event for the World Autism Awareness Day on April 2. From left: Binibining Pilipinas 2018 second runner-up Samantha Bernardo, Bb. Pilipinas Globe Michele Gumabao, Bb. Pilipinas Grand International Eva Patalinjug, Miss Universe Philippines Catriona Gray, Bb. Pilipinas International Ahtisa Manalo, Bb. Pilipinas Supranational Jehza Huelar, and Bb. Pilipinas Intercontinental Karen Gallman.



The blue lights at the green gate of the SMART Araneta Coliseum in Cubao, Quezon City remained from 6 o'clock to 9 o'clock in the evening for the World Autism Awareness Day celebration.



The awarding of Certificates of Appreciation to Mr. Gari Apolonio, Gallery Curator of the Gateway Gallery, Ms. Christine Diane Romero, Executive Director of J. Amado Araneta Foundation and Ms. Annie Alejo, Head of Public Relations Department of Araneta Center given by Mrs. Gonzales of PACDLD (center) and Ms. Liezl Eslana of Autism Partnership Philippines.

- **Light It Up Blue Ceremony and Family Prayer Jamboree for Autism at the Quezon Memorial Circle**

The LIUB ceremony and Family Prayer Jamboree for Autism held at the Liwasang Aurora, Quezon Memorial Circle in Quezon City were organized by Autism Society Philippines and the Quezon City Persons with Disability Affairs Office.



The Light It Up Blue ceremony at the Quezon City Memorial Circle.



Ms. Mary Janette I. Peña, executive director of Autism Society Philippines delivers her closing message.



Puppeteers from the Quezon City Public Library entertains the crowd with the puppet show, especially children in attendance.

- **Seminar on Autism at The Gateway Gallery**



Ms. Angela Lagunzad, news anchor of UNTV acts as master of ceremony during the seminar and LIUB ceremony at the Araneta Center, Quezon City.

This seminar was organized by the National Council on Disability Affairs and Autism Partnership Philippines in cooperation with the Araneta Center, the J. Amado Araneta Foundation, and the Gateway Gallery wherein close to 300 participants from the different national government agencies, local government units, non-government organizations/disabled people’s organizations attended the day’s event that started at around 10:00 in the morning.

The event was held on the 5th Floor of the Gateway Gallery, Araneta Center, Quezon City.



Members of the PNP-National Capital Regional Police Office attending the seminar.

As part of the program, three (3) resource persons were invited to discuss relevant topics on autism and legal rights of persons with disabilities. These speakers include (Photos below from left to right) Ms. Marian Christine V. Patriaca, Ph.D. of the University of the Philippines who discussed the topic of “Education: Girls Can!”, Mr. Raymond Fung, MSc, BCBA of the St. Cloud University of Minnesota, USA who discussed the topic “Autism and ABA Treatment” and Mr. Eugene Q. Yusi of the Department of Justice who discussed the “Legal Rights of Persons with

Disabilities.”



Three (3) parents of the Association of Adults with Autism Philippines (Photos below from left to right) Mr. Benjo Bernabe, Mr. Evert L. Mapalad and Ms. Geeta Sakhрани Santiago shared their own experiences raising their children with autism, the challenges as a parent, and tips for parents/relatives living with autism, among others.



Parents Mr. Bernabe, Mr. Mapalad and Ms. Santiago of the Association for Adults with Autism of the Philippines share their family journey living with autism in the family.



Ms. Thara Santiago of ASP sings a heartfelt and soulful rendition of "Anak " popularized by Freddie Aguilar.



Arch. Catherine Cham (left photo) of AAAP present a simple token one of the resource speaker Mr. Benjo Bernabe. Also in photo is Ms. Delfina J. Baquir, Information Officer IV of NCDA.

• Awarding of Autism Advocates



The awardees together with the organizer of the event Mrs. Felicite Jean Gonzales of PACDLD (4th from right).

The Araneta Center, the J. Amado Araneta Foundation, and the Gateway Gallery teamed up with Philippine Association for Citizens with Developmental and Learning Disabilities in feting autism advocates. This year’s awardees include teachers Ms. Ma. Carmencita Guanzon-Borbon, Ms. Pilar Relovo Habito, Ms.

Josephine Villareal Nepomuceno and Ms. Fredeswina Tantengco-Javier; Special Olympics Philippines executive Ms. Ma. Cristina Zafra Canizares; developmental peditricians Dr. Joel Lazaro and Dr. Alexis Socorro de Leon Reyes; social workers Ms. Angela Marina Luna Pangan and Ms. Ederlinda Lumaad Salud; and Bacolod City Mayor Evelio Leonardia were recognized for their efforts to raise autism awareness and help people with autism.

A short talk was delivered by PACDLD founder Felicite Jean Gonzales about the award and importance of recognizing these individuals.

PACDLD founder Octavio “Ogie” S.A. Gonzales was also given a posthumous tribute by his daughter Ms. Mayumi F. Gonzales for his contributions to the cause.



• Art Exhibit and Art Workshop



The opening of the Art Exhibit featuring the works of children with autism with officials from NCCA, Autism Partnership Philippines, Philippine National Police and SM Disability Affairs Committee.

Another activity during the WAAD is the Art Exhibit featuring the works of children with autism and Art Workshop organized by NCCA, Autism Partnership Philippines and PACDLDD that was held at the Music Hall of SM Mall of Asia, Pasay City.



The art exhibit lasted from 1:00 PM to 9:00 PM, while the art workshop that started at 2:00 PM was facilitated/conducted by Ms. Khristina Manansala of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts to some 20 children with autism. The participants are children of ASP Manila and Pasay Chapters.





Presentation of the artworks made by children with autism with Ms. Khristina Manansala, (left photo) artist trainer from NCCA and Mr. Sanchez.

Major sponsors of the event include McDonalds, Bantay Bata 163, Mogu Mogu, BrainFit Studio, Exceptional Sports, Tempra, Philippine Academy of Occupational Therapists, Inc., Speech Therapist Society of the Philippines, Mind N' Hands, Party Boosters, iFlick, Tic Tac, Nature's Spring, Olay, Pantene and the media newlywedsatwork eGroup.



A child enjoys a face painting.



Ms. Charlene Danica Escasiñas renders a beautiful song.



Children enjoy developmental games/sports provided by the sponsors.





The other activities during the WAAD included the **hanging and website posting of the WAAD Event's tarpaulin** of different government and non-government organizations in the country and a number of Philippine embassies abroad, which included Philippine Embassies in (1) Tokyo, Japan; (2) Muscat, Oman; (3) Macau, China; (4) Singapore; (5) Warsaw, Poland; (6) Abu Dhabi,

United Arab Emirates; (7) New Delhi, India; (8) Bangkok, Thailand; (9) Athens, Greece; (10) Toronto, Canada; (11) Sydney, Australia; (12) Vienna, Austria; (13) Rome, Italy, (14) Beijing, China;

Officials of NCD and Autism Partnership Philippines poses with the representatives from SM Disability Affairs after the awarding of



NCD also came-up with Facebook banners for the Light It Up Blue ceremonies at the SM Mall of Asia, the Araneta Center, and the Quezon Memorial Circle for wider dissemination of these events.



The Department of the Interior and Local Government, the Civil Service Commission and the Department of Foreign Affairs issued a directive supporting the observance of the World Autism Awareness Day.





The Department of the Interior and Local Government, the Civil Service Commission and the Department of Foreign Affairs issued a directive to all National Government Agencies, Local Government Units, Government-Owned and Controlled Corporations with Original charters, State Universities and Colleges, Embassies and Consulates, among others, supporting the observance of the World Autism Awareness Day.

Publicity Support

The different events were covered by television stations and print media namely: ABS-CBN 2, PTV4, UNTV, GMA 7, Philippine News Agency, The Daily Tribune, Manila Times, Philippine STAR, among others.

Regional Report



Police Regional Office 13 of the Philippine National Police had a short program prior to their participation in the Light It Up Blue ceremony.