

PRESS RELEASE

DepEd Region 5's ALS Encampment stirs love of learning, community support for OSYs

PASIG CITY, July 14, 2017 – Setting up out-of-school youth (OSYs) and adults for lifelong learning and gainful opportunities is made more engaging and holistic by the Department of Education (DepEd) Region 5, through the conduct of its annual Alternative Learning System (ALS) Encampment from July 11-16, 2017 in Guinobatan, Albay.

Now on its 14th year, the ALS encampment is one of DepEd Region 5's best practices in the implementation of the parallel learning program aimed at encouraging potential learners to acquire education even outside the formal system.

"*Dapat pang-15 nataonnaito kaya langnoong 2006, dahilsa Typhoon 'Reming,' humintomuna kami kasihindi kaya ng Bicol Region. So pagtuloynamin, naikotnanaminlahatng13 Divisions, round two na kami ngayon, so second time nangayonngAlbayna mag-host,*" Region 5 ALS Focal Person Ricardo Tejeresan explained.

The six-day event centers on the enhancement of core life skills: Discovering the world through IT; Personality development; Developing resiliency skills; and Creating synergy. The 1,548 participants, comprised of OSYs and adults between 15 and 60 years old, applied everything they have learned to enhance their skills and win recognition.

Activities are divided into Individual Interests (urban gardening, candle making, organic fertilizer making, and *longganisa* making); Learn-a-Trade (table skirting, wellness, liquid dishwashing soap making, and *pinangat* making); and Academic Contests (slogan making, ALS quiz, spelling contest, anagram, essay writing, and poster making).

Tejeresas noted that this year they added informercial making, a new academic contest that aims to showcase the ALS learners' skills in shooting and editing videos. Informercial entries must concisely explain the concept of ALS within two minutes.

He further lauded the consistent and strong support of local government units (LGUs) in making the ALS Encampment possible and comfortable for participants, "*Ang consistent talaga[in performance] dito ay Naga City, and that is because of the support of the LGU. Academic and skills, lahat halos well-rounded napagkakataongibinigaydahilsabikongasuportang LGU. Kasitalaganglahat halos ibinibigaynila. Ditonisangkusing halos ang Regional Office hindibumibitawngpera.*"

Everything is being provided by the LGUs, NGOs, and the community *kaya nakakaratingangmgataong 'yandito. Katuladnito, LGU ngGuinobatan, Albay, nag-put up ngmgakuryentengyan* [in the camp site], water system, including *yang mgapaliguandiyansakanilalahatyan*."

The ALS advocate pointed out that he is proud of what the learners can do, and that their skills and knowledge are developing to become at par with the competencies learned in a formal school. The encampment is Region 5's way of inspiring and maintaining the interest of learners, the lack of which is one factor for dropping out.

In the 2016 Annual Poverty Indicator Survey (APIS) result, lack of personal interest was cited among the top three reasons for leaving school. The percentage of potential learners with this reason grew from 14.2% in 2014 to 19.7% in 2016.

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