

2013 Basic Activities Report

Peace Corps Alumni Foundation for Philippine Development (PCAFPD)

The primary purpose of PCAFPD is to continue to contribute to human resource development in the Philippines. The foundation also provides former Philippines Volunteers and staff a means to continue their commitment to the Philippines. Joined by family, friends, and Filipino-American organizations, the Peace Corps alumni contribute to a scholarship fund to support 40 to 50 college students a year. Thus, during the course of a given year, there is a routine and rhythm to PCAFPD activities, all designed to recruit, select and support the scholars. PCAFPD celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2013.

In mid-January of each year, the Board of Directors convenes for a full day to select new scholars. In 2013 the Foundation chose to support twelve new scholars from across the Philippines to pursue degrees in: Education; Political Science; Molecular Biology; Engineering; Biology; Social Work; Mechanical Engineering; Information Technology; Accountancy (2) and Veterinary Medicine. One of the scholars will be supported by BIMAK, a Filipino-American fraternal and service organization, whose members are from the Cordillera region of the Philippines.

In March PCAFPD and the Philippine Embassy co-hosted a reception to celebrate the foundation's 30th anniversary. Philippine RPCVs and PCAFPD supporters from all decades, representatives of Filipino-American organizations, and staff members from Peace Corps and NPCA enjoyed Filipino food and entertainment and took the opportunity to renew long time connections and make new ones.

March also marked the graduation of fourteen scholars who had earned degrees in: Agriculture; Management Accounting; Mechanical Engineering; Psychology (4); Information Technology; Social Work; Hotel & Restaurant Management; Journalism; Accountancy; Organizational Communications and Engineering – Materials.

Semi-annual newsletters, published in May/June and November, are the major means of communication between PCAFPD and its supporters. In addition to scholar essays, the newsletter, *Balitaan* (which means news in Tagalog), includes stories from or about the Philippines; about former Volunteers and staff; and about NPCA activities. It also serves as a major fundraising tool. The 2013 newsletters included material reporting the thoughts of current students; news about recently graduated students; information concerning the 30-year history of PCAFPD and reports of group reunions. PCAFPD also has an online Bulletin (on the Constant Contact platform), which is sent out periodically to announce events, to recruit additional supporters and to supplement its fund-raising efforts. In September, the foundation raised additional funds by mailing a special appeal to its current supporters. The massive typhoon Haiyan/Yolanda struck the Central Philippines just as the November newsletter was going to press. The foundation ascertained that all of its current scholars were safe and used its Bulletin to raise relief funds to provide direct aid to several of its alumni scholars whose homes were destroyed or damaged by the typhoon or by an earthquake that hit the same area in October.

Philippines-based Board members, and those who visit the country, continue to nurture the PCAFPD Scholars and Alumni Association (PSAA), a network of graduates and current scholars committed to mutual support and leadership in development activities. PSAA has continued to develop and thrive with the help of social media and its dedicated leaders, whose education was supported by the foundation. PSAA members have been active in some of the initiatives of the recently-elected Philippine government to improve the schools throughout the country and were actively involved in direct relief activities for the victims of the massive and destructive typhoon.