Engaging a New Generation in the Southern Philippines in Inter-Ethnic Dialogue and Conflict Resolution
Philippine Youth Leadership Program:
Engaging a New Generation in the Southern Philippines
in Inter-Ethnic Dialogue and Conflict Resolution

Edited by
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Northern Illinois University
International Training Office
& Center for Southeast Asian Studies
DeKalb, IL, U.S.A.

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INTRODUCTION

FOREWORD

This book is a product of the Access to Community and Civic Enrichment for Students (ACCESS) Philippine Youth Leadership Program (PYLP) conducted in the U.S.A. for Muslim, Christian, and indigenous youth from the southern Philippines. The ACCESS PYLP Program is an exchange program model that enables young people (ages 15 to 17) and adult educators to participate in intensive, thematic, month-long projects in the United States on civil society, inter-ethnic dialogue and conflict resolution. Our participants and resource persons provided these materials for the ACCESS PYLP Program, conducted from April 7 to May 10, 2007 at Northern Illinois University (NIU). The program was implemented by the International Training Office and the Center for Southeast Asian Studies of Northern Illinois University (NIU). It is funded by a grant from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State.

The thematic focus of the project at NIU is conflict resolution (management and transformation) and inter-ethnic cooperation. It will introduce Muslim and non-Muslim youth to more specific aspects of the experience of ethnic and religious diversity as well as to the way democratic principles infuse American life. The intensive and substantive month-long institute focuses on four key teaching emphases: 1) the underlying premises and practices of conflict resolution and inter-ethnic understanding; 2) community activism and volunteerism; 3) contemporary American institutions in state and civil society that support ethnic diversity and religious pluralism; and 4) leadership development. The major goals of this program in the U.S. are to (1) advance a dialogue and promote greater mutual understanding between Muslim and non-Muslim youth from the ARMM and surrounding provinces; (2) create a cadre of leaders that will work toward an enduring peaceful coexistence among all groups within the ARMM when they return home; (3) promote a better understanding of the United States - its people, culture, values, and civic institutions. The specific objectives of the program are to (1) sharpen the participants’ skills in conflict resolution and management, inter-ethnic cooperation and tolerance, leadership, coalition-building, and community activism; (2) enhance the participants’ appreciation of their similarities and differences through various interactive activities that will serve as avenues for open dialogues; (3) provide participants with tools for working collaboratively across ethnic and religious lines; (4) develop in the participants an appreciation of the cultural, religious, and ethnic diversity of Midwest America by making use of NIU’s proximity to Chicago and Indianapolis; (5) give participants access to community projects in DeKalb and in the Chicago area so they can gain first-hand experience in civic participation and community leadership.

The following outcomes are envisioned: (1) the foundation will be laid for an expanded and committed generation of youth leaders and activists who will contribute toward grassroots peace initiatives in the ARMM and surrounding provinces; (2) increased understanding of the nature and causes of inter-religious and inter-ethnic conflicts; (3) enhanced strategies and tools for conflict resolution, tolerance, respect for diversity, and inter-ethnic understanding; (4) a better understanding of the cultural similarities and differences between U.S. and Philippine cultures; (5) new knowledge and skills in strategic planning/action plan development and coalition-building; (6) an appreciation of the value of community service as evidenced by increased participation in volunteer work in their home communities; (7) established networking and collaboration among alumni in developing and implementing community development/peace projects; and (8) continued contacts between alumni and their American host families and friends.

The first chapter provides the context of the program. It starts with an overview of the causes of the conflict in Mindanao in the southern Philippines. It ends with a critical review of the critical-reflection essays, poems, slogans, and photo essays of the projects that the participants have implemented in the different communities in the southern Philippines. Graduates submitted critical writing and creative works that reflect on their personal transformation as a result of attending the NIU program. The second chapter is a compendium of critical-reflection essays the participants wrote while they were at Northern Illinois University. These essays sum up their prior learning, experiences at NIU, and plans to engage in peace efforts upon their return to their respective communities. The third chapter is the concept paper for the theater production about Philippine history. The fourth chapter is a collection of poems and slogans about peace that the Filipino participants co-wrote with students from Kishwaukee College in Malta, Illinois. The fifth chapter presents some sample project proposals and action plans. The sixth chapter contains participants’ reflections about the impact of their projects they implemented upon their return to their communities. This chapter is followed by a glossary of terms. The last chapter is a photo gallery of some of the activities in which the participants were engaged. Fully respecting the essence and sense in the works of the contributors, we kept the integrity of the original essays, poems and slogans of the
participants. All errors and omissions are those of the contributors. Only photos in the Photo Essay Chapter which convert well into publication format are retained.
Program Planning and Administration

Division of International Programs  
Associate Provost  
PYLP Project Director  
Director of International Training Office and PYLP Administrative Director  
Consultant  
Business Manager  
Financial Coordinator  
Training Coordinator  
Contact Persons and Resource Persons

Dr. Deborah Pierce  
Dr. Susan Russell  
Dr. Lina Davide Ong  
Dr. Nagasura Madale  
Pam Rosenberg & Nancy Schuneman  
Rey Ty  
Jerry Amoloza, Teddy Amoloza, Avi Bass, Michelle Bringas, Evelina Cichy, Steve Cichy, Jamie Craven, Kay Forest, LaVerne Gyant, Lindsey Hall, Kareem Kandil, Garth Katner, Kathy Kelly, Lina Davide-Ong, Sue Orem, Laurel Jeris, Maimouna Konaté, Nagasura Madale, Phinette Norton, Peace Learning Center, Rita Reynolds, Susan Russell, Padma, Shana & Lakhi Siap, Rey Ty, Todd Yeary, Ellen White, Talia Yousuf, Wei Zheng and too many other people to list. Thanks!

Training Coordinator  
Training Assistants  
Qualitative and Quantitative Online Mixed-Method Evaluation Design, Data Analysis and Data Interpretation

Rey Ty  
Nalika Diyadawa, Lily Ann Villaraza, Lisa Leonard, & Maimouna Konaté  
Rey Ty

Events Planners and Coordinators

Training Manual Editor  
Audio-Visual Instructional Technology  
Chicago Field Trips  
Computer Orientation  
Evaluation & Critical Reflection Essays  
Host Families  
Indianapolis Field Trip  
NIU’s PYLP Website  
Online Group Webmaster  
Photo Documentation  
Indiana Field Trips  
Transportation  
Video Documentation  
Volunteer Community Service Orientation  
Volunteer Community Service  
Volunteers  
Others…

Rey Ty  
Rey Ty  
Nalika Diyadawa, Lily Ann Villaraza, Rey Ty  
Nalika Diyadawa  
Rey Ty  
Leslie Shives, July Lamb  
Rey Ty  
Robert Zerwekh, Julie Lamb  
Rey Ty  
Nalika Diyadawa, Don Butler & Participants  
Rey Ty  
Nalika Diyadawa  
Lily Ann Villaraza  
Rey Ty  
Lily Ann Villaraza  
Lily Ann Villaraza  
Maimouna Konaté, Amando Boncales, Michael Hawkins & many others  
Thanks to all the Leaders of the Day, interns and volunteers too many to mention!
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Resource Persons

Michelle Bringas

Michelle Bringas has served on NIU’s campus for 15 years and has served for the past three years as the director of the Asian American Center at Northern Illinois University where she works with several student organizations and peer mentors to help develop their leadership skills and career preparation. At Michelle is pursuing her doctorate degree in Counseling Adult and Higher Education.

Lina Davide-Ong

From July 1, 1999 to the present, Dr. Lina Davide-Ong is the Director of International Training Office, Northern Illinois University. Her responsibilities include the following: provide leadership to and administer all training programs sponsored and organized by the International Training Office; develop and maintain collaborative linkages with academic colleges, departments, and faculty; assist faculty in the design of short-term training courses for international clients; oversee the conceptualization, design, monitoring, and evaluation of training programs; select faculty with appropriate expertise for implementation of training programs; oversee the conceptualization and coordination of marketing efforts to reach diverse client groups; interface with international development organizations for recruiting training program participants; oversee office budget and expenditures; develop training budgets and interface with program sponsors overseas over training budgets.

The following are some of her accomplishments: Administrative Director, ACCESS-Philippines Project, 2003-2004; 2004-2005, 2005-2006, funded by the U.S. State Department Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Youth Programs Division; Administrative Director of the Capacity Building and Advocacy for Women’s Participation in Grassroots Democracy in Sri Lanka project, funded by the U.S. State Department Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Office of Citizen Exchanges (July – August 2004); Administrative Director of the Fulbright American Studies Summer Institute on Contemporary Literature, funded by a grant from the U.S. State Department Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Study of the U.S. Branch (2002, 2003, 2004); Administered the Certificate Course in Adult Education for Educators from Chile (October –November 1999 & 2000); Developed and administered the HRD and Strategic Management Training Program for the Deputy Director of Yayasan-LIA (Indonesia). October – December 2000; Developed and produced the first official OITD Capability Statement; Instrumental in the production of the first OITD brochure; Researched, compiled, and developed a Cross-cultural Orientation Handbook for international training participants; Designed and developed the Predeparture Handbook for participants in the International Career Development Program in Costa Rica; Developed the brochure, application form, and all legal documents for the Certificate Program in English Language and American Culture; Developed, edited, and produced the HRD and the Effective Management program brochures.

Dr. Ong obtained her Doctor of Education degree (Instructional Technology) in 1995 from Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Illinois. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree (Speech and Drama, English) in 1965 from the University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines.

Kay Forest

Dr. Kay Forest is Associate Professor and Department Chair of the Department of Sociology. She obtained her Ph.D. from Cornell University. Her scholarly interests include studying experiential and attitudinal predictors of cross-racial sympathetic concern. She is also interested in dynamic variations in family and gender relations within both developed and developing countries. Recent courses taught include Families and Social Change, Racial and Ethnic Minority Families, Families in Global Perspective.

Laurel Jeris

Dr. Laurel Jeris is an Associate Professor at Northern Illinois University in the department of Counseling, Adult and Higher Education. Her teaching and research areas focus on leadership, workforce development, and community development. For the last five years she has been the project advisor for successive grants funded by the US Department of State under the Citizen Exchange programs, working primarily with rural women in Sri Lanka on capacity building, good governance, and grassroots empowerment. These diverse interests both require and support the use of various research methodologies as well as teaching and facilitation.
strategies. Dr. Jeris has experience in quantitative, qualitative, and participatory research methodologies and chairs a broad range of dissertations for doctoral candidates in Adult and Higher Education.

Currently on sabbatical leave from NIU, she has completed data collection for a research project that explores women’s leadership experiences at the national, regional, and local levels in Sri Lanka. Twenty-three women shared their personal and public journeys of growth as community activists in videotaped interviews. The task before Dr Jeris now is to compile their stories as accurately and authentically as possible and share them with women in community leadership roles in many different countries – an awesome task but one that she eagerly anticipates.

Garth Katner

Dr. Garth Katner’s career path reflects a deep commitment to promoting global understanding through international education. He has four years of combined senior management experience in U.S. higher education and the international non-profit sector. He has eight years of academic experience teaching in a variety of higher-education environments in the U.S., Europe, and the Middle East. This has included supervising student, faculty, and professional exchanges with U.S. educational institutions and non-profit organizations. Overall, he has more than ten years of international experience designing and implementing successful education reform projects in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Albania, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, Tajikistan, India, and Australia. Kuya Garth has been to the Philippines, including Mindanao. Currently, he is the Great Lakes Regional Director of Roots & Shoots, which is a program of the Jane Goodall Institute.

Kathy Kelly

Kathy Kelly, of Chicago, Illinois, helped initiate Voices in the Wilderness, a campaign to end the UN/US sanctions against Iraq. For bringing “medicine and toys” to Iraq in open violation of the UN/US sanctions, she and other campaign members were notified of a proposed $163,000 penalty for the organization, threatened with 12 years in prison, and eventually fined $20,000, a sum which they’ve refused to pay. Voices in the Wilderness organized 70 delegations to visit Iraq in the period between 1996 and the beginning of the “Operation Shock and Awe” warfare (March 2003). Kelly has been to Iraq twenty two times since January 1996, when the campaign began. In October 2002, she joined Iraq Peace Team members in Baghdad where she and the team maintained a presence throughout the bombardment and invasion. Kelly left Iraq on April 19, 2003 and has returned there twice, for 17 day visits with team members who’ve remained in Baghdad. She most recently traveled to Iraq from December 21-2003 — January 8, 2004.

During the first two weeks of the Gulf War, she was part of a peace encampment on the Iraq-Saudi border called the Gulf Peace Team. Following evacuation to Amman, Jordan, (February 4, 1991), team members stayed in the region for the next six months to help coordinate medical relief convoys and study teams. In 1988 she was sentenced to one year in prison for planting corn on nuclear missile silo sites. Kelly served nine months of the sentence in Lexington KY maximum security prison. Kathy helped organize and participated in nonviolent direct action teams in Haiti (summer of 1994), Bosnia (August, 1993, December, 1992) and Iraq (Gulf Peace Team, 1991). In April of 2002, she was among the first internationals to visit the Jenin camp in the Occupied West Bank. In the spring of 2004, she served three months at Pekin federal prison for crossing the line as part of an ongoing effort to close an army military combat training school at Fort Benning, GA. She currently helps coordinate the Voices in the Wilderness campaign. Other Lands Have Dreams: from Baghdad to Pekin Prison (2005) by Kathy Kelly is available through Counterpunch or Voices in the Wilderness. Kathy has won several peace awards. She has a Doctorate of Theology, honoris causa, from Chicago Theological Seminary, awarded May 14, 2005 and a Doctorate of Humanities, honoris causa, from Lewis University, awarded May 15, 2005. She has a Masters in Religious Education, Chicago Theological Seminary, part of a consortium of schools which included the Jesuit School of Theology at Chicago. Kathy received her B.A. Loyola University at Chicago in 1974.

Nagasura Madale

Dr. Nagasura T. Madale got his Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education at Mindanao State University, Marawi City, 1968; M.A. in Philippine Studies, 1973 and Ph.D. Philippine Studies (1983) both at the Asian Center, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City. He was a Fulbright Exchange Scholar, Northern Illinois University, USA, 1978 for eight (8) months. He is a Folklore Fellow, Finnish Academy of Sci-
ence and Letters, 1991; Postdoctoral Nonviolence Fellow, Inter-university Center for Postdoctoral Studies, Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia, 1983. He was Chairman, Department of History, College of Social Sciences and Humanities, Mindanao State University, Marawi City, 1975-1976; Director, Southern Philippines Center for Peace Studies, Mindanao State University, Marawi City, 1981-1984. He was a Commissioner, Regional Consultative Commission on Muslim Mindanao that Drafted the Autonomy Law, 1988. He served as Head of the National Commission on Muslim Cultural Communities under the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, 1993, for six years. Member, Philippine Anthropological Society, International Peace Research Association (IPRA), Board Member, IPRA, September 2000 to date, member, Sikolohiyang Pilipino, and a Lifetime member, Philippine Fulbright Association; and served as a member of the Board of Directors, 1995-97, Fulbright Senior Fellow, USA, May 16, 2000 – November 7, 2000. A recipient of the Governor’s Award, Rotary International, District 387, Meritorious Award, 1990. Member, PEN; Regular member, National Research Council of the Philippines to the present; Founding member, ASEAN Muslim Social Scientists, 1983. He was Vice Chancellor for Research and Extension, Mindanao State University, Marawi Campus, (1993-1999). Professor in Anthropology/History with a permanent tenure. He was Visiting Research Fellow, Akademi Pengajian Brunei, Universiti Brunei Darussalam, August 5, 1997 – September 30, 1998; Visiting Lecturer, Universiti Malaya (1988) and in Kebangsaan, Malaysia (1985), In-Country Project Coordinator, ACCESS Philippines Program (2003-present).

**Phinette Norton**

Phinette Norton is the Assistant Director of Mediation and Diversity programming in the Affirmative Action and Diversity Resource (AADR) office at Northern Illinois University (NIU). She served as a certified mediator (volunteer) with the center for Conflict Resolution (CCR) in Chicago. She has served as a community mediator (volunteer) for the DeKalb County/NIU College of Law juvenile mediation project in collaboration with the Assistant State Attorney Office. She has experience in working with faculty, staff and students on the issues of diversity, cultural awareness, discrimination, sexual harassment, disabilities and a variety of other climate and social concerns. She has developed training programs and workshops which address and promote diversity programming to enhance workplace climate issues to both campus and the external community. She is committed to the blending of social and workplace topics in addressing conflicts of cultural competency, communication, and raising awareness of other civility treatment concerns within the higher educational setting.

**Peace Learning Center**

Located in Indianapolis, Indiana, Peace Learning Center is Indianapolis’ only non-profit exclusively dedicated to peace and diversity education, Peace Learning Center works to create a culture of peace in our community. Since 1997, Peace Learning Center has made great strides establishing itself as a community resource for peace and diversity education in Indianapolis. Through partnerships and collaboration, Peace Learning Center has accomplished many activities:

- Provided intensive peace education to over 35,000 4th and 5th graders in the Indianapolis Public Schools and other students at Eagle Creek Park through Peace Education.
- Instituted Peace Camp for 6,400 6th grade participants – a three-day, two-night experience to learn how to peacefully deal with conflict and explore the natural environment.
- Taught conflict resolution skills to over 4,000 young people from domestic violence shelters, summer camps, community centers, and after-school programs.
- Established 35 school-based mediation programs, forming mentoring programs, Peace Clubs, and building strong community school partnerships impacting over 12,000 students, parents and school staffs.
- Recruited, trained and employed over 2,500 community volunteers including church groups, first-time juvenile offenders, parents, K-12 and college students. Volunteers mentor, serve as peer mediators, teach peace, and help with renovations.
- Receiving recognition and support from the Indianapolis community, Peace Learning Center demonstrates a common ground where people from all backgrounds can build peace. PLC has been honored with: the World Council of Churches – *Blessed are the Peacemakers Award* – 2004, the Mayor’s Celebration of Diversity – *Best of the Best – Sam H. Jones Award* -2003, Indianapolis Education Association’s *Spirit of Martin Luther King Award* – 2003, NUVO Cultural Vision Award - 2002, Indiana Achievement Award for *Innovation* - 2001, Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson's *Character Counts Award* - 2000, and Indiana Civil Rights Commission's *Spirit of Justice Award* - 1999.
• Garnered over $5,500,000 to fund operations from a wide variety of community resources including the Indianapolis Foundation, Indianapolis Public Schools, City of Indianapolis, Indiana Children’s Trust Fund, Lilly Endowment, Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust, Christel DeHaan Family Foundation, Hoover Foundation, Indianapolis Colts, Indiana Pacers, Health Foundation of Greater Indianapolis, and Gemmer Family Foundation.

• Completed evaluations of Peace Education and Peace Camp that showed over 88% of participants learned at least three new ways to manage conflicts.

• Decreased school suspensions by 68% in 12 schools with specialized peace services.

**Dina Rehab**

Dina Rehab is CAIR-Chicago's outreach coordinator. Her duties include outreach to both the Muslim and non-Muslim community, as well as recruiting and coordinating volunteers. She is a University of Illinois at Chicago graduate with a double major in Political Science and Italian. She has served as an Americorps Intern via the Arab Resource Corps at the Arab American Action Network (AAAN) in Chicago. Dina also served as the Educational/Cultural Outreach Coordinator of AAAN. She has extensive experience in reaching out to diverse communities. Dina can be reached at outreach@cairchicago.org.

**Susan Russell**

Dr. Susan Russell is a Professor of Anthropology and the former Director of the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at Northern Illinois University. She has over eight years of experience doing research and teaching in the Philippines, focusing on the ritual and economic anthropology in the Luzon highlands; the maritime labor organization of small purse seine fishers in Batangas; and the problems facing slum dwellers in Manila. Her publications include *Changing Lives, Changing Rites: Ritual and Social Dynamics in Philippine and Indonesian Uplands* (with Clark Cunningham), 1989; *Ritual, Power and Economy: Upland-Lowland Contrasts in Mainland Southeast Asia*, 1989; and *Structuralism’s Transformations: Order and Revision in Indonesian and Malaysian Societies* (with Clark Cunningham), 1999, along with over 25 articles. She has been project director of the ACCESS Philippines project since 2003, and was project director of the recent grant, The Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao: Majority-Minority Relations in the Philippines: Religion, Education, Community and Political Process.

**Padma Mangharam Siap**

Padma Siap is an artist-educator, who graduated Mass Communication, Magna Cum Laude, in St. Theresa's College in Cebu. She was fortunate to have been the student of one of the best speech teachers Cebu ever had...Lina Davide Ong. After college, she taught high school English and Literature in the same school she graduated in. While teaching, she also got involved in radio, television and stage. She then pursued a Master of Fine Arts Degree in Drama in Texas, taught there for 5 years and then went back to Cebu to raise a family. Padma taught at UP, the University of San Carlos and Cebu Institute of Technology, and then she opened up her own school, the Arts Magnate where her children were educated. Padma first got involved in training when she was chosen to handle the Dale Carnegie Human Relations and Public Speaking classes in Cebu. After that she got certified as a Steven Covey "7 Habits" trainer and then started designing her own training programs for Corporations, Schools, Government and non government agencies. The common thread was employing the arts in advocacy, values, human relations, and education. She has done programs like HIV-AIDS, Environmental Protection and Values Dissemination through the Arts.

**Lakhi Luke Siap**

Lakhi Siap has always been funny and charming, even as a toddler. First he was dubbed the family clown then the school comedian. He too grew up in a school for the arts, and he started on stage at the age of 2. Since then, there was no stopping. He not only engaged himself in acting, singing and dancing, he won drawing competitions as well. Lakhi earned a scholarship at the Philippine High School for the Arts in Makiling and stood out in the field of theater. He acted and even directed in the Cultural Center of the Philippines, and won in the Shakespeare competition by the British Council. The move to Chicago didn't stop Lakhi from pursuing his talents. Within a few months after he arrived from the Philippines, Lakhi was cast in a play by the Chicago based Filipino-American theater group "Pintig". He is now part of the teaching staff, handling theater classes for
children and teens. He prepares for his future by studying nursing in College, but will never give up self expression through the arts.

**Shana Siap**

Shana Siap was born in Cebu City. She studied in a school where the arts were employed in learning the academics. At the early age of 7, Shana was crowned the national winner for the title of GMA Rainbow Princess. Two years later, she became the Visayas's region's Little Miss Shakeys. Her passion for achievement won her many accolades along the way; in writing contests, oratoricals and declamations, and even swimming competitions. After she graduated elementary with honors, Cebu City awarded her the Don Sergio Osmena Award for Academic Excellence. In High School, she acted in several plays and performed in Dance Ensembles and concerts under the tutelage of the best directors, choreographers and voice teachers in the Visayas. At age 16, she directed "Helen of Troy", a play with a cast of over 300 children and teenagers....the youngest director in the country for a play of such magnitude. And mind you, no one even knew she was only 16! During Cebu City's Charter Day, she was commissioned by the government to sing the song especially written for Cebu's 68th birthday. Now, Shana is a nursing student at Harper College, spending most of her time over anatomy, pharmacology and other medical books. Yet she continues to find time to sing at special events as performing is her first love.

**Reynaldo R. Ty**

Currently, Rey serves as the Training Coordinator of the International Training Office of NIU, where he is an editor and co-editor of many of its publications. He is a Doctoral Candidate in the Department of Counseling, Adult and Higher Education at NIU. To date, he has presented about fifteen academic and conference papers on several topics, including transformative pedagogy, peace education, gender, critical theory, postmodernism, post-colonialism and human resource development. Multimedia resources for these papers are available in the public domain at http://reyty1.googlepages.com/onlinemultimediateachingvideoclips. He is the student representative to the CAHA Chair Search and was the student representative to NIU's International Programs Advisory Committee and to NIU’s Search Committee for the Annual Best Department in International Education Award. He wrote a proposal that successfully obtained funding from the Department of State through AMIDEAST for a peace-education program conducted in the summer of 2006 for 44 Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots. In Spring 2006, at the behest of NIU administrators, he assisted in a closed-door crisis management, serving as a mediator in a dialogue between university journalists and the DeKalb-based Muslim community. The contents and context of the meeting are confidential. At NIU, he was actively working in coalition with students of all colors to organize the Asian and Asian American student community for the recognition of its voice and for political empowerment. His education includes B.S. in Foreign Service from the University of the Philippines, M.A. in Asian Studies from the University of California-Berkeley, M.A. in Political Science from NIU, and certificate courses at the University of Paris, Sorbonne and International Institute of Human Rights, Strasbourg, France.

Due to the grassroots people’s confidence in him, Rey has served as Chair and Vice-Chair of several national human rights non-governmental organizations in the Philippines, has actively lobbied for human rights in different international and regional organizations, and is engaged in human rights and peace education for various beneficiaries in the different parts of the world. National human rights NGOs in the Philippines requested him to write the Draft Philippine Declaration of Human and People’s Rights (1990). Furthermore, over 240 Asian NGO representatives in the regional meeting in preparation for the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, Austria requested him to prepare the Joint Summary Asian NGO Statement read before the United Nations Regional Meeting at ESCAP in Bangkok, Thailand (1993). These over 240 NGO representatives asked him to be one of the four spokespersons to speak to government representatives on behalf of Asian NGOs. Rey was one of the four co-editors of the NGO recommendations in the United Nations’ Asia Regional Meeting at UN-ESCAP, Bangkok, Thailand. The United Nations invited him as a “non-governmental individual” (NGI) to attend the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, Austria. The Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland trained Rey who is a Certified Human Rights Field Officer. In the mid-1980s, along with the other members of a core group, Rey helped set up Amnesty International Philippine Section. For over 5 years, he had been part of an international team of facilitators in Geneva, Switzerland, using English, French, and Spanish as the medium of instruction, teaching international human rights, international humanitarian law, and peace to teachers from all over the world. Funded by the United Nations, Rey has taught international human rights law to over 80 law-enforcement officials (i.e., police, judges, prosecutors, as well as prison and ad-
ministrative officials), lawyers, and NGO representatives in Kathmandu, Nepal in June 1993. He was also one of the two co-editors of the publication *Recommendations* which is a document produced by an international delegation that provided recommendations to the new Nepali Parliament when Nepal became a democracy. Furthermore, he was also the chief resource person in the international human rights training course in Bangalore, India for several years. In addition, Rey has held such professional positions as Director and Technical Consultant of Education and Public Information (Philippine Presidential Committee on Human Rights under Corazon C. Aquino), Assistant Professor (University of the Philippines), and Teaching and Training Assistant at NIU.

**Wei Zheng**

Dr. Wei Zheng is Assistant Professor of Human Resource Development with the Department of Counseling, Adult and Higher Education at Northern Illinois University. Dr. Wei Zheng is originally from China. She received her Ph.D degree in human resource development (HRD) from the University of Minnesota. She worked in a variety of HRD settings. She served as strategic HRD consultant, working with Fortune 500 companies such as Thomson and Medtronic. Her experiences also include serving as instructional designer for Inscape Publishing, intercultural training consultant for Window on the World, director of US-China training collaboration at International Academy of Minnesota, curriculum developer for the Institute on Community Integration at the University of Minnesota, member of the instructional team at Dale Carnegie Training, and management consultant for several Chinese companies. Dr. Zheng's research interest lies in innovation, strategic HRD, and international HRD.

The session on strategic planning will familiarize participants with the concepts and processes of conducting strategic planning for their communities or organizations. By the end of the workshop, they will have created visions, missions, and short-term objectives for their communities or organizations. The session on action planning will help participants summarize new learning that occurred during the ACCESS program, and guide them through the process of action planning both as a group and as individuals. The focus will be on transferring their learning in the US to their home settings.
# Youth Participants

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<td>M</td>
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## Adult Participants

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<td>Institute of Peace &amp; Devlpt. Studies, Southern Christian College</td>
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CHAPTER 1: CONTEXT OF THE PHILIPPINE YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Armed Resistance, Peace Negotiations, Peacebuilding Activities, and Conflict Transformation Efforts in the Southern Philippines

by

Susan D. Russell, Anthropology Professor, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Northern Illinois University and
Rey Ty, Department of Counseling, Adult and Higher Education and International Training Office, NIU


Abstract: This paper reviews the causes of rebellion in Mindanao, various views of peace building challenges, grassroots peace building initiatives, and collaborative efforts that Northern Illinois University has undertaken in two capacity-building projects within civil society. The first project is focused on training Muslim, Christian and other indigenous Filipino youth in this region since 2003 in inter-ethnic dialogue and conflict resolution, and the second project is focused on assisting Muslim and Christian leaders of Mindanao in coming together to expand and consolidate multi-sectoral networks and efforts to improve majority-minority relations.

Introduction:

The Asia Pacific region is home to 3.3 billion people and is an area of vast ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious diversity. It is also home to the greatest number of intra-state armed conflicts and ‘intractable’ ethno-political conflicts in the world. One of these ‘intractable’ conflicts is in the southern Philippines, where indigenous Moro peoples have fought for centuries either to defend their sovereignty and territory in the Spanish colonial period, for their independence in the early American period, and again since 1970 with the Philippine government. Although periods of relative peace have co-existed throughout this 400-year period, the Mindanao conflict is considered “the second oldest internal conflict in the world”, with Sudan being the oldest.

The purpose of this paper was to examine the hands-on efforts in conflict transformation in the southern Philippines of an academic institution, namely, Northern Illinois University. This paper answered the following three questions:

1. What are the fundamental causes of the “Mindanao problem” and the resultant armed conflict in Mindanao, the southern Philippines?
2. What is the nature of the Moro armed resistance?

1 Acknowledgment: The projects discussed here are part of an international collaborative effort involving many American and Philippine professionals that are too numerous to name but who contribute a great deal to the success of our mutual projects. I would like to acknowledge specifically a few: my co-project investigator, Dr. Lina Davide-Ong, Director of International Training at Northern Illinois University and the Administrative Director of all of these projects; Dr. Nagasura Madale, Capitol University in the Philippines; Attorney Marilen Ramiro, Executive Director of the International Visitors Program-Philippines Alumni Foundation in Manila; Attorney and Professor Suharto Ambolodo, Notre Dame University of Cotabato; Dr. Susana Anayatin, ARMM Department of Trade and Industry and Notre Dame University of Cotabato; Dr. Domingo Aranal of the Silsilah Dialogue Institute in Zamboanga City; Dr. Nita Bala of Philippine Normal University in Manila; Dr. Tom Kral and Dr. Bruce Armstrong, former Cultural Affairs Officers of the U.S. Embassy in Manila; Carolyn Lantz at the Youth Exchange Division of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State, and April Rica Gonzalez, one of our many talented and committed graduate students on these projects.


3. What are the different efforts from the top, middle, and grassroots level waged to promote just peace?

This qualitative research paper used multiple research methods. Field research, ethnography, and grounded theory were tools employed to discuss the two case studies involving conflict transformation projects in which Northern Illinois University was involved. Data were collected by means of document analysis and participant observation. Interviews of key informants and document analysis were used to analyze the root causes of the “Mindanao problem” and armed conflict in Mindanao. As this is an inductive study, the authors are not using a theory, but rather are engaged in theory-building that is grounded on the empirical evidence observed, collected and used. Based on the findings of this research, this paper specifically develops a grounded theory of conflict transformation for promoting just and durable peace.

The Multiple Causes of Conflict in Mindanao:

The roots of the most recent conflict in Mindanao, now entering its fourth decade, are manifold: historical, social, economic, political, territorial and cultural. Historically, the period from the 1500s to the end of the 19th century witnessed the development of powerful pre-colonial trading states centered around two Muslim sultanates in the southern Philippines located in Sulu and Cotabato respectively, and a third multi-centric ‘federated estate’ in Lanao. Coastal sultanates were engaged in international trade and maintained strong linkages and alliances with interior groups of agricultural peoples and other sea-faring peoples. A classic Malay trading-raiding-slaving complex fueled the growth of these political forms into powerful multi-ethnic states that alternately entered into international trading alliances with other Malay peoples and early European and Chinese trading ventures, or fought them fiercely in battles to control their sea lanes and commerce.

In 1898, at the end of the Spanish-American war, Spain ceded the Philippines to the U.S. under the Treaty of Paris. Although they were never effectively part of Spain’s colony in the Philippines, Mindanao and Sulu were included in this treaty. Muslim Filipinos (or Moros as they often prefer to be called today) in the south objected to this act on the grounds that they were independent states, and U.S. military forces then became heavily engaged in battles to defeat armed resistance up until 1913. During American colonial rule, the U.S. military categorized and administered the Moro and other indigenous peoples of Mindanao separately from the mainstream Philippines. American efforts to integrate these peoples into the larger Philippine Hispanized and Roman Catholic society focused on education, but various Moro groups continued to periodically engage in armed resistance throughout American colonial period.

Armed Resistance: In the late 1960s, Nur Misuari formed the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and full-scale armed rebellion against the independent Philippine state broke out in Mindanao. The causes of this rebellion are many, but have much to do with desires to re-acquire the status of a separate, independent state, or Bangsa Moro, wherein Muslim Filipinos would have greater access to and control over social services so that they could actually benefit from economic development in Mindanao. They also wanted to be able to protect and regain their ancestral lands that were being taken over by in-migrating Christian Filipinos and multi-national corporations and establish an Islamic way of life. By the time the rebellion broke out, the immigration of Christian Filipinos to Mindanao that started in the American era had created a lopsided social landscape wherein

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Moro Filipinos and other indigenous tribal Filipinos (collectively referred to as Lumad) had become minorities in their own homeland.

In 1976, after years of fierce fighting, thousands of deaths and internally displaced people, huge casualties and atrocities, Kuwait and Libya accused the Philippine government of a campaign of genocide against its minority Muslim population. International pressure and fear of widening international support for the Moro National Liberation Force helped compel President Marcos to the peace negotiating table. In 1976, the Tripoli Agreement was signed in Libya between the Philippine government and the MNLF. It provided for political autonomy for the 13 provinces of Mindanao, Sulu and southern Palawan, which Moro Filipinos saw as their traditional homeland or sphere of influence. However, these efforts to actually implement a plebiscite vote among residents did not align well with the other measures contained in the Tripoli agreement. The failure to implement all of the aspects of the agreement set the stage for what later became four failed peace agreements.

The initial failure also led to the formation of a break-away faction from the MNLF known as the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) headed by Hashim Salamat. All-out war between the Philippine government and the MILF occurred in 2000 and again in 2003. Since 2003, the MILF and the Philippine government have been engaged in periodic informal peace talks, brokered by Malaysia, with renewed war-like activity occurring as recently as last month after numerous Philippine Marines were massacred by rebel groups. An international cease-fire monitoring group has helped keep violations of the cease-fire agreement from erupting into full-scale war so far. The cease-fire between the MILF and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) is still holding, as of today, while the AFP focuses its military targets on the terrorist Abu Sayyaf Group. The Abu Sayyaf Group engages in atrocities against civilian and military targets, including beheadings, bombings, wide-scale violence and kidnap-for-ransom activities. The U.S. military provides non-combat intelligence, strategic advice, and military equipment for the Philippine forces engaged in fighting terrorism.

The “Mindanao Problem”: Mochtar Matuan summarizes the “Mindanao problem” as an interconnected problem set involving: poverty, inequality, and environmental destruction; political corruption; negative images held by Christians, Moro, and Lumad peoples of each other; failure of the national government to integrate Moro peoples into a national Filipino identity; the economic exploitation of Mindanao’s resources and the migration of Filipinos from the north that led to a loss of ancestral lands; and the Moro struggle and longing for self-rule. The outcome is that many Moro and Lumad Filipinos are economically marginalized, have experienced massive poverty and social injustices, are politically marginalized and not well-represented in the national polity, and feel they lack national recognition and respect for their unique cultural and religious identities.

The effects of war and discrimination have left what is currently the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) with the highest poverty incidence in the Philippines (73.9% poor, compared to 40% for the country as a whole) and the UNDP Human Development Report in 2005 ranked 4 of the 5 ARMM provinces as comparable to that of the world’s poorest countries located in Africa. A recent Pulse Asia survey in 2005 indicated that 47% of Filipinos “think Muslims are terrorists or extremists” and the U.S. State Department Country Report on Human Rights documents discrimination against Muslims in housing and employment. Since 1970, more than 120,000 people have died in the war in Mindanao, with over 50,000 wounded and millions displaced. There is also the problem of poor schools, massive firearms and weapons proliferation, clan violence related to politics and land feuds, general criminality and kidnap-for-ransom gangs, and ongoing ‘pocket wars’ between

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8 Under the Visiting Forces Agreement between the U.S. and the Philippines, the U.S. is not allowed to establish bases on Philippine soil nor enter combat, except in self-defense.
9 Matuan, Mochtar, 2004, unpublished lecture delivered in Cagayan de Oro, Capitol University, Philippines for the ACCESS Philippines project of Northern Illinois University (funded by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State).
the MILF and the AFP despite the presence of an international peace monitoring mission. More Filipinos have died from the terrorist group Jemaah Islamiyah-inspired attacks than in any other country, including Indonesia, thus making the region an international security concern for foreign countries.  

Since 2000, violent Islamist groups in the Philippines have killed or injured more than 1,700 people—mostly perpetrated by the Abu Sayyaf Group and the Rajah Solaiman Movement—a number that exceeds the number of people killed or injured in the same period in Indonesia and far more than those killed and injured in Morocco, Spain, Turkey or the United Kingdom.  

Despite this daunting history and continuing set of challenges, the overall benefits of a sustainable peace agreement, cooperatively implemented within an agreed framework and with the involvement of the international donor community, could gradually replace the mistrust and ‘never-ending’ cycle of conflict. Cook and Collier (2006) noted that Mindanao’s links to Southeast Asian terrorist groups such as the Abu Sayyaf Group and Jemaah Islamiyah have opened a window of opportunity through increased multi-country regional security concerns. Elevated foreign support and interest in assisting the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Philippine state in reaching a peace deal is the ideal way to reduce Mindanao’s attractiveness as a safe haven for regional extremist or criminal groups. They strongly recommend four areas for foreign support: 1) strengthening the peace process by supporting permanent personnel on the peace panels and ceasefire monitoring teams; 2) encouraging successful Islamic parties in Southeast Asia to send representatives to Mindanao to help eventually transform the MILF into an unarmed political movement that can raise the profile of Moros in the national government; 3) major development aid to reduce poverty and assist in rehabilitating the conflict-affected regions; and 4) developing local special forces’ capabilities to close down terrorist safe havens and ultimately help modernize the armed forces of the Philippines into a defensive, externally-focused posture.

**Peace Efforts in Mindanao:**

Abubakar (2007) observes that there are a number of challenges to resolving the demands for Moro self-determination and independence. First, the nature of democracy in the Philippines makes it difficult for the government to garner enough support to decide on the independence demand of armed separatist movements among the Muslim minority. The Philippines has a history of political turbulence and corruption, with only one president having entered and left office through a regular democratic process in the last four decades. Second, radical Islamic home-grown terrorism in the Philippines is firmly situated in the midst of a protracted and violent intra-state conflict. Determining appropriate resolution mechanisms to the secessionist rebellion is complicated by the strategies used to counter international terrorism.

Given that minority groups such as the Moros have limited influence in the national politics, civil society organizations are extremely important in the Mindanao peacebuilding process. Abubakar groups peacebuilding initiatives in Mindanao into nine categories: 1) peace movements and alliances; 2) peace education and research; 3) relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction; 4) truth commissions and investigative missions; 5) grassroots ceasefire monitoring; 6) peace journalism; 7) dialogue and consultations; 8) interfaith dialogue; and 9) arts and culture for peace advocacy.

The efforts of civil society groups, religious organizations and alliances, academic institutions, people’s organizations, and the media are on-going in Mindanao, which has a very strong and increasingly outspoken set of efforts to help enforce cease-fires, assist in emergency preparedness for evacuations of civilians from war-torn regions, and exert pressure on both sides to return to the peace negotiating table. Civil society groups also play a role in the establishment of ‘zones of peace’ where combatants are requested to stay out of a particular

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17 Abubakar, op cit, p.35.
18 Abubakar, op cit, p.39.
locality; these have met with some limited success but are few in number. Numerous international donors involved in development assistance in Mindanao play a similar, if more behind-the-scene role, in pressuring the Philippine government to return to the peace negotiations, which have been stalled this year over disagreements about the territory that might be included in an autonomous Bangsamoro Juridical Entity.

Abubakar highlights some key obstacles to peacebuilding in Mindanao. First, there is a severe imbalance in peacebuilding activities in that Christian groups dominate the Moro and other indigenous, non-Muslim, non-Christian indigenous groups. Owing to decades of war and disruption, few Moro and other indigenous peoples have experience with scholarly work compared to Christian Filipinos, who dominate inter-faith activities and NGOs related to peace. Second, the overlapping Moro social mosaic of established rebel groups, ‘terrorist’ groups, and criminal gangs or private armies of politicians and warlords poses significant and complex challenges for civil society peacebuilders as well as for the armed forces and government peace negotiators. Both Abubakar and Lingga have argued that the key to solving the problems of the Moro people and the conflict are to widen the peace negotiation discussions so as to include the entire Bangsamoro constituency, not simply the MILF and MNLF. Abubakar also argues that a more direct form of participation of civil society groups in the peace negotiations, while perhaps complicating the work of the actual negotiators, might provide in the long run a sense of ownership that eventually will enable these groups to build stronger peace constituencies in the Moro and Christian communities. Finally, Abubakar observes what many NGO leaders in Mindanao have commonly observed, which is that there is an overall lack of coordination regarding peacebuilding efforts and multinational donor-assisted activities.

Steven Rood of The Asia Foundation in Manila, in his study of civil society organizations in Mindanao, makes several important, related recommendations:

- strengthen Muslim civil society to rectify Muslim/Christian imbalances
- transform the shifting alliances of Muslim and Christian peacebuilding networks into organizations capable of bringing both groups together for sustained action planning
- conduct more empirical studies on the impact of interfaith dialogue, peace zones, and their effects on citizen attitudes so as to guide conflict management strategies
- Involve local governments in conflict management and encourage them to work with civil society organizations to influence larger numbers of Christian and Muslim citizens to support the peace efforts.

Kamarulzaman Askandar, Regional Coordinator of the Southeast Asian Conflict Studies Network, argues that peacebuilding must be acknowledged as the foundation and an integral part of the conflict resolution process, even before the conflict is resolved. A key element of that foundation is capacity building for the stakeholders, building trust with the various parties over time and through joint activities, and the inclusion of all in various types and levels of decision-making. He also recommends more specific strategies including: 1) building a post-graduate study program in “Peace and Conflict Resolution”; 2) creating ‘peace studies’ centers throughout the Southeast Asian region, e.g., establishing a network of peacebuilders among scholars and practitioners; 3) creating a regional Southeast Asian “Peace Studies Center”; 4) promoting peace education programs; 5) discovering and highlighting local and indigenous forms of conflict management and resolution; 7) conducting ‘conflict-impact assessments’ in conflict areas to ascertain the impact on the people themselves; 8) organizing dialogues and problem-solving workshops between the parties to the conflict; 9) organizing ‘scenario-building workshops’ for conflicting parties to imagine a future with non-violent alternatives; 10) poverty-alleviation and development projects; 11) creating early warning systems and ‘disaster management’ bodies; and 12) promoting peace journalism.

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20 Abubakar, op cit, p.59; Lingga, Abhoud Syed, Executive Director of the Institute for Bangsamoro Studies, personal communication during an interview in summer 2006.
21 Abubakar, op cit, p.60.
24 Askandar, op cit, p.27.
NGOs, government officials, and other community leaders. We anticipate that a number of the projects they have initiated are successful and some probably had to be
carefully engaged Filipino scholars in Mindanao to conduct an independent evaluation, which has not yet been completed. The U.S. Embassy also has
currently undertaking efforts to come up with more precise analysis of these projects. The U.S. Embassy in Manila we designed a competitive recruitment and application strategy for the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao and surrounding provinces for youth applicants aged 15-17 years of age from all
ethnic and religious groups in the area.27

From 2003 to the present, we have so far trained over 100 Muslim, Christian and indigenous Lumad youth and adults in an annual series of one-month training workshops at our university entitled ‘Bridging the Gap: Engaging a New Generation in the Southern Philippines in Interethnic Dialogue and Conflict Resolution’. The major goals of the NIU Institute are to 1) advance a dialogue and promote greater mutual understanding between Muslim and non-Muslim youth; 2) create a cadre of leaders that will work toward an enduring peaceful coexistence among all groups in Mindanao when they return home; and 3) promote a better understanding of the United States—its people, culture, values, tolerance and civic institutions. The NIU Institute focuses on four teaching emphases: 1) volunteerism and civil society, emphasizing particularly the institutions and organizations that mediate between the national government and individuals; 2) contemporary American institutions in state and civil society that support ethnic diversity, affirmative action, and religious pluralism; 3) the underlying premises and practices of conflict resolution; and 4) the historical and moral dimensions of similarity and difference that underlie majority/minority ethnic and political ties in Southeast Asia.

The project incorporates two-week home-stays with American families for participants; a variety of field trips to religious and peace activist organizations in the diverse Chicago region, Springfield, Illinois, and Indiana; and an array of national and international speakers. The participants are expected to design action plans to implement in their schools and communities upon their return to Mindanao, and we then sponsor a ‘follow-on’ activity in Mindanao some months after the NIU Institute. Each year, we produce a booklet about the project, the participants and collaborating institutions, the lesson plans, action plans, and essays from the participants. The booklet includes an overview of global issues of cultural diversity and conflict that emphasizes the need to address the root causes of hostilities in the world, with specific attention paid to the causes of conflict in Mindanao historically and currently. It also contains an overview of theoretical frameworks for the study of conflict, conflict transformation and the work for peace, as well as a “tool kit” for “barefoot facilitators” to use when they conduct peace programs.28

The project is intensively evaluated at all stages, with yahoo-group electronic social networking lists providing the primary means of staying in touch with the participants in the Philippines. This year, all ACCESS Philippines alumni will be gathered together for the follow-on activities, and we are hoping to launch a Mindanao-wide group of youth leaders for peacebuilding at this event in October. The high schools and universities are also expected to contribute a pledge to support the projects that ACCESS participants have initiated even after they graduate. The kind of action plans that the youth and adults design are quite diverse and we are currently undertaking efforts to come up with more precise analysis of these projects. The U.S. Embassy also has engaged Filipino scholars in Mindanao to conduct an independent evaluation, which has not yet been completed. We anticipate that a number of the projects they have initiated are successful and some probably had to be care-

25 The project website is at http://www.cseas.niu.edu/PhilAccess/default.htm
26 This project was renamed by the U.S. State Department in 2006 as the Philippine Youth Leadership project, although we continue to refer to it as ACCESS Philippines.
27 Youth of this age span are developing social consciousness and awareness and their enthusiastic involvement in peacebuilding has a vital multiplier effect, as they can easily mobilize support among other youth and collaborate with NGOs, government officials, and other community leaders.
28 Rey Ty, a human rights activist and current graduate student in Counseling, Adult, and Higher Education at NIU) is the author of much of this work.
fully re-designed or even abandoned in favor of an alternate plan once they returned home. They include such activities as designing diversity clubs and conducting inter-faith or inter-cultural dialogues, re-iterating (“re-echoing”, as they say) the trainings that they received at NIU in their schools, peace marches, peace song contests, radio talk shows, outreach programs to indigenous and other Moro youth, etc. Adult projects tend to be much larger, and include setting up venues for peace learning, sports, theatrical and media shows, arts for peace contests, and even peace and sensitivity training for the Philippine military and Civilian Armed Forces Geographical Units (CAFGU). The most important role for the adults, however, is to be supporters of the projects and activities of the youth, and to incorporate them in all possible learning venues to build up their leadership capacity.

The ACCESS Philippines project has a qualitatively “successful” component that is highly visible, insofar as the enthusiasm and affection generated among the Muslim, Christian and indigenous youth from many different geographic and ethno-linguistic groups during the transformative month-long program in the U.S. are apparent. By their own admission, the project has encouraged them to work for peace in whatever ways they can—whether through acts of defending others from discrimination, reaching out to members of other ethnic or religious groups, or through volunteer or more direct peacebuilding activities. The project also has brought a wide range of faculty, graduate students, student organizations, religious and local government leaders, and community members together in a channeled form of peace activism that energizes and challenges all of us. The participation of organizations like the Council on American-Islamic Relations in Chicago or the Inter-Faith Youth Core in Chicago are also important ways by which our participants and university have established linkages we wish to build on in the future. The ACCESS Philippines project also compelled us to design a second proposal with our project partners in the Philippines, which we recently completed.

The Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM): Religion, Education, Community and Political Process Project:29 Building on our on-going partnership with the International Visitors Program-Philippines Alumni Foundations, Inc., which is a diverse collection of high-profile leaders in a wide range of fields of expertise who have participated in U.S. fellowship programs, we submitted a second proposal in 2005 to another open competition announced by the Office of Citizen Exchanges of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State, to do a multi-sectoral capacity building project for local leaders in the ARMM. While the ACCESS Philippines ‘Request for Proposal’ guidelines contained detailed instructions as to what the project should accomplish, the second project did not. However, after e-mail correspondence with our colleagues in the Philippines, we basically designed a second proposal that followed the successful model laid out in the ACCESS project.

The ARMM project focused on training in majority-minority political relations, solutions and problems; inter-ethnic dialogue and conflict resolution; and capacity building for NGO, government, academic, and Muslim and Christian religious leaders with established networks of support so as to empower civil society in the ARMM in ways that would assist in a larger rehabilitation effort. The three week NIU Institute was specifically designed to foster the development of sustainable community networks and dialogue among local communities for the purpose of strengthening stability and promoting peace. Participants were provided an enhanced understanding of how religion, education, community and political leaders interact in the U.S., as well as core skills and tools in peace leadership, community activism, human rights and social justice, civic participation, and building linkages. We also offered them study tours and visits to Salt Lake City in Utah (where a minority religion is the majority government, e.g., the Church of Latter-Day Saints of Jesus Christ); Chicago, St. Louis, and Springfield. The field trip to Utah specifically was requested by one of our project coordinators in the Philippines who, as a Muslim, was impressed with a previous trip to the region and felt it would provide participants with interesting viewpoints relevant to the future governance of the ARMM. The field trips included a visit to an Amish community, which is also a very popular segment of the ACCESS project.

The recruitment and selection process, as well as the follow-on activity, were handled very similarly to the ACCESS project—including the participation of the project director in all phases of the in-country activity where interviews of finalists and action plans are presented. The NIU project director, the Cultural Affairs Officer at the U.S. Embassy, and a number of Filipino professionals in Manila and Mindanao also participate in designing the selection criteria, as well as ranking of all first and second stage applicants. Hence, the selection

29 The project website is at http://www.cseas.niu.edu/ARMM/
team itself is interdisciplinary and geographically and ethnically diverse, which adds confidence for applicants that no specific bias in the selection is present.

The final 12 high profile ARMM leaders that attended the program at NIU in the summer of 2006 reflect the rich diversity of communities from Mindanao: one is a ranking MNLF leader who heads the oldest and best-known Bangsamoro Women’s organization and has been the recipient of major awards; two lawyers; a Chancellor of Mindanao State University in Maguindanao; a regional legislator; a Deputy-Governor for Indigenous Peoples in the ARMM; a vice-mayor; NGO leaders (including a former MNLF field commander); a provincial mufti (Islamic religious scholar); several university professors; and a Catholic priest. Most had never been to the United States, but are deeply and actively involved in community activities, and passionately committed to peacebuilding and development.

Our multi-sectoral participants designed a Strategic Plan before they left NIU, which identified a mission, vision and goals, as well as five functional task groups and coordinated action plans to set up after their return to the Philippines. Essentially, the participants collectively aim to set up a non-profit Center for Philippine-Bangsamoro Relations to help promote better majority-minority relations through provision of a venue for a) the preservation of Bangsamoro peoples’ cultures and arts; b) offering dialogue and discussions between and among various peoples; and c) engaging the youth in advocating for peaceful co-existence. The overall thrust is to enhance Philippine – Bangsamoro relations through “empowerment and advancement of social and economic conditions of Bangsamoro people, promotion of sustainable development, good governance, accountability, equity, unity and non-violent conflict resolution, and the education of the majority Filipino population about Bangsamoro society, history and struggle.”

The five advocacy-oriented and functional task groups include Bangsamoro – Philippine Relations Institution Building; Networking and Alliance-Building; Economic Productivity; Interfaith Dialogue and Intercultural Conversation; and Legislative Relations.

In the follow-on program for this ARMM project, which was held in the southern Philippines last December 2006, discussions focused on how to bring the Center into a reality and where funding might be obtained. The participants are scattered over a huge area of the southern Philippines, and e-mail and electricity are erratic in some areas. Lacking travel money, they nevertheless discussed an impressive set of accomplishments since their June stay at NIU. They include: 1) formation of a Muslim Women’s Rights Advocates group in the ARMM and engagement with the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women so as to keep them aware of Muslim women’s reproductive rights and family relations issues; 2) organizing a Muslim women’s forum with male Muslim leaders about the facts of rape, abortion and polygamy; 3) working toward the establishment of a more accurate Halal Foods certifying program in the Philippines; 4) a new halal food agricultural development program in the ARMM; 5) a new peace, gender and development program at Mindanao State University in Maguindanao and associated training of high school and university faculty in peace education; 6) an assembly in Jolo (an island in deep conflict) with representatives of the government, civil society NGOs, religious leaders, the military, the MNLF and the MILF to discuss inter-faith and inter-cultural issues; 7) networking with the Assembly of Darul Ifthah and the Bishops-Ulama Forum, as well as the Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines group and the Organization of Muslim Religious Leaders of the ARMM. The latter initiative is very impressive in that efforts are focused on educating Muslim Filipinos about Islam and encouraging them to turn to moderate rather than radical Islamic beliefs by such activities as coordinating all of the Friday sermons at all of the mosques in the ARMM and working to improve understanding of Islamic tenets among residents.

While the ARMM project has officially ended, we have been contacted by the U.S. Embassy in Manila about their own desire to conduct a second ARMM project in the future, should they be able to find the funding. One of the very exciting outcomes of the ARMM project involves the plan (should funding be available) to set up centers for dialogue in all the communities or schools where ACCESS youth are and to link their activities up with the future efforts of the ARMM participants. That effort will provide a sustainable channel for young leaders in Mindanao to continue their efforts in the future, and will enhance their interactions with the many other youth organizations engaged in peace or inter-faith activities in Mindanao. Other outcomes include funding for a new proposal we have recently been awarded by the U.S. State Department for a country-wide project on citizenship and civic participation for leaders of youth organizations or those in a position to influence the next generation. That project has a focus on two areas of largely indigenous peoples in the north and south of the country. The overall impact on our campus, beyond those of us directly involved in these projects, is to push for a permanent global peace and conflict studies program and research cluster across disciplines and colleges—

30 From the Mission statement. See http://www.cseas.niu.edu/ARMM/ARMMSTRATEGICPLAN.ppt.
similar to what the Center for Southeast Asian Studies faculty already is beginning to develop and hopes to expand.

**Conclusion:**

**Summary:** This paper yielded the following results. One, there are historical, social, economic, political, territorial, and cultural root causes of the “Mindanao problem” and armed conflict in the southern Philippines. Two, because of these societal problems cited in the foregoing statement, many rebel groups emerged to struggle against these injustices, among whom were the Moro National Liberation Front, Moro Islamic Liberation Front, both of which are engaged in political and revolutionary struggles, and the Abu Sayyaf Group, which is a terrorist group. Three, there are three-pronged approaches to conflict resolution in the southern Philippines: (1) Track 1: high-level negotiations, (2) Track 2: middle-level conflict transformation programs, and (3) Track 3: grassroots initiatives. This research contributes to the literature on peace in general and to theory-building in particular by presenting here a grounded theory of conflict transformation for the promotion of just and sustainable peace, based on the finding of this research. See diagram below.

![Fig. 1: Grounded Theory of Historical and Contextual Model of Multi-Track Promotion of Peace](image)

**Impact:** The southern Philippine region with its many different ethno-linguistic and religious groups, high poverty levels, ongoing counter-terrorism operations, and diverse rebel groups pose significant challenges to peacebuilding efforts, peace negotiators and conflict transformation. The civil society groups active in peacebuilding or inter-faith dialogue in the region are also divided by goals, strategies and ethnic or religious membership. While recent years have seen efforts to consolidate these networks, there is still much work that needs to be done. Our capacity-building projects are designed to empower Muslim leaders with established networks of support (the ARMM project) and to help them and former combatants forge stronger ties with the major national constituencies. The ACCESS project focuses on bringing young Muslim, Christian and other indigenous youth together in positive interactions that will develop more globally aware, informed and activist leaders for this region in the future.

Certain facts continue to offer much hope for the outcome and aftermath of the peace discussions. First, many international donor organizations and countries such as the United States, Australia, the European Union, Japan, Canada and other Muslim countries such as Saudi Arabia, Libya and Malaysia have pledged to provide aid once a peace agreement is signed. The World Bank and the United Nations Development Program, among others, also have set up a rehabilitation plan for Mindanao in the future. Second, the leadership of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Philippine government have indicated a strong commitment to the peace process. Third, the substantive issues of the peace discussions pointedly include key issues that were never resolved after the 1996 peace agreement with the Moro National Liberation Front but which must be dealt with if a lasting peace is to occur. Foremost among these issues is the one concerning territorial domain and ancestral lands of the Moro and Lumad peoples—and the Philippines has one of the most progressive agendas on the rights of in-
A stable peace in Mindanao will require the energy and commitment of all official and unofficial actors, and hence ‘multi-track’ approaches are necessary. Wake (2004:127) argues that the “beauty of multi-track approaches is that they afford an opportunity for anyone, at any level, to contribute to the peacebuilding process with the means that they have available to them.” The projects that we are pursuing are but a few that are being dedicated to creating a new generation of empowered youth and adult leaders from all religions and ethnic groups in the southern Philippines who desire to make a sustained peace a reality. We anticipate that as we continue to collaborate with ongoing local efforts to build a network of youth in Mindanao dedicated to sharing their experiences in peacebuilding, dialogue and conflict resolution that a brighter future will surely follow. Dialogue remains one of the most common forms of informal peacebuilding and conflict resolution in the world today, and the goal of dialogue in conflict resolution or peacebuilding is to generate increased understanding and trust between opposing parties. It is also a critical component to multi-track approaches in that it enables all parties to explore ways of working together.

Fry (2006:247) argues that humans have a much stronger capacity for getting along peacefully even as they are very capable of engaging in warfare. Peace-promoting possibilities include “enhancing crosscutting relations; recognizing interdependence; promoting new values, attitudes, and beliefs; implementing overarching levels of governance; and expanding the use of conflict management mechanisms”. Small (1985; 1997) notes that international citizen exchange programs, whether focused on transferring academics, students, businesspeople, military personnel, artists or others help reduce tensions, expand understanding and awareness, and represent an appropriate way of transforming attitudes.

Implications: This paper has (1) policy, (2) social action and (3) further research implications. On the top policy level (track 1), governments and rebel groups must continue to explore all avenues in coming to an understanding on the causes of and solutions to the societal problems with which inhabitants of Mindanao are confronted. On the grassroots level (track 3), civil society likewise needs to embark on inter-ethnic and interfaith dialogue as a means for conflict transformation. Last, but not least, on the middle level (track 2), academics can do their part in promoting peace. The direct involvement of faculty, staff, and students at Northern Illinois University (and many other universities here and abroad) in concrete projects for conflict transformation demonstrates the ability and impact of the academic community in doing its share in getting parties to a conflict to come into a dialogic circle wherein meaningful collaborative, transformative learning and action planning can help bring about conditions that promote a just peace. The challenge for academics in times of armed conflict still remains, however, to dialectically link peace theories with practice in ways that actually promote sustainable peace. That challenge is equally as relevant for promoting peace internally within nations as it is between nations. In terms of research, academics can go one step further to do empirical research that actually measures the impact of collaborative peace education programs, among others, on (1) learning those values that promote peace, (2) personal transformation, (3) organizational transformation, and (4) social transformation.

Questions for further research include, among others, the following: Based on the empirical evidence, what are the lessons learned in implementing peace programs? What makes a peace program successful? In short, what are inductively derived (not pre-determined) indicators of success? What are the best practices?

32 Wake, Jim 2004 “Lessons learned from peacebuilding practices in Asia Pacific”. In Searching for Peace in Asia Pacific: an Overview of Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities, ed. Annelies Heijmans, Nicola Simmonds, and Hans van de Veen, pp.105-134. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner
What issues are involved in the question of the relationship between specific historical-social contexts and transferability of lessons learned and best practices? To what extent are programs with established peace and conflict organizations more capable and successful at engaging in sustainable peace promotion than those without organizational structures? With these questions, our search and work for peace continues unabated.
The Ties that Bind: Social Injustice, Armed Conflict, Transformative Education, and Social Change in the Southern Philippines
Rey Ty

Introduction

Through the eyes of a child, the words rebellion, war, revolution, and conflicts made me wonder why these things happen. It is very disturbing… I must first find its roots, the cause which I think most people have overlooked… I am concerned for my homeland and wish to see it gain peace… I have my own distinct passion for peace.

A female Muslim student leader wrote the essay above, which gave me a burst of enlightenment and made me think about the difficulties with which the youth of today in the southern Philippine island of Mindanao are confronted on a daily basis. Her passionate search for the causes of the conflict are mine as well, after the discovery of which youth leaders can plan and implement historically and socially contextualized projects for the attainment of peace in their communities.

Aside from this female Muslim student leader, two student leaders have sent me, through Northern Illinois University’s Associate Provost of International Programs and her entourage, drawings which depict their frustrations about the current state of affairs and their hopes for a better future. A colorful drawing has two sections. In the landscape are illustrations of stick figures, a flag, a road, and buildings. The words “bad eggs,” indifference, hatred and domestic violence are written. In the middle is a road called “path to peace”, which the Philippine flag drapes. There are arrows pointing towards the right-hand section of the tableau, where the words “new eggs,” harmony, and peace are inscribed.

Another drawing metaphorically takes the shape of the Philippine flag: a triangle spanning the whole flag so to speak, at the tip of which is a line that further divides the flag into two parts: one in red and the other in blue. The red part of the flag, which symbolizes bloodshed, had images of violence, military vehicles villages in the midst of vast expanse of land, women and children of different religions, and mountains with all the trees chopped off. The words war, boom, killings, “ASG,” and “MILF” (please see the “Glossary of Terms”) are prominently visible in the red landscape. On the blue part of the flag, which signifies peace, are images of women and children, people of different faiths shaking hands, verdant mountains, nice roads, lush fields, and comfortable houses. A general sense of tranquility prevails. The words improved and united take a prominent position in the montage. In the middle of the triangle is the sun, as is the case of the actual Philippine flag, which represents hope for a bright future. But super-imposed right in the middle of the three geometric sections is a globe which is encased in the peace sign. I can sense that this female Christian student who drew this art work feeling the impact of the armed violence that different Muslim groups in the place where she lives. But at the same time, I can feel her struggling to work for a better future for people of all faiths in her community. Indeed, she is hopeful to move from the red zone of terrorism and war to the blue zone of unity and peace.

Student leaders from the southern Philippines wrote the above essay and sketched the two colorful drawings I depicted. Through a grant from the United States Department of State, about twenty-five student leaders (fifteen to seventeen years old) and about six to eight adult leaders from the southern Philippine island of Mindanao come to NIU to attend a peace education program for over a five-week period from April to May every year. Since the academic year 2003-2004 to 2006-2007, Northern Illinois University has trained a total of one hundred twenty four Filipinos, most of whom are women, at NIU. They are indigenous, Muslims and Christians.

Poverty and social injustice breed crime and revolution. In the Philippines, the majority of the people live below the poverty line. While the majority lowland Christians control economic, political, and cultural power, Muslims and indigenous peoples, who are the ethnic and religious minorities, do not have economic, political, and cultural power. The Muslim and indigenous minorities have been dispossessed of their land, natural resources, property, wealth, and voice. About 90% of the population is Christian and the rest are the non-Hispanized Muslims and indigenous peoples (Department of State, Philippines, 2006). The Spanish and the Americans won the war for religious converts, as only 5% of the population is Muslim (Russell, 2006). There are also Chinese and Indian minorities.

There are two central concepts which need to be defined: peace and conflict resolution. As my research involves peace education program, hence, the most important concept in my research is “peace,” which defies
simplistic explanation. Here, I attempt to explain the concept in detail. I am not only talking about personal peace, but more importantly, for the war-torn context of the southern Philippines, social peace. Peace is not merely the absence of war. It requires justice, freedom from exploitation, and total human liberation. War, of course, negates peace. But stopping war (such as by ceasefire) does not necessarily create peace. The absence of war does not guarantee the presence of peace. Justice, not war, is closely linked to the outcome of peace. The University for Peace of the United Nations (2007), which is based in Costa Rica, identified six dimensions of peace to include the following:

1. Educating for dismantling a culture of “war” (micro/macro levels), which includes problems and issues of direct violence and strategies of active non-violent resolution of such conflicts;
2. Educating for living with justice and compassion, which focuses on the realities of structural violence, especially in relation to paradigms of development and globalization, and alternative relationships and structures for local and global justice;
3. Educating for human rights and responsibilities, which seeks to deepen the knowledge and skills of promoting human rights;
4. Educating for inter-cultural solidarity whereby cultural diversity is respected while the values and principles of a common humanity are fostered;
5. Educating for environmental care, which recognizes the inter-connectedness of all beings and planet earth, and suggests alternatives to build sustainable futures;
6. Educating for personal peace, which highlights the urgent need for nurturing values, principles, and practice of inner/personal growth to complement the tasks of building outer or social peace.

The second term that is central to this article is conflict resolution. There is a sharp distinction between the approaches of peace studies and conflict resolution in general. Peace studies tend to be more social in its focus, although they also include psychological components, including conflict resolution as one element of peace. Conflict resolution, on the other hand, tends to be more psychological in its focus, although there is a potentiality for the field to expand to include more social components. Conflict resolution runs through the whole gamut, from pro-active methods which are used when conflicts do not yet exist to reactive methods which are used when conflicts already occur. Pro-active efforts are important in poverty-stricken and war-torn societies, such as the Philippines, so that people who are not directly affected by the armed conflict can learn to live in harmony with one another. As explained later in this section below, non-western communities tend to engage in social conflict resolution, while western societies tend to engage in very personal, individualistic, and psychologically based conflict resolution. Methods for the resolution of conflict fall under the following categories:

1. non-judicial, (2) quasi-judicial, and (3) judicial (Buergenthal & Murphy, 2002). According to Buergenthal & Murphy (2002, p. 67), non-judicial methods of dispute settlement include “negotiation, inquiry, mediation, and conciliation,” quasi-judicial methods include “arbitration and adjudication” (p. 70), and judicial method involve the resort to presenting cases before a court. Negotiation involves direct bilateral or multilateral dialogue to resolve differences between parties in person or through correspondence. Inquiry refers to “the designation of a group of individuals or an institution to act as an impartial fact-finding or investigatory body” (Buergenthal & Murphy, 2002, p. 68). Conciliation “requires an agreement by the parties to dispute referring the controversy to a group of individuals or to an institutions which will receive the views of the parties and then issue a report containing recommendations for resolution of the disputants” which can be accepted or rejected (Buergenthal & Murphy, 2002, p. 69). In reality, many actual conflict resolution efforts are a combination of different methods. An arbitration tribunal or panel is an ad-hoc judicial body whose “composition, jurisdiction, and the rules of procedure it applies, must be agreed upon by the parties” (Buergenthal & Murphy, 2002, p. 70). Adjudication is a judicial conflict resolution which “takes place in…a permanent court, which has a fixed composition and operates under preexisting jurisdictional standards and rules of procedure” (Buergenthal & Murphy, 2002, p. 71). Finally, judicial methods resort to bringing cases to local, regional, national, continental, or international courts, with varying degrees of enforcement and sanctions.

What is Peace?
Authors conceptualize peace quite differently. Of the 45 peer reviewed journal articles, only two articles have explained how peace is related to the other fields. Focusing on the content, Rauch & Steiner (2006) argued that an education for sustainable development must put together (1) peace education, (2) environmental educa-
tion, and (3) development education that involves global learning. Discussing both substance and instructional methods, Johnson & Johnson (2005) identified five elements of peace education to include: (1) integrated school, (2) a sense of common fate, (3) constructive controversy discourse, (4) negotiations and mediation (5) civic values. In addition, the University for Peace of the United Nations (2007) identifies the six elements of peace to include the following: (1) conflict resolution, (2) justice and compassion, (3) human rights and responsibilities, (4) intercultural solidarity and common humanity, (5) environmental care, and (6) personal care. Hsu was concerned about non-violence (2006b), spirituality (2003), working for peace (2006a), and disseminating Gandhi’s, Freire’s, and Thich Nhat Hanh’s lessons on non-violence (2007).

Nature, Focus, Content and Strategies of Peace Education

Nature. There are different types of studies about peace education programs: peace education in general (Johnson & Johnson, 2005) and peace education conducted in comparative and international education (Davies, 2005; Narsee, 2005). Furthermore, there are many studies which specifically contextualize peace education in certain societies, such as in Austria (Rauch & Steiner, 2006), Canada (Malhouse, 2006), Cyprus (Vrasidas & Associates, 2007), Israel (Tatar & Horenzyck, 2003), Northern Ireland (Nolan, 2007), Sierra Leone (Bretherton, Weston, & Zbar, 2005; Wessells, 2005), South Africa (2005), the U.S. (Berkowitz, Long, & Jackson, 2006). Peace education programs are used in various contexts: (1) schools (Tatar & Horenzyck, 2003), (2) relations with minorities (Berkowitz, Long, & Jackson, 2006), and (3) emergencies and reconstruction (IIEP, 2006), (4) multi-ethnic conflicts (Nolan, 2007; Kupermintz & Salomon, 2005; Yablon, 2007), and post-conflict situations (Wessells, 2005).

Focus. The literature on peace education can be divided into those that focus on (1) the substance and (2) teaching strategies. Galtung’s seminal work (1969) on peace studies propelled me to be more passionate in my peace advocacy work. According to Galtung (1969), there are different types of violence: (1) structural violence which includes social injustice, social inequality, racism, and sexism (2) criminal violence, (3) revolutionary violence, and (4) repressive or state violence. To attain peace, the root causes of structural violence must be addressed; by so doing, criminal violence and revolutionary violence are mitigated. In addition, peace is a social process that involves the respect for human rights. Durable peace exists when social justice is present. All of the types of violence that Galtung discussed exist in the Philippines. Hence, Galtung’s framework is very useful in understanding and solving the situation of violence as well as in working for peace in the Philippines.

Content. In societies with ethnic conflicts, the challenge of the content of peace education programs is two-fold: (1) to recognize the shared values in order to counter prejudices and (2) to respect the differences of the various ethnic groups (Nolan, 2007). Peace education programs must have components that analyze social systems (Galtung, 1969; Bischoff & Moore, 2007) as well as challenge oppressive social structures (Opotow, Gerson, & Woodsdie, 2005). In addition, they need to inculcate values, such as human rights values (Narsee, 2005). They must also promote mutual understanding of the cultures of the different groups in order to create an environment that promotes peaceful coexistence (Magolda, 2002). Peace education programs for non-U.S. contexts will be more fitting, if they take into account the actual historical, economic, political, cultural and social contexts and conduct needs assessments of the learners, instead of simply using or importing U.S. models (Jones, 2005). The curriculum should emphasize the social imperative to move away from moral exclusion where social injustice reigns to moral inclusion where justice, equitable allocation of resources, and concern for everyone’s welfare are stressed (Opotow, Gerson, & Woodsdie, 2005). In addition, when schools work with the community, a more concrete and durable peace can be attained (Bretherton, Weston, & Zbar, 2005). Long-term impact of peace education on the community must also be studied and assessed (Davies, 2005).

Instructional Strategies. In terms of teaching strategies, the best approach in peace education is one that promotes learner-centered pedagogy. Such pedagogy allows learners to engage in critical thinking (Mahrouse, 2006) and active, practical learning (Biachoff & Moore, 2007). Effective programs are practical rather than didactic, encouraging reconciliation and cooperative community processes for dealing with conflict (Wessells, 2005). Using oral history (Bischoff & Moore, 2007) as well as listening to collective narratives of the different groups and accepting non-monolithic worldviews (Al-Jafar & Buzzelli, 2004; Kupermintz & Salomon, 2005), learners share their stories and engage in dialogue that promote justice and lasting peace. However, there is a debate as to whether peace education programs must have cognitive, emotional, motivational, or behavioral...
components (Yablon, 2007). Some are wary of the relevance of the emotional component (Yablon, 2007), while others are critical of narrow cognitive or rational component in peace education (Brandhorst, 2004; Davies, 2005). Technological tools, such as online communication networks, are helpful in the educational efforts for peace and reconciliation, as they promote continuing interaction (Vrasidas & Associates, 2007). Some have observed and are critical of the Eurocentric bias perspectives (Berlowitz, Long, & Jackson, 2006) and U.S. models (Jones, 2005) in peace education, which excludes the African American perspectives (Berlowitz, Long, & Jackson, 2006) in particular and all other non-European perspectives (Lederach). The focus and strategies appropriate to a learning community must be negotiated, considering that case studies have demonstrated that different groups have different ideas of what needs to be discussed and how they should be discussed (Tatar & Horenczyk, 2003). Based on the foregoing statements, the content and instructional strategies of peace education programs clearly need to be grounded on the history and social context as well as respond to the actual needs of the learners.

**Relevance**. The current state of the literature stresses the importance of certain content and teaching strategies. In terms of content, my study benefitted from the existing literature by learning about the importance of inculcating such values as mutual understanding and moral inclusion. However, as I am guided by critical theory, I am able to detect that the current literature misses out on the importance of seriously taking into account gender, ethnicity, and religion. In terms of teaching strategies, my study benefitted from the literature by learning about the importance of using interactive strategies, which involves the active participation of the participants in the learning process, often-times in a classroom setting. However, two matters are missing in the literature. One, my study involves learning and doing peace work not only in the classroom setting but more importantly in the community where the learners live. Two, interactive workshops are necessary but not sufficient components of the Philippine peace education programs. Our participants need to be taught skills in different methods of conflict resolution, such as negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, as well as filing complaints.

**Major Themes**

The findings, clustered around four major themes, centered on the voices of my respondents. These themes are (1) context of social problems, (2) peace education, (3) personal transformation, and (4) social transformation.

**Social Volcano and Chains of Oppression: Context of Social Problems**

In some drawings the student leaders sent me, there were words and images that stood out. One drawing has the words stereotyping and prejudice attached to a dove in chains. Another drawing has the words pagans, immoral, and traitors (representing the stereotypes of indigenous peoples, Christians and Muslims, respectively). A third drawing contains the map of Mindanao with a person who is chained with knife, grenade, a broken heart, and blood. A fourth drawing grabbed my attention: it had the image of a volcano in the midst of all social problems. Metaphorically, the southern Philippines is a continually erupting social volcano. The colorful drawing depicts a brick wall that literally divides a mosque and a church, which symbolize the divide between Muslims and Christians. In the drawing, the indigenous woman was in tears. Both this indigenous woman and another indigenous man were symbolically situated on the lowest level of society, which demonstrates the oppression they experience. On top of the brick wall that divides the different communities sits a scale, which represents social inequality. Clearly, there is an ethnic, religious, and economic divide, as the indigenous people, Muslims, and Christians live separately in a common land. Trees with only trunks remaining signify environmental degradation. Money grabbed on one hand represents corruption. Armed groups with guns stand for criminality and violence.

A former graduate of the Philippine peace education program who is now a graduate student in History at NIU summarized the social problems in Mindanao to include the following: “secessionist and separatist groups, …conflict between the Christian majority and the non-Christian minorities, Abu Sayyaf [a terrorist group with links to Osama bin Laden’s Al Qaeda movement], the MILF, MNLF, CPP-NPA, kidnapping, [and] corruption.” He aptly identified the root cause of all these problems: “These ills are products of economic deprivation.” Hence, economic injustice breeds all the social problems in Mindanao today.

In an interview, one faculty member who is a co-director of the program indicated that “the causes of the conflict in Mindanao are multifaceted.” She asserted that since “historically...this area was never really conquered by Spain” and the non-Christianized groups “protested [as] they were never part of Hispanized Phil-
ippines.” She continued: “However, in the aftermath of World War II…the United States…overlooked” the protests of the Moro people who “did not want to be governed by the larger Philippine state.” She added that “a lot of state-sponsored and individual migration to the homelands of the Moros and indigenous peoples” made them “a marginalized minority.” As a consequence, “actual combat broke out in 1970,” according to the faculty member I interviewed, which led to the “massacre” of Muslims, which “really launched…the Moro National Liberation Front.” This faculty member concluded that “it’s been a war over their marginalization, discrimination, loss of their territory, lack of recognition in Philippine history, their identity, religion, and a desire to live in an Islamic state more recently.”

As a result of social injustice, many have turned to either revolutionary struggle or criminal acts, especially in southern Philippines. Thus, unending conflicts take place. Under the umbrella of the National Democratic Front (NDF), the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and the New People’s Army (NPA)—whose primary religious heritage is nominally Christian but many of them are not practicing Christian—wage a war of national liberation all over the Philippines, including the south. The Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) whose members are Muslim Filipinos waged a revolution but had signed a peace pact with the government and its members have reintegrated into the mainstream of society. The splinter group Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) whose members are also Muslim Filipinos waged another revolution but its members are now in the process of engaging in peace talks.

**Peace Education**

Faced with all of these problems, while rebels and the government are trying to negotiate their peace settlements, the common people in the Philippines must likewise engage in a dialogue that promotes just peace in order to end the hostilities. Changes are occurring. The Philippine government recognizes that the communist and Muslim rebels are a force with which to reckon. Some groups are giving up their arms and returning to the mainstream of society. While the Philippine government is engaging in different efforts to end the conflict in southern Philippines, there are other non-state actors now actively involved in the peace efforts, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and social movements in civil society. In this connection, there is a need for a program on interfaith dialogue and conflict resolution, especially because there is no critical mass or enough number of individuals and groups involved in inter-ethnic dialogue and conflict resolution. Thus, there is an opportunity to fill the gap and constraints in skills, knowledge, and abilities in inter-ethnic dialogue and conflict resolution.

Northern Illinois University’s International Training Office and Center for Southeast Asian Studies respond to the need to facilitate the empowerment of ethnic and religious minorities and to promote social justice and peace in the southern islands of the Philippines. The major goals of the Interfaith Dialogue and Conflict Resolution program are the following (Russell, Ong, Gonzalez, & Ty, 2005): (1) to advance a dialogue and promote greater mutual understanding between Muslim and non-Muslim youth from the ARMM and surrounding provinces; (2) to create a cadre of leaders that will work toward an enduring peaceful coexistence among all groups within the ARMM when they return home; and (3) to promote a better understanding of the United States—its people, culture, values, and civic institutions. The specific objectives of the program are the following: (1) to sharpen the participants’ skills in conflict resolution and management, leadership, civic education, respect for diversity, and community activism; (2) to enhance the participants’ appreciation of their similarities and differences through various activities that will serve as avenues for open dialogues; (3) to develop in the participants an appreciation of the cultural and ethnic diversity of the ARMM by comparative understanding of Muslim majority and minority cultures of Southeast Asia; (4) to provide participants with tools for building inter-religious and inter-ethnic partnerships for future community projects and dispute resolution; (5) to develop in the participants an appreciation of the cultural, gender, and ethnic diversity of Midwest America by making use of NIU’s proximity to Chicago, Springfield (the seat of the Illinois state government), and Indiana; (6) to give participants access to community projects in DeKalb and in the Chicago area so they can gain first-hand experience in civic participation and community leadership.

In general, all the participants indicated that they liked the peace education program that they have attended. One indicated that “this program is an excellent one to hone the skills and talents” of the student and adult leaders who are engaged in peace-related work. A second person argued that “the program of NIU (ACCESS) had helped me a lot in dealing with different cultures.” A third person said that “after attending the NIU program, I really gained…confidence, especially in talking in front of the public.”
A fourth person claimed that "my NIU experience is indeed a life changing one. It did not only make a change in me but also urges me to make a change in others.” A fifth person articulated that "no doubt the program has help me a lot! Thanks for the chance of inviting me to stay and study at NIU. You did not only change my life—you helped me change the life of others, because I am more empowered now.” A sixth person declared that “the NIU institute is indeed a great help for me to realize that there is unity in diversity. The NIU Program made me a better person.” A seventh person stated that the "NIU Program on inter-ethnic dialogue and conflict resolution helped me a lot to change my attitude towards people of other cultures and religions… [I had] slight prejudices and stereotypes… [which] were totally eradicated by the program. Tolerance, respect and love for other cultures and religions were greatly developed in me by the program. I hope that the US Department of State will continue on supporting the program because Mindanao is really in need of programs like this.” A second Anthropology faculty member who was involved in the program whom I interviewed had this to say: “I think this is the best kind of work that anyone could be doing… young people, personal transformation, exposure to different ideas and different experiences with diversity—it’s…like a long-term investment. And I’m really grateful that… we are doing it.”

Personal Transformation

Initially, I was working under the assumption that since Filipinos are very community-oriented, they will all talk about their commitment to social change only and that no one will think about personal change. I was proven wrong. There were at least two out of fifty-three drawings that depicted personal change. They were really a revelation that Filipinos also think of personal development, despite stereotypes to the contrary. The first drawing, which was in black and white, shows two almost identical faces, except that one looks to the right and the other looks to the left. The two individuals looked at each other face-to-face as equals. This image represents not only social equality in general, but equality between individuals, regardless of their gender, color, ethnicity, or religion. The second drawing, which was in color, has the image of a person in formal Filipino attire right in the middle of the paper. The person wears a necklace with a golden medal holds a rose, which symbolize recognition and celebration, respectively. While the person was drawn in black and white colors, the background was in full color, which appears to be bright rays emitting from the person that shine the whole world.

Aside from the drawings, there was textual evidence to portray personal transformation. One person specified that the “program was a life-change experience for me.” Another student indicated that “I became friendlier to…people of other faiths” and that the “program has changed me positively.” A third graduate of the program said that the program “has a big impact on my life. I became more sensitive to [people of] other religions.” A fourth participant voiced her being “so glad” that “the program…has changed my life’s mission.” Another leader stressed that “I was empowered to sustain my advocacy in interethnic dialogue that long been started to keep peace in ourselves in Mindanao for the benefit of the people in the mother earth. ACCESS program strengthened further my commitment to peace.”

In summary, although not numerous, there were some alumni of the program who have expressed, both in their drawings and in their response to my questions, that the peace education program they have attended have given them an opportunity to have a life-changing personal transformative experience. This was my surprise finding, the surfacing of a discourse, which involved graduates talked about their individual growth, which normally is not stressed in Philippine discourse.

Social Transformation

All respondents agree that the Philippine peace education programs are successful in bringing about social change. However, they differ in terms of arguing to what extent the program yielded positive results and whether the results are readily felt immediately after they return to the southern Philippine or whether the results can be observed only after several years. One faculty member stated that “student exchange programs like this empower young people and give them opportunity to see the world and themselves in a different perspective.” An indigenous person who graduated from this intensive course said that “the program empowered the IP youth, because it empowered the IP participants who in turned were inspired to empower and educate [people in] their communities. It was one of the first times that IP voice was heard, IP struggle was narrated to be understood. Hopefully the programs stay the same and further bring light to many people who have had seen darkness enough with their own community and the rest of Mindanao and the country as a unified whole.” Another student graduate said that “I am now participating in a lot of activities related to inter-faith dialogue and peace. We
are now creating a federation under Islamic Youth Organization. It’s more on helping one another regardless of religions. And all of this participation is because of Phil ACCESS.”

The Ties that Bind

There are at least three drawings which have a thread or a string that weaves everyone and everything together. Metaphorically, they are the ties that bind, meaning, despite their differences, indigenous people, Muslims, and Christians who are in the southern Philippines—regardless of their gender, ethnicities and religions—are still Filipino(a)s. They all are bound to the same ties that bind them together. With these strings, they are bound together for inter-ethnic equality and gender equality, especially as there were two drawings of women as symbols of peace. The sun was omnipresent in many drawings, as it symbolizes hope for the future. And, of course, the dove was also well represented in many drawings, as it is a metaphor for peace.

Based on the response of the respondents in their own words and drawings, there were four major findings in this study. One, the southern Philippines is a place where economic and social injustice breeds crime and revolution. Two, the NIU program provides the alumni a life-changing experience. Three, quite surprisingly, a few alumni stated that the NIU peace education program has a direct impact on their personal growth which made them as individuals change for the better. Four, all respondents concur in believing that they were able to affect social transformation by spreading peace to their communities.

This research has a broader significance to peace education programs in general, especially because most of the literatures focus on cases in the U.S. only with a few cases involving Western Europe and South Africa. The southern Philippine case is unique because of its history, ethnic and religious diversity, social context, and armed hostilities going right now. This research also has implications for teachers on three counts. One, as the literatures and the Philippine peace education programs have shown, interactive learning strategies are really crucial for the success of the program. Two, most studies deal with peace education programs in the formal classroom setting. This study, however, shows that peace education must also be launched in non-formal settings, such as outdoor workshops that do not involve lectures. Three, interactive instructional strategies alone, while important, are not sufficient for peace programs, considering that conflict resolution skills, such as negotiation, enquiry, mediation, and conciliation must be transferred to the learners, as they need them to resolve conflicts upon returning to their communities.

The existing literatures only underscore the importance of dealing with differences in race, ethnicity, and color, thereby making invisible all the other differences. For further research, gender analysis and religion must be central in peace education, especially in situations where women and religious minorities are survivors of discrimination. In addition, more studies about the impact of peace education in other contexts, such as in Africa, Latin America, and Eastern Europe, are needed to enrich the existing literature. Last, but not least, people involved in our peace education programs learned through years of experience that while interfaith dialogue is crucial for the success of peace education efforts in contexts with inter-religious conflicts, intra-faith dialogue—such as among Muslims of different ideological positions who interpret the various Holy Books differently—is equally necessarily for the settlement of conflicts and the attainment of peace.

Reference


CHAPTER 2: CRITICAL-REFLECTION ESSAYS

Welcome Speech

Dr. Domingo “Bong” S. Aranal

Delivered during the Welcome Luncheon on April 12, 2007 at the Sky Room, Holmes Student Center Hotel, Northern Illinois University, Dekalb, Illinois

Dr. Brian Hemphill, Vice President for Student Affairs, Northern Illinois University, Hon. Blesila Cabrera, Consul General of the Philippine Consulate here in Chicago together with her staff and some members of the NIU Filipino circle of friends and leaders, including Princess Embraida Kiram, who drove all the way from Wisconsin to grace this occasion, Dr. Deborah Pierce, Executive Director of the International Programs, Dr. Susan Russell, Project Director of the Philippine Youth Leadership Program, Dr. Lina Ong, Project Coordinator and Director of the International Training Office, NIU, together with her dynamic NIU Team headed by Kuya Rey Ty, other NIU Officials, Dr. Nagasura Madalle, the In-Country Project Coordinator, and Vice President for Research and Extension, Capitol University, Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines, my co-participants, guests, ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon, Buenos Dias a todo y assalamu alaikum wa rah ma tullahi ta Allah wa barakah tuhu.

At the outset, on behalf of the adult participants of the Philippine Youth Leadership Program or better known as the ACCESS Batch 4 for CY 2006-2007, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all of you present here today. Indeed your presence has made us all feel warmly welcome, comfortable, and very much at home, despite the biting cold of the snow outside. I would like to let you know that we are delighted and truly grateful by the kind of hospitality you have shown to us since we arrived in Chicago on April 7th. I particularly acknowledge Tita Lina and her ever dynamic team – Kuya Rey, Amando, and Ate Lily Ann – who met us at the airport and who have since then been looking after our various needs. It is also very heartwarming to know, based on Dr. Sue Russell’s and Dr. Deborah Pierce’s remarks during the inaugural ceremony of this program held last April 9, that many of the NIU officials and friends are excited about this ACCESS Project and that you are all looking forward to meeting with us.

As I stand here before you, I feel elated to have been given this rare opportunity to travel particularly to this part of America, to share with you some of my initial thoughts and reflections as we move on with our peace building mission --- the very reason that brought us all twenty-seven Filipino Muslim, Christian, and Lumad (Indigenous People) participants in this four-week Institute on Inter-Ethnic Dialogue and Conflict Resolution, here at the Northern Illinois University, Dekalb, Illinois. I would like to believe that our coming together here today and in the next days to come, coupled with the active participation shown by my co-participants, is in fact a concrete expression of our own commitment to work for peace and development not only for our own selves, family, community, region, or country, but also for the whole of humanity.

When one scans the human family worldwide, it is impossible not to feel a strong sense of wonder at the enormous diversity of cultures and traditions. Many societies today are composed of groups or communities of divergent cultural traditions, beliefs, and ethnic origins. However, conflict often results from this diversity because, more often than not, groups do not respect or tolerate each other’s worldviews and fail to reconcile their differences through creative non-violent strategies. Often, the roots of such intercultural conflicts reach deep into issues of social, economic, and political inequities and structural violence. This was confirmed by Phinette Norton yesterday during her presentation on Understanding Cultural Diversity, capsulized in two key ideals of 1) being creative and productive and 2) being aware of possibilities and resources. I agree with Ms. Norton when she said that our differences are “something we can share.” I also found her activity on “stereotyping” to have some therapeutic value, which to me is very important in any peace building efforts. I believe that we need to heal our wounds to be able to continue the journey that we have already started. In this pilgrimage that we all take, I likewise believe that understanding and respecting where we each come from is a key towards bridging cultural differences, crucial to the ideal of achieving peace and development.
In the Philippines, or Mindanao in particular, where most of us come from, diversity is a phenomenon in great heights and challenges. Undoubtedly our cultural diversity, enhanced by a multitude of art forms, songs, dances, celebrations, indigenous beliefs and practices (some of which you will have the opportunity to witness today after my talk) is one of the best features that make us a nation or region so humanly rich and interesting. Unfortunately, however, the region has continuously been beset with conflicts widely covered by the media over the years. Instead of recognizing and appreciating the significant contribution that each group makes to the beauty of Filipino culture, in general, and Mindanao culture, in particular, so we can move forward as a nation, we find ourselves still stuck in the quagmire of intolerance and disrespect. Many of our people/communities, i.e. Muslims, Christians, and Lumads/Indigenous Peoples alike, still live behind centuries-old walls of stereotyping and discrimination, mostly derogatory and disrespectful of each other. Moreover, the lack of respect for each other’s religious and cultural practices, aggravated by ignorance and prejudice, has resulted in mutual distrust and alienation among our people in Mindanao. Unless we break down these walls, I believe that our journey towards peace will be long and arduous.

It is therefore inspiring to see that programs like the Institute on Inter-Ethnic Dialogue and Conflict Resolution are continuing to exist to help us better understand ways of breaking down walls of intolerance and building bridges of mutual understanding and respect among our people in the midst of diversity. In this program, we have the opportunity to explore the issues of inter-cultural or inter-ethnic conflicts which, I believe, play a vital role in obstructing peace, not only at the regional or national levels but at the global level as well. We hope to affirm that an inter-ethnic dialog about our cultural diversity can indeed be a valuable tool, instead of a debilitating hindrance, to peace. Cultural conflicts that have plagued our world, country or region must be reconciled through creative non-violent strategies, such as an inter-ethnic dialog. This, I believe my friends and co-participants, is the challenge we are facing.

I remember a Mozambique Village Leader who once said, “You can bring the culture of war in a plane and humanitarian aid in a truck, but you can not bring us the culture of peace because it is a tree with its roots deep in our land”. With this thought, I call on you, my dear co-participants, to continue to be part of this pilgrimage that we have embarked on. Let it be our task to help our very own people understand the different cultural traditions and traits of the various groups of Filipinos in our respective areas (Muslims, Christians, and Lumads or Indigenous People) when we go back home to our country --- Philippines. Such understanding must transcend stereotyping while remaining sensitive to the rich differences among all tribes and communities.

As ACCESS participants and peace builders, let us encourage one another to continue to tell people that diverse cultural communities and all the diverse religious groups can learn to live together in peace, harmony, and unity. Let us help people learn to dialog that will help all of us clarify the many misunderstandings and misconceptions that are deeply rooted in our past. Let us learn to build bridges of mutual understanding and respect, instead of walls of intolerance and prejudice, as we learn to discover and appreciate the beauty of one another. Let us also be reminded to be grateful to the government of the United States of America for its generous contribution to our effort to continue to work together towards a society that respects cultural differences and seeks to build cultural solidarity amidst diversity. Above all, let us be thankful to God for providing us the opportunity to be part of this noble work towards PEACE. Through ACCESS 2007, we can make a difference!

Padayon ACCESS 2007! Muchisimas gracias y wassalam to all!
Youth Leadership Program: A Privilege and Responsibility
Rodelio N Ambangan
Indigenous Person

The Philippine Youth Leadership Program 2007 offers a profound learning and experiences. For me, this event has two sides; it has opportunity and responsibility. It was an opportunity because many of my age yearn to travel abroad and experience the taste of American life; from feeling the glacial snow to the meeting of white men and women and above all meeting and working with the tri-people youth of varied perspectives coming from diverse culture. It is also a time to intensify responsibilities beyond the normal routine. It is the time to face the responsibility in applying new learning extracted from the training. For sure, I will invest more of my time, effort and other resources to work and manage with the tri-people youth and the indigenous people (Ips) youth in Southern Christian College.

Learning and Reflection

Community Facilitation Approach has no substitute approach in terms of providing service to the community people. There was a time in the history of Ips wherein Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) did some development programs by providing loans and other livelihood projects. But after sometime, when the project ended, the communities also end up with nothing. The community became dependent to external support. It is therefore logical to really uphold this community facilitation approach to empower themselves.

Strengthen, share and service – I strongly believe in this framework of individual and community development. Strengthening is the elementary level to any development and empowerment interactions. Education plays a primary role on this level – the kind of education that is contextualized into the individual and collective experiences of the community. Having this kind of education, it generates into another level, the level of sharing. Sharing of thoughts and deeds will provide power to people to serve – this level leads to service level. The service must consider its appropriateness and responsiveness to the needs of the people, and a service that empowers the whole community to help themselves.

Racism, and recognition and power- I believe that in attaining a rational and sustainable peace in Mindanao and any parts of the world, the community people must learn and appreciate the balance of power. Racism issue exists due to lack of appropriate and responsive recognition. Most racist maintains its power by establishing order and structure. Most of this structure can be vividly seen in the government. Education is the powerful tool to dismantle this unlivable power equation and eliminate racial discrimination at all levels.

Application

My learning could be applied through (1) Culture of Peace trainings and (2) Indigenous People Youth organizing. The main purpose of these activities is to invoke the tri-people youth participation in peace building efforts in Mindanao. We will also intensify the organizing and education of indigenous people’s youth to advance Lumad peoples rights and survival.
Engaging a New Generation of Youth for Dialogue and Peace
Domingo “Bong” S. Aranal
Roman Catholic

Expectations and Dreams
Each one of us --- participants to this Four-Week Institute on Inter-ethnic Dialogue and Conflict Resolution, who come from various parts of Mindanao, Philippines and belonging to different ethnic and religious communities, may vary in terms of our individual or institutional expectations. However, I believe no matter how varied these expectations may be from one another, there is still one common ground that binds us together and probably the very reason why we have all come to this part of the globe --- America and that is our collective dream of having Dialogue and Peace in our home country --- Mindanao, Philippines.

I am happy that this program has provided each one of us with the necessary knowledge, skills, attitudes needed by us to promote dialogue and peace most especially in our respective communities.

Reflections
Now that this program has equipped us with all the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to bring about social change, we continue to reflect more in terms of how and where we situate ourselves in this part of the country.

I believe, our ability to be able to look at things in a more broad perspective would allow us to understand and respect one another’s point of views.

This will facilitate the attainment of our dreams in a manner that is peaceful and non coercive as we do not simply put our own point of view on the other. Understanding, respect, acceptance and appreciation of one another regardless of his/her religious or cultural backgrounds are important values that we need to continuously nourish to be able to achieve this dream of PEACE.

Challenges
When I go back home, I promise to undertake whatever is called for me most especially my being a peace advocate and educator with so much joy and contentment. My work with the military may be difficult to achieve, but then I strongly believe I will be able to do this because I have the right kind of people around me and I have also the right attitude to facilitate their (military) own personal transformation that hopefully lead to societal change.
A Change for Peace
Aileen Chris Arellano
Youth Participant

Leadership Molding

Each one can be a leader for a change. Even an ordinary student can make a difference and that would make him an extraordinary one. Although things might be so hard, there are still solutions to it. It’s hard to adjust into a new environment. As what I have experience, we transferred into Kidapawan City as I had my first year high school. It took time for me to adjust with new people, new culture, new way of living and the environment around is quite so different from what I had before. But then, later, I’ve learned top live like them. I’ve learned to mingle with their culture, attitudes and way of living.

Those things helped me become a better person. As I had my study in NDKC, I’ve felt so lucky to study there. There, I had my first leadership training and I’ve learned that even an ordinary person can lead others. I am just like a little dust in our school when I first got there. I’m just quiet sitting in my seat and seem to be such innocent of what is happening around me. But when I’ve been one of the first honor students of our school, I became aware of my surroundings. I haven’t expected that I could be an honor student of the school. I kept my grades up thinking that my mother would be so proud of me if I maintain my grades up so that when I will graduate high school, she could attend in my graduation not like when I graduated my grade school without her by my side during our march. I know, it’s because that she was not satisfied with the honor I got. That event molded me to study hard and reach what I have right now. It’s not quite nice because it also made me earn anger to my mother.

But when had different leadership trainings and recollections, I’ve realized that I shall not keep anger to my mother. Instead, I just focused my attention to my studies and molded myself to become a good leader, a leader that can make a difference. One of the Trainings I’ve gone was that North Cotabato Schools Leaders Trainers Training on Inter-Ethnic and Inter-Religious Dialogue and Conflict Transformation.

During that 3-day training, I’ve met a lot of young leaders from different religions, different places and had different cultures who has more complicated situations that mine. Mine was just a simple one and that can be solved easily. I’ve reflected unto myself of what I’ve learned during that seminar. It turned me to have a resolution to my own problem. I talked to my mother and we just come up into a solution. Since that, I really want to join different organization especially those that aim to promote peace and encourages youth to become good leaders.

Joining the ACCESS Philippines Youth Leadership Program could really mold me into a better person and to become a good leader that can promote peace in our community and in our country even in just small ways. Conflicts might come into our ways but there’s a resolution of each conflicts if it could be solve as early as it could be.

Have I Changed at the Middle of the Flow?

It seems that days approached so fast and a lot of loads of learning were added into our backpack. At last, we survive the cold in here and friendship is going deeper among ourselves. We do have a lot of things we shared to others and that make us more effective leaders for a change. There are times that among the participants, there are conflicts that occur but I’m glad that a sudden solution was made regarding those topics.

Our topics are becoming more interesting and exciting as these days past. We have a lot of tour in different places. These tours were not just for fun. We learn in every place we go. Even in just passing by a diverse community, we learn things. We are reflected of the diversity that occurs here in U.S. and I’m amaze to see different races and ethnicity of people interacting with each other. It’s fun to see churches of different religion that are not found in our country and I am absolutely astonished by their architectural designs and way of culture.
And behind those designs, stories of teamwork, volunteerism, humility and leadership are recipes that make those architectures meaningful and to be treasured a lot by their successors.

I learned a lot of things out of the program and I knew more about myself. Respect is the first thing that I’ve learn. It has a very deep meaning for me. It’s a thing that you must have it in yourself for you to respect others. Without this, you could not be able to feel free to be yourself and to understand others. Another thing I’ve learned is that to cooperate with others to make more productive outputs. Considerations are needed in times of decision-making. Consensus can give opportunity to each person in the group to speak his/her point of view. It is also better to ask questions than judging a person by their physical appearance or religion they belong to. We don’t have to assume that we know all things. We may have stereotyped a person by just some descriptions of himself. I really tend to be pessimistic rather than thinking possibilities. But it is not right to have that attitude. Understand…not only things we can see but also those things we felt. Humility is present in Amish community. It showed us that only man itself makes life complicated. So, conflict comes from within us and TRANSFORMATION is needed. Silence…in such a way that it could be a sign of peace although sometimes, it means conflict. But through silence, we can be able to think of things that we want to happen, things that where we can hear the sound of nature, the essence of peace and the beauty to become peaceful in within ourselves and towards our community.

At this time, we are able to have our partial action plans for our region and personal plans to improve ourselves and to become a better leader. These plans can be our guide to transform ourselves into a better one. Yeah, I’ve learned a lot of things but I’m still really viewing for more, those things that can really mold each and everyone to be dedicated in making a change towards peace. I may dream big things. It’s hard to achieve it but I can do small steps either.

We youth are here in the program to be trained as leaders for peace. As of now, the training has made a great impact into me and even to others. It was great opportunity to be given a chance to be one of the participants of this project. I’m really thankful for that. I can see the transformation of each one of us as we come back home.

Social Responsibility & Community Service

I came here without awareness of the discrimination of other people. Having this program as a part of my life, I had a great transformation in my perspective towards the other religion. Now, I have that understanding, respect, sensitivity and awareness on other religion and ethnicities. I learn to be more helpful towards others voluntarily and valuing my responsibilities and that made me gain the “Social Responsibility and Community Service award”. I didn’t expect to have that because I’m not really helping others voluntarily before. Maybe that is one that transformed within me.

As we go back home, our backpack was now very full and we have a lot of things to apply, implement and share to others through service. As I go back home, I’m planning to have that Interfaith Youth Camp. But to make it successful, the first thing I’ll do is to communicate with the members of the organization. It is very hard to contact them because we are from different places in North Cotabato. There is also conflict that existed among the members and I want to reconcile each one of us for us to make the project successful. It’s hard but as what Dr. Garth K람 said, “Think big, but take small steps”. I can make it if will really make a move regarding this issue.

If I will succeed with that, I’ll really make the Interfaith Youth camp successful with the cooperation of my co-members. I really wanted the youth in North Cotabato to be aware in the diversity and to solve conflicts and misunderstanding in others religion and ethnicity. This will serve as my payback for the chance to be a participant of Philippine Youth Leadership Program 2007 and for the award that I received.

My service will not just end with that. I have to be consistent and have courage and strength to make steps to achieve my dream which is to have peace within me and with others. We will hand in hand work together and achieve peace in Minadanao, to our country and to the whole world. And I commit myself to serve others to reach that dream even I’ll grow old.
A Realm of Reality
Abdul Mahid M. Ati

Before Coming to the U.S.

I have been in this world for quite sometime – 16 years is enough for a youth like me to know and to assess what’s going on in my country more specifically in my community. I have been exposed to different peace – related activities since I was in high-school that equipped me to be what I am right now. I engage myself as a student leader in my academic institution yet, I do believe that my experiences, even though are not enough for me to say that I am an effective one, set my integrity, principles, and the way I see life in a constructive way. Through these experiences, I gained insights of peace that is, for me, divine so it cannot be attained without divine inspiration. It is a reality from within which is more that the silence of guns. And so, peace is the daily effort of man to appreciate his fellowmen and to live with them calmly and rationally. Therefore, peace should primarily come from within for there is no true peace if one is struggling with his inner emotions and yet showing calm outer self.

I see my community as a crucial part of my life because it is the place where I learned to love and be loved by my family and friends and where I cultured the norms of my community to mingle with other person and developed my background as an individual who wants to achieve lasting peace and development which is an elusive dream of mankind.

My community faces lots of problems in terms of governance, family feuds and other conflicts, public service, distribution of resources and other issues which normally passes through every community. I can say that RIDO which is a Meranao term equivalent to conflict is the biggest problem that our community always faces. Based on this I can say that there are two classifications of rido – a good and a bad one. For me, being a good believer of Islam aspiring to be governed by Islamic principles in the Philippines is that the rebels are fighting for an Islamic State is not a war against the government but rather a conviction that if will be realized then peace and development may be attained.

Maranaos are extremely sensitive people, especially when their maratabat is at stake that’s why there is always a conflict or rido in our community. Hence, Marawi is blessed with abundant resources in agricultural means and thus Lake Lanao provides electricity in the Lanao Province.

Although I do have knowledge in my community, there are still many things that linger into my mind and are not yet answered and this is one of the reasons why I joined the Access Program. Along with my personal reason is that I want to know more about the real me such as my strengths and weaknesses.

Youths have responsibility towards there own communities. They hold the key for a better tomorrow. So what are we waiting for, let’s start to perform these tasks through starting within ourselves.

While in the U.S.

It was been one of my dreams to go to the United States of America and this program actually giving me the opportunity not just to live and experience the American way of living but, then, the program is also teaching and preparing me in dealing with conflict resolution and exposing me into different activities such as the out – reach activities and visitations that promote the spirit of volunteerism and brotherhood. I also had a great deal in interaction with the American people. I found them accommodating and very interesting individuals. The value of appreciation and being time conscious are also starting to build up in my attitude. Moreover, I adore this country because they have been trying to achieve peace but due to their efforts they do achieve unity in the midst of diversity not perfectly but better than our country.

Returning to the Philippines

After gone through the ACCESS program, I have learned many things. My mind is now more enlightened to advocate for peace and to make a difference. The value of appreciation and positivism is now flowing into my veins. I can feel my fervor for peace. I learned to be mature and I’ve gain more confidence. Hence, I am
now strong than before. I can now do little things independently on my own. I also have undergone some forms of personal transformation because I saw the need to improve our selves first for us to become better advocates of peace and goodwill. In line with these, I learned not to stereotype and not to think of myself as superior to other people but, rather respect uniqueness and appreciate differences and commonalities. Now, I practice punctuality and mutual respect. Therefore, the program made me see the other side of the coin.

As a youth of Marawi, I do believe that the main problem of my community is bad governance. Nepotism is abundant. Political marginalization arises. People rally thus, government becomes greedier. And now, the voice of the youth matters. What can we, youth, do? What are we going to do? How can we make our community the community of communities? When will be the time that we can attain peace and unity amidst diversity?

I agree with “Think Big, Take Small Steps” by Mr. Cartner. He got it. That’s the right words. As I think of my community, the problem is bad governance. It is the core of the problems, challenges and issues that my community faces. The government takes a big responsibility towards the people that’s why they do affect the daily living of the people. And if they would use their power in a right proper way, then, crimes and other forms of violence that are happening in our community might be minimized. So, as an advocate of peace I believe that one way to solve this problem is through conducting leadership programs in the high-school level. Their values, attitudes, and principles would be developed in this stage and it is important to let them realize the scenario that that exists. And that is what I’m planning to do in my community, InshaAllah.
Times in America: Past, Present, Future
John Karlo Del Socorro Ballentes
Youth Participant, Protestant

I Didn’t Know It Was the Path

Even before the ACCESS program was exposed to Leadership and community work skills enrichment programs, I have joined lots of organization whose main bulk of work is to conduct trainings, seminars and workshops in the partner community of our school. My institution is one of the schools in the world who is giving great attention in the advocacy for Peace and Human Rights. We students are encouraged to be part of the Extension programs and community outreaches so that we can experience it on hand. I was once an apprentice in the Radio Program of our school where I was tasked to host a radio program which discusses current issues on Peace and Order and other topics in our community. I have also gone to different communities of various cultures and traditions. Due to these involvements my awareness was intensified on the ideas of the problem of Mindanao including the options for Peace and I instilled those things on my mind and was trying to look for a certain solution on what I can do as a youth that is aware on these issues. Until the ACCESS thing reached me and with the knowledge I have, My interview went on so well. I think that I had more ideas to some questions rather than my opponents because my learnings were fresh from the 4th Mindanao People’s Peace Summit and all the outputs which I gained from all the involvements I had. I became familiar to some ideas like Right to Self Determination (RSD), Conflicts in Mindanao, GRP-MILF Peace Process and the role of the Youth in Peace-Building. Indeed I memorized it by heart. It was the only time I realized that my efforts for Peace and the inputs I learned from all the summits, forum and lectures that the school have conducted are my best weapon in conquering the ACCESS 2007 Screening. I realized that all of our efforts will be paid off and we will enjoy its benefits maybe not now but somehow in the future.

Here’s the Track: Now What?

Perhaps one of the best things that happened in my life is joining the ACCESS Program. This program brought new and thrilling times in my usual living career. Being in the ACCESS is more than a summer escapade or a month long travel. I was thinking of it getting into serious things. Thinking of myself being into peace advocacy? I was clueless then. I was shocked and even afraid if I could ever stand the challenges ahead or as simple as passing the interview at first. It was difficult though and we’re clueless who’s got to go but maybe it was destiny to push me on the track I never thought I would be. Honestly, at first I took it as a simple competition I never knew they were missions and goals we need to accomplish and actually I really never figured it out what’s I’m going to. I was failing classes actually but I like to process my papers rather than attending boring Psychology classes. It was just like that, I applied and tried my best and then I passed. Then as just as a click I was at Northern Illinois University.

The first few days were on climatic adaptation. We are having classes but the thing in our mind is seeing snow and we did. Seeing snow in April is really unusual but maybe there was snow because there were us. The first half of the training was more on satisfying ourselves on the things we don’t enjoy in the Philippines. We bought new stuff eat big food and the flow of the program was really satisfying. As part of it, I can really see the efforts that the facilitators are giving into it. Every detail seems to satisfy our needs while we’re away from home. The hotel is great, we enjoy so much amenities that we are not having in our houses. The sessions’ flow is going very fine so far.

Every session has got a lesson to learn. There are really bunch of stuff that I learned. One thing can’t forget is respect I knew that it is indeed a necessary thing for harmonious existence. In order to be fruitful and productive individuals we must possess respect within us so that we can please other people. Another lesson that I like best is the one with Ms. Phinette Norton. When she started talking I was really amazed how strategic she is in delivering her lecture. She tried to present it as substantial and as interactive as it should be. I learned about the video clip entitled The Village 100 I realized that majority groups in the world will rule the village of 100.

It is really a clear interpretation of what is really happening now on the real world. People seemed to be creating their own problem. They create war maybe for business. The people in power don’t think of the people
suffering in pain, hunger, and poverty. There are peacekeepers but why is peace still very illusive? As far as the Philippine setting is concern there is armed conflict and discrimination among groups of people and peace efforts are really intensified to advocate peace instead of having war.

During our stay at the Peace Learning Center I have been really empowered to be committed enough in the endeavor for peace and development in Mindanao. I have learned how to resolve small conflicts and how to work peacefully achieving a more beneficial end result through consensus. I appreciated the principles of teamwork and how it will shape our efforts in groups. The community web was also a superior way to show how everybody is significant in the community and if anyone is not given an importance there will be misunderstanding that will lead to conflict. The experience at the Peace Learning Center is one of the most inspiring sessions. The facilitators themselves showed us that even if they are already professional their efforts for peace are really exceptional.

The sessions with Dr. Wei Zheng challenged me most. It impacted me in two ways. First, how will I apply my learning and second the Social Transformation in me. For everyone, it’s really a firm task. Indeed we are on the right track but what will happen now if we don’t move. On my part having all those lessons in my mind is a great instrument to really inspire me to change and go out in my comfort zone to be a catalyst for change in Mindanao. I can say that slowly I got my self moving in this path I chose. I know that with the help of my fellow ACCESS members we can be the hope of Mindanao. Though times may be tough and we might encounter dark hours, our determination and aspirations will be our strength as we persist in carrying the flame that will radiate the culture of Peace in Mindanao.

Life After NIU: How Will It Be?

Indeed, the biggest challenge that will come is our life after the program. We will be encountering difficult times especially in advocating for peace and for being a catalyst for change in Mindanao. All of us are expected to become a living example of the new generation of youth in our country. Now that our life in Northern Illinois University has ended we came to a point that we are to live on our own. We must live to the standards of our learning and be an example to the others. Life in NIU is full learning, experiences and challenges and all of us believed that our stay in the U.S. made us a better person and a great citizen of our country. Being home in the Philippines again is the point where our vision, mission and goal start. As an NIU alumnus of the Philippine Youth Leadership Program, I will fully manifest within myself the learning I gained in the United States of America. I will make my Project Plan as the stepping stone as I gradually instill in the minds of every Mindanaoans the essence of having peace in our land. Through Media Broadcasting I can promote awareness to all people. I will make myself responsible and credible enough in projecting my identity as an agent for peace. Times may be difficult and tough, but me and my fellow participants will never cease in advocating for the culture of peace, justice and unity.
The PYLP is successful in making transformations among the participants though not holistically but begun the change. After the writing, presenting and revising of action plans, our fresh minds are ready to take these into realization. However, many challenges await us as we go back to the Philippines. The time that we will return to our own country and begin to contaminate what we have learned is not a small thing.

We cannot change everyone’s perspectives. But it is everyone’s desire to make a change but unity amongst all diverse cultures is remained. We are challenged and we wholeheartedly accepted it. We are the peace advocates team. And as peace advocates, our own way to make a change is by peace. One instrument is the use of inter-ethnic dialogue.

It is not only the adults who are needed to participate in this. We have the youth and they should be given the chance to learn more and to understand because they are the ones who will nurture the next generation. Representatives of different age groups engaged in inter-ethnic dialogues. But it needs to transfer the information on the local population. So conducting motivating and fun-learning activities makes the process of peace building open for everyone and make an access to it.

Now that everyone is equipped with those information, community service is also needed. To be part of the community and to serve them is to begin to make real the community of communities. There are lots of plans we can do for Mindanao. And we are those privileged people who can begin that change.
No More Discrimination: My Noble Mission
Mohammad Ben-Uusman

According to our political and traditional leaders, our communities blessed with grandeur of natural resources and high-standard social living has attained such term as “PEACE”. But I don’t believe on them because I grew up on such society and I find it very poor in terms of development which tells me that peace has not been achieved yet. Perhaps, one of the most reasons why this happens is the presence of diversity which shows people a lot of differences---such as in culture, tradition, values, faith and beliefs. And having this differences eventually results into gaps among them.

Composed of many communities therein, Mindanao State University where I have been studying since my childhood has a very diverse population in terms of religion and ethnicity. Muslims who are mainly Maranaos, Maguindanaos, Tausugs, etc. and Christians, as well as Lumads or indigenous people, live together in the campus but with the inevitable presence of discriminations, prejudices and misunderstandings. As a result, intra-ethnic and intra-faith group isolations are what you can see everywhere. Furthermore, this greatly contributes to the deterioration of the good peace and order situation of the university.

Being one of the youth in such areas, I’ve been dreaming to deeply participate in eradicating such bad elements in the university. My participation of the PYLP-ACCESS 2007 is, indeed, one of the greatest steps I had hardly achieved in educating my self the art of leadership which I believe can be my great asset in doing so. With the PYLP, I’ve learned and experienced a lot. I’ve also came up into many realizations. I’ve also gained a lot of encouragements to really admire contemplating to such disastrous issues.

My action plan is entitled “MSU-Marawi City Youth Camp”. It is a three day program which consist a lot of activities such as inter-ethnic and interfaith dialogue, leadership skills enriching seminars and related activities, community services, daily monitoring and evaluations. It is designed for selected students in the university who are Muslims, Christians and Lumads to participate.

Inter-ethnic and inter-faith dialogue is, I think, the most important one. The participating students will be given the chance to talk and to mingle with one another to really understand each other’s religion and ethnicity. They will be also facilitated by us to speak and talk more about the peace and order situation and its significance in the everyday life. They are also going to be given a great chance to be with one another to also know and learn that going together amidst differences is not bad, yet a very happy one. Moreover, we will also share them our learning in the PYLP. They will be having seminars and trainings on leadership also to enhance their skills in interacting to other people, especially for those who live very different from each of them. They will be also oriented with community service to learn the pleasure feelings being part of the youth rendering a service to the community and to its people as well. They will be monitored and evaluated daily to see to it that the program is working all the time.

This program is one of the most effective ways that can be achieved and initiated to remedy such wounds of the community. The people in our community are altogether looking forward to also help. The local government has been always supporting us in many ways and they’ll probably assist us also for the implementation of the project. I believe that this will be very much efficient in attaining its goals. I also believe that with the help of the Almighty, we can also come up into a very good society with a happy people having no discrimination anymore despite the differences---MY NOBLE MISSION...Mabuhay Pilipinas (Long Live The Philippines)!
“It Pays to Strive Hard”

I am an officer of our school organizations, such as the Student Body Organization, Student Peer Counselors’ Club, Science Club, and the like. Being an officer in an organization, it really needs a lot of sacrifice, patience, and hard work. I have to attend some required leadership trainings and seminars and prepare required reports. I have to sacrifice some of my leisure time just to meet my responsibilities. There are many hard times dealing with my academics and extra-curricular activities but I find my self duty –bound. So I must do what is expected of me. There were times, I told myself, when I was just wasting my time as a youth doing all these. But I now realized I was wrong. I found out that it is absolutely great. I am grateful to the leadership trainings and seminars I’ve attended because it had provided me basic knowledge about leadership which are very useful and helpful in handling important matters in an organization and it also helped me towards self–development. All those experiences, all those hard and happy times working for the good of our organization have pushed me to soar more and it is the very reason why I have reached this wonderful place.

To be more specific, one of the various trainings and experiences I have attended in our school was the inter-ethnic dialogue which is usually conducted once a year. But I’m not that active. I was just there listening and observing participants’ different opinion, ideas, and beliefs. I believe that by simply attending and listening to these forums, I will have a deeper understanding and awareness on different beliefs, and cultural practices. With this awareness I establish better relationships with others. It helped me overcome my prejudices and biases especially towards our Muslim brothers and sisters who are always the suspects of car napping, hold-ups, and all sort of troubles in the School Campus. Hence, one of my close friends is a Muslim.

I also had an experience witnessing a conflict settlement between Muslim and Christian market vendors. It was held in the house of my grandfather and the arbitrator was my grandpa’s cousin, who was once the town mayor and who will be the in-coming Mayor. He runs for Mayor in the coming election and can be proclaimed winner because there is no other candidate for that position. From what I witnessed, that the cause of the conflict was due to lack of awareness of cultural practices among the conflicting parties. The arbitrator was successful in settling the conflict because he knows the culture of each group and knows how to reconcile them without offending ones belief,

Thus, I believe that being an active member of an organization leads to self development which can be radiated to others. This will help improve the life of each member in the community and will ultimately lead to peace and order. No doubt we will have a better quality of life.

Like a Big Bang!!!

The Philippine Youth Leadership Program is a big bang to me. It contributed a lot of great things- cognitive, social, psychological, cultural, physical development. I’ve observed enormous improvements within myself. For me, one big impact of the program is my transformation into a person imbued with leadership and social skills. One day I was surprised by my realization that somehow, and in someway I’ve effectively interacted with other people. I’ve come to this realization because before I really, badly hate and had a hard time socializing with people. I believe that in order to overcome this, I need to undergo the learning process of life. The interaction we had with the high school, college, elderly, Amish, facilitators and all the different kinds of people, especially with the host family and social gatherings greatly helped a lot in building my skills in socializing and getting along well with people. It requires a step by step process and it can’t be done overnight. And now in someway or another I find interacting with people interesting and fun. I have realized that before I have attended this training, being a leader in the various school organizations was somewhat difficult for me because my skills were not fully developed.
The program is really a great help to all of us, we acquired much knowledge about culture of peace and the roots of conflicts. One thing that sticks to my mind is that hatred is the main reason why we have conflicts. This hatred is caused by stereotypes, biases, prejudices, and the like. If we could just eliminate these things we can achieve peace. These stereotypes, biases, prejudices can be overcome by being aware of each other’s culture, practices, ideologies coupled with understanding, acceptance, tolerance and respect.

“Memories and Commitment”
Our four week training institute on inter-ethnic dialogue and conflict resolution has come to its end but our quest for social transformation in Mindanao continues. It seems that it was just yesterday when we came to NIU and now we are leaving. The Philippine Youth Leadership Program gave us great, tough, fun experiences. The activities and all the things we need to do were really tough. We had a lot of work to do. Good thing was, we also had fun in all the activities. The program also brought personal transformation within each ACCESS participant. The program impacted us in different ways. For me it helps in building social skills. All in all my experiences was absolutely great.

Now, we have to face the challenges that was been set forth by the program. We must now have the courage and commitment in implementing our plans. We must exert effort in working out our plans. By the time that I return home, I will implement my plan and make it happen. For me, my plan is really much attainable with the help, coordination of other people in the institution as well as in the community. I planned to have a peace related activities such as information campaign through seminar-workshop, inter-ethnic/faith dialogue and Fun activities (Literary contest, poster making, slogan making, essay writing, all about Unity in diversity). In this way I believe that it helps educate Christian, Muslim, Lumad and the other students about how to achieve Peace and Unity in diversity.

As what Dr. Katner said “making the ideal real is where the hard work begins”. This is true that’s why we need to exert effort to make our plans happen. We should not give up and be committed to our plans. By doing this, we help in attaining the transformation that we all dreamed of the social transformation in Mindanao. Isn’t that great contributing for the transformation in the entire Mindanao? Absolutely great
My Quest for Peace
Sunny Vhie Dublan

The best thing of being a human being is that we are given the prerogative to do what we wanted to do. I am definitely one of those who wanted to have a better place who is using my prerogative to think and reason out correctly. I am living in a place where Christians are the majorities, Lumads are seen and Muslims are rarely seen. This might be difficult for me to be an advocate for peace but it is still one of the main reasons why I am here. I wanted to reach out and find something that could change me in the sense of knowing others, developing my skills and talents, learn and to be a catalyst of peace. I am now in the midst of asking myself where really am I. People sometimes misunderstand me with the attitudes I show but I’m just showing who really am I.

My life evolved in our home, school, in the organizations where I belong and in my community where I live in. Since then, I’ve been working for change. I’m one of those youth who shows the effort to be the best role model. I join FARM foundation which mobilized the youth of today especially high school students. I served as counselor an Ate to every youth regardless of age, sex, color, etc. I’m one of those who join activities that what I believe is enough for me.

Since then I live a simple life. I’ve been a president, vice-president and a member of clubs and organizations but I really think that is not enough for me. Maybe there is something that should be for me or that I should work-out. I was one of the youth leaders in our community and in our school. I’ve been studying nursing but part of our curriculum in school is to have Religious Education that’s why my idea of being an advocate of peace before really boosted. We did some training on values, conflict resolution and what the youth can do to humanity. I experience the feeling of inter religious dialogue where you got to know deeper other religions. I believe inter religious dialogue is not for comparison of religions and I’ve meet also some people who really gave me an inspiration to go on with what I believe is right. I did some integration on different religions: Muslims, Lumads and Christians. We’ve gone to the mosque, to Iglesia ni Cristo churches and to every religion in our community. But this is not enough for me. I wanted to learn more and develop more what I should have and to make a positive difference in myself and in the world.

Just yesterday I was thinking that I should make some striking title for my midterm essay and I definitely found it with what Ate Mai emphasized about making a change. For almost three weeks of being away to my family I found myself learning the process of being independent to my family and liberating myself to new ideas and things to explore more with the presence of the people around me today.

Is there really a way for change? Away from these things that we all experienced and we don’t want to go back? I’m living what I believe is right I may have been a sinner before but I think Ma’am Laurel Jeris is right about the people who become a menace if they could only just change they could probably be the one who will lead the positive change.

I actually learned a lot with the program I may have mistakes but I usually take it as part of the learning process. On the past few days one person that really struck me most with her topic was Ma’am Forest she actually elaborated the ideas of American diversity. I usually seen America as a wealthy nation who actually owns and acquires the right and equal services they need but it seems to be that there are still people who actually experiencing difficulties with the accessibility and availability of the resources. Ma’am Wei was also very articulate: she comes with the different way of teaching step by step. She helped us design our regional action plans and it seems to be that all people really participated.

Another person that I really admired was the courage of Ate Mai to make a difference with the women’s right. She cited inch by inch the discrimination of Islam women on their way of life. I really sympathized with the people who became part of discrimination, stereotyping and many others. I strongly agreed that far more important than fighting for yourself is fighting for the people you loved and you will be loved. I loved the way program goes it seems to be realistic of what really is happening today but I don’t know what is inside my head.
that is really craving not with the theories but I’m looking for a different way of dealing the conflict. In realized
that god has a lot to offer to me and this might be one way of delivering his message but it’s like dealing with
art- the art of making a change, the art of dealing the conflict with our heart and minds. We may be looking for
solutions but the real thing is looking for some things which is in our hands.

We had the interaction with the high school students and college students. Yes, they might have the best
things of material wealth but I believe were far richer than them not because of our face and not totally because
of our money but with the vast experiences we encountered. This is the best way of driving yourself to the path
of making and bringing about some change in history!

Bringing what I have learned was I think the supreme way of achieving your goals. When I go back I
may have this 2-day seminar that would train advocates who does not only train to be an advocate for peace but
to mold people who are cultural sensitive and respectful into the humanity. I’m hoping that maybe for the future
I could finally live in a better place. In a place where there would peace, understanding and justice. My com-
mmitment to this vision of peace might be hard and instilling to the mind of the people what your perspective is
the best thing of being an ACCESS Alumna. It does not only mean achievement because of your certificate but
it’s actually fulfilling to do such move not only for yourself but to the whole humanity.

I always missed my family but this is only my motivation to move on and do the best for them. When I
go back in the Philippines I may have a lot of things to do but this does not mean that my advocacy for peace
will cease. Still, my commitment is a lifetime one. When I get back into the Philippines I will do a lot of net-
working and preparation for my seminar. I’ll try my best to such move to lessen the conflict in our place it may
be hard to do cause it involves the lives of my family but still my commitment is advocacy and that’s what I am.
First thing that I will really consider is on how can I change myself to a more better one and transmit to other
people the values that could lead to peace.

Times had passed and years will be gone but I know deep inside my heart that my passion for peace will
never fade. I know that what I learned could be use.
A Wonderful Journey of a Volunteer
John Yrick Era
Youth Participant, Male, Roman Catholic, Ilonggo, from Norala, South Cotabato

Dealing with My Own Weakness: Shyness

Before, when I was in my elementary and secondary years I used to be a shy person. Anything is somewhat strange to me that I could not even talk to anybody whom I did not know. Things were difficult for me cope with. I could hardly communicate with others because of my weakness-shyness.

When I got into college, things really change. I am starting to conquer my shyness. What I did is joining clubs and organizations and participating on their activities. The clubs and organizations that I am with today are the following: Pathways to Higher Education, T’nalak Youth Group., Junior Philippine Institute of Accountants, Honors’ Society and Philippine National Red Cross.

I have learned a lot in the Pathways to Higher Education. I was transformed when I started to join in this non-government organization. My current work here is in the tutorial programs which are offered to 4th year high school students in our province, South Cotabato, and which are held regularly during Saturdays. I have been a volunteer teacher for one year; I have given my time and effort in free just to help my fellow youths.

Volunteerism and Leaderships skills are the two of the most important things I have learned during my work in Pathways to Higher Education. I value Volunteerism, in the sense that I gave my time and effort without any complains and expecting a return. I acquired Leaderships skills from various programs and activities that are offered by the Pathways to Higher Education. The activities are for the volunteers for them to have self-confidence in influencing their co-volunteers to strive more to be able to serve to our fellow youths.

Now, I have learned to conquer my weakness-shyness. I learned how to gained self-confidence. My advice to those who are shy, just believe in yourself. Try your best in everything you do. With the things I have learned for the past years, I have stick to my own motto in life “Never give up.”

I am very much grateful that I am one of the 20 youth participants qualified for the Inter-Ethnic Dialogue and Conflict Resolution Training. This is another start of my journey as a volunteer. I am thankful to the staff and all the persons involved in this program, it would really help me a lot, to continue what I have started, “Giving hopes to the diverse Filipino Youths, whether you are a Lumad, Muslims, or Christians.”

My Seven Inspirational Learning Experiences

Why only seven? You may wonder why it is only seven and in fact I could put all hundreds of the ideas I’ve gained from the Philippine ACCESS Leadership Program. It is because I put all of these learning experiences into just seven phrases. I combined all of them. And one thing more, number 7 is a great number for us, ACCESS Philippines 2007- Batch 4.

I am now in my halfway pilgrimage in this international training seminar on Inter Ethnic Dialogue and Conflict Resolution. I have already acquired so many new ideas and facts about the different topics regarding about the goal of the ACCESS program.

The seven inspirational learning experiences enumerated below is from my very own reflection, thoughts and challenging experiences based on the things I’ve learned. They are presented in a logical manner because each of them is interrelated to each other and one can’t be realize without the other.

1. Opening Myself
(Knowing more about myself)
The pre-departure orientation that I have in Manila and my first days in the Holmes Student Center Hotel in NIU with my other colleagues made me discover more about me. My strengths were unveiled and some of my weaknesses vanished. I have identified some of the potentials and capabilities that I could contribute in the ACCESS program.

“Knowing deeply about myself made me realized that with my strengths and opportunities I have, I can do more than what I can do before.”

2. Recognition and Appreciation
   (I discover and I appreciate)

   The activities that I participated in getting to know other people, visiting different religious places, interacting with different American students, and staying with my host family are the best experiences I have in the ACCESS program. I’ve learned to recognize and accept other people of different beliefs. Being open-minded and understanding are some of the attitudes I acquired in the ACCESS program.

   “I recognize them by their first names and I appreciate them, this is recognition.”

3. Friendship
   (I am making invisible ties)

   Meeting new people, visiting high school and college American students, exchanging email addresses, inviting friends, in short “making friends” is one of the challenging experiences I have in the program. I make invisible ropes that connect me to my new friends that I really treasured. “The invisible ropes of friendship that connect me to the persons I have met in the ACCESS program will gave me opportunities that could help in the attainment of my goals not personal but as a catalyst of peace in Mindanao.”

4. Common Goals
   (I dream and I share)

   All the lectures and workshops I had in the ACCESS program made me realize and create deeper goals and views in my own life. I formulated goals that would suite the goals of the program. I’ve learned the goals of my colleagues and I knew what to do. We share common dreams, we share common goals and that is to have a community of communities in Mindanao.

   “The life that I want to live depends on the decisions that I have made.”

5. Willingness and Obedience
   (I’m willing and I will obey)

   The persons who made this program possible really inspire me more. I am very much grateful that I met Dr. Russell, Dr. Madale, Dr. Ong, Kuya Rey Ty, NIU team and all others, who gave their time and effort for us, ACCESS participants. The spirit of volunteerism is one of the noble virtues that I want to live on. The willingness that these people showed to me, I am now willing and thus I should obey these people.

   “If there is willingness in my heart and obedience in my plans, I could be able to achieve my goal. Just believe in yourself, never give up.”

6. Teamwork
   (I’m blending with the group)

   When I did the workshops and activities of the ACCESS program, I am actually creating harmonious relation with my colleagues. I’ve learned from the Peace Learning Center that teamwork is one of the
tools that I can use and we could all use to attain our common goal. Determination, trust and patience should be inculcated among the members of the group to create a very good teamwork.

“I let my mind think, my heart feel and my hands act, I share and I blend with others, all of us become one.”

7. God’s guidance
(I’m strengthening my faith)

The most important thing I’ve gained and develop from the ACCESS program is to strengthen my faith on God. I prayed with my colleagues, we share inter-faith praying every morning. It really made me strong and be optimistic in every thing I do. All of us have one God, we only differ in the way we praise him. “No matter that you are, what you are, has a strong faith on Him and He will give you peace. Believe that we can all make a difference.” These are my thoughts, my feelings and my learning experiences. These would not be realized without the ACCESS program. I learned, I was satisfied, I gained, I realized and I have fun for this half month experience. There is still half month more, and I am sure I will learn more.

“A Big Challenge to ACCESS 2007”

The four week institute training program also called as, Philippine Youth Leadership Program (PYLP) 2007 was ended by a graduation ceremony of the ACCESS youth and adult participants last May 8, 2007 at the Sandburg Auditorium, Holmes Student Center Hotel at Northern Illinois University. It seems that it was just yesterday that all of the ACCESS participants met and became friends with each other. Now, we are saying good bye to each and everyone and especially to all the people who made this program possible. My experiences as a whole in the Philippine Youth Leadership Program are really great. There are many things that I’ve learned, gained and felt in the program. One of these big things is the Action Plans. Before I went here in the United States of America, I haven’t ready a sample of what I am going to do after this program. Though if you think it is rude not to prepare something but after learning from the lecture of Dr. Zhing and the critique made by Kuya Rey on my action plan really made me more responsible in all the things I will do.

My action plan is all about adopting a small village where-in we can find different people, inter-ethnic with each other and different religions. Why I chose this kind of project? I chose this project because I want to help my people in our place, Norala. I want to interact with them and know there problems and the conflicts they have from other religions. After knowing the conflicts, I will find ways to solve it and making them realize that conflicts made our lives miserable. Some of the things I want to do being a volunteer are (1) to serve whatever and whoever community that needs help (2) promoting peace in ourselves and to others and (3) share my blessings. All of these are just simple things but it is really worthy if you will really work on it.

The biggest challenge for me now is realizing my action plan, putting my ideal into real things so that I could build a community of communities in Mindanao (taken from Dr. Katner). The questions are: (1) Do I have the skills and tools? (2) Do I have the leadership skills (3) Do I commit myself in the mission and vision of the PYLP 2007 (4) Will I implement my action plan? (5) Will I take the courage and perseverance to fulfill these dreams of young leaders? In God’s will, “Yes, I have; Yes, I will.”

Before ending this essay, I want to share my motto in life and it is the shortest graduation speech ever made in the Oxford University.

“Never Give Up, Never Give Up”
-Winston Churchill

Kalinaw-Mindanao
Padayon ACCESS 2007
Thank you very much
Gracias me amigos
Maraming Salamat
Daghang Salamat
Madamo gid nga Salamat

God Bless and Good Health……Hasta luego, until we meet again………………
My Three Steps for Peace
Sheryan Pendaliday Guialel
Maguindanaon, Youth Participant, Female, Muslim

Before: The Foundation
Islam is a very sacred religion for me. It is because of its unique laws and teachings that sympathized a faithful belief in God. In our home, my family is practicing our religion as best as we can. When I was a child, my parents already mold my mind about the religion of Islam. I have learned many things. It is that we should be careful of what food should be eaten or not, what clothes and many things. Our religion is very sensitive and should really be understood, not only our religion but all religion should be understood by all of us. I had my experience at the department store regarding my HIJAB (head covering for women). I was walking and then I saw two salesladies looking at me and whispering ‘take care, a shoplifter!’ I was so embarrassed that time, but then I hold my temper to have no trouble because I was grown by my parents in the environment of no fighting. It is because they do not want their children to experience war like them. They had a lot of stories that were told to me. This became one of my reasons why I pursue in joining Inter-ethnic Dialogue for me to understand other people more.

When my parents sent me at my first school, I learned a lot like how to lead a group until I reach the position of being an officer in our school. I tried to do my best to maintain my service and fortunately, I am still an officer in our school right now. I am so thankful because I was given a chance to learn things that is useful. I had also a great experience that is hard to forget in my student life. It is when I participated in our University Intramurals on a Declamation contest representing High School department. Fortunately, God help me made it! I had also an experience of camping on GSP, when I was elementary. It became so interesting for me because it will be my first time to meet people from other places and mingle with them. On camping we do enjoy our activities like adventures, doing community services and trainings for us that will be useful for our future. On my High School life, GSP was changed in Peer Counseling which is more interesting because you are going to listen to somebody’s problem. I had a lot of experiences that I encountered when I entered in this Peer Counseling. I had meet different characteristic of students and different problems from them which seem to me so interesting. As of now, I will try to continue my experience journey until I could reach my ambition.

I was so thankful to God because He let me to experience those good and bad things. In my good experiences, I continue to learn and developed myself because I discovered many things which are useful for everyone else. On the other hand in my bad experiences, I also learn something like understanding people who has no enough knowledge about the world. Because of this bad experience, I gain a determination to help people on how they could understand some confusing things. I think, I would not consider it as bad because it helps me a lot. So, those are my most unforgettable experiences. I wish I could tell a lot but those are the most important one. I hope you enjoy reading My Experiences and can gain some lessons!

Now: Good Start to a Great Success
“The program was so good. It has many adventurous and advantageous objectives. It is all useful for all of the people, but there was a time that I felt too small and questioning myself, “why am I here?” It’s kind of weird but honestly it really came out of my mind.”

Within the halfway of the program I learned many things out of those sessions and lectures. There were 3 important words that stored in my mind and submerged in my heart. Those were C.U.S. which mean Coming out of comfort zone, Understanding everybody and Silence.

Silence is very important when you’re going to think deeply. It helps a lot for us to get a good and great idea. That’s why in building peace, we should have a moment of silence for us to have greater ideas and to have also a great success on implementing it. The word Understand and Respect really submerged in my mind because it really helps us on peace. Coming out of comfort zone for the so-called transformation is really hard to do. It needs more time to adjust. Being uncomfortable is really bad to be felt. That’s why comfort zone is hard to
leave but leaving it can really help us a lot. It will make you a strong and true person. I find it hard to leave my comfort zone because it was really my weakness. I am too shy, no courage and cannot easily mingle with others. Everyone advises me, my friends, teachers and even my sister. She’s a shy person also and advises me not to follow her step, instead I should know what I really want to do but my problem is how? How could I do that? Philippine Access helps me to do it and now I hope I could start and will continue it constantly.

“In finding a moment of Peace, you need something. You need to be serious about it, you need to concentrate and finally you need SILENCE… in Silence, you would be able to UNDERSTAND people and knows how to RESPECT them. By that way, you already TRANSFORMED yourself and be able to Transform EVERYBODY to be one of the PEACEMAKER in the world. That will be “A GOOD START TO A GREAT SUCCESS”.

**After: The Future Plan for a Peaceful Mindanao**

I am now transformed. I could say that after the whole month of training, I changed a lot. My attitude, my perspective and my belief was changed. The transformation in myself was a positive transformation. I learned to be independent and I learn to respect others.

Now I am ready to face the challenge, the challenge that changed me a lot. It is the action plan that made me realized how important to be independent. I became a better person because I know that I could now do some things which I can’t on the past. I became more mature because I am now concern on attaining peace and to the other people. I want a change on our place. I want them to understand the culture of peace and I also want to help them. For me to be able to reach these goals, I will create an organization made of youths. Why youths? It is the common question. Youths because their minds were still fresh and not polluted which are willing to accept information. Molding minds is sometimes difficult but if you are sure that it is for the better, there will be no reason why we can’t do it. I plan to an organization which will be aware of culture of peace. They would experience workshop first for them to understand the reason of the organization. I dream a peaceful community in our place that’s why the organization that I am planning to organize is having a mission to spread their learning by applying on, by recruiting or convincing and by helping the community. I could say that it is like STRENGTHEN, SHARE and SERVE of Dr. Garth. It is the strongest strategy that could build a Community of Communities which was told by Dr. Garth that needs to Think Big, but Take Small Steps. It is how we could attain PEACE by slowly but surely step. Let us struggle for PEACE in MINDANAO.
Dream Big, But Work Hard

Islam is peace. It is a way of life. Hence, peace in Islam is a way of life. It is what I most value for I am a true believer of Islam who came from a pious Muslim family. It taught me on how to live my life peacefully through the guidance of my family, friends, and other people that surrounds me. As a Muslim woman, I always wear a head covering (hijab) for it is obliged for me and it is stated in our holy book (the Qur-an). I came from an ethnic tribe, the Tausug. Many people don’t know what Tausug and Muslims (Islam) are. Hence, they stereotyped us.

Tawi-Tawi is the place where I live. It is a peaceful province at the southern tip of the Philippines and of Mindanao in particular. However, conflicts will always exist anywhere and anytime. I, myself have experiences and am involve in conflicts. Discriminations and stereotyping occur especially when Muslim women are wearing hijab. These happen not only in our place, but also in our country and even in the whole world. Feelings of superiority and inferiority among the majority and minority groups respectively also cause conflicts. People live in diversity and only few cares for it.

As a youth, I was also active in promoting peace in our place. I have always participated in activities related to peace and the development of our society. I was able to experience being a leader. My institution and organization as well gave me those opportunities. I have been part of different clubs such as Science, Mathematics, Arabic, English and so on in my institution. I am also a member of a Muslim women organization, the Qudwatun Nisail Muslimat (QUDWA). Through these exposures, I was able to volunteer for community services such as outreach programs to those indigenous people in our place. Moreover, I am part of the Mentoring Program of Tawi-Tawi Family Life Foundation Inc. (TFLF) wherein I am a mentor of those children who have difficulty in reading and writing. This gave me the opportunity to build a rapport among us, mentors, and as well as our mentees.

I have always dreamt for peace in everywhere. I have always worked hard to achieve my goals. What I am right now is the result of what I was before. I have always kept my faith in God (Allah). I am proud being what I am, a Muslim-Tausug youth.

The Beginning of a Wonderful Journey

The Access Philippine Youth Leadership 2007 is a training that I never imagined I would be involved. Yet, God (Allah) gave me this wonderful opportunity. As what they say, “Many are called, but few are chosen.” I learned more about conflicts and its resolution. I was able to interact with different people of different faiths and cultures.

I live in diversity, yet I wasn’t really aware of it. Through the sessions, visitations and other activities of this program, greater awareness had developed in me. My understanding of the differences of the people was increased. I have built camaraderie with the people I met especially with my co-participants. I met different people of different ages. I was able to understand them although our faiths and cultures are different. I also earned more knowledge about Americans. I was exposed to different places of worships such as mosque, synagogue, Hindu temple, Baha’I temple, and church. There were lots of differences that must be shared. I also found some commonalities; all of those faiths want peace.

In addition, staying with our host families is one of my greatest experiences during my stay at the United States. They were so accommodating and really took care of us. I was able to live the way Americans do. We had interacted and shared each other’s faith. I was challenged to share more about my religion, Islam.

This training enabled me to share my faith and cultures to others especially to my co-participants and likewise, they also did. Our Muslim prayers and the wearing of hijab were some of those important things I’ve shared.
This program developed me to really work hard on my passion for peace. I now have the dream to make a difference for peace in my own community and in Mindanao as a whole. Hence, this is a great stepping stone for me to fulfill my dreams and this is just the beginning of my wonderful journey.

**I Can Make This Happen: Face the Challenges!!!**

The training at Northern Illinois University has got to end. I learned, shared, understood, cried, laughed, and opened my mind. All of those things I would never forget. I will always treasure the camaraderie that has been built with my co-participants and cherish the moments with them. All of us have been personally transformed by this program. I can say that the whole training was really great.

I participated in this training for a purpose. This is to implement my action plan. This implementation is not an easy thing to do. Thus, I should take the challenges and difficulties that I may encounter as a reason to improve my self and as an inspiration. I have to share for me to make a difference.

My plan is all about interfaith and inter-ethnic interactions of students through seminar-workshops and other peace related activities. This is to empower students on peace and their roles as youth in development. I know I can make it through the support of my family, friends, PYLP 2007 and alumni, and most especially with the guidance of the Almighty God, Allah.

I can make this happen! Aim for PEACE in MINDANAO!
Metamorphosis
Sittie Norhanie H. Lao
Islam, Maranao, Female

The Egg

As far as I can remember, I began to be active in extra curricular when I was in my junior days. That was when I joined our school organ. After undergoing through numerous screenings, I ended up as the news editor. It was my stepping stone. I got recognized by people when they were able to read my articles and other paper works. From that time, I realized that I should work hard to be the editor-in-chief of the following year. My efforts were paid off. After several more difficult screenings than the past, I finally had my dream put into reality. But, it wasn’t the end of everything. It’s even the start of the new chapter of my life as a senior student. I was able to get one of the highest positions next to the student body president, but along with that great blessing is a great responsibility. Within my term, a period of one school year, I learned a lot of things that helped me grow. Heading the school paper granted me experiences that other students in our school were not able to experience. Most importantly, I was able to have my leadership skills tested for the very first time. It was my first time to handle a huge responsibility. It was difficult. There were so many fears inside me. I had always asked myself, “What if the hundred and fifty thousand budget for the publication will not be worth it?” Writing is a very sensitive job of course. We have to be very cautious with what the articles are talking about. It put me to the realization that it takes a lot of courage for media men to freely express.

When I was in my senior level, I got the opportunity to be a part of a three-day leadership training program, the Kalilintad Youth Camp. I could say that this youth camp had influenced me a lot, in a positive way of course. I was able to realize the prejudices and biases that I have against others. I have negative impressions with other Maranaos of my age who are not studying at my school. I have unfavorable beliefs against Christians before. Stereotyping is a normal thing to consider then but not until I participated in the youth camp. I learned the value peace and respect. I learned the significance of peer mediation. I learned to value others as much as I value myself. I knew that I should learn to follow before learning to lead.

Just this February, I was able to participate in an interfaith dialogue organized by the Inspired Young Optimists Guild (IYOG) in our university. I also learned a lot. I was still in the stage of adjustment that time, because of the huge diversity that I am witnessing every single school day. Mindanao State University is a very big laboratory for social integration and the second home to its students which are constituted by Muslims, Christians and Lumads from all over the MinSuPala region. As days pass by, I slowly learn that there can really be unity in diversity. I learned that despite the differences we had, there are also a number of commonalities among us. Now, I have established friendships among people that are not a part of my ethnicity and religion.

But I know that these aren’t enough yet. I am young and I have the opportunities to learn and make a difference. Now, I am very blessed to take a higher step. I am very lucky that I am currently participating in the ACCESS Program. I am continuing to gain knowledge and enrich my personality everyday, so that in the future, I could be of useful tool towards attaining progress, peace and unity.

Pupae Stage

Learning is always like being a butterfly. We start from zero just like being an egg and then you grow each day until you reach that stage of becoming a real and beautiful, well-formed butterfly. I never knew that I could experience what I have experienced as a part of the Philippine Youth Leadership Program. It put me to the realization that learning never stops. I was skeptical at the beginning of the program. I oftentimes asked myself, “As a youth, what could I possibly do to promote Culture of Peace among people, and why in a foreign place?” Of course, peace-building is such a very difficult task. Each day, I get clues for this jigsaw puzzle to be completed. Now, I am halfway to finally figuring it out. Thanks to the PYLP.

I am aware of what’s happening around me. I know if there’s any change that occurs within me. I would assess that I am on the pupae stage of my life as a visiting student here at NIU. I could feel the changes that took place and that are taking place. This program is effectively transforming me to a better person. Everyday is education, not only for the mind and soul but for the heart. One thing that this program taught me is the virtue of
punctuality. It may sound very common but coming on time contributes immensely to the progress of the nation. I learned that a country with lazy people meets lazy progress.

In the first two weeks, I have gained a lot of learning and insights. I have realized a lot of things. I have realized what DIVERSITY really means. The interactions that I had with different kinds of people made me the “more mature Sittie” that I am at present. I am happy that now I have greater understanding of other people’s religion and learned new faiths that I have never heard before, like the Baha’i. Because of this greater understanding, I learned to appreciate and to respect them more. I opened myself to hear and learn from others who have different religious affiliations with me. I learned to appreciate the differences, but most of all I’ve learned that no matter what religion each of us is in, our religions teach the same things: love, peace, respect, and goodwill.

I am able to find commonalities not only among the religions, but between the history of the Philippines and history of the United States. Now I know why this program takes place in America. In my own opinion, it is because Philippines and America share a lot of commonalities and differences that both of them can learn from. They both have very diverse environment and people. Both experience conflicts. Having the experience of home stay with host families is also overwhelming. My first two days are very memorable. I get to experience and learn more about American family and living through interaction. I also get to educate them about my country and culture. Indeed, this program is really effective. Personal transformation: affirmed!

The Butterfly

I remembered lines written by Dean Tjosvold, a US psychologist and author. It goes, “Learning is a common journey that binds leaders and employers together...Learning unites leaders and followers in a common journey of self-discovery and team development.” This is true for all of the twenty-six participants.

I started with a premise that I need no one and nothing to prove myself as good. Being a grantee of this program is such a BIG thing I have in life right now. If it made me proud that I was able to qualify in the screening processes of the program, I am more proud that I am now able to accomplish something BIG as a graduate of PYLP. Now, it’s time to reflect. Certainly, the metamorphosis of the butterfly perfectly describes the great changes I’ve undergone in a very short span of time. From, an egg, I continued to be more and more mature until I reached the stage where I am right now, a well-formed butterfly.

The program gave me a lot. It improved me as a social being. I learned to prefer reaching out than waiting for others to reach out. I realized so many things about myself. The experiences I had from the program made me aware of my potentialities and my limitations. From this comprehension, I learned to maximize these potentialities not only for my own good but most importantly, for the good of the many. However, the best thing I’ve proven to myself is that as a youth, there is really something that I could contribute for the betterment of my community and for the country as a whole. Now, I finally realized my role in this big stage of life. I finally realized my dream.

I have so many plans to implement, but as what I have learned from Dr. Garth, “THINK BIG but TAKE SMALL STEPS.” I think before I try to reach out and influence others, I should put myself in order. I really want to be a lawyer ever since, but I was very pessimistic if I could really do it. That maybe the reason why other people found it really easy to dictate what I should be in the future. Now, that I have all the courage I need, I will definitely follow my dream. So, when I finally get back to Marawi, I will shift to another course that will be my preparatory course for law.

I also have plans for my institution, and to make a good start, I am planning to hold an interfaith symposium to be held in MSU-Marawi. This symposium will invite an imam, a priest and a Lumad to talk and share ideas in front of an audience composed of students from different colleges and high schools. For me, dialogues are important. There are a lot of people who are afraid to reach out because they are ignorant about others culture and religion. That’s the reason why I designed this plan. I will be working with ACCESS alumni from Marawi and hopefully, from this we will be able to form an organization (ACCESS Alumni-Marawi) to be offi-
cially recognized by the university. In turn, we can work freely in the university as a bona fide organization. This will hopefully sustain my plan.

Now that we’re going back to the Philippines, I am ready to test my wings to see if I can really fly high or not. I am very optimistic that I could make it. We could make it. BIG dreams require BIG efforts and because every growth begins from small, I should start from small.
Path to Transformation
Jefford Ray D. Mamacus
Youth Participant, Ilocano, Christian, Male

Vivid Ideas of a Young Leader
Living in Mindanao isn’t as tough, and as easy, as what you think. With all the “Bangs” and “Booms” that echoes the surroundings – uncovering the deafening sobs of the community, I have found myself locked up in a nation, which is a FATHOM away from greatness – a fathom which may look so near, yet so far.

Yet, behind all these disentangling thoughts and sob stuffs, there is still HOPE – for the nation, and for the people. I have been a student leader for about 7 years now, and I have experience a lot in governing the school, or any organization. I haven’t been working about peace for my whole 15 years of existence, but there is that special day, in which I start looking and dreaming of the future. A future in which all people, youth or adult; Christian, Muslim, or Lumad; whatever color, race, religion, tribe, tradition, or culture they may have, they will all be living on the same principle, united as one.

15 years of existence may be quite enough to start working for what we want. I have heard a lot from people of different tradition, and what I want to hear is from people, of all nations and culture, speaking as one.

Transforming a Palette of Peace
Having to deal with different sides and ways to go on with a conflict and dialogue can really be a tough task. It takes a lot of work, pressure, and effort to make things for the better. There were different ideas flowing through us, yet, it just cam down to one, and only one thought – understanding.

Now, every one of us has a chance to be a put our own color in the palette of peace. I, myself, has been a part of it, which really has transformed me a lot. I made me become more aware of what is the reality among our region, and made us feel a little more enthusiastic to work on all of those stuffs. With this, it made me feel fulfilling and eager to share what we have to say, and what we believe. It has, not really changed my perception, but strengthened it and shook it up, for me to realize what should be or shouldn’t be done. As what a famous professor has once said, “Education is not merely filling of a pail, but igniting of a fire.” And, I believe, the fire within us has began to ignite, and the heat made us feel that thought that we should start something. We are not making another masterpiece here, like “Monalisa” or “Creation of Man”, but, as far as I know, we should all be working together to make a GREAT “something” out of the scrap paper that we have – Mindanao.

Path to Transformation
Finishing the 4-week training has indeed challenged each and every one of us to make a difference for the society – A difference that would evolve into a transformation of the situation happening in Mindanao. And now, beyond all those things that bother me, what I have realized is that I should do something

Upon returning home to Kidapawan City, I am planning to create a long-lasting communication between the tri-people of Mindanao, and this should start with the youth like me. Building up an interfaith youth corps for our institution is great step for the pathway we would take to achieve this dream.

I had a dream – and this dream is starting to come true. Yes, I know – we cannot change the whole world at once. Four weeks may not be enough to change a community, but it is quite enough to change a life.
A Leader for Social Change
Darcy Mai Y. Repolidon
Female, Christian

The day is so fast approaching that I couldn’t imagine that I have surpassed the home sickness living in a new place and the surrounding that has a vast shocking of their way of living and the way they manage their life having an enormous freedom and great responsibility of their own.

Having a new environment is merely a big challenge to know new things. Living a month here in Dekalb could be the most exiting journey of my life. To meet new friends and to acquire positive cultures and knowledgeable experience that I can implement back home in the Philippines.

It is indeed a tiring day but yet a challenging words of wisdoms from our speakers. This morning we had an Inaugural Ceremony Program Overview and Logistics from Dr. Susan Russell and Dr. Lina Ong. It is a great honor having this kind of people to be with us disregard of their positions and lending their hectic schedules just to give some reminders and give their warmth welcome with us.

Moreover, this would be a stepping stone and a continuation of my mission here on earth not just to do righteousness according to God but to become one of the Peace Builders that would help unite everybody to have a mutual understanding and remove the stereotypes, biases, prejudices, concept of misunderstanding and multi-faceted invisible wall that is not seen.

In the afternoon, Kuya Rey Ty gave us some Pre-Test, Inter-Cultural Communication and Practical Guide Living here in DeKalb. Even though American’s has their own way of living and absolutely different from the cultures and traditions in the Philippines but yet it is so nice to know these things that will give us more information how to get along and to respect the way they use to it.

Involving in this prestigious program is a worthwhile experience that I will never forget until my existence here in God’s beautiful creation. It so overwhelming and great opportunity for me as a young youth leader in the future hoping to become an agent for change with a positive difference for the people that surrounds me wherever I am. It’s so fascinating to be apart for it.

The program is now approaching at its end. To become catalyst for change is not just a one shot deal yet it goes with a process of transformation. Though I’m not that good to become a good leader for social change, but this are my learning in the ACCESS Youth Leadership Program 2007 that adds to my backpack as I carry all of it back home in the Philippines. Because I do at all times believe that, “A thousand mile starts with a single step” and with this determination that I have I can say, “There’s nothing impossible if you want to have it.”

- Respect other people in order for them to respect you in return. It may be compared to a give and take process just like the golden rule says, “Don’t do to others what you don’t want others to do unto you.” In this way you learn to understand others perspective and possibly deescalate the stereotypes, biases and prejudices that leads to the misunderstanding and further become the mainstream of a big conflict among other people.
- Stay cool
- Tell your point of view
- Explore their point of view
- Problem solve
- This is one way of accepting others of what they are, because what matter most is not what they are but who they are.
- Communication and constant dialogue bridge the gap of every individual. Though they were enemies but later they will turn to good friends and sooner or later become best of friends. This interaction dwells the emotion that is kept inside and further resolve the problem that is long time hadn’t been talking.
• To become open-minded is another thing that I had leaned in this training. With this, I can establish mutual understanding among others and know the person that I’m dealing with as well as the people that surround me. This has been a good sign to understand the community that I belong to, over and above it helps me to foresee the change that I want in my community.

• “Conversation with an eye to eye contact” means a lot to me. It has a big change to the person that I’m communicating with.

• I can also add to my back pack about using I-message, Rephrase, and Apologize & Request as part of the insights that is being taught to me in the Peace Learning Center.

• Learning as well the American culture, its institution, its civic community and its amazing diversity enthralled me to explore about what is the United States of America. Its extreme diversity taught me the unity and acceptance of one another, to respect them and to promote equality & justice for everybody.

I owe all of these insights, strategies and techniques to this program and for all the people behind to make this worthwhile project possible as well as the people that surround me. Through this opportunity even though it’s a half way training but it instill in my mind the determination or the strong will to become an Agent for Change. Even though I’m taking it step by step but I know within me the slow yet sure transformation. Through this, it ponders in my mind the MISSION, VISION, & GOAL that I will be going to undertake and somehow I can it and further spread the good news to other people that surrounds me. For if you don’t go to your mission, vision & goal to pursue it all there’s no point and there will be no change at all. Life is not a matter of chance yet it is a matter of choice. Therefore, I must not give up until I don’t achieve my mission, vision and goal in life and the community that I’m looking forward for.

FIGHT & FIGHT, NEVER GIVE-UP UNTIL I WILL MAKE A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE.

“Onward ACCESS 2007 in reaching the peak of your dreams for Mindanao to have UNITY & PEACE amidst vast DIVERSITY.”
Learning about Ethnic Diversity and Conflict Resolution
Omarshariff A. Salik
Maguindanaon, Male, Youth, Islam

Turning back from my past experiences about youth leadership, inter-ethnic dialogue and conflict resolution, we must learn first how we could attain peace? And so as after attaining it, we could now start spreading PEACE as a primary goal for anyone of us.

And actually, before I get in to this Access program, I actually have my own perceptions that are based on my own observations like; if I would be ask if there is truly armed conflict of there is biases taking place in our own community between the different religious groups namely the tri-people who are the settlers of our Homeland, the Mindanao? I would say that it is not true in the sense that, it is just the battle or fight between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and not between any religious groups because further more, as I observed in my own community when a woman has a veiled and a bearded man passes to a street they would automatically recognized or tagged as member of an international terrorist group sadly speaking but it is what is now taking place in our community! Some would say that; why did I say so that there is no armed conflicts taking on and perhaps there is so many report in the news that there are so many people that loses their lives because of bombing attacks and many other devastating works who are recognized that this destructive acts are done by the international terrorist groups which they think that all of the Muslims all over the world are members or the supporters of this group. Actually in my own observation, there is also armed conflict that’s taking place in Mindanao in such a reason that the Muslims specifically, were trying to have an independent Bangsamoro Homeland and accordingly they were just trying to pick up what they have before that as what they have said that it was get in to them because based to their ancestors, Mindanao before was a composed only of the Sultans which Islam is their religion.

More unto this, I have also learned the diversities of every religious group specifically of the so-called tri-people; they were the Muslim group, the Christian group and the Lumads or the indigenous religion. As a part of it, It is a great experience that I had given a chance to mingle with this three(3) religious groups that are involve with this dialogue.

In terms of the skills, attitude and the values that I have learn. I think one of my special skills that I can share to you is that in terms of being involved in peace building seminars I can easily relate myself to the misunderstandings about the diversities of many different ethnic-groups. And another thing, in terms of my attitude when I attend different peace-dialogue I usually takes into consideration the differences of each and anyone of us and so I can relate and understand my own perception to them so as we can be open to everyone and I think it is also a one way that we can now understand everyone’s faith, ethnicity and culture.

And fortunately, since my mind was being opened to this things I do not have the so-called prejudices among the other ethnic groups and as a matter of fact, since I started myself being involve in peace culture seminars I have learned too much values like we must respect the many things that every religious group has and may they also appreciate and learn our own religion and customs.

“Now I Realized”

We are been blessed that the program was now on it’s halfway through our graduation to this training. It seems that the program is doing excellent in enlightening our minds about how we the youths can make a change by means of equality and justice.

In the past two (2) weeks the program is doing so great because we had now a little knowledge on how we could resolved the conflicts that in our places taking on and that is;

1. How we should embrace diversity? ; As we all know, Mindanao has many diverse communities and perhaps it leads to social discrimination, prejudices, stereotyping and biases and the program made us embrace each and everyone’s culture and religion. I mean as I observed in my-
self I do now appreciate and understand the Jewish people, in particular because before actually in our place all I can hear to these group was they were the one who are against to our religion, the Islam. And so, it causes conflicts and I think I must change that perception that are inculcated in the minds of the new generation and that I think I had something, that I can share now that Jewish were not us bad as what they are thinking.

2. How we could present a good public speaking as well as how we could have a good presentation skill? These subject is actually do not have connection too much in resolving the conflicts in Mindanao but it do help us a lot in communicating to the other sectors. Well, this topic makes a good and efficient leaders and us a good speaker which is actually one of the qualification of a peace advocates. And so. Were very thankful, that Tita Lina helps us build our good communication skill. Actually, before I do have a complication in speaking into a crowded place but I now I can see my improvements! I can now speak in some way but how I wish I could not let go my shyness and quietness when in terms of discussions.

3. How can we understand conflict and how to prevent it? In here, I think on of the main problems that the Mindanao is now facing of is that; some people valued too much their pride and so if they would have a problem, they would just ignore about it and they do not know how to resolved it. I remember when we are at the PLC at Indianapolis, I had one thing that I cannot forget and that is; listening… that’s I think we can resolved the problem.

4. From diversity and justice how we could made it to consensus and how we can resolved it? This topic was more about taking a decision were all of the interest ho are concern about the issue is considered and so, it tackles more about consensus or in short, the win solution.

5. How the Muslims women in Mali lived harmoniously despite of the degradation of their rights by the Mali Muslim man. –This is one of the topics that I was been attentive because it is about the degradation of rights among our Muslim sisters in Mali and it actually hurts because I am a Muslim. But inspite of it, I do not violently ask but I was calm because for me it is a big issue also in our community. Because if we will just compare between the situation of the Muslim woman at Mali and some indigenous people in Mindanao you can see how harsh they can feel and so we must change it and we should eliminate this kind of violence.

And so, I think the program has a big impact on enlightening us about conflict resolution and inter-faith and inter-ethnic Dialogue because I do have now more ideas how we could resolved the problems in Mindanao. I wish that the youths of the new generation would not be the same as what is happening today...

Inshaallah… God willing!

“Goodbye Illinois! Hello Philippines!”

It’s nice to remember all of the things that you had been gained and shared during your stay here at NIU. Well, I hope when I go back from my place all of our moments, laughter’s, and dreams that we had been share will in the future be reminisce and reach by ours and so our motherland will tell that, “This is my children, helping to grow our homeland”.

At the last part of the program, I came into deeper realization about the appreciation of the things around us. Well I could say that, this stay at NIU is a stepping stone for us and as well as of the community for the enrichments of everyone dream and that is to have PEACE for everyone. Honestly as I can remember before I get here, several times that in my life that I usually do not care for the others situation. I admit to myself that I was been insensitive to the others situations especially the occurring conflicts and misunderstanding in our community. I admit that it was been a big talk when bombings, kidnappings, ambush and many other acts of violence was actually occurring obviously in our community but what can I do.

Considering the fact that we were just students who everyone thinks that we cannot do anything and it unfortunately it resulted to the unawareness of the youths about what is actually occurring in the society. I was glad that there is a program that helps build youth to be more active in building a community of communities
and so I was actually transformed in terms of the willingness of my heart to help the society a place where there is harmony and peace.

As the program will the end, I just think and wishes that the next generation youth who are an advocates of peace will be the one in the future leaders of tomorrow who knows what actually the needs of the people and so the youths of tomorrow can produce harmony and peace in God’s name.
Light a Candle or Forever Stumble in the Dark
Rosanna Sambile

Peace cannot be achieved by words and actions alone, but with the silence of our hearts, and listening from the voice within. Distinguished guests, friends, ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon.

Four weeks have passed. Weeks of challenges, learning, laughter, tears, joys, experiences. 26 youth & adult participants, sharing together their own knowledge and dream, have indeed started a great step towards inter-ethnic dialogue among the tri-people of Mindanao.

For every session and activities we have done, we came to realize one thing. A thing of great account and responsibility – transformation, in mind, in heart, and in deeds.

Being one of the participants for the Philippine Youth Leadership Program 2007 is not an easy task. I often felt before than even myself has such discomfort within people different from me. But being with them, being one of them – sharing with one thought, working with one mission, living with one dream, has indeed changed the way I see things.

I am already 15, but I must admit that to this day, the real meaning of peace is still vague to my senses. You cannot change the whole world at once. Four weeks may not be enough to improve a community, but it is quite enough to change a life.

As the writer Joyce Vollmer Brown has always noted, “A thankful heart is a happy heart. Never take blessings for granted just because they have become a common place.” And that, I believe is the same thankful heart that I have learned to have. And I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you here, for molding our young minds, and for molding the future of our beloved Mindanao.

Working with different tasks and responsibilities has made me realize that we, the youth, a beat generation as what they may say, though small, though weak, though it seems we are incapable, we can do something!

Before I end my sharing with you, I would like to leave you the challenge: Would you rather light a tiny candle, or forever stumble in the dark?
Access program was the biggest program I ever participated. It takes me many first time things. I already attended some seminars and workshops about Peace Building and other Inter-ethnic programs but just in our town. I never had the chance to go to other places for education sake. It’s always on our place. Sometimes, I’m asking myself why I am like this. I can’t even get the chance to see other places. Other than my town and the only place I went to is the Zamboanga. No more, no less.

But when the time I lost my grandfather and my beloved father at almost the same time, the dream of going to another place had left my mind. It started breaking my heart into pieces and doesn’t stop my tears from falling. Even though I am trying to forget by making my self very busy, it’s still always reminding me that I can’t have again the presence of my father physically. And for being the youngest in the group and to be so close to my family it’s very a hard thing for me to accept and forget. It added to my mind of asking more my self, “What am I here for in Earth?”

But then, one day it escaped my notice that I am already recovering and find my self studying hard and being more active in extra activities in school. I’m joining school organizations and still doing well in academics. And from then on, I do realized what every other person says “Everything has its own purpose”. My father became my instrument and model as well in achieving my goals and trying hard to be successful in life. And to made my mother very happy, because it was here who supported me along the way, in my dreams and every work I’m doing. She’s always there for me and for my three elder brothers. We are working hard to make our mother very proud of us in any other way.

Me as a Youth

The program had already reached its half-round. And still it runs very smoothly. It is very nourishing and enlightening my thoughts and knowledge about almost everything under the sun. It is really an investment of time and efforts. There is no time wasted. Even though, it always puzzles up my mind on what to do and how to do those things. But, it is a part of the training.

Since the day, I passed the application form I told that I should seek some evidences that can prove to my school and my brothers and sisters in Islam that this program gives equal importance on different religions particularly, the Muslims and the Christians and the other tribe as well. And I do really appreciated those days when we visited the Mosque here at Northern Illinois University and some sessions that talks about my religion, the Islam. This is the evidences I’ve been looking for. And at least, now I can go back home with chin up- that I am not converted neither left out or discriminated by other religion but rather I am now more proud to become a part of my religion.

If I am to scale with percent-what was added to my knowledge from my past learning, I should say it’s 51%. I learned many things such as what Teamwork and Team building means, that we should have trust and cooperation with the members. The Consensus-a new better way for me in resolving conflict that I believe would be effective when I’ll reach home. The Stereotyping-what it really means and how bad it is and how to overcome and how to be aware of it. And the extreme diverse of America and how should I interact with them in a proper way and it also changes my perceptions and erased those bad impressions about them. After all, they are kind, hospitable and friendly.

But the best learning that I can say I could keep from this time on is the understanding of different religions and beliefs of different people. When we visited Synagogue, the Baha’I Temple, the Mosque and the Hindu Temple and the sessions about Native Americans and Indigenous people. “We really need to erase that invisible wall of stopping us in having peace in any other races.

By the time, I’ll go back home, I know that I can probably put into actions the things I learned here. What I do really want here is to mold me into a new better person and make me mature enough in terms of the insights of life’s meaning. And I can say I already reached that point and I am already transformed into the person I want to be. A person who can be an Agent of Change.
And now, I can deal with the biggest challenge of my life as a youth- the hope of Motherland.

The End

A month is already at its end and we are about to say goodbye; to our mentors, host families, facilitators and friends. But, one question is really at stake; do I felt satisfied with the program?

Action plans are now most of our concern. To put it into action and somehow, could have a big impact on each of our community and to be a bridge in building peace and harmony among us all.

To be a part of ACCESS group is now what I can really say, A DREAM CAME TRUE. Life is really more like a roller coaster and in this coaster ride of ACCESS wheel really twisted my mind and determined me more to boost my ability and let out my skills. And while the wheel is continuously moving, I was confused and had given much all my time, effort and everything I do have. Every mistake done, acted not in a proper way, or something bad, really hurts me much and marks a big bang on my self. But, at the near end, I do realize that this is not the real world. This is just an instrument to let us all realize our mistakes and enhance all our abilities and skills to a positive way. And I know, other participants would be very lucky if chosen to be one of this program in the coming year.
A Few Days But with Great Impact
Ronald Hallid D. Torres
Muslim Adult Participant

A Person Who Wants to Make a Difference

The world keeps on moving. It changes tremendously and as its changes, various challenges and burdens arise. These things should be dealt by the people to live to the fullest. One may ask “Why do you have misunderstanding?” “Why do people keep on thinking cultural differences that hinders the realization of the long quest for peace, justice and equality”. This rhetoric questions had awaken my mind and challenged me to do my part.

I had been an active student leader since my elementary and secondary school days. I was able to establish youth’s organization that promotes camaraderie and sportsmanship. I was also able to organize various trainings and gatherings for students that would sharpen their skills and potentials in leadership. This where my love for volunteerism and leadership took a starting point.

I believed that the things I did during my young stage in life were just a commencement of all the things I want to do in realizing my part in completing the big puzzle for the attainment of peace, justice and equality. I pursued my tertiary education at Mindanao State University-Maguindanao and I took Bachelor of Secondary Education-English. I continued the love for leadership in my college studies. I have been a part of various academic, non-academic and community organizations that poster academic excellence and camaraderie that bridges the gap among students of different culture and status in life. As such, I was then tasked by the Division of Student Affairs and the Office of the Chancellor to spearhead all the programs and activities of the students regarding leadership and peace related activities. I became then the student leader of the university.

My commencement in undergraduate studies didn’t hinder me in my pursuit to be a part of peace building and somehow be referred as peace builder even in a minute way.

I was then hired to be a teacher of the Integrated Laboratory Science High School of MSU-Maguindanao. Because of my shown interest and enthusiasm to work with peace aside from routinary works as a teacher and dormitory manager. I was then designated to be the Focal Person on Peace matters of the high school. The school tied up with the ACT FOR PEACE Programme of the United Nations Multi-Donor Programme and Government of the Philippines. Through this program, we were able to develop the school to be a School of Peace. I was able to materialize the plans that my office has regarding peace building and community participation on the attainment of peace.

Though I had various schema of leadership, I was not engage to much on inter-faith dialogue. I am always thanking the ALMIGHTY for granting my wish to be a part of this challenging program. I know that after attending this one-month training, I will be able to grow and learn lot of things that would enrich me. Hence, I can be the person who wishes to make a difference.

In the Middle of the Journey

Almost everybody wishes to be a part of realizing the longest quest for PEACE. It is indeed a great opportunity for everybody to participate in this program.

As to satisfaction, there is no such word that would be able to to elucidate the satisfaction that I have. There is quantitative and qualitative description I could give but I know that I am satisfied not only in cognitive but also the affective and psycho-motor domain of myself.

Theoretically, my background knowledge on Culture of Peace helps me a lot to understand and to internalize the learning that I gained so far. Learning may come from and to in different ways. I would prefer not to enumerate the learning that I gained because I might not be able to write them all. However, I would just at least give short details in the sessions that extremely made an impact to me. These are as follow but in random:
The discussion on Integrated Arts as Approaches to Peace convinced me that even a simple word, enigmatic action, theatrical presentation would be a potent tool in campaigning and disseminating information about clamor and quest for PEACE.

The video presentation on Shadow of Hate touched the core of my heart. This was a good projection of the causes, possibilities and effects of stereotyping, discrimination and the likes.

The visit in different religious center (Mosque, Synagogue, Baha’l and Hindu Temple and Amish) gave me a chance to understand and interact with the believers of these religions. Precisely, knowing the religions would be the start of respecting these.

The various activities on Peace Learning Center, though most were not synthesized, reminded me that peace starts from good personality, behavior, awareness and education. These would lead up to good interaction and effective mediators or the likes. The STEPS and Hike in the forest gave me an idea in enhancing my strategies in imparting knowledge and experience to my students.

The Strategic Planning we had was a manifestation of the participants’ critical analyses of the peace problems and possible actions to counter part these problems. It further proved that the participants have the determination to make into actions the plans they had.

The Home stay is a good strategy of letting us to see and experience the real American family. I really feel lucky because I am placed in the family where I am now with the two youth participants. Though there are some minute personal problems that arise, I keep on finding solution on it. Pardon me if I ask these questions, Do the kindness, hospitality and family set-up they show to us are the real American family?

I might not be realistic if I say that I’m already transformed and to what kind of transformation. Yes, at this point in time, I can say that I now understand myself and recognize my strengths and weaknesses. In the middle of the journey, I can say that I’m personally transformed.

I understand that the program in now in the middle; nevertheless, I believe that the journey for peace is also like a ship in the middle of nowhere, there is no seashore to land with but there are people in the ships that are looking for the port.

**The Commencement of the Challenge**

The one-month training on Inter-Ethnic Dialogue and Conflict Resolution is finished. I may not be able to quantify my satisfaction and learning but my action will prove that I am satisfied and I learned.

As I go home, the challenge will just commence. I will surely get commendation but I also expect for reactions and jealousy. Nevertheless, these would be both help me in realizing my actions for peace as a way of life.

The action plan I presented wasn’t good enough. More than it, I pledge to myself to do everything for peace. As I go home, my bag is now full of insights and thoughts. I believe that the application of these would start in me. Rest is assured that the time we are here will not be worthless. I be doing the best I can for peace as part and included to my profession.

Thank you very much Dr. Sue, Tita Lin, Kuya Rey, Ate Lily Ann, Ate Lisa, Ate Nalika, Ate Maimona, Ate April, Sir Naga and to all of you! You are all important part of a chapter of my life.
Leaving and Coming
Mc Donald Valledor
Christian, Youth Participant

Crude, Improve
Prior to coming here in the U.S, I was thinking of the things that I shall be learning. My level of knowledge in conflict resolution and inter-ethnic dialogue was good at that time. I was president of many youth organizations in our academe and city, and my skills in conflict management consisted of the usual approaches done by typical people. But these skills of mine, which I could consider crude in a sense, I wanted to strengthen and share. I was expecting that the PYLP 2007 will be very worthwhile. And my concrete trip, with high hopes, to the U.S. started by boarding Northwest Airlines at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Amaze, Blaze
I’m here, after hours of trans-Pacific travel. Session started the next day. The program contributed a lot to my personal transformation. It offered great variety of different settings where we don’t get bored with. I got to grasp my own understanding of the discussed topics, which is good in that it allows me to think for myself and contextualize things over.

Return, Transform
I am going back to the Philippines this Thursday. It’s a new beginning, a new dawn to start great at home. What I need to do now is to contribute more to the community. I have set myself now to be a new server-leader, a responsible citizen that shall take small steps towards a big positive change in society, that one may find inspiration with and take their own steps towards the betterment of society, too. This is my continued mission.
Declaration of Unity in Diversity
2007

After having gone through this four week institute on Inter-Ethnic Dialogue and Conflict Resolution, we, the 26 participants of the Philippine Youth Leadership Program 2007 representing various ethnic and religious groups in Mindanao --- Muslim, Christian and Lumad, do hereby pledge and commit ourselves to work together towards a society that respects cultural differences and seeks to build solidarity amidst diversity.

We urge one another to understand and appreciate all the diverse cultural communities and religious groups in Mindanao, and must learn to live together in peace, harmony and solidarity.

Let us therefore help build bridges of mutual understanding and respect, instead of walls of intolerance and prejudice, as we learn to discover and appreciate the beauty of one another.

THIS IS OUR collective task as BUILDERS AND PROMOTERS OF PEACE, to help our own people understand the different cultural traditions and traits of the various groups of Filipinos in our respective communities as we go back to our country --- Philippines. Such understanding must transcend stereotyping while remaining sensitive to the rich differences among all tribes and communities.

Finally, let us be thankful to our ALMIGHTY GOD for providing us this opportunity to be part of this noble work for PEACE.

Inter-Faith Prayer

O God, we cry for peace,
Purify our eyes to see peace,
Purify our minds to understand peace,
Purify our hearts to love peace,
Purify our memories to work for peace;
The peace that comes from your love and compassion.
O God, sustain our visions of peace following Your inspiration,
You have many ways of revealing Your presence and love for humanity, but Your style is constant:
You are in dialogue with all, You care for all.
Make us 0 God, a sign of Your peace,
Living a life-in-dialogue with You
to understand Your silence
and seek Your presence;
In dialogue with ourselves
to rediscover the meaning of our lives;
In dialogue with others
to move together in harmony with all;
And in dialogue with creation to care for the earth.
Give us, 0 God, the courage to live in dialogue
in the midst of divisions and conflicts
and to build peace with all people of sincere hearts who believe in Your love and compassion.
I would like to quote Eleanor Roosevelt, the wife of former President Theodore Roosevelt, “It isn’t enough to talk about Peace. One must believe in it. And it isn’t enough to believe in it. One must work at it.”

To say that our lives have changed dramatically is an understatement. One witness is the breakthrough conversations with important people and with different perspectives that we have engaged into. With this, I have come to see that there are few defining moments in our lives and careers that make all the difference. However, what is vital is that we have drawn out from our entire lives and experiences and share this to others.

After all those enriching and wonderful experiences we have during our training on inter-ethnic dialogue and conflict resolution, I wish we could take our leave by simply standing in silence to show how overwhelmed we are by all the support given by the following:

- The US Department of State, Bureau of Educational Affairs
- Northern Illinois University, faculty, staff and students
- International Training Office
- Southeast Asian Studies Center
- All the host families, especially my foster parent, my friend, Atty. Victoria Gillio who is celebrating her birthday today
- Resource Persons
- Kind hearted Filipinos in Chicago and Wisconsin
- In country coordinator
- The participants of the PYLP
- And to everyone who in one way or another has helped to make this program possible

We are very much delighted to see that there are people who gave their all out support to this quest for peace in Mindanao.

I believe that building peace is still an elusive dream.

As everyone will attest, the battle is not over. However, all your support has filled us with optimism, with hope.

The only important requirement is our will and commitment.

This is the beginning of our invigorated and inspired journey as architects of peace. This is the beginning of youth empowerment for peace. This is the beginning of sustainable peace development.

Mindanao will move towards that moment of our collective dream. And every big step that each of us takes, in courage and love, will bring us closer to that moment.

Mabuhay ang Pilipinas. Padayon Kalinaw sa Mindanao. Onward with our efforts to bring peace in our Beloved Mindanao!
Journey of Attaining the Culture of Peace
My Graduation Speech
Alzad Sattar

Peace be upon us all!

At the outset, I would like to acknowledge the presence of the host families, especially Kuya Joe and Ate Patty, my host family, whom I owe a lot because I learned many things from both of them about American culture, beliefs, history and politics. And they changed my perspective towards the American people. Thank you very much for attending our graduation ceremony.

With this, allow me to start my speech with Mindanao situation in brief. Mindanao, the southern part of the Philippines is known as the land of promise. But because of the age-old conflict between the various groups brought about by injustices, prejudices, biases, stereotypes, and discrimination, the conflict resulted to different types of human rights violations where civilians become the most convenient victims and served as “collateral damage”.

Let me then share with you my own humble experience. To recall, sometime in July 2001, I was a victim of the Philippine government’s declaration of warrantless arrest. This was because of my exposure to many human rights violations and injustices that are still occurring in our area. I was arrested by the military without probable cause for the crime which I was implicated and never committed. This was the case of kidnapping and serious illegal detention that was filed against me at the Regional Trial Court in Basilan, a province in the South Western part of Mindanao. This was the time when the terrorist group (known as the Abu Sayaf in the area) kidnapped more than 20 people from Tairan, Lantawan, Basilan Province. Fortunately, the court finally dismissed the case after series of hearings due to lack of evidences because it was established that at the time of the incident I was in school performing my duties and responsibilities. This was also affirmed by the kidnapped survivors themselves where they openly testified in court that indeed I was not among the kidnappers.

Nevertheless, this hurtful and painful experience of mine did not demoralize me, neither as a person or as a peace and human right advocate, but rather this challenged me to become even more stronger and determined in my efforts to build peace in our area, particularly Basilan. This is also the reason why I have applied for this program so that I will be better equipped with the necessary knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary for me to build a peaceful community.

Therefore, allow me to call on you my friends in peace, to be one with me in this journey of attaining the culture of peace where there is respect, understanding and tolerance among all peoples of various cultures and traits. Let this be our cry as we continue and go back to our respective homes and countries. And I firmly believe this is possible because we have taken this challenge and we are still very young, aggressive, decisive, determined, and above all committed to make a difference!

Thank you very much!
The Challenges We Face
Graduation Speech
Sittie Norhanie Hamdag Lao

As Spidey’s Uncle Ben said, “With great power comes great responsibility.”

Ladies and gentlemen, in behalf of the PYLP Youth participants, I would like to greet you all good evening and Assalamualaykum warahmatullahi taala wa barakatuhu (Peace be upon you all).

Each of the twenty-six PYLP 2007 participants strived to prove that they are worth being here. We went through painstaking moments, from the making of our essays, passing of all the requirements to the nerve-wracking interview. So when we finally received our messages informing us that we are among the 20 youth participants, we felt that our efforts and pains have been paid off. It was not the end of everything; rather it was just the beginning, the beginning of our journey, a journey with a noble purpose of catalyzing positive change in our communities.

This program provided us an avenue for personal-social transformation that shall lead us towards contributing to the betterment of the Mindanaon society.

The ACCESS program gave us varied experiences and learning that most people of our age did not experience. With this great privilege and opportunity, it shows that we also have a great responsibility, and that is to bring light to bring peace in Mindanao.

We have dreams for Mindanao. We want change for the betterment and for the progress of Mindanao. We want to build peace so that the generation next to us will live in an environment where the Tri-people live harmoniously. And the biggest challenge that the youth of our generation face today is putting these dreams into reality. It would probably take us long time to achieve this but, the important thing is that we already made a move by instilling peace with ourselves and our co-participants.

Now that we are graduates of this program we feel so much joy in our hearts that finally, we have accomplished something. Being graduates of the ACCESS Program means a lot. This graduation signifies our personal-social transformation. Now, we are more inspired, more empowered and more mature ready to face new challenges in life as we move on this noble journey.

Our commitment to our noble purpose and our faith with ourselves and with the Almighty will help us achieve our dreams. We are the youths and with your encouragement and support, we can always do something to make a DIFFERENCE.

This is our commitment...
CHAPTER 3: A CONCEPT PAPER FOR THE THEATER PRODUCTION ABOUT PHILIPPINE HISTORY FOR THE CLOSING CEREMONY
By John Karlo Ballentes & D. Victoria F. D. Bat-og

Scene 1
In the beginning there was peace and peace prevailed in Mindanao. There was harmony among God’s creation. The birds flew freely. The wind rails along the green pastures and the leaves flirt gently in the air. The waters flow smoothly in the rivers and it was indeed a paradise in the past.

Scene 2
Life was synergetic. The people utilized all that can be offered by nature. The soil was rich. They plow the fields and rip abundant harvest and the people relate with nature resourcefully, they strongly manifest their relationship with their God to thank for the good harvest. They joyfully celebrate feasts to symbolize abundant and rich planting season.

Scene 3
The people exist with simple ways of living and with peace among them, until the colonizers came to their land. In 1951, Ferdinand Magellan came to the Philippines for Spain, introduced Christianity and many were converted to Roman Catholicism. Philippines were under their regime for three hundred years. The people revolt against the Spaniards others were defeated but the Muslims remained defiant. Their weapons are not enough and their strength was diminutive.

The Pilipinos fought vigilantly and when victory is almost at hand in 1898, the U.S. purchased the Philippines, Puerto Rico and several other islands from the Spanish. However, the Filipinos had been fighting a bloody revolution against Spain since 1896, and had no intention of becoming a colony of another imperialist power. Education is one of the contributions of America to the Pilipino people. The Thomasites, a group of about five hundred pioneer American teachers sent by the American government to the Philippines in August 1901 to establish a public school system, to teach basic education and to train Filipino teachers, with English as the medium of instruction.

Scene 4
Times have passed and the many historic events formed the Philippines to what it is now. Reminiscences of the past became the instrument of shaping its future. The Philippines have finally gained their independence. The land is once again free from its colonizers.

But it’s hard to accept that the Philippines in the present is under its own regime. People suffer from war, conflicts and disputes. Many became victims of the centuries-old conflict children, families, innocent people, farmers and all kinds of people in Mindanao. There is war but we know our efforts will soon be an effective instrument for realizing our vision for peace in Mindanao.

“Youth is the hope of our fatherland,” according to Pilipino Hero Dr. Jose Rizal. We the youth of today can make a change. Peace is in our hand.
CHAPTER 4. POEMS & SLOGANS FOR PEACE BY VISITING FILIPINOS AND KISHWAUKEE COLLEGE STUDENTS

John Carlo Ballentes & Groupmates
Peace is P.E.A.C.E. Itself

Possible if all people would understand and love each other.
Everyone has its task to do to create a harmonious relationship.
Achieving peace is what really want.
Concern for everyone should also be present to foster harmony and unity.
Everlasting harmony between God’s creation.

D. Victoria F. D. Bat-og & Tanesha Robenson

P - Its always Pleasant to be Patient
E - Enjoy while Enduring the process
A - Accept while Accommodating others’ beliefs
C - It is Courageous to be Caring
E - Exchange ideas to achieve Enlightenment

Ma. Luisa Buot, Sheryan Guilel, Kelly Janowiak, Marietta Preston,
Subrey Nelson, Shanthi Rohini & Amy Fisette

P-eople
E-ssentially
A-re
C-coming together
E-motionally, effectively, everywhere

Rica Sue D. de Sosa and Mrs. Carrie of Kishwaukee College

P – eace in the community
E – nlightens everybody’s heart And
A – eceptance reduces
C – onflicts and
E – ncourages Harmonious Relationships

Aileen Chris Arellano, Sunny Vhie Dublan, Al-Bennadz Tingkahan, Mohammad Ben-Usman, Nina Harp,
Kandice Campbell, & Amber Orchowski

P-eople’s Participation
E-quity
A-dvancing the Moral of Individuals
C-onscious Governance
C-onscious Governance
E-nhancing the Relationships of Individuals

John Yrick Era’s Group

P-eople
E-verywhere
a-re
C-aring far
E-ach Other

Gwen, James, and Alex Roldan

P = P e O p L e
E = e N r I c H I n G
A = A L L
C = c U I T u R e S
E = E Q U A L L Y
P – providing
E – equality
A – and
C – cultural awareness
E - every-where

Passion to
Empower,
Advocate, and
Campaign for
Equality

Darcy Mai Repolidon, Diego Mejia, Kelly Semon,
& Kandice Campbell

P-eople
E-very age
A-ny race
C-ould get along
E-verywhere

P-olicies: peace through policy
E-conomics: share the wealth
A-ceptance: accepting differences
C-ulture: celebrate diversity
E-veryone: working together

Back to Origin
Nelson Singson, Dino

People are commonly different
Symbol of diversity piece
Pure race doesn’t exists

Color and creed just an identity
Believe only in human history
God sculptured them from clay

People equally created
Having many opposites
But respecting others taste

When everyone is treated equal
Nothing appears but peace in hand
Discrimination, disunity and, suffering won’t born anymore

Bandar Sandakan, Sabah, Malaysia
10:30-11:00 am, November 13. 07, Tuesday

Queenie Mae Alanis and Jessica Klco

Home of Tyranny
Nelson Singson Dino

Blood of martyrs dried in the plains
Died in the Valley Mountains
Fighting for independence

Injustices felt when migration arise
In the island of pearls
And in the land of promise

People were put in chaos
When their land grabbed out of laws
Immigrants view as dominant foes

Once oasis of freedom
Is a now doom of ignorance
When tyranny became lord of the land

People were driven out of their post
Were given just pinch of hope
To live life in woe forth

Oh the never ending story
Of the endless tyranny
Please leave this home happy!

Kampung Bahagia
Sandakan, Sabah, Malaysia
5:35- 6:35 pm, November 13. 07, Tuesday
Cry for Justice
Engr. Abubacar M. Datumanong, Ph.D.

Millions of pesos spent to war unabated
It is wasted for every being, thus, tolerated
Never it do good but hurt every moment.
Displaced families, children, youth and elders
All people everywhere, horrified and traumatized
Neither have tranquility nor peace of mind
Amidst the cry for foul and unfair judgment
Of stereotypes and accusations still unfounded.

More and more people live under the poverty
Years and years of conflicts affect them seriously.

How can the poor succeed and live in harmony
Or even the riches feel safe with security
Meeting the needs to survive with dignity
Echoed to leaders to clear darkness and ease poverty
Learn to speak even through the harshest way
And continue to aspire, hope for sound society
Never loss hope, help seek the light sincerely
Dearest Mindanao would be relieved from grief and misery.
**Project Title**

Educating Towards the Creation and Promotion of a Culture of Peace

Dr. Domingo Aranal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rationale/ Background</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Western Mindanao is still an area of conflict in matters of culture, politics, and religious belief. As observed and experienced, situations of conflict arise in many different scales in almost all aspects of human existence --- We see the resurgence of conflicts, acts of violence and intolerance of individuals and groups. We face difficulties such as unequal opportunities, environmental degradation, and various health and social problems. These situations make the offering of peace education imperative for all institutions, both government and non-government organizations as their proactive response to the demands of the times. As said in the UNESCO’s Medium Term Strategy 1996-2001, “Education is at the heart of any strategy for peace building. It is through education that the individual acquires the values, skills, and knowledge needed to build a solid basis of respect for human rights and democratic principles and the complete rejection of violence, intolerance, and discrimination”, (p.12).

Thus, realizing the growing relevance of peace education, the Zamboanga Life Care Services, Incorporated (ZLCS, Inc) in collaboration with the 1st Infantry Tabak Division, Philippine Army sees the urgent need to integrate a peace education component into the training program of the military, particularly of the 1st Infantry Tabak Division, Philippine Army. This direction is considered as one of the venues by which non – government organizations can enhance their partnerships with government institutions such as the military through collaborative efforts in the creation and promotion of a culture of peace especially in this part of the country.

It is therefore on this perspective that this project entitled, “Educating Towards the Creation and Promotion of a Culture of Peace” is being proposed. It our hope that such collaborative effort can be our modest contribution to the formation of a new generation of military that is much aware and concerned about promoting and building of a just and a more humane society.

**Project Description**

The meaning of peace education may be better understood by reflecting on these two essential questions:

1. How can education contribute to a better awareness of the root causes of conflicts, violence and peacelessness at the global, national, regional, community, and inter and intra-personal levels?

2. How can education simultaneously cultivate values and attitudes, which will encourage individual and social action for building more peaceful world?

Hence, peace education requires both understanding and practice, both reflection and action. It is insufficient to merely understand why conflicts and violence abound in the world; one must also act to create more peace (Toh, 1987).

This project “Educating Towards the Creation and Promotion of a Culture of Peace” is a Basic Orientation on Peace Education for selected organic, Non-Commission Officers, and other members of the 1st Infantry Tabak Division of the Philippine Army, which will be carried out in a form of a three-day seminar – workshops.

It will be a collaborative effort between the Zamboanga Life Care Services, Incorporated (ZLCS, Inc), a Non-Government Organization based in Zamboanga City and the 1st Infantry Tabak Division, Philippine Army, a Government Organization also based in Zamboanga City.

The 1st Infantry Tabak Division Philippine Army through its Commanding General and Training Program Officer in consultation with the President and Program Coordinator of the ZLCS, Incorporated will set the schedule (preferably first week of July) and identify the prospect participants (not more than forty; other criterion will be established later to make sure we get the right participant for the program) who will undergo the Basic Orientation on Peace Education Seminar – Workshops.

The Zamboanga Life Care Services, Inc. on the other hand will be responsible for providing the “experts” or facilitators/speakers and for the conduct of the three-day Basic Orientation on Peace Education seminar – workshops.

**Objectives**

This project therefore hopes to achieve the following objectives:

1. To provide a broader orientation and raise awareness of peace education concepts, issues and pedagogical prin-
ciples;
2. To develop values and attitudes which will ultimately lead to action for a more peaceful world; and
3. To engage participants in the different creative and participatory activities and approaches in peace education.

### Expected Output

The project outputs include (1) a **documentation or terminal report** that will be submitted to the funding agency. This will include hardcopies of the workshop modules, hand outs, activity sheets, and other workshop outputs including photos; and (2) **formation of a Peace Education Core Team** who will be responsible for the integration of the Peace Education component into the regular Training Program of the Military. This means part of the responsibilities of the Core Team would be (2.1) the **development of a Peace Education Curriculum** that can be integrated into the present Military Training Program of the 1st Infantry Tabak Division, Philippine Army; and (2.2) **establishment of a mechanism** that would allow a regular monitoring and feedback giving of the program.

### Project Components

The project is divided into the following components:

**First, Preparatory Stage.** This will include meetings with the heads and key persons of both institutions (ZLCS, Inc and 1st ID, PA) wherein the content and process of the training design will be discussed; ground rules or criterion for identification of potential participants will be established; actual dates or schedule of seminar will be finalized as well as other administrative and logistical needs;

**Second, Implementation Stage.** This is the actual conduct of the three-day Basic Orientation on Peace Education seminar workshop, which will be facilitated by the ZLCS, Inc. pool of experts; and

**Third, Post-Implementation Stage.** This will include the post evaluation meetings, again with the heads and key persons of both responsible institutions; initial planning meetings with potential members of the Peace Education Core Team who will be selected from among the participants who have undergone the three-day seminar workshops. Some of the major points that may be discussed will include (a) the organization of a Peace Education Core Team, (b) revision of the present Military Training Program of the 1st Infantry Tabak Division, Philippine Army that would allow the integration of Peace Education as one of its component, and (c) defining a mechanism that would allow a regular monitoring and feedback giving of the program for successful and more sustainable implementation.

### Strategies of Implementation

To carry out the above stated objectives, this project will be undertaken through seminar workshops making use of various creative, participatory and interactive approaches such as class discussion, picture analysis, drawings, case analysis, small group sharings, etc.

Regular meetings and consultation with heads and key persons of both responsible institutions will also be employed.

### Target Beneficiaries

The primary beneficiaries of this project will be the forty selected organic, Non Commission Officers (NCOs), and other members of the 1st Infantry Tabak Division, Philippine Army, who will undergo the three-day seminar workshop on Basic Orientation on Peace Education following the established ground rules for identification of participants.

Other indirect beneficiaries will include the total population of the 1st Infantry Tabak Division of the Philippine Army as they may become part and parcel of the project’s expected outputs.

### Schedule and Venue of Implementation

The schedule will be set sometime on the first week of July. The exact dates of the actual conduct of the seminar can only be determined after consultation with other heads and key persons of said institutions. The venue will be the 1st Training Group (ATG) Conference Hall in Malagutay, Zamboanga City.

Other details on the tasks and schedule will follow based on the stages of implementation as described above under Project Components.

Below is a Draft Program of Activities, which will still be subject for further discussion and deliberation by heads and key persons of both responsible institutions.

---

Basic Orientation on Peace Education: A Three-Day Seminar – Workshops for the Creation and Promotion on a Culture of Peace
## Program of Activities

### Day 1 – Morning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:00 – 8:30</td>
<td>Arrival and Registration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30 – 9:00</td>
<td>Opening Ceremonies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• National Anthem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Invocation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Declaration of the Training/Seminar Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Overview/Rationale and Objectives of the Seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00 – 10:00</td>
<td>Session 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Getting to Know You</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Leveling of Expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Developing Ground Rules and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organization of Host Teams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 – 10:30</td>
<td>Health Break and Social Integration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 – 11:30</td>
<td>Session 1 continues…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30 – 12:00</td>
<td>Forum and Synthesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 – 1:30</td>
<td>Inch and Personal Integration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Afternoon

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1:30 – 3:00</td>
<td>Session 2 – Personhood: Who am I?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00 – 3:30</td>
<td>Health Break and Social Integration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30 – 4:30</td>
<td>Session 2 continues … (workshops and processing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:30 – 5:00</td>
<td>Forum and Synthesis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

End of day 1

### Day 2 – Morning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:00 – 8:30</td>
<td>Prayer, Recap, and Energizer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30 – 10:00</td>
<td>Session 3 – Concepts and Theories of Peace and Peace Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 – 10:30</td>
<td>Health Break and Social Integration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 – 11:30</td>
<td>Session 3 continues…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30 – 12:00</td>
<td>Forum and Synthesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 – 1:30</td>
<td>Inch and Personal Integration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Afternoon

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1:30 – 3:00</td>
<td>Session 4 – Personal Peace and Cultural Solidarity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00 – 3:30</td>
<td>Health Break and Social Integration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30 – 4:30</td>
<td>Session 4 continues … (workshops and processing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:30 – 5:00</td>
<td>Forum and Giving of Assignments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

End of day 2

### Day 3 – Morning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:00 – 8:30</td>
<td>Prayer, Recap, and Energizer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30 – 10:00</td>
<td>Session 5 – Conflict Resolution and Transformation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 – 10:30</td>
<td>Health Break and Social Integration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 – 12:00</td>
<td>Session 5 continues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 – 1:30</td>
<td>Inch and Personal Integration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Afternoon

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1:30 – 3:00</td>
<td>Session 6 – Synthesis, Evaluation and Recommendations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00 – 3:30</td>
<td>Health Break and Preparation for the Closing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ceremonies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30 – 4:30</td>
<td>Closing Ceremonies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• National Anthem</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Invocation
• Students’ Impressions/Testimonies
• Presentation of Candidates for Graduation
• Declaration/Acceptance of Graduates
• Distribution of Certificates
• Messages
• Mass Singing of Pilipinas Kong Mahal

4:30 – 5:00 - Refreshments and socialization…
End of the Seminar – Workshops …

**Proposed Budget**

The budget below shows only the expenses for the actual implementation stage. The Preparatory and Post Implementation Stages are not included.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Particulars</th>
<th>Proponents’ Counterpart (*PA &amp; **ZLCS)</th>
<th>Funding Agency</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participants</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Lunch = P 120.00/pax/day (P120.00 x 40 pax x 3 days)</td>
<td>P 14,400.00</td>
<td>P 14,400.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Snacks = P 60.00/pax/day (P60.00 x 40 pax x 3 days)</td>
<td>7,200.00</td>
<td>7,200.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Breakfast, Dinner and Lodging = P 200.00/pax/day (P200.00 x 40pax x3days)</td>
<td>*P 24,000.00</td>
<td>24,000.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speakers and Secretariat/Organizing Committee</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Lunch = P 120.00/pax/day (P120.00 x 5 pax x 3 days)</td>
<td>1,800.00</td>
<td>1,800.00</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Snacks = P 60.00/pax/day (P60.00 x 5 pax x 3 days)</td>
<td>900.00</td>
<td>900.00</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Honorarium= P 3,500.00/facilitator/day (P3,500.00 x 2 pax x 3 days)</td>
<td>21,000.00</td>
<td>21,000.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>= P 1,000.00/support staff/day (P1,000.00 x 3pax x 3 days)</td>
<td>9,000.00</td>
<td>9,000.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Local Transpo = P 600.00/day (P600.00 x 3 days)</td>
<td>1,800.00</td>
<td>1,800.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Venue &amp; Other Training Facilities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(P 1, 500.00/day x 3 days)</td>
<td>* 4,500.00</td>
<td>4,500.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Workshop Materials and Handouts</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Manila paper, computer ink, photocopy, etc. (P3,000.00/dayx 3 days)</td>
<td>9,000.00</td>
<td>9,000.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Documentation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Office supplies, film, developing, etc. (P5,000.00)</td>
<td>* 5,000.00</td>
<td>5,000.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUBTOTAL</strong></td>
<td>P 33,500.00</td>
<td>P 65,100.00</td>
<td>P 98,600.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Output Indicator</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 698.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 1,357.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 2,055.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The project output indicator may include the following: (1) completed documentation or terminal report; (2) existence of a Peace Education Core Team; (3) revised Military Training Program that integrates a Peace Education as one of its components; (4) well defined monitoring and feedback giving mechanism in place.

**Sustainability Plan**
The sustainability plan of this project rests on the institutionalization of the integration of the Peace Education into the regular Military Training Program particularly of the 1st Infantry Tabak Division of the Philippine Army. This will be closely monitored by the Peace Education Core Team who will be in constant consultation with the heads and key persons of both responsible institutions.

Name of Organization: Zamboanga Life Care Services, Incorporated in Collaboration with the 1st Infantry Tabak Division of the Philippine Army, Zamboanga City

Printed Name and Signature of Organization Head: Domingo S. Aranal, Program Coordinator, ZLCS, Inc.

Date: May 3, 2007
Project Plan

Era, John Yrick
- Youth participant
- Province of South Cotabato
- Roman Catholic
- Ilonggo

PROJECT TITLE
- Adopt a “Small Village” (El Kuda) for Peace

RATIONALE/BACKGROUND
South Cotabato is a small province that can be found in the southern part of Mindanao. The province is
diverse because it is composed of different major and minor groups of people (ethnic tribes such as T’bolis and
B’laans, Muslims, Christians and other religions.)

In a small remote village called El Kuda located in the town of Norala is a reflection of the diversity of
the province. The people who lives there are mostly indigenous people, some are Muslims and the minority is
Christian’s denominations. The area experiences different social and economic problems such as stereotyping,
poverty, and poor education and conflicts such as family feuds and competition within families.

This project, Adopt a “Small Village” (El Kuda) for Peace, is designed to respond on these problems
and conflicts arising within the village.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
The project will be implemented every semester of the school year based on the curriculum of Notre
Dame of Marbel University. It has three parts:
(1) Inter-ethnic dialogue and community interaction to strengthen the relationship among the people of El
Kuda,
(2) Provide a two-day community service each semester to help the people of El Kuda in catering their
needs such as livelihood programs, and
(3) Monitoring and developing the established project in “El Kuda.”

Being an officer, I will volunteer my council, Peace Development Council (PD Council) as the head of
this project.

OBJECTIVES
The objectives of the project are the following:
(1) To promote peace within the village of El Kuda through inter-ethnic dialogues
(2) To deepen the knowledge of the people of El Kuda the importance of inter-ethnic dialogue in main-
taining peace on their village,
(3) To sharpen the volunteers leadership skills in community involvement,
(4) Better understanding of the people’s lives within the area,
(5) Develop “El Kuda” by providing community services.

EXPECTED OUTPUTS:
The expected project outputs are divided into two according to the beneficiaries:

Tri-people of El Kuda:
(1) Memorandum of agreement that relates to the maintenance of peace after dialogues
(2) Native products made by the people which are ready for marketing
(3) Livelihood education and health care services for the people

The Peace Development Council:
(1) A list of contacts of the organizations and individual partners and as well as the government officials of the community involved
(2) A research on the common problems and conflicts that occurs within El Kuda
(3) A compilation of stories of the people living in the “sitio”
(4) A documentary film about the project.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES
The project outcomes that will be beneficial to the tri-people of El Kuda are the following:
(1) Greater awareness on the real situation that happens within the village
(2) Increase of the people’s skills in handicraft and native products making
(3) Better understanding on how to attain peace and order in the village.

PROJECT COMPONENTS

Tri-people of El Kuda:
(1) Interfaith and inter-ethnic interaction between the volunteers and the people living within El Kuda
(2) Livelihood enhancements like handcraft making, trade of native products and develop skills of the workers
(3) Health care services
(4) Book donations to the children and
(5) Clean up drive

The Peace Development Council:
(1) create linkages and partnerships to other organizations
(2) implementation of action plans
(3) monitoring of the established project

STRATEGIES OF IMPLEMENTATION
The strategies that will be use in this project are the following:
(1) Organize the committee by bi-weekly meetings
(2) Link and create partnerships with other school and independent organizations
(3) Identify possible funding and mailed solicitation letters
(4) Inform the community of the project
(5) Implement the action plans and
(6) Evaluate the project

TARGET BENEFICIARIES
The target beneficiaries of this program are (1) the adopted “village of El Kuda” as well as the tri-people who lived there and (2) the student-volunteers come from different clubs and organizations within the NDMU campus.

ACTION PLANS
The project is divided into three different plans.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>People Involved</th>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Schedule and Venue</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-Create a committee who will work in the project from the PEACE Development council of NDMU</td>
<td>-NDMU student-volunteers</td>
<td>-Endorsement letters, solicitation letters, posters and ads around the school campus</td>
<td>-June 17-30 Notre Dame of Marbel University</td>
<td>- The minutes of the meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Link to other organizations such as the Pathways to Higher Education, Economics club and Science department</td>
<td>-PD council</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-PD council</td>
<td>-School clubs -Local officials</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

87
-Partnerships with the local official
-Identify funding

A two-day community service includes:
1. Interfaith and inter-ethnic interaction within “El Kuda”
2. Livelihood enhancements such as handicraft making
3. Health care services
4. Book donations to the children
5. Clean-up drive

-Proceeds with the local official
-Identify funding

-NDMU volunteers and the people who are living with in the “sitio”
-NDMU teachers, elders of the

-PD council & other clubs

-PD Council

-Through out the school year

-A two-day community service includes:
1. Interfaith and inter-ethnic interaction within “El Kuda”
2. Livelihood enhancements such as handicraft making
3. Health care services
4. Book donations to the children
5. Clean-up drive

-NDMU volunteers and the people who are living with in the “sitio”
-NDMU teachers, elders of the

-PD council

-PD Council

-Through out the school year

-Sustainability Plan
(1) Documentation of the project by signing a contract
(2) Train second level members that will be the next volunteers
(3) Institutionalized the project through the school
(4) Maintain possible continuing funding from any group

-PROPOSED BUDGET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Proposed Budget</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-Create a committee who will work in the project from the PEACE Development council of NDMU -Link to other organizations -Partnerships with the local official -Identify funding</td>
<td>Php 2000.00</td>
<td>-transportation fees, mails, letters of endorsement, food for the volunteers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| A two-day community service includes:
  1. Interfaith and inter-ethnic interaction within “El Kuda”
  2. Livelihood enhancements such as handicraft making
  3. Health care services
  4. Book donations to the children
  5. Clean-up drive | Php 5000.00 | -transportation fees, food for the volunteers, educational supplies |
| -Monitoring the established project strategies | Php 3000.00 | -transportation fees, mails, letters |

-SUSTAINABILITY PLAN
(1) Documentation of the project by signing a contract
(2) Train second level members that will be the next volunteers
(3) Institutionalized the project through the school
(4) Maintain possible continuing funding from any group

-PROJECT TIME TABLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Stages in weeks (starting June 17)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Pre-Program
- Make a project proposal
- Send copies of proposals
- Create a committee
- Increase partnerships | X  | X  |  | X  |
### Program
- Interfaith and inter-ethnic interaction within “El Kuda”
- Livelihood enhancements such as handicraft making
- Health care services
- Book donations to the children
- Clean-up drive

### Post-Program
- Send thank you letters
- Share photographs
- Make a report
- Monitor of the project

### STAKEHOLDERS
The stakeholders of this program are
- the tri-people within the village of “El Kuda”
- the Barangay Chairman of Puti
- the volunteers of Peace Development Council of NDMU
- the volunteers of the Pathways to Higher Education being an assisting organization-NDMU chapter

### ORGANIZATION’S HISTORY AND BACKGROUND
- Peace Development (PD) Council
  - A council of peace advocates (NDMU students)
  - established to promote peace within the school and the community
  - all students of Religious Education subjects are members
- Assisting Organization
  Pathways to Higher Education
  - international organization that promotes college education among high school students
  - it has a main office at Notre Dame of Marbel University

### ORGANIZATION’S PAST PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES
Peace Development (PD) Council has the following projects and activities every school year:
- Seminars on Peace Education, leadership trainings and workshops
- Peace Development Days
- Community Services, tree planting

### ORGANIZATION CONTACT DETAILS and HEAD OF THE ORGANIZATION
Peace Development (PD) Council
Mrs. Buenafe Quillope
- Moderator
- Religious Education Office
- Notre Dame of Marbel University
CHAPTER 6: REGIONAL PLANS

Project Proposal
Victoria Bat-og

PROJECT TITLE
“Tinig ng Kapayapaan” (Voice of Peace)
A Radio Peace Advocacy Program

RATIONALE AND BACKGROUND

“While the peace process between the conflicting parties, the government and the MILF is facing obstacles that hinder its speedy realization, the youth must be given a forum to express their concept of peace, and we believe that the media is one venue of projecting their yearning for that elusive thing called peace. For is it not that we are working for peace for the youth and the future generation? Our generation may have an idea of peace for the present and the next decades, but the youth has a farder reach to the future and an advance vision of peace that could suit them well.”

Mindanao, particularly North Cotabato is one of the playing grounds of conflict. The media is one of the most powerful modern technologies that influence the mind, intelligence and emotion of the people. The broadcast (radio & television) and print media can mobilize people, create and run the course of history, may destroy and build. The mass is vulnerable to what the people behind the pens and microphone write and say on air. Among the tri-media, radio is most widely adopted, it can reach the remotest barangay and people can still do their tasks while listening.

The conflict in Mindanao is being heightened at times due to the media projection in Mindanao. North Cotabato and its contiguous areas have the worst media projection which greatly affects their economic situation. It heightens discrimination; instigate misunderstanding and shape public opinion if not handled properly. With the negative connotations it mostly project, media can be an effective venue to promote harmonious relationship amongst the peoples of Mindanao.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The voices of the young people, our children are most mostly unheard and ignored. They comprised almost half of the population yet their point of view is ignored by the adults. The youth should be given a chance to be heard and a radio program is a venue where they can air their views, opinions, grievances, hopes and inspiration. It will give them a chance to make an appeal to the listeners their dream of peace in Mindanao. To be given an opportunity to speak and be heard. Youth influences each other. It has a greater impact if they speak and be heard by their peers and their voice as an appeal to the adult has an emotional component.

OBJECTIVES

1. To organize the ACESS alumni as core media peace media advocate;
2. To be fully able to draw out from these young ACCESS alumni their perception of peace and unity and share it with the listeners;
3. To provide the youth a venue to promote inter-ethnic and inter-faith dialogue to further promote peace and development among the tri-people in the region;

EXPECTED OUTPUT

1. Establish a strong media core group in the area;
2. Achieve to a certain degree the understanding of the beliefs, traditions and practices of the different ethnic group that leads to appreciation and respect;
3. Express their sentiments through the radio, their understanding of peace and development;

PROJECT COMPONENTS

1. Media Peace advocacy;
2. Skills development and enhancement;
3. Documentation;
4. Monitoring and evaluation;
5. Solicitation for sponsors
**STRATEGIES OF IMPLEMENTATION**
- Training of host in peace reporting and ethics of broadcasting (skills enhancement);
- Discussions, sharing of ideas, reflection sharing of youth on air;
- Hosting will be rotated among the adult & youth via the telephone (the radio network will call the host instead of the host going to the station);
- Documentation

**TARGET BENEFICIARIES**
A. Seminar for ACCESS youth alumni from North Cotabato and Maguindanao provinces;
B. The radio program will cater to all listeners from all walks of life, children, youth and adult within the radius of the radio stations perimeter. Radio Mindanao Network (RMN) - DXMY –an be heard in the provinces of Maguindanao, North Cotabato, adjacent municipalities of Bukidnon, coastal of Sulu and Zamboanga del Sur.

**SCHEDULE AND VENUE OF IMPLEMENTATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>PEOPLE IN-CHARGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PREPARATORY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th week of May</td>
<td>Information dissemination &amp; networking with ACCESS youth alumni for Media</td>
<td>D. Victoria F. D. Bat-og</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peace Reporting Seminar</td>
<td>Rodelio Ambangan</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>John Karlo Ballentes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Link with the radio network to negotiate air time etc</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMPLEMENTATION</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd week of June</td>
<td>Seminar proper on Peace Reporting, scriptwriting, hosting and interviewing</td>
<td>D. Victoria F. D. Bat-og</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rodelio Ambangan</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>John Karlo Ballentes</td>
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<tr>
<td>3rd – 4th week of June</td>
<td>Airing of live radio program in Cotabato City radio station RMN-DXMY</td>
<td>Host will be on rotation amongst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st &amp; 2nd week of July</td>
<td></td>
<td>the Access youth alumni</td>
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<tr>
<td>And to continue</td>
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<tr>
<td>POST IMPLEMENTATION</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd week</td>
<td>Writing of terminal report and documentations</td>
<td>D. Victoria F. D. Bat-og</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rodelio Ambangan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd week of June - on-</td>
<td>Fund sourcing to pay the airing fees etc</td>
<td>D. Victoria F. D. Bat-og</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>going</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rodelio Ambangan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ACCESS adult alumni</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PROPOSED BUDGET**

Airtime
1 hour per week during week ends @ Ph1,500 /hour X 4 weeks = PhP 6,000.00
1,000.00
Facilitator
Host & speakers honorarium will be for free since most of them are ACCESS alumni

Transportation & coordination and networking  2,000.00
Meals & snacks (for the 2 day training of Alumni)  5,625.00
15 participants X P75/meal X 5 meals = PhP 5,625
Transportation to attend the training will be shouldered by the ACCESS alumni
Lodging @ P200/person/night X 15 persons = 3,000.00

Documentation and printing of materials  1,000.00

TOTAL  18,625.00

OUTPUT INDICATOR

☐ Develop committed Peace-building youth media advocates as well as a core of peace loving radio listeners;
☐ Establish youth and adult peace media advocacy network and linkages within the vicinity for future reference;

SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

Regular Focus Group Discussions and communication among host for new ideas and
A massive solicitation will be conducted by all ACCESS alumni to be able to sustain the program for a long time.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mindanao Week of Peace Celebration Through Arts and Music</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prepared by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ronald Hallid D. Torres</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rationale/ Background</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Mindanao Week of Peace is a program of Ulama-Bishop Conference and this is usually celebrated every last Thursday and first week of December. Further this celebration is even pursued to national level so that no only Mindanao alone will commemorate this week. However, preponderance of the people particularly students in Maguindanao and Shariff Kabunsuan province are not yet aware of this commemoration. A simple way of celebrating it through arts and music will enlighten the people about it. The students would further understand and appreciate it if they are part of the celebration. One potent tool of peace information is through arts and music. More than this the skills of the students will be enhanced. Mindanao State University-Maguindanao being an institution of higher learning caters for peace education and peace programs. It is in this context that this proposal is formulated for favorable action and immediate implementation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The celebration through arts and music will be a collaborative effort of PhilACCESS Alumni, and Peace, Gender and Development Office of the university. This would be a one-day activity. The program will be spearheaded by the PhilACCESS batch 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The celebration aims to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Participate in the Mindanao wide celebration of Mindanao Week of Peace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Provide opportunities to the schools which are less reached by the program through the facilitation of PhiLACCESS Alumni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Express thoughts, ideas and ways for peace through arts and music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Gather the alumni of the program through the Regional Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Facilitate information dissemination on the ACCESS/PYLP 2008 through distribution of brochures on Q and A or open-forum.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expected Output</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The project outputs include:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Documentation or terminal report on the celebration of the Mindanao Week of Peace through Arts and Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Slogans, painting, theatrical short presentation, essays and concert for peace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Contact details and updates on the PhilACCESS Alumni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Properly and widely Disseminate information regarding the ACCESS/PYLP 2008</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Components</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preparatory Stage. Appointment and meeting with Regional Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Information dissemination to target participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Preparation of the Program Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation or the Actual Stage. Actual conduct of the one day celebration of Mindanao Week of Peace</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Post Stage or Evaluation Stage. Evaluation of the activity

Strategies of Implementation

- Walk for Peace
- Contests on slogan making, painting, essay, theatrical presentation and concert for peace
- Gather the PhilAccess alumni and make further plans for linkaging and networking.

Target Beneficiaries

Immediate or Direct beneficiaries:
- Selected students from 10 high schools
- PhilACCESS Alumni in the province

Schedule and Venue of Implementation

- During first day of the Mindanao Week of Peace (November 2007)
- MSU-Maguindanao Peace Training Center

A Draft of possible flow of the program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date/Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Responsible person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:00-7:15</td>
<td>Arrival and Registration</td>
<td>Secretariat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:30-8:30</td>
<td>Walk for Peace (University campus to downtown)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00-9:30</td>
<td>Snacks</td>
<td>Host School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30</td>
<td>Program</td>
<td>Host School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drama contest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Concert for Peace</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00-12:00</td>
<td>Tour in the campus (Courtesy Call)</td>
<td>Host School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00-1:00</td>
<td>Lunch Break/ Duhor Prayer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00-3:00</td>
<td>Essay Writing contest, Slogan and poster making contest</td>
<td>Host School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00-3:30</td>
<td>Short Open-Forum (Adult Alumni- Panel)/Sharing of Experiences</td>
<td>Alumni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30</td>
<td>Snack/ Asar Prayer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30-4:30</td>
<td>Certificate Distribution</td>
<td>Host School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:30</td>
<td>Home sweet home</td>
<td>participants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Proposed Budget

Total Expenses

A. Program Materials = 3,000.00
B. Foods and snacks = 2,500.00
C. Awards = 3,000.00
D. Mobilization/ transportation of the participants = 3,000.00
E. Contingency Allowance = 1,000.00

P 13,500.00
Output Indicator

The project output indicator may include the following: (1) completed documentation; (2) Prepared Action plans by the ACCESS alumni for sustainability (3) contact details of the alumni.

Sustainability Plan

- The program coordinator will instruct the participants to organize peace groups in their respective schools
- The PhilAccess alumni will make plans for sustainability purposes.

Name of Organisations

1. **Peace, Gender, Development Office**: Mindananao State University-Maguindanao, Datu Odin Sinsuat, Shariff Kabunsuan Philippines
   - Organization Head: Dr. Renato Gacayan - Director
   - Fax number (064)486-0039
   - www.msumaguindanao.edu.ph

2. **Student Supreme Council – Students Organization**
3. **Sangguniang Iabataan in the Community**
Regional Action Plan  
Region IX Peace and Human Rights Center  
by  
Region IX ACCESS 2007 Participants  
(Zamboanga City, Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi Provinces)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Background</th>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Beneficiaries</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political tensions</td>
<td>Setting up of a sustainable center Zamboanga City</td>
<td>To promote justice &amp; peace</td>
<td>1. set up office</td>
<td>Seminar; cadre of peace advocates</td>
<td>1. Increased mutual understanding among people of different faiths;</td>
<td>Interfaith students</td>
<td>Start on June 23, 2007; seminar on May 10 - 17, 2008</td>
<td>Php 50,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human rights violations</td>
<td>Zamboanga City</td>
<td>To promote &amp; protect human rights</td>
<td>2. get student volunteers</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. conduct peace &amp; human rights activities</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Human rights violations**  
To promote & protect human rights  
- Human rights documentation; cadre of human rights advocates  
- Increased protection and promotion of human rights  
- Human rights victims  
Start on December 10, 2008 (Human Rights Day)  
Php 30,000.00
### Action Plan

**Facilitating Interfaith Dialogue**

**Region 10**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Background</th>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Main Objective</th>
<th>Specific Objective</th>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Beneficiaries</th>
<th>Time-line</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Sustainability?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Political and Economic conflict, human rights violation, environmental destruction, land grabbing</td>
<td>Facilitate an interfaith dialogue</td>
<td>To develop and promote among the youth the Culture of Peace through the development of the value of understanding, respect, justice, tolerance and love</td>
<td>To facilitate an interfaith dialogue and community outreach program</td>
<td>Cooperative Action Facilitate Dialogue Networking Evaluation</td>
<td>1. Interfaith Activity 2. Trained Youth</td>
<td>Muslims, Lumads &amp; Christians Youth in Region 10</td>
<td>Mid of July, 2007</td>
<td>P10,000</td>
<td>Create a youth organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. ACCESS Trained Alumni</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Note:**
- Create a youth organization
CHAPTER 7: PHOTO ESSAYS OF PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Report of Activities Related to Peace and Inter-Ethnic Dialogue Building

Youth Leader: Christine Mae E. Ablao
ACCESS Batch III

Female / Male: Female
Religion: Roman Catholic
Ethnicity: chavacano
City, Province, Region, Island: Lamitan city, Basilan, ARMM, Mindanao
Activity Title: Caravan for Peace
Date Conducted: November 27, 2006

Objective:
The overall objective of the Peace Caravan was to promote inter-ethnic dialogue and cooperation among various constituents through the conduct of province-wide peace forums and consultations spearheaded by the provincial government of Basilan, the military, local government units, non-government organizations, religious sectors and other local stakeholders of the province.

Activities and Outputs:
Some of the important features of the event include a province-wide caravan that showcase various themes associated with peace building and community cooperation participated by Muslims and Christians constituents of the Province. In Lamitan municipality, the activity was culminated by a community gathering in the town’s Cultural Center where important talks and speeches were given by members of the provincial government, municipal government, military, religious sectors and youth representative.

My role in this affair was to represent the youth sector of Lamitan. I was tasked to give a speech on peace building and environment, and share my thoughts of what the young people feel about the recurring threats of peace in our beloved Province of Basilan, perpetrated by lawless groups that continue to threaten innocent lives. During the public assembly, I also exhorted to consider the youth sector in their respective development and peace agenda to ensure that any effort made towards peace building could be applied and sustained down to our level and generations to come. The impact of this activity may not be felt immediately. However, visible signs of participation and cooperation among local stakeholders and government have been encouraging especially on matters and issues related to law and order and peace building measures.

Pictures: Delivering my speech at the Cultural center of LAMITAN attended by different stakeholders of our municipality and province.
Earth Day Celebration  
April 23-25, 2007

Objective: The objective of the Earth day Celebration in our Municipality is to raise public awareness about the importance of protecting and keeping our natural environment safe and abundant to ensure sustainable resources for our future generations.

Activities /Outputs:

The local government of Lamitan initiated a three (3) day activity to commemorate International Earth Day celebration in our municipality. These include motorcade and hanging of streamers in conspicuous locations depicting the importance of preserving and protecting environment and natural resources, and care for mother earth. An environment forum focusing topics like global warming and LGU programs for the environment were also highlighted on the second day. The activity was culminated on the third day, with mangrove seedlings planting held at Maloong Canal, Lamitan Basilan.

The youth sector actively participated in the mangrove seedlings planting activity because we believe this is one way of raising awareness among the youths about the importance of preserving and enhancing natural habitats to sustain life and improve our access to marine resources for food. Further, the activity helped us reflect about rural livelihood, food security and poverty issues in the countryside that affect peaceful co-existence among local residents. The experience helps realize that everybody should be involved in whatever capacity to ensure that limited resources are protected and enhanced for future needs. The earth day celebration helps raise awareness among young people about the environment and encourage wider participation of stakeholders in environmental and community affairs.

Pictures: Various activities commemorating Earth Day Celebration at Lamitan Municipality, Basilan
Community Outreach in Maguindanao

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<tr>
<th>Youth Leader/Adult Leader</th>
<th>Haiah Jeunnie B. Adam</th>
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<td>Batch:</td>
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<td>City, Province, Region, Island</td>
<td>Datu Odin Sinsuat, Shariff Kabunsuan, ARMM, Mindanao</td>
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<td>Project Plan</td>
<td>Community Outreach Activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dates of Project Implementation</td>
<td>October 2007-Present</td>
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This Community Outreach Activities is a one day activity that encourage Youths to be one of the MAD (Making A Difference) People. Those activities enable participants to realize the importance of Lending a Hand that was conducted at Barangay Basak D.O.S. Shariff Kabunsuan on the afternoon of 19th day of October. It educates participants what was really the essence of PEACE by having Interfaith and Interethnic Dialogue, Conflict Resolution that was conducted during the two-day seminar on October 17-18, 2007. There was a Youth Peace Laws signed by the people promising to be one of the MAD (Making A Difference) people that was conducted during the very first day of the two-day seminar (Oct. 17-18, ’07) on going until now. In those little times we’ve shared, I’ve been moved by the efforts given by the participants and the people living in Barangay Basak, D.O.S., Shariff Kabunsuan. They gave their best to cooperate in those activities that was conducted. I realized that lending a hand isn’t really counts on how many supplies or presents that you will provide but on how will you give your best just to make people happy and how much you care about them. I realized that being a leader to make a difference isn’t a simple task, you have to work hard to earn, you have to be patient and keep moving, and you have to fall in order for you to stand up and learn from you own mistakes. For those challenges that I have encountered, you just have to keep trying and believe to your dreams that you can do it and you can handle it even though there will be a great hindrance in your way…

Signing the Youth Peace Laws (Banner For Peace)

Participants and the people of Basak posing after receiving the goods… with their PEACE sign of course!

Participants packing the goods for the Community Outreach Activity

The Arrival of the participants to Barangay Basak

The distribution of goods to the people of Basak

Walk For Peace with the silence of nature
“To impart knowledge and to be appreciated are the best achievements I truly considered”

Mobile Eskwela was collaborative activity between the PhilACCESS and EAGLES(Ensuring Access to Gain Leadership Empowerment for the Society) which was held at Pindaliday Village, Datu Odin Sinsuat, Shariff Kabunsuan. We have 20 respondents from the village. It was the activity we have initiated to help the out of school youth to shape their lives and to stimulate them on the importance of Education in one’s life. It was a good opportunity for them to be awakened on the positive changes that may happen on their lives through Education.

The specific activity was humanitarian on giving emphasis to the status of out of school youth in the aspect of education. We know that the best tool in overcoming the challenges of life is knowledge that is learned through Education. Thus, this activity was in response to their needs.

We have seen and it was really manifested by the respondents that they were longing for Education and eager to learn socially and educationally. Behind the smiles and laughers, they have shown us, we have still felt that deep inside the sadness exist. We have also determined that Education can play a big role in the lives for it is their basic needs. Most of them were wishing to be sent in school; however, most of them are not capable due to a financial problem they face. The interest was dominantly manifested in spite of the fact that the activity is once to be held.

It was seemed that the activity is momentous event for them as they showed their cooperation and participation on the said event that led us to prove that “Action speaks louder than voice”.

The activity was really appreciated in the course of the sincere cooperation of the parents. They worked with us in motivating their young to participate.

It was really a memorable event for us because in a simple way we felt how to become shaper of their lives. Moreover, we felt appreciated for what we have done. For me, it was the thought that counts and cannot be deleted in my memory until I am alive.
Accomplishment Report
Mary Rose Jean C. Andrada
ACCESS Batch 1

It has been four years since I participated in the ACCESS Philippines Program last April 2004. Much has happened and I have progressively grown as a youth leader in school and my community. ACCESS has been a monumental benchmark that has exposed me and allowed me to realize my potential for leadership.

Immediately after ACCESS I thought that Peace was simply all about inter-faith dialogues and peace talks. However exposures to many other similar programs made me realize that peace is also about sustainable development; that it depends on the attitude of the people in the area. Most especially attaining peace entails developing leaders in the community who would share the same vision of development and thus peace.

Programs engaged in:

**Place at the Table Zamboanga**

The group organized by Kenny Macrohon, Henry Segovia, and myself is still continuously working on improving and achieving the mission we promised to live by.

**Latest project:**
- Mini-grant project called “Team Diversity” (see Appendix A for report)
- Upcoming project “Youth Peace Circle Training of Trainers” (see appendix B for proposal)

**February 2007: Ayala Young Leaders Congress 2007**

Ayala Young Leaders Congress is an annual gathering of 75 of the most promising youth leaders all over the Philippines. It is sponsored by the Ayala Corporation. The AYLC congress has given me the opportunity to meet other young leaders and learn new methods for leadership development. It has also allowed me to represent Mindanao and discuss with the Luzon and Visayas participants issues on peace that ACCESS has helped me understand.

**AYLA Zamboanga Chapter Head**

My participation in AYLC has made me an automatic member of the Ayala Young Leaders Alliance. This is an alliance of 17 chapters all over the country with more than 650 members. This position has given me the clout to conduct projects that have a direct impact on the youth of the various communities in Zamboanga.

**Upcoming AYLA Zamboanga project:** SK Aide (see Appendix C for proposal)

**Journalism**

**Contributor to Starfish magazine The First Youth Empowerment Magazine in the Philippines**

Starfish Magazine is a youth empowerment magazine initiated by the AYLC Batch 2004. It publishes 3 to 4 issues annually and is distributed nationally to all Accredited Level 2 schools and universities. It is also sold in selected National Bookstore outlets in the NCR region. I am tasked to write about the issues the youth of Mindanao face and feature inspiring stories of struggle for improvement by the people of my island. In my own way, I change the view of non-Mindanaoans who are able to read my articles in this National magazine.

**Philippine Star Week Sunday Magazine: Cover and Essay on Mindanao**

On the February 25, 2007 issue of the Philippine StarWeek Sunday Magazine I was featured with another fellow AYLC 07 participant on the cover of the magazine. We were given the chance to write about our views on National Crisis and Celebration of the anniversary of the EDSA Revolution. Along with this, I was given the opportunity to write an essay on Mindanao that was featured in the centerfold of the Magazine. The essay was entitled: “A Land Called Mindanao: Fighting A Different Revolution”. (see Appendix D). I have received emails from people of different backgrounds and professions expressing their eagerness to help our youth.
group in our projects. (see Appendix E for some email correspondences) This has expanded our network and allowed me to meet more people who share the same vision of improvement for Mindanao.

Youth Leadership Development Involvements

**GK 1 MB Bicol Challenge**
In partnership with Ayala Young Leaders Alliance, Far Eastern University, Miriam College, and Poly-technic University of the Philippines I joined the Gawad Kalinga (GK) 1 MB Bicol Challenge held last April 2007 in Anislag Bicol. It was a one week camping stay where our team built 4 houses for the victims of the storm that struck Bicol and destroyed many homes and properties in the region. This activity has allowed me to understand poverty and gave me the chance to have a tangible contribution to improve the welfare of others.

**Camp Friendship 2007 July 2007**
Camp Friendship 2007 was a 3 day seminar workshop on Peace and Leadership organized by the US Embassy. I was contacted by Maam Joji and invited to participate as Youth Facilitator. Along with YES Program alumni and ACCESS Alumni (Nashwa Salih Batch 3 and Arvee Llesis Batch 3), I served as youth facilitator to the 60 high school student participants from all over Mindanao. I handled the Pakat group and conducted team building activities with them. I still keep in close contact with these high school student leaders. 3 of my members have applied for ACCESS batch 5.

**Facilitator EYLC (ELSA Young Leaders Congress)**
EYLC is a project of the AYLA. Last May 2007 in Cotabato, I volunteered to be one of the facilitators for this 4 day workshop on leadership and peace. Currently, EYLC has finalized its second 5 year project. The 2nd EYLC series of leadership workshops will be held in Western Mindanao. In partnership with an alumnus of AYLC 04, I am currently working on the first workshop which will be held in Tawi-Tawi.

**Speaker Voces Zamboanga 1 and 2**
Voces Zamboanga is a one day seminar for high school students initiated by the office of the Congresswoman for District 1 in Zamboanga, Ma. Isabelle G. Climaco. I am tasked to discuss volunteerism and personal discovery for leadership with the participants.

**Speaker on Youth Development in the Workshop on Professional Growth for Educators in Zamboanga**
This was the first time that I was invited to speak to professionals, particularly, teachers. I talked about the teachers’ task to encourage leadership in their students. I challenged the 100 teachers to help their students get involved in various activities and support their brilliant project ideas.

Currently Working on:
Positive Journalism on Mindanao
Youth Development for Educators in Zamboanga
Notre Dame Interfaith Youth Camp and Training on Inter-ethnic and Interfaith Dialogue & Conflict Resolution

Aileen Chris Arellano

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<td>Project Title</td>
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<td>Dates of Project Implementation</td>
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The Notre Dame Inter-Faith Youth Camp and training on inter-ethnic and interfaith dialogue and conflict resolution was a two-day and two-night activity held in Notre Dame of Kidapawan College High School Department Campus last July 20-22, 2007. The camp was held to meet the following objectives: (1) to build camaraderie among the interfaith youth; (2) to promote better understanding of different religions and cultures; (3) to sharpen the skills of the youth in conflict resolution, leadership and community building; (4) to enhance youth to become leaders in making their own plans in promoting peace and unity in their community; and (5) to build a community of the inter-ethnic and interfaith youth on campus that promotes inter-ethnic and inter-faith relationship among the young people.

The people involved in the training are Jefford Ray Mamacus, Aileen Chris Arellano, Sunny Vhie Dublan, Darcy Mai Repolidon, Queenie Mae Alanis and Ms. Ivy Yecyec as the facilitators; Bro. Teodolo Fernandez, FMS, NDKC President, Bro. Noel T. Fernandez, FMS, NDKC IBed Principal, and Ms. Aurora Juan, assistant principal; and 30 High School students from NDKC that participated the camp. As an output of the camp, there was a commitment wherein the people involved in the camp painted a mural through the footprints; and organization, NDIYC was organized and participants created their action plan for the school and the community. There will be an upcoming camp for the Elementary students and some interested students that will join the organization.

As we implement the camp, I am very happy that I’m through with my action plan. But then, I realized that it was just the beginning of our steps towards our big dreams. After the camp, the organization became very active in community services and promotion of peace. I am really glad that what they have learned from the camp, they applied it in their lives. I am also challenged to do more rather than stopping on the first step that I have. That’s why I’m working on for the next camp for the elementary students and for more youth that aspires to be part of the peace movements.
Assigned Leaders of the Day working on their tasks

Reflections on the Mindanao situation

Cultural Presentation of the participants of the camp

Liturgy for the Solemnity of the Mural Painting

Mural painting using footprints to symbolize commitment of the participants towards peace

Participants discussing their own action plans for the organization, Notre Dame Inter-Faith Youth Core and for the school
Paninggalan sa Ranao Leadership Training Program
Abdul Mahid Mackno Ati

Youth Leader/Adult Leader
Batch: PYLP 2006-7
Female/Male Male
Religion Sunni Islam
Ethnicity Maranao
City, Province, Region, Island Marawi City, Lanao del Sur, ARMM, Mindanao
Project Title Paninggalan sa Ranao Leadership Training Program
Dates of Project Implementation August 18, 2007

Paninggalan sa Ranao Leadership Training Program is a one day workshop on peace and leadership that promotes awareness to peace and develops leadership skills among college students at the university. This is a program addressing the most basic needs of the youth with the vision that they become empowered. It came into fruition for the purpose of eradicating the roots of chaos, enmity, and intolerance through this, thus, peace is its main component. This project was implemented on the 18th day Saturday of August 2007 at the of Pre-University Center, MSU Campus, Marawi City through the collaboration of my organization which is the Inspired Young Optimists Guild Inc, a socio-civic organization aiming for positive social change and youth empowerment.

25 college students actively participated and shared their knowledge on the activities. The project was a success because it made the participants see the other side of the coin which means that the project served as an empowerment for them to continue the advocacy of peace. Further, the participants became our linkages in the sustainability of the project.

During the registration at the secretariat’s table (A) During the registration at the secretariat’s table (B)
Expectation check A focus group discussion about leadership
An icebreaker: “head-to-tail”

Discussion on Peace

Personality Evaluation Activity

A debriefing of experiences
Coming back from US means a greater responsibility for me. I was more than challenged to continue my peace efforts for Mindanao. I know then that my learning in at NIU will have really equipped me to be a better peace advocate. The early first semester of my second year was tougher and busier than what I have expected. I was again elected as the Governor of our college bringing more responsibility. This have actually became my problems in the implementation of my project plans. Unfortunately, due to time and financial problems my project plan in US was not materialized. However, I still organized one activity to be able to provide a venue for my College to learn more about Conflict Resolution. On October 18, 2007 near 17 students from the college of Social Work became my participants in a Forum on Conflict Resolution Strategies at Southern Christian College Midsayap, Cotabato.
TARAKA YOUTH LEADERSHIP SEMINAR-WORKSHOP is a one-day program that consists of numerous activities with one general objective, that is to develop young leaders who have basic awareness of the real situation of the town Taraka. These young leaders are capable of doing something different that can later help aide the problems existing in the society such as religious and ethnic discriminations, clan or family feuds, ancestral domain issues, and others. The theme of this program is Youth Empowerment towards a Culture of Peace and a Climate of Understanding and Tolerance.

This was held on October 14, 2007 at MSU-Taraka Community College with the help of some volunteers from ACCESS-Marawi Team, Royal Builders and Ranao Council, Inc.
The Capitol University Interfaith/Ethnic dialogue was planned in coordination with the Campus Ministry office, Muslim Student Association, Student Peer Counselors Circle, Youth on Fire, and all other recognized campus organizations in the university. The activity was initiated to promote deeper awareness, understanding, respect and acceptance of the various cultural practices and religious beliefs. The participants of the said activity included students, faculty members, and non-teaching staff. There were Muslims, Christians and Lumad of Bukidnon. There were also a few Japanese and Vietnamese. The active participation of the attendees contributed much to the success of the dialogue. Participant’s awareness of the various religious beliefs and practices help them develop respect and acceptance of their differences. This was made evident of the friendship the participants had established among themselves. The harmonious interaction among the participants during and after the dialogue implies that they have gradually overcome their prejudices and biases.
Sharing the Muslim perspective

Working on one’s own plan to achieve peace and harmony

Distribution of Certificates to Active Participants and Resource Persons of the Interfaith/Ethnic Dialogue, Capitol University, September 22, 2007
Implementation of Multiple Programs
Jana Jean Dacobor

The Mindanaw Tripartite Youth Core is the Youth Desk of the Bishops-Ulama Conference. This community of young people composed of the Tri-people Youth in Mindanao, the Indigenous People (Lumads), the Migrant Settlers (Christians) and the Moro (Muslims). This was formally established and named as such after the PHIL-ACCESS experience of the Youth Coordinator. The experience in the Peace Learning Center in Indianapolis, Indiana inspired the community to stand on its own ready to journey with the Mindanawon Youth for dialogue and peace.

Circle of Hope: Jana Jean G. Dacobor (ACCESS Adult Participant, Batch 1) facilitates the Focus Group Discussion for the formulation of the Youth Unity Statement during the Kalindogan 2007 – National Indigenous Youth Peace Congress held last October 16-19 in Davao City, Philippines. This Kalindogan 2007 bears the theme: “Strengthening the Solidarity among the Indigenous Youth in Asserting Indigenous Peoples’ Rights”. Kalindogan is a Mindanao word which means “to gather, to come in a sacred activity to celebrate life”

Peace Facilitators on the Go! – Youth Participants tried to map out the Peace Situation in Mindanao during their Peace Education Workshop for the Tri-people Youth in Bukidnon held in Bukidnon State University last October 19-20, 2007. This workshop is facilitated mainly by the Core Leaders of the Mindanaw Tripartite Youth Core in Partnership with the Philippine ACCESS –Northern Mindanao and the Government Affairs Division of CCEIT of BSU. For an attempt to mainstream the Peace Education program in the university, the 18 youth leaders are encouraged to serve as Peace Facilitators in their respective youth organizations either school or community-based.

Peace Art Exhibit in Southern Christian College (Midsayap, North Cotabato, Philippines) as one of the educational tours for the promotion of the forthcoming celebration of the Mindanao Week of Peace. Teachers and students of SCC find time to listen with the Mindanaw Tripartite Youth Core Coordinator of the Bishops-Ulama Conference during her presentation of the rationale and objectives of the exhibit. This activity also encourages young artists of Mindanao to actively involve in peace making through their artworks.
Dialogue with the Youth in Cotabato during the workshop on the Sources of Conflicts; this workshop was mainly facilitated by Mindanao-Sulu Pastoral Conference-Youth Secretariat in Partnership with the IP Youth Organizations and the United Youth for Peace and Development (UNYPAD). The dialogue attempts to build friendship and networks among these youth leaders in strengthening Youth Participation in peace processes. This was held in Cotabato City last October 5-7, 2007 with the presence of the Church Leaders and Youth staff from the Archdiocese of Cotabato.

Dialogue with the Youth of the 7 Tribes in Bukidnon in an attempt to build friendship and understanding for the Peace Education program that shall be facilitated by the Youth Desk of the Bishops-Ulama Conference and the Phil-ACCESS Alumni of Northern Mindanao; this activity gave way to more venues of peace making with the Indigenous Youth in the province of Bukidnon, Philippines.
Spreading the Word about Indigenous Peoples and Muslims for Manileños
Menard Pete P. Dacono

Youth/Adult Leader
Batch ACCESS 2004 (Batch 1)
Gender Male
Religion Christian
Ethnicity Bukidnon
City, Province, Region Davao City, Davao del Sur, Region 11
Project Title Young Ambassadors of Peace Club/Mindanao Awareness Series of Talks (Lauan University Center)/Leadership and Conflict Management Talk (Botolan Beach Point, Zambales)
Dates of Project Implementation April 2004-Present

I am one of the ACCESS alumni who decided to organize some of their action plans outside Mindanao. I am currently residing in Quezon City because I am studying in Ateneo de Manila University taking up a Bachelor Degree in Management.

Studying outside Mindanao is not a hindrance in applying some of my learning in the ACCESS Program. In fact, I have already accomplished two projects and one project is still on its way to its actual implementation.

To be honest, doing action plans in Manila is a great challenge for me because what I am dealing with here are mostly Manilenos who have a slight idea on what is truly happening in Mindanao. This indifference challenges me to initiate activities that are in line with the program’s theme: “Inter-ethnic Dialogue and Conflict Resolution”. However, the nature of the activities that I have conducted are not exactly the same with that of my ACCESS batchmates’ projects because I am catering to a different target audience. Most of these are Catholics from Luzon and Visayas who have several negative stereotypes for Muslims and misconceptions about Mindanao.

Through needs assessment, I was able to come up with an idea in my first year of college and that was to conduct a series of talks on Mindanao Conflict and Culture. I invited several Ateneans to take part in the program and most of them admitted that they had bad images for Muslims (e.g. sellers of pirated DVDs, terrorists etc.) and after undergoing the said program, their views changed and they realized that they are also part of the existing Muslim-Christian problem. They resolved to be more open and sensitive in terms of dealing with these people.

My next project happened in my fourth year of college (because from 2004-2006 I was the club coordinator of my founded organization in Ateneo de Davao High School). I conducted a talk during my organization’s Evaluation and Formation Seminar that focused on Conflict Management and Resolution and most of the techniques that I taught them where from the ACCESS Program in US. The officers were able to understand the different conflict management approaches well and they also resolved to apply these techniques as they work with their co-members in the coming weeks.

This was done to prevent or lessen unhealthful conflicts in the future (because there were some of these conflicts in the previous semester) which are caused by differences of perspectives and behaviors indirectly attributed by their cultural backgrounds (many come from different provinces). Moreover, these people begin to realize how important the usage of appropriate communication tools and methods when it comes to dealing with other people.
Group Dynamics

Open Forum

Dinner

Communicating Intercultural Values

Sharing Cultural Information about Indigenous Peoples and Muslims

Luan University Center: The Venue of Mindanao Awareness Talks
As a follow through activity to the 1st International Bangsamoro Conference with the theme “Development: Challenges and Opportunities for the Bangsamoro in the 21st Century” held in May 19-21, 2002, the Bangsamoro Development Agency (BDA) and the Institute of Bangsamoro Studies (IBS) sponsored the holding of the 2nd International Bangsamoro Development Conference with the theme “Towards Rebuilding the Bangsamoro Economy” last June 19-21, 2007 at the El Manuel Convention and Entertainment Center, Cotabato City.

The said activity aims to come up with strategies that will bring back control of the economy into the hands of the Bangsamoro through the crafting of strategies that will extricate them from the vicious cycle of exploitation, conflict, poverty, ignorance and ill-health. The conference has also introduced the Bangsamoro into a virtuous cycle of enlightenment, good governance, material and spiritual progress and peace.

It further served as a venue for the Bangsamoro people, as a community, to develop their sense of professionalism in managing their own affairs in matters affecting economic growth and sustainability.”

International delegates especially those from the business sectors; community leaders and other official invitees have attended and witnessed the event.

The conference started with discussions of strategies for the development of the Bangsamoro Homeland and culminated in an investment forum, supported by the Department of Trade and Industry-Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (DTI-ARMM), that showcased business opportunities posed for the Bangsamoro people.

Conference discussions were focused on the crafting of strategies for the: (1) challenges for a post-conflict reconstruction program to be undertaken in the Bangsamoro areas, should there be a peace accord signed between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Government of the Republic Philippines (GRP); (2) roles to be undertaken by the local and international funding donors; (3) business opportunities for the Bangsamoro areas and the proper processes/procedures in doing business in the regions of Muslim Mindanao.

Workshops were also held, to tackle various Bangsamoro issues namely, the integration of the Bangsamoro economy, harnessing their formal and informal economy, promotion and enhancement of entrepreneurship for small and medium enterprises, and priorities for infrastructure and human resource development.

Through the conference, the participants have accumulated more support from all sectors to work harder and dedicate more commitment to achieve an economically independent Bangsamoro community as well as accomplish the goal of sustaining the peace process between the MILF and the GRP.

The conduct of this activity is in line with the continuous support of the civil society groups, the business sectors and other concerned individuals in keeping the spirit of the peace process alive in the Bangsamoro homeland namely: the World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY) – Philippines, ARMM Department of Trade and Industry and ARMM Business Council, Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP), Japan Embassy, and Mindanao Trust Fund – Reconstruction and Development Program (MTF-RDP) and other partners in development.
The 6th ARMM Business Congress held at El Manuel Entertainment and Convention Center in Cotabato City on September 4-5, 2006 has just concluded as it closed on the 5th of September 2007. This 2-day Annual Congress was spearheaded by the ARMM Business Council and the Office of the Regional Governor Datu Zaldy U. Ampatuan and hosted by the Shariff Kabunsuan Province, in close collaboration with the Department of Trade and Industry-ARMM, the Regional Board of Investments-ARMM, the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries-ARMM, Department of Tourism-ARMM, Bureau of Cultural Heritage-ARMM, Bureau of Public Information-ARMM, the Regional Legislative Assembly-ARMM and the GEM2 Program-USAID.

Attended by about 300 participants from the business community in ARMM and outside the region, trade associations, policy makers, academe and farmers, the said Congress aimed to promote the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao in general and the Shariff Kabunsuan Province as an investment destination. It also provided the venue to present the potential investment areas or business opportunities for possible business partnerships among member chambers of the ARMM Business Council, local and foreign. The 6th Congress had also provided the venue to discuss the economic cost of war and its impact to doing business in the ARMM and provided possible recommendations. This year’s Congress theme was: “Expanding Business Linkages with Other Chambers Responsive to Peace Efforts”.

The Congress was highlighted by the holding of the Trade Fair and Exhibits facilitated by the Department of Trade and Industry-ARMM. This activity showcased the ARMM products and donors institutions services to the ARMM. The Trade Fair and Exhibit lasted for 2 days started in the first day of the congress.

The Honorable Regional Governor Datu Zaldy U. Ampatuan was the keynote speaker represented during the Congress by his Regional Cabinet Secretary Norudin Mamaluba. Highlighted during the Congress was the signing of two (2) the Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) between the ARMM Business Council (ABC) and Makati Business Club (MBC) and the Private Enterprise Accelerated Linkages Project Phase 2 (Pearl2)-CIDA.

The MOU signing between ABC and MBC formalized cooperative relationship and affiliation of ABC and MBC for purposes of coordination, exchange of ideas and relevant information, expansion of network for both parties’ members, wider participation in relevant socio-economic and political issues, and partnership in special projects and activities, which are mutually beneficial. And the ABC-Pearl2 MOU was a project implementation entitled:” Institutionalization of ARMM as the Production and Processing Center of Halal in the Philippines”, which has taken off the ABC’s capacity building activities and promotion of Halal industry development in ARMM.

The Administrative Order No. 192, introducing the Department of Trade and Industry on Humanitarian Intervention to Support Basilan and Sulu project or the H.E.L.P. (Health, Education, Intervention) Programs was also launched during the congress opening ceremonies.

**Business Opportunities and the Halal Initiatives in the ARMM**

Presentations on selected business opportunities in ARMM and for ARMM businessmen were presented during the 6th Congress. The Business Opportunities presented during the Congress Plenary included the following: Franchising by Mr. Bernard Eugenio of FRANCORP; Business Process Outsourcing (BPO), by Edwin Moran, President of Audio Dicta Transcription Corporation; Corn Production and Processing by Ms. Rosalie M. Ellases; Biofuel, by Mr. Marriz Manuel B. Agbon, President, Philippine Agricultural Development and Commercial Corporation and Abaca Production and Processing by Ms. Cecilia Gloria J. Soriano, Administrator, Fiber Industry Development Authority.
Halal initiatives in the ARMM was also presented wherein the Muslim Mindanao Halal Certification Board (MMHCB) was once again introduced and promoted. The status of Halal initiatives in ARMM was presented by the Secretary Sajid S. Druz-Ali of the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries – ARMM. A Roundtable Discussion on Halal Industry Development in ARMM was also conducted and facilitated by LGSPA-CIDA. In related activity, the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP) had launched the ARMM Halal Guide Book, which was prepared in partnership with the DTI-ARMM.

A presentation on the Peace Process and its impact to doing business in the ARMM was also discussed during the Congress. These presentations were given by the Institute of Bangsamoro Studies and the Mindanao Business Council. The 6th Congress generated four (4) resolutions as follows:

1. Urging the GRP-MILF to continue the peace efforts to sign a Peace Agreement the soonest possible time and to find all possible ways to resolve the on-going armed conflict in Basilan and Sulu, in respect to the observance of the Holy Month of Ramadhan;
2. Urging the ARMM Regional Government thru the Regional Legislative Assembly (RLA) the immediate enactment of the Regional Investment Act (RIA);
3. Recognizing the pivotal role of the Port of Polloc in fostering international trade and commerce in the ARMM and Central Mindanao regions, respectfully appealing to the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to implement with utmost urgency its strong pronouncement to extend assistance to upgrade the Polloc Baseport’s vital facilities and to provide equipment and materials to ensure safety and security of the region’s passengers and cargoes to attain greater efficiency and improved port services at global standard;
4. Commending the GEM2 Program-USAID and its contractor Louis Berger International and the ARMM Regional Government and its line agencies for the support and assistance extended to the ARMM business communit.
Hagas-Hagas Sin Gumi
Nelson Singson Dino

Youth Leader/Adult Leader: Adult Leader
Batch: ACCESS 2006
Female/Male: Male
Religion: Islam
Ethnicity: Tausug or Suluk
City, Province, Region, Island: Takut-takut, Jolo, Sulu, Bangsamoro Homeland, ARMM, Mindanao
Project Title: Peace Independent Film Project “Hunghong Sa Yuta”
Dates of Project Implementation: July 2007 - February 2008

PEOPLES STORIES
The story is fictional in terms of setting of time and place but its pacing is composite of realities in war-torn Mindanao. The writer-director Arnel Mardoquio has woven the film’s narrative through people’s stories he gathered in the communities mostly affected by war. The story is all about the sad plight of the deaf and mute children pawned in the war as child soldiers. Their lives changed for the better when they met a mysterious teacher Vigo Cruz (Nelson Dino-lead actor) from far away who empowered them through non-formal education in liberating them from their hopelessness. Indeed, it became a redeeming act when the children started to learn to communicate through sign language and discovered that they are also capable of playing their traditional instruments of gongs and kulintangan. Surviving mothers who have finally decided to spare their children and save them by encouraging them not to join the war anymore as child soldiers plays as other protagonists in the story.

COLLABORATIVE ENERGY
Peace Independent film projects entail highly collaborative processes. It is akin to a convergence of positive energies in advocating for peace in Mindanao. Artists as peace advocates learn tolerance, understanding and other peace concepts from the diversity of cultures and languages in Mindanao. Though the actors are Moro Tausug and a Lay missionary who speaks the Indigenous language of Tagakaulo Lumad tribe of the South Mindanao, Christian settlers are playing some film characters as Moro Tausugs. The artistic process was also at the same time a cultural immersion process wherein one has to accept and learn from each other’s traditions and cultures.

GREATER HEIGHTS OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN MORO, INDIGENOUS PEOPLE (LUMAD AND MIGRANTS
The film project dubbed as Hunghong sa Yuta (Earth’s Whisper) is made possible through the initiative and full support of the Youth Ministry of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart. In its peace advocacy mission in Mindanao, the Brothers of the Sacred Heart have been initiating creative projects that hone potential talents of youth in theatre and music. In its film debut as the Executive Producer, they have provided us the moral and financial support needed to stir the project. Working with the young Tausugs is not new to them, since they have provided a center for two weeks for the Tausug artists (Puddang Lupah Sug Artists Guild or PLSAG) last December 2006 in time for their theatre production (antigong agong) tour in Davao City. And a semblance of collaboration is being sustained through Hunghong sa Yuta (Earth’s Whisper), a maiden film project about children and youth.

PEACE ADVOCACY MISSION
The Director and the Executive Producer of the film are bent on pursuing its task to peace advocacy. Premier night is set on the middle week of November 2007. We will be touring colleges and universities in time for the celebration of the Mindanao Week of Peace during the last week and early week of December 2007 or February 2008. We shall be holding Peace I after the film showing to get signatures calling for a lasting peace in the island. We shall be holding free shows in the depressed communities afflicted by war. We won’t have the film viewing in movie houses but instead we will become a “mobile cinema” touring colleges, universities and communities all over the country.

PEOPLE INVOLVED
Writer/Director, Arnel Mardoquio, Veteran scriptwriter and stage director, Palanca Awardee Cinematographer/Cameraman, Egay Navarro, GMA-7 Manila, filmmaker
Assistant Directors Francis Odulio
Assistant Director, Pepito Sumayan, Maranao consultant on Muslim Culture
Choreographer/Mujaheedin, Mario Lim, Veteran choreographer, can handle different musical instruments and stage actor; Production Design Director, Maree Contaoi, Singer, can handle different musical instruments, vocalists, stage actress; Production Manager, Kristy Lim, Veteran stage actress; Stunt Director, Faidal Jumdana, Tausog, stage actor and dancer; Lead Actor, Nelson Dino, Tausug coach language, stage actor, and composer; Musical Director. DPA, Popong Landero, Veteran composer, singer and stage actor; Film Editor, Bong Segovia, Recognized film editor; As Child Soldiers, Beverly Joy Solina, Dan Lester Albaracin, Sara Ingles, Marvin Mindog, JayMar Henerana, Joshua Calapre. These children have been stage actors since 2000; they were given workshops to become film actors; Women as guerilla fighters, Joan Soco, Kristy Lim, Maree Contaoi, Lady Anne Gacho (Sign language teacher); As Lumad Baylan, Lucia Cijas, Can speak the Tagakaulo language

PERSONAL & SOCIAL IMPACT & TRANSFORMATION
It promotes awareness among people in Mindanao, especially those that are not yet informed of what are Muslim, Lumad and Migrants all about. This is also helps to prevent conflicts and war, because of the environmental degradation, poverty, ethnic, political and religious clashes.
Cast members of the Hunghong Sa Yuta Peace Independent Film Project with their PEACE sign, hoping to end the Mindanao and Sulu Conflict. They are the children (Lumad, Moro and Settlers) who became deaf because of the war in the film story.

Mustapa, one of the casts of the Hunghong Sa Yuta Peace Independent Film Project feeding his goat in the grazing land (Actual filming).

Mourning in the grave of their Non-Muslim teacher who taught basic counting and alphabets.

Mujahideen (Wahab) rescuing a Lumad woman (Buyag Iggan) killed by Military agent (Taok) (Actual filming).

Actual shooting of the Hunghong sa Yuta Film Project during the War Scene and trying escape from it.

Sign language workshop preparation for project. Teacher Lady Anne S. Gacho.
I took a lot of effort and courage to push my action plan. Our municipality as well as our barangay had been through a lot of problems. It started with the killings of civilians by the rebels, the conflict between Christians, Lumads and Muslim, vehicular accidents and a lot more. All these happened in our barangay. These gave me the idea, to have a seminar on inter-ethnic dialogue and conflict resolution for me to be able to integrate and form an organization that would work for peace and development in our Barangay. I presented my action plan to our Barangay Captain, without any hesitation he helped me make it happen. With the help, of some concerned citizens I was able to raised Php. 450.00 just enough for my materials and some snacks. From the start, I decided not to get any registration fee from the participants and spend my own money if ever I could not raise enough money for it. Participants came from both Public and private elementary and high school students aged 11-17 and are residing in our barangay. Our barangay had been known to be the place where CPP-NPA had allies. Some of the citizens are collectors of the revolutionary tax, members and officials of the group. People had been used to it but some wanted a change but it could not happen because of our fear to push it.

Our seminar happened on October 06, 2007 at Barangay Malasila Gymnasium and started at 7:00 am-4:30 pm. Before it, I was advised to reschedule my seminar because of some circumstances but I still push it. The night before my seminar I was in Kidapawan to attend our class, right after the class I was rushing to buy all the stuff needed and the bomb blasted I wasn’t able to buy all the stuff but with the help of some people they provided me some materials. It was also difficult for me to find some resource speakers and facilitators for the seminar but I was able to invite Sir Jelor Pescadera our resource speaker and I facilitated the seminar the whole day. There had been a total of 34 selected students who attended the seminar. 3 Lumads, 1 Muslim and 30 Christians attended the seminar. These became possible with the help of the faculty of Malasila National Vocational and Technological High School and Malasila Elementary School they’ve been the one responsible for the selection of participants. With months, of preparation I was able to surpass all the challenges I had financially and physically. This one-day seminar brought a big impact to the community because of some strategies, uniqueness and fairness of our seminar. Participants were able to express their feelings, they were able to interact with other ethnic groups, learn and to dedicate their selves for peace and development advocacy.
Participants placing their artwork on societal problems in Makilala

Critical reflection in Barangay Malasila Gymnasium on October 06, 2007

Barangay Captain Alfredo Elid, on his Inspirational Message

Participant presenting their artwork on the societal problems of Makilala

Malasila Youth for Peace and Development Advocates having their lecture on Conflict Resolution given by Jelor Pescadera on October 06, 2007

MYPDA President presides during their election
Notre Dame of Kidapawan College Interfaith Youth Corps
Sunny Vhie G. Dublan

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Notre Dame of Kidapawan College is a Marist Educational institution in Kidapawan city giving holistic education to youth from different religion and ethnicities of the provinces and the neighboring places. NDKC acknowledge students from different religion and ethnicities and acknowledge their right. As part of the vision of the school to promote peace we have activities like mural painting for peace, interfaith worship, Muslim Student Organization and etc but what is lacking is an peace-related organization that would be participated by the interfaith youth of NDKC. So, we have decided to organize the Interfaith Youth Corps an organization that would promote peace and dialogue.

October 15, 2007 at Saint Marcellin Champagnat Student Center we had conducted our Religious Studies Day not only to celebrate but also to integrate peace education and to formally organize the organization. It is a joint activity by the Peace Education Culture and Society Office, Muslim Student Organization and Religious Studies Students. We have decided to have a half-day lecture and half day socialization and ball games. I had the lecture on Mindanao Situation, Mr. Jelor Pescadera on culture of Peace and Ms. D Victoria Bat-og on Conflict Resolution. Participants paid Php. 90.00 for the food, honorarium and materials.

They were a total of 96 participants from the tri-students. Fifty (50) Christian participants, twenty-seven (27) Muslim Participants and nineteen (19) Lumad Participants and they were automatically member of the organization. The IYC members were students from Religious Studies class and some Religious Education students they already had done Interfaith worship and other activities that promote peace. It brought a big impact not only because of the activities done by the group but it shows the diversity of NDKC which became one way of advocating peace and dialogue.
President of NDKC, Bro. Teodulo Fernandez showing support to the group.

NDKC-IYC members playing volleyball at NDKC Grounds on October 15, 2007

PYLP Alumni giving lecture on Mindanao situation, Conflict Resolution and Culture of Peace

Lecture on conflict resolution given by Ms. D
I’m isolated! I knew for a fact that studying away in Mindanao will somehow curtailed my existence as a peace builder. My decision to study in the University of the Philippines Visayas (UPV) was somehow deviant to what I had pledged two years ago in the United States of America. Though isolated in a place where people do not experience armed conflict, I have learned that peace building should not only be confined in Mindanao alone, that peace building does not merely concentrate in war zones, and that every individual in the country gropes for peace.

I had to admit that my peace efforts are not that intense compared to that of the other batches that stayed in Mindanao for school. It is a given fact that they had all the opportunities because they had a core group to work with, support partners for that matter. Whew! I would sometimes think that it is really hard to work when you’re alone, isolated and desperate. I would sometimes shout on my head, wailing “I quit, I quit” But at the end of the day, I would whimper and realized how stupid I am for putting in mind the word ‘quit’. Then I would think of the ACCESS people who have been sacrificing their time, effort and somehow part of their lives to push peace in the hearts and minds of the Mindanaoans within their reach. Then I would smile and continue dreaming of peace, of happiness, and of love. Oh bliss! Very well then! This photo essay is a collection of my recent experiences as the “lone Visayas based ACCESS peace builder” I am happy that though I’m away from Mindanao I can still contribute little efforts to bring peace in the archipelago. I may be isolated, alone and desperate but as long as there are people who still believe that peace exist I will work and will persevere to at least contribute a little effort on the quest for peace. I know that these photos are just shallow manifestations of my works as a peace builder. On the first glance one would say that these are just simple things and have little contribution to the peace effort. Yes! I would admit that. However, these little things have brought a lot of realization in me. I had realized that with little things you could actually change perspectives. With the little efforts you do you actually impart something: something that is valuable and worth emulating. These little works somehow served as inspirations in me. I would sometimes smile and appreciate the little things over the big ones. The isolation I had made me more responsible as an individual. It transformed me into a person who does not seek glory but wait for it. Though I’m alone, isolated and desperate and sometimes not appreciated with the little things I do I’m happy and smiling and dreaming and fighting for peace in soliloquy.

Environmental Peace! My Aquatic Science Class conducting a lecture at Palaca High School, Miag-ao Iloilo. We lectured the importance of the Aquatic Ecosystem, the problems encounters, and the solutions to the problems.

“Touching Hearts through Arts” – Arts as an approach to peace. With my Artists Anonymous peeps after one of our painting session. These paintings were made under the theme “Kulturang UPV”. We then exhibited these works in the school’s art gallery.
Building A Youth-Based Organization
Sheryan Pendariday Guialel

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Building Youth Based Organization is a chance for every youth to develop their ability. “Youth-Agent of Change Organization” (Y-ACO) is the newly organized group that has been supported and approved by the new ILSHS Principal Prof. Manalindo Magelna. The organization had 40 youth members who are willing to serve sincerely and devotedly. Participants were given a task or mission on their everyday life. They recruited youths in their community to help the organization on spreading the culture of peace and inter-ethnic, interfaith dialogue. They were encouraged to apply their learning from the organization on their personal life. The organization conducted their first mission which was Community Immersion and Walk for Peace at Barangay Makir, Datu Odin Sinsuat, Shariff Kabunsuan on October 14, 2007. It is to orient the community people of the said place about the Peace Awareness and Interfaith Dialogue. Then a two-day seminar-workshop regarding peace, inter-ethnic dialogue and leadership for the future leaders, was held on October 17-18, 2007 at MSU-Maguindanao Training Center.

Convincing people is really a hard task to do. Every person has their own point of view. That is why, we, Y-ACO was really challenged with our activities. “You can have what you want if you work with your heart” – it is what happen to us. We worked with a great sincerity, thus, we also got a great participation from the youth and community people. Participation is the nice start. With this, Unity will follow until every one of us can understand each other. Therefore, Participation, Unity and Understanding are the three steps to start a simple peace with sincerity to a great peace with cooperation.

Y-ACO members on its Walk for Peace at Brgy. Makir
Y-ACO members with the community of Brgy. Makir on its Community Immersion
Brgy. Kagawad Pilot G. Abas orienting his people on the Community Immersion activity
PEACE from the children of Bangsamoro
Participants from other school with their certificates on two-day seminar-workshop activity of Y-ACO
My personal re-echo about learning experience with ACCESS Philippine Youth Leadership Program at Northern Illinois University, USA was held last June 29, 2007 at MSU-TCTO, SHS Social Hall, Bongao, Tawi-Tawi. The re-echo included the information about the ACCESS program, the places we visited, the activities and workshops, exposure to different houses of worship, and some of my learnings about peace and conflict resolution particularly the situation of conflict in Mindanao.

**PEACE-INTERFAITH ADVOCACY**

The Peace-Interfaith Advocacy for youth with its theme “Empowered Youth: Catalysts for Change” was conducted to empower the students on commonalities of values and attitudes that will foster understanding and tolerance among them. This will also provide greater awareness of their significant roles as peace-builders of the society. This seminar was held on September 28, 2007 at MSU-TCTO Science High School (SHS) Social Hall, Bongao, Tawi-Tawi.
Presently, I am the president of the Arabic Club of our institution. This club conducts annually an Islamic Symposium during the month of Ramadhan. For this year, the said club included and conducted its first peace-interfaith advocacy. It is hoped that this kind of activity will continue as long as the institution is in existence. The institution as a whole and the barangay chairman of Tubig Mampallam supported for the success of the said advocacy.

The main beneficiaries of this are the students of MSU-TCTO Science High School. The topics tackled were Youth Empowerment in Islamic Perspective, the Roles of Youth in Peace and Development, and the Culture of Peace. The resource speakers were representatives of Muslims and Christians.

Ustadz Abdulwahid Inju        Mr. Rowel Lowaton           Ms. Rosabella Serato        Atty. Radzma Jamiri, PhD.

Having been conducted this activity; students had better understanding among themselves despite their cultural and religious differences. This has contributed to the student’s respect and tolerance towards each other regardless of faith and creed.

The challenges I met were the preparation, arrangement and organization of the said event. There were so many things to consider like the time, the speakers, the financial sources, and so many things. But still, with the help of the Almighty God and the active participation of the students and private sponsors, this had been successfully held.

SHS students attentively listening
Operation Shoebox: A Box that Can Change a Life and Inspire a Dream
Dorothy Joann Lei O. Labrador

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Finally, a dream of a brightly smiling child came into reality. On September 13, 2007, the Education Academic Organization (EAO) of Ateneo de Zamboanga University gave 155 shoeboxes filled with basic school supplies and other educational items to students from grades 1 to 6 of Mampang Elementary School. From the education students of the said university came the donated shoeboxes. Indeed, they acted as hands and feet of this project.

Mampang is a Muslim urban poor area in Zamboanga City. Fishing is the common source of living because it is situated near the sea. Most of the students of the said recipient school are children of these fishermen. Because of the insufficient income of their families, many children do not have complete school supplies to be used in school. Some of them do not even have any footwear when they went to school.

It all started with a real story told by our teacher which inspired me and my friend, Jhissa Lae P. de Leon. She told us of a boy who carried her market goods in exchange for some pennies. While walking, she talked to the kid and found out that he came from a poor family. What struck us the most was when we heard that the child only had one notebook for all his subjects in school. As future educators (we are currently graduating students, taking up Bachelor in Elementary Education), we know how important it is to have complete materials for school. Aside from the fact that having these will help them improve their standing in school, they will also be motivated to learn because of these things. Thus, Jhissa and I conceptualized the Operation Shoebox.

The idea of this operation is to adopt a child when preparing a shoebox. The giver should think of a kid, regardless of gender and race, and think about what he/she would need in school. Each shoebox must include at least 5 notebooks, 3 pencils, a box of crayons, a sharpener, a ruler, an eraser, and some pad papers. The giver can also give other items for the kid like lunch boxes, books, clothes, and others that the kid can use in school for as long as they are decent and presentable.

What separates this project from other charity activities are the letter and the concept of “gift”. The giver should write a letter of encouragement to the child, regardless of whoever will receive his shoebox. This adds personal touch on the part of the giver and inspiration on the part of the recipient as they will feel important and special through the gifts and letter. Also, to make the experience more meaningful, the boxes should be wrapped in colorful gift wrappers. This makes the project more of a gift than a donation. Also, children are fond and excited to receive colorful boxes. The gif-wrapping also is an application of the element of surprise; thus, makes the recipient’s experience more joyful.

The experience from the first operation really struck me to the core. As a pre-service teacher, I have felt the passion and seen the need to empower the future citizens of our society and the first step to do this is to provide their basic necessities.

So where do we go from here? On December 2007, we shall have two operations targeting over 1,500 grade school students. These are just steps to our dream yet to be realized: to get all schools in Zamboanga City to give at least one shoebox each year to the children of the community. I know that the road to make that dream a reality is still a long way but I am willing to take small steps towards it.
The Education students of Ateneo de Zamboanga University wrapped the shoeboxes with colorful gift wrappers.

Each shoebox contained basic school supplies like notebooks, pencils, crayons, erasers, and others.

A special feature of this project is the letters written by the giver of the box to its recipient.

Each shoebox costs approximately PhP 70.00. It can change a life and inspire a dream.

Lei Labrador, ACCESS-II alumna, headed the Operation Shoebox implemented in Mampang Elementary School, Zamboanga City on Sept. 13, 2007.
Kapanalan ko Kasisinabuta  
(Finding Ways for Mutual Understanding)  
Sittie Norhanie Hamdag Lao

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It is very easy to plan things, but I found implementation as the most difficult part. Financial support is one great problem we have encountered, but thanks to the Supreme Student Government of Mindanao State University-Marawi for providing us the funding and also to the partner campus organizations, Alpha Phi Omega and UNYPAD, for making our program, Kapanalan ko Kasisinabuta, which is a part of the three-day activities of the Freshmen Week, an effective and a successful one.

The program has two components. First, The Kanggita-gita '07, conducted in the morning (8-11:30am). This has adapted the concept of The Amazing Race. We divided our sixty freshmen participants into ten teams; each has a designated color and composed of ethnically and religiously different people. We also made ten stations all over the university. Each station has a different challenge to be completed in order to get the next clue to move on to the next station. The first three teams to finish were declared winners and were given prizes. The objective of this activity is to integrate these diverse people, to give them the experience of working with different people toward one goal. This is also to prepare them for the afternoon activity which is more serious in ambiance.

The second part of the program conducted in the afternoon was the Interfaith Dialogue: Channel to Mutual Understanding and Peace-Building. We had invited three speakers, one Christian, one Lumad, and one Muslim, who talked and exchanged ideas about their faith and culture. They also answered several questions thrown by the audience. For the Christians we invited Prof. Jim Ouano, a faculty of the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics and a known pastor in our university. For the Muslims, we had Prof. Sandiman Lomala of the King Faisal Center for Islamic and Asian Studies, MSU. For the Indigenous Peoples, we had Ms. Rosanna Sambile of Bukidnon State University.

We decided to have it before the classes begun and to have freshmen participants for a purpose. It is because freshmen students are more aloof. They have the greater tendency to go on groups based on common religion, ethnicity, or high school than sophomores, juniors or senior college students. We felt it such a great call to have this program for as they go to college they will meet different peoples. This program was meant to open their eyes on huge diversity and also for them to celebrate and appreciate it through learning about the great commonalities that they have.

Honestly, at the beginning, I only have the thought of implementing my action plan and just that. Making a difference is a second thought. However, the tables were turned during the program. I felt how difficult it is to work for peace-building and I also felt the great sentiment of fulfillment—of being able to contribute something, even just a little, for the promotion of peace and mutual understanding. I felt everything I have learned from the PYLP. Doing everything to make the program possible might seem so easy. It is indeed difficult, but the difficulty made us feel so fulfilled when we finally overcame it and when we realized that we were able to put up something BIG at this age.
Official opening of the race for peace.

A group completing one challenge, "The Puzzle"

*Lift Me Up*, an activity that teaches the participants the value of team work.
Challenges of Peacebuilding in the Military: A Journey of Hope
Ma. Teresa Angelina V. De Leon

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Sometime in 2004, I was called upon to do a 3-day Seminar-Workshop on the Dynamics of Conflict. I was sole facilitator – not because I was the only one qualified, but because I was the only one available – considering the venue and unstable peace and order situation of that place. Not excluding the fact that it was raining cats and dogs the whole time I was back-riding on a motorcycle. Of course, I was offered a military transportation which I felt I had to refuse. Being a non-government organization worker for quite sometime gives one a “healthy suspicious mind:” always challenging one’s biases and doubts of sincerity. Peacebuilding seminar-workshops were usually given to the grassroots peacebuilders, religious leaders, civil society, etc…..it was not usual for military to be beneficiaries.

I was told that the participants of this seminar-workshop were senior officers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. Also, it was emphasized that I was going to do “my stuff” with the Dynamics of Conflict as it’s focus. So, I arrived at the venue – after a seemingly endless rough road travel, with the occasional short strips of asphalt roads (thank God!) – with my seminar-materials wrapped in plastic bags. (Unfortunately, I couldn’t travel lighter by bringing with me a flash drive or some CD’s. Electricity was not stable, if there was…) I was soaked and drenched and muddy. Already, the participants were ready for me. I only had time to change my shirt. I was ready and excited, too – despite and in spite of everything. Conflict has been a favorite topic in all my peace seminars. It’s dynamic, exciting…and I always felt that in understanding it, it gives us the hope that peace is possible in the here and now…that, when we talk of peace…we do not always take it in the context of the “peace of the graveyard”. Anyway, I walked into that small place that they called session hall and my jaw literally dropped when I looked at the backdrop in a makeshift white “wall”. It read “A 3-day SEMINAR-WORKSHOP: VALUES FORMATION AND CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION”. I was looking at the participants faces as they saw me walk in and found out that I was going to be their facilitator…confused, blank, “oh my gosh” expressions on those faces! (I guess, even if they weren’t the military, seeing a 4ft. 9” female, drenched and muddy would have that effect. I’d definitely like to believe that).

**Values Formation**, my goodness! These men have been formed since I probably was in high school! (and believe me…that was some time ago…). I wasn’t willing to do values formation for men who already have formed values! I didn’t want to even be responsible for that. My mind was racing…cultural differences, differences in religious beliefs, different upbringing….yes, part of my materials was Erik Erikson’s Psychosocial Stages of Development, a checklist on Conflict Styles or how one acts in conflict, some materials on perspectives….okay – all of these would be dependent on formed values. Slowly, I started to breath normally…. I said to myself, “I could definitely do this…” With my index cards, I started making notes (during the “getting to know you” part) on how I was going to facilitate this seminar-workshop toward the Dynamics of Conflict.

After the first two hours plus a thirty-minute break, “my” participants decided I knew what I was doing and I definitely knew what I was talking about. To cut this long sharing short I could humbly say that, that seminar-workshop was a success. That’s one of the many good things about working with peace building in the military, always I get an update. And if the number of continues seminar-workshops are indications of success, then, I can safely say it is a success. If it will also help in validating success – the military, in that small part of the world at least during that time – was no longer considered as enemies or initiators of violence by the majority of the people who live in that community…then, it was a success.
Unfortunately, “peace” is still fragile in those parts of the world. For peace to be sustainable, it will take continuous effort from all stakeholders. For now, bad politics, ignorance and intolerance, exclusivity and the like still have the power to shatter relative peace. But for as long as efforts are done and hope is present the goal of peace in the here and now is possible.

As an update, the seminar-workshops are no longer entitled that way. Because of the continued efforts the title is more specific. Coming from the request of the clientele themselves who are composed of NCOs (Non-Commissioned Officers who are frontliners) and Key Executives of CMO (Civil-Military Operations), the seminars are now titled as Conflict Management and Peacebuilding and they requested that they be acknowledged now as Peacebuilders.
Organizing the Notre Dame Interfaith Youth Corps (NDIYC)
Jefford Ray D. Mamacus

Youth Leader/Adult Leader: Youth Leader
Batch: PYLP 2006-7
Female/Male: Male
Religion: UCCP
Ethnicity: Boholano/Ilocano
City, Province, Region, Island: Kidapawan City, North Cotabato, Region XII
Project Title: Organizing the Notre Dame Interfaith Youth Corps
Dates of Project Implementation: July 2007 – Present

The Notre Dame of Kidapawan College – High School Department Inter-faith Youth Corps is an organization for the NDKC institution that involves students of different religion and ethnicity, which promotes peace and dialogue around NDKC, and Kidapawan City in general. This new organization has been approved and supported by the NDKC President Bro. Ted Fernandez, FMS; NDKC – IBEd Principal Bro. Noel Fernandez, FMS; and Assistant Principal Ms. Aurora Juan.

The organization started with the interfaith youth camp on July 20 – 22, 2007, wherein the members bond together with the other members. Other outputs made by the NDIYC are stage presentation presenting the Mindanao situation and how to resolve them; original songs composed by our very own members recorded at the Mass Communication Laboratory of NDKC; reach-out to the different victims of conflicts in some parts of Mindanao; as well as the NDIYC Peace Courier – a bi-monthly newsletter posted on each classroom of the institution. The members of the organization are planning to conduct another Youth Camp for the Elementary students, as well as other activities related on dialogue for the inter-ethnic students of the NDKC-HS.

With the different activities held by the organization, I realized that these steps we are taking can lead to a brighter situation of Mindanao in the future. Though we are still students, I have observed that the culture peace is growing within us. The members has indeed showed cooperation, despite the different religions and ethnicities they cam from. With every outreach and mini-interfaith dialogue we are doing, we prove that even we are still young; we can do something for the better of the community. Unity is one thing that can promote peace within us. Like what we have started, may we have unity and understanding among ourselves, so that peace and love will grow all over Mindanao.

The members of the NDIYC, showing a “peace” sign, during the Interfaith Youth Camp on July 20 – 22, 2007
Mural Painting on July 22, 2007, as a sign of Commitment of the members
A Group Discussion (Little Interfaith Dialogue) of the Organization on July 20, 2007

The NDIYC members having their extension services to the victims of fire, on September 22, 2007

Officers of the NDIYC preparing the different medical assistances donated by the students and the NDIYC members on October 13, 2007. These medical assistances are for the victims of the bomb explosion that occurred on October 5, 2007

“Munting Paaralan para sa Munting Paslit” project of the NDIYC, teaching the children of different ethnicities who are not capable of a quality education. The NDIYC members, themselves, teach the children every third Saturday of the month.

A little conversation of the NDIYC members with the different children of the ethnic minorities in Kidapawan City on October 7, 2007

The NDIYC members preparing for the recording of their own composed songs about peace on August 25, 2007. They performed it a week later during the culmination of the Buwan ng Wika.
**Youth Leader/Adult Leader**  
Kimbol A. Mangelen

**Batch:** ACCESS 2005-06

**Female/Male**  
Male

**Ethnicity**  
Maguindanaon

**City, Province, Region, Island**  
Datu Odin Sinsuat, Shariff Kabunsuan, ARMM

**Project Title**  
Pagaliko, Tabangi Ko (My Brother, Help Me)

**Dates of Project Implementation**  
April 05, 2007

---

NGO representatives and ACCESS-3 rep. Kimbol A. Mangelen sharing insight on “Tribal Discrimination” and the possible solution to the said problem.

Giving food (juice, bread, some toys, etc.) to the Tiruray’s children at Brgy. Bugawas, Datu Odin Sinsuat, Shariff Kabunsuan.

House-to-house distribution of solicited goods (food, clothes, some medicines, etc.) at brgy. Bugawas, Datu Odin Sinsuat, Shariff Kabunsuan by ACCESS-3 Rep. and the volunteers.

The untiring peacemakers volunteer of Maguindanao province with the Tiruray lumad representative.
PROJECT REPORT

Title: Pagaliko, Tabangi Ko

Goal: Improve human development outcome in the area of “Education (Peace Education), Health Care and Shelter”

Specific Objectives:

1. To empathize with the Tiruray Lumad people and have bond with them.
2. To advance their belief that peace is attainable.

Activities

1. The PHIL.ACCESS-alumni in nearby municipalities gathered at Parang, Shariff Kabunsuan on Feb.24, 2007 to talk about the plan entitled “Education and function literacy for the people of Sitio Tinindanan Bugawas, Datu Odin Sinsuat, Shariff Kabunsuan. The majority of the group members suggested first to undergo a survey about the actual situation of the people and this is to find out if the said project is appropriate.

2. On March 14, 2007, we referred to Mr. Abdulmain Abas, the Barangay Captain of the place upon asking permission regarding the plan to be implemented; he agreed and even appreciated the project.

3. On March 16, 2007, we visited the place and observed the people’s way of living and their situation. Certainly, the said plan may not need to be realized for the people are being educated yet majority of them are living poorly.

4. On March 18, 2007, the PHIL.ACCESS alumni gathered again at MSU-Maguindanao, Datu Odin Sinsuat, Shariff Kabunsuan. The group came up with the plan of improving human development outcome in the area of “Education (Peace Education), Health Care and Shelter.” Every member of the group is then obliged to contribute for any available equipment that are needed. It is suggested also to ask support from other concerned organization like NGO’S. As agreed by the body, the said plan shall be implemented on April 05.2007.

5. On March 20, 2007 the group collaborated with the NGO’S president and his subordinates and fortunately NGO’S are willing to help and are very glad hearing about the plan.

6. On April 05, 2007, plan’s implementation”. In the morning the peace forum was held, NGO’S lectured on how to prevent conflict and manage peace and order. After lunch is the house to house visit to the brgy, and the distribution of solicited needs, goods and clothes to each family was done. The people were very thankful and stated that, ever since, we are oppressed and discriminated by most urban people for the fact that our level of education are low and that we are not always aware of everything”. Consequently, through the actions of the PHIL.ACCESS and NGO’S, the people have realized that somebody is concerned to give help and care. The groups are very much thanked by the people.
Peace is just a simple word to say but difficult to attain. All of us have our own way how we interpret peace and how we would spread it. Individuals are hoping to attain peace in the world and in the country: this thing is not so ambitious to wish for. Nevertheless, we start working for peace within ourselves, which is a very simple and productive manner of spreading and attaining peace.

I conducted an activity called "Pagtun-an naton ang Kalinong" with the help of my friends, my adviser in the Boy Scout, and my adviser in Columbians Squire, Mr. Alan P. Celera, to make this activity successful. This activity aimed to spread peace. We presented a workshop which serves as the new seed to be implanted in the minds of the participants which will grow bountifully as they became ambassadors of peace and good will in their own little ways. The workshop was about what the current and past situation. Most of the participants were Muslims and Christians. There is an existing invisible wall between these two groups. Metaphorically, I was able to destroy that wall in my own little way, which gave me a chance to bring love and friendship to our all our brothers and sisters, regardless of our religious differences. The workshop questions included issues about what do Muslim people comes first into their minds if they heard the word "Christians" and vice-versa; a little bit of the discrimination of both parties, how did it affect their personalities at the same time their customs and tradition that are being labeled by the other tribe. Because this activity dealt with the negative impression, revising to be useful in order to achieve the solution to that problem, at same time strengthening the brotherhood and the interaction between other tribe. And it lessens the discrimination between unlike parties but still there is discrimination exist, we could only minimize it.

After the workshop, we had games which provided the participants time for bonding where they met new friends in a world full of hatred and sorrow. The purpose of the game was to enhance their learning or to evaluate what they have learned from the lecture and how they plan to apply what they have learned in their daily-life activity. It also built up their personality and their self-esteem as they interacted and mingled with people of other cultures.

After the fun outdoor games, the next session was the open forum, which was a time for dialogue to know what the problems in our community are and to arrive at well grounded solutions. At the same time, it provided the participants an opportunity to have a closer relationship among themselves from whom they can call for help when inter-ethnic and inter-religious conflicts arise in the future.

The last part was the closing program where a yarn was being passed around in a clockwise direction. The yarn was tied up in their wrist while giving their impression in the activity. The yarn symbolized unity and friendship. After the workshop, the participants left with joy in there faces, as new friends enter into their lives on whom they can count, when conflicts arise.

*You must be the change you wish to see in the world~* Mahatma Gandhi.
The experience is unfathomable yet what comes after this one the big responsibility and challenge is here. The response of what we take after the training, what we must do in order to promote peaceful coexistence amidst diversity, and what awaits us from the unconditional circumstances along the way of having positive ground for common good.

Moreover this would be a stepping stone and a continuation of my mission here on Earth not just to do righteousness according to God but to become one of the peace builders that would help unite everybody to have a mutual understanding and remove the stereotypes, biases, prejudices, concept of misunderstanding and multifaceted invisible wall that is not seen.

All of these things made me swirl with makes emotion but made me challenge. That is why I need to be awake for the responsibilities in order for me to achieve all the starting points that I have made. This is such a tough but enjoyable journey to look forward and set some options to become reality.

Now, the moment is provoking and the action well implemented. The experience abroad, the learning and the unconscious time is molding us to rob the peak of our best, lending a hand of making effective strategies that is useful to make the dream come true in taking small actions yet with great impact and eventually making a positive difference of peace building.

Footnote:
“Onward access to thousand seven in reaching the peak of your dreams for in the now to have UNITY AND PEACE amidst vast DIVERSITY.”
Convergence 2007: Kapatiran ng mga Kabataan para sa Kapayapaan
Accomplishment Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. Project Title:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dalaw-Kalilintad (A Cultural Caravan)</td>
<td>April 14, 2007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>II. Project Proponent(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suhaini Nasher Pagadilan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ali Rafsanjani Pikit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>III. Project period (Conception and Completion Report)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• March 2007- Series of meetings of the ACCESS alumni and communicating with communities to be visited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• March 2007(last week)- Finalizing program of activities by the ACCESS alumni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• April 2007(first week)- Preparation and tapping of participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• April 14, 2007- Implementation of the project</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IV. Project Implementation Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 14, 2007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| V. Project Objectives: (Must be SMART – Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Results Oriented and Time-bound): |
|                                                                                                                                    |
| General Objective:  1. To improve human development in the area of education;                                                      |
| Specific Objectives:  1. To expose non-Maranao students of MSU to the Maranao communities;                                         |
|                      2. To provide an orientation of the Maranao culture to new students of MSU; and                                        |
|                      3. To conduct workshop about diversity and cultural awareness                                                        |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VI. Project Description:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dalaw-Kalilintad is a one-day activity that happened on April 14, 2007. The activity was composed of two major parts: the community visits and the convergence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both the participants and facilitators were divided into two groups for the community visits. Two communities, such as Marinaut and Dayawan, were visited by the groups. The communities are located just right after Marawi City along the Lake Lanao.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The first group which went to Marinaut experienced a conversation and story-telling with a native of the place who is called Rajah Muda. Many beliefs and interesting features of the place were shared by the inhabitants to the participants. Two of these were the prohibition of getting anything from the place, and the top view of the entire community which resembles a crocodile’s mouth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The other group that went to Dayawan explored also a lot about the Maranao culture. They visited torogan (a Maranao royal house) which was built long time ago and is being maintained. They also went to Maranao cultural shops where they were introduced to some Maranao crafts which feature the very intricate Maranao art called okir.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All the participants and facilitators gathered together at the Mamitua Saber Research Center conference hall to take their lunch. Right after lunch, at 1:00 PM, the convergence activity started.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The purpose of the activity was to give the participants an avenue to share to one another their experiences from the two different communities they visited. Workshops were conducted by the facilitators to enhance the knowledge of the participants regarding the aspects of peace and to instill in them the objective of the activity which is to help eradicate the image of danger associated with Maranaos and Muslims, in general.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VII. Project Beneficiaries:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct:  Twenty students were invited to join the activity but only 13 of them came and participated. The list of the 13 final participants is as follows:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheikha Acas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dan Jave Dumpa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Monique Joni Gallo
Joshua Ray Garcia
Hannah Lipang
Norverissa Pingol
Goldie Pogosa
Marjorie Anne Sulapas
Mark Alvin Tampus
Michelle Tato
Dominador Toral
Leo Winnard Valeroso
Jessel Villareal

**Indirect:**
Indirect beneficiaries shall include the friends and people related to the participants for they are whom the participants will share their experience and learnings with. The Maranao people are also indirect beneficiaries because their culture is promoted in this project.

**VIII. Project Supporters:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Nature of Support/Assistance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. IVP Philippines</td>
<td>Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. ACCESS Philippines (Marawi)</td>
<td>Facilitation, Manpower and Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. MSU Communication Studies Department (thru Prof. Sorhaila Latip-Yusoph)</td>
<td>Facilitation and Communication (with communities)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**IX. Project Financial Summary** *(Use separate sheets for details)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sources of Fund</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>P7100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses of Fund</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>P6500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>P 600.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Explanation:
The proposed budget for the project has a total of P7100.00. IVP Philippines, the only funding agency, gave P6500.00. The proposed budget was then adjusted to make the fund given cover all the expenses needed. Due to lack of time of the proponents, the brochure production is not (yet) materialized and that comprises most of the amount in the *Actual* difference which is worth P1966.00.

**X. Project Commendations Received** *(attach photocopies of supporting documents)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**XI. Project Assessment**

At the end of activity, here are three testimonies from the participants:

*Thank you so much for conducting this activity. This is something we owe to you. I’ve learned so much from this.* ---Monique Joni Gallo

*The activity was very significant. I believe in your cause. All we need is just commitment.* ---Goldie Pogosa

*It was really fun. I admire your company. Hope to be with your group (ACCESS MARAWI) someday.* ---Joshua Ray Garcia

**Name/s and Signature/s of Project proponent(s)**

SUHAINI NASHER PAGADILAN  ALI RAFSANJANI PIKIT
## DALAW-KALILINTAD (A Cultural Caravan)
### Summary of Sources and Uses of Funds

#### Sources of Funds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Particulars</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IVP Philippines</td>
<td>P7100.00</td>
<td>P6500.00</td>
<td>P600.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal:</strong></td>
<td>P7100.00</td>
<td>P6500.00</td>
<td>P600.00</td>
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</table>

#### Uses of Funds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Particulars</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Venue for Convergence (lunch inclusive)</td>
<td>P2700.00</td>
<td>P2700.00</td>
<td>P 0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brochure Production</td>
<td>2000.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>2000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Expenses</td>
<td>1000.00</td>
<td>1000.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Expenses</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>200.00</td>
<td>(100.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>50.00</td>
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<td>Materials:</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Markers</td>
<td>70.00</td>
<td>70.00</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manila papers</td>
<td>20.00</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cartolinas</td>
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<td>20.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stickers (Dots)</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bond papers</td>
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<td>20.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snacks</td>
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<td>254.00</td>
<td>46.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contingency</td>
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<td>200.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal:</strong></td>
<td>P6500.00</td>
<td>P4534.00</td>
<td>P1966.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Difference:**

| P 600.00 | P1966.00 | (P1366.00) |

Prepared By: ALI RAFSANJANI PIKIT

Name and Signature
Date: July 21, 2007

[Image of a bird with a branch in its beak]
Engaging Student Leaders and Out-of-School Youth in Inter-Ethnic Dialogue and Culture of Peace
Ronald Hallid D. Torres

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Youth Leader/Adult Leader</th>
<th>Adult Leader</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Batch</td>
<td>PYLP 2006-07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female/Male</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>Islam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>Maguindanaon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City, Province, Region, Island</td>
<td>ARMM-Shariff Kabunsuan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Title</td>
<td>“Engaging Student Leaders and Out of School Youth in Inter-Ethnic Dialogue and Culture of Peace”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dates of Project Implementation</td>
<td>October 17-18, 2007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This project was implemented in response to the quest for peace and development, MSU-Maguindanao. Being one of the identified academic institutions for peace education and on the premise of the Executive Order No. 570 or known as Institutionalizing Peace Education in Basic Education and Teacher Education, this action plan is conceived to conduct a 2 day seminar-workshop on inter-ethnic dialogue and Culture of Peace for student leaders from different high schools and Out of School Youth to be aware of the importance of maintaining peace, tranquility, and respect in religion in the university and locality. This is to enhance the leadership skills, community activism, orientation on Culture of Peace and inter-faith dialogue for them to be active participants and work collaboratively in peace building. This was conducted on October 17-18, 2007 at MSU-Maguindanao Training Center and was participated by a total of 82 participants from four different schools (Integ.Lab. Science High School, Datu Odin Sinsuat Educational and Foundation Inc., Mamasapano N.H.S and Datu Tahir N.H.S).

Being the organizer and supported by the two youth alumni, I did all the preparation including invitations, program materials, setting up the venues, communication and the likes. This was supposedly in coordination with Institute of Peace and Development in Mindanao-MSU-Mag. But there was no financial amount received from the administration. Hence, the main challenge on me was financial concerns. However, this was surpassed because of the endurance and determination to be catalyst of peace. The achievements were the participants made their action plans to be implemented before the peace assembly to be conducted during the celebration of Mindanao Week of Peace this year. There was also an organized yahoo group of the participants where they can keep in touch and be updated of events and activities of the group.
**CHAPTER 8: BEST PRACTICES IN PEACE BUILDING**

### Peace Building Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Interventions</th>
<th>Approaches/ “Process”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Youth Development</strong></td>
<td>Student Leadership Training</td>
<td>❖ Proper coordination and effective time management can reduce risks: issues, labor, communication gap, and even finance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Workshop Training</td>
<td>❖ Be flexible to allow change and appreciate creativity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal Development Training</td>
<td>❖ Come up with working guidelines that address: project proposal, task, and post-evaluation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gender</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Teambuilding</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Counseling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Livelihood and Community</strong></td>
<td>Community Outreach Programme</td>
<td>❖ Establish relationship with the stakeholders/donors and keep them informed about the programmes of the school/community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community Volunteerism/service</td>
<td>❖ Drawn out support from the LGUs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tree Planting (Environmental)</td>
<td>❖ Involve stakeholders to plan-out for project implementation and create mechanisms for active participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strengthening Cultural Heritage</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Charity Programme</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Environmental Ecological Preservation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information &amp; Education</strong></td>
<td>Interfaith and inter-ethnic dialogue</td>
<td>❖ Net working is important to promote the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Photo &amp; Public Exhibit</td>
<td>❖ Partnership &amp; multi stakeholders provides greater transparency and accountability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School Publications</td>
<td>❖ Great impact is achieved when concern officers/administrator supports the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Symposium and Fora</td>
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<td>Sports for Peace</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Peace Building Assessment - 1**

With **good preparation and training**, program officers can be continually alert to simple, and non-controversial, ideas and openings which promote peaceful and constructive dialogue between and within the communities/partners with whom they work. A ‘humility of approach’ is needed, and it is important that peace builders from outside ‘put themselves in the shoes' of the 'beneficiaries.'

**Peace Building Assessment – 2**

- Before any peace building intervention a thorough **conflict analysis and mapping** exercise should be undertaken in the area involved.
- Peace building should be seen as a **process** and part of an integrated long term strategy. Donors should allow for funding cycles which are longer than at present.

**Peace Building Assessment – 3**

- **Transparency** is an important factor, so that peace building is not seen as a threat or challenge to existing power structures. A slow careful approach is required.
- ACCESS should **network and co-ordinate** with other donors and agencies who are involved in, or are developing, peace building initiatives to ensure that interventions are complementary and contingent.

**Recommendations**

- Regular dialogue/communication among the ACCESS PYLP participants and with partners
- Creation of Database & Strategic Planning
- Log Frame Analysis (community participatory meeting)
- Research and Documentation
- Ethics or working guideline
- Website/yahoo groups for ACCESS participants
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is the nature of the group/individual project? (e.g., objectives, beneficiaries)</th>
<th>What are the issues and challenges encountered during the implementation?</th>
<th>What are the actions taken to resolve the issues?</th>
<th>What are the lessons learned?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Institutional Project**
"Engaging Student Leaders and Out-of School Youth in Inter-ethnic Dialogue and Culture of Peace Seminar-Workshop"
**Objective**
Enhance leadership skills, community activism, orientation on Culture of Peace, and inter-faith dialogue for the participants to be active participants and work collaboratively in peace building
**Beneficiaries**
82 participants from four high schools | Financial Constraints
Night Session
Number of Participants | -The participants supported through registration fee of P75.00 each
-Support from PYLP Alumni
-Arranged with the Security Office
-Each room and school was given a slot for number of participants | -The participants were willing to be part of peace advocacy even they spent money from their own pocket.
- Proper designation of work is needed.
- The public schools in the province are supportive and willing to be part of peace building.
- There are bright ideas from the youth in realizing the peace building
- There is a need to materialize the youth peace assembly. |

| **Institutional Project**
"Orientation on Culture of Peace for PTCA, Out of School Youth, Local Government Unit and other community members"** Objectives**
-To be aware of the importance of maintaining peace and tranquility in the locality
-To strengthen linkage with the stakeholders of the school | Schedule postponement | -Finalize the schedule to ensure the attendance of the participants | - Keep the stakeholders will informed about the programs of the school |

| **Individual Project**
Community Based Community Immersion & Outreach activities at different brgy's in Datu Odin Sinsuat, Shariff Kabunsuan:
 a. Lecture on Unity of Christian, Muslim and Lumad
 b. Organizing MAD and | Lack of Budget
Weak response from the community | -Solicited support
-Communicated and coordinated with Brgy. Officials | -Work systematically and organized
- Be patient and flexible with the people around |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Objective</strong></th>
<th><strong>Beneficiaries</strong></th>
<th><strong>Individual Project</strong></th>
<th><strong>Beneficiaries</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e. Mobile Eskwela</td>
<td>Community members of different brgy. Youth Leaders</td>
<td>c. Quar'anic Essay Writing and Washiyah Contest</td>
<td>Do things today if you can</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Quar'anic Essay Writing and Washiyah Contest</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **Objectives** | - Orient the community members and Youth leaders about unity despite diversity of Christians, Muslims and Lumads  
| | - Be Member of MAD (Making a Difference People)  
| | - Develop the skills on understanding the meaning of Holy Qur'an | - Worked systematically |
| **Beneficiaries** | | | |
| | | - Scheduled the activities  
| | | - Used personal fund  
| | | - Being strong and persistent |
| | | - Its hard to convince and please everybody but be patient  
| | | - Work fairly  
| | | - Work enthusiastically and with love |
| | | - Financial matters should be settled first  
| | | - Be resourceful in all activities Made hand-outs for the participants to read and remember |
| | | - Present the need to them before formally promoting the project |
| | | - Month long research  
| | | - Gathering of sources for the series of talks  
| | | - Inviting Non-Mindanaons to take part |
| | | - Financial Shortage  
| | | - Lack of cooperation  
| | | - Some technical and logical problems  
| | | - Conflict arises because of different perspective |
| | | - Scheduling the activities  
| | | - Encouraged the participants to be participative  
| | | - Taught them in reducing possibility of conflict through conflict management styles & other related peace topics |
| | | | |
| | | - Financial Shortage  
| | | - Lack of cooperation  
| | | - Some technical and logical problems  
| | | - Conflict arises because of different perspective |
| | | - Scheduling the activities  
| | | - Encouraged the participants to be participative  
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| | | - Financial matters should be settled first  
| | | - Be resourceful in all activities Made hand-outs for the participants to read and remember |
| | | - Present the need to them before formally promoting the project |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Individual Project</strong></th>
<th><strong>School Based Developing Ideas for Peace through Arts and Journalism</strong></th>
<th><strong>Time management problems</strong></th>
<th><strong>Beneficiaries</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Objective** | - Develop leadership skills and social interactions of the VYPO officers and members  
| | - Promote unity & inculcate peace virtues | - Worked systematically |
| | | | |
| | | - Financial Shortage  
| | | - Lack of cooperation  
| | | - Some technical and logical problems  
| | | - Conflict arises because of different perspective |
| **Beneficiaries** | Officers and members of VYPO and selected students | - Scheduled the activities  
| | | - Used personal fund  
| | | - Being strong and persistent |
| | | - Its hard to convince and please everybody but be patient  
| | | - Work fairly  
| | | - Work enthusiastically and with love |
| | | - Financial matters should be settled first  
| | | - Be resourceful in all activities Made hand-outs for the participants to read and remember |
| | | - Present the need to them before formally promoting the project |
| | | - Month long research  
| | | - Gathering of sources for the series of talks  
| | | - Inviting Non-Mindanaons to take part |
| | | - Financial Shortage  
| | | - Lack of cooperation  
| | | - Some technical and logical problems  
| | | - Conflict arises because of different perspective |
| | | - Scheduling the activities  
| | | - Encouraged the participants to be participative  
| | | - Taught them in reducing possibility of conflict through conflict management styles & other related peace topics |
| | | - Financial matters should be settled first  
| | | - Be resourceful in all activities Made hand-outs for the participants to read and remember |
| | | - Present the need to them before formally promoting the project |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Individual Project</strong></th>
<th><strong>School Based Leadership &amp; Conflict Resolution Training</strong></th>
<th><strong>Beneficiaries</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Objective** | - Develop leadership skills and social interactions of the VYPO officers and members  
| | - Promote unity & inculcate peace virtues | |
| **Beneficiaries** | Officers and members of VYPO and selected students | - Financial Shortage  
| | | - Lack of cooperation  
| | | - Some technical and logical problems  
| | | - Conflict arises because of different perspective |
| | | - Scheduling the activities  
| | | - Encouraged the participants to be participative  
| | | - Taught them in reducing possibility of conflict through conflict management styles & other related peace topics |
| | | - Financial matters should be settled first  
<p>| | | - Be resourceful in all activities Made hand-outs for the participants to read and remember |
| | | - Present the need to them before formally promoting the project |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>and stereotypes for Mindanaons</th>
<th>Mindanao issues in the activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beneficiaries</strong></td>
<td>ADMU College</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Individual Project**  
School Based  
Help Increase Peace Activities  
**Objective**  
Lessen the misunderstanding about different beliefs & culture among the community members  
**Beneficiaries**  
OSY, interested students and NDU faculty

- Funds  
- Coordination with the moderators of other organizations  
- Solicitations  
- Making appointments to the moderators during vacant time  
- Learn time management  
- Be sensitive to the level of understanding of the community

**Regional Project Mini Grant**  
"Touching HeARTS, Teaching Values through Peaceful Arts in celebration of the Mindanao Week of Peace"  
**Objectives**

- Convening the participants from different schools  
- Conveying the message of peace to the communities who are directly affected by the all out war against MILF  
- Sending formal invitation through the school principals  
- Walk for peace  
- Peace forum  
- The financial support was very vital in the project implementation  
- The participants were welcomed by the host school  
- The awareness of the community about the existence of the Phil ACCESS would help in making them partner in project implementations  
- Activity is an appropriate venue to inculcate to the students the significance of bringing peace in Mindanao

<p>| Beneficiaries | 753 participants from 5 schools in the province |  |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is the nature of the group/individual project? (e.g., objectives, beneficiaries)</th>
<th>What are the issues and challenges encountered during the implementation?</th>
<th>What are the actions taken to resolve the issues?</th>
<th>What are the lessons learned?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Organization of NDKCIYC (High School and College Department).&lt;br&gt;• Pikit Youth for Peace &amp; Development Advocacy.&lt;br&gt;• NDMC Justice Peace &amp; Integrity Creation.&lt;br&gt;• Forum on Conflict Resolution Strategies.&lt;br&gt;• NDKC Inter-Faith Youth Camp for Interfaith Dialogue and Conflict Resolution&lt;br&gt;• NDKCYIC Training on Inter-ethnic Dialogue and Conflict Resolution&lt;br&gt;• Outreach Program (Munting Paaralan para sa Munting Paslit)&lt;br&gt;• Song Composition for Peace.&lt;br&gt;• Malasila Youth for Peace Development Advocacy.&lt;br&gt;• YPDA Lectures and Forum for the Lumad (Lumad Empowerment)&lt;br&gt;• ACCESS Mlang's Peace for Kids.&lt;br&gt;• -s-I ACT in UPV (Integrating ACCESS Cultural Tasks in the University of the Philippines Visayas)&lt;br&gt;• Peace Mural Paintings&lt;br&gt;• National Peace Consciousness Month Celebration&lt;br&gt;• Inter-Faith &amp; Intercultural Celebration for Ramadan&lt;br&gt;• &quot;KANDULI&quot; &quot;A banquet for Peace Love &amp; Unity&quot;&lt;br&gt;• North Cotabato Prov H.S. Student Leaders Trainer's-Training On Inter-</td>
<td>• Financial (Budget Constraints)&lt;br&gt;• Project recipients are limited.&lt;br&gt;• Time Management (Project implementation schedules are conflicting with academic schedules)&lt;br&gt;• Distance (Project venue)&lt;br&gt;• School Permit Acquisition&lt;br&gt;• Project sustainability Partners&lt;br&gt;• Speakers&lt;br&gt;• Technical Problems&lt;br&gt;• “Generation Gap”</td>
<td>• Utilization of Personal Resources&lt;br&gt;• Multi-tasking&lt;br&gt;• Registrations&lt;br&gt;• Coordination/partnership with other existing peace organizations (school based, NGO and government agencies)&lt;br&gt;• Collaboration with school administrators&lt;br&gt;• Compromising (Postponed activities to give way for important things)&lt;br&gt;• Look for donations&lt;br&gt;• Use &quot;award system&quot; to motivate participants. Protests&lt;br&gt;• Submit Proposals to NGOs for Funding&lt;br&gt;• Proper coordination with school administrators.&lt;br&gt;• Collaboration among ACCESS Alumnus&lt;br&gt;• Proper Planning&lt;br&gt;• Integration of programs to institutional action plans.&lt;br&gt;</td>
<td>• Organize the projects well.&lt;br&gt;• -coordinate properly with the concerned people&lt;br&gt;• plan the activities ahead&lt;br&gt;• actions plans should be flexible and well defined based on the objectives&lt;br&gt;• -communicate with the speakers and participants ahead of time&lt;br&gt;• Budget should not be a hindrance in the success of a Peace program.&lt;br&gt;• Look for sponsors/funding agencies&lt;br&gt;• Seek help with NGOs&lt;br&gt;• Be ready to take the challenge&lt;br&gt;• Put God First and everything will be all right.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious and Inter-Ethnic Dialogue &amp; Conflict Transformation</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Peace Camp</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Parenting Seminar on Peace/Conflict Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Poster and Slogan making contests about peace and solidarity</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Paaralang Pangkabataan School for Peace Radio Program.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Media Peace Advocacy</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Culture of Peace Seminar/Workshop in partnership with CRS</td>
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<td>- Concert for Peace</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Collaborative Act for Peace.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name of the Project/Peace Efforts</td>
<td>Issues &amp; Challenges Met</td>
<td>Resolve the Issues</td>
<td>Lessons Learned</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Integration of Lessons Learned on Dialogue &amp; Peace</td>
<td>Lack of ...</td>
<td>Gather stakeholders to plan-out towards the formal integration of lessons learned</td>
<td>That friendship through dialogue begets friendship for life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement in the Peer Counselors' Club re: Individual Counseling/Sharing of Experiences</td>
<td>-strategic planning by objectives</td>
<td>Conducted meetings and discussion for leveling-off; defining duties and responsibilities</td>
<td>Student/youth organizations are drawn to active participation and involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource facilitators in the Interfaith/inter-ethnic Dialogue</td>
<td>-logistical needs</td>
<td>Lobby gender &amp; development units; ask for provisions</td>
<td>Great impact is achieved when concerned officers/administrators support with the effort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender and Development Desk-conduct training &amp; other services re: Gender &amp; Women issues</td>
<td>Weak implementation of the program re: No designated office/physical structure</td>
<td>Recalled significant stories to share;</td>
<td>Clarified issues affecting concerned people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing in the Family, Friends &amp; Relatives</td>
<td>Less attention to significant details of the experiences in the program</td>
<td>Be mindful of the impact that may create change</td>
<td>Clarified biases &amp; prejudices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening of Student Organizations</td>
<td>Time element – revision will take place 2 years from now</td>
<td>Draft &amp; pre-formulate components of teaching learning integration</td>
<td>Peace Education must be prioritized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempt to integrate Peace Component in PA Subjects</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information &amp; Education Campaign on Inter-ethnic Dialogue &amp; Peace</td>
<td>Resources are not enough to showcase events and experiences that have significance to dialogue and peace</td>
<td>Gather appropriate and enough resources to be used in further activities</td>
<td>Encourage oneself to serve as ad personnal/bringers of hope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo-exhibits</td>
<td>Youth are anxious to take part re: Peace Matters</td>
<td>Provide more venues for Youth Interaction</td>
<td>Reaching-out more people leads to 'unity amidst diversity'</td>
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<tr>
<td>School publication</td>
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<td>Increased youth participation to</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Art Exhibit (Mindanao-wide)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
- Promotion & Recruitment of ACCESS Philippines
- Distribution of Peace Quotes
- Sharing of Information/Experiences in the yahoo group

especially on national & international involvement
- Less access to proper information

- Motivate others to enjoy and take part in peace initiatives
- Keep the communication open

- Venues are given to access information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inter-ethnic Workshops and Peace Activities</th>
<th>Weak participation of the youth vis-a-vis organizers' bias of participants to pull in</th>
<th>Sit down with the stakeholders and level-off concerns on the level of participants to invite with</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ Youth Cultural Caravan</td>
<td>Lack of support from the LGUs and the Youth Networks</td>
<td>Maximize other resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Youth Interaction</td>
<td>No enough logistical supports from the community and other stakeholders</td>
<td>Encourage other institutions to give their share and their presence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Dialogue with the Youth Leaders)</td>
<td>Conflict of schedules</td>
<td>Give feedback to invited Youth participants on the activities that have been experienced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Sports for Peace</td>
<td>Group not organized</td>
<td>Communicate regularly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Teambuilding</td>
<td>Some activities – not their priority!</td>
<td>Design mechanisms that allow everyone to communicate regularly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Activities</td>
<td>Miscommunication (scope is too biggg!) - Mindanao wide</td>
<td>Plan to meet and share matters for understanding</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ Community Service and Involvement</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ Strengthening of Cultural Heritage</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ Peace Education Workshop for the Tripeople Youth in Bukidnon</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ Panagtagbo sa ACCESS Marawi, CDO&amp; Malaybalay (Youth Encounter) priority!</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ Sining Kabataan para sa Kapayapaan (Youth Art for Peace)</td>
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<td>➢ Celebration of the Mindanao Week of Peace</td>
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</table>

- Mainstreaming of Peace Education and other peace activities in the areas of Northern Mindanao
- Highlight significant issues; celebrate efforts; and advocate youth's effort to peace through dialogue
- Intensify mechanisms for coordination and collaboration Strengthen partnerships and networks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Creation/Establishment &amp; Strengthening of Peace Organizations/Communities</th>
<th>Less number of active members</th>
<th>Invite and encourage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Insubstantial ac-</td>
<td>Guided Open mem-</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>bership</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Kaliwat ki Apu Agyu (XU)
- Bukidnon Youth of the Seven Tribes of Bukidnon (BSU)
- Mindanaw Tripartite Youth Core (Youth Desk of Bishops-Ulama Conference)
- Anak ng Tribu (Sons/Daughters of the Tribe) - Songco, Lantapan
- Gender & Development Desk Core Group
- Nurses for Help & Development (CU-XU MPSC-LdCU-COC-LC)

| Activities responsive to leadership and communication development | Some members failed to appreciate the spirit of volunteerism |
| Keep the friendship alive through regular interactive activities |
| Designed activities that more motivating, stimulating and encouraging |
| Dialogue with the moderators and level-off with their duties and responsibilities |
| Designed activities that more motivating, stimulating and encouraging |
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## What is the nature of the group/individual project? (e.g., objectives, beneficiaries)

### A. Community Volunteerism

1. **Alfie Kadil:** Leadership Empowerment Advocacy And Development

**BENEFICIARIES:**
Selected Youth Leaders from different School and community

**BUDGET:**
Governor's Office: Venue and Snacks. It was implemented last year. Alfie S. Kadil, Nelson Dino and Dr. Hanbal Bara are the lecturers.

**Others Activities Actualized:**
A. Community cleaning in Brgy. Asturias
B. Radio Program at Dxxm Jolo

**OBJECTIVES:**
-腿-working
-Transportation
-Looking for the venue (logistics)
-Lack of support in other Activities

## What are the issues and challenges encountered during the implementation?

- **Leg-working**
- **Transportation**
- **Looking for the venue (logistics)**
- **Lack of support in other Activities**

## What are the actions taken to resolve the issues?

- **Dialogue with administrator's office staff.**
- **Introducing and proposing the ACCESS objectives.**

## What are the lessons learned?

- **Did not experience difficulties in lobbying because the provincial administrator is involve in the NGO work.**

### 2. Annie May Puasa:

**Orientation on Young people's Advocates for Peace, September 30, 2007**

**BENEFICIARIES:**
~Children in Four (4) Baranangays and created a core group

**OBJECTIVES:**
- **Adjustment on the Paradigm shift of the Kali mayahan Family Life Center affiliated w/ CCF**
- **Make used of the opportunity that the NGO is working on Children Friendly Project and October is Children Month**

**- Needs partners in the implementation of the project**
- **Community exposures are important to aware and sympathetic**
To establish a core group in four barangays in Jolo called young people advocates for peace

**BUDGET:**
NGO: Kalimayahan Family life Center

### B. Environmental and ecological preservation and Conservation

Activity: Mountain Climbing & Tree Planting.


OBJECTIVE: Preserve the virginity of the Forest (BUD TUMANTANGIS) The Marked Crying Mountain, Source of water of the community

BENEFICIARIES:
Elementary Student in Indanan 35 Grade Five (5)

### C. Peace advocacy campaign

RO-JANNA JAMIRI: Peace Interfaith Advocacy Theme: Empowered Youth: Catalyst for Change

September 28, 2007

OBJECTIVE:
To empower Students on Peace and their roles for Development

BENEFICIARIES:
1st to 4th Year student

### D. Infrastructure

- Suspicious residents of the community
- Presence of LAWLESS ELEMENTS
- Inform the Barangay Captain and the lawless element about the particular community
- Children are easier to deal with.

- Financial and moral support
- Availability of speakers
- Director of the School
| 1. Zarah Kathleen Alih: Establishment of Youth Center |
| BENEFICIARIES: Tawi-Tawi Youth |
| OBJECTIVE: Provide Venue for the Youth to Conduct a Research |
| FEATURES: |
| C. Mini Library |
| D. Internet |
| E. Counseling |
| -Sustainability |
| provided financial support |
| -Reserve alternative Speakers |
| -Seek other partners like UNFPA and other institution for assistance |
| -Close Coordination with other organization or individuals who are involve in Peace Building Activities |
| -Teachers must also be empowered |
| -Unavoidable Circumstances must be addressed and anticipated |
### Nature of the group/individual projects?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of the group/individual projects?</th>
<th>What are the issues and challenges encountered during the implementation?</th>
<th>What are the actions taken to resolve the issues?</th>
<th>What are the lessons learned?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Livelihood/Community</td>
<td>Not all families are represented Indifference Venue not conducive</td>
<td>Feed back-ing/consultation Tap local resources</td>
<td>1. Networking is important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Development -students, leaders, and children</td>
<td>Indifferent students Schedules did not match Resources are lacking Not easy to contact officials</td>
<td>Gathered other org members Meet with school heads Organize schedule where everyone is free Long term planning Flexibility Self discipline</td>
<td>2. Proper coordination is needed careful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex Education</td>
<td>Contacting School Officers Motivating people to give Not enough goods</td>
<td>Plan ahead of time Creative Campaigns Feed backing with beneficiaries</td>
<td>3. Networking is important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charity</td>
<td>Bad weather Barangay officials were absent during the event</td>
<td>Involve the purok leaders Check weather forecasts</td>
<td>4. Proper coordination is needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5. Careful planning is a must</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Lessons Learned

1. Networking is important
2. Proper coordination is needed carefully
3. Networking is important
4. Proper coordination is needed
5. Careful planning is a must
6. Volunteerism is important for social development
7. We must acquire skills in resource mobilization
8. Time management
9. Budgeting skills must be learned.
10. We must be committed.
11. Practice creative advertising
12. Know your resources (research)
13. Be open to partnerships.
14. If the current format is not working, change it (PATT)

---

1. A school club that extols tolerance and respect for individual diversity and awareness of the issues that concern the student body of Basilan National High School (BNHS)
2. Subsequent ACCESS 3 alumnus from BNHS sustained the clubs objectives and expanded it to include leadership trainings in partnership with the Supreme Student Government
3. The club is presently engage in other issues that affect the members' community such gender sensitivity issues and drug abuse problems.

**PATT:**
We came up with a more effective format that addressed our issues on: delegation of tasks, giving members equal opportunity to lead the group, basic drafting of proposal

**How?**
New format
## Wider network of partnerships

### Successes

1. Tulungatong resettlement area was improved and organized.
2. The recipients learned how to make pastel and other delicacies.
3. The participants learned cosmetology and were able to use the skills as income generating project.
4. Income generation
5. Around 50 families benefited from the love drive.
6. 48 high school students attended the symposium and actively participated in the activities.
7. Collage on the activities was created.
8. The Club elected officers and was formally established.
10. There were 360 children and young people who attended
11. There were about 50 participants from stakeholders (LGU and other NGO's)
12. About 100 mangroves were planted.
13. A compilation of essays from the contest was done which delved on peace dreams and efforts of the youth for Mindanao (a copy was given to Dr. Sue Russell on July 2006)
14. 155 shoeboxes filled with basic school supplies and other educational items were given to the indigent students from grades 1-6 of Mampang Elementary School.
15. The experience was overwhelming that a proposal was framed to implement another operation on December involving the other academic organizations (colleges) of Ateneo de Zamboanga University
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG)</td>
<td>A terrorist group in the southern Philippines</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACCESS</td>
<td>Access to Community and Civic Enrichment for Students. This is the official name of the Philippine peace education program from 2003 to 2006. Now known as PYLP.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ARMM</td>
<td>Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPP</td>
<td>Community Party of the Philippines</td>
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<tr>
<td>IP</td>
<td>Indigenous peoples (who insist on having an “s” at the end)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lumad</td>
<td>The collective term for indigenous peoples in the southern Philippines</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maguindanao, Maranao and Tausug</td>
<td>The major ethnic groups in the southern Philippines with Islam as their religion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mindanao</td>
<td>The name of the major group of islands in the southern Philippines</td>
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<tr>
<td>MILF</td>
<td>Moro Islamic Liberation Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MNLF</td>
<td>Moro National Liberation Front</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moro People</td>
<td>People of different ethnicities in the southern Philippines who are Muslims. Also known as Bangsa Moro.</td>
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<tr>
<td>NDF</td>
<td>National Democratic Front</td>
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<tr>
<td>NIU</td>
<td>Northern Illinois University</td>
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<tr>
<td>NPA</td>
<td>New People’s Army. The armed wing of the CPP.</td>
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<tr>
<td>PYLP</td>
<td>Philippines Youth Leadership Project. This is the new official name of the Philippine peace education program from 2006 to 2009. Formerly known as ACCESS.</td>
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<tr>
<td>RP</td>
<td>Republic of the Philippines</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subanon, Talaandig &amp; T’Boli</td>
<td>Some major ethnic groups belonging to the Lumad group (or indigenous peoples’ group).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tri-People</td>
<td>The term used in the southern Philippines to refer to the indigenous peoples, Muslims, and Christians collectively.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zambasultaps</td>
<td>Zamboanga, Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 10: ART AND PHOTO GALLERY

U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines Kristie Kenney interacts with Filipino peace activists who came to NIU

Carolyn Lantz of the U.S. Department of State receives a Mindanao textile as a token of appreciation

Arrival, O’Hare International Airport, Chicago, Illinois

Carolyn Lantz with a Muslim Filipino on a River Cruise in Chicago

Workshop on Armed Conflict in Mindanao

Workshop on Vision and Mission Statements
Workshop on Leadership

Teaching Rochelle High School Students How to Use Philippine Garment

Volunteer Service, Oak Crest Retirement Center

Architectural Cruise in Chicago

Follow-on Meeting in Mindanao in the southern Philippines

MSU-Maguindanao Chancellor, Mayor, NIU Associate Provost for International Programs and U.S. State Department Officials
Conflict in the Southern Philippines
From Conflict to Peace
Peace between Muslims and Christians
Peace among Indigenous Peoples, Muslims and Christians
Peace among Indigenous Peoples, Muslims and Christians
Symbols of Peace
Symbols of Peace
Symbols of Peace
The Individual and Personal Transformation
SAIL FORTH

by: Dorothy Joann Lei

O. Labrador