



Australian Foundation for Fostering Learning in the Philippines

www.afflip.com (available from September 1, 2012)

Newsletter 1 – August 8, 2012



Welcome

Greetings Members and Friends of AFFLIP! This is our first official Newsletter since the formation of AFFLIP and our first Board Meeting in January this year. As a Board, we want to tell you about our progress with programs and activities, thank you for your interest, and encourage you to be involved.

Administration – Coordinator Ali Douglas

We have established an eight-person AFFLIP Board in SA chaired by Alan Reid with Hon. Greg Crafter as our Patron. The Board has met five times and subcommittees for our flagship programs (Curriculum Resources, Teacher Professional Development, Health and Nutrition and Schools Network) and supporting functions (fund-raising, finance and administration) have been created, each of which is led by a Board member. The Davao-based AFFLIP Technical Working Group comprising nine Filipino educators has been formed. It acts as the operational and advisory arm to the Board.

Key AFFLIP documents including the Philosophy which underpins our work, organisational structure and background brochure have been developed and have become working documents to guide our operation and describe our organisation. Each flagship program area has a clear rationale and plan for operation which will evolve further as the foundation grows in experience and influence.

Encouraging endorsements for AFFLIP have been received from many quarters in the Philippines and Australia including AusAID Manila, Central/Regional/Division levels of the Philippines Department of Education, UNICEF Philippines, Mayor of Davao City, the Congressman for the 1st District in Davao, the Honorary Philippine Consul to SA and the CE of Department of Education and Child Development in SA.

Our website is currently under construction through the efforts of new Board member Roger Saunders. We hope to have it up and going within the next month at www.afflip.com. We also have a Facebook page at AFFLIP.

Max Greenwood, Sue Walter, and Steve and Helyn Southwood have also joined the administration sub-committee.

Financial – Coordinator John Younger

We have completed all the "red tape" associated with becoming a not-for-profit foundation including the following: constitution, incorporation and ABN/TFN. We have opened a bank account at the Macquarie Bank.

The membership drive is underway and board members and members of the administration sub-committee are making a concerted effort to approach prospective members.

Members will receive newsletters such as this one which will provide updates regarding AFFLIP activities and offer the opportunity to participate in programs from time to time. In addition to

eligibility to be elected to the AFFLIP board, membership will also provide a means to network with other people with a similar professional or philanthropic interest.

The most important benefit that membership will bring is the knowledge and satisfaction gained from helping in a small way to improve the learning opportunities for children in Mindanao through financial assistance, care and interest. The board would appreciate any approaches our members can make to encourage friends, colleagues and family to join AFFLIP.

Fundraising – Coordinator Alan Reid

AFFLIP will raise funds for its programs and activities in a range of ways. These include membership fees, donations, sponsorships, grants, pledges, and fund raising events. To date we have engaged in the following activities:

(1) *Launch event:* University of South Australia students Katherine Gilson and Nhi Pham have joined the fundraising subcommittee predominantly to organise our major launch event to be held early next year. They are working with Caroline Green on the event which will be a formal cocktail party with a Filipino theme and will include official guests, music, auctions, and the launch. There will be more detail about this event available in the near future. We hope that members will strongly support this event by attending with as many of friends as possible. We also intend to hold a BBQ event in November this year at a picturesque location. Details will be available soon.

(2) *Sponsors:* We are approaching prospective corporate sponsors and individuals and would appreciate any suggestions and assistance from members about possible sponsors.

(3) *Community Groups:* We have been busy speaking at city and country service clubs, including the Rotary Clubs of Maitland, Bordertown and Unley and the Apex Club of Maitland with some pleasing financial responses.

(4) *Individuals:* A number of individuals and groups have made generous donations when joining the foundation as members, for which we thank them sincerely. The Maitland based clubs and some individual donors have pledged to provide support to AFFLIP for future years and provide some certainty for our finances.

(5) *Grants:* The fundraising sub-committee is making application for a major research grant; and is also applying for funding from two large NGOs and agencies.

Curriculum resources – Coordinator Lyn Wilkinson

We landed our first shipment of learning resources in Davao in June and amid great excitement 53 boxes containing 4200 books and teaching resources were unpacked in the schools. The resources were selected, packed and shipped through our partnership with South Pacific School Aid. We are indebted to Peter Kirk and the team at SPSA, Andrew Thiele who notarised the deed of donation for the shipment, the Adelaide East Rotary Club which provided seed funding and Romano Venuti for his assistance in clearing the shipment from the wharf in Davao. The members of the TWG managed the receipt and distribution of the resources to the schools of Talomo most capably which is no small feat!

We are about to commence the packing of the second shipment which will include reading books, reference material, dictionaries, atlases and encyclopaedias as in the first shipment. We also hope to be able to source maths resources, laboratory equipment and levelled reading materials.

Judy Will from “Picture Magic” has offered to provide all teachers with a free copy of her teachers’ guide which focuses on thinking and learning through pictures. She also sells high quality picture packs and activities on 13 topics with more specific instructions for teacher guidance. This is an extremely generous gesture given that there are approximately 400 teachers in the Talomo District!



Health and Nutrition – Coordinator Jock McFarlane

We have gathered data from the Talomo District regarding the current situation with the health and nutrition of its students. Over time we plan to address the major medical and dental needs of the children but for now we are focussing on nutrition.

One of our key projects for this year is to support the development of food gardens in the schools of Talomo to supplement the schools' feeding programs and to create awareness for parents and children about the nutritional value of common vegetables in a balanced diet. A. Bonifacio Elementary School (ABES) has been chosen to be part of the national program titled "Oh My Gulay" which has targeted 40 beneficiary pilot schools with implementing partner East West Seeds, which trains teachers and students to manage their vegetable gardens. They have made enormous progress with their food garden as seen in the photos below. The staff of ABES has conducted a workshop for the other 14 schools of Talomo in the OMG approach and will assist the schools in the establishment of their own gardens. The District has established a support group which will be critical to the success of spreading this program to the other 14 schools. AFFLIP will support this initiative through the provision of tillage implements in the schools and will seek to partner with the OMG group in Manila to further develop the concept and practice in Talomo.



Teacher Professional Development – Coordinator Graham Dodd

The Foundation's aim is to facilitate and provide opportunities for teacher professional development that are sustainable over the years ahead through the establishment of support networks comprising local, national, and international education professionals.

An extensive needs analysis has been conducted with the principals of the Talomo District and English Literacy has been identified as the major focus for PD by AFFLIP for teachers. We are currently looking at a model which involves principals and literacy coordinators in the identification of the specific elements to be addressed and the development of a strategy for an initial teacher professional development program. AFFLIP's other flagship programs will also support the Literacy theme in a variety of ways and we hope to provide some basic physical facilities which facilitate storage of materials and provide designated reading areas. Improvement in the quality of teaching and learning in the area of English Literacy is a key element of the national Department of Education agenda in the Philippines.

The principals of Talomo identified Instructional Leadership as the area in which they would welcome assistance from AFFLIP. The next part of the process here is to identify the priority aspects of instructional leadership to be tackled by AFFLIP whilst being aware of other PD possibilities for leaders.

The modes of PD delivery under consideration are (1) face-to-face, with Australian educators working on a short term pro-bono basis once a year in Davao and/or the formation of a partnership(s) with Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) in Davao who would deliver a negotiated program; (2) on-line learning, where the principals and teachers of Talomo can work with educators in Australia/Davao TEIs to complement the face-to-face approach.

To this end, we are sourcing laptop computers for each school from IT Services Flinders University of South Australia and are exploring the use of technologies such as Skype for on-line communication and training. This means of communication will become of increasing importance for dialogue between the AFFLIP Board and the Davao-based TWG and also between schools in the Schools Network program.



Schools Network – Coordinator Trevor Tiller

The concept of establishing a Schools Network comprising Talomo District and South Australian schools was identified by the principals of the Talomo District and AFFLIP as offering tremendous curriculum possibilities for the participating schools.

It is proposed that each of the 15 elementary schools in Talomo district will be paired with one of 15 public primary schools in the Yorke and Mid-North Region of South Australia. Each pair of schools will determine the nature of their relationship but typically it might involve activities and programs which cover such aspects as curriculum, student and teacher interaction through dialogue and exchanges, and fundraising for specific projects. In addition, the schools in each country will interact as a group. The idea here is to encourage communication within and between the two groupings, so simulating global civil society. Thus, although individual schools are paired, there are times each year when all schools from both groups interact by sharing information and discussing areas of common interest.

We have appreciated the support of Terry Sizer for AFFLIP and the schools network initiative in particular. Terry is the Regional Director of Yorke and Mid-North (DECD) and she has recently sent a communication to all schools in the Region with a Primary enrolment, inviting them to express interest in becoming part of the program. Closing date for Expressions of Interest is 18th August.

In conclusion

On behalf of the AFFLIP Board, thank you for your interest in and commitment to AFFLIP. We look forward to providing you with more updates in the future.

AFFLIP Patron: Hon. Greg Crafter AO

**Board Members: Professor Alan Reid AM (Chair), Mr. Alastair Douglas (Deputy Chair),
Dr. Graham Dodd, Mr Jock McFarlane, Mr. Trevor Tiller, Ms. Lyn Wilkinson,
Mr. Roger Saunders, Mr. John Younger (Treasurer).**