

Cogonan, Aga teachers, pupils thank RHI, CADPI for desktop computers





NASUGBU, BATANGAS – About a thousand school children and over 30 teachers from the Cogonan Elementary School and Aga Elementary School yesterday expressed their gratitude to Roxas Holdings, Inc. and Central Azucarera Don Pedro, Inc. for donating 10 units of desktop computers.

At the turnover ceremony held at the Cogonan Elementary School, Nasugbu District Supervisor Gregorio V. Meneses said the donation reflects “the sweetness of CADPI sugar”. Quoting American author, political activist and lecturer Helen Keller, Mr Meneses said: “Words are never warm and tender enough to express one’s appreciation of a great kindness.”

Meanwhile, CADPI OIC and AVP/Factory Operations Head Simon P. Turno III said that the event was significant to him because while he rarely goes out of the plants, the ceremony tugged at his heart because most of the employees under him during his time as Head of Boilers, were mostly from Cogonan.

“Masaya po kaming makatulong at ako na ay naiinggit sa mga bata ngayon dahil nakahawak lamang ako ng computer noong ako ay nasa third year sa Mapua. [We are glad to be of help. I envy the children now who have access to computers at a young age. I was introduced to the use of computer only when I was in third year at the Mapua Institute of Technology],” Mr. Turno said.

With his 28 years of experience at CADPI, Mr. Turno, a licensed Mechanical Engineer, shared that RHI and CADPI support initiatives to empower children and help them gain access to education.

“Charity begins at home. CADPI will always be here to help,” he said, urging children to value their computers in their learning journey. He added: *“Dati ang sarap pumunta sa library. Ngayon, puwede ng mag-research sa computer sa pamamagitan ng Internet. [In the past, we had to go to the library to do research. Now, we can do that anywhere through the use of Internet in the computers.]”*

Mrs. Luisa P. Fenol, Aga Elementary School Principal II, said the desktop computers would go a long way in helping their 638 pupils and 21 teachers.

A scholar of the Sugar Industry Foundation, Inc. (SIFI), Ms Fenol recalled how the sugar industry, especially CADPI, created such an impact in their lives. *“Tumatanggap po ako noon ng Php500 a year. Ngayon naman, mga computers para sa mga bata. Sinusundan po ako ng pagpapala ng CADPI. [I used to receive Php500 a year then from SIFI. Now, I am receiving computers for the schoolchildren. Blessings from CADPI have been flowing continually.]”* Mrs. Fenol shared.

“The additional computers will help five children a day. We commit to return these blessings to the schoolchildren,” Mrs. Fenol said, noting that the computer activities will be incorporated in the Journalism activities for children while teachers can use these for reports and other requirements in school.

Mrs. Ma. Rita Luz M. de Padua, the Principal of Cogonan Elementary School and also a SIFI scholar, said 312 pupils from Kinder to Grade 6 – guided by 11 teachers, stand to benefit from the five units of computers given to their school.

Mrs de Padua said: *“Kami po, sampu ng mga guro, ng Parents-Teachers Association (PTA) at ng Barangay na pinamumunuan ni Kapitan ay nagpapasalamat sa mga computers na mga ito. Nagagalak din po ako na ibahagi na ang Cogonan Elementary School ay Regional Best Brigada School. Salamat po sa tulong ninyo. [The teachers, PTA and the Barangay, led by our Captain, are thankful for the computers. I am also glad to share that with your help, Cogonan Elementary School emerged as the Regional Best Brigada School.]”*

In an earlier talk, Mrs de Padua shared that computers are “very important” nowadays especially for kids who cannot access technology in remote areas like Cogonan. “It is difficult to present theories without the kids seeing these in actual. With the donation, the kids will be in front of the computers, while the teacher discusses. *Malaki pong bagay ito sa mga bata.* [This is a big thing for children.] We hope to receive more computers for the children,” she said.

RHI’s Head for Corporate Social Responsibility Angeline Bondad said that she is glad with the partnership that serves the children.

“We are espousing the education of the youth. By this, we are able to raise their way of life through livelihood and education,” Ms Bondad said, noting that both Cogonan and Aga Elementary Schools are now under CSR’s Adopt-A-School Project.

“Gamitin ninyo ng maayos ang mga computers [Use the computers properly],” she urged school children, advising them to expand their knowledge with the use of the desktop units.

CADPI Human Resources Head Carlota V. Inumerable said that each time she visits schools and sees children, she is reminded of her younger days and is driven more to reach out to larger groups of children.

“Kids are always close to our hearts. As part of the Family Welfare Committee and of Kiwanis, we always look for ways to help children,” Ms Inumerable said.

During a visit to the Aga Elementary School yesterday afternoon, Mr. Ernesto Maullon, the School Property Custodian shared that the five units of desktop computers given to them spell a big difference in the lives of Aganians, especially for the pupils who trek the mountains and cross the rivers for hours just to go to school in hopes of enhancing their knowledge.

“Salamat po. Kailangan talaga ng mga bata ang mga computers. Makikita niyo ang excitement sa kanilang mga mukha.” [Thank you. The kids need the computers. You can just see the excitement in their faces. Now, they can take turns using the computers],” Mr. Maullon said.

Aganians Princess Zoe Rivera, 11; Mariel Aure, 11, Avril Allaiza Palco, 10; Daryl Gatdula, 11; and Irish Umali, 12 each shared how happy and grateful they are for the computers.

“Ngayon lang po ako makakaexperience nito [It’s only now that I can get to experience using a computer],” said Gatdula. *“Madadagdagan po ang aking kaalaman* [This will enhance my knowledge],” shared Umali.

For Palco, seeing the computers felt surreal. *“Hindi po ako makapaniwala na makakagamit na ako* [I could not believe I could already use a computer],” she said.

Cogonians Shaila Mae P. Gumiit, 11; Paul ian D. Panaligin, 10; Althea Grace D. Villegas, 11; Princess Consigo, 11; and Lea Anne Ureta, 11 also gushed profuse gratitude for the computers.

Exuding optimism, they shared that the computers would open opportunities for them to learn more, get further information on matters that interest them, and prepare them for the future.

“Madali na po naming magagawa ang aming mga assignment [We can now easily work on our assignments],” Ureta said.