

ACTS OF SOLIDARITY

A Preliminary Report

We are grateful for the varying expressions of love and solidarity from churches, alumni, individuals and groups all over the world – phone calls, text messages, FB posts, prayers, letters of concern and support, visits, facilitating the release and transport of those who were trapped in Marawi, and for the rescue of the seven (7) teachers of Dansalan College that were taken as hostage on 23 May 2 017, the day of the siege.

The United Church of Christ in the Philippines immediately issued *A Call for Prayers and Sobriety for Such A Time Like This*. Then, within the week of the Marawi Siege, Bp Reuel Marigza (UCCP General Secretary), Bp Melzar Labuntog (assigned in Northwest Mindanao Jurisdiction), Dr Pio Bacong (Chair, UCCP General Assembly), Rev Rannieh Mercado (UCCP Executive Secretary for Administration and Partnership), and Ms Edna Orteza (Executive Director of CREATE-UCCP, the association of UCCP schools and colleges) went to Iligan City to explore possibilities for intervention for the rescue of the hostages and those still trapped in Marawi. Thereafter, Rev Mercado maintained a regular update on developments with partners and the general constituency.

Through the UCCP, partners in Germany and the United States sent immediate assistance.



Rev Sonia Parera-Hummel, Asia Secretary of the United Evangelical Mission based in Wuppertal, Germany had a radio interview where she spoke about the Marawi Siege and Dansalan College.



Rev Sonia Parera-Hummel in a radio interview

In Geneva, the Filipino community where Maryssa Mapanao-Cammado is a member, raised funds in cooperation with VOX Geneva, Ugnayang Bayan, and the UPAAG (UP Alumni Association in Geneva). The international choir ALERON and the Loboc Children’s Choir were generous with their talent and time.



Center: the Aleron Choir with some members of the Filipino community

Northwest Mindanao Jurisdiction raised funds among the conferences. Local churches and conferences in other jurisdictions also responded.

Brokenshire College organized a Dinner for a Cause, and prepared a video presentation based on *The DCFI Story* on the siege.

Members of the Christian Young Adults Fellowship (CYAF) of Iligan City UCCP came with their families to plant trees in the DCFI campus.



CYAF Iligan Tree Planting @ Dansalan College

Fr Rex Reyes, General Secretary of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines called for prayers that civilians will be protected and served and that civil liberties will be respected and observed.

Churches, seminaries, educational institutions, associations and networks have extended support, among them



A team from Silliman University, in coordination with the Northwest Mindanao Jurisdiction, conducted a *Trainers Training on Trauma Awareness and Resiliency* at MSU-IIT Iligan City. There were about 40 participants from Dansalan College and from the conferences.



Participants from Dansalan College



With Bp Melzar Labuntog, Dr Fedelinda Tawagon and Ms Edna Orteza



With the resource persons and other participants



The Board of Trustees of Silliman University approved the sending of cash assistance to each member of the faculty and staff. Atty Grace Sumalpong, Board Secretary, visited Dansalan College to personally deliver the check to Dr Tawagon, witnessed by Bp Melzar Labuntog who is a member of the SU-BOT, and Ms Edna Orteza, also a former member of the Silliman University Board of Trustees. The teachers and staff - who lost everything they owned - were all very happy to use the generous amount in different ways, e.g., pay the tuition fees of children in college, send to parents whom they support, acquire needed household items, buy food, groceries and personal stuff... The balance was divided equally among the seven (7) hostages.



Atty Grace Sumalpong with Dr Fedelinda Tawagon, Bp Melzar Labuntog and Ms Edna Orteza

Southern Christian College donated 150 wooden chairs, which were delivered personally by the President himself, Dr Edwin Balaki. Dr Pio Bacong, President of Pilgrim Christian College and Mr Besben Maquiso, President of Gingoog Christian College, came to witness the event.



Some of the wooden chairs; Mr Besben Maquiso, Dr Edwin Balaki and Dr Pio Bacong

Churches and institutions came to visit, among others



Pilgrim Christian College



Gingoog Christian College

Apart from generous cash contributions, individuals, institutions and groups sent goods that teachers and staff fully appreciated as they were left with virtually nothing.



HOW the FUNDS were USED

With the funds received and put together, Dansalan College was able to, among others

1. Provide salaries for faculty and staff for May and honoraria for extra load during the last quarter of the schoolyear;
2. Convert rooms at the DCFI Resource and Convention Center into classrooms and offices;



Students making project presentations in class



3. Construct makeshift science rooms and acquire laboratory equipment;



4. Secure the administration office with metal grills;



5. Purchase air-conditioning units and electric fans for the classrooms and offices;

6. Acquire materials and resources in fulfillment of the standards and requirements set by the Department of Education;



Some stuff for the Pre-School children



Textbooks for the different subject areas for all grade levels



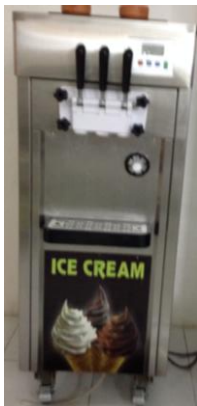
School uniforms



Computers for the IT laboratory



Musical instruments for the Drum and Bugle Corps



Equipment and appliances for vocational-technology subjects (also used in the cafeteria)

7. Set-up the cafeteria/canteen for students, faculty and staff and for school events;



8. Purchase a 29-seater school bus.



Blessing of the school bus



Dr Fedelinda Tawagon welcoming guests to a test ride

9. Prepare for and welcome students and parents at the opening of classes;
10. Conduct orientation meetings with students, faculty and staff, and parents to share experiences, thoughts and feelings on the new situation and to provide an update on developments;
11. Facilitate trauma healing sessions with students; and
12. Conduct convocations for students and teachers.



Chairs for the roof deck where meetings are held; Students in a convocation



Meeting/Sharing with faculty and staff, mostly with those trapped



Orientation meeting with some of the parents



This is not complete. Dansalan College keeps a record of partners, churches, institutions, groups and individuals that sent contributions directly and through the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, CREATE-UCCP, Northwest Mindanao Jurisdiction and others.

All these acts of solidarity helped ease the pain and the great sense of loss, insecurity and vulnerability, and inspired us to move forward and continue with the ministry entrusted to us.

We continue to appeal to your sense of generosity and solidarity at this critical time.

Let us pray for peace in various parts of the world, peace that will transcend all earthly barriers, and peace that will last through generations to come.

Let us reach out to one another in love.



DR FEDELINDA TAWAGON
President
Dansalan College Foundation, Inc



EDNA ORTEZA
Executive Director
CREATE-UCCP



BP REUEL MARIGZA
General Secretary
UCCP

and the

DANSALAN COLLEGE COMMUNITY

