

PRESS RELEASE**Private partners enable 1,300 ALS learners to receive high school diplomas**

PASIG CITY, August 8, 2018 – Through the collective efforts of the Department of Education (DepEd), Motortrade Life and Livelihood Assistance Foundation (MLALAF), Tanglaw ng Buhay Foundation, and other partners, 1,300 learners under the Alternative Learning System (ALS) Program received their High School diplomas on July 31 at the Christ’s Commission Fellowship (CCF) Center in Pasig City.

One of the graduates was Martha Ruivivar, 57 years old, who never thought that people her age still have a chance to finish basic education: “*Natuwa ako, nabuhay ang mga pangarap ko na makatapos ng High School noong nalaman ko sa kasamahan ko sa simbahan ang tungkol sa ALS... Hindi man lang pumasok sa isipan ko na darating ang panahon na ako ay mabibigyan ng pagkakataon na makatapos pa,*” she shared.

After graduating from elementary, Nanay Martha had to set aside her dream to finish high school and immediately work to help her mother provide for their family’s needs due to his father’s early passing.

“*Napakabuti ng Diyos, hindi ko inasahan ang lahat ng ito sa buhay ko. Salamat sa pagpapala na ibinigay niya sa akin at sa mga tumulong na ako ay makapagtapos. Para sa mga kabataan, nawa’y maging inspirasyon ako sa inyo, na kahit may edad na ako ay nagsumikap pa rin akong makatapos ng high school,*” Nanay Martha said.

Catalysts of positive transformation

In her speech during the graduation ceremony, DepEd Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs Service and ALS G.H. Ambat underscored the importance of collective efforts in reaching all learners, especially those in the marginalized sector.

“We acknowledge that the responsibility of educating our citizens is not just the responsibility of DepEd alone. It is for this reason *kaya patuloy pong nakikipagtulungan ang DepEd sa mga private organization para maabot ang mas maraming estudyante, lalo na yung mga hirap makapasok sa formal setup,*” Ambat said.

“You [MLALAF and other partners] have endeavored to become catalysts of positive transformation by putting up community learning centers that equip lifelong learners with academic excellence and biblical values. Thank you for your hard work and for your love for the learners,” she further expressed.

Ambat likewise expressed gratitude to all graduates who persevered to finish basic education through the ALS program, despite the circumstances they are in: “*Congratulations dahil hindi niyo pinalampas yung oportunidad na makapag-aral through ALS. Itong tagumpay na ito ay hindi lang po para sa inyo, para rin ito sa inyong pamilya, community, at sa bansa natin.*”

“We are living in very interesting times where we need learners like you who have excellent academic skills and biblical values who can contribute truly in nation-building... Because the more equipped lifelong learners we have, the more productive this country will be,” she concluded.

MLALAF is a non-stock, non-profit organization which has been a service provider of DepEd-ALS Program since 2003. It does not only aim to instill academic excellence among learners, it also provides skills training and values education.

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