DOST-PSHS System inaugurates new Training and Administration Center

The DOST-Philippine Science High School (PSHS) System has inaugurated its new building located north of the PSHS Main Campus at Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City, last December 9, 2015.

The blessing and inauguration was well attended by members of the Board of Trustees led by USEC Rowena Cristina Guevara and members of the Executive Committee, some invited guests and visitors.

Named as PSHS System Training and Administration Center, it houses the Office of the Executive Director, Financial and Administrative Division, Research, Policy Formulation and Academics Division,

state-of-the-art Board Room and training facilities and mini-dormitory.

The construction and completion of the Center marks another significant milestone in PSHS history. With its improved and modern state-of-the-art facilities, the PSHS leadership and management is confident of a more improved delivery of services to its clientele and stakeholders.

The construction of the Center was started during the administration of former PSHS System Executive Director, Dr. Josette T. Biyo.

The System’s Office composed of the Office of the Executive Director (OED) and its two divisions held office for a long time at the PSHS Main Campus since its establishment in 1998.

A short program was held after the sumptuous lunch. After the program, Dr. Cabatic, thanked all those who have extended their support and help for the realization of the OED building. He affirmed the collaborative effort extended by everyone that made this dream a reality.

“The new building is more than just providing a home for the OED family but more so in building a meaningful and harmonious relationships among everyone,” Ms. Maria Concepcion Sakai, Financial and Administrative Division Chief, said.

Father Joseph Wang of the Order of the Ministers of Infirm, officiated the blessing ceremony.
PSHS System conducts GLOBE Forum for Public High Schools

The Philippine Science High School (PSHS) System in collaboration with the Quezon City Science Community Foundation, Inc. (QCSCFI) hosted a GLOBE Forum last December 1, 2015 with Dr. Desh Bandhu, head of GLOBE Asia-Pacific, as guest speaker. Fifty two teachers from 25 public secondary schools attended the forum held at AST Building, PSHS Main Campus, Diliman, Quezon City.

Aside from the lecture of Dr. Bandhu, the teacher-participants gained further knowledge through actual demonstration of GLOBE protocols—land cover and atmosphere investigation—by the GLOBE-trained teachers from the PSHS Main Campus namely Dr. Melanie Anne Cheng & Sofia Doco for Land Cover Investigation and Bernard Llaguno & Caridad Gicaraya for Atmosphere Investigation.

GLOBE stands for Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment. The GLOBE program which is on its 20th year this year, is an international science and education program that provides students and the public worldwide with the opportunity to participate in data collection and the scientific process, and contributes meaningfully to our understanding of the Earth system and global environment. This program is jointly sponsored by U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the National Science Foundation (NSF), with support from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and Department of State.

“The PSHS has been a member of this international scientific community since 1999. Through the GLOBE Program, PSHS System has been delivering one of its mandates: to promote science education in the country through its various outreach and teacher training programs,” PSHS System Deputy Director Rod Allan A. de Lara said.

Dr. Alumanda dela Rosa, Executive Director of Philippine Nuclear Research Institute, who also represented the QCSCFI, in her closing remarks, upheld the vision/mission of the GLOBE Program as it connects students, teachers, scientists, and citizens from different parts of the world to conduct real, hands-on science about their local environment and put in a global perspective.
How do the youth see themselves, say, 10 years from now?

Science professionals recommend biotechnology careers for them in the future. More science careers, they say, are up for grabs as there are a lot of exciting professions that future scientists can choose from.

Students from around Cavite gained some knowledge and pieces of advice from biotechnology experts on how vast opportunities are in the field of science and technology, particularly in biotechnology.

To enhance students’ and teachers’ knowledge and skills in biotechnology, and encourage the young to take up related courses in college, the Philippine Science High School System (PSHSS) of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) organized a forum dubbed “Career Talks and Interactive Hands-On Activity for High School Students.” Held last November 26 at SM City Dasmarinas in Cavite, the forum is part of the celebration of the National Biotechnology Week (NBW) 2015.

Dr. Antonio A. Alfonso, industry affairs and regulatory lead of DuPont Pioneer Philippines, gave insights on “Building a Career in Biotechnology and Related Sciences.”

According to Dr. Alfonso who is a plant breeder and molecular biologist, there is a dire need for more agribiotechnologists and biotechnology entrepreneurs, especially more plant breeders, in the country to address the needs of the people when it comes to food security.

Meanwhile, not all science careers require full practice of the profession. Some use the power of communication to disseminate information about biotechnology and science per se.

Dr. Mariechel J. Navarro, director of Global Knowledge Center on Crop Biotechnology of the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications, is one of the many biotechnology experts turned science communicators. According to her, science information must be popularized for the public to easily understand it. People with extensive background on science can be science communicators by laymanizing every bit of information.

Among the popular media for science communicators are social networks like Facebook and Twitter, websites, publications, mobile apps, the target audience of which are the youth.

On the other hand, Dr. Navarro also encouraged others without a science background but who want to be science communicators, to keep on reading and researching to pursue their dreams.

“Do not hurry. Everything will take place at the right time,” said Dr. Navarro, quoting the popular maxim of the infamous Lola Nidora of Eat Bulaga. “Think carefully about what you want to pursue as a career.”

The high school students were also able to get a glimpse of what forensic scientists and crime investigators do through a hands-on activity on DNA fingerprinting.

DNA fingerprinting is a technique used to distinguish between individuals of the same species using only samples of their Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA). A product of biotechnology, DNA fingerprinting is often used to determine family relationships, disease-causing organisms, and solve crimes. (DOST-STII)

The PSHS System would like to acknowledge the special participation of the Science Education Institute (SEI), during the forum, represented by Deputy Director Maria Theresa de Guzman who gave the closing remarks. Tokens from SEI were also given to the participants.
Curriculum Dev’t & Management Team Goes Int’l Benchmarking

The DOST-PSHS System’s curriculum core group and management team recently went on international benchmarking activity in selected top science and math high schools in Singapore, Thailand and Malaysia from November 16 to 21, 2015.

The team visited National University of Singapore (NUS) High School of Mathematics and Science, Hwa Chong Institution both in Singapore; Institute for the Promotion of Science and Technology and Mahidol Wittayanusorn School in Thailand; and in Malaysia, the Royal Military School, Junior Science College and Secondary Education Division-MARA.

The week-long activity enabled the team to gain valuable experiences and insights related to their current work as curriculum developers and implementers. It allowed them to gather information about the different academic programs for Grades 11 and 12 which may be adopted by PSHS for better implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Grades 7 to 12 curricula. It likewise served as a venue to learn from the schools visited on their best educational practices, materials, facilities and programs and provided a rich opportunity to collaborate and establish partnerships with premier academic institutions involved in science and technology education in Asia and Pacific Region; and explore possible international linkages for the international Science Internship Program for incoming Grades 10-12, among others.

The team who went on international benchmarking was composed of Dr. Larry Cabatic, Executive Director; Dr. Rod Allan de Lara, Deputy Executive Director; Dr. Jessamyn Marie Yazon, RPAD Chief; Ms. Maria Concepcion Sakai, FAD Chief; Dr. Ronnalee Ortega, IRC Campus Director; Dr. Chuchi Garganera, SRC Director; Dr. Warren Cordeta, CVisC Director; Dr. Marie Christine Obusan, SST IV of BRC; Ms. Janeth Fuentes, SST IV of EVC; Mr. Fortunato Tacuboy, Jr, SST IV of Main Campus; and Science Research Specialists Ms. Melody Bejosano and Ms. Marufie June Limpin of RPAD.

With the School Principal, Dr. Yuvadee Nakapandungrat of Mahidol Wittayanusorn School in Thailand.

With the staff from Institute for the Promotion of Science and Technology, Thailand.

With representatives from Hwa Chong Institution, Singapore.

With the school officials of Royal Military College, Malaysia.
PSHS SYSTEM LUZON CLUSTER HOLDS
JOINT GENDER SENSITIVITY TRAINING & SPORTSFEST

Seven (7) PSHSS campuses in Luzon together with the Office of the Executive Director (OED) where a total of 381 faculty and non-faculty personnel with their respective campus directors gathered together for the first ever Joint Gender-Sensitivity Training and Sportfest at Subic, Zambales last December 14-17, 2015.

The seven (7) campuses are Ilocos Region Campus (IRC), Cagayan Valley Campus (CVC), Cordillera Administrative Region Campus (CARC), Central Luzon Campus (CLC), Main Campus (MC), CALABARZON Region Campus (CBZRC) and Bicol Region Campus (BRC).

“This is a rare opportunity for the Luzon campuses to gather together and go outside of their work parameters,” CLC Campus Director Lilia Habacon said in her opening remarks during the opening program held at the Seorabeol Leisure Hotel and Resort. ‘Let us devote ourselves from knowing and interacting with one another to strengthen camaraderie with other campuses,” she said.

PSHS System Executive Director, Dr. Larry L. Cabatic, in his inspirational message, enjoined everyone to show and exemplify unity and solidarity taking into mind the big responsibility lodged into the PSHS System of producing the best of the best students in science and technology with the vision of becoming the ASEAN’s best in 2016. “Those given with bigger resources, come with bigger responsibility,” he meaningfully said.

Invited Resource Speaker from PSHS Main Campus, Mr. Peter Fermin Dajime, a well-trained PE instructor and trainor who has an extensive knowledge on a wide variety of field tests that assess various health and performance related fitness components, interestingly shared about epidemiology stressing the importance of physical activity in order to decrease the risk of age-related and lifestyle diseases such as stroke, diabetes, heart disease, obesity, just to name a few.

After the lecture in the morning on the first day, the afternoon session and the following days were devoted to sports competition. The participants were divided into three (3) teams namely: Blue (composed of IRC, CVC and CARC); White (comprised of CLC and BRC) and Yellow (composed of MC, CBZRC and OED).

The Blue Team emerged as the over-all grand champion having bested almost all the competitions while White Team garnered the second spot and Yellow Team, third. The following winners in the different sports were as follows: Basketball: 1st – Blue Team, 2nd – White Team and 3rd – Yellow Team; Volleyball (Men): 1st – Blue, 2nd – White, 3rd – Yellow; Volleyball (Women): 1st – Blue, 2nd – White, 3rd – Yellow; Table Tennis: 1st – Blue, 2nd –White, 3rd – Yellow; Badminton: 1st – Blue, 2nd – Yellow, 3rd – White; Chess: 1st – Blue, 2nd – Yellow, 3rd – White. Best volleyball players went to Mr. Marwin Ruiz (CVC), Mr. Crisostomo Bato (CLC) and Mr. Jose Manresa Enrico Español IV (MC).

There was also a Talent Contest during the fellowship night on the first day, where the different campuses showcased their talents with Gender-Sensitivity theme. First prize winner went to CVC, second prize to CLC while the third winner went to BRC.

The activity was indeed filled with fun and laughter where camaraderie and sportsmanship were further honed and inculcated.

The joint activity was made possible through the joint effort of all the campuses involved spearheaded by the Office of the Executive Director. PSHS-CLC arranged for the venue and accommodation of all the participants.
Some members of the PSHS System Executive Committee and Board of Trustees pose for posterity during the inauguration of the new PSHS System Building last December 9. From left to right: Dr. Reynaldo Garnace of EVC, Ms. Shena Faith Ganela of WVC, Dr. Salvador Romo of CVC, Dr. Warren Cordeta of CVsc, Ms. Elsie Ferrer of BRC, Dr. Conrado Rotor, Jr. of CARC, Dr. Ronna Orteza of IRC, Dr. John Andaya of CBZRC, Dr. Chuchi Gariganera of SRC, Dr. Josette Biyo, SEI Director, USEC Rowena Cristina Guevara, Executive Director, Larry L. Cabatic, Ms. Delia Legaspino of SMC, Ms. Ruwina Gonzaga of CRC, Mr. Carlito Lariosa, FAD Chief of CMC representing Dr. Lorvi Pagorogon, Executive Director, Rod Allan de Lara and Ms. Maria Concepcion Sakai, FAD Chief.

Cheers to a successful DNA Barcoding Workshop for PSHS Biologists and Researchers held last November 6-8, 2015 at the Institute of Biology National Science Complex, UP, Diliman.

Training on Selected/Advanced Topics in Physics for PSHS System Teachers at the Institute of Mathematical Sciences & Physics, UP Los Baños, Laguna last December 11-13, 2015, thru a grant from DOST-Human Resource Development Program.

PSHS System chemist teachers during their validation of chemical method of analysis training course at Research, Analytic and Services Laboratory, National Science Research Institute, UP Diliman last November 25-27, 2015.
The DOST PSHS System’s annual operational planning dubbed as “PSHS System Physical and Financial Planning Workshop for CY 2016 and Budget Preparation for CY 2017: Continuing the Transformation” was conducted last October 19-23, 2015 in Baguio City. Ninety four participants composed OED’s Management Team and staff, and the campuses’ Management Committees together with their Accountants and Budget Officers attended the workshop.

Eight (8) personnel from the PSHS System-OED conducted an outreach program entitled “Alay kay Nanay at Tatay” at Haven for the Elderly, a nursing home, in Tanay, Rizal last October 8, 2015. The team distributed basic goods such as bathroom tissue, sacks of rice, adult diapers, canned goods, biscuits/cookies, 3 in 1 coffee sachets and milk to the elderlies and conducted an interactive activity to bond with them. In this photo, the team led by Ms. Maria Concepcion B. Sakai, FAD Chief (3rd from left) is shown with Mr. Ricky A. Bunao (4th from left), Center Manager of Haven for the Elderly.

Test Development Writeshop for the 2016 LAQE and Seminar Workshop for Test Item Writers of 2016 Readiness Exam for Grades 8 and 10, was held last September 18-22 at Mabuhay Manor, Pasay City. The second writeshop was held on December 1-4, 2015 at Eurotel, North Avenue, Quezon City. Participants to the twin activity were members of the technical working group and designated LAQE reviewer editors from the different campuses nationwide. Invited consultants/subject experts from top universities like UP, DLSU and Ateneo also attended. Mr. Fortunato Tacuboy III, SST IV and staff on special detail at OED facilitated the activity together with the RPAD secretariat.

Photo below shows members of the curriculum TWG, some of the consultants, members of the curriculum core group and RPAD secretariat during the 2nd Curriculum Writeshop for Grades 11 & 12 held last September 18-22 at Eurotel Hotel, Quezon City. Thirty-four faculty teachers from the different campuses, 22 consultants/subject experts and members of the curriculum core group hurdled the gigantic task of coming up with a curriculum for the specialization years that should develop the kind of graduates that PSHS envisions to produce. The 3rd Curriculum Writeshop was conducted last November 6-9 at the same venue to make the final stitches before it will be presented to the PSHS Board of Trustees for approval, in consultation with chosen outside consultants/subject experts.
Pisay-CVisC Bags Silver Medal in Malaysia’s Engineering Science Fair

Out of 312 science, technology engineering, and mathematics (STEM) project entries from four Asian countries, one entry from Pisay-CVisC was among the 14 silver medal awardees in the Secondary School Category of the Kuala Lumpur Engineering Science Fair (KLESF) Challenge 2015 on October 30 to November 1 at the MINES International Exhibition and Convention Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The inventive group of Teokan Duran Demircan, Joseph Karl Salva, Jr., and Bryne Alric Yu “out-innovated” most participating schools from Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia, and Philippines. They received a cash prize of 200 Malaysian Ringgit and Silver Medal Certificate. Their winning entry was entitled “Coconut Coir Based Sound Absorber Board for Noise Pollution Control”.

Among other awardees in the fair included four gold and nine bronze medal recipients.

Two other exhibit-tested groups from Pisay-CVisC also did their best in the event but just fell a bit short in getting the nod from the judges.

The three project groups were guided by their research adviser, Mr. Benito Baje, who accompanied the group to Malaysia.

The KLESF is an initiative started with the aim of enhancing interest in STEM among school students.

Pisay-MC Gets Bronze & Silver Medals in 12th International Junior Science Olympiad in Korea

PSHS-Main Campus delegates to the 12th International Junior Science Olympiad 2015 (IJSO) held in Daegu, Republic of Korea, December 2-11, 2015, garnered bronze and silver medals.

The student-winners are Bon Leif Amalla (bronze), Nathan Ross Bantayan (bronze), Arthur Reiner De Belen (bronze), Albert Neil Dulay (silver), Lorenzo Gabriel Joquiño (bronze), and André Matthew Tayamen (bronze).

Dr. Jessamyn Marie O. Yazon, RPAD Chief and Ms. Carmela Bonifacio accompanied the students to Korea. Aside from Dr. Yazon and Ms. Bonifacio, special thanks also go to the science teachers who mentored them before the competition, namely: Mr. Efren Paz and Ms. Xandra Junio (Chemistry), Ms. Maria Veronica (Physics) and Mr. Felipe del Castillo (Biology).

The International Junior Science Olympiad (IJSO) is a major international academic competition held annually and the only international academic competition that covers physics, chemistry and biology at the same time. The competition is known for its intricacy as it requires a wide knowledge range in all three sciences. Top students from each country are selected to the competition and each get a chance to compete with their counterparts from across the globe. Two hundred forty nine (249) students from 43 countries joined in this year’s competition.