

LCF promotes CSR best practices in 2014

A birthing facility that provides free services to pregnant mothers living in far-flung villages, watershed environmental modules to save our denuded forests, carpentry and masonry training for jobless men, and holistic health programs for poor children and senior citizens—these are just a few images of corporate social responsibility (CSR) at work in the Philippines. These initiatives are not simply funded by big companies and conducted by ordinary volunteers. These are well-planned and organized by professionals trained in CSR work. They work in-house or in foundations, serving as CSR champions of companies that want to help improve the lives of the underprivileged in communities where they operate their businesses.

Helping make the CSR campaigns of more than 80 companies in the country successful and sustainable is the League of Corporate Foundations (LCF). LCF was formed in 1991 by several corporate foundations engaged in social development in the Philippines. In 1996, it was formally registered as a non-profit organization to address better the needs of its members and the sustainability of the organizations.

LCF conducts relevant research studies, publications, workshops, and fora at its Corporate Social Responsibility Institute (CSRI) established in 2007. The LCF Secretariat also has five committees that promote arts and culture in nation-building, conduct education and training together with the Department of Education, train out-of-school youths to become entrepreneurs, tackle environmental issues, and conduct health awareness lectures and medical missions.

DIFFERENT CSR EVENTS THIS YEAR

This year, one of the activities LCF conducted was the ASEAN CSR Network (ACN) workshop last March. ACN is a network of CSR groups and professionals in Southeast Asia. LCF co-founded the group and is also a member. Among the resource speakers at the ACN workshop were Florian Beranek, senior CSR expert at the United Nations International Development Organization; Thomas Thomas, CEO of ACN; and Grace Cheah, trainer/assessor at DNV-GL. The workshop oriented participants on the ASEAN and EU CSR strategies, the Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact and ISO 26000. ISO 26000 is a voluntary guidance standard for integrating social responsibility into company values and practices. LCF believes it is essential for CSR professionals to learn more about this framework and how it can best help their company implement strategic CSR in their respective areas.

On July 24, LCF will hold its 13th CSR Expo Conference at the Dusit Thani Manila hotel in Makati City, gathering hundreds of business leaders, society movers, and changemakers discussing the importance of CSR in the country and what it can do to promote inclusive growth for all Filipinos. The theme for this year's expo is "Commit. Strengthen. Rebuild." The conference is part of the activities lined up for July as the country celebrates the CSR Month. Other events include the CSR Expo Trade Exhibit on July 29 to 31 at the Glorietta Activity Centers. It will feature the development work of corporations, corporate foundations, and other organizations. LCF will likewise conduct the CSRI Lecture Series for university students and teachers on July 7 to 18. LCF's five committees will also mount special events from health fora to environmental awareness sessions and education trends discussion in the country.

LCF Chairman Jeffrey O. Tarayao says these initiatives are part of the organization's way to strengthen its goal of developing CSR leaders. "We are convinced that the benefits of these programs and its adaptation will not only create a pool of more competitive and efficient corporations/corporate foundations but a stronger League and also a more resilient and prosperous Philippines," he says.