



# ACCESS JUSTICE

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Official Newsletter of the Philippine Deaf Resource Center, Inc.  
DEAF Human Rights and Legal Access Advocates

ACCESS JUSTICE is a newsletter of the Philippine Deaf Resource Center, Inc.—Deaf Human Rights and Legal Access project. This newsletter is a forum of the Paralegals and Advocates of and for the Deaf in our united effort to realize a vision where every Filipino Deaf has full access to the legal and judicial systems and where Filipino Sign Language is integral to the fundamental right to information and communication.

## ENTER

The Deaf Human Rights and Legal Access Training all over the Philippines

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ORTIGAS, PASIG CITY - the Philippine Deaf Resource Center (PDRC) in partnership with World Bank - Knowledge for Development Center (KDC) and the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), conducted a series of Deaf Human Rights and Legal Access training at WB-KDC Ortigas, Pasig City between December 10, 2010 to March 9, 2011. The trainings were simultaneously conducted to participants in other World Bank-Knowledge for Development Centers via videoconference using Polycom or Skype. WB-KDC are located at University of San Carlos-Cebu, Palawan State University- Puerto

Princesa, Saint Paul University of the Phils.- Tuguegarao City, Central Philippine University-Iloilo City, Silliman University-Dumaguete City, University of Southeastern Philippines-Davao City, and Ateneo de Naga University-KDC Naga City.

The training is a component of a four-part project called "Strategies for Attaining Legal Access and Safeguarding Human Rights of the Deaf in the Philippines" of the Philippine Deaf Resource Center (PDRC) funded by AusAID. The project aims to increase awareness regarding Human Rights of the deaf among deaf litigants par-



Mr. Raphael Domingo interacts with Tuguegarao training participants

ticularly deaf women and children who are victims of sexual abuse, deaf & hearing advocates for the deaf, and members of the legal and judicial systems, and public-at-large. It also aims to train the paralegal deaf and hearing advocates for the deaf, and monitor cases involving deaf parties and witnesses throughout the Philippines.

### Dictionary.com

#### Paralegal

A person with specialized training who assists lawyers

#### Guardian ad Litem

Appointed by the court to accompany or represent the minor or someone who is incompetent (ex. with mental disability).

#### Advocate

one who espouses a social issue or cause

\* Paralegals cannot become a court interpreter. The court interpreter is an officer of the court and should be impartial.

## PASSWORD

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Article 13 states that

1. State parties shall ensure effective ACCESS TO JUSTICE for persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others, including through the provision of procedural and age-appropriate accommoda-

tions, in order to facilitate their effective role as direct or indirect participants, including as witnesses, in all legal proceedings, including at investigative and other preliminary stages. 2. In order to help ensure effective access to

justice for persons with disabilities, State parties shall promote appropriate training for those working in the field of administration of justice, including police and prison staff.

## CONNECT

### The nationwide videoconference experience

First STOP—the city of Gentle People Dumaguete City. KDC Silliman University hosted the venue of the training last December 10, 2010, January 14, and 28. The Deaf participants mostly from the Dumaguete



**Atty. Eliezer Escorial a.k.a. the “Marlon Brando of Dumaguete” - a new-found ally of Deaf Dumaguete**

Effata Association of the Deaf were able to interact and share insights with participants from Greater Physician Rehab Foundation, the PNP, lawyers from the Prosecutor’s Office and social workers.

Next stop is the land of Durian and Mt. Apo—Davao City. An overwhelming number of participants and observers were present during the training at University of

Southeastern Philippines Davao City last January 18-20.

The third stop for the videoconference training is Palawan, the country's ecological frontier. Attendees of the training were outstanding coming from different organizations of the Deaf here in Manila and Palawan. It was conducted at KDC—Palawan State University on February 14-16, 2011. Participants were able to ask some legal issues to our resource speakers and were very active and enthusiastic to become paralegals for the Deaf.

In the list of the next training was Iloilo who raised various concerns regarding the Deaf in particular not having access to jobs and employment opportunities. The training was conducted last February 17, 18, and 24 at KDC-Central Philippine University, Iloilo City. It was attended by different sectors and by the Association of Late Deafened for Empowerment Advocacy Research and Support (ALDEARS). The training participants were all willing to advocate for the rights of the Deaf

#### The paralegals and advocates for the Deaf in Iloilo



and to be able to promote it to the different agencies. Energetic partici-

pants were observed to be in Tuguegarao, the Fire City. They showed their exemplary performances during the group creative presentations and were able to send different points of views to the issues affecting the Deaf. The videoconference was conducted last February 21-23 held at St. Paul University, Tuguegarao City. The Queen City of the South, Cebu, was the next destination for the videoconference training. It was attended by participants from the police, various NGO like the Gualandi Volunteer Service Programme,

Children’s Legal Bureau, Cebu-CASAGAL and Deaf organizations like Cebu Association of the Deaf, Hearing and Deaf Society. It was conducted on March 2-4 at University of San Carlos, Cebu City. The last part of the series of training was KDC-Naga which had an overwhelming number of participants coming from different parts of Camarines Sur region. It was attended by different institutions such as representatives from the local government, media, and religious sector. It was facilitated by World Bank KDC - Ateneo de Naga University and was held on

March 7-9, 2011. The seven-city training tour were all made possible by gaining access and full utilization of technology. World-Bank Knowledge for Development Centers shared to us the venue and the technology of Polycom or Skype to connect to these various cities and for our resource speakers to be “virtually” present to share their insights, views and information on Deaf Human Rights and Legal Access. May all these trainings be our entry point as we aim towards full access to justice for the Deaf.



**“Online Pictorial” - Cebu training participants pose with Ortigas participants**

# CHATROOM

## Discussion points from the legal point of view

Different questions were raised during the training and one of the interesting topic is about the Crimes under R.A. 9442 or the Magna Carta for Persons with Disability specifically focusing on the topic about “Public Ridicule” and “Vilification. “ What is it? How do we address this? Other people would call the Deaf, “pipi” in Manila or “amang” in Cebu, “apa” in Iloilo and some other names in different regions. Actually, the Deaf do not want to be called with other names. They would prefer to be called “Deaf” (Bungol in Bisaya or Hili-gaynon) so it would be a general term

for them. According to Atty. Rosario “Chato” Olivas-Gallo, during one of the videoconference training, “Public ridicule is making fun of the Deaf because of their disability. Vilification, on the other hand, is the utterance of bad words against the Deaf. The penalty for first offense (mockery or mimicking) is imprisonment of six (6) months to two (2) years and/or fine of P50,000—P100,000. The second offense is imprisonment of two (2) years and fine of P100,000-P200,000. The Deaf can also claim moral damages. This will teach people to respect the Deaf.” Public ridicule and vilification

is a criminal offense. R.A. 9442 clearly states that PWDs should not be ridiculed. We should be vigilant and report cases immediately to the police so that the Deaf could protect their rights.



Atty. Chato explaining RA 9442

# VIRAL

## Spreading the word

The Dumaguete participants of the Deaf Human Rights and Legal Access training conducted a workshop on Accommodating Cases Involving the Deaf with the PNP Negros Oriental personnel last February 1.



The Security Guards learning their ABCs in Sign language.

They also gave another workshop with the Hearing Guards on awareness about Deaf culture and Sign Language. These workshops were made possible through the efforts of Mr. Rolando Villamero, Jr. of

### The PNP officers of Dumaguete learning signs from Mark



the Greater Physician Rehabilitation Foundation, together with the Dumaguete Effata Association of the Deaf.

The Cebu Deaf Human Rights and Legal Access participants also gave a re-echo seminar to the Philippine National Police personnel of Cebu City last March 9, 2011. This was spear-headed by the Gualandi Volunteer Service Programme.

If you want to learn some few basic sign language vocabularies for law enforcers, log on to

<http://www.ady14.cjb.net>. This was made possible through the efforts of Team D, batch 4 Manila participants: Ed Cabalfin, Giselle Montero, Zenaida David, Jhenielie Regaspi, and Evelyn Cardoniga.



The Cebu PNP personnel with Gualandi Volunteers Service Programme, Cebu Association of the Deaf at University of San Carlos-KDC

### Signing with a smile!



# LINK

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Email your comments, articles,  
stories, news, testimonials or  
questions to [deafhrlainfo@gmail.com](mailto:deafhrlainfo@gmail.com)

The Philippine Deaf Resource Center, Inc. (PDRC)

- moves forward through the power of volunteerism
- is guided by the principles of
  - Deafness as a culture
  - Research and Information as empowerment for the Deaf
- draws from a pool of hearing and Deaf volunteers from academe, industry and civil society

## GUESTBOOK

### Testimonies, Impressions, Comments and Views



**A full-packed room during the Davao videoconference training**

"I'm very happy that I was invited to attend the training because I have learned a lot specially regarding the rights of the deaf. It would be of great help for me to understand more deaf persons like my daughter who is already a teenager. Thank you PDRC for giving such wonderful training for it is an additional knowledge for parents of deaf like us and it's fun working with the deaf."

-Tessie, Manila

"We have six (6) cases involving the Deaf. Before we don't know where to go or what to do. It seems hopeless. But with this training, learning about the VCAD, and the SC Memo, there is now hope."

- Sr. Lydia, Daet

"This training is an eye-opener for me. I have many realizations."

-Tony, Sorsogon City



**Mr. Rey Lee gives his presentation**



**Connecting to Palawan participants via Skype**

"I think addressing the needs of the linguistically isolated Deaf is very important. Language is empowering. Language allows us to access information and assert our rights. Perhaps reaching out to this sector of the Deaf population is one way to prevent human rights violations."

- Vanessa, Legazpi City