



FAIRPLAY FOR ALL FOUNDATION

a level playing field on and off the pitch

Newsletter

March - April 2016

Rapture in Rio



This March, Team Philippines from the Street Child World Cup joined 8 other countries in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, to participate in two main events: the Street Child Olympics and the Street Child Convention.

This gathering aims to strengthen ties among street children all over the world and deepen solidarity for social change.

Crystal, Erica, Ronalyn and May represented an all-girl Team Philippines, making it the second time to visit Rio for Erica, Ronalyn and Crystal. The team was thrilled to meet new people, share the success of the previous two years, and join in the events. They met other former street children from Argentina, Brazil, Burundi, Egypt, Great Britain, India, Mozambique and Pakistan.

Street Child Olympics

The Street Child Olympics was a very challenging event as this was the first time our delegates participated in sports like: Hurdles, Long Jump, 400m Relay, Shot Put, 100m and 400m run. A week of training and practice was held before the final



competition to complement the preparations each team had in their home countries and to acquaint the competitors with each other. On the day of the Olympics March 20, 2016, Crystal and teammates Mehar (Pakistan), Doaa (Egypt) and Armel (Burundi) won second place in the 4x100 relay, bagging a silver medal. Crystal, reflected on their victory saying "I can't believe we did it, because it is my first time to do it (400m game)". There was so much support going on among team members and even among different teams that rivalry and competition took a back seat. The Olympics showed physical prowess, fighting spirit, and loving hearts in each of the players. (cont. to page 3)



(Left) Friends for Keeps: Ronalyn and Crystal reunited with friends from Great Britain and Brazil

(Below) Natural High: Ronalyn and Crystal jump for joy in Copacabana Beach during the first set of the games.

HIGHLIGHTS

Fairplay was invited to a Charity Day by the William Hill PLC last March 22. 50 kids joined the football event at McKinley Hill Stadium while the Fairplay Cafe provided catering:



The MMFL League came to a close with Payatas FC U16 and U12 making it to the top 2 of MMFL Northeast and qualifying for the Champions League held last April 3.

Our application for a grant from the Australian Embassy in Manila through the Direct Aid Program (DAP) was approved. The grant will fund the construction of the Payatas Sports Center.

Fairplay welcomes two new teaching staff to the family: Kuya Mon and Ate Cris.

Roy was invited to speak in a FIFA Conference on football and development last April 24.

Kindred Spirits

Raymund Armeña, or Kuya Mon, is 29 years old and is a Philosophy major. He is one of two additions to the Fairplay family. For this feature we've asked him to share a little bit about himself and his experience so far teaching in the Fairplay Center.

A few months ago I became a teacher in the Fairplay Center in Payatas. To be honest, it never occurred to me before that I would be teaching children. I used to be fixated on the idea of teaching in the tertiary level, thinking that I would take the university academician path and that it is the best avenue for my philosophy. Moreover, I never thought that teaching young kids would be this hard, as one needs to match their off-the-charts energy levels and make lessons more age-appropriate. You also need to be more creative to make sure lessons are interactive and engaging enough to keep them hooked and deepen their interest. Despite these challenges, learning with the children of Payatas has been a fun and fulfilling experience.

During my first few weeks in Fairplay, I was fascinated by the interaction between teachers and students. The kids are more at ease when talking to their teachers and the teachers are warmer when addressing their students. Classes, though non-mandatory, are never empty and there's no shortage of energy and interest for learning. I find this refreshingly extraordinary since, like most of us today, I was brought up and schooled the traditional way where kids are forced to attend classes, follow a strict timetable, and are usually kept in check by force and fear.

Being a teacher is never an easy task. However, I found out recently that being a teacher in a Democratic School is even more challenging since it disposes of all the conveniences of being the unquestionable authority in the classroom. It requires one to dismantle his/her own ego, steer away from the familiar, unlearn years or even decades of formal instruction, adopt new ways of thinking and once again see the world through the eyes of a child. Here, children can be the curious and active little creatures that they naturally are, without the anxiety of being constantly reprimanded or judged. Here, they are allowed to develop at their own pace to become free, creative and socially responsible human beings.

So many of the world's problems will not be solved by producing more specialists but rather through a radical shift in the way we look at the world, ourselves, and others. Our great capabilities as a species would be put to waste if it is to serve human greed and hubris rather than higher human ideals like freedom, equality, truth and peace. And how much more encouraging would it be if our education system, which we spend much of our day for over a decade, was built on similar ideas of curiosity, mutual respect, and cooperation?

In this sense, I see Fairplay as a beacon of light, a reminder that there are other ways of doing things. That there are efforts to change society for the better, and they are already happening on the ground. I am reminded of what a former professor said when asked as to how we can change society in the wake of the modern forms of domination: "find your kindred spirits and do something worthwhile". In Fairplay, I can say that I have found mine.~



Kuya Mon facilitating an extra class in the Studio. He is sharing the life cycle of a bike.



Ate May facilitating an art class with the kids in the Studio.



The kids enjoying a teambuilding activity in the backyard.

FACES OF PAYATAS

"Hindi naman ako takot lumipad; gusto ko lang talaga makita ang mundo." (I'm not afraid to fly; I just want to see the world.)

Meet Lyka. At the age of 14, she already shows a sense of adventure and wonderment that cannot be matched by people thrice her age. She says she wants to see the things that the world has to offer; she speaks fondly of wanting to see the cherry blossoms in South Korea. As Lyka speaks of her dream to travel the world, her eyes sparkle and fill with hope. The same sparkle can be seen in her eyes whenever she attends her classes in the Fairplay Center, whether in drawing, dancing, science, reading, or writing, she always participates actively.

She is not afraid to speak up when she has something to say and she has the initiative to lead her classmates whenever needed. But the girl who is so eager to study wasn't always this way. When she was at a nearby public school, she used to dread going to class, not because she didn't want to learn but because of the negative experiences in the classroom. She was scared of the people who were supposed to guide her through her development. Many children who drop out of school in Payatas complain about teachers bullying them; physically, verbally, and emotionally. Fortunately for Lyka, she was able to find a comfortable, loving, and stress-free learning environment within the Fairplay center. Here, she is not scared to learn because she knows she is safe and truly cared for. Without fear hindering her desire to learn, she worked hard and soared high.

Lyka has also shown a great deal of responsibility at home. When her father passed away, she had to take care of her siblings while their mother worked. Earning P300 a day (5 pounds), Lyka's mother sorts scraps of paper in a junkyard to provide for their family. Meanwhile, Lyka is in charge of her two siblings, Melba and Shikim. Melba is her older sister but due to a cognitive disorder, Lyka cares for her on a daily basis. Shikim, on the other hand, is her younger brother who is also a full-time student at the Fairplay Center. Despite going through hard times, Lyka remains a strong, passionate, hardworking, responsible, and adventurous young lady. If she continues to work hard and develop a positive mindset, without a doubt she will not only see the world, she will also take it by storm. And sure there will be times when she will have to endure some tears but at the end of the day, no amount of tears can wipe away the sparkle in Lyka's eyes.



Lyka

WAYS TO SUPPORT

Become part of the team with regular donations of P1,000 (£15) a month to support one of our projects. This stable income makes a big difference.

One off donations can be given from anywhere around the globe. Visit www.justgiving.com/FairplayForAllFoundation

Invite someone from FFA to speak about the project.

Organise a fundraising event at your school, workplace, church, community, or other group.

Volunteer with us.

Street Child Convention and Congress

More important for Team Philippines was the Street Child Convention. The first 3 sessions opened the discussion and sharing of experiences among the teams about the Conference themes: Right to Identity, Right to protection from Violence, and Right to Education. The sessions were deeply personal and emotional for the participants, who were steadfast in having their voices heard. The convention was concluded by a Congress held in Copacabana Palace on March 18. The former street children spoke publicly about their experiences, demands, and hopes and dreams. Ronalyn graced the stage to share about her experiences of police brutality and to publicly demand their accountability. Erica, meanwhile, urged listeners to reevaluate the effectiveness and appropriateness of existing educational systems saying a one-size fits all approach is detrimental to learning. In sum, the former street children in the Congress share the same sentiments: They are hoping that their voices have indeed been heard and will be followed by a set of concrete actions to address the problems they suffer from.

Aside from these events, the delegates enjoyed side activities like mural painting, capoeira, community drumming, and Late Night Shows. There were also exciting trips to Sugarloaf Mountain, Copacabana Beach and Forte Duque De Caxias. All in all, with friendships built and strengthened, talents shared and supported, stories told and voices heard, the one week long stay in Rio was fun, inspiring and challenging experience for the team. Team Philippines was sponsored by the Angus Lawson Memorial Trust.~

Scoring Goals with the Metro Manila Futsal League

Fairplay has been involved in creating and running friendly football leagues for several years now, given the lack of appropriate youth leagues in the area. This included the Quezon City Futsal League where Fairplay organised a 5 a side league of 7 teams for nearby clubs with hosts Olympian Preparatory and English School.

Creating friendly, local leagues solves many problems at once; Manila is so large and full of traffic that it takes several hours to travel to one of the few decent venues, making regular games difficult. Ten minute games crammed into a cup format create a short-term focus on winning at all costs – because you only get to play again if you win.

Fairplay has often found that the best way to solve problems like this has been to create something better. Partnering with Dream Big Pilipinas and with help from Gawad Kalinga, both local NGOs, the Metro Manila Futsal League was created with 31 teams across two regions of Manila (North and Central Manila) and two age groups (U16 & U12); for fun, development, and for the kids.

Payatas FC reached the Semi Finals in both age groups, but more importantly there were a lot of lessons off the pitch too. Two of our older girls refereed all games in the North, and our older kids coached the younger teams kickstarting the refereeing and coaching development of Payatas FC. Each week a promise of future games, no matter the result, took off some of the pressure for players too. It all became much friendlier.

After a successful hosting of the league, a large telecom company pledged support for Season 2 in 2016. The MMFL can take a great place in the sustainability goals of Fairplay's sports program, generating the running costs of Payatas Football Club and the Payatas Sports Center (more about that in the next newsletter) through low-cost, high-impact tournaments. Over time, expanded very gradually, the MMFL offers fun, friendly, local leagues for players and teams of all levels and will help solidify Fairplay for a long time to come.

We're excited for the growth of the MMFL and the involvement of more and more Payatas FC players as coaches, referees, league organisers, and more. In the meantime, look out for the feature on the **Payatas Sports Center** in the next newsletter as we have some exciting news in the making.~

Metro Manila Futsal League Champions League



Last April 3, the Metro Manila Futsal League concluded with the first ever Champions League. Four teams from MMFL Northeast and from MMFL Central battled on the pitch in a display of skill and teamwork. Congratulations to all who participated! And congratulations to Payatas FC U16 and U12 for their team spirit in this action-packed season of MMFL!

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