



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH CENTER UPDATE

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PROJECT INCLUSION: WE ARE ALL ABLED DIFFERENTLY

SDRC in partnership with the UNILAB Foundation will conduct a research study entitled “From the Margins to the Mainstream of Society: Transforming the Lives of Workers with Exceptionality, their Co-Workers, Business, Corporate Practices, Policies, and the Workplace”. The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was signed at the Bayanihan Center on August 3, 2013 to formalize the partnership. UNILAB Foundation Executive Director Rhodora Palomar-Fresnedi attended the event together with her team. Organizations and schools handling individuals with exceptionality—the Down Syndrome Association of the Philippines, Inc., Independent Living Learning Center, Shine Special Education Center, Inc., Bridges Foundation, Inc., Autism Society of the Philippines, CARD Phil-PAFI, and The

Learning Center—also graced the event to express their support for advocating the inclusivity of people with exceptionality in the workplace.

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SRH for WWDs Research Team Trains New Researchers for Data Gathering

Members of the SDRC “Sexual and Reproductive Health of Women with Disability in the Philippines: Building Evidence for Action” project team conducted a Disability Inclusive Research Training from August 12 to 15 at the Imperial Palace Suites in Quezon City. Principal investigator Cathy Vaughan, co-investigators Jesusa Marco and Jerome Zayas, and researcher Graeme Armechin facilitated the training and provided an orientation to the project, which seeks to address the needs of disabled women in two sites—Quezon City and

Ligao City in Albay province—in gaining access to quality sexual and reproductive health and services.

The disability inclusive training is part of the research design, in which capacity development activities will ensure that representatives of disabled persons organizations, local research institutes and service providers are equipped with the skills and confidence that will enable them to be local research partners. Members of

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The research will provide a picture of the present workplace of differently-abled persons—the corporate practices, the policies pertaining to their conditions, and their relationship with co-workers. The workers will be identified as either exhibiting autistic spectrum disorder or mental retardation, based on the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for Mental Disorder 5 2013 (DSM-MD5). The study also aims to describe how the neurocognitive functions of persons with autism and the socio-emotional sense-abilities of mentally challenged individuals can be transformed into exceptional work performance and productivity. The research will be conducted in selected companies in key

cities in the Philippines (at least three cities each in Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao).

This project is headed by Dr. Robert E. Javier (DLSU College of Liberal Arts, Department of Psychology) with four co-investigators: Dr. Feorillo Petronilo Demeterio III (DLSU CLA, Research & Advanced Studies), Dr. Melvin A. Jabar (DLSU CLA, Social Development Research Center), Dr. Ron R. Resurreccion (DLSU CLA, Department of Psychology), and Dr. Raymund Habaradas (RVR College of Business, Research and Advanced Studies).

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Philippine partner organizations PARE (Persons with Disability Advocating for Rights and Empowerment), WOW LEAP (Women with Disabilities Leap Social and Economic Progress), the Likhaan Centre for Women's Health, and the Centre for Women's Studies at the University of the Philippines attended the training and shared their own experiences and insights on conducting research and accessing SRH services.

The training was highlighted by presentations made by experts in the field, who provided valuable information to prepare the group for the first stage of data gathering. From a medical perspective, Dr. Junice Melgar of the Likhaan Women's Center gave an introduction to the subject of “Understanding the Sexual and Reproductive Health of Women with Disabilities,” first defining RH in terms of all matters relating to the reproductive system, identifying the core RH services, and pointing out the key issue of RH inequities, particularly stemming from myths about WWDs. In a later session, she also discussed “Complexity in Conducting Research in the 'Post-RH Bill' Environment,” centering on the

difficulties of reproductive health in the Philippine context given that there is almost total ignorance and neglect of SRH for WWDs, and that the Department of Health itself does not have an RH program.

Dr. Joy Garcia of WOW LEAP spoke on “Disability: A Human Rights Perspective,” providing a situational analysis of PWDs in the Philippines, citing the significance of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and tracing the progression from the “old way” of seeing disability to the new and emerging models that are currently used. She also relayed her thoughts on “Interviewing People with a Range of Impairments: Basic Courtesies see page 3



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Toward Persons with Disabilities,” emphasizing that it was important that people remove their attitudinal barriers toward PWDs, and specifying situations in which the environment could become more disabled-friendly (by choosing appropriate venues, considering the use of assistive devices when accommodating PWDs, and conducting one's self properly depending on the type of disability the PWD has).

Former UP CWS Director Dr. Carol Sobrechea's presentation “Understanding Disability Inclusion and Gender Sensitivity” defined both terms by “testing” participants with a gender sensitivity scale, speaking in detail on the Center's dealing with cases under the Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children law (RA 9262), and on the importance of the Magna Carta of Women as the Philippine government's pledge of commitment to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

In her talk on “Lessons Learned in Conducting Qualitative Research with PWDs,” Dr. Teresa Batangan of the University of the Philippines first distinguished qualitative from quantitative studies and the importance of both, then proceeded to explain her nine principles of conducting research, or factors to consider that are sometimes overlooked when dealing with vulnerable groups.

Two of the participants—Krissy, who is visually impaired, and Weng who is hearing impaired—also imparted what they have learned in interviewing people about sensitive topics, and gave guidelines on how to deal with persons from their respective cultures of disability.

In further preparing for the data gathering component, Dr. Vaughan sought feedback from the participants on what their experiences were of stigma as a cultural barrier, and what they foresaw would be the challenges they would face in the field. Mr. Zayas presented statistics on disability in the



Philippines and an overview on what has been conducted in the area of disability research; he also discussed case studies that are inclusive and not inclusive in relation to disability, gender and sexuality. Dr. Marco reminded participants of what the project sought to accomplish, and presented to them the working draft of the questionnaire for their feedback and suggestions.

Meanwhile, a qualitative research training involving selected members of the SRH of WWDs team was conducted from September 24 to 27, 2013 at the Cocoon Boutique Hotel in Quezon City. During this training, interview guides for WWDs and question guides for focus group discussions with partners, carers and service providers were developed and practiced on for the qualitative data gathering phase of the project. A third training for members of the entire research team, both for Quezon City and Ligao, was scheduled to be held from October 14 to 18, 2013 as final preparation prior to embarking on field work.

The “Sexual and Reproductive Health of Women with Disability in the Philippines: Building Evidence for Action” project is funded by AusAID through the AusAID Development Research Award (ADRA) with substantive co-funding from the UNFPA Philippines Country Office.

Meet the New SDRC Director

Dr. Melvin A. Jabar, an associate professor of Behavioral Studies under the DLSU College of Liberal Arts, has been appointed to the position of Director of the Social Development Research Center beginning AY 2013-14. The youngest faculty member ever to be appointed as the Center's Director, he obtained his doctorate from Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University in Japan, and returned to SDRC--where he previously assisted in projects funded by the World Health Organization and the Bureau of Food and Drugs--as a research associate in November 2011. He has since been on the research teams that have conducted the studies *"Seeds of Change 30/15 Being Poor, Becoming Non-Poor: Perspectives, Evidence and Insights,"* and *"Political Economy of the Use of Knowledge and Research Evidence in the Design and Delivery of Urban Resilience Measures."*



Presiding over his first meeting with the research staff last June 4, Dr. Jabar presented his vision for the Center, by way of the acronym **DREAMS**, which stands for **D**eveloping proposals; **R**esponding to the call for community support; **E**nlisting local researchers; **A**rranging activities for staff development; **M**aking international connections; and **S**haring technical/research skills. To fulfill this vision, he encourages the staff to continue to search for calls for project proposals; suggests that the Center return to former project sites to evaluate the projects' impacts on stakeholders/communities; recommends that the Center's training and capacity building brochure be revised by identifying specific resource persons and topics; suggests that letters of invitation be sent to local researchers to participate in SDRC projects; and supports the revival of the SDRC Staff Development activity series.

Dr. Jabar's research interests are in intercultural marriages, educational sociology, health social science, and parental involvement. His recent publications include "Educational Challenges of a Japanese-Filipino Child in a Japanese Classroom" which appeared in the *Asia-Pacific Education Researcher*, and "Filipino Mothers' Involvement in Children's Education: Experiences and Challenges," which is included in B. Jones & R. Silver (eds.)'s *Teachers Helping Teachers 2010 Proceedings*. Newly married to the former Veronica Li, Dr. Jabar devotes time to supporting activities of the Kaagapay Oita Filipino Association, a women's organization established for Filipinos and by Filipinos, in Oita City, Japan.

Doctoral Candidate Presents Findings in Social Research Centers Study

Mr. Leland Joseph R. Dela Cruz, a Ph.D. candidate in Sociology at the University of the Philippines-Diliman, presented the findings of his study entitled “Autonomy and Expectations: The Evolution of University Social Research Centers” on July 12, 2013 at the Learning Commons of the Henry Sy, Sr. Hall. The study tries to make sense of the evolution of nine USRCs including DLSU-SDRC, and provides an explanation for the tensions and crises some of these centers have faced in the past and continue to face today.

The USRCs included in Mr. Dela Cruz's study are divided into five from private institutions and four from one public institution (the University of the Philippines). Those from private institutions, apart from SDRC, are the Institute of Philippine Culture, Ateneo de Manila University; the Office of Population Studies, University of San Carlos; the Research Institute for Mindanao Culture, Xavier University; and the Social Research Center, University of Santo Tomas. The USRCs from UP are the Center for Integrative and Development Studies, Third World Studies Center, and University of the Philippines Population Institute (Diliman); and the Institute for Strategic Planning and Policy Studies (Los Baños).

Mr. Dela Cruz's study sought to address these questions: 1) How have USRCs evolved and what accounts for how they have evolved? Why are some more sustainable than others?; and 2) In the context of the evolving field of knowledge production and the evolution of universities, are USRCs still functional for their universities, funding agencies and those who could populate those centers? In arriving at answers for his study, he conducted key informant interviews



with present and past directors of the centers under study, present and past administrators of the universities in which the centers are located, funding agencies providing support for the centers, and others.

For his dissertation, a comparative analysis was utilized employing the perspectives of those in the centers, administrators and those outside the universities; and the situations in the various USRCs. The analysis involved a search for patterns rather than exhaustive institutional histories.

In his findings, Mr. Dela Cruz revealed that the tensions and crises faced by USRCs are accounted for by two factors: incongruent expectations between these USRCs and systems in their environment, and the inability of USRCs to adequately respond to changes in their environment. Incongruent expectations were observed in the relationship between some USRCs and their universities in terms of differences in their understanding of the nature of a university, differences in research orientation, differences in expectations for

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researchers, and differences in expectations for university decision programs and channels. Meanwhile, key environmental changes affecting USRCs are those in personnel in all organizations involved, the increase in competition, and changing practices in knowledge production for both universities and policy-oriented research. Mr. Dela Cruz noted, however, that SDRC was an exception to such tensions and crises, as it was not among the USRCs that experienced them.

Joining SDRC Director Dr. Melvin A. Jabar and the Center staff during the dissemination were former SDRC Directors Dr. Exaltacion E. Lamberte and Dr. Jesusa M. Marco, College of Liberal Arts Dean Dr. Julio C. Teehankee, CLA Research and Advanced Studies Director Dr. Feorillo Petronilo Demeterio III, Jesse Robredo Institute of Governance Director Dr. Francisco A. Magno, and Bienvenido N. Santos Creative Writing Center Director Dr. Shirley O. Lua. A discussion following

Mr. Dela Cruz's presentation centered on what problems involving publications and promotion he encountered, the difficulties of publishing in the field of social science as opposed to the hard sciences, the absence of formerly active funding agencies such as the Ford Foundation, the current trend of funding agencies that do not encourage the publication of project findings, and the ratio between teaching load and deloading for research at the different universities.

Mr. Dela Cruz obtained his AB in Development Studies and Masters in Economics from Ateneo de Manila University. He has served in various teaching and administrative capacities at AdMU, including a stint as research associate of the Institute of Philippine Culture. He is currently the Director and an Assistant Professor of Ateneo's Development Studies Program.

Jabar Delivers Presentation on Japanese-Filipino Children at Middle East Technical University

SDRC Director Dr. Melvin A. Jabar presented a paper entitled "Identity of Children of Japanese-Filipino Marriages" during the conference on "Making, Re-presenting, and Disassembling Differences and Identities in Contemporary Societies" held at the Middle East Technical University Northern Cyprus Campus from July 2 to 5, 2013. Dr. Jabar's paper, which discusses the cultural differences and identity issues experienced by the children of Japanese-Filipino couples, and the influence of family and the environment on the development of such children's characteristics, was delivered as part

of a panel discussion on Children, Identity, and Difference chaired by conference co-convenor Dr. Scott H. Boyd.

The conference was organized by the Cultural Difference and Social Solidarity Network, of which Dr. Jabar is now a member. While there, he met with the network's co-director Dr. Paul Reynolds to discuss possible research collaboration between SDRC and the CDSS. He is currently recommending that the two organizations develop a research proposal to be submitted to prospective funders in the UK.

Social Sciences Focus on Mental Health of the Youth



In what ways can academe address the needs of the Filipino youth, particularly in ensuring that they have healthy minds?

This was the topic of discussion during the 2nd Annual Forum on Social Sciences held on November 9, 2013 at the Yuchengco Building of the DLSU campus. Focusing on the theme “Youth at Risk: Depressive Symptoms among University Students—Who Needs Help and How are we Helping?”, the forum opened with welcome remarks by College of Liberal Arts Dean Julio C. Teehankee, who noted that this was a timely subject that would create an opportunity to understand how to identify and help troubled students.

Psychology Department Associate Professor and Pi Gamma Mu International Honor Society in the Social Sciences Vice President Dr. Madelene Sta. Maria made the first presentation during the forum, on an “Overview of Mental Health Research Priorities among University Students.” In explaining the significance of promoting adaptive functioning during adolescence, she said that completed suicide increases with the onset of adolescence, and continues to rise into adulthood; she further cited that 75% of mental

disorders are present before the age of 24 years. Risk factors leading to mental illness among the youth were categorized within the family, peer group, school, and neighborhood contexts. Possible solutions in addressing mental care issues for the youth include developing evidence-based interventions, providing training for mental health professionals on adolescent behavior and mental health issues, and engaging non-professionals who can deliver appropriate and culturally appropriate ways of providing mental health services.

The second presentation was made by Behavioral Sciences Chair and Pi Gamma Mu International Honor Society in the Social Sciences President Dr. Romeo B. Lee on “Who are at Risk for Depressive Symptoms among Filipino University Students? Evidence from a Large-Scale Survey.” Citing the recent spate of suicide events and the need to collect systematic evidence as reasons for conducting this study, he explained that its research aim was to identify the social and demographic factors associated with higher levels of depressive symptoms among Filipino university students. A complete enumeration survey was conducted among 67 undergraduate classes, utilizing a University Student Depression Inventory (USDI) containing statements on lethargy, cognitive emotion, and academic motivation. Based on statistically significant characteristics, the survey concluded that lifestyle, financial condition, and parental and peer relationships are important indicators for higher level of depression symptoms among university students. Evidence can help in guiding the development of a campus-based prevention program, but more research is needed toward building knowledge on the topic.

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In the afternoon, a panel discussion on “What Universities are Doing to Help Students at Risk for Mental Health” was held. Sitting on the panel were Dr. Shiela Marie Jocson, Director for Counseling Services of the Far Eastern University Manila and Makati campuses, who defined her office's goal as maximizing prevention due to the limited number of counselors available, and spoke on its ten preventive programs for target groups; Ms. Linofe Aglubat of the Nueva Ecija State University Counseling Services, who cited her school's reliance on the LGP because it has no budget for counseling services from the government, and stressed the need for government to recognize that mental health programs are a priority; and Dr. Susana Estanislao, Director of the DLSU Office of Counseling and Career Services, who informed the group of her office's adherence to the “Three A's”: accountability (through documentation and recording of cases), advocacy (particularly in areas of learning disabilities), and advancement (especially in the acquisition of tools, skills, and competencies).

The Forum concluded with a business meeting on “Collaborative Large-Scale Research on

Mental Health among University Students,” participated in by representatives of each of the schools and institutions attending the forum. The resulting group made initial plans for the research to be conducted, and agreed that their next meeting would be held at Far Eastern University.

The Annual Forum on Social Sciences aims to foster a greater level of awareness and knowledge of mental health problems among university students as a research and program issue, by: 1) providing an overview of the mental health research priorities among university students; 2) discussing scientific evidence on the characteristics of university students at risk for depressive symptoms; 3) discussing campus-based mental health interventions for students, and 4) offering the public an opportunity to share and discuss relevant perspectives and experiences.

The day-long forum was co-sponsored by the Pi Gamma Mu International Honor Society in the Social Sciences, and the Behavioral Sciences Department and Social Development Research Center of the DLSU College of Liberal Arts. It was participated in by representatives from Far Eastern University, the Nueva Ecija Mental Health Institute, Nueva Ecija State University, the University of Santo Tomas College of Medicine, the College of St. Benilde Counseling Services, University of the Philippines-Manila, Philippine General Hospital, St. Scholastica's College Manila, University of the East Manila, University of Perpetual Help Las Piñas, Concordia College, San Beda College, Mapua Institute of Technology, Philippine Women's University, Technological Institute of the Philippines-Manila, Pamantasang Lungsod ng Valenzuela, the Philippine Mental Health Association, and United Laboratories (UNILAB) Foundation.

New Faces at the Center

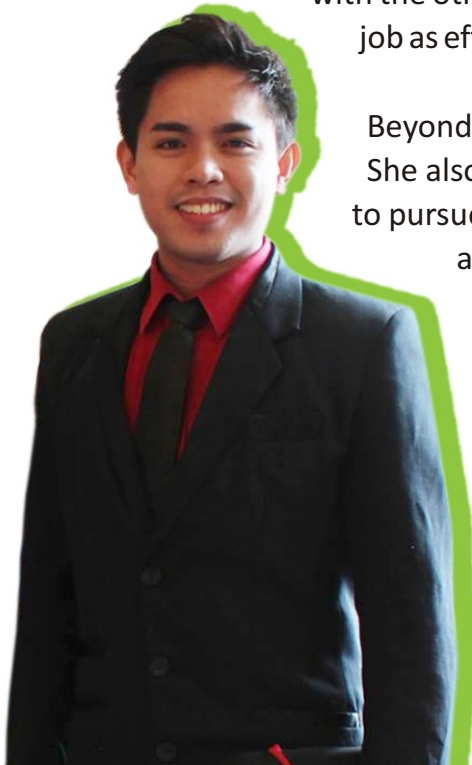
The research staff of the Social Development Research Center welcomes four new members in the persons of Office Assistant Ailene Agang, Research Assistant Kent Tangcalagan, Resesarch Associate Klarizze Valdoria, and Research Apprentice Mark Velasco. They were recently asked to share information about themselves, which is presented in this feature as an introduction to *SDRC UPDATE* readers.

AILENE, or “**Ai**,” graduated from the Polytechnic University of the Philippines with a Bachelor of Business Administration degree, Major in Marketing. She first joined DLSU by doing secretarial work for Chancellor Emeritus Carmelita I. Quebengco, and was then taken on as a research assistant by former SDRC Director Dr. Rhoderick Nuncio for his Challenge Grant project “eLearning Outreach Program for Public Education: An Action Research on Creating Knowledge Space, Learning Opportunities & Community Engagement for Public Elementary Pupils.” The project involved direct interaction with children, who Ai says inspire her. She also found that being an RA tested her flexibility, resourcefulness and decisiveness.



At present, Ai is focused on office work—filing documents, recording minutes of meetings at the Center, handling correspondence—and arranging the activities of SDRC Director Dr. Melvin Jabar. She enjoys her work at the Center—in fact, finds it exciting—and since she has become familiar with her tasks, she does not find them difficult to carry out. She particularly enjoys working with the other research staff, and looks forward to learning more and doing her job as effectively and efficiently as she can.

Beyond SDRC, Ai is a worship leader at her church in Meycauayan, Bulacan. She also sings and composes songs and poems when motivated. She plans to pursue studies in Psychology in the future, which together with Theology and Philosophy are her areas of interest.



IT MAY BE surprising to learn that while his background is in nursing (with a Bachelor of Science from the University of San Jose-Recoletos, Cebu City) and health social science (with a Masteral degree from DLSU), **KENT** has been an instructor in English as a Secondary Language (ESL) for Koreans at the Cebu English Language Center. While teaching group classes, he also headed the writing section in a summer training workshop for ESL instructors. He says that this experience widened his awareness of the Korean culture and taught him how to deal with non-English speakers.

Prior to working with SDRC, Kent was also a staff nurse at the Perpetual Succor Hospital in Cebu City, where he served moderate to critical level patients in the medical-surgical, pediatric, obstetric-gynecological and communicable wards. This served as training for him in managing his time, as he multitasked while maintaining service and compassion to his clients/patients. Such a skill is useful to him in his current position on the research team for the USAID/SANREM project “Conservation Agriculture for Food Security in the Philippines.” The project seeks to show that conservation agriculture principles (CAPS) and the practice of minimal soil disturbance, continuous mulching and diverse species rotations constitute the appropriate “tool box” to create sustainable permanent cropping systems for annual crop production under wet tropical conditions in Cambodia and the Philippines. Kent's participation involves being research assistant for Gender Expert/Social Scientist Dr. Ma. Elena Chiong-Javier in the midterm evaluation of the project's third year, and presenting an abstract under CA and Human Nutrition in Battambang, Cambodia this December.

Several activities have served as diversions for Kent as of late. He shares that he has been doing a lot of running—because the job in the Center mostly requires sitting down and facing the computer, he has realized that he should be doing more physical activity. He also enjoys horror movies—his favorites including those from Japan, Korea, Thailand and Indonesia—and he says these allow him both to use his imagination and to train his investigative script-writing skills. Meanwhile, he follows American TV series on law, crime, order and mysticism, which give him a break from the serious concerns of work.

Kent says he feels privileged to be working for SDRC, especially under a very excellent project director like Dr. Javier. Although pressured to bring in exceptional work, he feels that he can boost his potential as a budding researcher under her mentorship. He has found that working for her has opened up many opportunities to learn and improve his research skills.

BUSY TAKING UP her Master in Science in Medical Anthropology at the University of the Philippines, where she also obtained her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, **KLARIZZE** or “**Kla**” was hired as a research assistant in the area of HIV/AIDS by a freelance Public Health consultant prior to joining SDRC. The position expanded her horizon by providing opportunities in taking on different roles, from administrative and clerical duties to research tasks. She describes the freelance research work that she did as being mainly output-based and dependent on the duration of the project, which ranged from three months to a year. Doing fieldwork gave her new insights, which helped her understand the human side and realities of the topic under study.

At SDRC, Kla was first tasked to search for funding through calls for research proposals relevant to the Center's areas of expertise. She has also been recruited to join the research team of the UNILAB-funded project “From the Margins to the Mainstream of Society: Transforming the Lives of Workers with Exceptionality, Their Co-



Workers, Business, Corporate Practices, Policies, and the Workplace.” The project involves the inclusion of persons with intellectual disability in the workplace.

Since starting on her graduate studies, Kla says her interest in understanding culture in general, and how each culture is made, has been elevated. This is what preoccupies her outside of office hours, as she says it is difficult to separate work and her interests—she wants everything that she does to be relevant to each other. Regarding the Center, meanwhile, she shares that working at SDRC gives her the chance to contribute to understanding the mysteries in Philippine society, and to eventually come up with a solution based on the context of different realities.

MARK IS SDRC's first research apprentice, and was initially involved in the study “Micro-Hydro Project in Barangay Mataragan, Malibcong, Abra: An Impact Assessment,” focusing on its socio-economic aspect. He says that his participation in that project has been the most meaningful so far, as he experienced walking in the terrain of the mountain for long hours and tasting some exotic delicacies. The project also showed to him the relevance of development work in far-flung areas of the country.

Having obtained both his Bachelor of Arts in the Humanities and his Master of Arts in Political Economy, with specialization in International Relations and Development, from the University of Asia and the Pacific, Mark is now at the dissertation-writing stage of his Ph.D. in Development Studies at DLSU. Previously having taught with the Department of Social Sciences at St. Scholastica's College Manila, and having done consultancy work in youth socio-civic organizations, he is now involved in the UNILAB-funded “From the Margins to the Mainstream of Society” study. His tasks for this study are anchored on Human Resource (HR) practices, policies and procedures in employing the differently-abled individuals. Together with graduate students from other departments, he is also currently leading a research project under the Challenge Grants (student edition) spearheaded by the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation (VCRI).



Mark says the other side of his busy days in the office is devoted to art appreciation or production, specifically in painting, film, and classical music. He is thankful to be working at the Center, first for being given the chance to experience many facets of conducting research through his involvement in various projects under the mentorship of experts in the field. Second, he acknowledges being given more time to craft his dissertation. Lastly he appreciates the opportunity to write articles and researches with the view of publishing them. He also observes that the SDRC environment can be equated with that of a family, which is valuable in providing support in the endeavors he is undertaking.

Center to Host Visiting Researcher on RP Child Rights in Action

The first of this year's visiting researchers at the DLSU Social Development Research Center will pursue fieldwork for her doctoral studies this November. Ms. Emily Cheesman, an Australian-Filipina Ph.D. candidate with the Melbourne Law School at the University of Melbourne, will be focusing on how direct service NGOs in Manila that are involved with street children may understand and apply children's rights to their work. She is the recipient of the University's Human Rights Scholarship and will be hosted by SDRC until mid-January 2014.



Having worked as a legal researcher and policy advisor on child and family welfare issues in Australia, Ms. Cheesman has developed a deep interest in the ways in which international children's rights law may directly support children and those that care for them. She has spent a number of years undertaking both academic and practical work focusing on child and family welfare, minority issues, and children's rights. A central aim guiding both her research and professional work is to support and build ongoing collaboration and information sharing between researchers and communities, ultimately improving outcomes for children and families.

Ms. Cheesman's dissertation will consider how the legal, political, economic and cultural contexts within which NGOs operate impact upon rights-based work. The study involves desktop research and qualitative research methods, including supervised observations of NGO programs and interviews with adult professionals currently working (or with expertise) in the child and family welfare sector in Manila. The academic environment that SDRC will provide, together with opportunities to gain a broader appreciation of cross-cutting issues, are factors that Ms. Cheesman considers will be valuable to her research.



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