

DFPC's Corporate Social Responsibility

Duty Free Philippines is not just an ordinary travel retailer. As an agency of the Philippine government operating under the Department of Tourism, DFP is an institution of the people and for the people.

Aside from its commitment to building a stable and responsive company for the enhancement of the professional growth and well being of its employees, DFP also works on improving the quality of life of its workforce and their families as well as of the local communities and society at large through various projects and activities.

Day Care Center.

On February 5, 1987, Executive Order No. 340 was signed by then President Fidel Ramos directing all National Government Agencies and Government Owned and Controlled Corporations (GOCC's) to provide a workplace-based early childhood care and development (ECCD) program for their employees' children below five years old by extending substitute parental care while the parents are at work.

In support of the said Executive Order, Duty Free Philippines opened its Day Care Center (DCC) on April 14, 2004 with a floor area of 210 sq.m and is located at the ground floor of EHA building behind the Value Shop.

The DFP-DCC accommodates employees' children between 3-5 years old. Priority is given to parent-employees who do not have household help to look after their children. The day care center is being managed by a Day Care Teacher who provides the children with hours of playing, music lessons, poetry reading, arts & crafts, story-telling, physical exercise, indoor games, self-help skills and an afternoon nap time.

DFP Day Care Center regularly conducts seasonal activities such as the traditional Flores de Mayo, Halloween and Christmas parties and karate, dance, baking, clay molding lessons and other sports and creative skills classes are also conducted during summer.

The Blind Rondalla.

Since the beginning of DFP's operations, the Blind Rondalla has been providing music and entertainment to its shoppers. Always seen at the exit lobby of the Fiesta Shopping Center and now at the Fiestamall, this ensemble composed entirely of blind musicians never fails to amuse balikbayan and foreign duty free shoppers with their adeptness in playing string instruments and at times their brilliant vocal rendition of old Filipino folk songs.

The group may not be contributing to DFP's income as they are not being charged for the area they are occupying but their music and inspiring life are enough to fill and warm everyone's hearts.

Outreach Program and Relief Efforts.

DFP has done its share in contributing to the upliftment of the plight of the less fortunate, most especially those who were affected by natural disasters and calamities. Through the Department of Tourism, the Philippine National Red Cross, other non-government agencies, and/or DFP's own employee-volunteer group, the agency has provided food, clothing, medicine and financial assistance to those in need.

In coordination with the local government units, DFP also held gift-giving events during the holidays for the depressed communities within the agency's vicinity. Entertainment and bags of food, treats for the children and other basic necessities were given to poor families in attendance. Feeding programs were also regularly conducted for undernourished children of local communities and orphanages.

DFP C.A.R.E.S.

The Prelude

Typhoon Haiyan, or Typhoon Yolanda – the most powerful tropical cyclone ever to hit Southeast Asia last November 2013, left thousands dead and homeless in all eight regions of the Philippines. The devastation struck at a time the country had even barely recovered from the aftermath of the 7.2 magnitude earthquake in Bohol.

Many agencies, private corporations, organizations and civic groups immediately pitched in to help the Philippine government in alleviating the plight of the survivors. But the enormous extent of the damage, with infrastructure, roads and bridges destroyed, made relief efforts extremely difficult and quite impossible at first.

News poured in on the depressing plight of those mourning, injured and hungry survivors in desperate need of immediate assistance.

We at Duty Free Philippines (DFP) could not bear to just watch and do nothing.

The Birth of DFP C.A.R.E.S.

Although DFP, through the years, has been helping and donating to various charitable agencies/foundations and depressed communities in the past, the agency had yet to create a program solely dedicated to this cause.

The several calamities and tragedies that befell our nation which further emphasized the Filipinos' resilience in the face of adversity inspired DFP to step up and do its share.

After a thorough consultation and brain storming among the executives and managers of DFP and a media group (advertising agency), DFP CARES was conceptualized.

Aside from its literal connotation, DFP C.A.R.E.S. stands for "Coordinated Action in Response to Emergency Situations". It was created as a support program that aims to encourage and mobilize DFP's former and current employees, suppliers and partners in the industry to help in generating funds that will be primarily allocated for the relief and rehabilitation efforts for victims of natural calamities in the country.

The First Steps

A few days after its inception, DFP CARES geared up by forming the core group made up of able volunteers from the company's roster of current employees and prepared a lineup of immediate activities and possible fundraising projects in coordination with other agencies and organizations.

The initial undertaking was the pooling of all possible internal resources (i.e. budgets from cancelled Christmas parties and employees' birthday meals, corporate gifts) as well as personal cash donations from managers and staff.

The following weeks were then devoted to DFP employees doing volunteer work in the relief repacking efforts of the Department of Social Welfare Development (DSWD). The relief packs were distributed to the families in the regions severely affected by typhoon Yolanda.

The Travel Retail Response

As news spread about the overwhelming disaster that hit the eastern Visayas region, an immediate call for help and support was put forth by Mr. Martin Moodie through the Moodie Report. DFP's efforts to assist in the relief and rehabilitation efforts for the typhoon Yolanda victims spread, the influx of help from the international travel retail community quickly poured in led by generous donations from the Tax Free World Association, The Moodie Report, Remy Cointreau, Tumi Asia Ltd., Nuance Group and many personal donations. Several companies also organized fund raising activities.

DFP C.A.R.E.S. Projects

DFP CARES' operations became fully functional with funds already sufficient to effectively begin the conduct of its planned programs and activities.

By end of November 2013, DFP CARES was able to donate packed meals to the government's Department of Social Welfare and Development for the survivors arriving at the Villamor Airbase in Manila from Tacloban, one of the most ravaged provinces in the Visayas. And in January 2014, DFP CARES was also able to distribute packed meals to the University of the Philippines Tacloban students who were relocated to the school's Manila campus.

Since December 2013, several fund raising projects were launched.

- Yuletide Gift Pack – in cooperation with Yearsley, DFP’s supermarket supplier, a special gift pack consisting of special food items was sold at cost to Fiestamall customers wanting to send help to affected families located in the province of Cebu's Hilotongan, Lipayran and Mambucayao Gamay islands. Sponsors or those who purchased the pack even got to sign cards bearing an inspirational message of good will and holiday greetings attached to the gift packs. Packs were distributed to 1,000 families last December 29, in time for New Year’s Eve.

- KISAP MATA PARA SA PAGASA Photo Exhibit – DFP sponsored a fundraising event in support of the rehabilitation drive by Photogra.ph, a group of professional and amateur photographers. The exhibit was held at the Fiestamall Atrium from December 16 to 31. In January, the exhibit was moved to the posh Rockwell Powerplant Mall in Makati City and was able to raise more than P2.4 million.

- JOHNNIE WALKER

DFP C.A.R.E.S. collaborated with Diageo in “Celebrate and Donate”, wherein for every unit of Johnnie Walker purchased, U\$1 will be donated to DFP Cares to be used for the purchase of fishing boats for fishermen devastated by Typhoon Yolanda. The project raised \$18,000.

DFP CARES’ Next Steps

Now, DFP C.A.R.E.S. is shifting its focus to long-term recovery and rehabilitation by embarking on a new mission – Rebuilding Lives ONE Block at a Time.

As thousands of Filipinos displaced from their homes are still in need of shelter, the DFP C.A.R.E.S. vision is now to rehabilitate communities in Haiyan-devastated areas by raising funds to build houses for the families who survived the calamity and are trying to rebuild their lives.

Community Development

A major component of this housing project is the management of its settlers. On this aspect, we partner with a non-government organization or NGO to carry out the following:

- identification, profiling and shortlisting of qualified beneficiaries
- conduct values formation seminar
- develop livelihood training programs
- draft sustainability programs for the community

The land, on which the project is built, is covered by a Deed of Donation made by the owners to the Foundation. Under the project’s guidelines, no individual titles will be issued to beneficiaries to prevent misuse of the property. Succeeding generations of the beneficiaries though, can inherit rights to the houses. Beneficiaries are obliged to help take care of the village, including the painting of the houses, beautification of the community, planting flower plants in the vicinity and maintaining cleanliness and peace and order.

UPDATE : Ormoc City Groundbreaking

In partnership with the SM Foundation, Inc. through SM Cares, the DFP C.A.R.E.S. already broke ground last March 18, 2015 the Ormoc City site in Cebu. The Village will have 200 housing units, 33 of which to be constructed by DFP C.A.R.E.S, and to be given for free to qualified Yolanda survivors in Ormoc City.

The two-hectare donated private lot is situated in Barrio Catmon, Brgy. Concepcion, Ormoc City. It's a rolling plane with a Calamansi orchard and Sugarcane plantation nearby. The houses to be built are disaster resilient with maximum concrete strength of 3,000 psi and could withstood magnitude 7.0 earthquake. SM Cares Village Ormoc City will also feature a football field as a venue to train grassroots talent on the said sport.

DFP C.A.R.E.S donated Php 6.6 Million and was duly acknowledged during the groundbreaking for having raised the money through its Yolanda awareness program and partnership with the Duty Free News International, through the Charity Ball to be held this April in London.

UPDATE : "REBUILDING LIVES ONE BLOCK AT A TIME" IN TACLOBAN

A month and 2 years after Typhoon Haiyan left many of our countrymen suffering and anguished with the loss of their loved ones, homes and livelihood, lives are now being rebuilt, slowly but surely.

DFP C.A.R.E.S. in partnership with the SM Foundation, Inc. through SM Cares, originally planned to build houses through the generosity of the travel retail community in Ormoc City, one of the areas severely affected by Typhoon Haiyan. However, due to minor changes in the land agreement, the project was then moved to Tacloban City, an area where more families are in need of permanent and stable homes.

But there have also been a few obstacles in Tacloban City which resulted to the slow pace in the construction works, such as problems due to damaged roads and infrastructure which posed risks in the transportation of building materials, problems in the availability of laborers, and not to mention the intermittent weather condition.

As of the last week of November 2015, several houses have already been build. These houses, as planned, were designed above building code and mandated standards with precast walls and roofs that can withstand winds of a Category 5 typhoon. The roofs used heat-resistant paint to lower interior temperatures and increase energy efficiency. The windows and doors have aluminum frames and PVC for high resistance to corrosion, chipping, discoloration and other severe conditions. Turnover to beneficiaries, which are approximately 53 families, is slated by the first quarter of 2016 once electricity and water facilities are installed.