

7th YEAR



GreenEarth
HERITAGE FOUNDATION

Transforming Land.
Transforming LIVES.

ANNUAL REPORT

2015-2016



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GreenEarth Heritage Foundation, Inc. Philippines was registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission of the Philippines on May 22, 2009. It is accredited by the Philippine Council for NGO Certification.



About the Cover

The children of the farmers of GreenEarth have to walk a bridgeless-river and kilometers of unpaved roads 3 hours round trip daily in order to attend the nearest public school. At long last, on our 7th year, the LORD has paved the way for a Dep-Ed Accredited HomeSchool program to be established right on GreenEarth's land.

About the Foundation



Green Earth Heritage Foundation is a holistic Christian organization whose mission is to preserve the environment, adhere to sound and sustainable agricultural practices and assist in alleviation of poverty through livelihood and community development.

We are Christian

We acknowledge One God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In Jesus Christ alone we have the promise of salvation.

We seek to follow Jesus in His Teachings to nurture and protect all of God's gifts, in His respect for the dignity of all men and women, in His call to love others as ourselves, and in His offer of abundant life to those who choose to follow Him.

We are Stewards

The resources at our disposal are not our own.

They are entrusted by God; therefore, we are committed to sound and sustainable agricultural practices that will preserved and protect the environment for the generations to come.

We Believe in the Dignity of Every Human Being

We are committed to help our workers and beneficiaries fulfil their dreams through fair compensation, benefits and a housing plan right on GreenEarth's land donation.

This VILLAGE OF HOPE will adhere to the principles of green design. The plan will be implemented through working partnerships with professionals as well as non-stock, nonprofit organizations that share our core values of fairness, ecology, health and Christ-centeredness.

We Promote Good Health

The Bible teaches that "the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19)". We, therefore, have to make choices that will enhance wellness and prevent disease.

How it all began

**"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it.
The world and all its people belong to him."**
Psalm 24:1

Agrarian unrest has been a hallmark of Central Luzon's history for over 60 years now. It is the cradle of the Hukbalahap movement which metamorphosed into the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army.

Thus, the manifestation of idle yet fertile land has been the basis of socio-economic conflict as seen in peasant unrest and the unequal distribution of wealth experienced by our nation.

This is the social backdrop of our fledgling Foundation's mission. Nestled in the foothills of the majestic Sierra Madre mountain range in historic San Miguel, Bulacan are over 100 hectares of bucolic hills. These were donated to GreenEarth Heritage Foundation by a generous land-owner in early 2009.

The Land was purchased roughly 40 years ago with the landowner's dream of developing a viable agricultural endeavour. However, as is often said, "work got in the way,"

and the land was left idle, susceptible to both fraudulent transactions and illegal squatting. Its lush potential was never achieved.

Hence, the decision to cede the raw Garden of Eden to our foundation to ensure its viable promise for beneficiaries without the taint of potential profiteering and the past mistake of non-use.

Over 139 families live in the foundation's immediate vicinity, mostly in abject poverty. An overwhelming majority of the residents have only attained an elementary level of education and 48 percent of the population are below 20 years old.

GreenEarth's mission is to assist in poverty alleviation by providing livelihoods centered in organic agriculture and by empowering communities through spiritual transformation in the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We believe that it is through a personal relationship with Christ alone that we will be able to bring hope, change and a bright future to the people of the community that we serve.

Green Earth @ 7th Year

LEADERSHIP MESSAGE



Dear Friends of GreenEarth,

From the Seven Days of Genesis to the Seven Seals of Revelation, Scripture is saturated with the Number Seven. Essentially all Biblical scholars, regardless of their stance regarding the meaning of numbers in Scripture, have recognized its special symbolic significance. Simply stated, it is impossible to miss. God laid the foundation of its meaning when He introduced this number in the context of His finished Work of Creation (Gen 2:2):

In Scripture, SEVEN symbolizes completeness or perfection. On the seventh day God rested from his labors and creation was finished (Gn 2:2). Pharaoh in his dream saw seven cattle coming from the Nile (41:2). Samson's sacred Nazirite locks were braided in seven plaits (Jgs 16:13). Seven devils left Mary of Magdala, signifying the totality of her previous possession by Satan (Lk 8:2); "seven other devils" will enter the purified but vacant life of a person (Mt 12:45).

On the seventh year the Hebrew slave was to be freed (Ex 21:2), having completed his time of captivity and service. Every seventh year was a sabbatical year (Lv 25:4). Seven times seven reiterates the sense of completeness.

In the Year of Jubilee (at the completion of 7×7 years = the 50th year), all land is freed and returns to the original owners (Lv 25:10).

Pentecost, the Feast of Weeks, is seven times seven days after Passover. "Seventy," which is literally "sevens" in Hebrew, strengthens the concept of perfection.

There are 70 elders (Ex 24:1) in Israel. Israel was exiled to Babylon for 70 years (Jer 25:12) to complete its punishment. "Seventy times seven" (Mt 18:22) reiterates this still further. The Lord was not giving Peter a mathematical number of times that he should forgive another person, but rather was insisting on limitless forgiveness for a brother's sin.

Although the Almighty has been mighty at work in our midst at GreenEarth since Day One, we have looked forward in anticipation at what the LORD will reveal to us on our SEVENTH year of operations.

We entered our 7th year on May 22 2015.

What has the LORD done for GreenEarth on our 7th year?

From the AGRI development side:

1. Though we are still praying for its release and are intensely following up, we won our BIGGEST grant so far!

On the seventh month of our seventh year, December 2015, it was announced by the Dept. of Agriculture-National Organic Agriculture Program (NOAP) that our grant appeal was approved to be able to plant 75,000 moringa oleifera trees, build 165 rainwater harvesting tanks and procure more than 2 million pesos worth of farm equipment and machinery which includes a 7 year prayer point--a mini-tractor!

2. We received our first DSWD accreditation from the Standards Bureau. This accreditation certificate allows our foundation to be entrusted with public funds, a relatively new requirement of the Commission on Audit.

3. We have built our FIRST CONCRETE FARMHOUSE.

This means a lot to us as we allow our first farming family to live in dignity within GreenEarth, much more protected from incessant typhoons and ferocious winds. We have seen devastation overnight at the farm time and again as a result of our lightweight structures. The time has come for sturdy, lifetime housing at our GreenEarth. This is just the beginning.

4. We have received the support of SM Kultura, allowing us to market our flagship product, certified-organic moringa tea, in six of their establishments namely, SM Kultura at Aura, Makati, Mall of Asia, MegaMall , Cebu Main and Seaside Cebu.

5. For the first time ever, 3 hotels within the Ayala Hotels Group (Intercon Manila, Holiday Inn and SEDA Hotel) have thrown their support for GreenEarth by serving our organic moringa tea as part of their daily breakfast buffet fare.

- 6 Intellicare, the country's most successful HMO, strengthened its support of GreenEarth's livelihood program by being the largest corporate buyer of our moringa tea each month. Because of their consistent support, we have been able to build a concrete storage facility at GreenEarth which will protectively house more than 2 million pesos worth of farm equipment and machinery which is essential for our continuous land development.

6. We won a second grant from the German Embassy, allowing us to build an additional 12 rainwater harvesting tanks and 19 steel greenhouses. What an answered prayer this has been, allowing us to fully replace all of our tattered bamboo greenhouses, that have been battered by more than a dozen typhoons. This has brought up to number 37 ---the amount of rain water harvesting tanks at GreenEarth up to this writing.

7. We have planted the most we have ever planted during the very short rainy season of 10,000 trees with very little resources for reforestation. The LORD has multiplied our bread and fish with RESULTS! We now have 23,000 thriving trees with a few thousands more in our nurseries .

8. The FIRST foreign travel of our resident farm manager and site administrator took place on our 7th year!

Aileen Deocampo who has served our missionfield for more than 5 years, finally set foot on foreign shores, SINGAPORE, thanks to a kind, consistent and generous donor of GreenEarth who was moved by the service of this young woman, a graduate of UP Los Banos, to live amongst the rural poor of our community in order to lead our movement for positive change in our countryside.

Aileen was able to see how the green movement flourished in Singapore and take home valuable lessons and strategies to help us scale up at GreenEarth.

9. Willis Towers Watson, ACER Philippines, and MicroSourcing Philippines have been consistent with their support of our treeplanting efforts for the 5th,4th and 2nd year respectively. Employees of Aboitiz Foundation joined the ranks of our corporate group treeplanting volunteers on our 7th year.

10. GreenEarth experienced its first R&D milestone, having been selected as sampling site for our organically grown moringa by UP Diliman scientists.

UP won a USAID-STRIDE funded grant in collaboration with US-based Rutgers University. Together they are studying bioactive molecules in Philippine moringa which will help us boost in many ways the moringa industry in the Philippines.

We are humbled by UP's choice of GreenEarth as a sampling site and look forward to the results of their studies which will one day be published in international journals.

From the **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SIDE:**

1. A GreenEarth Farmer's Child makes it to the USA!

Our farmer's child at GreenEarth who won the International School Manila scholarship in 2012, Rom Blanco, set foot in the United States of America as tuition scholarship grantee of the Global Youth Leadership Conference and kind generous donors who threw their support behind this life-changing experience for our farmer's child .

2. Our most revolutionary community development milestone--HOMESCHOOL!

Through the auspices of Victory Christian International School, we were finally able to set up a Dep-Ed accredited homeschool right at GreenEarth for 11 farmers' children from K1 to Grade 2. This has obviated the need to walk 3 hours round-trip a day, across a bridgeless river and unpaved roads in order to attend the nearest public school. To us, this is the most significant milestone on our 7th year.

3. Our educational and spiritual transformation initiatives were turbocharged by the blessing of a UP College of Music-schooled homeschool teacher and music director, Francis Lowell Perez, coming to join our missionary team on our 7th year.

The GreenEarth hills are alive with the SOUND of MUSIC daily!

We are reminded of what the LORD said about praise.

"If we don't praise Him, the rocks will praise Him".

We are grateful that the LORD blessed our desire to put the spiritual fire in the bellies of our people through music.

4. At long last, we have been able to begin construction of a dorm to serve as home for our volunteers on Year 7!

In the aftermath of Typhoon Santi, we lost a row of nipa sleeping huts that has served as safe haven for those helping our mission through the years. We have not been able to build immediately due to the overwhelming destruction. Livelihood had to come first.

But the mission cannot continue without the involvement of professionals ---from engineers, architects, forest conservationists, agriculturists of various specialties and corporate and student volunteers seeking to accomplish their CSR and school social responsibility requirements now have a place they can call home at GreenEarth.

Truly, we must build it so that many can come!

All praise and honor to our LORD GOD ALMIGHTY for His active work at GreenEarth over the last seven years !

He is faithful and true to His promise -- *"Call unto me and I will answer you and show you great and mighty things that you do not know."* -- Jeremiah 33: 3

May we experience more of His goodness and receive a greater outpouring of his blessings in the coming years as we heed His advice found in Deuteronomy 5:33 to walk in obedience in all the ways that He has commanded us that we may live and prosper and prolong our days in the land that He has called us to possess.

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO CONTINUE TO BELIEVE!

Sincerely,

James and Mylene Matti



A person wearing a teal t-shirt and black shorts is bent over, tending to a row of green leafy plants in a greenhouse. The greenhouse has a curved black frame and a translucent covering. The plants are growing in rows of dark brown soil. In the background, there are more plants and a glimpse of the outside world through the greenhouse structure.

TRANSFORMING LAND AGRICULTURAL Development



National Organic
Agriculture
Program (NOAP)



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GreenEarth's Farm Manager and Site Administrator - UPLB Alumna Aileen T. Deocampo receives GreenEarth's accreditation certificate from no less than DSWD Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman. Our certificate was issued on December 28, 2015.





THE FIRST CONCRETE FARMER'S HOUSE AT GREENEARTH

Ever since the devastating typhoons of late 2013 (Santi, Yolanda), The Blue Kitchen Stores have vowed to support an environmental cause and uplift the lives of our rural poor farming families who are struggling to keep body and soul together where they are. They found GreenEarth and ever since then, they have been our committed partners in development.

Because of their commitment to support our livelihood program for more than two years now, we were able to allocate resources slowly but surely to build at last, a home for one large farming family, much more protected from incessant typhoons and ferocious winds. We have seen devastation overnight at the farm time and again as a result of our lightweight structures. The time has come for sturdy, lifetime housing at our GreenEarth.

Our first concrete farmer's house beneficiary is Aldrin Presas, along with his wife Jennifer and their 5 children. For several years in a row, they have been the top producers of organic vegetables in our livelihood program



GreenEarth received the support of SM Kultura, allowing us to market the flagship product, certified-organic moringa tea, in six of their establishments namely, SM Kultura at Aura, Makati, Mall of Asia, Mega-Mall, Cebu Main and Seaside Cebu.



For the first time ever, 3 hotels within the Ayala Hotels Group (Intercon Manila, Holiday Inn and SEDA Hotel) have thrown their support for GreenEarth by serving our organic moringa tea as part of their daily breakfast buffet fare.



Green Pastures opens its 3rd branch at the BGC!

After much success at the new Shangrila Mall and Eastwood locations, the grass becomes greener at the BGC!

Thank you very much Chef Robby Goco for choosing GreenEarth's internationally - certified organic moringa tea leaves as key ingredient to your highly popular Pineapple-Malunggay Smoothie and Moringa Ginger Lemongrass Tea!



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SINGAPORE

The FIRST foreign travel of our resident farm manager and site administrator took place on our 7th year! Aileen Deocampo who has served our missionfield for more than 5 years, finally set foot in SINGAPORE, thanks to a generous donor. She was able to see how the green movement flourished in Singapore and take home valuable lessons and strategies to help us at GreenEarth.

Musings from my FIRST FOREIGN TRAVEL-- Singapore!

By: **Aileen T. Deocampo**
Farm Manager and Site Administrator
GreenEarth Heritage Foundation

It was during our 6th anniversary celebration last May 2015, when our Executive Director, Dr. Mylene Matti shared the good news that a benevolent supporter of GreenEarth has decided to bless me with a trip to Singapore!

The news melted my heart. I have never been overseas. The year before, almost prophetically, GreenEarth applied for a passport for me, believing it will have an important use for me one day soon.

I was standing at the back of the Learning Center with overflowing thanksgiving and tears of joy flowing down my eyes.

I was then overtaken by my curiosity.... who is this person thinking of me? I was told that the day will come when I will meet my benevolent gift-giver.

Days, weeks and months passed. I kept on praying for my gift-giver. The date of the trip was announced---- my anxiety of leaving the farm, my home for several years, with work that will be left behind worried me. I don't know what awaits me on this trip. Is it a pure rest and recreation or work and recreation? I had no idea.

Being at the farm for almost six years, arriving at a denuded, deforested area without road access, no electricity, no running water and no comfortable amenities made me realize that life can be very simple by choice.

I lived in a small hut and makeshift bathroom under a leaning old mango tree. I bathed in water coming from a creek upstream. It refreshed me daily. The sound of insects at night daily calmed my tired body before I retired. A simple dinner with our farmers lighted by



kerosene lamps, followed by short chitchat helped me to get to know them better. Knowing their past, their continuing hardships, dreams and aspirations in life, pinched my heart each day. "How, O Lord, can I help them?"

I never imagined that 3 years after graduating from college, I will find myself living and working in a dry, dreary, desolate, denuded piece of land at the foothills of the longest mountain range of the Philippines in Northern Luzon. Time flies! It is more than five years now.

My parents were also farmers from South Cotabato, Mindanao. They worked hard and instilled in us the value of education. By God's goodness and grace, three of us siblings made it to University of the Philippines Los Banos (UPLB). My 4 years at UPLB, taught me the virtue of hard work. I had to discover ways and means in the campus to find part-time work in order to make my financial ends meet.

Right after graduation, I thought that my focus should and would be achieving financial prosperity at all cost.

A great majority of my batch mates work in call centers and other firms that have nothing to do with agriculture. Many have left for overseas. The priority of everyone is attaining financial security.

As an agriculturist, I firmly believe that it is essential to help our farmers achieve their maximum potential when it comes to crop production, without depleting the soil of its life and nutrients.

This is my heart's desire until now. How can we alleviate the lives of the poor farmers, the tillers of the land?

I salute the farmers. Sunburnt skin and callous hands are the mark of their perseverance in life.

The day came, when I finally met my benevolent donor for my Singapore trip. I had the privilege to travel with her and her very loyal staff.



Arriving at Singapore's Changi Airport amazed me. Even our trip to the hotel was breath-taking. Everywhere I looked was a landscape of big trees, green lawns and flowers in bloom along the road. Singapore indeed is a City in a Garden! I couldn't wait to see their showcase of biodiversity. As we went to parks, gardens and other recreation areas, GREEN welcomed me everywhere.

Everything I saw made me think ---- is possible for GreenEarth become like this?

People were disciplined. Clean and green was a priority.

While in Singapore, I found out that the Singapore government is spending 20 million dollars a year for landscape maintenance. This includes paying for maintenance of plant nurseries, diligent and continuous inventory of flora and fauna, compensation of agriculturists, horticulturists, landscape architects, entomologists, plant pathologists and etc. Even drainage and canal systems were well organized.

I became curious to know how the Singapore government succeeded in greening their entire country.

I had the chance to spend a few minutes at the bookstore and saw a book "Living in a Garden: The Greening of Singapore".

I started reading it when I got back to my hotel that same day. Despite my fatigue from touring, I couldn't put the book down every night.

This greening project started more than 50 years ago. It took one man, Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew to start the tree planting campaign. Until today, Singapore celebrates a National Treeplanting Day.

A quote from PM Lee Kuan Yew "Without the greening effort, Singapore would have been a barren, ugly city. There would have been a few trees, planted haphazardly here and there, but there would have been none of the planning or the care and maintenance that sustain our greenery today." They faced many hurdles along the way, but they

pressed on. Focusing on soil rehabilitation, plant nourishment maintenance and monitoring. I truly agree that planning is the beginning of it all.

It took their school children, professionals and out-of-school youth working together hand in hand to bring forth what we can see in Singapore today. Many Singaporeans took horticulture and other related degrees overseas.

Their leader started a heritage that they are now enjoying and taking pride of today--- Singapore is a place of tranquility, beauty and opportunity.

As my mentor, our founder and executive director Dr. Matti always tells me, "Let us plan ahead. We just don't know when it will become reality, the important thing is we have a vision and prepare all our plans to the smallest details.

I became more visionary because of this trip.

I can now more easily visualize beauty everywhere I look at GreenEarth's land. Even the most neglected spot-- I appreciate its potential.

In God's perfect time, beauty through biodiversity will began to flourish at my beloved GreenEarth.

The once denuded land will become A Garden of Eden dedicated back to the LORD. The bushfires every dry season will be replaced by flowers in full bloom. I can't wait and all I can do is to keep on praying that it will not take us so long to live in paradise from once barren, denuded and neglected land. I can see the Lord answering our prayers and being so busy at work in our midst.

THANK YOU GreenEarth for giving me the opportunity to serve and see beauty in everything.

Let us be one with the vision and live the mission each day!



REFORESTATION PROGRAM

TREE PLANTING @ GREENEARTH on Year 7:

Despite very little resources and overwhelming priorities on all fronts, we hit 10,000 trees planted this year!



TOWERS WATSON Tree Planting

September 12, 2015

578 Narra Trees were added to GreenEarth on this day, thanks to the energetic efforts of the WAVE team (Watson Associates Volunteer Experience) in fundraising and organizing the yearly event, now on Year 4.

Aside from the treeplanting drive and actual planting that took place, the volunteers so generously gifted the farmers with hearty meals, organized games with prizes and gave lots of books for the farmers' children's Library and Learning Center.

We praise the Good Lord for the perfect weather that He has given us. It made all the difference in the world.







MICROSOURCING.com Tree Planting

On Sept. 26, 2015, volunteers from Microsourcing.com added 170 narra trees to the slopes of GreenEarth. Not only did they answer to our treeplanting program call to help plant 10,000 trees this rainy season, they also shared their love and talents by hosting an art workshop for the kids of GreenEarth.

THANK YOU SO MUCH MICROSOURCING.COM!!!

Year 2 of your partnership means so much to us and is truly making a difference.

The Good Lord Jesus bless you all!



ACER PHILIPPINES Tree Planting

Four years and 4000 trees later, ACER Philippines continues to care about the land and people of GreenEarth Heritage Foundation.

We had a “FAMILY REUNION” with our ACER Family at GreenEarth on November 28, 2015 with no less than the country manager of ACER Philippines, Mr. Manuel Wong leading the treeplanters that day.

This year, ACER sponsored another 1000 trees, consisting of neem trees, lanetes, mahoganies and of course MORINGA.

Our vision is to re-establish biodiversity on our slopes to bring back a stable and healthy ecosystem for all.

Our treeplanting event was followed by programs by the Children of GreenEarth. Our homeschool kids played the angklung and sang “Getting to know you” with Teacher Lowell, the highschool scholars and sponsored kids sang “Do Re Mi” and played a Christmas carol on the angklung as well. The program ended with a duet by Jerouszel, ACER Philippines’ college scholar at GreenEarth and Rom, GreenEarth’s scholar at ISM. They sang “A Whole New World with a video on the background, made by GreenEarth’s college scholars, Gerald and Renz, showing the impact of ACER’s partnership in the lives of the GreenEarth kids through technology.

THANK YOU FROM THE BOTTOM OF OUR GREENEARTH HEARTS, ACER PHILIPPINES!!!!

More power and grace to you!





ABOITIZ FOUNDATION CSR Activity



This volunteer group is handling the organic fertilizer preparation station.

The labor of love of our Aboitiz volunteers and GreenEarth members together. 23 adults and 2 kids trekked the foothills of the Sierra Madre Mountains in San Miguel, Bulacan early in the morning in order to be one with us in our mission. 2,900 polybags filled with compost media was the output of the day.

THANK YOU for spending your day with us, Aboitiz Foundation volunteers!

Your help means the world to us!

You all have made GreenEarth a better world with your presence and great help.



Aileen Deocampo, UPLB alumna serving as GreenEarth's farm manager and site administrator explains to the volunteers GreenEarth's mission, vision and ongoing programs to restore the denuded forests and combat climate change in our neck of the woods.



Organic Fertilizer Preparation Area



Daddy volunteer is teaching his little girl how to plant.



The arrival of the Aboitiz Foundation Volunteers



Viewing the Vermiculture Station at GreenEarth



Aboitiz Volunteer Mrs. Malou Marasigan aided by GreenEarth Farmer Pablo Guadalupe planting her 3rd Narra sapling today.



Loyola Mountaineers Volunteerism at GreenEarth

April 24, 2016

"We, the Loyola Mountaineers of Ateneo University, envision a society of individuals that have a drive to nurture their skills, fully aware of the needs of the country and active participants in the challenge of nation building. We envision a society of individuals who are appreciative of nature and advocates of environmental preservation and rehabilitation, and who, in the spirit of willing service, are competent and responsible servants to their countrymen."

THANK YOU Ail, Mariel, Kev, Angela, Raffy and Ique for your sacrificial giving of your time and energies to help us prepare GreenEarth for the coming rainy season as we plan a massive treeplanting effort at GreenEarth. We thank you for coming during this hardship season of El Nino. Your labor will not be in vain.

Thank you very much!



GreenEarth experiences its first R&D milestone, having been selected as sampling site for our organically grown moringa by UP Diliman scientists.

UP won a USAID-STRIDE funded grant in collaboration with US-based Rutgers University. Together they are studying bio-active molecules in Philippine moringa which will help us boost in many ways the moringa industry in the Philippines.

We are humbled by UP's choice of GreenEarth as a sampling site and look forward to the results of their studies which will one day be published in international journals.





TRANSFORMING LIVES
COMMUNITY Development

HOMESCHOOL

Through the auspices of Victory Christian International School, we were finally able to set up a Dep-Ed accredited homeschool right at GreenEarth for 11 farmers' children from K1 to Grade 2. This has obviated the need to walk 3 hours round-trip a day, across a bridgeless river and unpaved roads in order to attend the nearest public school. To us, this is the most significant milestone on our 7th year.



FROM L to R: Dr. Mylene Matti, our founder and executive director; Mr. Wallace Panlilio, Headmaster of Victory Christian International School (VCIS), Mrs. Segevamor Javalera, VCIS' Principal and Lowell Perez, our pioneering HomeSchool Teacher at GreenEarth.





Teacher Lowell Speaks

Taking the road less traveled by and it has made all the difference.

A UP COLLEGE OF MUSIC student who dropped out of college on his junior year due to financial hardship now finds his way back to his alma mater after 13 years.

It's quite astonishing that my path led me to the foothills of Sierra Madre, to work—of all jobs—as a homeschool teacher!

I remember being driven almost to despair in the summer of 2015, when I was looking for something new to do in my life ...my job of many years, as a church music director was becoming dreary. The humdrum was just sapping my energy. Not that music ministry



in church is unexciting, my spirit somehow needed a hiatus from this daily grind.

So, like most people looking for something new to do, I browsed through some job postings online. Sifting through all the jobs offered, only one caught my attention. A job as a teacher in a remote place, teaching young indigent children for a foundation with an environmental thrust.

"Now, that's quite interesting!"

One requirement they needed for the job is a background in music. "I can do that", and so I sent my application. I had already sent my application when I re-read and examined the ad closely... they were actually looking for someone who was board-certified in Education.

Sigh! "I did not even have a college degree. What I have is a degree from the "School of Hard Knocks" and a "Certificate" of Continuing Self-Education . I never stopped reading, and reading so voraciously !"

To my surprise, the foundation expressed interest in my application.

After a few email exchanges, I was asked to actually visit the place and to volunteer my time to teach the farm children a couple of songs to be performed for the Foundation's 6th Anniversary. I agreed to go and teach the children. Then and there, I got the picture of what the job will be like. It became crystal-clear to me that this is more than a job. It is a serious missionfield where the good news of salvation had to be preached. The people were both materially and spiritually poor, in need of the saving grace of the Savior.

I prayerfully went to the LORD about this mission. I asked him if this mission would fill the void that I was experiencing and if it would, may He grant the desire of my heart to be accepted?

The LORD gave me the confirmation that I was looking for. I got the job!

That meant I had to leave my post in church as a music director. When the LORD closes a door, He opens a window.

I may have “left” a ministry in church but He had a mission waiting somewhere else for me. As in everything, we need to say “YES, LORD, I am coming!”

I am profoundly grateful to GreenEarth for having me on board and giving me a chance to do something new and extraordinary in my life and for the lives of the children of poor farmers at the foothills of the Sierra Madre, so in need of hope and a bright future.

The LORD said that He is the potter and we are His clay (Isaiah 64:8) “Mold me, use me...this is what I pray...”

Here I am, an inexperienced teacher with no college degree, who only knows how to play and teach music, but is willing to learn, to explore, and to rely only on what God can do in his life. But with the help of more experienced teachers who were willing to support my work, the under-served farmers’ children who desperately need better academic instruction will have that chance in life in the future.

I am very grateful for the world-class educational materials that were donated by



Victory Christian International School which provided an amazing template for the multi-level classroom instruction from Kinder 1 to Grade 2 for our first batch of students at the farm. These are the 11 youngest members of our beneficiary community who have to cross a bridge-less river and kilometers of unpaved roads in order to attend public school. Their learning gaps are profound .A major overhaul was needed just to get them up to speed to their age-appropriate academic levels.

Just a short thirty days into my service in the GreenEarth ministry in 2015, unbeknownst to me, our Executive Director was already being used by the LORD to bring me back to the UP College of Music, at the end of my full year of service as pioneer teacher of the foundation’s HomeSchool Program.

“As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.”-Isaiah 55:9

The LORD had a plan for me all along to be able to get back on the path of my college education. He had me find it, by taking the “road less traveled by--to serve the poorest of the poor children of farmers for a time---and that has made all the difference!”

By GOD’s goodness and grace, Year One Homeschool has been a tremendous leap forward for my beloved students at GreenEarth. And I will be leaping upward too to return to my beloved alma mater to complete my studies at the UP College of Music with the help of GreenEarth Heritage Foundation.

To Him alone, be all the glory, honor and praise!

GreenEarth Farmer's Child makes it to the USA!

Four and a half years ago, I walked two hours each way, across a bridge-less river and unpaved roads to get to GreenEarth Heritage Foundation. I heard that they were bringing back the forests and teaching the children to LIVE, HOPE and DREAM!

All I wanted back then, as the 7th out of 9 sons of a rice and vegetable farmer, was to gain assistance for my daily school needs. I did not want to stop schooling like my older brothers.

GreenEarth taught us to dream BIG because the GOD we serve is a BIG GOD!

Tonight, I am flying to the United States of America as a Filipino delegate to the Global Youth Leadership Conference (#GYLC). Thank you to my beloved school, International School Manila for the nomination, to GYLC for hosting a scholarship competition and awarding me with funds to be used towards tuition, and to my numerous kind donors who have contributed to make this trip possible. I honor you all!

Thank you Lord for your wonderful promise:

"For I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you, plans not to harm you, but to give you hope and a good future" Jeremiah 29:11

TO GOD BE ALL THE GLORY!!!



Reflections on my first -ever trip to the United States of America

by Rom Blanco

Romnick Blanco

Filipino Delegate to the Global Youth Leadership Conference (GYLC).

More than 240 delegates and 194 nationalities.

To my dearest kind donors,

My first visit to the United States of America was a blast!

I invite you to view my photo-travelogue which I archived on this link:

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.944216578934258.1073741882.146181955404395&type=3>

During my 37-day stay in the US, I had the opportunity to set foot on the following states—California, Illinois, New York and Washington DC. Within the US, I flew on 4 different airlines namely American Airlines, Delta, United Airlines and Southwest. It was a season of the MOST number of FIRSTS in my life so far.

A mobile society

While in the States, I was able to experience the following modes of transportation—planes, subway trains, buses, taxis, ferries and cable cars.

I went on two cruises—an architectural river cruise in Chicago and a fun river cruise in New York with the GYLC delegates. America is a very mobile society where people from all walks of life take planes, trains, and automobiles all day long. These are nothing special to Americans. It is part and parcel of their daily life.

The use of technology in American daily life

Unlike in the Philippines, American taxicabs have TV screens on the passenger side and have credit card scanners. The TV screen is not just for entertainment. On it, one can see the full breakdown of one's bill. The built-in software even has the percentage of the tip calculated exactly with different choices for the passenger. Every single taxi I have ridden had a camera for security purposes.

Airports in the United States are also very heavy on the use of technology. Passengers don't even have to have a printed copy of their boarding passes; they can just save it on their smart phones and flash it on the airport scanner. Checking in can be done online and luggages can be checked in at the curb. Life in the States is very convenient. If you know how to use technology, you can save so much time because many transactions can be done online.

When I was in NY, my host noticed that her bathroom paper supplies were running low. She just went to Amazon.com and in 2 hours, the supplies she ordered were delivered to her building's concierge, no hassle. No need for us to even walk to the nearest store to buy!

People in the US use technology in their daily lives because for them, time is very important and there is nobody else who would do these things in their stead.



I remember being stuck in an airport in the US for four hours because my flight from SFO to LAX was cancelled, then delayed four times. I didn't have to get up from my chair to know what was going on. Because I registered on the airline's website for up-to-the-minute updates, I was closely updated on the flight status on my phone. Even my hosts waiting to pick me up in my destination knew what was going on because they registered on the airline's site too. This system was a big help in streamlining communications.

I noticed that people were focused on being productive even while sitting around waiting for our flight. They were working on their computers or reading a lot. Of course some were getting annoyed. As for me, I actually enjoyed being stuck at the airport for hours. I spent my time reading my Bible and people-watching at the same time. I found it entertaining. My hosts were so worried about me but then I assured them not to worry because I was having a great time with this new experience.

During this trip, GreenEarth also got me a pre-paid credit card to help me pay for my daily miscellaneous expenses. Lunch everyday during the conference was our own expense and there is always something to spend on when it comes to transportation here and there, etc. It was assuring to have the plastic card in my wallet at all times. I didn't have to worry about losing cash. I didn't carry much cash. As far as gaining a sense of responsibility during my trip, I learned to ledger my expenses everyday to make sure I was not spending over my limits. I survived!

Immense Exposure to the Arts

During my stay in the US, I developed a heightened appreciation for the various forms of art rendered in various media.

While in New York, I had the chance to watch three Broadway Musicals on three consecutive days. It was such a blessing to receive these gifts since I am signed up for International Baccalaureate Theatre for Grade 11 and 12.



I saw the Lion King, the King and I and An American in Paris. Different genres, all spectacular, but my favourite one was An American in Paris. I loved the sets, the dance choreography and all the singing.

Every state I visited had huge public spaces for their museums, memorials and other exhibitions commemorating special events in history.

There is "The Mall" in Washington DC, the "Museum Mile" in New York, and the "Museum Campus" in Chicago.

In a span of 37 days, I had the chance to visit 13 museums—the Huntington House Museum, the Philip's Collection, National Air and Space Museum, Natural History Museum, Holocaust Memorial, Ground Zero Memorial, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Guggenheim, the Walt Disney House Museum, Chicago Art Institute, Field Museum, Alder Planetarium, Shedd Aquarium, and the California Science Center.

Not only is there an abundance of galleries showcasing art and history in all the cities that I visited, there are also a lot of open spaces and parks with public art on display for the enjoyment of all for free. For example, there is the Central Park in New York, which is such an oasis in the middle of an urban jungle. In downtown Chicago, there is the Millennium Park, which is quite green and also has a lot of monumental art such as The Bean, the Ribbon of Steel, the Crown Fountain, and many others. It was wonderful to observe that in the cities that I visited, a lot of importance was given to preserving history and developing public spaces so that the future generation can enjoy it too.

Another thing I noticed in America is kids get exposed to cultural things even at an early age. While I was at the California Science Center for example, there were lines of small children, all below age 10, with their caretakers /camp teachers. It was nice to see very young kids get exposed to museums and art galleries. This will help them develop their imagination early and for sure these



experiences will assist them in understanding their lessons in school. I never had this benefit growing up. These kids are blessed and have no idea what life is like in places such as where I came from.

In the US, not only do they give importance to art, they also preserve old buildings and historical landmarks. Even though people are constructing towering modern buildings, there is value given to old architecture. In downtown Chicago for example, we stayed in a hotel that used to be a Motor Club building built in 1929, but there's no way you would think it was built that long ago. The building was so well-maintained, the metal accents were still shimmering, intricate wall and

ceiling mouldings were preserved and still so nice to look at. Instead of demolishing what is old, I learned the value of maintaining remnants of the past around us so that we can be connected to history everyday.

Education in America

During my stay in the US, I had the chance to visit 6 universities, namely, Caltech, Columbia University, University of Pennsylvania, Stanford, UC Berkeley and Manhattan College. Out of these six colleges and universities, I joined a formal campus tour and attended the information session for college admission at Caltech, Columbia and Stanford.

During the information sessions, I learned that anybody who aspires for higher education in the US should simply focus on getting accepted and not worry about the money yet. All who get accepted can apply for financial aid and so one can really aim high in life. I learned that a great majority of students have student loans. Those students whose parents cannot fully subsidize their education can apply for need-based scholarships, loans, or serve as working students “If there is a will, there is a way” in the USA. No wonder this country has been dubbed as a “land of opportunity”.

One day, I entered a crafts store in New York and the sales lady is actually a college freshman. She was using her free time to work in order to support herself. I learned about all kinds of working students---people waiting in restaurants, driving taxicabs, working in theatre etc. It is nice to see that students in America have so many opportunities to earn a living while studying.

To be able to attend college in the US is desired by many people around the world. I was able to appreciate this during my college tours where in people from all over the globe came and displayed interest to vie for admission in these prestigious colleges.

I was blessed to have been given the opportunity to set foot into such highly esteemed institutions



as The United Nations headquarters, The World Bank, and Facebook’s campus. These are a few of the experiences that I will always remember in my life.

Customer Service

Just before this US trip, my foster dad gave me his Ray-ban wayfarers which he bought 20 years ago. It is the classic style, a very nice brown, still unscratched and in perfect condition in its case. I saw how expensive these glasses were in the stores and mine had more value because it was vintage now.

After travelling for over three weeks, I noticed that the screws got slightly loose and needed some adjustment and so I entered an optical and asked if they could fix it. They took it to their lab behind the display area and I saw that they put it in a certain machine to heat up the screws and adjust it in a more precise manner. Despite the fact that this was not their product and I didn’t buy anything from the store, the lady was very cheerful and was so willing to help me even if it took a bit of her time.

Just before going home, I decided to have it tightened again in another optical in Pasadena, CA. They use machines to tighten the screws in the US and I wanted to take advantage of this technology. A similarly cheerful and helpful person attended to me and for free. It was so heartwarming to receive this type of service even if they had nothing to gain.

Since I grew a few inches taller just this past year, my pants are all starting to get short and tight for me. And so my foster parents said I must take advantage of the sales in America. I therefore went to a store to try out some slacks on sale. When sales lady noticed that that pants I wanted was a bit too baggy, she told me immediately that I should not buy it because it didn’t look good on me. I also tried a shirt on but the size was not right and so the sales lady went out of her way to check on another store’s availability and suggested that I go



and regular restaurants, as well as groceries stores are going organic too. Chipotle and Shake Shack are two examples of fast food chains that I tried that have a commitment to use ingredients that are free of pesticides, chemical fertilizers, antibiotics, growth hormones and other unnatural substances. Even the way animals are grown matter.

Whole Foods, on the other hand, is the largest organic grocery in the world. I was very fortunate to have hosts who took me only to stores that sold food that were natural and organic. A lot of them are health buffs and really care about where their food is grown and comes from. No wonder they avidly support GreenEarth. Going back to Whole Foods, this store had an extensive selection of fresh produce and groceries---- from organic ice cream, milk, eggs, nuts, pasta, chocolates, what-have-you. They also really label the origin of the food, who grows them and the process of how they are made. Another great thing about this store is that customers are more than welcome to try any of the products before they buy. People can freely taste everything to help them decide what they like. I so loved the grocery experience at Whole Foods.

A letdown

There are so many great and inspiring things about the United States, but there was one thing that disappointed me.

I read this article about the children in Syria who were eating grass just to survive and that really made me sad. I therefore found it appalling to witness restaurants in the US wasting so much food. I saw servers throwing crackers in unopened packaging just like that. People grab packs of salt, pepper, parmesan cheese, utensils, napkins and throw them all unused. There was a time when I returned a bunch of hangers to the cleaners which were accepted gladly, while others were simply throwing them in the garbage chutes.

I hope and pray that one day these people will realize that they are so blessed and that there are

so many people around the world who do not have as much resources as they have.

A Whole New World for me

This tremendous blessing of a trip has given me a new pair of eyes, a new vision, a new perspective. How I view the world is no longer the same. I have developed a love for travel like never before. I enjoyed every minute of it all. I have become more curious and I think that I am more keen in observing people now. I have also become more confident and independent --- I have ridden planes and public transportation by myself, stayed in hotel rooms and dorms alone, mingled with all kinds of people from all over the world who continue to connect with me through social media today. I am also proud to let you know that I did not lose anything during this trip, although there were near-misses!

Each day in the US was a day of learning—a day of learning about the country, its history, its people, and its culture.

It is my most fervent prayer that I can apply what I have taken home with me so that I can become a better person, inspire my countrymen most especially other poor farmers' children like me and help improve my own country even as early as today.

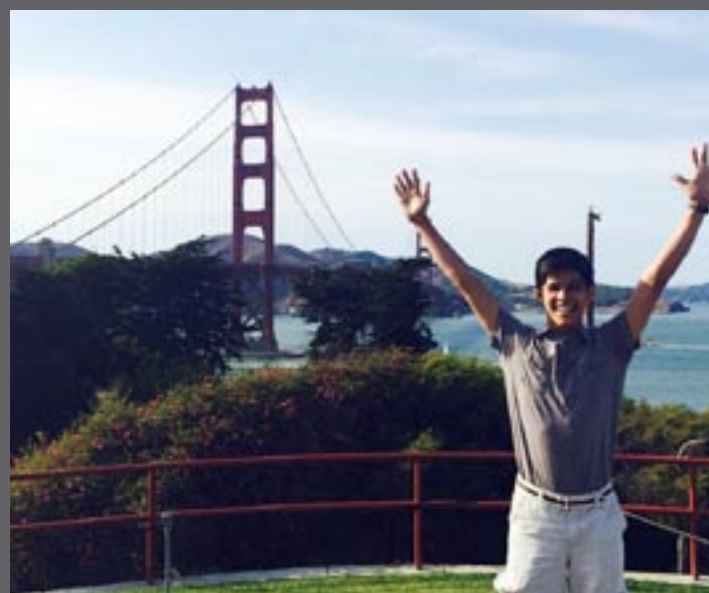
Words are not enough to express my DEEPEST, MOST HEARTFELT GRATITUDE TO YOU for your big investment in my life. You could have chosen not to support me, but because you did, you have changed my life for the better.

I promise to share my blessings just like you have shared yours with me and to always remember what the LORD JESUS himself taught in Luke 12: 48 "...to whom much is given, much is required."

THANK YOU VERY VERY MUCH FOR EVERYTHING!

With all my love and gratitude,
ROM BLANCO



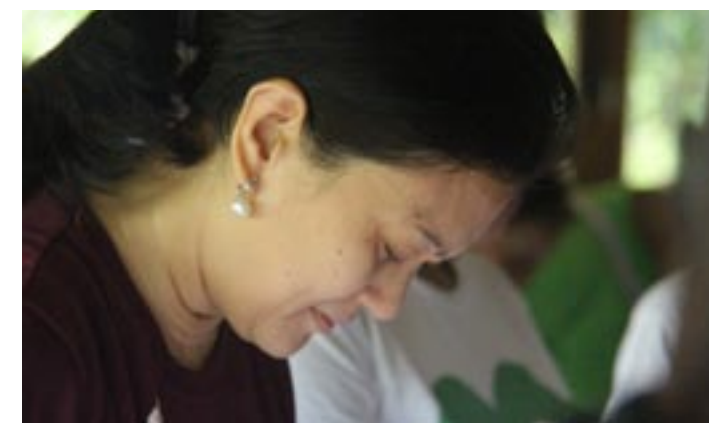


7th Pamaskong Handog at GreenEarth

Our 7th Pamaskong Handog at GreenEarth was a beautiful time of reflection and thanksgiving for the goodness of the LORD the past year.

We had the blessing of a light rain shower in the morning which made the entire day very cool and breezy at the farm. We started off with Praise and Worship. This was followed by a scrumptious lunch consisting of organic lechon, chopsuey and everyone's favorite pancit. It was the first time our farmers roasted their own pigs ever at the farm and everyone was really excited stuffing the lechon with lemongrass, oranges, oregano, basil and lots of garlic. The skin of the lechon was basted continuously with coconut water while being roasted. The farmers' wives also prepared bibingka-sa-pugon which was enjoyed by all.

We wish to THANK YOU ALL VERY MUCH who gave toward our gifts, prizes and games for the special day. Everyone, young and old, relished the treats. All went home with new T-shirts with "A Better Earth is a GreenEarth and cool messenger bags with the GreenEarth logo to boot.



Each year's Pamaskong Handog is something all of our farming families look forward to. God bless you all for your generosity and love.





We salute our kind and committed donors and volunteers whose faith in our mission and vision continues to propel us forward and upward.

Thank you very much.

FINANCIAL Highlights

GREENEARTH HERITAGE FOUNDATION, INC.

For the year ended December 31, 2015
(in Philippine pesos)

REVENUE

Donations	Php	5,334,565
Sales		3,549,164
Total Revenues		<u>8,883,729</u>

EXPENSES

Agricultural Development	Php	4,642,804
Community Development		2,601,609
PROGRAM EXPENSES (Total of Agri Dev and CommDev)		<u>7,244,413</u>

PROGRAM EXPENSES (Total of Agri Dev and CommDev)	Php	7,244,413
ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES		73,623

TOTAL EXPENSES (Program + Administrative Expenses)	Php	<u>7,318,036</u>
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Figure 1
REVENUE



Figure 2
PROGRAM EXPENSES

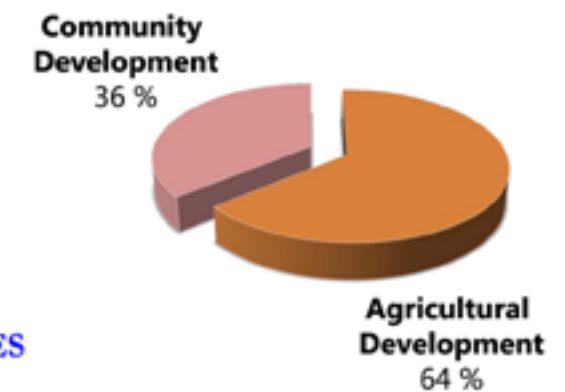
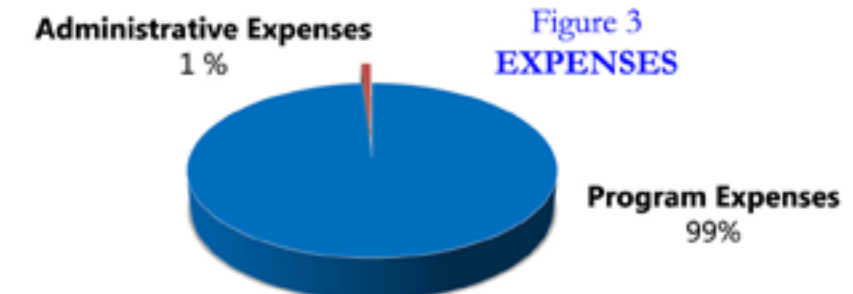


Figure 3
EXPENSES





GreenEarth
HERITAGE FOUNDATION

www.greenearthheritage.org

Administrative Office:

1723 Dian St., Palanan, Makati, MM 1235 Philippines

GreenEarth Farm:

Sitio Malapad na Parang, Barangay Sibul, San Miguel, Bulacan, Philippines

Email: contactus@greenearthheritage.org

Tel. No. (632) 775-8836