

People behind the scenes: Normandy T. Nangca, the Philippines



2009 was one of the busiest years ever for the Development Academy of the Philippines (DAP), the country's NPO. It hosted two APO mega events: the Eco-products International Fair (EPIF) in March and the Workshop Meeting of Heads of NPOs (WSM) in October. Both occasions were great successes in terms of their contents, the hospitality offered, and the level of enthusiasm. The music, dances, and cheers of the host country made the events even more memorable and enjoyable.

However, what amazed me was the people behind the scenes. The DAP team was always smiling, sharing jokes and laughter, and sometimes singing and dancing. It was very difficult to single out only one of them to feature in this column, but perhaps the story of Normandy T. Nangca, Assistant to the President and Director, Corporate Operations Office, DAP, would be the best.

During the course of preparations for the WSM, the busiest and most nerve-racking time for the Secretariat and the host organization is the eve of its opening. The final checks and confirmations are extremely demanding, requiring tedious and meticulous rechecking that everything is as it should be: the correct number of chairs and microphones; the optimal positioning of the desks; the order of ceremony; the list of local

guests; the presentations on the opening stage; etc. Under those conditions, tempers could easily fray. However Norman, the local coordinator in charge, was endlessly cheerful, sweet, and professional, well past the time I became exhausted and said good night to him and the other staff.

On the opening morning, the stage was ready, as discussed the previous night. Norman, the master of ceremonies for the opening ceremony, greeted delegates with his pleasantly energetic voice. Later I learned that he had barely slept the previous night. Amazingly, though his gentle manner and broad smile were maintained until the end of the first day's program, including the welcome dinner for the delegates. He truly seemed to enjoy the entire occasion.

I realized then that it was his passion that led to excellence. People say that, "You cannot win against people who work with passion in their hearts." Therefore you would not be surprised to learn that it was with that same smile and passion that he wished everyone a safe trip home on the final day of the WSM. When asked what he planned to do now that his tasks had been completed successfully, he replied, "Now it will be family time." Then he flashed another of his glowing smiles.