Professors give better opportunities for the deaf

The professors from all over the world who recently attended the "Teaching English as a Second Language" (ESL) program at the American Association of the Deaf (AAD) School in Tokyo, Tokyo Medical and Dental University, and the Technical Institute for the Deaf (TNTD) found that the program was beneficial to both students and teachers. The program was hosted by the Swiss Foundation for the Deaf (SFD), a nonprofit organization that promotes the education and employment of deaf people worldwide.

"PHYSICAL disability is never a hindrance to success," teacher Jonathan Tuasam said. However, it wasn’t until he witnessed a group of hearing-impaired students in the different areas of education at the Alliance Foundation (DEAF) School in Laguna that he realized — and went on to work on something to help.

"It was then that I truly understood that Tuasam encountered the foundation’s choir. In his experience, he realized how much he helped to pursue a career with the deaf, learning the richness of their culture, language, and world.

An educator from the DSU-College of St. Benilde, Tuasam was the only Filipino to participate in "Teaching English as a Second Language," a series of workshops recently offered by Postsecondary Education Network International (PEN International), which in turn is a program funded by the National Foundation for International Programs (NFIP).

PEN International is a global coalition of national organizations that promotes the development of education and training for deaf and hearing-impaired individuals.

Theavan was one of 12 participants from across the globe. Aside from the DSU-CSL, other schools that joined the workshops included the British Council, Moscow State Technical University in Russia, Tsukuba College of Technology in Japan, and the American University in Beirut, Lebanon.

During morning and afternoon sessions taught by veteran NTID faculty members, participants learned about and discussed instructional methods for teaching deaf children, including how to use Web-based technology for educational support.

The SDEA is also offering opportunities for further education to its deaf students. The Bachelor of Arts Degree in Applied Deaf Deaf Studies, as well as various certificate programs, has graduated many deaf students who now find themselves well adjusted to a hearing, working environment. Recently, the Applied Deaf program underwent a curriculum revision to allow the students to specialize either in Multimedia Arts or Entrepreneurial Studies.

The SDEA has also launched new programs in partnership with the National Foundation for the Blind of the Philippines. These programs, along with the creation of new positions and training, are expected to benefit deaf students.

"What I've learned from my deaf colleagues is that they are capable of achieving anything they set their minds to," said a deaf student. "The support and encouragement we receive from our teachers and peers help us to succeed in our studies and careers."