



YOUNG FOCUS ANNUAL REPORT 2015



**YOUNG FOCUS
WOULD LIKE TO
PRESENT THE
ANNUAL
REPORT ON
PROGRAM
ACTIVITIES
FOR 2015**

CONTENT

[2] Intro
Managing Director

[3] Young Focus in a
Nutshell / Student
Education Program

[4] Meet some of our
students

[5] 'Nytlyf' Night
learning

[6] Merit Bazaar /
Meet More Students

[7] Fair Jewelry /
Family Care

[8] 2015 Facts &
Figures

[9] Young Focus
Successes

[10] Social Care
Program / The Bridge
School

[11] Combat
Malnutrition &
Mother's Classes

[12] Young Unlimited

[13] Highlights 2015

[14] Highlights 2015

[15] Young Focus
Info



Two of our college graduates in 2015.

They didn't just graduate but got full-time jobs as well!

"It is encouraging to know that we are not only building their characters and helping them, but in a way they too are helping us see our purpose in life."

- MARK
YoUNGgLI Coordinator

Dear Reader,

Greetings from Manila, the Philippines!

An annual report is usually written a few months after the year has ended. I am writing this introduction with feelings of gratefulness when I look back over 2015, a year with so many changes and challenges as we went through the months. Although it was tough at times, it ended with a lot of excitement for the following year.

In my opinion, some of the most exciting topics we are writing about in this annual report are the achievements of students who graduated from college. Imagine, growing up in the Smokey Mountain area of Manila, then getting the opportunity to receive proper education through Young Focus programs, developing their talents and skills, and participating in a growing workforce in the Philippines!

My wife and I used to work in the Philippines way back in the late eighties and early nineties. Even when students obtained a college education, future opportunities were slim. Right now the economy is growing in the Philippines: the real poor do not benefit much from it, but once they get an education, the doors are open for a 'normal' job. Education is therefore the way to go in this developing country. Young Focus is proud to be part of this.

Young Focus gives education opportunities to young people of all ages: from preschoolers all the way up to college students. In 2015 our vision for early childhood education started to grow and grow. Possibilities were opening up to run a bigger preschool and teaching resources were flooding in through a partnership with a private local school.

It's been a good year. 2015 opened doors to new opportunities. Little did we realize that the outcome would be greater than we could have imagined. As the Young Focus team we are grateful for the accomplishments of the students.

Thanks to all of you who partnered in taking 'our' children a year further on their journey.

Yours,

Paul van Wijgerden
Managing Director & Founder Young Focus



“Writing gives me the opportunity to express my ideas.”
- MERCY (G7)

YOUNG FOCUS IN A NUTSHELL

YOUNG FOCUS HAS 2 MAIN PROGRAMS WITH THE FOCUS ON EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CARE. IN SHORT:

- OUR **STUDENT EDUCATION PROGRAM** PROVIDES EDUCATION AND COACHING FROM ELEMENTARY UP TO COLLEGE AND GIVES SCHOOL DROP-OUTS AN OPPORTUNITY TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL. THROUGH A ‘FAIR TRADE’ TYPE OF PROGRAM, COLLEGE STUDENTS MAKE SOME EXTRA MONEY (THAT HELPS THEM DURING THEIR STUDIES) THROUGH THE MAKING OF JEWELRY.
- OUR **SOCIAL CARE PROGRAM** PROVIDES NUTRITION, TEACHES ON HEALTH & HYGIENE ISSUES, RUNS A CHILD CARE CENTER FOR BABIES THAT ALSO HOUSES A PRESCHOOL. IN ADDITION A NEW PROGRAM FOR STREET YOUTH WAS ADDED AT THE END OF 2015. ‘FAMILY CARE’ SUPPORTS AND COACHES THE PARENTS.

STUDENT EDUCATION PROGRAM

Manila, the capital of the Philippines, has gained attention in terms of its poverty, especially the area of Smokey Mountain in Tondo. This has been the location of several enormous garbage dumps over the last fifty years or so, where many people earn a meager living by scavenging through the garbage.

For the children in these impoverished areas education is the most effective way of giving them a brighter future. However, the finances needed are beyond the reach of many families living in these squatter areas. Young Focus’ sponsorship of children to school offers a solution: Providing education from the day they start school until the day they find a job.

The main objective of the Student Education Program is to give children and young people the opportunity to develop to their full potential at all educational, creative and social skills levels, and to have a job following graduation. Since 2009, more than 700 students have benefited from this program. Through this program, Young Focus provides sponsorship and coaching of elementary, high school and college students. In 2015, Young Focus had a total of 450 students from all levels in school.

Some children start going to school, but then drop out because of different reasons and family circumstances. According to a survey conducted in 2013 by Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey (FLEMMS), one in every ten or about 4 million Filipino children and youth were out-of-school in 2013.



The Young Focus Love2Learn program is for children ages 8 to 14 who are not attending school. For one year the children receive elementary level lessons with the goal of preparing them for the local schools. Every year there are about 25 students in the Love2Learn program. Since 2011, 125 students have benefited from this program. In 2015 another batch of 23 children enrolled in Love2Learn.

MEET SOME OF OUR STUDENTS

'Nikki' (not her real name) is in Grade 3. She started to be sponsored by Young Focus in 2014 as a Grade 1 student. Her grandmother raised her since she was a baby. Her mother did not visit her or take time to look after her.

After seven years, Nikki's mother came back and decided to take care of her. Young Focus wants children like Nikki to develop not only intellectually, but also sees the importance of holistic growth in children through their relationship with their family. Meeting her mother, Nikki was able to express more enthusiasm in her studies. She became more active in school and in the activities of Young Focus. Experiencing how it is to have a mother helped Nikki better pursue her dreams. At a young age, Nikki has been able to develop initiative and leadership skills. In 2015, she received an Academic Award in her class. Despite the absence of her mother in her formative years, Nikki is growing up to be a responsible child with the help of her grandmother and the support of the people in Young Focus. She dreams of being a teacher someday.



"There were some periods of transition in 2015. Thankfully, these new developments gave birth to a stronger team in the Student Education Program. More passionate people in the team meant more goals achieved!"

**- MARIAN
Manager SEP**

From scavenging to dreaming his dreams again, 'Gerry' (not his real name) has gone through many different challenges to realize who he is now.

It was in 2008 that 'Gerry' decided to go back to school. He enrolled himself in school and his parents only found out about it when he started going to school. He was grateful for the moral support that he got from his parents. To support his school needs, 'Gerry' would go with his father who was a scavenger to look for scraps that could be sold to scrap buyers. During this time, he was juggling his studies and his work as a scavenger. It was also during that year that 'Gerry' became part of Young Focus as a sponsored student. Because of his fear of social interaction, 'Gerry' was keen not to participate in any activity at Young Focus. He then realized that if he was not going to face his fear, he would miss out on the opportunities provided by Young Focus. This marked the dramatic turn of events in his life, as 'Gerry' grabbed the chance to develop himself. Not only did 'Gerry' start participating in the activities of Young Focus, he opened himself to being a leader too. In 2009, he was awarded as the 'Student of the Month' and earlier this year he was recognized as the 'Student of the Year.' In this same year, he graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Industrial Education majoring in Computer Education.

'Gerry' showed perseverance going through another trial when his father had a medical condition and 'Gerry' had to stop going to school for a while. He never gave up and he still chose to stand on his dreams. As a student leader, he wants to influence others to persevere despite the challenges that they may face. From a timid young man, 'Gerry' became Young Focus' pride and joy and is now one of the teachers in Young Focus Love2Learn program!

STUDENTS' ACTIVITIES 'NYTLYF' NIGHT LEARNING

Young Focus sponsored students attend local schools, as well as colleges and universities in Manila. When not at school they can make full use of the Student Center, which includes a computer room, library, and several classrooms/workshop rooms.

A team of coordinators, teachers and social workers supervise the students, maintaining contact with their parents and teachers as well. During the week, but mainly on Saturdays, all children have an opportunity to participate in remedial classes, social activities and other events - organized by the coordinators and teachers. One specific event we would like to highlight is called 'Nytlyf'.

Early 2015, the Student Education Program started an evening activity called 'Nytlyf' or night learning at Young Focus.

'Nytlyf' was organized with these objectives: discover hidden talents and abilities that students can use to improve themselves and their community; develop the students' leadership skills and train them to teach others; and encourage students to engage in wholesome activities after school and provide them with a safe place to hang out.

Students from third year high school up to college level are the participants of 'Nytlyf'. There are different clubs they can join, such as 3P's, HIMIG, ACT, Health Unlimited and Move It. These clubs have club leaders.

3P's stands for Pen, Pages and Podium. This club develops students in their reading, writing and speaking skills.

HIMIG is an acronym for Honing and Inspiring Musicians in Greatness. The purpose of this club is to encourage students to enrich their musical talents.

ACT is short for Artists for Communication and Transformation. This club provides students with opportunities to express themselves and develop their personality, confidence and aesthetic sense through theater and multimedia productions.

Move It aims to develop the students' dancing abilities.

Health Unlimited encourages students to pursue a healthy lifestyle through sports and nutrition.

'Nytlyf' has hosted various projects and events such as a dance competition, upcycling drive, math and science fair, debates, and sports tournaments.



'Ynah' is one of the students who has benefited from the activities in 'Nytlyf':

'Nytlyf' helps the students build their leadership skills. Since students are part of the decision making we are able to develop our thought processes and express our ideas. Through the activities in 'Nytlyf', students are more participative in the organization. They see themselves as part of it, that's why they appreciate the sponsorship more. I personally developed the value of selflessness. Because of 'Nytlyf,' I learned not to think of just myself, but as I contribute to the activities in 'Nytlyf' I think of the other students and Young Focus as well."

— 'Ynah', College Graduate



Nytlyf activity: creating fashion from recycled items found in the Smokey Mountain area.

MERIT BAZAAR

Since the setting up of the bazaar, college student 'Pedro' has been an avid participant.

"The 'Merit Bazaar' is an avenue for us students to buy other things that we need, especially school supplies that we lack. I can also buy toys for my nephews and nieces. I find it really motivating and we are more eager to be participative in the life skills and tutorials since we can get points."

- 'Pedro', College Student

"A good teacher does not create his own followers but creates more leaders."

- GERRY
Young Focus graduate



Another activity that the Student Education Program runs is the 'Merit Bazaar.' The idea of this activity is rooted in the desire to motivate the students to attend the tutorials and life skills sessions. For each activity the students attend, they accumulate points, which are then converted to 'Pokus Money' (play money made by Young Focus) to buy things in the bazaar. The students can buy a variety of things in the bazaar such as books, clothes, shoes, school supplies and even toys.



MEET MORE STUDENTS

Writing for some is a hobby, but for 'Mercy' (not her real name) it is something that has developed her self-esteem. 'Mercy' is a Grade 7 student and has been sponsored by Young Focus since she was in Grade 5. She is already 18 years old and is quite a bit older than her classmates. Despite the age gap, she still gets along well with them. Her age hasn't stopped her being active in school. When she was in Grade 6 she got involved in their school publication and participated in an inter-school journalism competition as a feature writer.

Despite experiencing a lot of challenges, from losing their home and living on the streets to, at one point, being forced to stop attending school, Mercy has shown her eagerness to continue her education, as well as her strong desire to graduate from school. For Mercy, being part of Young Focus is the opportunity of a lifetime. She has high hopes that through the sponsorship, she will be able to finish her studies.

'Mercy' continues developing herself through the life skills activities and tutorials she attends at Young Focus. Although she is no longer part of the school publication at her new school, 'Mercy' continues to hone her interest in writing and news. On weekends, she is busy reading books, writing and listening to news. Mercy loves teaching her younger siblings as she dreams of being a teacher in the future.

'Rica' (not her real name) went through our Love2Learn program. When 'Rica' was in Grade 2 her parents decided to stop sending her to school due to financial problems and the difficulties 'Rica' had with reading and catching up with the school lessons. In 2014, she became part of the Love2Learn program and this opened doors for her to go back to school. 'Rica' showed an exemplary attitude in their lessons in Love2Learn. Despite her shy character, she was very industrious in her class and she showed a strong desire to learn. 'Rica' is now enrolled at a local public school and is under Special Education.

From being a shy girl, 'Rica' went on to join competitions in her school. She was involved in inter-school sports activities and even bagged three medals in a badminton event. Change was made possible in the life of 'Rica' because she was given the chance to go back to school!



FAIR JEWELRY

"I am working at Fair Jewelry to help my parents by lightening the burden of our household expenses. Fair Jewelry helps students of Young Focus by giving us opportunities to earn money to cover the extra expenses of our studies. I think all the jewelry I make here is beautiful and it's made with all my effort and heart. I would like to say to anyone buying Fair Jewelry products: "Thank you very much and keep buying."

– 'Marina', college student

In 2015, Fair Jewelry had great opportunities to sell at bazaars which gave us fair sales for the year. It was also our first time to mass-produce bracelets as a corporate giveaway for AXA Philippines.

In addition we had a new photo shoot with our students, modeling for Fair Jewelry. You can see their pictures, together with new jewelry on www.fair-jewelry.org.

The year 2015 was challenging in terms of the availability of materials from our suppliers.

We worked on:

1. Progress in the program
2. Looking for more commitment from our students
3. Planning new products
4. More sales for 2016

FAMILY CARE

Manuel Manarang, Family Care manager reports: "Family Care has been a great help to the beneficiaries, their parents and Young Focus itself. Through this program, parents are more informed about what is happening with their children, and at the same time the organization can support the families in dealing with and resolving their issues. There is better communication among the beneficiaries, their families and Young Focus which makes our approach holistic as an organization."

In 2014, Young Focus started the Family Care program. It gives social support, counseling, training and assistance to all Young Focus parents (the parents or guardians of all beneficiaries).

Tulong Kapamilya (TKAP - Helping Families). This initiative was developed to encourage parents to help themselves and other families when there is an emergency. Willing members of TKAP share an amount of money, which is then saved for future needs (e.g. hospitalization, burials).

To better serve and connect with the communities where we work, Family Care trained parent leaders to be part of the Family Care Area Leaders. These leaders are the arm of Young Focus in disseminating information and news to the community. Young Focus desires to see these leaders further develop their potential and influence other parents to be more participative in the programs and activities of Young Focus.

Parents are also given training sessions using government produced modules about effectiveness of parents in raising children and family development books.



Despite the challenges it faces in terms of transforming the mindset of the parents in a positive way, Family Care continues to grow with the vision of Young Focus — to help the parents recognize the importance of education and to develop their confidence as parents.

Agnes Robles, a parent leader since 2014, has greatly benefited from the training. She oversees 11 parents in the community of Vitas-Katuparan. She has 4 children and, together with her husband who is a factory worker, they support the daily needs of their family. As a family, they are often challenged by financial problems, but through the training Agnes attends she has learned how to effectively budget their money. She is a proud leader of mothers who need support and aims to be a blessing to her community.

2015 FACTS & FIGURES

Student Education Program (SEP)

School Sponsorship Grade 1 - Grade 12 and College	<p>Sponsorship and coaching of elementary, high school and college students. In 2015 Young Focus had 450 students from all levels in this program in the school year 2015/2016. <i>The main objective is to give children and young people the opportunity to develop to their full potential at all educational, creative and social skills levels and to have a job following graduation.</i></p>
Love2Learn	<p>Elementary education for 'out-of-school' children. A total of 23 children went through the program in 2015. <i>The main objective is to motivate, stimulate and encourage children and their parents concerning the importance of education, and to prepare the children for enrolling (again) at a local school.</i></p>
Young Professionals	<p>Young Focus Young Professionals consists of Young Focus college graduates who have successfully completed their education. Young Focus facilitates their initiatives and supports their activities. Actual impact: 75 college graduates (since 2008).</p>
Fair Jewelry	<p>'Fair trade' and job skills training for college students to (financially) support them and their families. A total of 30 enrolled in 2015. <i>The main objective is to ensure that students are able to complete their college education. Students are trained in making jewelry which is sold, thus providing financial support to cover any extra expenses (such as food and transportation costs) during their studies.</i></p>

Social Care Program (SCP)

Child Care	<p>Nutrition and medical care for malnourished babies and toddlers (0-3 yrs old). A total of 20 children. <i>The objective of the Child Care program is to combat malnutrition by providing nutrition and medical care for babies and toddlers. After a certain period these children grow and develop to a certain level and 'graduate' from the program.</i></p>
Child Care PLUS	<p>Nutrition, life skills, play and basic education for preschoolers (3-5 yrs old). A total of 87 children. <i>The main objective of the Child Care PLUS is to provide a quality early childhood care program which helps the child's social/emotional, physical and cognitive development and prepares them for elementary education.</i></p>
Combat Malnutrition	<p>Nearly 150 children receive a daily nutritious meal from Combat Malnutrition when they are in class. The program adds teaching on nutrition of all mothers, as well as daily training for a specific group mothers who participate in the 'Nutrition Core Team'. <i>The objective of Combat Malnutrition is to eliminate malnutrition and promote healthy nutrition, also educating mothers on nutrition and on how to cook nutritious meals within a specified budget.</i></p>
Family Care	<p>'Family Care' gives social support, counseling, training and assistance to all Young Focus parents (the parents of all children and students) to enhance their individual and collective well-being, also helping them develop their skills and their ability to resolve (family) problems. Family Care served more than 600 families in 2015. <i>The objective is to empower parents with skills, confidence and knowledge on how to run a family, how to be good parents and deal with difficult issues mostly caused by poverty.</i></p> <p>N.B. In the programs Combat Malnutrition and Family Care, Young Focus gives health education, training/ teaching the parents on hygiene, health, and family planning.</p>
YoUNgLI (Young Unlimited)	<p>'Young Unlimited' is a program that specifically focuses on teenagers and young adults who have not had any proper education at all. Young Focus however believes that these youth have 'unlimited' potential. The program provides life skills training, job training, coaching, education and sports. Young Unlimited has its own center which functions as a hang-out place and training center. <i>The objective is to recapture their passion for education, discovering their talents and developing their skills, opening up a more promising future. Number of participants starting in December 2015: 27</i></p>



ALTHOUGH YOUNG FOCUS SPONSORS CHILDREN TO THE LOCAL SCHOOLS, ITS SUCCESS IS DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE EXTRA SERVICES FOR ALL PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES. THESE EXTRA SERVICES ARE NEEDED TO PROVIDE A HOLISTIC APPROACH FOR EACH BENEFICIARY: BESIDES THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT YOUNG FOCUS PROGRAMS PROVIDE FOR THE DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN OF SMOKEY MOUNTAIN'S SLUM COMMUNITIES, YOUNG FOCUS ALSO COACHES THE CHILDREN INDIVIDUALLY WHENEVER THE NEED ARISES. YOUNG FOCUS OFFERS TUTORIALS, LIFE SKILLS TRAINING AND SEMINARS ON A VARIETY OF TOPICS TO EMPOWER THE CHILDREN FOR THE FUTURE. YOUNG FOCUS HAS FACILITIES INCLUDING CLASSROOMS, A COMPUTER ROOM, A LIBRARY AND RECREATIONAL AREAS. FOR THE ONES IN EXTRA NEED YOUNG FOCUS PROVIDES NUTRITIOUS MEALS AND TEACHES THEIR PARENTS HOW TO MAKE HEALTHY MEALS WITHIN THEIR BUDGET. THERE IS ALSO TEACHING ON HEALTH, HYGIENE, CARE FOR THE FAMILY AND FAMILY PLANNING. ON TOP OF THIS, COLLEGE STUDENTS WHO NEED SOME EXTRA PESOS TO BUY THEIR LUNCH AND PAY FOR TRANSPORTATION, ARE PART OF A FAIR TRADE TYPE PROGRAM TO MAKE SOME EXTRA MONEY.

SOCIAL CARE PROGRAM

PARTNERSHIP WITH THE BRIDGE SCHOOL

In 2013, Young Focus started providing education to little children from ages 4 - 6 through the program Child Care PLUS (CC+). It aims to provide a high quality early childhood care program helping the child's social/emotional, physical and cognitive development. The program started with thirty children in a center within the squatter community of Sitio Damayan (aka Smokey Mountain 2).



At the end of school year 2014/2015 Child Care PLUS had 20 students moving up to grade 1 elementary school. In school year 2015/2016 Young Focus accepted 70 children. At the end of 2015 the vision grew to enrol more than 300 children for the next school year.

In 2014, the number of children we were helping increased to forty. Unfortunately, the center burnt down in a bad fire and then, although it was rebuilt, a few months later, the whole community was demolished by the local government. Young Focus faced a challenge on where to continue the program. For months, CC+ was temporarily running in the Student Center. In November 2014, through a partnership with the local government, an old wet market area was provided to Young Focus as a space for the new CC+ Center. The construction of the new center opened doors for more than 70 children to be part of the program.

In 2015, even greater things happened in the program as the number of children increased to one hundred and eighteen. It was also this year when CC+ looked further into its curriculum and its effectiveness among the children. The vision of Child Care prompted the need to move from traditional teaching into a more progressive and fun way of learning. With the help of The Bridge School, CC+ was able to implement this approach in September 2015.

The Bridge School is a private, co-educational childhood learning center modeled on standards of developmentally

appropriate educational practises as set by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), USA. According to the Social Care Program Manager Ann Ragudo it has been a great partnership since the teachers of The Bridge are all approachable and are willing to share their expertise to further develop and improve CC+. We have seen the progress among our children and the satisfaction of our teachers in observing their students learn while enjoying themselves despite their challenging background.

“The progressive approach of teaching is effective in terms of the academic learning of the children. The children are learning more because they are given the opportunity to explore the areas they are interested through activities and games.”

— Theresa
CC+ Teacher

‘Andrew’ (not his real name) started in CC+ in 2014 and is still part of the program to date. Prior to the progressive-approach, ‘Andrew’ was very quiet and didn’t like to mingle with other children. But since the change of curriculum, he has been able to develop his skills at his own pace. He has started taking the initiative during the lessons and his social interaction has clearly improved.

Child Care PLUS continues to progress and is expecting expansion by 2016 as Young Focus partners with a Hong Kong based NGO called Firetree. The goal is to have three hundred and eighty children in the program. Young Focus will hire a Head teacher and many new teachers to implement the development of the program.



COMBAT MALNUTRITION AND MOTHERS' CLASSES

Children living in squatter areas run the risk of becoming malnourished . Malnutrition is caused by poor or insufficient food, sickness and a lack of hygiene. If a child has a quick succession of diarrhea attacks, for example, and this is in combination with poor nutrition, then the child can lose weight very rapidly.

Young Focus started a feeding program to battle the dilemma that the community we are working in is dealing with. Despite this initiative, there still seemed to be insufficient progress in the development of the children in terms of nutrition.



In 2013, Young Focus made a radical improvement to the feeding program through the setting up of the Combat Malnutrition Program. A Training Needs Analysis (TNA) was first conducted and it was determined that the kind of food given to the children was not nutritious enough and that the end goal was not being met. Training was given to the staff by our volunteer nutritionist to address this problem.

In 2014, Young Focus strengthened the Combat Malnutrition program even more through the involvement of volunteer mothers. The goal was to continue the nutritional development in their own homes. Additionally, an improved menu was created and these meals were also

taught to the mothers participating in the program. In the latter part of 2014, there were twenty mothers who enrolled as volunteers, thirteen remained and eight applied to be official volunteers in the program. These eight mothers became the Core Team of the Combat Malnutrition program.

In 2015, the Social Care Program developed the mothers' classes to supplement the Combat Malnutrition program. Our volunteer nutritionist conducted consecutive training sessions on proper food handling, meal budgeting and nutrition. Through this, relationships were built and the mothers were monitored on what they were doing in their homes, being accountable to see if they were improving in becoming better parents. This also involved character building among the mothers. In 2015, a Combat Malnutrition Chef was also hired.

"To be the Combat Malnutrition Chef is an opportunity to grow because it is my passion. I am happy that I am able to help the mothers. Having the Core Team is a good way to help the mothers since by helping they can have rice and meals for their families and they are learning about nutritious meals."

— Jacquilane Gigaquit,
Combat Malnutrition Chef

The Core Team of Combat Malnutrition is the first group that was trained on different topics about nutrition and family. Edalyn is one of the mothers who has benefited from this program.

"Before being part of Combat Malnutrition, I was really shy but through the lessons and training we had, I was able to build my self confidence. I am also happy to share the knowledge I got from the training on topics like breastfeeding and cooking nutritious meals. I can say that this program has been successful so far because it not only gives the opportunity to kids to have nutritious meals, but also helps mothers in the community."

— Edalyn

"What was imparted to the mothers was not about nutrition alone. The mothers got a new perspective in terms of relating to other people. Physically the mothers also changed; they learned how to be more comfortable with themselves and confidently present themselves."

— Ann Ragudo,
SCP Manager



Young Focus has been running an out-of-school youth program called 'Love2Learn' which caters to children ages 8-13 years old. The development of this program led to another, which involves 'street youth' in the community who have dropped out of school - either elementary or high school. On December 17, 2015 we had our first event.

Young Focus believes that these youth have 'unlimited' potential. The program provides life skills training, job training, coaching, education and sports. Young Unlimited has its own center that functions as a hang-out place and training center.

Eighteen teenagers were invited to the YoUNgLI (Young Unlimited) center on Road 10 as an initial introduction to what the program is all about. Our YoUNgLI Coordinator together with our Social Care Program manager conducted a series of interviews and counseling sessions with these teenagers together with their families. Their parents were also given an orientation about the program to create partnership and relationship with them.

These teenagers come from challenging backgrounds: working as scavengers, sniffing solvent, caught up in various vices like smoking, and living with struggling families. The initial weeks of

the program evolved through getting to know them better and providing them with a new environment and company.

YoUNgLI's goal is to unleash the unlimited potential of these teenagers through various activities and to give them the opportunity to pursue, either by going back to formal school or enrolling in a vocational class of their interest.

Some of the initial activities in YoUNgLI include;

"Rock and Role" — the participants' roles in the program were explained. They were encouraged to speak of their interests and what they expect from the program.

"Bakit di ka Crush ng Crush mo?" (Why doesn't my crush like me?) — this activity focused on proper hygiene and grooming. Coming from surroundings where scavenging is common, the

participants were less concerned about their physical appearance. The goal of the activity was to encourage them to take care of themselves and take the initiative to be more presentable and confident.

Although this initiative started at the end of 2015, many plans were made for 2016. The program will have regular lessons on basic English and mathematics, basic computer knowledge, art and drawing skills, as well as music and dance activities.

The goal is to enroll as many as possible in local schools in June 2016 and invite more youngsters from the area to participate. Mark, the coordinator from YoUNgLI is aware that it will be challenging as he knows that these youngsters are often addicted to sniffing solvents. However he is looking forward to creating the opportunities that will impact their lives and their future.

HIGHLIGHTS 2015

SCHOOL RENOVATIONS IN PANAY

Continuation of school building renovations after typhoon Haiyan in November 2013: Manuel and Paul spearheaded four more inaugurations of school buildings repaired through Young Focus. According to Paul, more than one and a half years after typhoon Haiyan most of the schools had been repaired on Panay, though some still struggle with not enough classrooms. Young Focus encountered makeshift classrooms with more than 50 children, simply because repairs were still going on or there was a lack of classrooms altogether. However, it was a time of celebration, enjoying seafood, performances, speeches and building friendships with hundreds of children who now have their classrooms back.

MICROSOURCING CAREERS PROGRAM

A group of Young Focus graduated college students went through a special course called MicroSourcing's Careers for Disadvantaged Youth Program. This Careers Program is an impact sourcing initiative that promotes responsible outsourcing and gives employment opportunities to unemployed youth from Manila's poorest districts.

"I would like to say a special thank you to MicroSourcing for this wonderful experience. May you continue to help other people like us and believe that every dream is possible. Of course, we all look forward to working with you, but even if that is not what God wants for us, then we will still all make sure that we use whatever we have learned here and will never forget this experience. To everybody here, thank you for not just being our co-workers but also our family." - Marielle, College graduate.

Our partnership with MicroSourcing gives our graduates an opportunity to be equipped with important BPO skills that will help them secure long-term job opportunities. Some of the students who went through this program are now working with MicroSourcing. Others have found a job elsewhere.

GROEVENBEEK STUDENT EXCHANGE

Four Students and two of our staff - Ann and Grace - had a great experience in the Netherlands. This trip was made possible through the exchange program of the Dutch high school Groevenbeek. The school has been partnering very closely with Young Focus. They also sponsor a number of students from high school all the way to college.

One of the students who was part of the exchange program shares, "I was able to experience the cool weather in the Netherlands. I enjoyed talking to the Dutch people even if I had a hard time speaking in English. It was a great opportunity to see a different country and experience a different culture." The tremendous impact on the two student exchange programs (2013 and 2015), has now been researched and documented in a thesis.



SUMMER CAMP 2015

Through the sponsorship of Verizon we organized an amazing camp for all our high school and college students, as well as the college graduates/Young Professionals. More than 200 students, staff, volunteers and visitors enjoyed a 3-day sports camp at an American style ranch in Batangas. It was a superb time for all the students who enjoyed activities like basketball, badminton and softball.

STUDENT CENTER & CHILD CARE CENTER ADJUSTMENTS

As our numbers of sponsored children grow we often run out of available classrooms at our Student Center. The idea came up to turn our top floor into two classrooms. With sliding walls we would still be able to create one big area whenever the need arises. Our local partner Cebuana Lhuillier visited us and donated enough funds to start this new adventure of making sliding walls and the construction of a ceiling. More adjustments in the center were scheduled for 2016.

Our Child Care Center needed a fresh coat of paint and British School Manila (BSM) needed a place for community service... A win-win situation! We had an amazing crowd of sixty-five BSM students and staff busy with paintbrushes and rollers. Besides receiving a new coat of paint, a ceiling has also been constructed in the Child Care Center.

2015 CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

We celebrated Christmas through different parties with all our beneficiaries from the slum communities. In addition to reflecting on the true meaning of Christmas, Young Focus also distributed bayong (native) bags with food and Christmas goodies. Our local partners provided toys and school materials for the younger kids. During the parties many games were enjoyed as this is a local tradition for any true Filipino Christmas celebration!

Besides the parties of our different programs, for the first time the parents of the children had a special Christmas parents celebration. There was also a musical for all students and elementary parents performed by students from Love2Learn, elementary, high school and college. Our theme for all of the celebrations was: 'Give a Gift that Grows this Christmas' - focusing on care, commitment and love for each other within the family, rather than just focusing on presents.



YOUNG FOCUS INFO



Organization

Name & address of organization	Young Focus for Education & Development Foundation, Inc. 284 Dayao Street, Balut, Tondo, 1013 Manila, the Philippines
Contact person / position	Paul J. van Wijgerden / Managing Director
Telephone	+63 358 48 22
Mobile	+63 (0)9-7781-0-6681
Email	info@youngfocus.org
Websites	www.youngfocus.org / www.facebook.com/youngfocus.org / www.fair-jewelry.org
Date of establishment	December 28, 2007
Bank account	BPI (Bank of the Philippine Islands), Navotas Account no.: 4651-0036-58 / BIC/SWIFT code: BOPIPHMM

History

Young Focus International was initiated in the Netherlands in 1992 to finance the education of young people living on the garbage dump (Smokey Mountain) in Manila. This was initially achieved through a partnership with a local organization in the Philippines. In December 2007 Young Focus International established itself in the Philippines with a new independent local entity: Young Focus for Education and Development (aka Young Focus = YF). This entity allowed Young Focus International to build on the successes of the previous partnership but drive the development of our programs further.

YF's programs grew to include not only the sponsorship of students through the local schooling system but also the provision of supplementary education to build confidence, equip with life skills (including but not limited to: soft skills, English and computer lessons), as well as better opportunities for further education and better job prospects.

Over the following few years a more social approach was developed to set up holistic training and coaching programs for students and parents.

Legal Structures

Charitable organization: Registered & licensed as social welfare and development agency to implement Community-Based Programs and Services for Disadvantaged Children, their Families and Communities by the DSWD (Department of Social Welfare and Development - Reg. no. SWD-SB-A- 001358-2015

Board: Paul van Wijgerden / President (Interim) / Managing Director, Young Focus, Loreto Jose Dapon Jr / CFO / Lawyer, Elizabeth Yu / Corporate Secretary / Businesswoman, Sunil L Bharwani / Member / Pastor of Church Simplified, Karen Weber / Member / Business Consultant

Accreditations, affiliations & partnerships

- *Accredited by Department of Social Welfare & Development (DSWD)*
- *Member of Education Cluster:* (initiative developed by YF to collaborate with other education NGO's in the area to). The other members of the initiative include: Purple Centre Foundation (PCF), Education Research & Development Assistance (ERDA), Self Reliance & Development Konkokyo Center, Gawad Kalinga

Partnerships: Partners for Technical Assistance/Collaboration, Department of Social Welfare & Development, National Nutrition Council, Local health centers (Vitas Health Center, Smokey Mountain Health Center & Posadas Health Center), Likhaan Center for Women's Health – provision of training to the mothers of our students, ENFANCE Foundation – provision of financial seminars for the parents of our students, British School Manila – provision of funding, exposure experiences and provision of extracurricular activities, International School Manila – Saturday Service Learning for YF students & exposure experiences, The Bridge School – curriculum development for Child Care PLUS (preschool), volunteer of skills, teacher training, A variety of local elementary, high schools and colleges where our students receive their formal education

Development/Funding Partners: Young Focus International, the Netherlands, Firetree Asia

Volunteer Sending Partners: Young Focus International, the Netherlands: U! Happy Events – Volunteering agency for volunteering with Children in the Philippines: AIESEC De La Salle University,

Partners - Philippines: AXA, Microsourcing, Messy Bessy, Verizon, Church Simplified, Cebuana L'Huillier, The Bridge School Paranaque City, International School Manila, British School Manila, Manila Cub Scouts Pack #351, KLM Philippines, Makulay, Messy Bessy, Smash Balloon, U! Happy Events, AIESEC, Project Pearls, PCF */// Germany:* Esther & Silvias Dornier Stiftung */// The Netherlands:* Intracare, Groevenbeek, Milieu Service, Young Focus support groups in Canada and in England at the ACS International School Cobham, and many others!



Young Focus
284 Dayao Street, Balut, Tondo
1013 Manila
the Philippines
+63 358 48 22

info@youngfocus.org

www.youngfocus.org / www.facebook.com/youngfocus.org

www.fair-jewelry.org