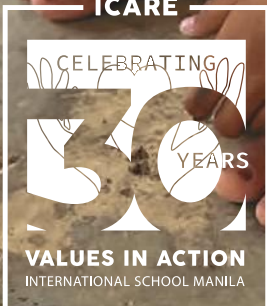


VALUES IN ACTION

International Community Actively Responding to the Environment

ICARE 1993-2023
30th Year Anniversary Edition

Integrity
Service
Merit



ISM

International School Manila



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SUPERINTENDENT

Celebrating thirty years of dedication to community service through experiential learning is a fabulous milestone for any school to enjoy. I well remember my first year as the ISM High School (HS) Principal (2007–2008), when my executive assistant dropped the bombshell that my role as HS Principal also involved organizing ICARE. I quickly realized the multitude of moving parts and the logistical minefield that it can become, but of course the effort is all worthwhile when you see the quality of interactions that abound throughout the program. To see ISM students interacting with their community, often local students, who are enjoying activities planned and executed by ISM students, is an absolute highlight of each and every year.

Fortunately, I discovered that Mr. Neil Woods had skills in this area, and he became my natural successor. As the saying goes, the rest is now history. Mr. Woods has taken the program and evolved it further into a world-class program envied and copied by many. ISM's commitment to service has never wavered, and I feel so proud to be part of celebrating its 30th anniversary.

William Brown
Superintendent



ICARE PIONEERS

ICARE started as a classroom project.

A Community Service Project had been a requirement for Vicky Huang's Philippine History class for many years. In 1995 she asked me to help her champion the idea of making this a HS wide requirement. We discussed this idea at length, prepared a pitch for the school, and ICARE was born.

In the beginning it was just Vicky and myself. We wanted to extend Community Service beyond the walls of the school so that students could experience service and a glimpse of life wherever the service took them. We referred to this as Service Learning.

We wanted to integrate the concept of classrooms without walls. We were certainly referencing Médecins Sans Frontières though humbly and to a much less but more attainable measure for HS students.

Long story short, it worked and ICARE is now a traditional project at ISM.

After I retired Vicky asked Nanette Nadora to take over and ICARE continued to grow and mature.

Vicky and I are not really pioneers but concept bearers of sorts. A pioneer is one of the first people to do something: Neither Vicky nor I were the first people to think of Community Service. It was already there and what we did was tweak it to what we called Service Learning.

Corazon Valles / Vicky Huang / Nanette Nadora
ICARE Pioneers

Releasing Olive Ridley's at dawn on the beach in Bataan, painting murals filled with the handprints of happy learners on coastal Iloilo, screaming through the obstacle course with children in a Zambales field, organizing a Christmas carnival for students at the dusty base of Mount Pinatubo in Tarlac, planting rice, mixing cement, playing games, building desks, creating art... our Bearcats do it all on ICARE. Whether in Metro Manila or in the province, ICARE gives students a chance to explore Filipino community and culture in an authentic and experiential manner. The learning that occurs on these trips helps students develop collaboration skills, opens eyes to new perspectives, and bolsters problem solving abilities. And, the joyful community building and memory making that occurs on these trips lasts forever. For 30 years, ICARE has remained a special week when we work hard, give back, and have fun. We are grateful for the amazing communities who have welcomed ISM over the years, for the intrepid chaperones who lead their students, for the students willing to get out of their comfort zone and get dirty, and for the CAS Office that organizes it all, you have left an indelible mark on the soul of the Bearcat Nation!

Andrea M. Thompson
High School Assistant Principal

I am an educator because I strongly believe that a school must prepare students for the world, whilst showing the world how it should be. For me, everything good and valuable can be found in a single journey through a great school.

Art, music, science, dance, sports, and literature are experienced in a short walk through the ISM campus. Every day you will witness smiling teachers, the chitter-chatter of excited students, the explosion of color in the art rooms, and the cheers in the gyms. In great schools, students are nurtured, encouraged, and flourish. The values we espouse, such as our commitment to fairness, equity, honesty, tolerance, and respect are developed. Through the diversity of opportunities, world-class facilities, dedicated educators, and a positive and productive environment, ISM students experience an incredible education that prepares them for the world.

It is through this lens of what schools can and should strive to be that we view ISM's commitment to service. At the heart of service is the heart. The emotional connection defines the human experience. Great schools encourage students' emotional growth through authentic experience, deep human connection and agency. It is the belief that there is more that unites us than divides us, and that through, understanding, interaction, and application we can all flourish. ISM students have the skills, resources, and the need to support those in our community, and through these interactions, everyone can grow, be more empathetic, understand issues more deeply, and shape a positive future for the Philippines.

Neil H. Woods
CAS and Activities Coordinator/
Director of Service Learning



**HIGH SCHOOL
ASSISTANT
PRINCIPAL**



**CAS AND ACTIVITIES
COORDINATOR**

**DIRECTOR OF
SERVICE LEARNING**

ICARE

INTRODUCTION

International Community Actively Responding to the Environment (ICARE) is a wonderful experience for all high school students, allowing students to contribute positively to their community, the environment, and learn more about the Philippines and Filipino culture. ICARE embodies many of the school's aims and Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS) requirements.

The school offers both Metro Manila and provincial sites for four days in December. Over the four years in High School, where possible, a student will attend four different sites, experience a wide range of activities and work with many different students. ICARE encourages students to move out of their comfort zone and accept new challenges.



BOTOLAN AETA
FARMING COMMUNITY 2023



Heads Hearts Hands

ICARE A.L.O.T
2023

Increase awareness
of oneself, the
Philippines and
Filipino Culture



Engage in Issues of Global
Importance, such as
building houses, working
with marginalized people or
understanding and
responding to
environmental impact

Consider the ethical
implications of their
actions, such as
reflecting upon own
motivations and impact
upon ICARE partner

Develop new skills, such as
learning how to build and /
or paint, prepare lesson
plans, teach and care for
children with special
needs; thus, breaking
down social barriers

Plan and initiate
activities, such as
preparing lessons,
organizing work teams,
preparing reflection
sessions

Undertake new
challenges, such as
building, trekking,
interacting with
children, teaching

Show perseverance
and commitment,
such as building,
painting or digging
for a sustained
period of time

Work collaboratively, such as
working well with students
from different grades and
cultures, outside of the usual
friendship groups



PAPAYA ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL 2023

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



4 QUALITY EDUCATION



During the 2022 Bataan site project, ISM students provided educational support to local students.





ICARE SDGs

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) outline 17 interconnected global objectives to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all by 2030. These goals encompass vital issues such as poverty eradication, quality education, healthcare, gender equality, renewable energy, responsible consumption, and climate action. They serve as a universal roadmap for collective action toward a more sustainable and equitable future.

Our approach at ICARE is to seamlessly integrate the UN SDGs. Utilizing the SDGs, students pinpoint the predominant issues at their project sites and align them with the relevant SDGs. This alignment guides the creation of projects and action plans tailored to address the specific challenges identified at each site.

14 LIFE BELOW WATER



At the 2022 Bataan site, ISM students engaged in learning about the nurturing of sea turtles, exploring their habitat and understanding the environmental factors impacting their growth.



11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



At Bataan site 2023, the ISM community actively contributed to the construction of tables for the conservation center, exemplifying their commitment to sustainable communities.

ISM students enhanced their understanding of farming through hands-on experience at La Union Lotus Farm.



13 CLIMATE ACTION



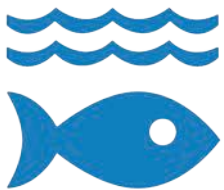


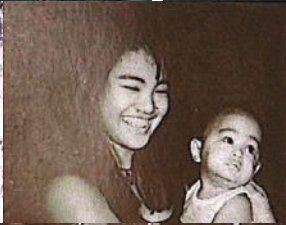
12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



Subic Aeta community, one of the last remaining indigenous tribes in the Philippines, imparted their ancestral wisdom to ISM students, showcasing traditional cooking methods utilizing natural resources.

14 LIFE BELOW WATER



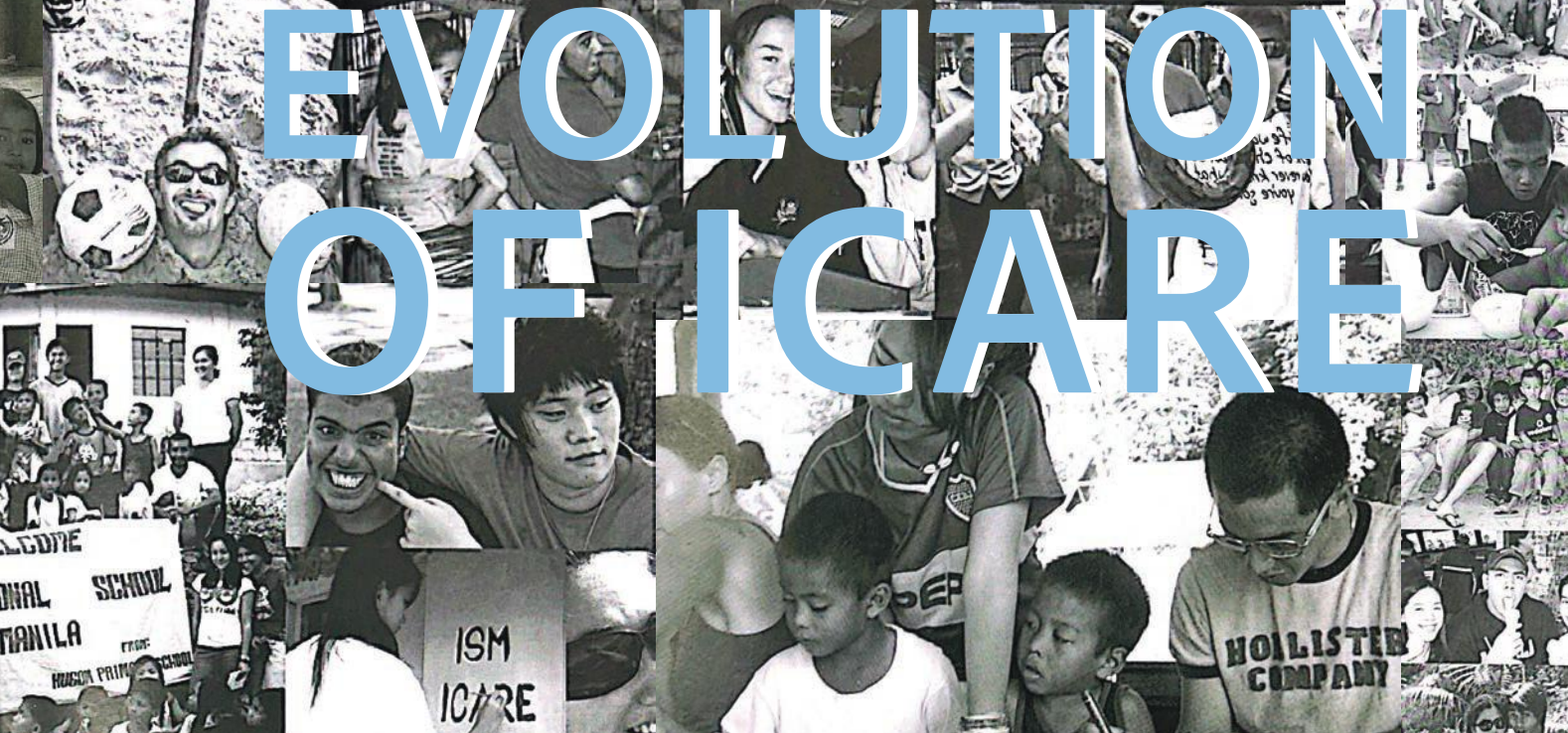


CONCERT
TOUR
'07





EVOLUTION OF ICARE





ICARE NOW

2020 2021 2022 2023 ...



31 Sites



832 Students



THE BIRTH OF ICARE

1993 1994 1995 1996



ICARE originated from a classroom initiative that began as a community service project in Vicky Huang's Philippine History class. The pioneers behind this endeavor, including Vicky Huang, Corazon Valles, and Nanette Nadora, sought to elevate community service beyond the campus walls. Their goal was to provide students with an immersive experience, allowing them to engage in service activities and gain insights into life outside the school environment, which is referred to as Service Learning.

The concept resonated with a whole generation of high school students who embraced projects that ventured beyond the familiar surroundings of ISM. This marked the inception of ICARE, signifying a commitment to proactive engagement and responsiveness in addressing community and environmental needs.



DAVID TOZE
Former Superintendent



Every year I used to meet with small groups of new parents, usually in the AMR Hall and in the first month of the school year, to introduce them to their new school and to outline our values and principles.

I would talk to them about the extraordinary teaching and learning, the academic results and college entries, the sport and drama and music and all the myriad activities their children would enjoy, but always I would conclude with the most compelling element of our co-curricular program: Service Learning.

"Giving back" is at the heart of our program even for the smallest children at ISM, but it is in High School that it reaches its apotheosis in the Saturday Service program and in ICARE. And when I talk about this to those new parents, some of them raise their eyes at the cost to the school in terms of resources and time and

energy. And this is how I answered those unspoken questions:

"It's easy for a family to come here from overseas for a two or three-year posting, to live in the city and then, after their tour of duty is done, to go back home and say, 'We've seen the Philippines.'

I lived there for twenty-four years in total – twenty-one years in Manila and three in Baguio. It is my second home, and I love the country. It is a land of contrasts, and outside the bubble of BGC there is a real and pervading deprivation. The difficult truth is that many Filipinos live in poverty."

"Our Service Learning program doesn't completely resolve this problem in the Philippines. But it does show those people trapped in that poverty cycle that there are others who care and who are willing to try to do something – anything – to bring some light in their lives."



02



03

"The bigger beneficiaries, though, are the students themselves – in what they take away from this experience. I've read hundreds of college essays in my time as Superintendent, and so many feature at their heart stories of their ICARE trips and Service Learning projects. And when I meet alumni at reunions around the world, you can bet their reminiscences aren't about learning how to solve quadratic equations or challenging each other to remember the date of the Treaty of Brest Litovsk. They talk about the things they did, the fun they had – and those trips they made where they learned about the real Philippines, where they enjoyed the camaraderie of working together in a world beyond their own."

And this is how I used to conclude with those new parents in the AMR Hall:

"The fact is we don't do this out of any desire to proselytize. We do it, in part, because we know that many, many of our graduates will go onto positions of significant leadership. They will be decision-makers – whether in this

- 01 RURAL RISING 2022
- 02 MAD TRAVEL SUBIC 2023
- 03 RURAL RISING 2023

country or anywhere else in the world. And what we hope, when they come to make those life-changing decisions, be they political or economic or commercial or technical, is that they bear in mind those people whom they served back in their ISM days and make sure that the choices they make are ones that benefit everyone and not simply a privileged elite."

Service Learning is at the heart of what we do at ISM: INTEGRITY, SERVICE, MERIT.



2013

ANDREA M. THOMPSON High School Assistant Principal ESTANCIA

The morning of November 7th, 2013 in Southern Luzon was bright and sunny and while we wondered why school was canceled, vicious Pacific storms brewed, heading for the Visayas. Typhoon Yolanda (internationally named Haiyan) was the first Super Typhoon to hit the Philippines and one of the deadliest in Philippines history. While our archipelago is used to its share of typhoons, Visayans didn't know what to expect with Yolanda. With power outages and cell towers down many people across the country waited to hear about the whereabouts of their families in the Visayas. One of those people frantically waiting was ISM Security Guard Crizenda (Criz) Lanirez. With her two young daughters living in Iloilo and no way to communicate with her family, she was scared for their lives. Thankfully with the help of Security and Operations at ISM, she found a way home to her little fishing village called Estancia on the east coast of Iloilo.

Upon arrival, Criz found her children and family safe, but as for the town and her children's school, that was a different story. Houses and businesses were smashed, the city's fishing boats decimated, and Estancia Central Elementary school all but flattened. This school, with a large and lovely campus, serves over 2000 children in the area and is also home to the town's biggest evacuation shelter. So during the storm thousands converged in the covered basketball court for shelter, hoping for safety. But when nearly 300 mile per hour winds hit, the shelter began to sway and residents

realized the roof wasn't going to hold. Suddenly, the evacuation center had to be evacuated, and just as it was cleared, the roof crashed in and the facility was destroyed.

When the winds abated and the sun shone again, there was much work to be done, and when Criz returned to Manila to tell us this tale of destruction, ISM wanted to help. Six months later in May of 2014 we sent a delegation of students and administrators to Estancia to see how we could support the elementary school. When the decision was made to raise funds to rebuild the ruined evacuation center and kindergarten classrooms, our Bearcat community, at home and abroad, flooded in. After raising hundreds of thousands of pesos the ISM Disaster Relief Fund, in conjunction of other international donors, was able to rebuild a strong and sound covered court and evacuation center and beautiful new Kindergarten classrooms.

In December of 2014 Estancia Central Elementary School became an official ICARE site, and after our initial trip was scuppered by yet another typhoon, our first ICARE crew of students and teachers jumped on a plane in June 2015 to assess the needs of the community. We were shocked when we got there. The town and school were still recovering over a year after the storm. Skeletons of classrooms had become dumping grounds for rubble. The gardens were entirely wiped out. The sprawling school field was still covered in makeshift tent-classrooms. The school needed love, and for the following seven years, physically and then virtually, Bearcat love it received!

We first focused on beautification efforts; gardens of vegetables and rows of calamansi trees were planted; a mural featuring local animals was painted; classroom walls were whitewashed; and, art lessons for the Kindergartners in their new classrooms were delivered with laughter. The following years saw more of the same joy. Annually ISM students worked with Principal Gerry Tingson,



Classroom Turnover

2014

using his learning goals for the year to create lessons for students and a theme for a new mural. Students also partnered with teachers to learn what their students needed and tailored lessons, games, and projects to those needs. We continued to plant more and more, replenishing the lost green landscape and we continued to paint classrooms brighter each year. Overtime we painted a vibrant library and filled it with book donations, fixed up the school Health Center and the Nutrition Center, sourced new bins for trash separation and recycling, turned 60 desks into left-handed desks, and donated new water tanks for proper water collection. One special year, we flew Criz and her daughters with us so they could return home for the first time since Yolanda.

Every year we brought gifts to the kids to promote collaboration and activity, such as a huge twister tarp for life-size play and new soccer goals and equipment, but the best gift was replacing the basketball hoops. In this basketball nation, no town is complete without hoops, so a group of ISM students made the basketball court their CAS project and raised funds for two new standing, moveable hoops, and myriad of basketballs. After the nearly impossible task of getting these hoops – which were in pieces in huge boxes – on the plane and finding transport on Iloilo to get them to Estancia, the boys assembled the bases, poles, backboards, hoops, and nets. The crowd watching them toil grew during the day and the news of the hoops rampantly spread. By dusk the hoops were erected and placed in their proper home – a gorgeous, and supertyphoon-strong, covered basketball court and evacuation center – and the court was filled with hundreds shooting hoops as the sun set.

Fast forward to December 2019, the last time students took the flight to Iloilo: the school is lush, students eat the gardens' fresh veggies and fruits daily, the classrooms are fixed, and rubble is gone, it's simply a lovely provincial school filled with learning and laughter. Through the ICARE program, we built strong relationships over time with the students, teachers, and administration; we mentored them as they mentored us and the community flourished.



The Gym and Evacuation Center

Herbal Garden and Mural



Crew 2017



Mural



2015

2016

2017

2018

ICARE IN ACTION FACULTY VOICE

THOMAS ANDREW CALLAGHAN

In her collection of essays, *The Empathy Exams*, Leslie Jamison seeks out people with whom she has little in common - sufferers of mysterious illnesses, addicts, extreme athletes, doctors - and writes about them in an attempt to explore the limits of our ability to empathize. Jamison ultimately realizes the limits of our ability to establish proximity with those so different from us, but, importantly, she finds value in the attempt. Through the attempt we test and build our own capacities, find limits within ourselves and, hopefully, emerge knowing ourselves and others a bit better.

In going to Nueva Ecija Girls' Home for ICARE I like to think that ISM students and faculty engage in a similar sort of immersive empathy; in material terms, we come from very different backgrounds than the Nueva Ecija girls, but from the moment the ISM students arrive there is an immediate frisson - the excitement of meeting

new people melts away whatever differences exist between the kids. Over the next 3 days, our students dive headlong into their own attempts to connect with others and build their own capacities for connection and understanding.

This year ISM students planted gardens, delivered seminars to the girls on matters of health and wellness, performed maintenance on the girls' dormitories and provided the girls of Nueva Ecija with school supplies and Christmas gifts and in so doing, left the girls' home a little bit better than they found it. In talking to the girls during our time there, they had fond memories of former ISM students who had visited and, likewise, several ISM students made return visits this year to rekindle relationships and do meaningful work for people who need it.

I have been proud to be part of this ICARE trip for the past two years and to have had the opportunity to participate in and witness mutually valuable work and human interactions that, I hope, will last a lifetime.



PATRICK HILLMAN

For each of the fourteen years I have been at ISM, ICARE has been a standout highlight. Engaging with communities both provincial and in Manila has been one of the most rewarding aspects of my time at the school. I know this is also the case for many other teachers and students. Building lasting relationships through ICARE has been a profound way to connect with children and adults from different communities. The collaborative approach embraced by ISM and its partners fosters empathy, understanding, and a shared sense of community that transcends social boundaries and creates lasting memories. My first ICARE site was with Baguio Bethesda School. Accompanied by

thirty ISM students, we traveled overnight to spend three precious days with young children (many of whom were orphaned) and their amazing teachers. We helped paint dormitories, prepare concrete for a bathroom block and joined the children for various arts, crafts and sporting activities. Bonds were quickly built and many tears were shed from both the children at Bethesda and ISM students on our departure. This wonderful introduction to the fantastic ICARE program was just the beginning. I have also visited the Stairway Foundation, Bahay Tuluyan Laguna, RED, Makabata, Papaya Academy and CJ Learning. We were warmly welcomed and embraced into their community at all of these places like family. ICARE truly is a life-changing experience for many involved and continues to be one of the great achievements of ISM.



- 01 PHILIPPINE INST. FOR THE DEAF (PID) 2023
- 02 STAIRWAYS 2023
- 03 MAD TRAVEL SUBIC 2023





ICARE IN ACTION STUDENT VOICE

INES L.

When starting a club, an organization, or even planning an event, ISM students consistently see service as a part of the picture. I believe that ICARE is to be attributed for that. Starting as early as a month before ICARE Week, students take initiative as we identify problems and conceptualize solutions, and it becomes our responsibility to implement them. Thus, having ICARE as a student-driven program brings service to the personal level, where students hold a personal stake in the success of their own projects and become motivated to put in

- 01 ICARE A.L.O.T 2023
- 02 MAD TRAVEL ZAMBALES 2023
- 03 BATAAN 2022
- 04 | UPSKILLS LEADERSHIP TRAINING 2023
- 05 |
- 06 |
- 07 PROJECT BANTU 2023

the work to see them succeed.

Our school places a huge emphasis on service. Doing whatever we can goes a long way.

Looking to the future, I believe that we are going to continue to watch service-driven students, whether currently at ISM or graduated, motivated by the ICARE experience, do impactful and incredible things for their community and be the change in the world.



04



05



06



07

HAILEY Y.

ICARE is an invaluable experience for all ISM students. This year, I was part of the Upskills Leadership Training at Caliraya. Not only did we lead lessons and make new ISM friends, but we also bonded with the Upskills kids.

Regardless of how different our backgrounds were, we bonded over shared interests in dance, singing, art.

As ISM students, we often forget how privileged we are. ICARE connects us with the local community, helping us understand the complex layers that underlie issues such as access to quality education. This experience has encouraged me to give back to the community, not just through school activities, but also through my own initiatives. As ICARE continues to develop, I hope this program fosters a culture of understanding and empathy within the ISM community.

GABRIELA F.

Project Bantu is a social intervention program dedicated to empowering kids ranging from toddlers to teenagers through teaching the art of capoeira, a dance form which originates from Angolan culture in Brazil. Through this organization, youth within Manila's neediest communities are guided through passion, culture, and community to develop skills that will help lead them towards success in their future. Capoeira dance is specially taught to help prevent the lifestyle of poverty through sparking passion and building purpose for these kids.

Students of ISM work with several kids from Project Bantu by hosting them at ISM as well as visiting their 'casa bantu' and learning more about the community they come from, culture that is shared, and passion that binds them. However, through this ICARE, the close friendships and bonding we built with each of them served as an unforgettable experience.



ZAIRA S.

ICARE A.L.O.T is a destination dedicated to promoting cultural exchange, understanding, and mutual respect, as well as enhancing personal growth and the development of marginalized communities in the Philippines. The site prioritizes the advocacy for Agriculture, Lifestyle, Ocean, and Turtles within San Juan, La Union - a coastal province renowned for its exceptional surfing conditions. During this trip, we had the opportunity to work with the guides at CURMA (a sea turtle conservatory), acquire the skills to sustainable farming at Lotus Valley, and play both educational and recreational games with the kids at GOPALAKAS. At the end of the trip, despite not being able to surf due to the lack of waves, we were able to spend many hours enjoying the pleasant beach scenery and all the additional activities offered, like volleyball and American football. All of these activities assisted us in the enhancement of cultural awareness, sustainability, and patience. Overall, this experience was immensely memorable and effective in immersing us in the local culture of La Union.

EMILIO B.

Rural Rising Philippines is a non-profit, grassroots initiative dedicated to aiding struggling Filipino farmers to regain stability and contribute to the nation's food supply with dignity. Its primary program involves conducting "Rescue Buys" in regions experiencing surplus production of fruits and vegetables, offering farmers prices above standard farm gate rates. Moreover, Rural Rising distributes the rescued produce to its members at prices below market rates. This mutually beneficial approach ensures gains for both farmers and consumers. Additionally, any unclaimed fruits and vegetables within a 48-hour window are promptly channeled to needy communities in the NCR and various community pantries, ensuring zero wastage.

The camp that ISM students visited is in Nueva Ecija. Here, students engaged with the farmers, understanding their lifestyle and growing knowledge of farming and agricultural practices. From hiking the mountain the farmers live on to learning about local farming techniques, this experience at Rural Rising was truly insightful.

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04

ASMA S.

MAD Travel is a social enterprise that creates opportunities for marginalized communities in the Philippines through sustainable, eco-tourism. MAD Travel Subic focuses on fostering eco-tourism in the forests of Bataan in Subic Bay, which are amongst the last three percent of rainforests in the Philippines. The Aeta community is an indigenous community that resides in this forest and serves as the gatekeepers of essential resources such as clean water, various herbs and medicine, a diverse range of food, and plenty of area for shelter. The Aeta community is consistently keeping away business owners who see the rain forest as a prime area to convert into commercial businesses. The goal for MAD Travel is to develop sustainable tourism in the forests of Bataan so that the Aeta can show the world their way of life in the forest and how they learned to utilize the resources around them sustainably.

In the rainforest, ISM students interacted with the Aeta community in various ways. Students were first given a tour of the forest, where they were introduced to different herbs and fruits - some which they could even try. They then learned how to make a composting site using the resources around them, such as the special bamboo, kawayan, which is used especially for constructing. The Aeta also demonstrated their methods of cooking food in bamboo. The most remarkable part of the trip was swimming in the Tingtingin falls. The entire trip was very insightful in learning about the ways of the Aeta and the importance of conserving natural areas such as rainforests.



05



06



The menstrual hygiene management presentation



A workshop attendee making a cycle-tracking bracelet

MANUSHRI G.

Menstrual Hygiene Management: The Need of the Moment

What first comes to your mind when you think of the word period?

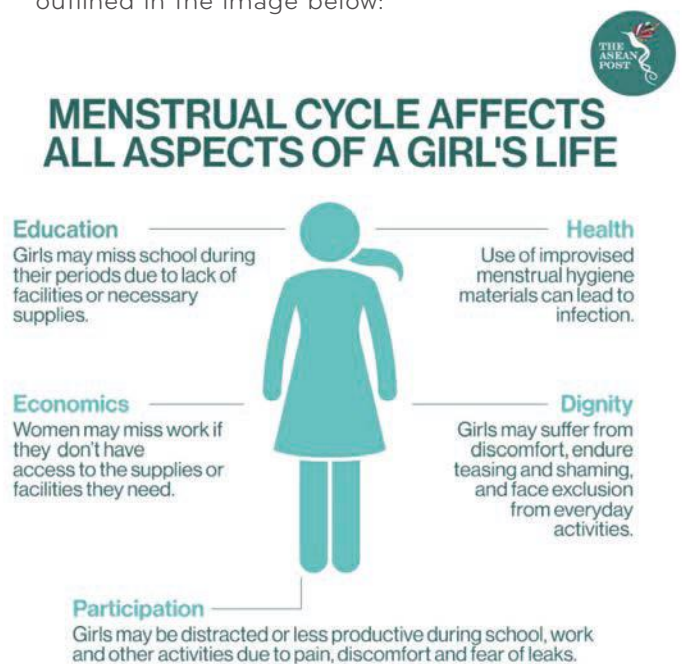
For millions of individuals across the world, this word is synonymous with pain, stigma, and shame because globally, around 500 million menstruators lack access to menstrual products and adequate menstrual hygiene management (MHM) facilities (World Bank). This issue, known as period poverty is the lack of menstrual health and access to sanitation caused by social, cultural, economic, and educational barriers.

There are three main causes of this issue. Firstly, there is a lack of acceptance that is born from the countless societal stigmas that prevent menstruators from rising to their potential. Secondly, there is a lack of awareness exemplified by the fact that thousands of menstruators are unaware of menstruation before menarche. Finally, there is a lack of access to sanitation due to several social and economic factors.

But why is this issue crucial to address?

Upon discussion with the administration of our

site: Nueva Ecija DSWD Home for Girls—which is a facility for the care, treatment, and rehabilitation of girls under the age of 18—they stated that menstrual hygiene products are among the primary needs of the organization for the 50 girls who had experienced the onset of menarche. Furthermore, the multifaceted impact of Period Poverty on a menstruator's life is outlined in the image below:



Source: Various

How Period Poverty impacts all aspects of a menstruator's life
(Source: The ASEAN Post)

In light of this information, my classmate Niyanthri and I set out to create an effective solution: empowerment through education. With the help of Filipino friends, we translated a culturally sensitive MHM presentation that I had previously designed for my passion project in my home country. We then determined the most practical hygiene product for the girls through the following criteria: sustainability, affordability, and effectiveness, bearing in mind that all disposable period products were found to contain carcinogenic chemicals (National Library of Medicine) and posed a health risk. We finally concluded that reusable pads were the most beneficial due to their sustainable and economical nature and fundraised for them through a bake sale.

On our second day at the site, we collaborated with the administration to facilitate the workshop and were pleased to see how curious the girls were. We were able to purchase 250 reusable pads and distribute them along with care and usage pamphlets. However, the most beautiful part was the cycle-tracking bracelet activity where we witnessed the excitement of the girls as they helped one another make the bracelet. For us, this workshop was a symbol of the resilient nature of the girls and their desire to actively participate regardless of obstacles such as scheduling delays and language barriers. Through this journey, we have witnessed the power of unity for a common cause, for menstrual hygiene management is truly the need of the moment. Now, what comes to your mind when you think of the word period?



MILA. A

MAD Subic: A Peek Into the World of Traditional Cooking

Cuisine is an essential part of one's culture, and cooking keeps the traditions alive. Many people enjoy trying food from all over the world, and the Aetas' unique approach to cooking is exciting and refreshing to witness. The Aeta tribe live in Bicutan, in a forest near El Kabayo Falls, also called by the native name Tintingín. A majority of their ingredients come directly from the rainforest where the community lives. Their methods of food preparation also rely on nature as a source of materials and tools. Instead of using the typical pots and stove, of western cooking, the Aeta instead use bamboo stalks as their cookware and an open fire as the source of heat.

The Aeta tribe is incredibly in tune with nature. Not only is the rainforest their home, but their supermarket. They know what is edible, what has medicinal properties, and what can be used for

building. For example, Ubod, or heart of palm, is one of the staples in the Aetas' cooking. It is cooked in a variety of dishes, some including ingredients like fermented fish and other native plants. According to the village elder, the plant tastes slightly different depending on the moon cycles. Despite the variety of plants and trees available to them, the most essential plant to this community is bamboo.

There are two main bamboo varieties that grow in the area. The first is kawayan, a woody type of bamboo that is dried and used in building all sorts of structures, from the beds that the Aetas sleep in, to the roofs over their heads. The second type of bamboo is buho, which is the type used most prominently as a cooking vessel. When used fresh, the water inside the wood steams the dish, making the food delicious.

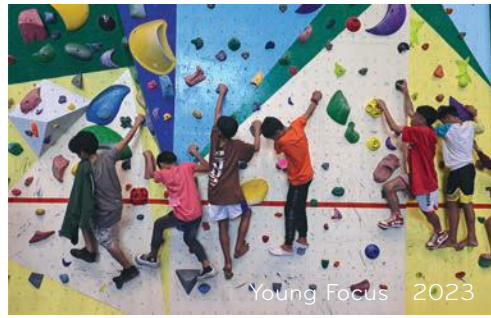
The community uses bamboo to cook many of their dishes. For instance, as with many communities in the Philippines, rice is the basis of any meal for the Aetas. Their cooking methods developed in such a way that it almost seems like bamboo is uniquely suited to cook the rice. The natural divisions in the stalks are used to create an enclosed space and a small cut is made in the middle to add in the rice and water. It is then closed up and cooked on an open flame until all the water boils. The result is perfectly cooked rice: hot, fluffy, and delicious.

A slightly different method is used to prepare meat. Bamboo is cut fully open and the meat and spices are placed inside with a little bit of liquid, such as water or vinegar, depending on the dish. The stalk is placed against a bar or metal grate to keep it standing in the fire, and it is occasionally rotated to ensure everything is cooked evenly. The meat turns out unbelievably tender, and using the plants found in the surrounding forest as spices, incredibly flavorful as well.

The spread of more modern cooking technologies has certainly impacted the Aeta, they do not rely solely on their traditional methods. Stovetops with pots and pans are used, as well as ingredients from the supermarket. But this does not stop the Aeta's from fighting to maintain their cultural practices, despite pressure to relocate from the forest and pollution affecting their ingredients. Much of their practices rely on the forest, so relocation is not an option.

Their culture is interesting, specifically due to such unique practices that highlight the importance of preservation. It is incredibly eye-opening to be exposed to these Aeta techniques, which many in the MAD Subic ICARE site had not seen before and to learn about how something being modern does not mean more effective, or the best in a particular situation. The utilization of the materials found in the forest is ingenious, especially when contrasted with the globalized and interreliant modern world.





Young Focus 2023



Kalawaan Elementary School 2023



Bataan Sea Turtle 2023



Mad Travel Zambales 2023



Child Hope 2023



Baguio 2022

“My favorite memory at the Bataan Sea Turtle ICARE was when we arrived at the school. It was a little bit nostalgic to me because it reminded me a little of my old school in Cebu: the uniforms, the architecture and the overall atmosphere of it. Because the school reminded me of my own school, it made me excited to teach the kids the planned activities my group had for them. Overall, I had a lot of fun at the school with the kids and my fellow classmates.”

-- Amanda



Papaya Academy 2022

"This ICARE was definitely something I would never forget because of the amount of fun and learning experience I had. I feel like from this event I have been constantly surprised by the ability to communicate with the children given their hearing disability; I now look to people of the deaf in a better light. Lip reading is a very important skill especially for them, and now they make me want to see them again next year!"

-- Amelie



CJ Learning Rizal, 2023

"Service is a big part of my life at ISM. In a lot of ways, it has gifted me with a sense of purpose. Amongst all the projects I've done, I would actually say my experience at Stairway was the most special. Working with the kids, I learned so much about their lives- but I also learned so much about myself. As a Filipino speaker, I think I was able to really step up in helping my peers communicate with the kids, developing my strengths and working on my weaknesses as a leader. When it comes to recognizing the effects of choices and actions, working with these kids and hearing stories of abuse truly opened our eyes to what we are capable of doing about a situation we once thought we had no power over. Most of all the bonds I made were the most important. From making bracelets with them to dancing to washing dishes to long talks by the ocean, it was all incredibly special".

-- Nika



Stairways 2023

“This experience is one that I know I will never forget, it is now one memory that will stick with me and all of my peers. We had the opportunity to communicate with a different community and broaden the bubble we live in. Simply walking into the Kids International school gave all ISM students a small snippet of how the local communities that surround us live their daily lives, and realize the privileges we have. Once we entered the school it was amazing to see all the children’s faces light up. We set up fun activities for the children to participate in. We were able to create a small community with the children we met, becoming closer with, they turned into our friends.”

-- Emme



Botolan Aeta Farming 2023



Bataan Sea Turtle 2023



Rural Rising 2023

“Getting to know and teach the UpSkills kids was a very valuable experience.”

-- Indigo



Rural Rising 2022



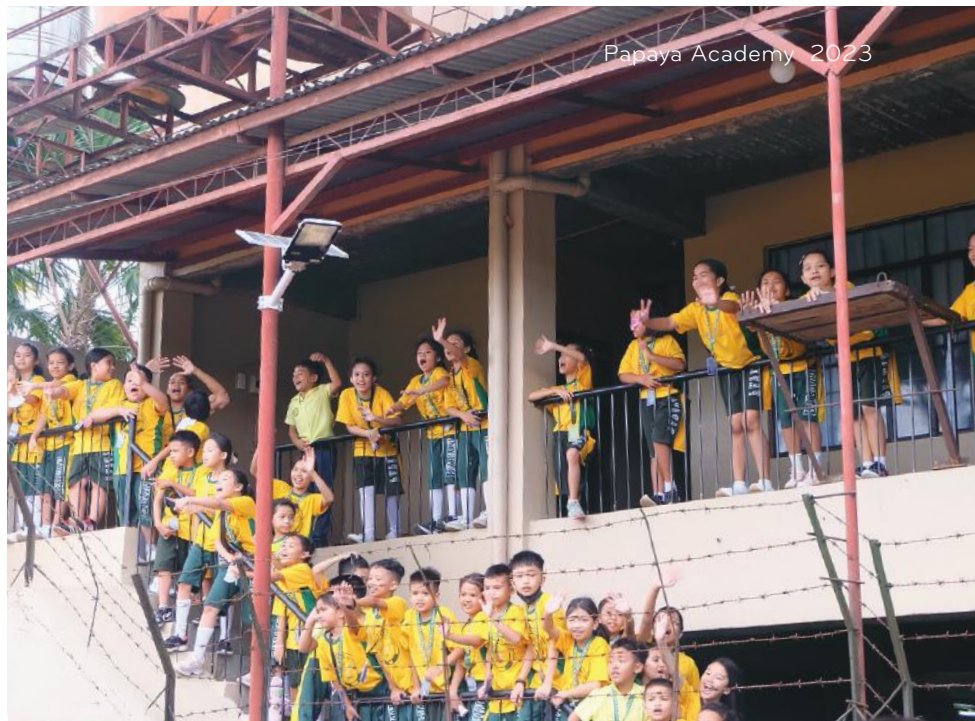
Stepping Stone 2023



Project Bantu 2023

“Things that changed about me after the ICARE experience was how I became more engaged and took many opportunities to engage with the Metro issues.”

-- Okwe



Papaya Academy 2023

NEIL H. WOODS

CAS and Activities Coordinator/ Director of Service Learning

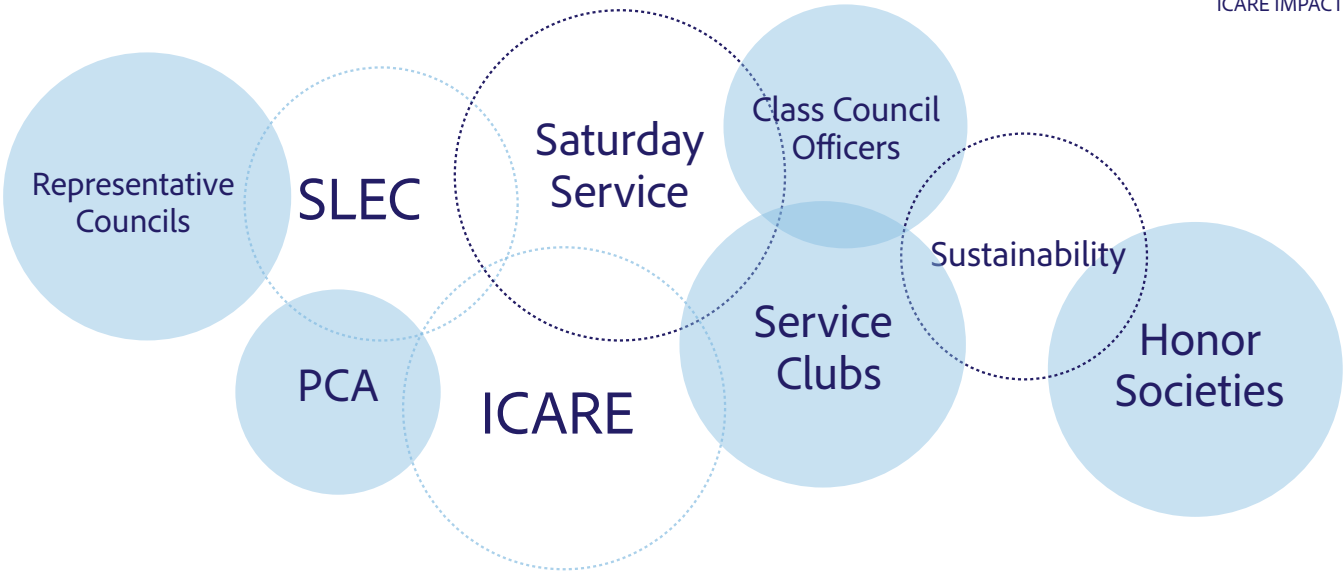
ICARE IMPACT ON ISM COMMUNITY

Connections with service partners throughout SLEC, Sustainability, Saturday Service

The Service Learning Program consists of ICARE for five days in December and a Saturday Service Program, that run year round. The structure of ICARE integrates diverse students from all grades, paving the way for a wonderful experience for all high school students. It allows students to contribute positively to their community, and the environment and learn more about the Philippines and Filipino culture. Over the four years in High School, where possible, a student will attend different sites, experience a wide range of activities and work with many different students. ICARE encourages students to move out of their comfort zone and accept new challenges.

Saturday Services are run by Service Clubs, Class Council Officers, Honor Societies, Representative Councils or the Parent Committee Association (PCA). These programs continue to evolve, diversify and deepen as the keystone programs, in a holistic, and fulfilling ISM education. With a commitment to providing meaningful, sustained and empowering experiences, these programs have set the standard in enabling our students to be the drivers of positive change. At ISM the underpinning of all our service efforts is to support the UN Sustainability Goals (SDGs) and in High School, CAS is at the heart of the IB program and it is through this educational philosophy that we address all service.





Beyond the two distinct programs of ICARE and Saturday Service, we integrate service into almost every aspect of our co-curricular programs. For example, Battle of the Band is a student run music competition, but it is also a huge fundraising event for ISM's Filipino Scholarship Program and local charities. All Honor Societies have service partners and "Honor Through Service" is central to their philosophy. Alongside the numerous Service Clubs, Class Councils, The Service Learning Council and PCA offer many ways to be involved in community action.



01 LITERACY DAY SATURDAY SERVICE 2023
 LOGIC CLUB, FINANCIAL LITERARY CLUB, BOOK CLUB

02 KASAMA SATURDAY SERVICE 2023
 03
 04

ALUMNI VOICE



RUCHIRA A. *Class of 2017*

I joined ISM in 2015 as a Junior in High School, and was able to participate with the amazing Mr. Ramos at Holy Family for ICARE 2015, and I participated with the incredible Ms. Bowers and her team at Buting Elementary School in 2016. I am truly grateful for the opportunity to volunteer with my amazing schoolmates, commendable ISM teachers and staff members, and at our ICARE sites. I cherish the memories I made there, and I am genuinely grateful to be able to work alongside so many fabulous people to do my part in uplifting and learning from. Initiatives like ICARE and Saturday Service instilled in us students the confidence to step up and responsibly do our part in helping those around us in every aspect of our lives. I am very glad I was able to actively

participate in service initiatives during my two years at ISM, and I will never forget the grace, gratitude and welcoming nature of our hosting communities.

I honestly appreciate all the hardwork every single member from ISM and the hosting sites put in to being able to meticulously and seamlessly organize ICARE every school year. I would like to express my immense gratitude that I was able to be a part of it, as it taught me the values of being empathetic towards others, actively caring for those around us and doing everything we can to ensure we are able to alleviate any problems and bring a smile on the children's faces by improving their surroundings.

I would like to attach a picture of a farewell message that the Holy Family team graciously wrote for our ISM team on our last day during ICARE 2015. I cherish this photo and their incredibly warm nature and gesture.

Once again, I'd like to express my appreciation for everyone at ISM and our hosting sites for giving us students the valuable opportunity to bring positive change and instilling the spirit of volunteering and selflessness within us as well.



rED Baguio 2023

VALERIE T.

Class of 2014

My senior year ICARE experience back in 2014 was at Stairways. One word I would use to describe stairways was "meaningful". It benefited my personal growth in the sense that it helped me put things into perspective, not only in terms of how we, as the ISM community, are reaching out to others and doing our best to support organizations but also directly supporting people who need it the most.

Even moving away from Manila, I understood the importance of always reaching out and understanding that there are communities out there that do need our support. It may seem like very little, but to them, it means a lot and it's always good to give back to our communities.

The most memorable moment for me from Stairways was meeting the children; they were so friendly and wonderful. We would spend hours chatting with them, getting to know them, and sharing our stories. It highlighted the fact that at the end of the day, we are all just human beings and we all love the same things; it highlighted the importance of human connection.

CHAEWON K.

Class of 2013



I went to Bataan Pawikan Conservation Center for my ICARE. To describe my experience in one word, I would say it was unforgettable. It was a great opportunity for me to learn about the critical role Pawikan plays in the Marine ecosystem. Overall, I became more interested in wildlife, nature, and the environment. I would hold myself accountable to recycle properly, use less plastic, and use more reusable bottles. The most memorable moment was during a night patrol when we encountered a mother turtle laying eggs. I had the chance to place my hands underneath and receive the eggs, which were soft and warm. It was an experience unlike any other, making it the most memorable moment of my ICARE journey.

MARKKI S.

Class of 2006

I went to Sagada, and I remember that experience in one word, ethereal. One memorable experience from my ICARE journey was being able to perform at a gymnasium back then with Showchoir. It made a lot of people smile and in the same breath, around 15 years later, I was able to perform in the same gymnasium as an artist. It felt like coming full circle. It makes me smile to think about how far I've come since my ICARE days and how much I've grown as an individual, performing for the community first as a choir and then as a solo performer. With that said, happy 30th anniversary to ICARE. May you continue to mold the students for a wonderful future, instill all sorts of beautiful experiences and memories, foster personal growth, and contribute positively to the community.

VOICES FROM SERVICE PARTNERS




STAIRWAY FOUNDATION

"ICARE is not just a concept, but a way of life. It embodies our core values and represents the heart and soul of everything we do. ICARE, to us, means going above and beyond to make a positive impact on the lives of those we serve."



STEPPING STONE

"ICARE is a valuable opportunity for all partners to meet and collaborate. It gives a cohesion to what non-profits do for their communities."





SPECIAL OLYMPICS

"ICARE is an immersive powerful program."



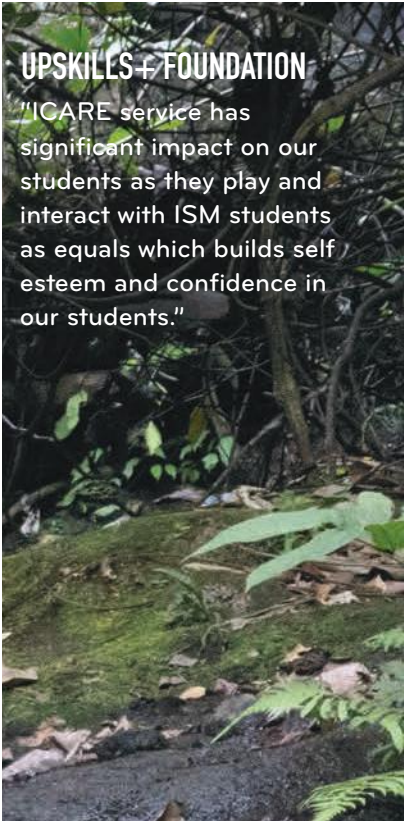
YOUNG FOCUS

"We believe in ICARE and its capacity to empower every participant as we learn from each other."



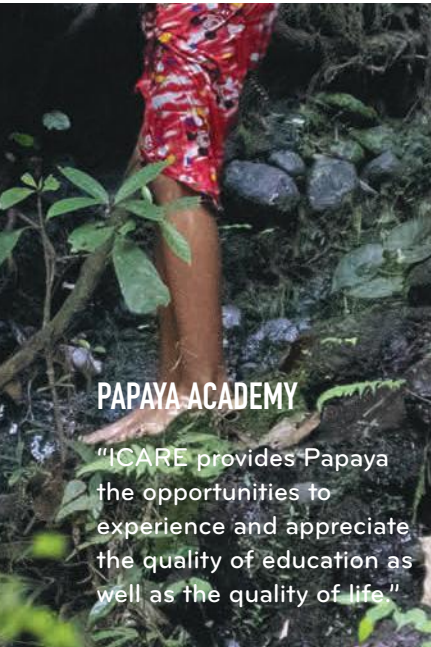
KALAWAAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

“Our rapport with ICARE made us forge meaningful connections that transcend borders and make a lasting impact. The partnership we’ve made also helped us tailor social responsibility, and foster community engagement among our learners. We are indeed grateful for the collaborative undertaking and we look forward to more meaningful engagements!”



UPSKILLS + FOUNDATION

“ICARE service has significant impact on our students as they play and interact with ISM students as equals which builds self esteem and confidence in our students.”



SPECS

“ICARE brings meaningful activities and opportunities to the children we serve from the most destitute communities in Manila. The team of ICARE, together with admin, students, and teachers, have deeply rooted values such as respect, kindness, and compassion. This is translated through their communication with their partners and the contextualized, high-quality programs/activities they implement. It is now rare to find a partner like ISM, who speaks love through their work and incorporates Filipino values of "kapwa-tao" in their social action. We are privileged to be working with and along-side the ICARE team at ISM.”

RURAL RISING

“Bringing ICARE students to a remote village like Pinamalisan is like bringing the world to them. The effects of the interaction lingers long after the students have left. While ICARE cannot conjur rainbows, it can fetch irrigation water from the mountains. While ICARE cannot create rain, it creates laughter among farmer children. While ICARE cannot make the sun shine brighter, it can make hope burn stronger. ”

PAPAYA ACADEMY

“ICARE provides Papaya the opportunities to experience and appreciate the quality of education as well as the quality of life.”



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