



## aXiom of the month

"True heroism is remarkably sober, very undramatic. It is not the urge to surpass all others at whatever cost, but the urge to serve others at whatever cost."

- tennis champion and social activist Arthur Ashe

SPECIAL ISSUE (AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2006) • Published monthly by Petron Foundation, Inc. for Petron Corporation employees and its CSR partners

## Fueling Heroism

THERE are heroes who lay down their lives, and heroes who make it to the annals of our history. And there are those who make our lives better by just being in it - by doing hard work and making sacrifices, though remaining unsung, unknown, and unheralded.

August 11 was perhaps the darkest day in Petron history. On this Friday, M/T Solar 1 sank off the coast of the island province of Guimaras, laden with 2 million liters of bunker oil. While the loss of the cargo which the company owned was painful, its spillage into and the resulting damage to the pristine coastal and marine ecosystems of the province was undeniably tragic.

It was the worst of times, yet it was also the best. For here, we saw heroes emerging from the oil spill incident. They are made up of Petron employees and donors - individuals and corporations - who make a big difference, not in a big splash, but with the things they do to turn tragedy into triumph.



**GOOD TO GO.** The first batch of employees to spearhead the cleanup operations in Guimaras.

Far away from their respective homes, in unfamiliar territory, and serving a tour of duty from seven days to two weeks, our employees soldier on, toiling every day together with the residents of Guimaras. They come from every department in all divisions of the company. They are continuously in the mercy of the elements and of man-made concerns. Yet these engineers, accountants, marketing people, I.T. experts, finance specialists, physicians, and clerks all serve with passion, integrity, and the highest standards of responsibility to society.

Their efforts are being matched by all groups, government agencies, corporations and individuals who have lent a helping hand. This includes our Petron employee volunteers who generously dipped into their pockets to donate cash or help in their own little way by repacking relief goods.

Time and again, we count on these people and laud their heroism without them even knowing. With them, we are able to withstand the trials and tribulations thrown our way, and make every effort last an extra mile. And with them, we are confident that we will be able to fulfill our commitment to bring back the beauty of Guimaras.

Marilou G. Erni  
Executive Director, Petron Foundation, Inc.

## PETRON AFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO RESTORE GUIMARAS



Affirming its commitment for the next three years or longer, Petron Corporation partnered with the National Disaster and Coordination Council (NDCC) and the Department of Social Work and Development (DSWD) in the Ligtas Guimaras project, which seeks to restore ecosystems disrupted by the recent oil spill.

Petron vows "to restore Guimaras and other affected areas back to their natural beauty, no matter the cost."

The oil spill followed the August 11 sinking of cargo vessel M/T Solar I, which carried 2.19 million liters of bunker fuel oil and affected the coastlines of the municipalities of Nueva Valencia, Sibunag, and San Lorenzo in the island of Guimaras. The oil spill reached mainland Panay through parts of Iloilo, a total of 220 kilometers of shoreline, extending to 29 out of 40 barangays in Guimaras and affecting 4,727 families living in these areas.

The government had formed Task Force Guimaras through the National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC). Petron works closely with the Task Force, headed by Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz, and includes the Health, Social Welfare and Development, Science & Technology, Transport and Communications, Energy, and Environment & Natural Resources departments.

As early as August 12, Petron had already put oil spill teams on alert, mobilizing gears and equipment. By August 14, the cleanup operations had begun under the DSWD's Cash-for-Work program. Meanwhile Petron continued to provide technical assistance and coordination with national and local government officials, as well as with mandated agencies such as the Philippine Coast Guard and the Marina.

Two months of the massive, almost non-stop cleanup in Guimaras, Petron has already covered 130 kilometers and shipped an initial 500 metric tons of debris (through the LCT Carmen) out of the province. Thousands of sacks continue to be collected everyday and loaded in waiting barges at the Cabalagnan Wharf in keeping with our commitment to the people of Guimaras removing the oil from their province.

To counter long-term repercussions from the sunken vessel, Petron commissioned the Japanese ship *Shinsei Maru*, a 51-meter long research vessel armed with state-of-the-art remote operated vehicle (ROV). The ship ROV had already gone down 640 meters below sea level and surveyed the sunken M/T Solar 1 and its findings are expected to determine the appropriate steps in removing the remaining oil - and all future threats to the marine environment - from the sea.

Part of Petron's long-term rehabilitation program is tapping experts from the academe – the University of the Philippines Visayas, Siliman University, and the Philippine Science High School Iloilo – for rehabilitating



mangroves, seaweed farms, and fisheries within the affected areas.

**Rebuilding lives.** An integral part of the restoration process is the rebuilding of human lives. Petron conducts relief operations in all affected barangays in the municipalities of Nueva Valencia and Sibunag. Being distributed are relief packs consisting of rice and canned goods, estimated to last for two days for a family of six to eight. This effort is complemented by a series of medical missions to benefit those taking part in the cleanup as well as



Exerting every effort to rid the coastline of oil and debris in the island barangay of Guiwanon (above) and Sitio Lusaran in Brgy. Nueva Valencia (left)

residents from the barangays where the medical missions are held. As of September 30, doctors from Petron and the Guimaras Provincial Health Office have checked up and treated 3,571 Guimarasnons.

**With a little help from our friends.** Corporate and individual donors have also extended help in the cleanup and relief operations by contributing food and water items, cleanup protective equipment, medicines, as well as cash. They include: Chevron Philippines (Iloilo City), First Kimex

Trade, Inc., Guard-All Electronic Security Systems, Inc., Lockheed Detective and Watchman Agency, Mirant (Philippines) Foundation, Miriam College Parents-Teachers Council, Petron Dealers Association - Cebu Chapter, Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., PROTEMP, Inc., PTT (Philippines Trading Corporation), Semper Foundation, Inc. (through *Cleanway Technology Corporation*), Servicio Filipino, Inc., Splash Foundation, Inc., SPT Trucking Services Iloilo City, Total (Philippines) Corp., United Laboratories, Inc. and Zuellig Foundation

Petron employees also pitched in their share through their cash contribution of over P500,000 as of end September to the Ligtas Guimaras project.

### By the numbers (as of Sept. 30)

<b>40</b>	-	Total no. of barangays
<b>29</b>	-	No. of affected barangays
<b>5,258</b>	-	No. of affected families
<b>43</b>	-	Number of days since the cleanup began
<b>45,600</b>	-	Total number of man days in the cleanup
<b>130</b>	-	Total kilometers covered
<b>2,052</b>	-	Metric tons of oil and debris collected
<b>179,535</b>	-	No. of sacks hauled
<b>5,644</b>	-	Relief packs given to affected families
<b>3,490</b>	-	Workers and residents who benefitted from the medical missions
<b>P13.9 M</b>	-	Amount given to workers under the Cash-for-Work program

# PFI Leads Relief Distribution, Medical Mission in Guimaras

Since August 18, Petron Foundation has led in the relief assistance distribution to the oil spill affected families in Guimaras. Consisting of 6 kilos of rice and 9 assorted canned goods, Petron employees, with assistance from the local DSWD personnel helped distribute the relief packs to the different barangays and sitios. The affected barangays in the towns of Nueva Valencia and Sibunag, totaling 5,258 families, have all been given their family packs. The relief goods were also given to residents of nearby islands which were also affected by the oil spill.

The same group of people also do the almost daily repacking of the relief goods done at the provincial capitolyo gym in San Miguel, Jordan. As soon as the supply of

the canned goods arrive at the cavernous venue, the volunteers start repacking the items for easy distribution to individual families. From time to time, assistance comes from unexpected sources. Military personnel who made the gym their barracks voluntarily offer to help do the chore. Our DSWD partners also invites students from the area to assist in the repacking.

As soon as the supply is exhausted, the repacked goods are sacked and are transported in dump trucks to the different barangays. Riding with the trucks are the volunteers with their DSWD counterparts. An average trip to the distribution site is



around 30 to 40 minutes over mostly rough roads.

Alongside the continuous clean up operation, Petron vows to continue its relief assistance to the affected areas.

(From extreme left) Residents repacking relief goods; DSWD Secretary Esperanza Cabral handing out family packs; employees from HR attending to residents; Petron's Dr. Jean Duque examining a worker.

## LENDING A HELPING HAND

Petron's partners and friends contribute to renewing hope for the people of Guimaras

Chevron Philippines (Iloilo City)  
 First Kimex Trade, Inc.  
 Guard-All Electronic Security Systems, Inc.  
 Lockheed Detective and Watchman Agency  
 Mirant (Philippines) Foundation  
 Miriam College Parents-Teachers Council  
 Petron Dealers Association – Cebu Chapter  
 Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.  
 PROTEMPS, Inc.  
 PTT (Philippines Trading Corporation)  
 Semper Foundation, Inc. (through Cleanway Technology Corporation)  
 Servicio Filipino, Inc.  
 Smart Communications, Inc. (SMART)  
 Splash Foundation, Inc.  
 SPT Trucking Services Iloilo City  
 Total (Philippines) Corporation  
 United Laboratories, Inc.  
 Zuellig Foundation



Also, our Petron employees who given more than P500,000 in cash and other items for Guimaras. As of September 25, a total of 36.7% of all employees have contributed to the efforts of rebuilding the province.

*Maraming salamat po!*



## Tulong Aral Scholars: Hope is their waking dream

FOUR Tulong Aral ng Petron scholars in fifth grade are living seemingly parallel lives: while confronted with grim realities of everyday life at age 11, they manage to stay on top of their four-walled world called the classroom.

And yes, they are among the first batch of pupils in April 2002 awarded with Tulong Aral scholarship, a program of the Petron Foundation under Fuel HOPE that sends poor but deserving children to school to overcome poverty.

"Naka-score po ako ng 48/50 sa Math quiz ngayon (I scored 48 out of



50 in our Math quiz today)," Hannah Jean Navarro of Bagong Silang elementary school in Caloocan North beams. She finished third overall in fourth grade, and is determined to place first this year. Rather frail-looking for a class president, Hannah was diagnosed with primary tuberculosis in January and got cured two months ago.

Rufaida Mamutuc of Don Geronimo Santiago Elementary School in San Miguel, Manila also finished third last year. She looks a lot more like Hannah: thin, limp-haired, and quite small for a child her age.

Cindy Manalese of Bagong Diwa Elementary School in Pandacan, Manila is more vigorous-looking than the two, but says she only landed fourth because she was sickly, too. Cindy, or Chin-Chin to her family, was wheeled into the hospital twice due to convulsion and diarrhea. But from grade one to three, she was first honor in her batch.

John Michael Del Valle of Kasarinlan Elementary School in Caloocan South, on the other hand, managed to maintain his first-honor standing all

these years. But as it is, his story is no different from those of his fellow TA scholars.

### STRIVING DAILY

The four have stark images of their first brush with the achievement of being Tulong Aral scholars—the interviews, written exams, and finally reaping the fruits, such as having brand-new school supplies and daily meal allowances.

All walk their way to school everyday. Hannah belongs to the morning shift, while the three stay in school from noon to 5:45 p.m. Being scholars, however, didn't box them in mathematical equations and mere academic goals. Their families are battling economic survival every day, and they know it.

Hannah's father Francisco recently lost his job as a baker, and her mother had to take the reins raising a household of three in the meantime. She does the laundry for Hannah's godmother who lives in Parañaque. Hannah, however, is proud that her mother still supervises her homework even after selling breakfast meals around Phase I, Bagong Silang, Caloocan.

But Hannah now practices doing things on her own. "Kagabi nga po tinapos ko apat na projects mula 4 hanggang 1 (Last night, I finished four school projects, working from 4 p.m. to 1 a.m)," she proudly recalls.

Cindy's mother Nenita also has to take charge as her father Conrado is afflicted with arthritis and diabetes. Five other siblings are already of working age, although two are married but landing regular jobs prove elusive. "Yung isa ko pong kuya eh tinatawag lang kapag may pipinturahan (My brother only gets called when there are painting jobs)," Cindy says.

Rufaida's and John Michael's households are geared by their fathers, but the work done is beyond their young minds.

### WEAVING DREAMS

Despite the hard reality within their homes, it is definitely not "all work and no play" for the scholars. Cindy and Hannah are avid viewers of fantasy shows such as GMA-7's *Majika*, while Rufaida prefers the flashy game show *Deal or No Deal*. John Michael, however, sticks to *Naruto* and anime shows.

And like the average kid, they weave sweet dreams for the future.

Rufaida dreams of becoming a doctor to cure her family of all forms of illnesses. Hannah is developing a nose for news and wants to become a journalist someday. She is slowly inching towards her dream by writing sports news for their campus paper. John Michael wants to become an architect or an engineer, while Cindy wants to pass on the legacy of education as a Math teacher.

When asked what makes her stand out among children her age, she immediately responds: "My intelligence." Her family may not be well-to-do, but she is well-groomed and baby-cologned.

Through their eyes, one could sense fresh optimism towards the future - enough to make you sleep soundly at night and say, "Yes, there is still hope."

## Petron volunteers continue Junior Achievement tradition

Six Petron employee volunteers continued to carry out what has become a company tradition of serving as advisers to the Junior Achievement Philippines' program for young students.

The six were: Carmen Say-Gutierrez and Melissa Nuguit, from Finance; Arnel Atienza and Danilo Billedo from Operations; and Steven Acayan and Rey Madelar of Marketing. They were among 50 volunteers from different companies who will serve as new advisers for school year 2006-2007 of JA Philippines, a 37-year-old non-profit organization that helps college students

prepare for their future.

JA Phils. is a 37 year old non-profit organization that helps college students prepare for their future. JA's initial program introduced in the country is the mini companies. This program helps young students appreciate

and understand better the role of business in the society by allowing them to organize and operate an actual business enterprise. At JAPI, students are trained to organize their mock up mini-companies and operate them on their own, with expert advise from volunteer professionals who act as their advisers.

Since 1995, Petron has been continuously sending volunteers to serve as advisers to the Junior Achievement Philippines. For the schoolyear 2006-2007 (August 2006 to March 2007), the six volunteers will share their business acumen with the students.

"Corporations are now pushing for more involvement in entrepreneurship education. By sharing our expertise, we will help college students learn business by doing business," said Malu Erni, Executive Director of Petron Foundation, Inc., at the orientation for new advisers at the Energizer Philippines office in Mandaluyong City last August 11.

A new program called JA-Applied Economics was launched in 1997 in different colleges and universities in Metro Manila. It was tied with schools' curriculum, specifically to Economics.

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## THE PETRON FITNESS TRAILS AT LAMESA

Last August 17, Petron celebrated another milestone in its support to the La Mesa Watershed by inaugurating the Petron Fitness Trails inside the La Mesa Ecopark. The simple event was attended by Petron VP for Legal and External Affairs Atty. Jose Jesus Laurel, ABS-CBN Foundation Managing Director Gina Lopez, and TV host Diane Castillejo, among others.

Designed to give your heart and body a whole body workout, the 1.2 kilometer biking and jogging trail brings you through gentle slopes and inclines amidst trees and dense vegetation, simulating a true forest experience. Moreover, the 800-meter exercise trail features 17 outdoor fitness stations for that much needed strength and stretching routines to improve flexibility and muscle tone.

