



Photo for the Month

Without playground equipment appropriate for his age, the child contents himself with playing with his slippers on the ground in an open space area. This photo was taken by YP intern Jenny Bore from the upper floors of a medium-rise housing project in Pasay City.

Quote for the Month

"...ideas do not come of themselves --- they are learned from others. Ideas delving into people's relation to the land hold potential for architects unsatisfied by copying the latest design fads. Basing design ideas on fundamental relationships of people to land is an appropriate place from which to grow defensible and relevant design concepts."

"Architects working in their region will --- by dint of practicing in the field of low-cost, sustainable, and incremental housing, develop sensitivity to their unique environment. This is a sensitivity that manufactured materials deny the designer. The architect should, in time, discover the options in affordable and sustainable materials that the region affords and develop her or his own architectural response. It can be a built environment that people can afford to live in."

- (quotes from the article "The Challenge of Affordable Housing and Sustainability")

- **Dr. Richard Burnham**, American architect and author of "**Housing Ourselves: Creating Affordable, Sustainable Shelter**"

WANTED: Design Ideas for Sustainable Communities

According to NHA statistics, before the 1980s twenty-five percent of Metro Manila's population lived in slums. After more than 25 years, that figure has not improved and now, with the megacity already reaching 11.5 million (2007 census), Metro Manila's slum population has increased to 30-40% of its total population. These numbers obviously show us that provision of decent and affordable shelter continues to be a formidable challenge. How have designers responded to improving the quality of life for the growing urban poor?

In terms of architectural and engineering design, basic compliance to the minimum standards of BP220 is the prevailing best practice in social housing projects. Apart from efforts by some non-profit groups (such as Habitat for Humanity) that have explored the use of alternative building technologies for social housing, there is a lack of notable locally-implemented designs that can be regarded as innovative schemes for housing the poor especially for those in urban areas. Sustainable or "Green" development is already the trend in building design yet these are hardly explored as design options when housing the poor is concerned primarily because of perceived cost implications (affordability).

TAO-Pilipinas launched the **YP Design Challenge** project to get today's young professionals to solve three design problems relevant to urban poor communities. *Sustainable Shelter* challenges YPs to design a social housing unit that applies the principles of green design and construction; *Trash Transformation* requires the use of waste materials to develop marketable community-created products; and in *Portable Playground*, YPs are tasked to design a mobile/demountable community playground (equipment & assemblies) for children.

Since we're asking for design solutions tailored towards the conditions present in urban poor communities, area visits to TAO-assisted communities are integrated in the competition program. We've also timed the competition so that universities/colleges could consider the design challenges as student design plates for a semester and encourage participation from older professionals as mentors/advisers to students and young professionals. Hopefully this competition becomes a watershed for creating innovative pro-poor design solutions and will show that good design could make a difference in the life of a community, especially in urban poor settlements.

Featured in this month's e-newsletter:

- **YP Summer Interns visit informal settlements and housing projects in MM**
- **Interns' Culminating Activity held at UP University Hotel**
- **TAO launches YP Design Challenge**
- **UP-TFA marks 22 years**
- **New volunteers work on TAO projects**
- **YP Reflections by Jenny Bore**

"It's time for us to go to the people rather than ask the people, especially the poor, to come to us."

YP Summer Interns visit informal settlements and housing projects in MM

As part of their internship program, exposure trips to informal settlements and social housing projects in Metro Manila were made by the YP summer interns last May 7-8, 2008. The field visits were conducted to give the interns a broader perspective of various social housing issues and talk to TAO-assisted communities and representatives of other NGOs who assist in housing provision for the poor. It was also an opportunity from them to learn from the different approaches to shelter delivery taken by both government agencies and non-government organizations.

On May 7, the interns were able to visit the SANAGMANA (*Samahan ng Nagkakaisang Maralita ng Navotas*) resettlement site in Navotas; Habitat for Humanity and Gawad Kalinga housing projects in BASECO, Manila; and SAPSPA (*Samahan Para sa Angkop na Pabahay ng San Pablo Apostol*) community in Tondo, Manila. On May 8, the interns' itinerary included the SHEC (*Saint Hannibal Empowerment Center*)-assisted communities in Malibay, Pasay; MRB (medium-rise building) housing projects by Habitat for Humanity in Pasay and FTI Taguig; and Gawad Kalinga's Cardinal Sin Village and the 7-storey housing project by the NHA (National Housing Authority) for families relocated by the Pasig River rehabilitation project in Punta, Sta. Ana.

After the field visits, the interns presented individual photo-essays that showed their observations and reflections from the 2-day exposure trip.



Interns' Culminating Activity held at UP University Hotel

After two months of working on TAO projects, four trainees who make up the second batch of TAO's YP summer interns presented their final internship outputs to project mentors, college advisers and community representatives. The presentations were the highlight of the Interns' Culminating Activity held at the University Hotel in UP-Diliman last June 7, 2008. Graduating from the summer internship program were Miriam College BS Environmental Planning and Management students Emma Ruth Ramos and Carla Jean Duque; Jenny Bore, a BS Geodetic Engineering student from UP; and Lloyd Ison, a BS Architecture graduate from Mapua.

Ruth Ramos and CJ Duque presented their research paper entitled "Good Practices in Community-Based Solid Waste Management in Metro Manila," a synthesis of field studies they made in about ten villages/barangays in Quezon City and Marikina City. Jenny Bore presented two case studies in Payatas, Quezon City and Malibay, Pasay City on "Land Acquisition among Urban Poor Communities." She made a comparative study analysis of the mandated procedures versus the actual experiences that the communities underwent in land acquisition through CMP (Community Mortgage Program) and Direct Purchase Agreement. Lloyd Ison presented the results of the socio-economic and structures survey done in SANAGMANA resettlement site in Navotas.

Among the panel reactors during the presentation were Miguel Puzon, Chair of Miriam College Department of Environment; Matthew Dimal of UP GE Department; Menelo Abueva and Margie Brucelo of SANAGMANA; and Jocelyn Satajo and Imelda Dongnol of SHHOA (Saint Hannibal Homeowners Association).





TAO launches YP Design Challenge

TAO-Pilipinas launched its latest YP project, the Young Professionals Design Challenge, at the Institute of Social Order (ISO), Ateneo de Manila University last June 6, 2008. The project is a design competition for young professionals that aims to generate ideas and design solutions for sustainable community development in urban poor settlements. The competition website [www.yppdesignchallenge.tao-pilipinas.org] was also presented during the launch.

Guests during the competition launch – (left to right) Engr. Francis Uy of Mapua CE-ESE; Engr. Guillermo Bernabe of PUP-CE; Arch. Ted Inocencio of PUP-CAFA; and Arch. Nicolo Del Castillo of UP-CA.

The YP Design Challenge is comprised of three design challenges, working around themes of sustainable community development. Each category has its own set of competition guidelines, judging criteria and prizes. Participants may choose to join in any or all of the following design challenge categories: **Sustainable Shelter, Trash Transformation, and Portable Playground**. The academe is encouraged to consider the design challenges as student design plate/project and see it as an opportunity for design students to put forward innovative, environmentally-sound, appropriate and affordable design solutions that can benefit poor and informal communities and improve the livability of social housing sites.

SELAVIP (Latin American, African and Asian Low-Income Housing Service) and MISEREOR (German Catholic Bishops' Organization for Development Cooperation) are the main sponsors of the competition. Support for the YP Design Challenge launch was also given by Davies Paints and Starbucks Philippines-CSR. Posters of the YP Design Challenge may be seen on the community boards of selected Starbucks stores.

Registration is now open and closes on August 29, 2008. The competition guidelines and registration forms may be downloaded from www.yppdesignchallenge.tao-pilipinas.org or request for copies can be made by calling Mai Ilagan at (63-2) 441-0998. (See competition poster on page 4.)

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YP Reflections



Jenny Bore is a senior student of BS Geodetic Engineering at the University of the Philippines-Diliman. She entered the YP summer internship for her course's OJT requirement. She was assigned to work on two research papers - "Validation of Research on Land Acquisition, Registration, Surveying & Titling in Metro Manila" and "Land Acquisition among Urban Poor Communities: A Case Study of Payatas & Malibay."

When I enrolled GE 198, my plan was to look for a company that would accept me as intern, learn and gain experience from the training program, complete all the requirements and get my grade. That was simple enough...until I started working with TAO-Pilipinas. The experiences I had in the course of the training program made me realize a lot of things.

I became more aware of the present condition of the urban poor communities - that they are not problems in society. They are Filipinos with problems that need assistance from us. They are also entitled to rights that we enjoy. I really felt sad after learning the situation of Phase I of SHEC's housing project, where the members of the community ended up filing cases against one another due to circumstances we cannot control. I can see from the tired face of Ate Estrella the hope of securing the land they occupy for her children.

As a geodetic engineering student, I thought that our main role is to survey and subdivide the land for the client. I learned however, from the case study I conducted, that the process of land acquisition is a long and complicated process for poor communities. I also learned that they are not going to initiate acquiring the land they occupy not only because of lack of funds but also because of their lack of knowledge of the process. I believe that professionals have a great role in helping them understand the process and educating teaching them on how and where to secure or furnish the documents needed.

I am really amazed at how members of different NGOs chose the life of helping the communities instead of working in high-paying jobs. I am inspired by their dedication to continuously find means to improve the lives of the poor communities. In the course of my internship, there is one realization that really struck me --- that if we really want to do something to help these communities, there would always be means to do it. As young professionals, we are responsible not only to our client or employer, but also for the state and the community. The lack of support from the government should not be hinder us from reaching out to the communities but should make us persevere even more.

I got an 'incomplete' grade in GE 198 because I wasn't able to complete the minimum required number of hours on time but I don't feel any regret in choosing TAO-Pilipinas. The experience I got was more than what I expected. I did not just learn and apply the theories I learned from books and readings, but I learned one of the most important thing that I believe I would have never learned in the profit-oriented surveying companies, and that is if we really have the will to help others, there is certainly not just a single way to do it...and we are the ones who must discover and search for them.

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YP DESIGN CHALLENGE

ideas for sustainable communities

designchallenge1: SUSTAINABLE SHELTER

A housing unit for an urban poor household that applies the principles of green design and construction, with sustainable design features and appropriate building technologies such as energy efficiency, disaster resilient building design, rainwater harvesting systems, and waste management. It should be original and innovative, cost-effective, environmentally-sound, socio-culturally sensitive and affordable.

designchallenge2: TRASH TRANSFORMATION

Marketable products made from discarded materials that urban poor people's organizations can replicate, creating opportunities for income-generation. Designs should be creative and functional, and be innovative examples of extending the lifecycle of discarded materials.

designchallenge3: PORTABLE PLAYGROUND

A mobile playground unit for an urban poor community that offers a variety of play spaces for preschool- and elementary-aged children. The proposed design should provide adequate spaces for appropriate and safe play and create opportunities for teaching children the value of environmental responsibility. It should also be mobile and transportable to other open spaces in the community; cost effective and built using sustainable construction materials and techniques; and socio-culturally sensitive and affordable.

ELIGIBILITY

Open to individuals or teams of undergraduate students of architecture, engineering, interior design, fine arts, industrial design, and environmental planning; and young professionals (YPs) in the above mentioned disciplines with not more than 5 years of professional experience.

PRIZES

Design Challenge 1: 1st: P20,000 2nd: P12,000 3rd: P8,000
Design Challenge 2: 1st: P15,000 2nd: P8,000 3rd: P5,000
Design Challenge 3: 1st: P15,000 2nd: P8,000 3rd: P5,000

SCHEDULE

Competition launch: June 6, 2008
Deadline for questions: July 31, 2008
Registration deadline: August 29, 2008
Mandatory site visits: August 5-8, September 2-5, 2008
Submission period: October 1-24 2008
Results announced: December 2008

REGISTRATION

Download competition guidelines and registration form from:
<http://ypdesignchallenge.tao-pilipinas.org>

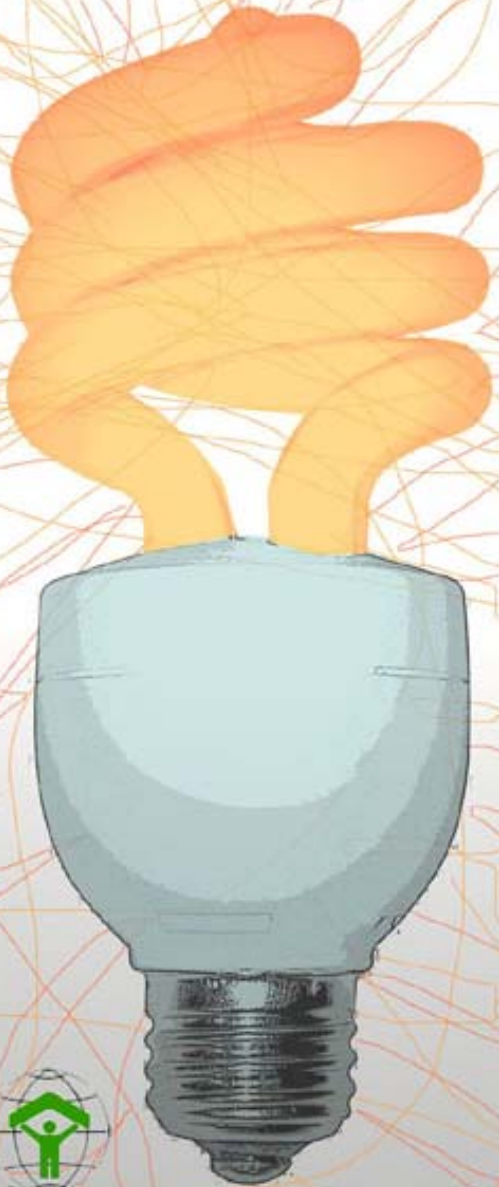
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UP-TFA marks 22 years

University of the Philippines – Task Force Arki marked their 22nd anniversary with a special lecture by Arch. Amillah Rodil, TAO-HSE program staff and previous chairperson of the organization. The lecture entitled “Anino ng Siyudad (Shadow Cities) – Understanding the Slums of Metro Manila” was presented last July 8, 2008 at the College of Architecture Building in UP-Diliman.



UP-TFA is a student organization composed mainly of BS Architecture students of UP and is part of the YP Volunteers Pool of TAO-Pilipinas. They have collaborated with TAO on the following projects: Structures Mapping for DSOP; Design & Drafting of 5 Houses for SAPSPA; and Design Options for Renovation and Extension of DSOP Core Housing.

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New volunteers work on TAO projects

TAO-Pilipinas welcomed two new volunteers, Gwen Lucero and Susi Mitchell, who shall be working on various TAO projects until October 2008. Gwen is currently completing a PhD degree in Urban & Regional Planning at UP and has started working on the research project entitled *Process Documentation of TAO Assistance to Urban Poor Communities in Metro Manila*. Susi Mitchell is completing her BS Applied Science (Planning) at RMIT University in Melbourne, Australia and is in Manila as an exchange student at UP-School of Urban and Regional Planning. Susi will be working on a study about the marketing of products from community-based solid waste management practices.

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Announcements

TAO moves to new office

TAO-Pilipinas recently moved to a new office location at **27-A Matiyaga Street, Barangay Central, Diliman, Quezon City 1100**. TAO may also be reached through its new telefax number: (63-2) **441-0998**.

Congratulations

Congratulations to Rosalyn-Frances Marcelo, TAO-YP staff, for passing and placing 3rd in the licensure examinations for Environmental Planners given last June 2008.

Thank You

Thanks to Starbucks CSR (through its manager Zarah Perez) for donating used tarpaulin streamers to the community in Tanza, Navotas affected by typhoon *Frank*. The tarps were used by the residents for the repair of temporary shelters destroyed by the typhoon.

TAO Shelter Magazine Issue no. 4

TAO Shelter magazine's fourth issue will be available by August 2008. The new issue focuses on ***Planning and Design for Extreme Weather Conditions***, with feature articles on:

What to look out for when planning seaside developments

Extreme homes: Teepees, domes, and floating houses show how humans adapt to different environments

Redefining settlement and building design for the changing climate: The Albayano architects' response

Guidelines for making your home typhoon and earthquake resistant

Rebuilding after the storm: Government and NGOs construct houses in relocation sites in Albay

Designing disaster resilient schools: Winners of the Millennium Schools Global Design Competition

Working with heart: Three young women share stories of immersion with local and international communities

TAO News: Workshops, lectures, and training seminars held in 2007 and 2008

YP Design Challenge: Answer to FAQs

Answers to the first batch of questions received for the YP Design Challenge have now been posted on the FAQ page of www.yppdesignchallenge.tao-pilipinas.org. Questions about the competition process, guidelines, or other content contained in the competition website may still be submitted until July 31, 2008 via email to ypdc@tao-pilipinas.org or fax to (63-2) 441-0998.

TAO to celebrate 7th anniversary in August

This August 20-22, TAO-Pilipinas shall celebrate the 7th anniversary of the organization with a forum and product exhibits (for social housing projects). Watch out for updates on these events at www.tao-pilipinas.org.
