

## Library on Wheels

*Where parents can't afford to bring their children to school, a museum for children is bringing learning to their communities.*

*Through its mobile library program, the Museo Pambata in Manila hopes to spark interest in reading among children in poor communities so that they will be eventually committed to learning and formal education.*

Manila, ([PRWEB](#)) November 12, 2003 --Primarily an interactive museum for children, Museo Pambata was created in 1994 so that children, families and school groups can explore new and exciting learning opportunities. The building itself has eight theme rooms with exhibits that encourage children to relive their rich cultural heritage, assume a proactive role in caring for the environment, understand how the human body works, and discover science through play. They can also try imagining what they could become someday and understand complex issues such as human rights in a global perspective. The Museo Pambata has since opened its doors to 1.7 million children and adults.

### Awakening the imagination

But there are millions more young Filipinos who do not have access to such learning programs simply because their parents could not afford to keep them in school. And so Museo Pambata developed the Mobile Learning Program, or MLP, a reading campaign that reaches out to economically disadvantaged children of Manila.

Over the last eight years, the museum has conducted storytelling and book lending sessions in 100 communities. MLP volunteers from different fields have been trained as community storytellers, visual art and storytelling facilitators. They visit at least three of these communities every week, benefiting at least 40 children and 10 adults with each visit. They also organize training workshops for children, parents, daycare workers, librarians, and community leaders. Moreover, the program has donated over 7,000 books to public libraries and reading centers in Metro Manila and in the provinces.

"Reading books is one way of instilling aspirations in and awakening the imagination of children," says early childhood educator and Museo Pambata president Dr. Nina Lim-Yuson. "We hope that the Mobile Library will give our less fortunate children access to good books and more importantly, to create in them a life-long desire to learn and become useful citizens."

The museum's library on wheels, which began with a little over 50 books, a couple of volunteers, and a medium-sized utility vehicle, has since received the support of donors who also recognize the importance of reading among children. With funding from the Ford Foundation, the museum received a customized, artistically designed six-wheeler truck that can carry at any time up to 3,000 children's books and other learning aids.

### Alternative education

According to Dr. Lim-Yuson, the positive impact of the Mobile Learning Program and the museum's other literacy programs on young children has encouraged Museo Pambata to commit to providing alternative education and uphold the welfare of children. The museum has helped set up children's libraries in Metro Manila and led the donation of children's picture storybooks nationwide with the help of publishing houses,



the Philippine Embassy in London, the Netherlands Embassy and private donors.

Ford Foundation in the Philippines also sponsored an eight-day course for more than a hundred social workers, librarians, and neighborhood parents so that they could establish their own reading centers.

Dr. Lim-Yuson says that the museum's literacy program plans to reach 13,000 children and 2,000 adults in 2004. It also intends to help start up 40 children's libraries in Manila, Antipolo, the urban poor community of Payatas in Quezon City, Marikina and Pasay City. To achieve this, Dr. Lim-Yuson is inviting like-minded individuals and organizations to donate funds, storybooks and other learning aids to help enhance the lives of young Filipino children.

###



**Contact Information**

**Abbey Lucas**

Ayala Foundation Inc.

(632)894-5620

**Online Web 2.0 Version**

You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).