

Philippine Tax Academy Launches 18-Day Campaign to End Violence Against Women

Manila, December 05, 2023 — The Philippine Tax Academy (PTA) took a step towards fostering awareness and advocating for the end of violence against women (VAW) with the kickoff ceremony of the 18-Day Campaign to End VAW. The campaign, themed "United VAW Free Philippines" #VAWFreePH, aims to address the crucial issue of violence against women and promote a society that is free from such harm. Mandated by Proclamation 1172 s. 2006, the 18-Day Campaign to End VAW is an advocacy campaign that is observed annually in the country from November 25 to December 12.

The kickoff event, held at the Function Room of the Department of Finance, centered around the discussion on the strength of collaborative efforts for "United VAW Free Philippines" and women empowerment for "Women and Power." Chancellor II of the Local Government Finance Institute of the PTA, Ma. Teresa S. Habitan, played a pivotal role in leading the activities. Her talk, titled "Witches, Saints, and Barbie: Violence Against Women, Where Do We Begin, and How Does It End," delved into the deep-rooted stigmas surrounding women and the gender issues associated with them.

Chancellor Habitan emphasized the need to challenge societal expectations and stereotypes about women. She highlighted the importance of creating safe spaces at homes, in schools, and communities that recognize and nurture the potential of each child, irrespective of sex and gender. Her talk magnified the significance of empowering little girls to make active choices about their lives and fostering emotional intelligence in little boys.

In a poignant excerpt from her talk, Chancellor Habitan stated, "Our little boys must be allowed to cry when they need to, because human beings cry when they are hurt - our little boys are little human beings, too. Shedding tears does not make them less of a man when they grow up; *it only shows their humanity.*" (*emphasis added*)

The kickoff ceremony saw the active participation of PTA officials and employees, reinforcing the institution's commitment to gender sensitivity as one of its core competencies. PTA President, Gil S. Beltran, echoed support for the 18-day campaign and emphasized the role of financial inclusion in empowering women.

As the chairperson of the Gender and Development (GAD) Focal Point System of the PTA, Pres. Beltran expressed the institution's dedication to ongoing efforts in promoting gender equality and women empowerment. Plans for establishing training programs for PTA employees and stakeholders to further advance these initiatives were also announced.

The 18-day campaign initiated by the Philippine Tax Academy not only seeks to raise awareness about violence against women but also underscores the agency's proactive role in advocating for a more inclusive and gender-sensitive society. The PTA's

commitment to fostering positive change echoes the sentiment that ending violence against women is a collective effort, one that can be achieved *"one little boy and one little girl at a time."* #

















