

JOHN LEGEND VISITS HIGHWAY HILLS INTEGRATED SCHOOL, A TEACH FOR THE PHILIPPINES PLACEMENT SCHOOL

Makati City, Philippines, October 2014 - Last September 26, 2014, John Legend, R&B artist extraordinaire, decided to drop by Highway Hills Integrated School (HHIS) to catch a glimpse of the public school system here in the Philippines despite of his busy schedule on the day of his Manila concert.

Upon his arrival on campus, John met with HHIS Principal, Mr. Romeo Bandal and started the school tour led by HHIS Teacher Fellows Dave Mariano and Trisha Palaganas. The tour group was composed of several members of the staff and Executive Team of Teach for the Philippines, namely CEO Margarita Liboro Delgado, COO Clarissa Isabelle Delgado, and Chief Strategic Resources Officer Patricia Feria.

At one point, John stepped in one of the classrooms to sit among the students. To his surprise, the students started taking his hand and pressing it to their foreheads!

“It’s the traditional Filipino way of showing respect for elders, like the bow for the Japanese,” explained Patricia Feria, TFP Chief Strategic Resources Officer. In the Philippines, children are taught “mano po” early on, and it’s a tradition reinforced by teachers in schools.

The tour ended at the conference room, where John met with several Teacher Fellows from Nueve de Pebrero Elementary School (NDPES), a neighbouring 2014 placement school in Mandaluyong City, and Commonwealth Elementary School (CES), a 2013 placement school in Quezon City.

During the roundtable discussion with the HHIS Principal, as well as the TFP Executive Team, Staff and Fellows, John found out more about how Teach for the Philippines operates and how the organization intends to achieve the vision of accessible education for all Filipino children by 2050.

“We’re not any different from our co-teachers in the public schools.” HHIS Fellow Clarice Fajardo answered, when asked what Fellows bring to the table, “We actually exchange teaching techniques. I share engaging ways to teach a lesson to my co-teachers, and just recently, I learned several effective ways to manage my class from them! So far, the learning experience has been mutual for us Fellows and our co-teachers.”

Principal Bandal also expressed how the presence of Teacher Fellows in HHIS has helped decrease the number of pupils in the Grade 3 classrooms, “When they [Fellows] came in, we created additional sections in Grade 3 that the Fellows took over. Because of this, the average number of pupils for each Grade 3 class in HHIS is now around 35.”

After finding out that a lot of the Fellows’ students were musically-inclined, he encouraged the Fellows to foster their students’ love for music; if possible, even incorporate music into the lesson.

“Don’t forget to love them, too.” John said, recalling parts of the commencement speech he delivered at the University of Pennsylvania last May, “What we need more in this world is for people to see others as people. Teachers especially need to see their students as people who need to be understood. I know it’s difficult to care for each and every one of them, given how many they are, but at the very core, you have to show them you love them, because that is how they will grow up to be good people.”

Unknown to many, John Legend is also John Stephens, a proud board member of Teach For America.

For more information regarding Teach for the Philippines, visit their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/teachforthephilippines and website at www.teachforthephilippines.org.

Contact:

The Marketing and Events Team

Teach for the Philippines

Tel: +632 808-8837

Email: events@teachforthephilippines.org

###