

Xavier Ecoville breaks ground; XU, Habitat ink housing deal for Sendong survivors

Xavier Ecoville, the joint relocation and resettlement project in Lumbia of Xavier University and the City Government of Cagayan de Oro, broke ground on March 3. In the same event, XU and Habitat for Humanity Philippines signed a memorandum of agreement for the construction of permanent houses at Xavier Ecoville.

The donation worth more than P51 million will be used to help build the 573 row houses which will be constructed on the 5-hectare lot, adjacent to the temporary bunkhouses where 249 households (out of a target of 500) are presently staying.

Charlito Ayco, CEO and Managing Director of Habitat for Humanity Philippines said that the house building will be hastened so the beneficiaries can be settled into their permanent homes immediately. Construction is targeted for completion in six months but may run for a year at the latest.

Besides Habitat for Humanity, other donors for the permanent houses at Xavier Ecoville are UnionBank Foundation, Brotherhood of Christian Businessmen and Professionals and the Chinese Ladies Association of Cebu.

Archbishop Antonio Ledesma SJ DD led the rites of blessing at the groundbreaking. Also present during the event were Vice President and Chair of the Urban Development Coordinating Council Jejomar Binay, 2nd Congressional District Representative Rufus Rodriguez, Abante Mindanao Partylist Representative Maximo Rodriguez, City Mayor Vicente Emano and City Councilor Nadya Emano-Elipe.

Binay assured everyone that “everything is on course” in the resettlement efforts of the government for those affected by Sendong in the cities of Cagayan de Oro and Iligan, and that “this is a government that can be trusted.”

The masterplan of Xavier Ecoville was unveiled during the groundbreaking, showing Xavier Ecoville to be not only a housing program but a community building program. XU aims to develop a thriving and healthy community at Xavier Ecoville. In addition to the residential lots of 50 sqm per lot, Xavier Ecoville will have a chapel and community center.

“I guess Xavier Ecoville will be the standard for everyone to follow in resettlement,” said Justo Ortiz, chairman and CEO of UnionBank. “This project is not only a testimony of the resilience of Filipinos... but a testament of *magis*.”

Xavier Ecoville espouses 10 core values: Pagtinabangay (cooperation), Paghigugma sa Ginoo (love of God), Pagsalig sa Matag usa (trust in one another), Pargespeto sa katungod sa uban ug dignidad sa tawo (respect for rights and dignity of persons), Pakigsuod sa silingan (friendship), Pag amuma sa kinaiyahan (care for environment), Pagkugi (industry), Pakiglambigit (involvement), Pagkamatitud-anon (truthfulness), and Pagmugna ug huna-huna ug lihok (creativity of ideas and actions).

Last February, the residents had their first fellowship activity aimed at fostering trust, harmony and belongingness among members of the Xavier Ecoville community. Every weekend, the community undertakes values formation sessions.

(Photos by Carmi Yvette C. Salcedo)



Rep Rufus Rodriguez and Vice President Jejomar Binay sign copies of the architectural design of Xavier Ecoville before they are placed inside the time capsule during the groundbreaking ceremony of Xavier Ecoville.



L-R: Leonilo Escalada, HFHP Manager for regional programs; Fr Roberto Yap SJ, XU president; Charlito Ayco, HFHP CEO and managing director; and Engr Elpidio Paras, chair of the XU Board of Trustees, sign the MOA for the construction of 573 permanent houses at Xavier Ecoville.



Overjoyed beneficiaries pose in front of the masterplan of Xavier Ecoville, their future neighborhood, unveiled during the groundbreaking ceremony.