

Students and a solar car take the spotlight at 2007 Ford Day

YOUNG AMBASSADORS ON A MISSION TO promote road safety. The first ever solar car poised to preserve the environment and lessen our fuel dependency. Both were star attractions at the recently concluded Ford Day 2007.

An annual event open to the media and general public, the 2007 Ford Day celebrations at the Fort Open Grounds in Taguig was a whole day affair filled with lots of lessons on road safety and environmental protection, especially via the use of Ford's Flex Fuel Vehicles or FFVs.

Both road safety and promoting the use of eco-friendly vehicles are advocacies pioneered by Ford in the local automotive industry and the country.

The Ford Road Safety Youth Council (RSYC) has been fearless in promoting Ford's commitment to Road Safety. Young as they are, they are as committed in creating awareness and appreciation of road safety among the youth today. Studies have shown that a good number of road accidents are caused by young drivers who are either too eager to get behind the wheel of a car, or severely inexperienced when it comes to safe and defensive driving.

This troop of brave youngsters is currently composed of 35 Core Council members and more than 800 RSYC members from 29 schools such as Ateneo de Manila University, De La Salle University, University of Makati, Don Bosco, UP Diliman and San Beda College Alabang, to name a few.

During the induction ceremonies at Ford Day, Vic Rosales, council chair, presented their plans to continue the activities the Council has started such as the Responsibility in Driver Education (Ride

Program and Inter-School Road Safety Project. The Council also introduced a new way of promoting Road Safety via an online newsletter and their very own RSYC website.

The event also saw the awarding of Ford's Road Safety Interschool Project competition. Don Bosco Technical College Mandaluyong won first place with its entry titled "Road Safety is Shared Responsibility" project. The second place was awarded to Muntinlupa National High School's "Road Safety is a Team Effort" project. Both schools were awarded P10,000 and P7,000 respectively on top of a P100,000 project grant. The grants money will be used to implement the project components submitted by these schools all aimed to improve road safety within their school premises. This competition was opened to all schools that have undergone the Ride Seminar and provides an opportunity for the students to take a more active role in promoting road safety in their respective schools.

"Road safety is another great project am proud to say that Ford has truly nurtured and cultivated from 2004. From setting up a seed fund of P1,000 for every Ford and Mazda vehicle sold, conducting Ride sessions in schools, to promoting the use of Child Safety seats, to the introduction of the first batch of Ford's Road Safety Youth Council officers, we have made some significant strides as a company to make our youth more responsible drivers, and our roads much, much safer," said Richard Baker, president of Ford Group Phils.

Another highlight of Ford Day 2007 was the unveiling of the first ever solar car in the Philippines.

De La Salle University (DLSU) Manila was the lead proponent in coming up with a breakthrough vehicle that runs through the power of sunlight.

Ford with its partners, Pilipinas Shell, San Miguel, Sunpower, Philippine Airlines and Ventus are part of this project. The solar car, dubbed "Sinag", will be entered at the World Solar Challenge in Australia towards the last quarter of the year.

The Technical Working Team is composed of DLSU Faculty Members engineer Rene Fernandez, engineer Martin Ernesto Kalaw, engineer Anthony Escobar, engineer Jose Antonio Catalan, and engineer Isidro Marfori III.

The 2007 Ford Day celebration dubbed "Ford Day 2007: Save Lives, Save Earth." was a venue to strengthen Ford's commitment to road safety and entrust its advocacy to care for the environment. Ford adds another first-in-the-country contribution when it rolled out the Flex Fuel Vehicle (FFV) program in April 2006.

Various activities also took place namely: Kiddie art activities such as Ford Ranger Drawing Contest and Save the World Collage, Kiddie Movie Marathon, Focus Victory Lap RC Racing, Eco-Driven Adventure, 2nd Ride Quiz Bee, Teen Driving Lessons by Tuason Racing School (TRS), test drives, live performances from Unity and Fat Sessions bands and raffled prizes were enjoyed by the whole family.

Ford Day 2007 also brought together its partners namely Pilipinas Shell, Tuason Racing School (TRS) and Automobile Association of the Philippines (AAP), San Miguel Corp and Land Rover.