

- Public building

NEW PHILIPPINE RED CROSS BUILDING INAUGURATED AT QC HALL COMPLEX

BusinessMirror · 1 May 2024 · B6

A NEW three-storey building now stands inside the Quezon City Hall complex for the **Philippine Red Cross Quezon City (PRCQC)** Chapter. The new building is testament to the partnership between the **Quezon City government** and the PRC.

The building hosts a Blood Center at the ground floor; a command center, a training room, and a multipurpose hall. Its construction was funded by the Quezon City government that also provided furniture and fixtures needed by PRCQC.

It is located alongside other City Health Department buildings, with the city government ensuring it was built taking into consideration the requirements of the PRCQC to enhance its capacity in responding to emergencies and provide blood assistance to Filipinos residing in the National Capital Region.

The new building was inaugurated last April 15, 2024. The inauguration was one of the activities to celebrate the 77th founding anniversary of the Philippine Red Cross. It was on March 22, 1947 when then President Manuel Roxas signed Republic Act No. 95, known as the PRC charter. Its first chairman was Aurora Quezon and its inaugural ceremony was held on April 15, 1947.

Among those present during the inauguration were Sen. Christopher “Bong” Go, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Health; PRC Chairman and CEO Richard Gordon, PRC Secretary-general Dr. Gwendolyn T. Pang, Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte, Quezon City Rep. PM Vargas, former QC Mayor & Speaker Feliciano Belmonte, Governor Ernesto Isla, Chapter Administrator Janice Melody Adolfo, SM Foundation Executive Director for Health & Medical Service Connie Angeles, and guests from different Red Cross chapters.

In his welcome remarks, Isla, who is Chairman of the Board of Directors, said the Quezon City Chapter was one of the Red Cross chapters already in operation in 1947 and was formerly part of the Red Cross Manila Chapter.

The history of the PRCQC is closely intertwined with the history of Quezon City. The relationship between the local government and the Red Cross demonstrates a strong, constant partnership which enabled vital humanitarian services to reach the most vulnerable in the city.

During the stint of Engr. Ponciano Bernardo as Quezon City Mayor (1946-1949), the city government supported the Red Cross by providing space and building at the old Quezon City Hall. Bernardo also served as the first chairman of the QC Red Cross.

Succeeding Quezon City chief executives also extended support to the Quezon City Red Cross. The city government during the term of Mayor Feliciano Belmonte funded a two-storey building for the organization. Following in his father’s footsteps, **Mayor Joy Belmonte** made sure the Red Cross in Quezon City has a modern and well-equipped building within the Quezon City compound.

“The Quezon City chapter has become the ‘always first, always ready, always there’ for the people of Quezon City because of that support of the local government,” Isla said.

“This has made not only the Red Cross strong but Quezon City as well. It has transcended not just from being a city of stars to a city of dedicated humanitarians and volunteers,” he added. Meanwhile, Mayor Joy Belmonte recalled that during the pandemic, the LGU partnered with the Red Cross in looking for quarantine facilities. Isolation facilities were constructed at the University of the Philippines Diliman and Ateneo de Manila University campuses by the Quezon City Red Cross chapter.

“We recognize your value not only in helping us care for our citizens during the most difficult times but also in training us to be volunteers for life,” told guests during the inauguration, adding, “if there is an organization that people should feel proud to volunteer for, it is the Red Cross.”

She also disclosed that the local government is crafting an ordinance to make Quezon City the volunteer capital of the Philippines.

According to Gordon the organization is committed to provide a transformative service to the Filipino people. “Our aim is to always provide assistance that will transform the lives of many. This inauguration shows how we always seek ways to improve and exceed our own achievements.” Gordon was introduced by Angeles who is an active member of the humanitarian organization.

SM Foundation is among the active partners of Red Cross. It collaborates with Red Cross in the conduct of SM Foundation medical and dental missions and blood-letting activities. The bags of blood collected during the blood donation drives in SM malls are stored in the PRC blood bank. SM’S Operation:tulong Express where volunteers travel to calamity-stricken areas to distribute relief packs is also conducted in

nd partnership with the Red Cross

After the inauguration and unveiling of the building marker, a mass oath-taking was held at the nearby Liwasang Aurora in Quezon Memorial Circle. Over 5,000 new RC 143 volunteers in Quezon City participated in the oath-taking where they affirmed their commitment to uphold PRC’S mission and values.