

Associations and nation-building

OUTSTANDING projects of associations and other membership organizations were in the spotlight at the recent gala dinner of the Fourth Associations Summit (AS4) organized by the Philippine Council of Associations and Association Executives (PCA AE), the “association of associations” in the country.

The PCA AE’s annual Ang Susi Awards, now on its second year, recognized two individuals—the Association Executive of the Year and the Association Board Member of the Year—as well as six membership organizations that have demonstrated outstanding achievements in helping the environment, empowering people, serving communities, enhancing trade and industry, developing technology solutions and for being agents of change.

Ang Susi, which stands for “Associations Nurture National Growth through Social Unity and Sustainability Innovations,” aims to recognize the key role of associations in national sustainable development.

During the gala dinner on November 23 at the Philippine International Convention Center, video clips of the winning entries and short speeches by the recipients of the awards were presented. On all these, one phrase was often mentioned and resonated with the audience: “associations help in nation-building.”

The institutional awardees were the Manila Bay Sunset Partnership Program Inc., for its “Manila Bay Clean-up Drive” on helping the environment; the National Confederation of Cooperatives (Natcco) for its “Aflatoun Social and Financial Education Program” on community service; the Aski (Alalay sa Kaunlaran Inc.) Multipurpose Cooperative’s “Strengthening Agriculture Value Chains,” and the Cement Manufacturers Association of the Philippines Inc.’s “Road Safety Program,” cowinners on industry development; Natcco for its “E-Learning Program” on technology innovation; and the Ligao Women’s Club as change catalyst winner for its “Love for Women and Children” initiative.

The individual winners were Leonardo M. Nuestro Jr., executive director of the Philippine Nurses Association Inc., named the “Association Executive of the

Year”; and Ma. Alegria Sibal-Limjoco, vice chairman of the Philippine Retailers Association, as “Association Board Member of the Year”. Among other achievements, both winners highlighted the importance of human-resource development to nation-building.

Interestingly, the theme of the summit was “Race to Innovation: Winning in the Age of Disruption”. Indeed, if you try to decipher the crosscutting message that the winners of the Ang Susi Awards presented, it was how associations and membership organizations showed innovation in marshalling their members and in building partnerships for the good of society and country.

While the Ang Susi Awards shone the spotlight on the achievements of these associations and individuals, the challenge is to continue to reach out to and inspire other membership organizations to present their work and advocacies to a wider audience. Doing good is one thing and communicating this good is another; both are mutually reinforcing.