

The Heirs: How the Youth can Embrace the Role as the Successor of Environmental Problems.

The skies appear grey as oil gushes out of the tanks pouring loudly into the rivers. A feller's frown slowly turned into a smile as the loud brattling of the saw suddenly stops and the tree's trunk thuds into the ground. Years ago, people selfishly took advantage of nature's resources seemingly untroubled and naïve from the consequences of their dirty deeds.

Decades later and we're still suffering from pollution and destruction of nature despite the laws and rules that mandate against it. As various industries continue to grow and take valuable resources from nature, the environment also continues to suffer from pollution, toxic wastes, and other environmental impacts of industrialization. Not only does it affect the mother nature, but also society as a whole. The youth will have to live longer with these current environmental issues, so they need to come up with decisions for the sake of the environment and future generations. The youth plays a vital role in the implementation of these laws and disseminating the importance of doing so. Training the younger generation to become responsible leaders could be a way for them to solve major issues such as forest preservation, wildlife protection, and watershed conservation for once and for all.

Davao City has eight watersheds. These natural reservoirs supply our drinking water, water for agriculture and manufacturing, and even provide a home for endemic animals. But our waterways also face a variety of different threats, such as pollution and eroding streambanks. For example, Environmental Management Bureau submitted a report to the City Mayor's office to relocate the informal settlers who lived near or along the river banks due to their improper disposal of wastes. (Mindanews, 2015). These types of pollution sources are the leading cause of water quality issues impacting our city's waterways. Contaminated water could result in major health issues within communities, which the main reason why we should keep our aqueducts clean. One of the ways a young person could get involved is by conserving water every day. Taking shorter showers and turning the faucet off when not in

use helps reduce the energy used in delivering water which also decreases pollution and conserves fuel resources. Driving less and walking avoids water pollution from car exhausts and car leaks. Refraining from littering in rivers and learning proper waste disposal also goes a long way.

Making efforts in reducing pollution doesn't only benefit the watersheds, but another part of mother nature as well — the wildlife. Polluted and toxic air may cause respiratory problems to wild animals. Another issue faced by wildlife is habitat destruction, which is a product of industrialization. In addition to the production of goods that rely on slaughtering wild animals and the destruction of their habitat, deforestation, urbanization, and climate change have all contributed to the destruction of wildlife. One notable example of an animal facing the brink of extinction due to the destruction of their habitat is our country's very own Philippine Eagle. It is important to protect and conserve our wildlife to reduce the risks of endangering species and ensure that future generations may witness the wonders of the natural world. The youth could get involved by joining non-profit organizations, participating in movements and fundraising events for the preservation of endangered species, and organizing local talks to help raise awareness.

As mentioned above, the Philippine Eagle is an example of an endangered species. The main cause of their endangerment is deforestation, which is another major environmental concern. Over the course of the 20th century the forest cover of the Philippines dropped from 70 percent down to 20 percent. In total, 46 species are endangered, and 4 were already eradicated completely. 3.2 percent of total rainforest has been left. (Deforestation in the Philippines, n.d). Forests, aside from providing shelter to various animals, also protect the land from erosion. Deforestation withdraws this benefit for the exchange of wood for industrial purposes, resulting in communities nearby to become prone to drought, floods, and loss of biodiversity. Youths around the world are taking action against deforestation by

getting involved in IGOs and NGOs in reforestation and forest preservation activities with local communities.

If nature becomes destroyed, its ecosystem will fall apart as well. We, humans, depend on a healthy ecosystem to have a healthy environment. If we let our environment to become contaminated, we also risk our own health. This is a very important factor in determining our city's urban livability. Treeless landscapes and congested highways not only affect the city's environment but its inhabitants as well.

The young generation will be the future bearer of the consequences by the present actions done by their seniors. Therefore, they must get involved and advocate for the aforementioned movements and make appropriate measures to create an environmentally-sustainable and bright future to avoid repeating history. Given the vital role that the youth possesses, they must be educated and informed about these environmental challenges thus helping them to develop solutions for the greater good in behalf of the following generations. The world needs passionate leaders and an environmentally literate society united and dedicated to build a vibrant, nature-friendly, and sustainable environment for the Earth and humankind. The key to the future we hope to achieve could be our youth, the hope of our nation. And maybe, after all, we don't have to also be the descendants of the selfish and cruel manner our forefathers adhered to.

Works Cited

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