

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

PeaceBuilders America on Saipan to recruit members

Thursday, February 10, 2005

Praise people, give up put-downs, seek wise people, notice hurts and help others.

These guidelines for daily living form part of the pledge of a true peace builder shared by the training directors of PeacePartners Inc. who are in town for a weeklong workshop and recruitment drive.

PeacePartners Inc. senior directors Monica Andrews, Claudette Parker Powers and Donna Burcher flew in from Long Beach, California to hold a series of peace building workshops for teachers, school principals and other school officials.

The PeaceBuilder workshop for teachers was held Tuesday at the Pacific Island Club Resort, which was organized by PeaceBuilders members from William S. Reyes Elementary School, San Antonio Elementary School and Koblerville Elementary School. These schools are the current members of PeaceBuilders in the CNMI.

Andrews said that PeaceBuilders has over 580 school members and would like to recruit more members from the CNMI.

Over 100 teachers and some principals attended Tuesday's event, said Andrews.

"Hopefully these teachers will be able to apply and transfer what they've learned from this session," she said, stressing the need to equip teachers with the knowledge on how to be good role models in their schools.

Headquartered in California, PeaceBuilders is a popular anti-violence youth program approved for the federally funded Safe and Drug-Free Schools Act. It is a community-based program launched to shift school environments to a more peaceful, productive and safe place for children, as well as parents, school staff, and faculty.

Andrews said that PeaceBuilders has already achieved a lot of

transformation in society, particularly in schools. She said that, in order to have a more motivating and peaceful school environment, teachers must be the role models for peace.

One subject that the workshop focused on was "noticing hurts" in children. To illustrate, the speakers mounted a paper doll named "Bluey" on the wall, then the participants were asked to say something bad to the paper doll and tear a piece off it. The participants were then asked to put back the pieces they tore from "Bluey" as they say something good to the doll.

"This is Bluey now," said Burcher, pointing to the doll. She said that, in spite of participants saying something good about Bluey, the doll still looked torn. This means that teachers should prevent putting down children because even if they take their harsh words back, the damage has already been done, said Burcher.

The three PeaceBuilders directors also visited some schools after the Tuesday workshop. They conducted another training at Hopwood Junior High School yesterday and at Kagman Elementary School today. They will conduct another workshop on Saturday for the parents and some members of the community from 8:30am to 12pm, also at the PIC.

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