

APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

MAKING THEIR MARK: ALUMNI IN THE SPOTLIGHT

DR. ABELAINE VENIDA TABLIZO

MIRIAM COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL 1999

BY JANEL SANTOS, CHIRHO SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER



DR. ABELAINE VENIDA TABLIZO

With steadfast support and love, Dr. Abelaine Venida Tablizo, a Miriam College alumna, has undeniably touched many hearts through her outstanding service in raising awareness about leprosy and striving to eliminate this neglected disease worldwide. Her exceptional advocacy continues to make a difference for people battling leprosy in the Philippines. Dr. Tablizo has been working tirelessly for thirteen years, serving as the President of Rizal Dermatology Services, Training, and Research Inc., fulfilling duties as the head of the Leprosy Unit of the Rizal Medical Center, and continuing to inaugurate the 'Hansen's Disease (HD) club,' with hundreds of HD patient club members in her first year of residency.

Dr. Tablizo continues to work on finding hope for this neglected bacterial infection by collaborating with the Department of Health, as they aim

to eliminate leprosy by 2030. Moreover, it is noted to be an unusual disease with stigma due to its tie to religion, perceiving the symbol as pernicious. This stigma casts down the vital role of seeking correct medical care, leading to the development of physical, psychological, and social disabilities and debilitation for patients with leprosy.

Although it has been strenuous for them to untangle this crisis, her endeavor is still to provide assistance by training healthcare workers nationwide pertaining to its diagnosis, management, and clinical pathways. Her objective as a doctor has consistently been to ensure that patients receive proper care and supervision.

Dr. Tablizo embodies what a true Knoller is all about and how she made an impact, bringing Miriam College pride by showing kindness and goodness in her work as a doctor and a mother of four. One of her experiences that underscored her career was representing our country at the Philippine Centennial celebration in Alberta, Canada during her fourth year of high school, which deepened her perception of life and how we can be an inspiration to others and flourish.

She believes that God is the center of everything in life. Her hope is to encourage Knollers to believe that pouring your heart with full dedication, perseverance, compassion, and love is a way to prosper, as it will not just allow us to attain goals, but to reach the fullest potential of happiness and contentment. Moreover, she emphasizes that finding purpose in life is essential for living it to the fullest.

APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

Alumni
Engagement
Office



MAKING THEIR MARK: ALUMNI IN THE SPOTLIGHT

MS. KATRINA TALA OCAMPO MIRIAM COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL 1999

BY RASHA LAZARO, FEATURES WRITER OF CHI RHO

As a full-time professor in the University of the Philippines (UP), a training and organization consultant, and one of the Maryknoll-Miriam College Alumni Association's (MMCAA) Board of Directors, Katrina Tala Ocampo believes that being the people's manager is to bring out the best in people.

In her twenty-one years of experience in human resources management, Tala's unshaken goal was to develop people-centric and driven leaders. She felt that college was the best place to start nurturing this audience, "I feel like it's my mission, as a lot of people in the corporate world are not equipped or they don't have prior education in managing people." Her guiding principles were the effective use of the self, pakikikapwa, and social justice.

Since her years in Maryknoll, Tala has been exposed to stewardship and learned to uphold the interests of the environment, the urban poor, and her community. Creating a meaningful workplace is a combined effort of dedication and inspiration. She sees her responsibility in the industry as advocacy from the Heavenly Father, and the people in her midst inspire her desire to create a better place at work. In particular with business, Tala asserts that "wherever we are, we impact equity and inclusion and to be ethical people in the field we are in."

Picturing her proudest moments, Tala sees it in her students, colleagues, and recruits. Seeing them succeed and take on great heights in their career makes Tala feel honored, especially when they consider her their mentor. She highlights that understanding her personal and professional role in the industry helps her serve the people better; when one is aware of the potential of their impact, it brings them to what is needed in their environment.

For Tala, a Maryknoll student is someone who balances doing what is worthwhile and creative. Being attuned to their community and responding accordingly is part of the essence of the Miriam culture, yet it also includes rejoicing in the art and festivity of life. Tala embodies this ardent description in her mission to guide the future generation, as she exerts tenacity in her work with an appreciation for the joys she has encountered.



MS. KATRINA TALA OCAMPO

APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

MMCAA BULLETIN

BY MS. PATRICIA D. SIANGHIO, MCHS 1999



MMCAA's first fundraiser with 9Works Theatrical was a hit. The April 19th show at 8PM exceeded ticket sales expectations, wowing the audience with vibrant performances. Cheers filled the air, marking a successful night. With excitement for the May 18th show at 8PM building, organizers and volunteers geared up for another memorable event, fueled by community support and artistic passion.

The recent MC Talk, in collaboration with MCHS 1999, centered on a vital topic: Women's Mental Load. This session defined mental load as the unseen cognitive and emotional work involved in managing daily life, both at home and at work.

Panelists Iza Calzado and Mia Claravall Reyes, guided by facilitator Tala Ocampo, shared personal insights and strategies for navigating this complex responsibility. They shed light on the challenges and societal impacts of carrying such a significant burden.

As we strive for understanding and support, let's continue these discussions to empower and uplift one another.

MC Talks: Anything Under the Kalachuchi Tree

Q2: On Parenthood & Motherhood

June 15, 10am to 11am
Motherhood and Everything Else that comes with it ☺





Iza Calzado
Actress



Mia Claravall Reyes
Tattoo & Culture



APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

Alumni
Engagement
Office



MMCAA BULLETIN



in partnership with MC ILAW Center

Self-care & Wellness Meeting

Embrace your holistic self-care journey.

August 3, 2024
10:00 GMT / 11:00 AM CET

via Zoom Meeting 



INTRODUCING THE MMCAA EUROPE'S FIRST 2024 PROJECT!

KUKBUK: Kultura at Kwentong Kusina ng mga Knollers sa Europa

KUKBUK PROJECT HEAD: ENGLE DAWBER

COOKING SOON



"The photos of the food are owned by individual members of MMCAA Europe and should not be reproduced further."



PROJECT HEAD: PAM GOTANGCO-HUPP

SEPT. 20-22, 2024

MMCAA EUROPE'S FATIMA PILGRIMAGE Trip Program

- SEPTEMBER 20, 2024
AM Arrival in Lisbon
PM Afternoon Tea with Philippine Embassy Lisbon and/or Fado Dinner
- SEPTEMBER 21, 2024
Whole Day Fatima Trip
- SEPTEMBER 22, 2024
AM Group Breakfast
PM Flight back home

*DATES ARE FINAL BUT PROGRAM SUBJECT TO CHANGE



REGISTER NOW!

mmcaa.europe@gmail.com

APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

Alumni
Engagement
Office



MMCAA BULLETIN

A promotional graphic for the MMCAA Bulletin. It features a dark blue background with a golden, sparkling light effect. In the top left corner is the Maryknoll-Miriam College Alumni Association logo. The central text reads 'PERKS-IN-THE-BOX YOU'LL LOVE' and 'Unboxing happening on Sept. 1, 2024'. To the right is a large, wrapped gift box with a golden ribbon, surrounded by labels for various perks: Dining, MC Facilities, Beauty, Health & Wellness, Fashion, Travel, and Lifestyle & Home. At the bottom left, it says 'EXCLUSIVE to MMCAA cardholders' and 'Get your ALUMNI CARD now!'. Below this are contact details: a phone icon, the number 89306272 loc. 1187, an email icon, and the addresses alumni@mc.edu.ph and alumni.mmcaa1979@gmail.com. In the bottom right corner is a sample of the Alumni Card, which includes the college logo, the name Maria Katigobera, the ID number 0011-1979, and the status MEMBER.

APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

MCHS BATCH 1974: SHARING LOVE AND CARE TO THE PARK 7 DAYCARE

BY THE MARYKNOLL-MIRIAM IDENTITY, SPIRITUALITY, AND MISSION OFFICE (MMISMO))

Last 11 April 2024, several alumni from Maryknoll High School (MCHS) Batch 1974 visited the Daycare Center of Park 7, one of the partner communities of Miriam College Loyola Heights Campus. They were accompanied by the Maryknoll-Miriam Identity, Spirituality, and Mission Office (MMISMO) and Dr. Marge Acosta, Director of the Alumni Engagement Office.

The program started with a short prayer led by a student from the Daycare Center, followed by welcome remarks from one of the volunteer teachers, Ate Didir. A simple introduction came from MCHS 1974 alumna Ning Encarnacion who explained that they were visiting the community to extend assistance and provide immediate needs of the Daycare Center.

The children expressed their gratitude to the alumni, parents, and volunteer teachers by presenting song and dance performances, as well as reciting poetry. To conclude the special morning, Coach Mac Gepuela and Ms. Jojie Flores of MCHS 1974 distributed some snacks such as bananas, sandwiches, and Yakult, and handed out coloring books and crayons to the children.

After the Maryknoll High School Batch 1974 provided selfless and generous acts of service, the Park 7 community felt happy and grateful. They recognized the Christlike charity and heroism demonstrated by the volunteers. The Maryknoll High School Batch 1974 will continue to live the Maryknoll legacy of service notably this year as golden jubilarians.



APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

ZOOMBA PARA SA MC HOSTED BY MCHS 1999

BY SHARYN TRACY MACARAEG, ZOOMBA CORE TEAM
PHOTOS FROM SHARYN MACARAEG AND LIANNE BACORRO



Batch 1999 together for their love of dance...Para Sa MC

As the overhead fans whirled to life, and emitted that much-needed breeze on that fine-summer morning, I said to myself "This is it". After a little over a month's preparation, this event is about to pan out, and I marvel how it came to be.

You see, I wanted a barkada-initiated fundraiser, and my mind zeroed in on Zumba. Why not? We have a celebrity friend who can host and one of her life's passions is dancing. Then the venue was a given: High School Covered Court, but to our batch, it was called Sportscom. It was the same space where a lot of our much-treasured memories were held: Boosters-cheerleading practices that went on until late in the evening; Intramurals; and nondescript day to day events that we wish we could relive, just one more time.

And so Zoomba Para sa MC was born. The purpose was to reconnect with ladies from our batch (MCHS 1999) after 25 years; to revisit Sportscom; for alumni living abroad to join in on the fun via zoom. Simple right? Boy was I wrong. After two weeks upon launching the event, we only had 2 registered participants (and one of them was me). It truly was humbling. I had to go to the Lord in prayer and ask "How can I glorify You in this?". And out of nowhere a batchmate living in Los Angeles; Angelee, called me up. "O si Dr. Belo, she wants to make an appearance at your event". My response: "Ha?"

That was a link in the chain of divine providence. As the group continued to work together; the talents we were gifted with started to emerge: Suzy naturally slid into the role of marketing, Nika was a master of logistics, Rhia and Ivanna played key roles in sponsorships, Iza and Angelee were the voice of the group that connected us with Dr. Belo and her team. Meanwhile, Madelle Paltu-ob was the gateway that tapped the international Zumba community to sign up. And one week prior, we were racking up the much-needed registrants, that caused me to say "Thank you Lord!"

APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

ZOOMBA PARA SA MC HOSTED BY MCHS 1999

BY SHARYN TRACY MACARAEG, ZOOMBA CORE TEAM
PHOTOS FROM SHARYN MACARAEG AND LIANNE BACORRO

So come May 5, the core group huddled in the holding room, covering the event with prayer. We sought the Lord's guidance, protection and blessing. After unanimously saying "Amen", the group was in a blur of activity: welcoming Dr. Vicki and Cristalle Belo, manning the zoom, overseeing the tech booth, handing out sponsor packets and making sure the guests were welcomed properly.

As the Zumba beats blasted from the sound system, and Madelle took the stage, my heart sank. The image projected in the zoom feed was garbled, and the community began to complain. I had to make a quick decision and offer refunds if things did not improve. Thankfully, after the 8-minute mark, it did. And so, I was afforded time to relax, observe and enjoy the fruit of our labor.

We had an 82-year old grandma, still vibrant, and keeping up with the steps. Kids were also in attendance with their families, and it was a sight to behold. Everyone, including those who joined us in zoom, were having a good time. Even more, when the raffle prizes were handed out. Because we had generous sponsors, almost everyone took home a prize.

The one take away I have from all this, is that the Lord is sovereign. He caused the success of this event, and beyond what I envisioned and expected. So this verse comes to mind, from Romans 11:36 "For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen."



Everyone in attendance from all age group!



Handing out tokens to key guests: Madelle Paltu-Ob (Zoomba Instructor and MC alumna) and Dr. Vicki Belo



The Zoomba core team. From left to right Suzy De Vera, Rhia Hautea, Iza Calzado-Wintle, Dr. Vicki Belo, Cristalle Belo-Pitt, Ivanna Dela Torre, Nika Tabaquin, Sharyn Macaraeg

APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING MC

ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT OFFICE PARTNERS WITH CHI RHO PUBLICATIONS

BY DWAYNE AYAG, CHIRHO MANAGING EDITOR

Last February 2024, Chi Rho Publications formed a partnership with the Alumni Engagement Office (AEO) as an official contributor to the AEO and the Maryknoll/Miriam College Alumni Association (MMCAA)'s Galing MC Newsletter A.Y. 2023-2024 quarterly issues.

With the guidance of the publication's moderator, Mr. Aron Garchitorena; Dr. Ma. Margarita Acosta, the Director of the Alumni Engagement Office (AEO); Ms. Lesh Gabud, the Program and Communications Coordinator of AEO; and Ms. Maricel Francisco, the Coordinator of the Office of Student Affairs (OSA), the partnership was formally initiated and commemorated through a photo-op with all representatives taken last April 12, 2024.

This partnership was proposed due to the publication's active participation in covering news and events relevant to the Miriam College community and beyond, establishing their continuous effort in bringing news and views that matter.

The Editorial Board of Chi Rho Publications worked hand-in-hand with the AEO in interviewing beloved alumnae: Julia Sucgang-Bonoan, Thea Guanzon, Tala Ocampo, and Abelaine Venida Tablizo who will be included in the "Alumni in the Spotlight", featuring their diverse backgrounds and experiences with MC and representing their continuous uphold of MC's core values.

Read more about the stories, accomplishments, and milestones of outstanding Knoller graduates in the upcoming Galing MC Newsletter's 'Alumni in the Spotlight' features!



Official photoshoot at the President's Lobby with the Alumni Engagement Office and representatives from Chi Rho Publications' Editorial Board.

From left to right: Chi Rho Publications Moderator Aj Garchitorena, Janell Raicheal Santos (Social Media Manager), Princess Ruth Nacional (Associate Editor), Bea Dianne Hilado (Head Photographer), Karina Daniel Melencio (Editor-in-Chief), and Alumni Engagement Office Director Dr. Ma. Margarita Alvina-Acosta

APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

MIRIAM COLLEGE INTERNATIONAL STUDIES GARNERS RECOGNITION AT THE 73RD MODEL UNITED NATIONS OF THE FAR WEST

BY ZOE NICOLA M. VERZO, MCHEU INTERNATIONAL STUDIES



*Courtesy Call at the Philippine Consulate General
in San Francisco*



*Before the Diplomatic Dinner
of the 73rd MUNFW*

Miriam College International Studies students, Danica Jemaima Jaramilla, Danielle Noche, Dominique Althea Policarpio, Maureen Rosario, and Zoe Verzo, recently made waves as they represented the Philippines and their institution at the prestigious 73rd Session of the Model United Nations of the Far West (MUNFW). Held at Hyatt Regency Hotel in San Francisco, California, from April 19th to 23rd, 2024, the event centered around the theme "Human Security: Our Shared Responsibility in the 21st Century."

Selected through a rigorous screening process that evaluated their academic prowess and interpersonal skills, these students underwent intensive training, which included workshops, simulations, and policy drafting. Guided by former MUNFW delegate and chair, Sir Rej Cortez-Torrecampo, alongside Mirma Tica-Ortiz, MCIS-MUN Training Coordinator and Faculty Adviser, the students honed their abilities to represent their delegation effectively on the global stage.

During the conference, the Miriam College delegation represented Sweden across various committees, including the General Assembly, First Committee, Human Rights Committee, International Organization for Migration, and Food and Agriculture Organization. Their exemplary pre-documents earned them the honor of addressing the Opening Plenary Session as representatives of the Western European and other regional groups, securing them the prestigious Plenary Speaker Certificate.

Their dedication and diplomatic finesse did not go unnoticed, as they were also awarded the Slanczka Achievement Certificate during the Diplomat's Banquet for their outstanding academic performance, diplomatic skills, and cooperative spirit throughout the conference.

The MUNFW experience provided these students with a platform to engage in meaningful debates, collaborate on global challenges, and enhance their public speaking, negotiation, and research skills. Beyond academic growth, they formed connections with peers from diverse backgrounds, fostering a deeper understanding of international relations and leaving a lasting impact.

Prior to the conference, the students had the opportunity to engage with officials at the Philippine Consulate General in San Francisco, discussing pressing national and international issues and gaining insights into the Filipino community's endeavors in the United States. They were welcomed by Consul General Neil Ferrer, Consul Rowena Pangilinan-Daquipil, and Vice Consul Adrian Baccay. This visit underscored the importance of diplomacy and collaboration in addressing global issues.

Additionally, the students received overwhelming support from the MMCAA West Coast during their trip, reinforcing their sense of community and solidarity. A visit to the Maryknoll Residence in Los Altos, CA, further enriched their experience, providing them with perspectives on global issues and inspiring a renewed commitment to effect positive change in their communities.

As the students bid farewell to the MUNFW journey, they carry with them not only memories of a transformative experience but also a strengthened resolve to contribute to a more just and equitable world. Their journey exemplifies the power of youth engagement in shaping international discourse and driving positive change on a global scale.

APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

ALUMNA DONATES FASHION BOOKS TO HEU LMC

Prompted by a student asking for a list of good fashion books, Mitzi Quilendrino-Bustos (CSC, MCGS '90, MCHS '94) while serving as Sustainable Wear speaker for the Bachelor of Design, had a bright idea of turning over her own collection of fashion books to the Higher Education Unit (HEU). This comes after closing her couture atelier and retail brand in 2022 and being part of the fashion industry for almost two decades.

The turnover of 20 fashion books happened on April 26 at 8:30AM in the Miriam College Loyola Heights campus. Present to receive the books were Dean Francis Evangelista of the School of Arts, Sciences, and Education (SASE), Ms. Myra Navarro, head of the HEU Library and Media Center, and Dr. Marge Acosta, Director for Alumni Engagement.

Plans are underway for Mitzi to engage actively with the students and faculty of the Bachelor of Design. Dean Francis Evangelista shared that this kind of active engagement of our alumnae to our academic programs will benefit to a great extent our students.



Mitzi Bustos (second from the right) donates her collection of fashion books to the HEU Library.

APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

MIRIAM COLLEGE 1974 GOLDEN JUBILARIANS DONATION

BY MS. MILLIE THOMECZEK, MARYKNOLL COLLEGE 1974

Golden Jubilarians Coll '74 kick off celebrations with a donation of 200 narra saplings for the Miriam College Alviera (MCA) Basic Education Campus on June 28, 2024.

President Lullah del Rosario received sapling samples from the batch headed by Menchu Genato Henson. A signing of the Deed of Donation was also done at the Alviera Country Club.

Also attending for MC: Mr Justin Villano, principal of MCA BEU and Mirma Ortiz, Student Recruitment Officer of MCA.

It was a good opportunity for the batch core team to visit the campus construction site, most specifically the planned chapel grounds which the Batch hopes to help landscape.



APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

HEU STUDENT ACTIVITIES: **2024 JOB FAIR**

BY MARICEL FRANCISCO – STUDENT ACTIVITIES AND ATHLETICS COORDINATOR

The Office of Student Affairs (OSA) in the Higher Education Unit (HEU) organized this year's Job Fair for the Fourth-Year students. Mock interviews were conducted on April 1, 2024. This activity aimed to prepare students for job interviews as they pursue their chosen professions after graduation.

The students from the Yellow Batch arrived in business attire and carried their resumes. The interviewers, who were mostly alumni from Miriam College, participated in simulated interviews and provided feedback to the students.

Everyone enjoyed the experience, and the exercise proved to be successful.

Snapshots taken during the mock interview.



APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

GENDER AND COMM ALUMNI SPEAKERS

CONTENT FROM [HTTPS://WEB.FACEBOOK.COM/CHIRHO.MC](https://web.facebook.com/chirho.mc)

Students of COMM 116, led by Ms. Lynda Catindig-Garcia, organized their inaugural event titled "Empowering Women in Communication: A Dialogue on Success" on April 20, 2024. The event featured five distinguished Miriam Alumnae who shared their experiences in various communication fields. After initial formalities including an opening prayer, the national anthem, and welcoming remarks, Michelle de Pacina, a journalist based in New York, spoke about journalism, authenticity, and seizing opportunities in her career. Following her, Jamiya Umali, an e-commerce specialist and podcast host, emphasized the empowering aspects of all-girls education and breaking through gender-based stereotypes in communication skills.

Mica Dizon, a Junior Art Director, reflected on her journey to becoming a creative director and highlighted the importance of teamwork and productivity strategies in the workplace. Marjorie Umali, who holds multiple roles including marketing officer and SK Kagawad, shared insights on setting goals and investing in experiences for personal and professional growth. Ria Kaye dela Rosa, founder of Simmer Studios, discussed overcoming identity crises and creative blocks to build her brand, emphasizing the value of meaningful relationships in achieving ambitious goals.

The event concluded with an open forum where students engaged with the speakers on topics like creative design, professional identity, and overcoming fear of failure. Certificates of recognition were awarded to the speakers, followed by a photo opportunity, and gratitude expressed to attendees and the organizing class for their successful event.



APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

MS. GAIL VILLANUEVA GIVES A TALK TO GRADE 4 STUDENTS DURING THE COMMUNICATION ARTS WEEK

BY KLINT JAM C. MENGULLO, READING SUPERVISOR OF GRADE SCHOOL



The Communication Arts Week this school year, held from April 15 to 19, concluded with an alumna author sharing her expertise in writing. Ms. Gail Villanueva, one of the founders of the Philippine Blog Awards, is the author of the successful novels *My Fate According to the Butterfly*, *Lulu Sinagtala*, and *Sugar and Spite*.

During the segment, she quickly drew the attention of the Grade 4 girls by sharing her journey as an author, beginning with her time as an MC student and continuing to when she fully embraced the life of a professional writer. Her life story became more relatable to the aspiring young writers when she shared her personal struggles as she ventured

toward achieving her dream. A spark of inspiration was kindled in the hearts of the audience as she constantly reminded them that every small idea can have an underlying greater purpose.

Ms. Gail's words truly inspired and fueled the passion of every young lady who attended the session.



MCGS Grade 4 students listen as Ms. Gail, this year's CA Week guest author, shares her novels with the batch

APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

MCGS GRADUATION 2024 SPEAKER

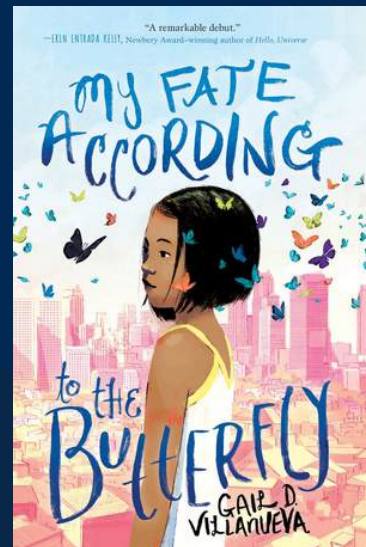
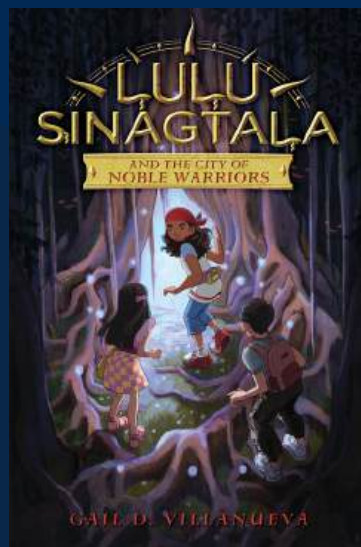
MS. GAIL VILLANUEVA

MIRIAM COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL 1999

Ms. Gail Villanueva is this year's grade school graduation speaker. She shared a deeply personal narrative of overcoming childhood struggles and embracing transformation. She recounted her initial difficulties with reading and the pivotal role of family support in nurturing her passion for storytelling. Despite grappling with self-doubt and the fear of rejection, she pursued her dream of becoming a writer, driven by a desire to give voice to underrepresented narratives.

Ms. Gail experienced the transformative power of perseverance and resilience in the face of adversity. It resonated with the audience, conveying the message that challenges are opportunities for personal growth and development. Encouraging the graduates to approach the future with courage and authenticity, the speaker inspired them to navigate life's uncertainties with determination and a steadfast commitment to their dreams.

Her speech concluded with heartfelt congratulations to the Miriam College Class of 2024, leaving a lasting impression of hope and empowerment as they prepared to embark on their next chapter.



Some of Ms. Gail Villanueva's works

[READ FULL SPEECH HERE](#)

APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

MCHS GRADUATION 2024 SPEAKER

MS. MARIA PAULINA E. DEL MONTE

MIRIAM COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL 2007



Ms. Maria Paulina E. del Monte, professionally known as Pola del Monte, is a distinguished alumna of Miriam College High School. Pola's educational journey began at the Child Study Center, continued through Grade School, and culminated in High School in 2007. She studied at the University of the Philippines, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in English Studies, specializing in Language, in 2011. She recently obtained a graduate certificate in Business Communications from Harvard University to further study Leadership Communication, Development Communication, and Negotiation and Conflict Resolution.

Pola is not only a journalist but is also a national consultant for social media for United Nations Women in the Philippines. Her projects are dedicated to empower women and girls using communication strategy as a tool. Her impactful work in media literacy education has earned her recognition as a "Woman of Influence" by Cosmopolitan for the year 2024. She is currently also nominated for her "Fearless Social Media Account" in Nylon Manila's Big Bold Brave Awards 2024.

Her writings, which focus on social issues, particularly feminism and the women's movement in the Philippines, have graced the pages of prestigious publications including CNN, Cosmopolitan and Vogue. She has led editorial campaigns on breast cancer and mental health awareness and has written about the challenges and opportunities of women leaders in society.

Beyond her writing, Pola is the founder of Miss Chief Editor—a platform that started as a humble Instagram page and has grown into a respected source of information on the critical role of language, media, and communication in shaping our society today. Through her leadership, she has built a strong community of over 17,000 followers including influential Filipino women including Olympic Gold Medalist, Hidilyn Diaz, and UN Goodwill Ambassador Karen Davila. Her commitment extends beyond social media as she conducts workshops for NGOs and Fortune 500 multinationals. Her social action activities include mentoring students and conducting pro bono workshops in public schools and state universities. Her dedication to share her advocacy to lesser-privileged communities is truly inspiring.



[READ FULL SPEECH HERE](#)

APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

Alumni
Engagement
Office



MCN COMMENCEMENT 2024 SPEAKER **MS. KATHLEEN CAMILLE M. RODRIGUEZ** **MIRIAM COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL 2012**

Ms. Kathleen Camille Rodriguez is a prominent figure in Philippine football, having represented the national team since the age of 14. She played a pivotal role in qualifying the Philippines for the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup and achieving a historic gold medal at the 2022 AFF Women's Championship. Beyond sports, Cam is an alumna of Miriam College and Ateneo de Manila University, where she excelled academically and adopted a commitment to service. She now balances her roles as a mental performance coach, sportscaster, and entrepreneur, advocating for women empowerment and youth development through sports.



Cam emphasized the importance of reflection and posed meaningful questions about life's purpose and direction, encouraging graduates to embrace moments of pause and introspection.

She shared two valuable lessons with the graduates. Firstly, the gift of reflection allows individuals to navigate life's challenges and decisions with clarity and wisdom. Secondly, she spoke about the power of trust, surrender, and resilience based on her personal experience as a football player striving for the World Cup. Despite setbacks, Cam highlighted the importance of perseverance and trusting in a higher purpose.

Cam concluded her speech by celebrating the achievements of Batch 2024 and encouraging them to embrace their future with bravery and resilience. She reminded them that mistakes are part of the human experience but should not deter one from pursuing dreams and aspirations. Overall, her message resonated deeply with the graduating class, inspiring them to trust in themselves, their journey, and their faith as they embark on new endeavors.



[READ FULL SPEECH HERE](#)

APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

MCHEU COMMENCEMENT 2024 SPEAKER

MS. MYRA LIZA STO. TOMAS
MIRIAM COLLEGE 2006



Ms. Myra Liza Sto. Tomas, or “Liza” is a graduate of Miriam College, Batch 2006 and a Certified Public Accountant. She is currently an Audit and Assurance Partner of KPMG Philippines, RG Manabat & Co., one of the biggest auditing firm in the Philippines. She has 17 years of experience in public practice and handles clients in various industries such as power, consumer markets, retail, shared services center, construction, manufacturing, educational institution, and many others. Her portfolio includes local and international clients, publicly listed clients, private entities and public interest entities. She also headed the audit methodology trainings and specialized industry such as BPO in KPMG and had been a resource speaker in different Schools and Universities. She is a key member of “KPMG’s Internship Program” on which students from Miriam College had been successfully included as well.

On the side, she is currently the Treasurer of Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants Metro Manila Region - Geographical Area Office (PICPA MMR-GAO) and an assistant secretary and the “chair” of the CSR activities for the PICPA Eastern Metro Manila Chapter (PICPA EMMC).

Myra, shared career advice with the 2024 graduates:

1. **Invest in yourself:** Work hard and see overtime as an investment in your skills.
2. **Choose your path:** Follow your own preferences rather than comparing yourself to others.
3. **Be resilient:** Face challenges head-on and persevere through difficulties.
4. **Network:** Build connections for career growth and mentorship.
5. **Generation Gap:** Embrace differences between generations for mutual learning.
6. **Give back:** Engage in community service for personal fulfillment.
7. **Integrity:** Uphold ethical standards to protect your reputation.
8. **Health:** Take care of yourself to enjoy success.
9. **Gratitude:** Appreciate those who supported your journey.
10. **Self-confidence:** Maintain belief in yourself throughout your career.

In conclusion, graduates were encouraged to find their place in the world, having earned their graduation spot through hard work.



[READ FULL SPEECH HERE](#)

APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

Alumni
Engagement
Office



MIRIAM COLLEGE PARTNERSHIPS: SEDA VERTIS NORTH



In line with the Maryknoll/Miriam College
98th Foundation Year,
we are happy to inform you that
we have partnered with
Seda Vertis North for you to avail a
**SPECIAL DISCOUNT RATE
USING THE**

**MC100
PROMO CODE**

*VALID FROM JANUARY - DECEMBER 2024

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Go to Seda Vertis North's official website:
www.sedahotels.com/hotel/view/9/seda-vertis-north
2. Select your preferred stay dates and type in the **promo code MC100**.
3. Click **OK**, **DONE** and then click **CHECK AVAILABILITY**
4. Availability and the special rates should appear

SCAN HERE:



APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

Alumni
Engagement
Office



MIRIAM COLLEGE PARTNERSHIPS: PHILIPPINE AIRLINES

Philippine Airlines Corporate Fares

Eligibility: Eligible travelers include Miriam College students, faculty, and employees. Additionally, this eligibility can extend to family members of the Miriam College community, provided that their travel is arranged through our appointed travel agent.

Ticketing: The use of Corporate Fares is exclusively available for ticketing **through the appointed IATA Agent of Miriam College—Emphasis Travel & Tours Inc.**

Discounts: Miriam College is entitled to discounts applicable to Booking Class Codes specified in the rate sheet, excluding event-specific fares. However, corporate discounts do not apply to senior citizen, child, and infant fares.

FARE BRANDS				BUSINESS CLASS				COMFORT CLASS		REGULAR ECONOMY CLASS															
BOOKING CLASS				J	C	D	I	W	N	Y	S	L	M	H	Q	V	B	X	K	E	T	U			
POINT TO POINT		TRIP TYPE	Applicable Corporate Discount on Published Fares																						
ORIGIN	DESTINATION																								
PH	LAX, SFO, JFK, HNL, GUM, YVR, YYZ or w.	OW/RT	10%	5%	5%																				
	POM, SYD, MEL, BNE, PER or w.																								
	RUH, DMM, DXB, DOH or w.																								
	NRT, HND, KIX, FUK, NGO, CTS or w.																								
	PEK, PVG, JIN, XMN, CAN or w.																								
	HKG, MFM, TPE, SIN, CGK, DPS, SGN, BKK, KUL, HAN, PNH or w.																								
	ALL POINT in the PHILIPPINES																								5%

Exclusions: Corporate Fares exclude government taxes, airport fees, and other applicable charges.

Applicability: Corporate Fares are applicable for Individual Travel only. Rates for Group Travel (minimum of ten passengers on one flight) shall be quoted separately.

For more information you may contact the Office of Institutional Partnerships and Resource Mobilization (OIPRM) at 89306272 local 1210

APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

MIRIAM COLLEGE PARTNERSHIPS: PHILIPPINE AIRLINES

Group Concessions (for a minimum of ten passengers on one flight): Special privileges on domestic and international flights include:

- Professional Account Executive

Corporate Account Executive : Eugenio Antonio V. Reyes

E-mail Add. : eugenio_reyes@pal.com.ph

- Lounge access
- Booking class upgrades
- Choice seats
- Dedicated check-in counter
- Extra baggage (choice of piece or weight system)
- Custom headrest
- In-flight announcement

Honorary Mabuhay Miles Membership: Accumulated miles will be used by the person nominated by the institution.

Reissuance and Changes: For any ticket re-issuance request, please refer to the issuing travel agent. Change fees are waived for the following Fare families: Comfort Class (W, N) and Economy Flex (Y, S, L, M, H). First rebooking/Change fee is waived for Business Value (I) and Economy Value (Q, V, B, X) only. This includes changes in time, date, and routing and is assessed on a transactional basis.

APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

Alumni
Engagement
Office



MC100 MERCHANDISE

MC100 Aquaflask

Php1,400



MC100 Noritake Dinnerware Set

Php36,999



MC100 Heirloom Collection



MC KALACHUCHI OUR
LADY OF MARYKNOLL

Php29,200



MC CHIRHO
FOR CHRIST HERS

Php25,000



MC RELICARIO OUR
LADY OF MARYKNOLL

Php41,500

FOR INQUIRIES CONTACT VALENTINE SALUDAR AT
VSALUDAR@MC.EDU.PH OR 89306272 LOC 1189

<https://www.mc.edu.ph/alumni/>

APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

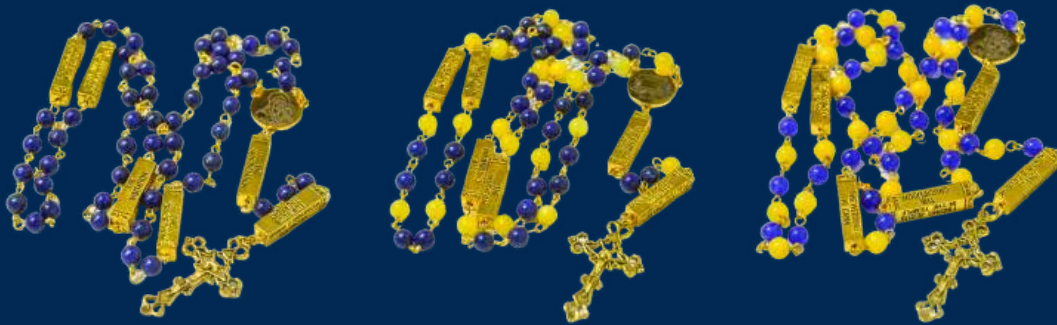
Alumni
Engagement
Office



MC100 MERCHANDISE

MC100 Rosaries

Php1,110



Personalize your MC100 Rosaries for only **Php1,910**

MC100 Scarf

Php2,800



MC100 Twilly

Php1,500



FOR INQUIRIES CONTACT VALENTINE SALUDAR AT
VSALUDAR@MC.EDU.PH OR **89306272 LOC 1189**

<https://www.mc.edu.ph/alumni/>

APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

Alumni
Engagement
Office



MC100 MERCHANDISE PAYMENT DETAILS

To confirm your reservation of the MC100 Merch items, you may pay through the following:

Bank Transfer

Bank Name: Bank of the Philippine Islands

Branch Name: Loyola Katipunan Branch

Branch Address: J. Escaler St cor Katipunan Ave, Loyola Heights, QC

Account Name: Miriam College Foundation Inc.

Peso Account Number: 3081119227

USD Account Number: 3084037531

SWIFT CODE: BOPIPHMM

Once you have already deposited or remitted the funds, kindly provide a copy of the proof of donation including the following details for the OR issuance.

Send To: Valentine Saludar

Email Address: vsaludar@mc.edu.ph

Cc: macosta@mc.edu.ph

Name of the Payor: _____

Description/Purpose: (Example, payment for MC100 Aquaflask)



APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING MC

MCHS GRADUATION 2024 SPEECH

MS. MARIA PAULINA E. DEL MONTE
MIRIAM COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL 2007

It feels so good to be back in my second home.

The first time I was on this stage, I was a star — that was literally my role: a “bituin” dancing “Kumukutikutitap” in our CSC play. But today I am marking another milestone with you: my first-ever commencement speech.

I never made a speech when I was a student. I was never a valedictorian, or a salutatorian. I was not even in the top 10, or the top 20, or the top 30, or the top 50, not even the top 100. In fact, I was top 244.5 out of 366 students of the Miriam College High School class of 2007. That means I was right smack in the middle of the bell curve, where, realistically, most of you ladies also are (no shade to the top students), and that I was average. So let me tell you now that: **Being average is not a life sentence.** Can you say that with me? **Being average is not a life sentence.** One more time and louder: **Being average is not a life sentence.**

I want you to really feel that. Because today seems like an ending, but it's really another beginning and another chance for a reinvention. I stand in front of you today, this top 244.5 student of batch 2007, to tell you how I went from Top 244 to a Woman of Influence in 2024. Here's the first step:

1. EMPOWER YOURSELF FIRST

You see, in high school, as in grade school, and even in college, I had persistent depressive disorder, or depression. I only learned about this when I turned 22, by accident, after a routine psychological test. That diagnosis, and the succeeding treatment—a balancing act of therapy, medication, sunlight, healthy food, proper sleep, etc. etc.—became pivotal to my reinvention.

I was in high school at a time when mental health was still taboo. Nobody knew the symptoms, and even I didn't think I had resembled someone who was mentally ill. I didn't know I had depression, nor did the people around me, but it manifested in my grades, in my underperformance, in my preference to be on the phone with my friends or on the internet instead of being present. Because depression is the leading cause of disability, I was essentially disabled from grade school until college, and only when I got the proper treatment was I able to turn my life around. **You cannot show up if you are not well.** You cannot reach your full potential unless you are not your full self. You need to be well to do great things, and you cannot accomplish any of those great things if you are not okay. **You have to EMPOWER YOURSELF FIRST**

ALL OF US HAVE MENTAL HEALTH, the same way that we have our physical health, oral health, etc. If you think you need help, reach out. If you feel burnt out, pause. If you are in an environment that is hurting you, leave. One of the things that affects our mental health is our insecurities. I learned from my PCOS nutritionist Audee Sunga-Berces that the voices we hear in our heads are likely the voices of other people. “You are not pretty enough.” “You're fat.” “You're not good enough.” These are statements we heard from others that we listened to, that we acknowledged, and we've ingrained in our system.



APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

MCHS GRADUATION 2024 SPEECH **MS. MARIA PAULINA E. DEL MONTE** **MIRIAM COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL 2007**

Let me tell you this: **You dictate your own value.** Let me say that again: **YOU. Dictate. Your Own. Value.** That's why the first person you need to empower is yourself. Because you will never be able to empower others if you are not empowered yourself.

Did you know that according to a Harvard study: "Men apply for a job when they meet only 60% of the qualifications, but women apply only if they meet 100% of them"? There is a big difference between **confidence** and **competence**. This is why, as a communication consultant and through my Instagram, I help people, especially women, build confidence in communicating, because sometimes, even if they are competent, they get passed over by people who are not competent but are over-confident.

In a way, MC has protected you from toxic masculinity by giving you a kind of education that is empowering and liberating. But when you leave the gates of MC, you are left to your own devices. In my first semester in UP, one thing I noticed was when our professors would ask us to move our chairs to the side, only the boys carried the chairs, and the girls were being "Disney princesses". That was a total contrast from my MC upbringing — where we lift chairs and tables and all sorts of things because no one else was gonna do it for us. Even us girls can do the heavy lifting. In MC, because all of us were girls, we experienced being president, being team captain, being leaders — it's very Barbieland. We are taught that we can do ANYTHING and that's very empowering. But when you go out in the real, patriarchal world, you are gonna meet toxic Kens. Last week, I was at GCash event with Department of Trade Industry Undersecretary Rafaelita Aldaba, who said: "When it comes to leaders, the secretary is male, but our undersecretaries are mostly female. There are some negotiations, like in the Muslim countries, where you need a secretary who is a male." But I'm NOT going to say "go girl," "be better than boys", that's not the point. Just excel — period. But at that same event, we had Michelle Alarcon, President of Analytics and AI Association of the Philippines who said: Who creates opportunities? It's not males, it's not females, it's LEADERS. Leaders create the opportunities. So women, you have to get that slot. To be able to lead, you have to excel first. When you actually excel in the game, you can change the rules." This leads me to the second step...

2. CHAMPION WOMEN.

Note the word: CHAMPION. I'm not only simply saying: mentor women, support women, inspire women, not even empower women. **CHAMPION WOMEN.**

So the UN Women gig is an opportunity that was opened for me by [slide: Me and Rissa] UN Women Champion Rissa Mananquil Trillo, who I met via Instagram. She was one of my first followers, but she had already been a role model since I always saw her on TV as a child. Rissa taught me by example how to champion other women.



APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

MCHS GRADUATION 2024 SPEECH **MS. MARIA PAULINA E. DEL MONTE** **MIRIAM COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL 2007**

She endorsed me for the social media consultant role at UN Women, I applied, and when I got in, she also took it upon herself to give me an informal orientation. Then in February, before Women's Month, she gathered other women champions for dinner which allowed me to meet other women who I've also recently been collaborating with.

Another champion is Myrza Sison, she was the founding editor of Cosmopolitan Philippines, my IDOL growing up, who I had the chance to meet through Instagram. When my account was only three days old, Myrza came across it, and sent me a message that she wished I was her writer when she was still in Cosmo! But Myrza's support has been super important because she also introduces me to people who can open doors for me. From Myrza: "We do not need to compete. We can collaborate.", I also learned this quote: "COLLABORATION, not COMPETITION." I remember hearing this also in MC — in a sense that I was taught to be competitive but also helping other people up with you, not bringing them down.

We live in a world where women are pitted against each other, but we do not need to be better or prettier or smarter. We can all work together. The men have their "old boys club", their "compadre system". If they need a new supplier, or they need to hire someone, they will turn to their friends or their friend's sons. We also have to have something like that where we allow our sisters to be given a chance. So if later on, you're going to hire a caterer, or a photographer, or if you need giveaways, HIRE A WOMAN. BUY FROM A WOMAN-LED BUSINESS. Because that's how you can boost women's economic empowerment.

Now I want you to look at the person beside you — pick a partner — and say this "I will champion you." Believe it or not, in this batch there is a future CEO, a future President. I want you girls to promise that you will champion other women. From this batch, from another batch, from another school. Because when you work with other people, our chances of sparking massive change multiplies. And this leads me to my last step:

3. SERVE THE PEOPLE

Let's be honest. You are here at this school because you have some level of privilege. Even if you are a scholar, even if you come from a humble background, you still have some privilege that's why you're here. Do not underestimate your power and privilege. Use it for good.

In my last year here, I learned from "Mga Ibong Mandaragit" that farmers only got a measly percentage of profits versus the landowners. And I remember Sir Dennis asking us if you were in the position of the landowner, how much percentage would you give the farmers? And our idealistic selves answered 50%.



APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

MCHS GRADUATION 2024 SPEECH **MS. MARIA PAULINA E. DEL MONTE** **MIRIAM COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL 2007**

I won't forget what he said next: "Tignan natin pagtanda niyo kung anong gagawin nyo."
So Sir Castro, although I do not own a farm, I can say in my own way as someone who is
"nagpapa-sweldo", I can say that I have been fair.

And I know in the future, you ladies will also be in a position where you can decide how much
money someone will make, or what opportunities you can open for others. And I hope you can
come back to what you learned here in Miriam which is SOCIAL JUSTICE.

Whatever your calling is, wherever life will take you after today, never lose sight of your moral
compass — for truth, peace, justice and integrity of creation. There are so many causes in this
world, and while you cannot do EVERYTHING, you can do something — even if you're average now.
And even if you're above average or below average. You have the power because you are not
alone. There are literally hundreds of you here, and the opportunities in the world are infinite.
So before I end this speech, may I ask you to repeat the three steps?

Ten or 20 years from now, I hope one of you will also be on this stage.
So congratulations, batch 2024. Today is your own [slide: How it started] "How it started". Your
future is still a blank space. I'm excited to see where you're going.



APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

MCGS GRADUATION 2024 SPEECH **MS. GAIL VILLANUEVA**

Good morning, everyone! It is truly an honor and a privilege to be part of such an important milestone in the academic life of our graduates. To be honest, I still can't believe I've been asked to make this speech. If you had known me back in grade school, seeing me up here is the ultimate plot twist. I hate to admit this, but I was bored and hungry at my own grade school graduation. I couldn't wait for my turn to go up the stage, shake the important people's hands, and be done with it. I wanted the ceremony to be over so I could celebrate with my family at Shakey's Katipunan. The yummy spaghetti and thin-crust pizza overflowing with cheese and topped with lots of mushrooms were all I could think of. And now, I'm here before you, doing the very thing in the graduation program that younger Gail slept on. So, I think you'll agree that for me, this speaking gig is a major glow-up. An upgrade. A change. You'll soon enter a phase in your life that's all about changes. Physical changes. Emotional changes. Changes at home and in school. Changes in your relationships with family and friends. Everything is changing and will change even more, for better or for worse. Sounds scary? Well, I'm not going to sugarcoat it and say that it isn't. Because it is. Change is scary. But here's another plot twist: you're going to be okay. Because you managed to get here. In this auditorium, at this very moment, graduating. You persevered. And you'll do it again, this persevering. Because even when we're embracing change, we need to keep pushing forward, keep dreaming our dreams.

I remember when I first started grade school. Everyone in my class already knew how to read... Everyone except me. I had a hard time catching up. But thankfully, my mom and my grandmother came up with a way to tap into my imagination and helped me associate images with words. Once I entered the world of stories, I was hooked. I fell in love with the magic of words. Still, I didn't fail to notice that none of the stories I read featured someone who looked like me. So, I promised myself, I would become a writer one day. Or an artist. Or maybe even both. Either way, I wanted my works to tell the stories of dark-skinned, flat-nosed Filipino girls like me.

You see, I've always believed that we all have a story to tell. A tale unique to each and every one of us. A truth that only we can share to the world. I wanted to tell my truth, but I was too afraid to show anyone my work, especially my writing. I worried they might think my tales weren't worth listening to. That my truths didn't really matter as much as I thought they did.

So, I kept these stories to myself. I did my best to fit in. I made a lot of friends. I joined the basketball varsity team and became good at the sport. I ran the 50-meter dash for the MCGS track and field team. Thanks to my super-secret writing habit and summer art workshops at home with my creative mother, I always got good grades in Art, Reading, and Filipino without even trying. I couldn't wait to graduate with a bang. Then, in the last quarter of my last year in grade school, I had a huge falling out with one of my friends. A bunch of kids I used to be friendly with suddenly just ignored me. I learned the hard way who my real friends were. But still, going to class wasn't as fun as before.

Back home, I poured my feelings into my writing and art. I was getting better and better at my craft without even knowing it. Well, that was, until my homeroom and Filipino teacher, Mrs. Nida Tamidles, reached out to my mother.

APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

MCGS GRADUATION 2024 SPEECH **MS. GAIL VILLANUEVA**

Mrs. Tamidles told my mom that I was talented in the use of words, and recommended she encourage me to keep honing my reading and writing skills. I held on to Mrs. Tamidles' compliment like a talisman all the way to graduation day. A teacher I loved and respected thought I was great writer! Maybe there was a chance I could become a published author, after all. Maybe one day I could actually walk into National Bookstore Katipunan and see a book I wrote on their shelves. Maybe it was possible for my dreams to come true.

So, you see, I was unfazed during my graduation because I knew there were more life adventures that awaited me after the ceremony. And, of course, there was still the yummy lunch of pizza and spaghetti I was looking forward to. Soon after, my mom bought me all the books I wanted to read and notebooks I wanted to write on. She even let me use our computer (yep, computers already existed back then). I read and read. I wrote and wrote more. Still, I didn't just yeet myself to the finish line. I encountered challenges and even more changes along the way. I needed to hurdle these obstacles that eventually changed me. I became stronger. I learned to pick myself up in the face of failure. I got wiser. I changed and became a better me.

After some time, the web design company I started with my husband turned into a thriving business. Then I got into blogging, and founded the first-ever Philippine Blog Awards, a nationwide award-giving body that gave recognition to our country's best bloggers. I eventually returned to fiction-writing and published my debut novel in 2019. I've been writing books for kids like you since then. And yes, I visited National Bookstore Katipunan when I had the chance. I saw my book and held my tears so the bookstore people wouldn't think I was being weird. Sometimes I wonder if I would have made the same decisions had I not been a Better Me. Would I have had the courage to submit my work to literary agents and not give up until after 72 rejections? Would I have gotten into mentoring aspiring authors when I had a difficult time getting published myself? Would I have written my books as a mirror for brown Filipino girls and a window for other kids all over the world? Maybe I still would have accomplished these things. Or maybe it'll be another plot twist and I wouldn't have. I don't really know. One thing I am sure of though, is that the better versions of our selves not only have the capacity to accept change but will also strive to usher positive change in the lives of others in their own little way.

Changes are bound to happen, so welcome the changes you will face. Embrace them freely. But do so while staying true to your convictions. Before long, you will find yourself becoming a better version of yourself too.

It's not going to be easy. Bettering yourself with every new challenge will likely become more difficult as you grow older. But you are Maryknollers, the Maria Katipuneras. You have love guiding your hearts, truth and justice inspiring your minds, and God's everlasting light shepherding your souls. Believe in yourself. Speak your truths, while uplifting those whose voices our society refuses to hear. And always, always keep your faith in the Lord.

Congratulations, Miriam College Grade School graduating class of 2024. YOU GOT THIS! 😊

APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

MCN GRADUATION 2024 SPEECH **MS. KATHLEEN CAMILLE M. RODRIGUEZ**

To Honorable Ambassador Laura Quiambao-del Rosario, President of MC, Ms. Christine Joy Corsiga, Director and Principal of MC Nuvali, esteemed members of the Presidents Council, faculty of MC Nuvali and Loyola Heights, thank you for choosing me to be this year's commencement speaker for the graduating batch of 2024. It is such a great honor for me to be here today and it is always a joy to come home.

To all the faculty present here today, thank you for shaping the minds and hearts of this batch who are both our present and our future. To Ms. Tish, Ms. Pam, Sir Dhoy, and all my high school teachers from 10 years ago present today, I am so happy to see you thrive in this new space and send off your students with you. This is truly a full circle moment for me. To the admin, security staff, support team who made this event possible, maraming salamat sa paninigurado na komportable at ligtas kaming lahat. To the parents and guardians who are here physically and in spirit, congratulations. What an achievement to help your child graduate. Ang araw na ito ay para sa inyo rin. Mabuhay kayo.

And of course, to the graduating batch of 2024, our 6th graders and 12th graders for a little bit more, it is my absolute pleasure to be able to speak to you all as a proud alumni and an even prouder ate.

I heard many good things about your batch from your teachers. I learned that you are hardworking and incredibly talented. I am in the midst of a lot of musicians, artists, athletes (like me!), creatives, studious individuals, and leaders. I am also in the presence of individuals who are reliable and respectful; and vocal when they need to be. Both independent, can do things on their own and humble enough to know when to ask for help. These are all great qualities that show your character as human beings. Character, as you move through life, is valuable. Protect it, build it, and hone it.

Batch 2024, thank you for sharing with me your time and attention today. Today, I will leave you with 2 valuable lessons.

Lesson #1: It is a gift to reflect

To be completely honest, I found it a little difficult putting this speech together. I lost my grandfather a couple of days ago and we said our final goodbyes to him yesterday. It's been difficult. For days, I've been contemplating change, loss, grief, legacy, and purpose. The questions in my head ask:

Paano ko masasabi na nabuhay ako ng tama?
May tama bang paraan ng pamumuhay?
What is my purpose in life? Can my purpose change?
Which path is the right one?

APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

MCN GRADUATION 2024 SPEECH **MS. KATHLEEN CAMILLE M. RODRIGUEZ**

How can I make a difference?

What can I do to make sure that everything that I want to happen, will happen?

These are the questions you may have asked at least once in your journey transitioning into a new life stage. I want you to know that it's okay to ask these questions. It is a gift to ask. It is a gift to reflect.

In your journey from here on out, you will face many crossroads, redirections, and roadblocks that will prompt you to pause. To pause allows us space to breathe. Rejections, missed opportunities, change of plans, change in characters are all part of the story we're creating called 'life'. These bumps on the road are opportunities for us to reflect; and the older you get, the more resources you'll have in the form of experience and mentors that will help you decide.

You can rest easy knowing that you have been introduced to core values like Truth, Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation— values you can ground your thoughts and actions on as graduates of this esteemed institute. You have also been prepared and shaped to be lifelong learners, embracing your humanity as fallible individuals. Because we're human, we will make mistakes. Mistakes are inevitable. You will make wrong decisions. You will hurt people, unintentionally. You will make the mistake of choosing safety over growth. You will stay in places that you've outgrown cause you're scared of being outside your comfort zone. That's okay. Remember, the presence of fear is not the absence of capability. You will fall short on a promise. You will fail. These are all part of being human. Because we're human, we will make mistakes. But there's a reason why you are here today, graduating, moving into a new life stage. It's because you are capable. To be human is to be capable while being vulnerable. We don't know what tomorrow holds. We don't have all the answers. Even at 30, 40, 50 years of age, we're all still figuring it out.

Gusto man natin alamin ang lahat. Hindi nasa sa atin para alamin ang lahat. Nasa sa Kanya. When I ponder on life once more, I realize that maybe it's not about having all the answers; but it's about not knowing and trusting anyway. Trusting ourselves that we are capable of weathering the seasons that will come our way; and trusting that the Good Lord will be with us every step of the way.

Lesson #2: Trust, surrender, try, and try again

My story is a story of trust. As you know, I'm a football player. I've been playing football for almost 20 years. I've been representing the country for 15 years. I was 11 years old when I started representing the country at the club level and then later went on to represent at the national team level.

APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

MCN GRADUATION 2024 SPEECH **MS. KATHLEEN CAMILLE M. RODRIGUEZ**

I've had the immense honor these past 3 years to help our country qualify into and prepare for our first ever FIFA Women's World Cup. Kaming Filipinas ang kauna-unang koponan na nakakamit ng karangalan na ito. Pasok na ang Pilipinas sa pinakamalaking kompetisyon sa mundo. What an honor.

To play in the World Cup is the dream of every footballer. I can say with my whole being that it was my dream and my life for 2 whole years. My other teammates who grew up in the United States share that it's been their dream since they were kids. I can't say the same for myself because when I was younger, the World Cup dream felt so far away. I couldn't dream it cause I couldn't see it. I didn't know it was possible that I, a Filipina, would come close to ever playing in that tournament. But when we finally came close to achieving it, the dream was planted in my heart and I put my head down and worked. Tiwala lang, sabi ko sa sarili ko. Trust.

From April 2021 til April 2023, I worked extremely hard to give myself the best possible chance to play in the World Cup. I was there from the start. I was part of the team that started training at the height of the pandemic in the Philippines when we had to navigate online distance learning, April 2021. I was also part of the team who got to travel around the world for 12 months to train in international camps to help us become the most prepared team entering the tournament.

I wanted to achieve my goal of playing in the World Cup so badly; but just a handful of months before the actual tournament, I got cut from the team. To this day, that experience stands to be one of the most painful events I've ever had to experience in my life.

What now? Tiwala lang parin ba?

In life to come, you will encounter huge redirections. Not getting into your dream school. Dream course. Dream company. Let me be a testament that you can chase your dreams, fail, and still be okay.

Batch 2024, learn to surrender. Sometimes, you don't get what you want because something even bigger and better is being prepared for you. After I got cut from the team, I surrendered to the Lord. On Easter Sunday, I prayed to Him in complete surrender. I said, "Lord, I've done everything I could do to achieve my goal these past 2 years and still, I failed. I surrender control to you. Ikaw na po bahala sa akin. Kung para sa akin parin ang football, please give me a sign that I should keep going." The next day I messaged my football agent asking for playing opportunities in international clubs. I didn't have anything to lose. Three days after I asked the Lord for a sign, I get signed to a club team whose name is, I kid you not, the Lord's Football Academy in India.

Message received, Lord. Trust, surrender, and try again.



APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

MCN GRADUATION 2024 SPEECH **MS. KATHLEEN CAMILLE M. RODRIGUEZ**

Since surrendering, so many more doors of opportunity have opened up for me. I still got to go to the World Cup, but as a brand ambassador. I got to become the first Filipina to play in the Indian Football League. Now, I also get to work with athletes as a mental performance coach. I get to share my knowledge and expertise as a game analyst for the top flight professional football league in our country. I get to produce sports stories on underrepresented Filipino athletes in mainstream media. The best part is, I get to tell my story to young, driven, hardworking, and talented individuals like you.

Batch 2024, live to tell the tale of chasing your dreams– all your redirections and seasons too. You are capable.

Grow. Explore. Be brave. Embrace everything life has to offer you. All the roadblocks, speedbumps, fast lanes, and go signals– embrace them all.

Reflect throughout your journey. Remember there is always space for reflection.

Celebrate your successes, both big and small. Rest, recollect yourself, but never give up. Keep going. Keep trying.

Above all, trust. Trust yourself. Trust the process. And most importantly, trust the Lord. Continuously. Unceasingly.

What an exciting opportunity you have ahead of you to practice trusting, surrendering, and trying again.

Again, you are capable. This is why you are here. As a firm believer in the power of savoring and positive self-talk, I invite you all to savor this tremendous achievement of graduating today. Close your eyes, take a deep breath, and tell yourself “I did it!” Afterwards, open your eyes, and tell your seatmate “We did it!”.

Thank you, Batch 2024. I wish you all the best. This ate is so proud of you and so are your parents, guardians, teachers, and all the aates, kuyas who helped you get to this point. Again, this is Cam Rodriguez of Batch 2012. It has been an absolute honor to be your graduation speaker today. Maraming salamat muli and God bless you all!

APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

MCHEU GRADUATION 2024 SPEECH **MS. MYRA LIZA STO. TOMAS**

To the President of Miriam College, Ambassador Laura Q. Del Rosario. To the Board of Trustees, President's Council, Teachers, Proud Parents, Guests and most especially the Graduates of 2024... Congratulations.

Year 2001, or exactly 23 years ago, I started my journey here in Miriam College as a first year student. During our time, first year students do not have major subjects back then, and all of us are just in one general batch. Then, from second year to fourth year (or 5th year for Accountancy), that is the time that we go to our own selected courses, we separate ways for some, until we graduate. And now on this day, we are gathered here again in one venue, together again with your batchmates, regardless of the courses that you've taken. To the graduates, you earned that seat. You are part of your batch, you are part of Miriam College.

So why did I say this, because in the real world, while we have different professions, we are dealing with different types of people as well, in different industries: academe, regulators, commerce and industry and even in public practice. And while I graduated in BS Accountancy and I am working in Public Practice, I would like to share with you some suggestions based on my experiences, in career and in life which you may use regardless of your course.

1. Invest in yourself. Work with a purpose.

As a newly graduate, you will experience that salary will probably start low while the demand in your work will be high. Sometimes, you are required to render overtime work and you might feel that it is not reasonable. When it happens, in the early part of your career, please remember that every exceeded hours that you rendered in your work is an investment for you to hone your respective craft. And eventually, you will see the benefits of those investments in the future when you are already a decision maker in your chosen career, so invest in yourself.

2. Choose your own path.

When you land on a job on early years, it is nice as some of you will be accepted in the same Company (e.g. Audit, Private Company, Academe, Government). But as time pass by, most of your classmates turned officemates, will soon leave the Company, probably because they have different priorities (e.g. going on separate field, do further study, etc.), so instead of putting pressure to yourself and comparing yourself to others, do what you prefer – decide on your own.

3. Be resilient.

Challenges will always be there.. as well as the accomplishments, one must just not give up. One of the misconceptions in public practice, given that we have busy season, is that we have sleepless nights, we do mostly work, and we don't have work-life balance. In my work as an external auditor, where I get to work with different clients in different industries, I was able to confirm that regardless of the profession, there will always be challenges: month-end closing for private firm, tests and modules for academe, rules and regulations for government and busy season for us, in public practice. So be resilient, challenges will end and success will be achieved for those who do not give up, so be resilient.

APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

MCHEU GRADUATION 2024 SPEECH **MS. MYRA LIZA STO. TOMAS**

4. Widen your network.

Networking is very important to thrive in your chosen career. As a guide, in every industry and in every profession, there are already established organizations. In my case for example, we have the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants or what we call PICPA. Any organizations connected to your specializations and interests is a great place to start. Why? Because there are already a lot of successful and established people in that organization which can guide you and mentor you as well. I realized that successful people like to see others become successful to, they are willing to help, you just need to ask them.

5. Generation Gap.

There will always, always be generation gap because the world is evolving. In our industry in public practice, it is the first place where accountancy students apply, whether its their choice or just the norm. Generation today is very good in technology and wants empathy. While earlier generation are known to be structured and resilient. And that is okay. But instead of trying to insist on closing the gap, and change the belief of different generation, use each other's strength instead and help with each other's weaknesses. If you learn to tolerate, it will be a win-win situation.

6. Give back to the community.

It always a great feeling when you succeed in your career but it there is immeasurable satisfaction and happiness when you can give back to the community as well. In our Company and Organization, I was mostly assign to Community Social Responsibility. This includes visiting and donating to cancer patients, donation drive to schools on remote areas, tree planting, feeding program to children and many more. When you can, I encourage you join this type of activities. It will bring good to you, as well as inner peace.

7. Integrity and values above all.

Always do the right thing. Imagine that you will build your career and with just the snap, with just one action that you compromise your values, it can all go to waste. Money can be replaced, but it's hard to rebuild a tarnish reputation.

8. Treasure your health.

I need not elaborate this one. To enjoy what we achieve, we need to take care of our health.

9. Be grateful to the people who helped you achieve where you are right now.

Such as your parents, relatives, teachers and others who mentored and assisted you to be able to achieve were you are right now.

10. Don't lose yourself, especially your self – confidence in the process of achieving your dreams.

If it happens, know when to stop and teach yourself to bounce back. Do not let your self-confidence to be waived.



APRIL - JUNE 2024

GALING **MC**

MCHEU GRADUATION 2024 SPEECH **MS. MYRA LIZA STO. TOMAS**

To summarize:

Invest in yourself. Work with a purpose.

Choose your own path/ Find your passion and stick with it.

Be resilient.

Widen your network.

Generation Gap will always be there.

Give back to the community.

Integrity and values above all.

Treasure your health.

Be grateful to the people who helped you achieve where you are right now. And,

Don't lose your self in the process.

You earn your spot to be in this graduation.. now go and find your spot in the real world.

Congratulations once again 2024 graduates. Thank you.