

FEBRUARY 14, 2023
DEAR SYLVANA,

“ THE TASSEL'S WORTH THE HASSLE, AND NOW, MY CAP MAY FLY
AS HIGH AS MY DREAMS IN LIFE ”

IT'S BEEN ALMOST 15 YEARS SINCE WE FIRST MET THROUGH LETTERS, AND NOW, WE'RE HERE AT THE END OF MY ACADEMIC JOURNEY. THROUGH THOSE 15 YEARS, YOU HAVE SEEN ME GROW INTO THE PERSON I AM TODAY. NOW, IT GIVES ME IMMENSE PLEASURE TO SHARE WITH YOU THAT I HAVE ALREADY GRADUATED LAST JANUARY 27, 2023, WITH A BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN CHEMICAL ENGINEERING, MAJORING IN FOOD AND DRUG MANUFACTURING, WITH LATIN HONORS "CUM LAUDE." I HOPE THIS BACHELOR'S DEGREE MAKES YOU PROUD OF ME, AND I HOPE IT MAKES YOU AS HAPPY AS I AM.

A STUDENT'S LIFE IS A CHALLENGING PHASE IN LIFE, FOR ONE HAS TO WORRY ABOUT FINANCES AND OTHER COMMITMENTS. AT THE CULMINATION OF MY ACADEMIC JOURNEY, I WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS MY HEARTFELT GRATITUDE FOR EVERYTHING YOU HAVE DONE FOR ME AND MY FAMILY. YOU HAVE BEEN A TRUE BLESSING TO MY FAMILY AND I CANNOT THANK YOU ENOUGH FOR ENSURING THAT I FINISH MY EDUCATION WITHOUT ANY HURDLES, WHICH MAKES ME FEEL MUCH MORE PRIVILEGED TODAY. I AM GRATEFUL AND HUMBLED TODAY TO REALIZE THE AMOUNT OF TIME, DEDICATION, AND MONEY YOU HAVE SPENT ON ME.

GRADUATION DAY IS FILLED WITH MUCH EMOTIONS. OUR GRADUATION CEREMONY WAS HELD IN THE MORNING, STARTING WITH THE HOOD CEREMONY. OUR PARENTS HAD THE HONOR TO AWARD US OUR GRADUATION HOODS, WHICH SIGNIFY OUR COMPLETION OF THE DEGREE AS WELL AS THE DEDICATION OF THIS SUCCESS TO OUR PARENTS. AFTERWHICH, WE HAD OUR BACCALAUREATE MASS, A THANKSGIVING CEREMONY OFFERED TO GOD FOR HIS BLESSINGS OVER THE GRADUATES AND THEIR FAMILIES THROUGHOUT SCHOOLING. FROM THIS CEREMONY, WE ARE REMINDED OF THE PURPOSE OF OBTAINING OUR DEGREES, WHICH IS TO SHARE THEM WITH THE COMMUNITY IN ORDER TO BUILD A BETTER SOCIETY.

AFTER THIS, THE GRADUATION RITES STARTED. OUR DEPARTMENT WAS SECOND IN LINE TO RECEIVE OUR DIPLOMA, AND I WAS FOURTH IN LINE. AS I WAS NEARING THE STAGE, I FELT VARIOUS EMOTIONS, FROM BEING HAPPY TO BEING JITTERY TO BEING PROUD OF MYSELF. DURING THAT MOMENT, I WASN'T ATTENTIVE TO THE CROWD, FOR I FOCUSED ON THE ACADEME PERSONALITIES UP ON THE STAGE WHO CONGRATULATED ME AND MY PARENTS, WHO HAD THE CHANCE TO AWARD MY MEDAL. AFTER THAT, WE WAITED FOR EVERYONE TO FINISH RECEIVING THEIR DIPLOMAS AND THEN, WE PLEDGED OUR ALLEGIANCE TO THE SCHOOL AND THE COMMUNITY. AFTER WHICH, WE HAD OUR DEPARTMENTAL PICTURE TAKING OUTSIDE THE VENUE. THE NEXT DAY, WE HAD A CELEBRATION AT HOME WHEREIN FRIENDS AND RELATIVES CAME TO COMMEND MY GRADUATION. I GET TO MEET AGAIN AND CHAT WITH SOME OF THE RELATIVES WE DON'T USUALLY ENCOUNTER, ESPECIALLY OUR ELDERS. I WAS SO GRATEFUL THAT A LOT OF PEOPLE CAME AND WERE DELIGHTED WITH THE SUCCESS THAT I HAD ACHIEVED.

RIGHT NOW, I AM STILL PREPARING FOR THE BOARD EXAMS. I PLAN TO DEDICATE THIS YEAR TO OBTAIN TWO PROFESSIONAL LICENSES: ONE FOR THE CHEMICAL ENGINEER AND ANOTHER FOR CHEMICAL TECHNICIAN. AFTER OBTAINING THESE LICENSES, I PLAN TO LOOK INTO WORK RELATED TO THE LABORATORIES AND SOON APPLY FOR A MASTERAL DEGREE RELATED TO FOOD MANUFACTURING OR ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING. I ALSO PLAN TO APPLY FOR A THIRD LICENSE UNDER FOOD PROCESSING TECHNOLOGIST.

AGAIN, I WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS MY GRATITUDE TOWARDS YOUR CONTRIBUTION IN MY LIFE. IT HAS BEEN SUCH AN HONOR AND A PRIVILEGE TO HAVE GOTTEN TO KNOW YOU. I WILL FOREVER CHERISH THIS CONNECTION THAT WE HAVE BUILT. I HOPE THAT YOU WERE ABLE TO SEE AND FEEL HOW MUCH I APPRECIATE YOU THROUGH OUR CONVERSATIONS. THANK YOU FOR BELIEVING IN ME, THANK YOU FOR ALWAYS BEING THERE FOR ME, AND MOST OF ALL - THANK YOU FOR LOVING ME!

YOUR SPONSORED STUDENT,
MIKA JOYCE S. LEANO