Serving the Truth with Gratitude

BS Pharmacy Pioneer Batch garners 78.38% passing rate in licensure exam
Grand Alumni Homecoming 2017
Daralagan sa ika-setenta
Aquinas University of Legazpi

Our Vision
We envision Aquinas University of Legazpi as a leading university in the region, nurturing with truth, love and gratitude the mind, heart and spirit of each member to be committed to Christian social transformation. Specifically, we see AUL to be:

- a Christ-centered educational community;
- a respected HEI with consistently high academic standard and values-oriented, socially responsive and globally competitive academic programs;
- a leader in Bicol in the fields of Law, Teacher Education, Business Management, Accountancy, Engineering, Architecture, Communication Arts, and Health Sciences;
- a center for Bicol studies, environmental protection, disaster risk management and preparedness; and
- a deregulated university by 2025.

Our Mission
Aquinas University of Legazpi, a nurturing community of Dominican learning...transforming and perfecting, under the patronage of St. Thomas Aquinas, commits itself to:

- the pursuit of academic excellence through dedicated study;
- the strengthening of one’s moral integrity through fervent prayer and witnessing;
- the sharing with others the fruits of one’s endeavor through loving service;
- the enhancement of one’s emotional maturity towards a more Christian community; and
- the promotion of cultural advocacy for a genuine appreciation of Catholic, Filipino and Bicol identity.
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**FEATURE**

Serving the Truth: Telling the Unpopular Narrative
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Illustrating Truth and Gratitude
Rev. Fr. Ernesto M. Arceo, O.P., STL, Ph.D.
Rector and President
Greetings from the Dominican University of Bicol!

Through the years, our institution has honed and shaped champions and ambassadors who would tell our stories of love and gratitude to our families, friends, colleagues, and the community at large. We have produced graduates who not only stage academic prowess but exemplify genuine Catholic formation and Christian values that enable us to seek and discover solutions to societal difficulties and disparities. Together, we have continued to raise the bar of excellence in our respective fields to further our mission to educate and enlarge our capacity to improve lives.

With this, we celebrate the success of our 29 homegrown Pharmacists for passing the 2017 Pharmacist Licensure Examinations. It is our honor to share this victory to all Bicolanos as ours is the first and the only BS Pharmacy Program in the Bicol region. We also recognize our young alumni who have trodden the paths of leadership, discovery, innovation, and collaboration in the spirit of honest service. We are honored that you carry our core values with you and have allowed them to guide you through many accomplishments, prospects, and changes in life.

We encourage all of you to stay connected with us as we embark on another important milestone in the history of our beloved institution, the celebration of our 70th founding anniversary marked by our transition to becoming the University of Santo Tomas-Legazpi. As we progress, we would love to see our alumni across different generations reaffirm their commitment to their Alma Mater to keep us grounded in moving deeper into the 21st century as a provider of quality education in the region.

Dios mabalos!
CHS celebrates 50 years of Glorious Excellence

The College of Health Sciences, formerly known as the College of Nursing, will be celebrating its 50th founding anniversary on Feb. 3, 2017 at Daragang Magayon Hall (DMH), Rawis Campus, Aquinas University of Legazpi (AUL).

The theme of the event will be “AUL-CHS at 50: Celebrating 50 years of nursing education in Aquinas University”, appropriate to the pioneer college of nursing in the Bicol area.

The program will consist of a conference in the morning and an open house in the afternoon, showcasing the facilities of the college which Commission on Higher Education (CHED) Region V describes as the most complete nursing skills laboratory in the region.

Former deans of the college will be giving a talk on topics like Pioneers of 1972: Connecting to the Millennials of 2017, The Distinct Character of an Aquinian Nurse, Enriching the Spirit of the Health Professionals, and Future Directions of Nursing and Health Professions.
New Aquinian Nurses named

Twenty two (22) Aquinian Nurses passed the recently concluded Nurse Licensure Examination. Results were released on June 17, nine (9) working days after the last day of examination with only 43.60% of takers successfully qualifying.

Aquinas University of Legazpi (AUL) garnered 64.71% Passing Rate for First Time Takers.

Here are the names of the new Aquinian Nurses:

- Renz Bryan N. Martin
- Junalie P. Mendizabel
- Jennylyn E. Pura
- John Martin A. Realosa
- Cyril N. Peñarubia
- Mary Joyce A. Alcala
- Jana G. Peran
- Ivy B. Orande
- Angeline Mae C. Almonte
- John Michael O. Pelonio
- Ava Dawn A. Sabeniano
- Maureen Joyce M. Zafra
- J-Francis Arniel C. Aguirre
- Ross-Andale Lesly P. Bodino

- Maricar Lyn M. Baronda
- Shariel Jushel S. Bellen
- Ivy B. Cardel
- April L. Co
- Ariel R. Duaso
- Ronna H. Grefaldeo
- Laralynne Ll. Labitag
- Maricar Lyn M. Baronda
- Shariel Jushel S. Bellen
- Ivy B. Cardel
- April L. Co
- Ariel R. Duaso
- Ronna H. Grefaldeo
- Laralynne Ll. Labitag
Aqunian Alumni Show Strong Camaraderie during the AUL Grand Alumni Homecoming 2017

A total of 244 alumni showed their support and love for their alma mater, as well as important personnel during the 2017 AUL Grand Alumni Homecoming, entitled, “Maogmang Balikan An Samong Pinunan”. The said event is consistently held every year during the second Saturday of May, which happened to fall on the 13th this 2017.

The attendees gathered as early as 7am at the Old Campus, now Aquinas University of Legazpi Professional School. Then they went to Legazpi Catholic Cemetery for the wreath laying. The event was filled with a vast array of activities and had important people attending it and giving talks. One renowned attendee was Engr. Abdon Balde, a civil engineer turned novelist, and is acclaimed for writing brilliant literary pieces.

Another was (blank) Imperial, brother of the Honorable Harold Imperial. Of course, Rev. Fr. Ernesto M. Areco, OP, current Rector and President of Aquinas University of Legazpi, was in attendance as well. The event concluded at 4pm; each batch went to their respective events afterward.

Of the 244 alumni, 22 were Golden Jubilarians, or those who graduated in 1967; 21 were Silver Jubilarians, or the 1991 alumni. Four of the original mentors were present. The oldest attendee was one who belonged to the 1958 alumni, while the youngest attendee graduated in 2009. The event was hosted by batch 1977. They were the first batch to have ever graduated from SOHS.
New Aquinian CPAs beat national passing rate

10 BS Accountancy graduates passed the May 2017 Certified Public Accountant (CPA) Licensure Examination, with AUL garnering an overall passing rate of 37.04% - higher than the 35.13% national passing rate.

The May 2017 CPA Licensure Examination was conducted on May 14-15 & 21-22, 2017 at Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) testing centers in Manila, Baguio, Cagayan de Oro, Cebu, Davao, Iloilo and Legazpi. Results were released on May 30, with 3,389 out of 9,645 examinees successfully qualifying.

Names of the new Aquinian CPAs are listed below:

- Jeffrey B. Aguilar
- Carmel A. Bañez
- Sheahan Ives
- B. Bañares-Onohara
- Leundas H. Castillo
- Janer M. Descalzo
- Mia B. Bermundo
- Angel A. Joson
- Aaron John B. Lunas
- Al Joseph B. Planes
- Karla Bianca A. Teope

Aquinnian places 10th in architect licensure exam

Ar. Crispin B. Cruz, a graduate of the BS Architecture program batch 2006, placed 10th in the Architect Licensure Examination (ALE) held last January 27 and 29, 2017.

Cruz is the second AUL alumnus to place in the ALE, following Ar. Mikael Jay B. Bonto who ranked first in the 2007 exams.


The January 2017 Architecture Licensure Examination was held in the cities of Manila, Baguio, Davao, Cebu, and Legazpi. Results were released on February 3, with 919 out of 1,595 examinees qualifying.
AUL congratulates new architects

Three graduates of the Architecture program of Aquinas University of Legazpi (AUL) passed the June 2017 Architect Licensure Examination. Results were released on June 27, 2017. Here are the names of the new Aquinian Architects:

Ar. Rey Mark M. Marbida
Ar. Benny June V. Nacion
Ar. John Cidfeihl A. Santillaan

New Aquinian Electronics Engineers and Electronics Technicians named

Two (2) new Aquinian Electronics Engineers and six (6) new Aquinian Electronics Technicians successfully passed the October 2016 Licensure Examinations. Results were released on October 21, with 40.36% of takers qualifying for Electronics Engineers, and 75.91% of takers qualifying for Electronics Technicians.

The October 2016 Electronics Engineer Licensure Examination and Electronics Technician Licensure Examination were held on October 15 and 16 in the cities of Manila, Baguio, Cebu, Davao and Lucena.

Names of the new Aquinian Electronics Engineers are:
Engr. Jay Patrick S. Cañezo
Engr. Nikki Isabel B. Bunao

Names of the new Aquinian Electronics Technicians are:
Denmark O. Alemania
Nikki Isabel B. Bunao
Angela E. Estrellado
Karl Kevin Thomas Marbella
Jessica V. Pabellano
Anthony Kenneth B. Ubaldo
AUL congratulates New Civil Engineers

Aquinas University of Legazpi (AUL) commends the five Aquinian graduates from the College of Engineering, Architecture, and Fine Arts (CEAFA) who passed the Civil Engineer Licensure Examination on November 2016.

Philippine Regulation Commission (PRC) posted the results on November 16, three working days after the last day of examination. Out of 10,972 examinees, only 5,036 takers successfully passed the Civil Engineer licensure exam.

Here are the newest Aquinian Civil Engineers:

- Engr. Sheena Mae B. Bandola
- Engr. Christian S. Bon
- Engr. John Paul M. Cejes
- Engr. Rosil JR B. Iglip
- Engr. Wensyl A. Marino

PRC Board of Civil Engineering administered the November 2016 Civil Engineer Licensure Examination in the cities of Manila, Baguio, Cagayan de Oro, Cebu, Davao, Iloilo, Legazpi, Lucena, Tacloban, and Zamboanga.
New Aquinian CPAs named

Eight (8) graduates of Aquinas University of Legazpi (AUL) passed the Board Licensure Examination for Certified Public Accountants this October 2016.

Names of the new Aquinian CPAs are:
Donna Mae Butac, CPA
Karla Jocel Cernechez, CPA
Syrel Macadangdang, CPA
Aileen Martinez, CPA
Shaira Louise Perez, CPA
John Evren Poniente, CPA
Janica Sia, CPA
Niño Tang, CPA

The October 2016 Board Licensure Examination for Certified Public Accountants was held on October 1, 2, 8 and 9 in the cities of Manila, Baguio, Cagayan De Oro, Cebu, Davao, Iloilo, Legazpi, Lucena and Tacloban.
AUL congratulates New Aquinian Teachers

Aquinas University of Legazpi (AUL) commends its newly licensed teachers from the College of Arts, Sciences, and Education (CASE) who passed the Board Licensure Examination for Professional Teachers (BLEPT) on September 25, 2016.

Philippine Regulation Commission (PRC) posted the results on November 28, 48 working days after the last day of examination. PRC announced that 3,378 elementary teachers out of 77,466 examinees (30.18%) and 31,334 secondary teachers out of 92,754 examinees (33.78%) successfully passed the exam. (www.prcboard.com)

The Aquinians who passed the board examination are:

Bachelor of Elementary Education (Batch 2016)

Basilla, Roy B.
Merdegia, Marenil R.
Nuñez, Giselle E.
Sevillano, Mica E.
Toca, Hannah Jennica A.

Bachelor of Elementary Education (ECD)

Orop, Mary Janelle P. (Oct 2015)
Surbano, Joyce I. (Batch 2016)
Bachelor of Secondary Education (Batch 2016)

Alaurin, Mariel I. (English)
Austria, Mayra Anne G. (English)
Bueno, Ivan P. (English)

Other Programs

Raymund Gerard V. Banzuela (BS Psych, Batch 2011) – second place, elementary level (BLEPT Sep 2016)
Peralta, Jayson Victor R. (AB Philo, Batch 2016)
New Aquinian Civil Engineers named

Three graduates of the Civil Engineer program of Aquinas University of Legazpi (AUL) passed the May 2017 Civil Engineer Licensure Examination. Results were released on May 11, with only 35.92% of takers all over the country successfully qualifying. AUL garnered 50.00% passing rate for First Time takers.

The May 2017 Civil Engineer Licensure Examination was held on May 7-8 in the cities of Manila, Baguio, Cagayan de Oro, Cebu, Davao, Iloilo, Legazpi, Lucena, Pagadian, Tacloban, Tuguegarao, and Zamboanga.
Aquinius William I. Ong, graduate of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program in 2009, was awarded Young Bicolano Entrepreneur of the Year during the Halyao Awards on November 24, 2016. The awards was held at the Avenue Convention Plaza in Naga City, and was organized by the Metro Naga Chamber of Commerce and Industry in celebration of the Bicol Business Month 2016.

Among his many business accomplishments, Ong has made impact in the Bicolano community when he was able to provide manpower services to Sorsogon-based factories. He has enlightened Sorsogonans of the importance labor-intensive jobs which could be another alternative aside from the agricultural jobs available. In this venture, he has successfully connected numerous applicants and employers in the said province.

He has put up a manpower services company, MANPLUS GENERAL SERVICES, which addresses the needs of different companies in 14 municipalities and one city in Sorsogon, and other provinces in Bicol. Aside from his entrepreneurial ventures, Ong participated in civic and community efforts. As a member of Junior Chamber International (JCI) Legazpi, he is involved in community activities. During the Typhoon Ondoy, JCI Legazpi together with Manplus provided aid to affected towns of Gubat, Prieto Diaz, and Bulan in Sorsogon. Furthermore, he successfully initiated a job fair through JCI Legazpi in 2015 wherein 5,000 job seekers in Region V where given opportunities for employment.

Ong may have pursued a different career path than what was expected of him based on his degree, but that did not stop him from living out the Aquinius values: the sharing with others of the fruit of one’s endeavor through loving service, the participation in community activities, and appreciation of Bicol identity. As an alumnus, Ong adheres to the Aquinius identity through his outstanding entrepreneurship and tireless efforts in the community – particularly in the business sector of the region.
AUL 70th Founding Anniversary kicks off with Daralagan sa Ika-Setenta
The Center for Community Involvement organized “Daralagan sa Ika-Setenta”, the first event to drumbeat the 70th Founding Anniversary of Aquinas University of Legazpi (AUL).

With the theme ‘AUL at 70, now UST-Legazpi: Serving the Truth with Gratitude, Daralagan sa Ika-Setenta was conducted on August 19, 2017 at the Legazpi Boulevard, Dap-dap, Legazpi City. Some 2,500 participants joined the fun run. The participants were composed of AUL administrators, employees, students, parents, and alumni.

The runners assembled at the starting line located near the Bureau of Fire Protection Station, and they occupied the left side of the Legazpi Boulevard. With 3 kilometers of running area, the organizers prepared first-aid and water stations along the way and at the finish line. AUL Red Cross Youth Volunteers provided medical aid and the Anduyog Volunteers set up water stations. Cash prizes were given to the first three finishers while the first seven men and women, first 5 youngest and oldest, and first 5 alumni received tokens. All the finishers received a certificate.

Aside from promoting a healthy plus an active lifestyle and encouraging the culture of sharing and volunteerism, the proceeds of the fun run will be allocated for the institution’s grand community outreach scheduled in December.
2017 August
New Aquinian Psychometricians named

Eleven (11) graduates of the Psychology program of Aquinas University of Legazpi (AUL) passed the August 2016 Psychometrician Licensure Examination. Results were released on September 5, with only 50.46% of takers successfully qualifying.

This year’s batch of Aquinian Psychometricians garnered a 78.57% Overall Passing Rate, higher than the university’s passing rate of 50% for the past two years.

The August 2016 Psychometrician Licensure Examination was held on August 30-31 in Manila.

Names of the new Aquinian Psychometricians are as follows:

- Richelle Fern A. Juan
- Kristine A. Miña
- Clarice R. Nasol
- Vernabeth N. Naval
- Jellie Anne B. Reyes
- Neil Arnold M. Ronda
- Jerome T. Del Castillo
- Jecxiz Camille L. Sioson
- Daria Camella S. Boarao
- Martha A. Laguilles
- Noly T. Benavides
Aquinnians Garnered 68.85% Passing Rate in the 2017 BAR Exams

Aquinas University College of Law, Legazpi City and AUL College of Law Extension Program in Tuguegarao City garnered a total of 68.85% passing rate with over 47 passers out of 69 takers in the November 2016 Bar Exams. First time takers also exceeded with 84.21% passing rate of 16 passers out of 19 takers.

The 2017 AQUINIAN LAWYERS:

1. Atty. Cherry A. Agmata
2. Atty. Daryl B. Alfante
3. Atty. Raymond M. Andes
4. Atty. Emmariel A. Antonio
5. Atty. Neil Jose C. Aranas
6. Atty. Eda Marie Avila-Gonzales
7. Atty. Lino Andrew L. Baeta
8. Atty. Susan M. Barrios
10. Atty. Monина M. Bataga
11. Atty. Jam Charmaine M. Belen
12. Atty. Fe V. Bodoraya
13. Atty. Jose Karlo M. Camposano
14. Atty. April R. Casquejo
15. Atty. Niña Francia D. Castañeda-Dimapilis
16. Atty. Nestie C. Clet,
17. Atty. Neil B. Campañero
18. Atty. Mark V. Del Rosario
19. Atty. Salvador Julius Caesar B. Destura
20. Atty. D’Joanna M. Diamante

22. Atty. Gieza R. Esparraguerra
23. Atty. Doreene Lorenzo P. Estor
25. Atty. Maria Glenie V. Gumban
27. Atty. Lina G. Jimenez
28. Atty. Leslie B. Lansangan
29. Atty. Anthony R. Lorcha
30. Atty. Marielle V. Manzanilla
32. Atty. Matthew C. Monforte
33. Atty. Maria Fe Gloria B. Murillo
34. Atty. Kathreen Ciela A. Nasayao
35. Atty. Lianne Gaille R. Payte
36. Atty. Cherry Jane R. Ragodon
37. Atty. Ivy-Lynn M. Raguindin-De Leoz
38. Atty. Sheena T. Rima
39. Atty. Reche T. Torzar
40. Atty. Xavier Henry L. Zamora
41. Atty. Maria Victoria Añonuevo-Llanera
42. Atty. Silky Cruel Balagtas
43. Atty. Jude Thomas P. Trayvilla

At Tuguegarao Campus:

1. Atty. Dawn Lin A. Concepcion
2. Atty. Rick Love S. Felix
3. Atty. Jay-Ar S. Maguiddatu
4. Atty. Paul Nicolas A. Villania
Alumnus presents research paper in 32nd Philippine Chemistry Congress

Sidney Christian Montas, a graduate of the AUL BS Chemistry program, presented his research paper in the 32nd Philippine Chemistry Congress held at Puerto Princesa, Palawan.

The research paper, entitled "Biosynthesized Gold Nanoparticles for the Quantitation of Mercury (II) ion by Digital Imaging Colorimetry", is a study by AUL alums Montas and Diane Claire Toledo. Montas attended the congress with their research adviser Asst. Prof. Jet Guerrero, R.Ch., M.Sc. (AUL Research Director) and Chemistry program chair Prof. Arianne Letada, and presented on June 1, the second day of the congress.

The 32nd Philippine Chemistry Congress is one of the largest annual gatherings of chemists, science teachers and researchers of the country. This year's congress was held at the Asturias Hotel in Puerto Princesa, Palawan from May 31 to June 2.
New Aquinian Chemists named

After a three-year hiatus in the charts, five (5) Aquinian Chemists passed the October 2016 Chemist Licensure Examination. Results were released on October 7, with only 54.86% of takers from all over the country successfully qualifying.

Names of the new Aquinian Chemists are:

Aldrin L. Cañares  
Francis M. Longoria  
Georgia Aileen N. Obligado  
Maryrose Argela E. Olbes  
Cherrylyn B. Bembunuto

The October 2016 Chemist Licensure Examination was held on October 4 and 5 in Manila, Cagayan De Oro and Cebu.
Names of the new Aquinian Pharmacists are as follows:
Amor, Meryl Grace G. (Sorsogon City)
Ancheta, Yedda Marie DJ. (Polangui, Albay)
Arienda, Kristine Marie B. (Legazpi City)
Atento, Ronalie A. (Legazpi City)
Azas, Dazzle D. (Sorsogon City)
Bandola, Angelica C. (Castilla, Sorsogon)
Belda, Ma. Cathrina A. (Tabaco City)
Bobier, Sheena Mae R. (Ligao City)
Bombase, Jamie Maureen T. (Garchitorena, Camarines Sur)
Boncalos, Robert James (Bacacay, Albay)
Bongat, Michelle Ann C. (Tabaco City)
Cabaccang, Kryzta Alaine S. (Daraga, Albay)
Diamante, Maria Adria Elean P. (Legazpi City)
Dote, Faye Karen P. (Legazpi City)
Folloso, Allyson Mae A. (Bato, Camarines Sur)
Francisco, Zyrelle B. (Bacacay, Albay)
Garrido, John Paul B. (Tabaco, Albay)
Isuela, Shally Mae P. (Caramoan, Catanduanes)
Longaza, Nicole Isabelle N. (Legazpi City)
The August 2017 Pharmacist Licensure Examination was held in the cities of Manila, Baguio, Cebu, Davao, Iloilo, Tuguegarao and Zamboanga.

Program in the Bicol Region, Aquinas University of Legazpi (AUL) com-

mands its newly licensed pharmacists from the College of Health Sciences (CHS) who passed the Pharmacist Licensure Exam administered on Aug. 30-
17, with 2,784 passers out of 5,079 takers. AUL garnered 78.38% passing

Maranan, Darrel M. (Sorsogon City)
Nacion, Allea Joyce B. (Camalig, Albay)
Rances, Catherine I. (Tabaco, Albay)
Razo, Rachel Anne O. (Pili, Camarines Sur)
Ribaya, Janielle Ruth A. (Legazpi City)
Romangaya, Niel Bryan A. (Tinambac, Camarines Sur)
Salandanan, Ignacio M. (Sorsogon City)
Samar, Deion Josef C. (Polangui, Albay)
Santibanez, Desiree Y. (Pio Duran, Albay)
Zaragoza, Andrea Nicole P. (Ligao City)
Becoming a journalist was not to have ever crossed Kevin’s mind. A brilliant, passionate, and hardworking person, Don Kevin Hapal could have been anything he wanted to be – a football player, an engineer, a doctor, or a cook, and is good at it. Instead, he decided to pursue his passion as a Social Media Producer.

Kevin grew up traveling from one place to another, due to his mother working at the Overseas Welfare Administration (OWWA). Kevin spent his high school years in Greece, and his first year of college taking up Bachelor of Arts in Social Studies at the University of Santo Tomas.

Even while studying full-time as a Communications student, and as a student leader, Kevin also went at the professional life – he worked as a marketing manager at Red Bar in Legazpi, then at Mi Bar in Legazpi, then at Red Continent Diner and...

Don Kevin Hapal

Kevin is a Social Media Producer at Rappler, a social news network in the Philippines.
Kevin and AUL
The first year he stayed in Aquinas University of Legazpi, Kevin wanted to be a filmmaker.

But on his second year, he went on an educational trip and visited different companies in Metro Manila, one of which was McCann Workgroup – one of the country’s leading advertising agency. “I then went back to Bicol so sure that I’d be in advertising when I graduate,” Kevin confessed.

That was what Kevin thought until he met Professor Gladys Serafica, one of his professors in his third year. Prof. Serafica told Kevin that he was a talented writer and that he might want to consider being a journalist. He shunned the idea.

A month later, Kevin and his colleagues were sent to a journalism workshop in Ateneo de Naga, organized by Rappler – a news platform Kevin had never heard of at that time. At the workshop, Kevin was taught about journalism and social change. “They made me realize just how much power one has to be able to change the world, to make ripples. That’s when I decided I wanted to work for a news organization,” Kevin said.

Kevin then took the extra mile and had his internship at Rappler. Even as an intern, he was already able to publish a handful of articles for the online news platform. Shortly after that, Kevin devoted his last year in the university as a staff at Aquinian Herald – the university’s official student publication – and managed its social media accounts.

It took Kevin the entire four years of his stay in the university to finally figure out what he wanted to be. Fortunately, the university was with Kevin the entire process. “They gave me tools when I wanted to be a filmmaker, took me to seminars when I was bent on becoming an advertiser, and finally, helped me realize my potential to be a journalist,” Kevin said. “AUL laid down not one but several paths for me. It didn’t tell me what to do and where to go. Instead, the university exposed me to different career options so I can decide for myself – all while continuously reassuring me that I can be whoever I want to be. I was never sure about my future, but AUL waited for me to figure it out.”

When asked about the aspect of the university that Kevin loved best, his answer was immediate – he’s very grateful for the university’s tightly-knit community.
“I have been to many schools due to the nature of my mom’s job, but I have never felt more at home than when I was a student at AUL,” Kevin said. “It’s not perfect but it’s full of kind-hearted and loving people. It had shortcomings but the people who run the university, especially those in my college, always made us feel that they genuinely want only the best for us.”

Making Ripples and Fighting Trolls

Right now, Kevin works as a social media producer and a writer. He manages Rappler’s social media accounts and writes in-depth stories related to social media and computational propaganda. Basically, Kevin is one of Rappler’s vanguards when it comes to battling online propaganda and trolls.

According to an article published by the Philippine Star on July 24, 2017, PDP-Laban party, the camp where our president belongs to, was found, through a study at the University of Oxford, to be funding trolls, aimed at spreading “nationalistic and pro-government posts and interact[ing] with dissenters through harassment and individual targeting.” The study found out that roughly around P10 million was expended to hire trolls who would spread propaganda for PDP-Laban, and target the detractors. Well-funded, organized trolls – these are the ones on Kevin’s plate every day that he comes to work.

“It’s a hard but necessary task,” Kevin admits. “As truth-tellers, it is the sworn duty of journalists to fight back. If not us, then who will? Who else would be able to see and tear down these walls of lies?” Rappler also has a BalikBayan section, which focuses on stories regarding our Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW). Kevin manages the section, and he regularly writes about OFWs. The job is second nature to Kevin since he grew up hearing stories about OFWs rather than fairy tales.

Telling the Unpopular Narrative

In the book The Brothers Karamazov by the Russian novelist Fyodor Dostoyevsky, the young Father Zossima met with a mysterious gentleman who said the following words: “You are, I see, a man of great strength of character, as you have dared to serve the truth, even when by doing so you risked incurring the contempt of all.” Rappler, with its staff including Kevin, receives a daily onslaught from trolls and even really powerful personalities who despise how the online news organization stands up to its convictions and echoes the ideals of a watchdog. Alas, Rappler has “incurred the contempt of all,” to the degree that President Rodrigo Duterte “lashed out” – to borrow from a Philippine Star article – at the online news organization during his second State of the Nation Address on July 24, 2017.
Yet, Rappler continues to make ripples and does so in its unique ways. Some may be fighting hard on the front with hard truth, while others, like Kevin, try to balance things out and soothe the tension, all the while braving the inclement waters of social media, with all its sharp-toothed trolls and deceitful propagandists. “Social Media has become very heavy lately,” Kevin admitted. “So we thought we needed to balance it out with light, inspirational stories. That’s where I come in.”

As to why Kevin chooses to remain in the journalism profession, he admitted that criticisms are an inevitable part of his job, and that fighting a troll is but a hard and necessary task. “Criticisms come with telling the truth. When you speak the truth about equality, it feels like oppression to the privileged. When you speak the truth against the status quo, there will always be resistance. When you speak truth to power, you put your own reputation and safety at risk,” Kevin said.

And what helps Kevin to get through the animosity toward journalists is the understanding that he’s just a small speck in a grand picture – that it’s not about Kevin, but the people that he serves and the organization that he represents.

“The truth may not be the popular narrative, but it’s the narrative we ought to tell. Because to some, the truth means ‘justice’, less sleepless nights, equal opportunities, better government services, respect, etc. ,” Kevin added. “Knowing that helps me to keep going.” Right now, Kevin works as a full-time journalist – something that he would never imagine himself doing, had it not been for all the hurdles and the growing need for people to serve and proclaim the truth. Until now, he still doesn’t consider himself a writer.

“When I shifted to AB Communication, I wanted to be a filmmaker. Then an advertiser. All until I discovered journalism. If you think about it, they’re all about storytelling,” Kevin said. “I prefer calling myself a storyteller. Because that’s what I do – I tell stories of ordinary people doing great things.”
Do what you love and success will follow.

This is the secret behind the accomplishment of Jamie Faye Anne B. Guardino, an alumna of Aquinas University of Legazpi-Science Oriented High School (AUL-SOHS) Batch 2002 and a chef at the Institute for Culinary Arts & Related Studies (ICARS) located on the 3rd Floor, JVG Building, Landco Business Park beside Pacific Mall.

Always dressed to the nines, Chef Jamie related her story on how her journey in the trade of Culinary Arts started, and how her brand of well-made cakes and her advocacies slowly changes the landscape of the food industry in the Bicol Region.

**Just for fun**

Initially, Jamie wanted to be a doctor like her mom but instead took AB International Studies major in European Studies at De La Salle University-Manila for her bachelor’s degree. “I was supposed to take a double degree, International Studies with Marketing Management, but then I started loving [AB International Studies major in European Studies]. I fell in love with international politics, international economics, and since I like the international law it was my dream to work for the United Nations that time,” she shared.

“After college, I was about to take the Foreign Service Exam but then one day I thought of cooking a dish for fun,” Jamie reminisced. “I grew up with maids doing all the house chores my whole life, and even in college my mother would not want me to be alone so there is always a maid,” she shared. Even though she lived a sheltered life she decided that she wanted to try cooking. “My then boyfriend tasted the food I cooked and he said it was really good,” she candidly recalled. Using her weekly allowance, Jamie learned to do grocery shopping and bought ingredients in the wet market by herself instead of her maid. She was then encouraged by her friends to enroll in the culinary school after they learned her knack for cooking.

Jamie finished a Culinary Arts course at the Center for Culinary Arts in Manila.

**Igniting the passion**

After finishing her degree in Culinary Arts, Jamie went back to Bicol to help with her family’s business. At the same time, she taught culinary classes at ICARS. Being able to teach the rudiments of cooking to her students, ignited her passion for the trade even more. In addition, cooking for her family because they love her food gave her a sense of pride and kept the fire burning.

Chef Jamie also had the chance to work with various internationally-acclaimed chefs. In 2013, she traveled to New York to work under Pastry Chef Joe Murphy during his tenure at Jean-Georges Restaurant. The restaurant is three-Michelin-stars establishment located at the lobby level of the Trump International Hotel and Tower in Manhattan, New York City. The opportunity provided her a new perspective and a new level of respect for the pastry industry. Consequently, Chef Jamie traveled to France to visit places related to food production. She found new appreciation not just for food but
A Recipe for Success

Jamie Faye Guardino
for the producers of the ingredients such as the farmers. “I always tell my students, do not waste your ingredients because you are not just wasting your money but you are also wasting the time and energy exerted by the people who produced these ingredients,” she shared.

**Jamie and AUL**

During her days as a high school student at AUL, Jamie was involved in organizations like Dominican Network and the student council. She likes organizing activities and interacting people. With these experiences, her skills as a leader were developed. “I was a timid person so the exposure helped a lot,” she shared in retrospect. Jamie also developed a network of friends whom she meets every once in a while. For her, the friendship that was forged was the thing she loved most during her high school days. “I consider my high school days the best part of my life,” she added.

The professors at AUL also played a big role in the formation of Chef Jamie. “Mrs. Maria Christi Muñoz is a strict teacher especially in speaking and she is the reason I talk this way. I get a lot of compliments that I speak well,” she smiled. “Mr. Abelardo Belleza taught us History and he really knew a lot about it. Also, I do remember one time that I topped the academic rankings in my class and he encouraged me to keep that spot. So I tried my best,” she added.

**Love and gratitude**

Chef Jamie expresses her love for the trade by giving her unsurpassed effort which is evident in her beautiful creations. She emphasized a countless of times during the interview that she does want to shortchange her clients because they only deserve the best. “It is evident that Chef Jamie loves her job as I love my job and I think everybody should. I feel lucky that I love my job because some people complain how they do not want to this or that,” she mused. “Love [also] comes with respect for the producers, and to other people in the profession. I try to share what I know, people can message in FB if they have inquiries about baking, and I also tell HRM students that they can invite me to speak in their talks or seminars,” she shared in addition.

Her gratitude towards her success in the industry is directed towards community service and advocacies. “I express my gratitude by sharing my knowledge and experiences with other people. My student at ICARS and I had a community extension project in San Roque, Legazpi City. The project was aimed at underprivileged kids with their mothers, and the objective was to feed them healthy food at least for a day. So my students made spaghetti using fresh tomatoes for the sauce and carrots instead of meat. They also made burgers using ‘puso ng saging’ as the patties instead of beef. We also educated them on the negative effects of processed food and drinks,” she related. Furthermore, Chef Jamie wants to re-educate restaurant owners in the region about food safety and sanitation. These are her ways in giving back to the community that acknowledged her skills.

**On working for success**

Chef Jamie imparted some nuggets of wisdom for those who are working their way to success. “Be excellent in everything you do, in whatever profession you are in. The reason why I succeeded is that I love making people happy with my work even though I get tired physically and mentally. If you do what you love you won’t feel the stress and you will do everything you are capable of;” she surmised.

Her story is a testament that doing what you love best is the main ingredient to the recipe for success.
Patrisha Morco is currently illustrating for five children’s books:

1) MediWonderland book series is composed of 50 books with the aim to make medical procedures less frightening for children. The book series is a project Ysha have with author and teacher Wendy J. Hall who is from Hong Kong. Books 1-4 of this series are all available in Amazon and Kindle stores.
2) Phonics Books HK is a series of 4 books for a local school in Hongkong
2. Cambodia ABC is an alphabet book for a local charity in Cambodia
3. Mindwise series is composed of books for theory of emotional intelligence. It includes lots of hands on and practical ideas to help children develop their EQ.
4. Travel Series is composed of 10 books for children ages 3-10 when they are visiting different countries such as Hong Kong, Japan, France, Italy, UK, Portugal, Spain, Canada, Australia, and Thailand.

Ysha also made a coloring book called “Pamana ni Dawani”, a project in JCI Dawani for children in local public schools in Legazpi City.
Illustrating Truth and Gratitude

Encountering a person who is able to pursue her passion as her career, despite the odds, is indeed a great satisfaction. Patrisha Morco, or fondly called as Ysha by her family and friends, is one good example of an individual who was blessed to discover her calling at such a young age. Driven and steadfast in her career as an illustrator for children’s books, Ysha took the time to impart her beginnings and her ongoing journey.

Humble Beginning

Ysha confessed that discovering her passion for drawing was not defined by any special moments. “I remember wanting to draw all the time at a very young age” she shared. As a child, Ysha learned that drawing was the most comfortable thing for her. She associates her introverted nature as a primary influence for her liking art activities. “I always liked activities that I can do by myself and art gives [me] a lot of space for that” she emphasized. In addition, Ysha confessed that she easily gets tired of things however it is different when it comes to illustrating art pieces. Even though she encounters stumbling blocks across the road, drawing drives her to continue forward in life. “Even if I’m having a difficult time, I still want to keep going. That [is] when you know you love something right?” she shared with a smile.

Her journey as an illustrator formally started in her college days at AUL. At first, her mother suggested she enroll in the Architecture program however when she finally made up her mind to pursue Fine Arts instead, her family supported her all the way. “I consider that luck on my part and I’m very grateful” she surmised.

Ysha and AUL

Ysha studied in Pasig, Manila from preschool to high school and for her college, she transferred in Legazpi, Albay. The change of place was a new and different experience for her. Even AUL, in the beginning, gave a vibe that is a far cry from her schools in the metro. People and her classes in the university was a tad bit different from the usual but all in all the environment was welcoming according to her. “Everything was simpler and calmer, and I got to appreciate the littlest things” Ysha disclosed. Initially, she had a hard time adjusting and dealing with people in university but as time progressed she eventually found some invaluable friends. She related one happy memory about being a part of a student organization called Prodigi. “The happiest memory I have of Prodigi was when we were doing the University video with Letran. We were using some high-class equipment and it really felt like I was in a legit production team [laughs].”
Illustrating Truth and Gratitude

The whole AUL community was involved so we even went to Aquinas Hospital and the Graduate School to shoot [some scenes]. Students across all levels, administrators, staff, and even our Rector [Fr. Ernesto Arceo] were involved in the [filming of some scenes]. It was a whole lot of fun, and I also learned some cool things about cameras, lighting, and video productions in general from the crew in Letran” Ysha reminisced.

When asked about what particular characteristic did she learn during her stay at AUL, Ysha shared that she learned how not to take things for granted. “One thing that always amazes me was how resourceful most of the students were, not all of them came from privileged or wealthy families but they work hard to make the most of what they have. Some of my classmates were like that and when I see them do their best, it makes me want to work harder and utilize every resource I have instead of taking them for granted.” she related.

Aside from her classmates, Ysha also loves the hard-working employees of the university. “I think it is the professors, administrators, and staff that works hard to make AUL a better place for [the] students despite the difficulties and limitations,” she concluded.

Living the Illustrator’s Life

Ever since she found out that it is possible to draw for a living, Ysha only sees herself treading that path. She admitted that working as an illustrator is not a breeze but she surmised that, wherever and whenever you go, you will experience difficulties in life, so she chooses to do something she loves rather than a job she is being forced to do. “One of my professors in AUL always said that the only kind of artists who can’t find a job are the lazy ones. Bearing that in mind, I was never really worried about not being able to support myself as long as I work hard,” she added.

Since being an illustrator is not easy particularly when a client is not satisfied or happy with your work, Ysha learned to distinguish criticisms that are constructive or spiteful in nature. She uses constructive criticisms as a foundation for improvement while spiteful ones are either ignored or motivates her to do better.
Principles of Love, Truth, and Gratitude

“A Life of Truth and of Love out of Gratitude”, the university motto, is inculcated in every Aquinian’s persona, and when Ysha was asked on how the motto has affected her career as an illustrator her response was a true reflection of the Aquinian identity. “Love is the foundation of every work I do. Even through the most laborious and arduous of tasks, love exists nevertheless. The truth lies in between those difficult moments but still choosing to stay sincere and honest with the clients. The discontentment I have for my work fades whenever it gets appreciated by a client and the children most especially. I never planned on illustrating for kids in the beginning but that is where I was led somehow and I’m very grateful - nothing beats the joy of seeing a kid smile because of my artwork. With an overwhelming feeling of gratitude, I hold those precious smiles and positive reactions dearly, it also transforms into my energy so I can start with my next task.”

Because of love, God blessed a person with different talents and abilities, and He is pleased when you utilize His gifts. In Ysha’s case, she brings glory to Him by not trying to be someone else but rather embracing God’s wisdom and sovereignty in creating her. With her work, she is able to make a mark in the world and that is making children smile.
AUL@70, now UST-Legazpi: Serving the Truth with Gratitude

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