## Respect Works Here

## You are the one determining your future. You cannot just give up. You seek and you find.

~ Angie Miranda

## Community Champion

**Angie Miranda** had no desire to leave the Philippines, a country she loved and where she lived with her close-knit family. However, with the political and economic issues in the '80s, Angie felt the pressure to seek a brighter future elsewhere.

"I never dreamed of going outside of the Philippines. I want to have a simple life, have a job and stay close to my parents. But that wasn't the case," explains Angie. "At that time, I had just graduated university and I was looking for a job for months and couldn't find anything. It was my uncle who suggested I try looking for work overseas."

Starting as a caregiver, first in Singapore, and then in Grande Prairie, Alberta, Angie knows first-hand the type of sacrifices that immigrants make. This has influenced her ongoing commitment to support and help newcomers in whatever community she finds herself.

In Vernon, she is a key member of the Club Filipino of Okanagan-Shuswap. In 2013 when she was president of the Club, she led the fundraising efforts for victims of Typhoon Yolanda, which raised \$36,000.

"I am still so grateful for the outpouring of support from the community and the business," said says. Once she had completed her two-year commitment as a caregiver, Angie returned to school at the Grande Prairie Regional College. Her degree from the Philippines was not accepted in Canada and so she pursued a diploma in Business Administration. She worked for Shoppers Drug Mart and then moved on to Kal Tire. Her strong work ethics and skills allowed her to advance in the company, eventually bringing her to the IS Department at Kal Tire's corporate office in Vernon as a purchasing agent.

For Angie, the keys to success are education, determination and a positive attitude.

"When people come here, I encourage them to go back to school. Even though many are already college graduates and I know it is hard for them, to go back when they are older. But they need to have more than just a job. They need to have a career," explains Angie passionately. "As my mother always said, education is important. You can lose everything ... you can lose your possessions, your money, but once you have an education, no one can take it away from you."

"You are the one determining your future. You cannot just give up. You seek and you find," continues Angie. "You need a positive attitude. It really adds up."

When she first came to Vernon in 2006, Angie admits it was hard, mostly because leaving her friends, it felt like when she had left her family in the Philippines. "This time though, I had my husband Carlos at my side, so it wasn't bad after all."

"You adapt," she says. "This is a small community where everyone knows everyone and it is more relaxed than Grande Prairie. The first few years it seemed a little cliquey," she adds hesitantly, then rebounds with her signature smile and positive outlook. "Once you open yourself to the community and volunteer it is fine. I love it here now. Vernon is home."









