



# Respect Works Here

## Community Champion

**Aurora Munro** has spent a lifetime taking care of people: she has been a nanny, caretaker, and companion in many homes and truly sees this as her ultimate destiny and the source of her contentment and happiness.

She originally left her home in the Philippines to help support her family by working as a companion in Greece. Her father had passed away suddenly and she needed to support her mother and siblings.

“My sister was learning nursing and my mom couldn’t afford to help her. So that was the start of my destiny - I helped my sister finish her nursing and then also my brother.”

Initially life in Greece was very hard for her. She didn’t understand the language, she wasn’t used to the food, but mostly importantly, she was lonely, separated from her family.

“People think maybe you leave your family in the Philippines because you don’t care for them,” says Aurora. “The reality is, we have to survive because they need our help. That is my strength – my family.”

“All the hardship I had is covered with joy because I know they are all settled now,” she continues. “I know it is my destiny: caring for people, caring for family.”

It was family – her aunt Nenette - that brought her to Vernon in 1994 to help care for Nenette’s sister who was battling cancer. Although she had successfully settled in Greece and was living a good life there, Aurora knew she needed to come.

In Vernon, she found her forever home and destiny. She has been married to Terry for 18 years. She has worked for numerous families taking care of both young and old and always treats them like her own family. No matter what she does, Aurora focuses on keeping positive and enjoying life. She starts every morning deliberately choosing to smile and to be contented.

“If I smile and am happy, then someone else can’t really be miserable,” she laughs.

For over twenty years Aurora has been an active member of the North Okanagan Filipino Canadian Association (NOFCA) which seeks to bring together Filipinos in the region to achieve common goals, to promote cultural awareness and to promote friendship. Aurora was president of NOFCA in 2003, when the club, along with the Club Filipino Okanagan Shuswap held fundraisers for victims of Hurricane Yolanda in 2003 that raised over \$36,000.

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“I try to help newcomers from the Philippines adjust to the lifestyle here and work together to get involved with the community,” she says.

Aurora loves to share her culture and the importance of family relationships, hard work and serving people with a smile ... and most importantly having fun while doing that. When people acknowledge her hard work in the community she is quick to say that she doesn’t want thanks or anything in return. She simply asks that they be happy and that they grow what she is doing, by paying it forward and helping others in the community.

“I don’t think I am a Community Champion – I am only a part of a community. There are a lot of Champions in this town.”

