

LEADERSHIP JOURNEY

by Lourieniel Dacillo

I embarked on my journey in Law School as an observer, a silent person with a grand vision. Thoughts, ideas, and “what ifs” never crossed beyond the confines of my mind. My personality didn’t seem to align with the leaders we had at school—friendly, approachable individuals with sunny dispositions.

As I transitioned to the second semester of my first year in law school, I contemplated the kind of lawyer I aspired to be—a lawyer people could turn to. To achieve this, I knew I needed to change. I began by joining Bar Operations during the best bar ever as a follower, working with the graduating batch then in their third year. In my second year, I volunteered as VP for Internal Affairs to bridge gaps. I aimed to support my classmates, then known as batch Barnotch. I never aspired to lead; I was content being a follower, a silent leader in the shadows.

However, fate thrust me into the role of President of the Paulinian Lex Circle. I was apprehensive, aware that my personality didn’t seem to fit the position, and lacking a comprehensive view of what the FO Law community needed, I was confined within my shell. I feared I wouldn’t live up to the excellence of my predecessors.

Yet, an inner voice—the little girl who had always been a fighter—pushed me to step up. So, I embraced the challenge. After a month or two, two friends convinced me to join the Association of Law Students of the Philippines. Despite my hesitations, I welcomed the opportunity to test my limits and discover my capabilities. This journey became a journey of self-discovery.

I began standing alongside leaders from other law schools and connecting with heads of





various organizations. In moments of fear, criticism, and adversity, I reminded myself that I embodied the essence could connect with peers, and professors, hoping to ignite a passion for service, a driving force that can help you go through law school without quitting.

In a world where we are all focused on personal growth, we must also look back on our previous struggles to bring solutions for today. Thus, we launched the Law Student Boot Camp. Understanding the struggles of first-year students, trying to adapt, and finding their group, we aimed to ease their transition. Despite the extra hours, I was happy with their participation. As months passed, faculty support for my ideas grew. Though burdensome for some, I emphasized focusing on benefits rather than how tired we were. Even without direct thanks, the impact on appreciative supporters mattered most. Because there is greater glory waiting for us at the end.

Once a silent presence, often seen alone in hallways, I was known by name, perhaps for an unfriendly demeanor. Yet, I possessed an uncanny ability to read subtle cues and body language, addressing unheard issues, I might not talk much by my love language was through action which is why we continued experimenting with what works and what doesn't.

We introduced changes to the Lecture Series, transitioning from typical law-centered lectures to including Mental Health Lectures and varied Law Days games, showcasing diverse student talents. It brought me immense joy to witness students shine in different avenues. Despite exhaustion and sleepless nights, my focus remained on

supporting others because I didn't want them to feel the struggles I experienced.

Through leadership, we implemented programs addressing the unspoken needs of people, nature, and animals, fostering a safe, inclusive environment valuing everyone. Despite my shortcomings, being stern or emotional, I strived to be better.

Concluding my leadership, I hope students draw inspiration and cultivate active senses, listening not just with ears but hearts, and leading with compassion and understanding. Be someone who talks when necessary, listens, and answers to understand.

Surround yourself with the right people because you will shine where you are valued, you can lead when you are supported. Leap and don't be afraid of what is on the other side. Law School is more enjoyable when you get to contribute to the growth of your fellow students. If you feel lost, know that in moments when you think you have nothing more to give, that is when you'll realize that there is still more of you to go around. Finally, always ask for guidance from the almighty. He will always guide you to adventures you thought you were not brave enough to venture.

I'm grateful for believers, my supportive team, and students valuing silent yet action-packed leadership, I, as President of the Paulinian Lex Circle 2023, ALSP Visayas, Island Director, interim Secretary, and Assistant Academic Head of Bar Operations 2020-2024, challenge you to be the next leader who uplifts others.