

**Lyrca Roniech Balala: Resilient Like A Bamboo**  
**by Iluminada SA. Domingo**

“I find our home in a peaceful situation,” replied Lyrca when her family was confronted with life storms. Upon coming home from family reunion with her father and siblings her mother was no longer around. It was in New Year 2016. Leaving them is not surprising at all. It happened in several occasions whenever misunderstanding arise between her mother and father. Either one of the siblings was taken by her mother away because she chose running away. “I am not sad when my mother left us because there were no longer arguments at home.”

Being silent is her process of coping in a stressful and conflicting situation. It is in silence that she was able to understand the world she is coping mentally, emotionally, physically and socially. Taking a walk helped her to breath out the negative and breath in when she is at the verge of an exploding emotion. The death of her older brother was a tragedy “I accept the way things are.”

Lyrca has been a consistent academic awardee receiving the highest honor when she received her diploma in Senior High School. Her scholastic record is a fruit of her perseverance, diligence and determination has been her guiding motivation to work hard in her studies. Presently, she is one the beneficiary of the City Scholarship Program of Cagayan De Oro City, a grantee of a monthly school allowance of Three Thousand Pesos. She is now a first-year student of Bachelor of Science in Computer Engineering in University of Science and Technology in the Philippines, one of top performing university in the Philippines.

A very diligent person who loves to read. Developed her confidence of communication skill both orally and in writing. She garnered awards in school on speech competition. Her dreams guided her of what she wants to be. She dreamt of a family of her own, loving, peaceful and stable. Poverty free not to live in a dilapidated house, have delicious and nutritious food, and to be in career world as a Software Engineer.

She has a fear living in unsafe community. Oftentimes, her dad had a drinking spree with neighbors. that lasted until midnight. She can only sleep when drinking session stops. She has a younger sister who is in elementary grade whom she looks after. Her sister has noticed an adult man watching her. At times, just the two of them, her younger sister stays in the unsafe house when father is gone to work in other places for five days.

Like many Filipinos they belong to a poverty-stricken family. She is aware of being the poorest among the poor which is bothering her. The family lived in housing (5 x 5 square meters) provided by the government which is unsafe from all forms of danger for her and younger sister. They eat poor food or food that is poor in quality. The standard of living of many Filipinos is very impossible for to meet.

Her father is an on and off unskilled worker. He works in construction work whenever there is an opportunity. Alternately, he drives a three wheeled cycle (not motorized) which he rented and earns Two Hundred Pesos from six o’ clock in the morning to five o’ clock in the afternoon.

Lyrca is being look up to as a “cool” person who never showed her negative emotion against anyone nor expressed publicly.

Daily, her life is anchored on Bible passage for her to reflect on, “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” - Jeremiah 29:11

Like the bamboo, Lyrca also survived in the harshest conditions, still standing tall. When the storm comes, bamboo bends with the wind. Grows tall but still bends down which also symbolizes humility. With Lyrca's achievements, she remains humble.

Like the bamboo, strong... flexible... surviving... coping... resilient...