

# In the business of transforming lives

Established in 1975, Punlaan puts into practice the social doctrine of the Church by providing young women the necessary skills to pursue a productive and meaningful work life.

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Punlaan School, a pioneer in Dual Training, firmly believes in holistic training, a comprehensive program for developing a person through education. A key factor in achieving

this goal is personal mentoring by experienced life coaches.

Equal weight is given to education in the faith and in spiritual life, a task entrusted to the Prelature of Opus Dei, an institution of the Catholic Church providing ordinary people the means to live their Christianity to the full in their daily lives.

Upon admission, a student receives lessons on how to appreciate the core values of life. This is the inspiration received from the founder of Opus Dei, St. Josemaría Escrivá.

Each graduate is required to work two full years after graduation in the local industry, as an exercise in personal social responsibility, a way of giving back to the people who made it possible for them to pursue a career in the service industry.

Graduates have not only given back to their benefactors but have also brought honor to their alma mater.

Mae Agnes Rusia-Mesina, 33, married and mother of one, won the prestigious Ramon Magsaysay Most Outstanding Filipino Worker Award.

Jacqueline Noda, 31, single, has been part of the support team operating the Lismullin Hospitality Services Centre in County Meath, Ireland, since 2002. The center won the Gold Award for Excellence in Accommodation Standards from the Irish Accommodation Services Institute.

To give back to her school, Elvira Mangaran-Silla, 35, married, spent two years as a culinary instructor at Punlaan while pursuing higher studies. Now a resident of Vancouver, Canada, where she works as a supervisor, she took up Bachelor

## of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management.

Kristine Lou Baltazar-Locher, 28, is a part-time Culinary instructor at Holy Angel University in Angeles City. She and her husband, Italian-Swiss chef Chris Locher, put up the popular C Italian Restaurant in Clarkfield, Pampanga.

Diana Jacobo, 30 and single, is a waitress at Australian M.V. Pacific Dawn Cruises. She spent for her younger sister Danica's education at the University of the Philippines Diliman. Danica, who graduated cum laude, currently teaches history at Paref Rosehill School in Antipolo City.

Widow Liza Lasalita, mother of one, is now a pastry chef in a food establishment in Dubai while Lady Anne Peñalosa is now a flight stewardess for Emirates.

Theresa Mendoza-Remitilla, 32, is a dining supervisor of The Peninsula Manila.

Since it opened, Punlaan has graduated over 800 and saw their lives take a 180-degree turn through the education they received.

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By MCS Pasion // Philippine Daily Inquirer

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