



PIERO GACAYAN:

A COLF STORY



# INTRODUCTION

Hi, worthy reader. My name is Piero, and this is the story of my time in Community of Learners. This year makes it my eighth and my last year in COLF. I learned a lot of things during those eight years, as I was constantly learning because of being exposed to different types of children and teachers. That was how COLF taught me one of its greatest gifts: openness and a sense of unity. This was the school where I was able to meet the friends with whom I will grow old and teachers whom I will always remember. This is the story of my life in my second home.



# A FRESH NEW START

I first arrived in COLF when I was eleven years old. I was a pretty shy kid.

I guess it's understandable after spending 2 years doing homeschool because of being bullied in my previous school before that. I did not really have a good experience being with kids my age. For two years, I did not really know anyone my age aside from my cousins, as I did not have any friends. All I had were my mom and my younger brother Lode as my best friends from Grades 2 and 3. So, I did not really know how exactly kids my age were like. My mom knew that it was time for me to go back to a normal school, even if I didn't really want that. So, she decided to bring me to COLF when I was in Grade 4. I still remember my first day in COLF, I was alone and scared since I did not know anybody.



# TILL WE GROW OLD

It was not for long until I was able to meet the people whom I would grow up with for the next eight years! Everyone was so friendly and open to getting to know me. And just like that, I wasn't so scared anymore. These are the people who will grow up to become my closest friends, allies, and eventually my second family. They taught me so much during our years in COLF, as they showed me their own views on things, their own morals, and principles. I will continue to learn from them even if we're going our separate ways. I will always thank them for the memories they made with me, and I will forever keep them with me.





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# ART AND LEADERSHIP



I can never thank my teachers and COLF enough for giving me the many opportunities to hone my talent in the arts as well as sharing them with the school. Even during my first year in COLF, there were plenty of tasks and projects that gave me the chance to practice my art. The kind words from my classmates and my teachers encouraged me even more to draw. Eventually, I was able to improve my art skills and led me to opportunities to even teach others. However, I was always scared of teaching or leading others.

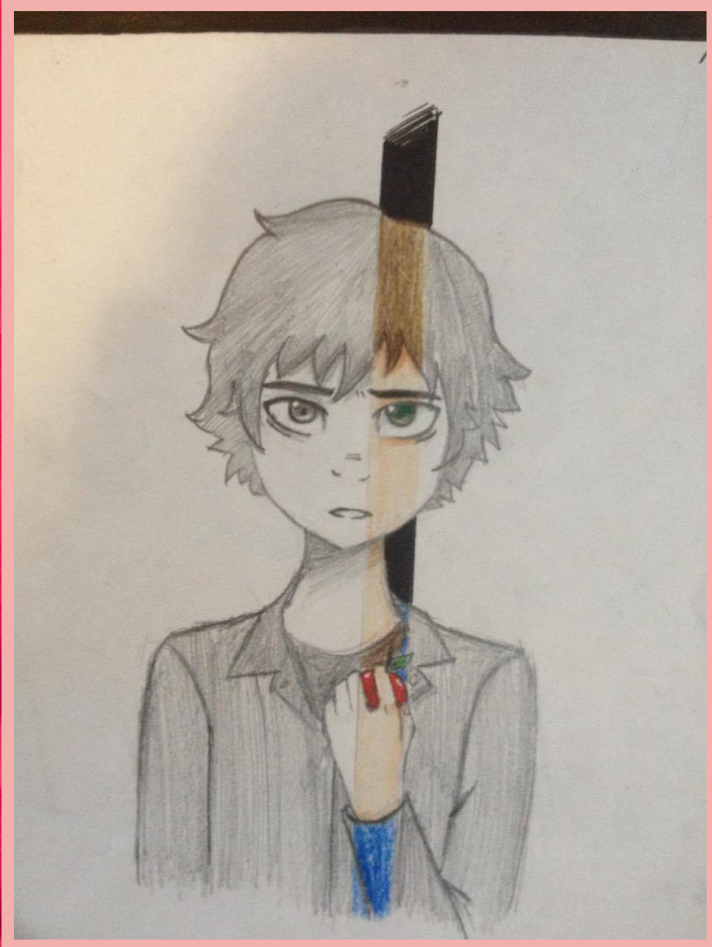
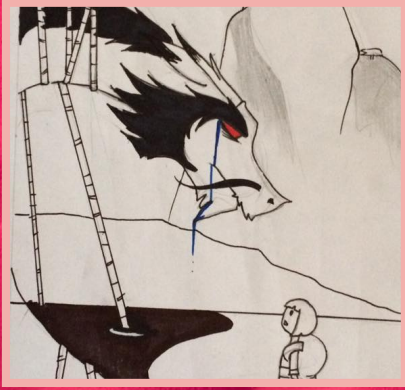
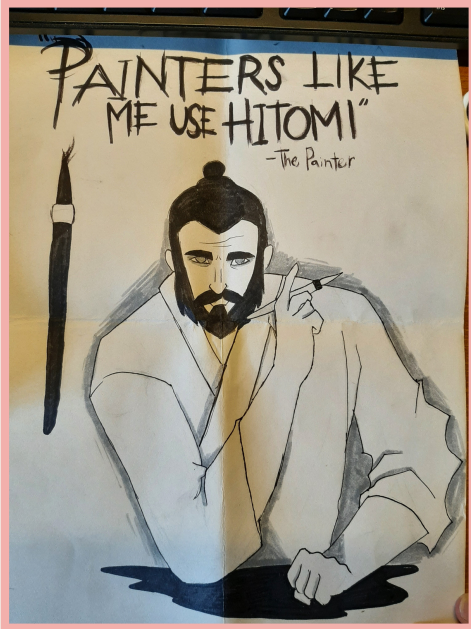


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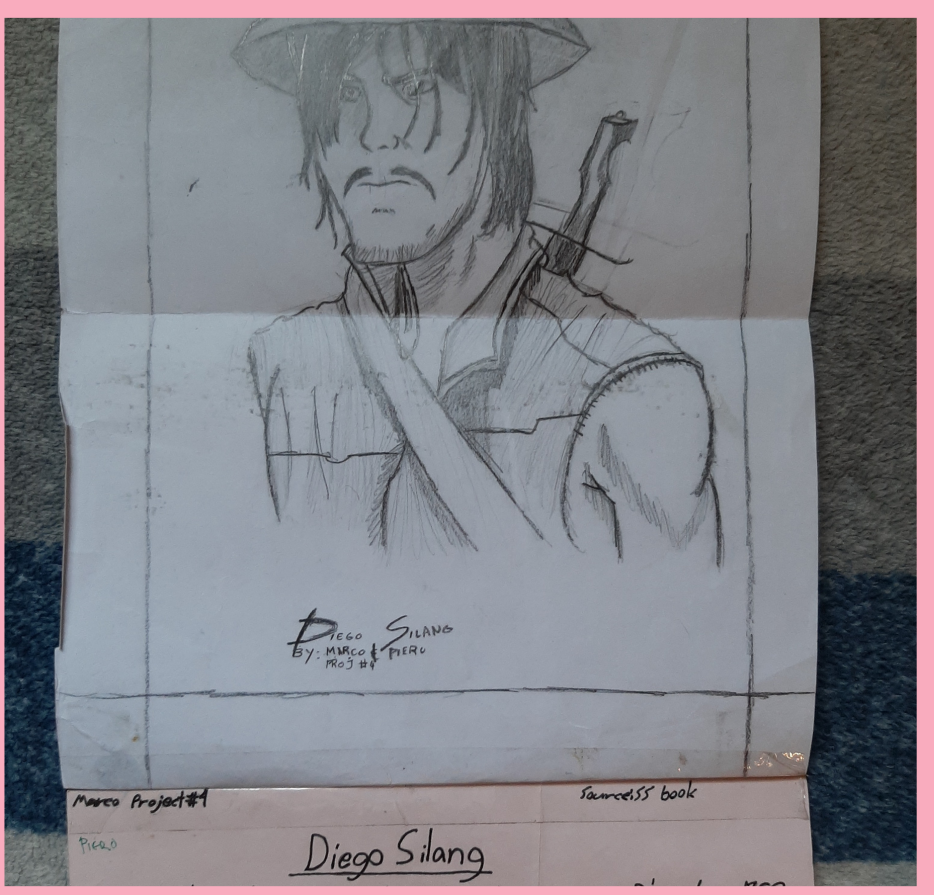
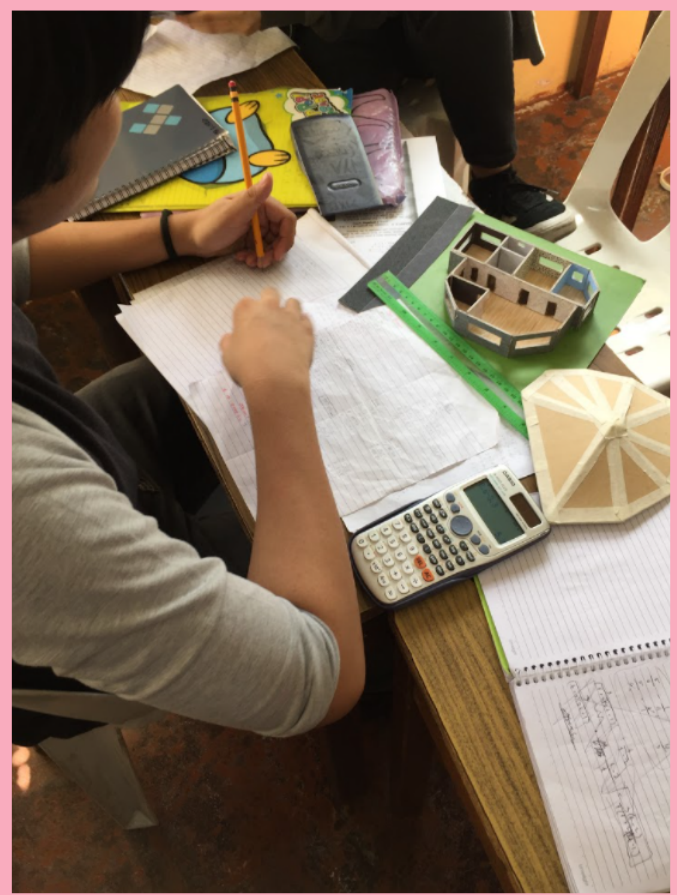
# ARTISTS POOL

I always saw myself as a follower, as I would usually be the one following orders. COLF turned that around for me, as it taught me that everyone can be a leader. During my time in Grade 10, Art and COLF gave me the opportunity to lead and teach fellow students about art. This was my time as a leader in Artist's Pool, which is an academic committee that is designed to help older and younger students collaborate and create artwork together for various school activities. Even when teaching, I was able to learn from the students I taught. With my talents, I found myself contributing to different student productions and school events. From responsibilities varying from small to big, I was able to learn a lot more about what I was capable of during those moments. For one; I did not know I would enjoy photography, video editing, or even dancing.









# DISCOVERY OF NEW TALENTS AND EXPERIENCES



Aside from my talent in the visual arts, COLF helped me discover some hidden talents and interests that I hope to also master someday. One of them would be joining COLF's high school Dance Team during Grade 8. Mainly, I joined because my mom insisted that I would join. Much to my surprise, I was able to learn to enjoy dancing. I could not thank my mom, my school, Teacher Analyn, and Teacher Manny enough for constantly supporting me during my time there. I was even able to land 3rd place during my first year of joining. Honestly, that's already pretty amazing for me.



There, I was able to perform in front of the whole school with the team and even battle it out in the annual Dance Olympiad. COLF also helped me find a sport where I had fun and was passionate about playing. That sport was Ultimate Frisbee, and COLF showed me to love it when participating during school Intramurals. I even won a championship during my first year of playing. Even just by trying out new things, COLF was able to help me find new things to enjoy. Learning guitar and drums was something that I really enjoyed, and I hope to get back to learning to play better someday.



Dance  
Team

# CLOSING THIS CHAPTER

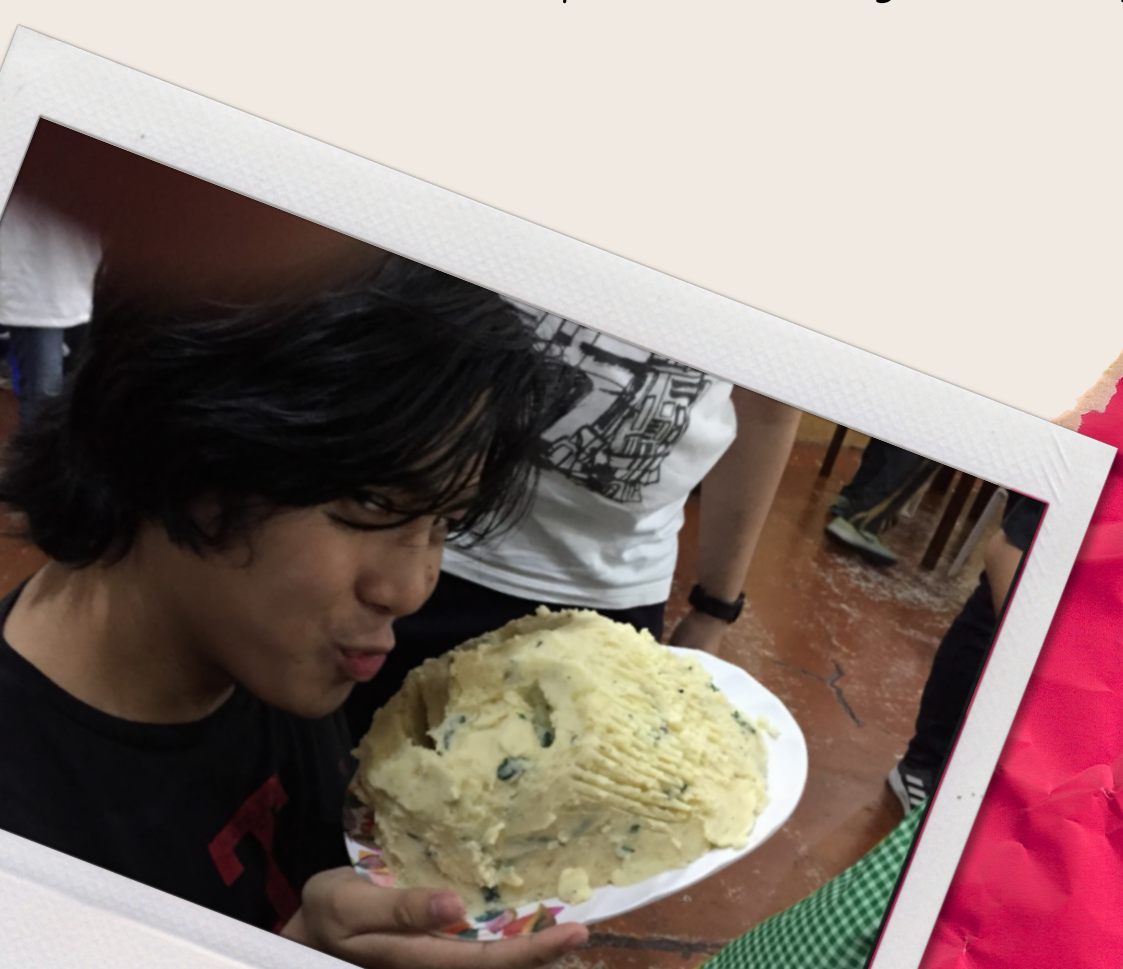


Leaving this school gives me this feeling of uncertainty since everyone finds comfort in familiarity. In my last days as a COLF student, I keep thinking of the people who saw me grow as a person. I constantly think that I am leaving my teachers, my other friends, my second family behind. An end of an era, in the final page of this chapter of my life. It saddens me that I will no longer see the same faces every day, or do the same things with them every day. I then realize that my memories, my learnings from each person I was within COLF will forever be with me. I just have to remember that I am bringing a piece of them with me wherever I go, and I find comfort in that.



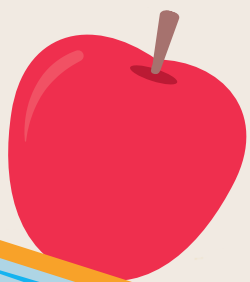


*To all the Batang CL, I hope you guys keep enjoying your future years in COLF and treasure your experiences deeply. Keep chasing that dream that you've always been chasing, because our teachers will do whatever they can for you to achieve it someday. Don't be afraid to ask for advice or questions, and if ever any of you need help, COLF is always here for you.*





*To the teachers who raised me like one of their own, I just want you to know that I will forever be grateful for keeping up with my stubbornness and my late submissions. You all are the reasons why I am here right now, writing to all of you as a COLF graduate. I cannot thank you all enough for raising me.*





*To my friends and classmates who grew up with me, I hope we all find the things that make us spark when we get to college. I will forever treasure the memories we've created together as a class.*





I will forever be grateful to COLF for giving me the childhood I believe everyone deserves. Thank you for all the experiences and opportunities you bestowed upon your students, as well as the people we meet along the way. This is Piero Gacayan, a proud Batang CL, not truly saying goodbye.

