

IN VICTORIA

Arlene Martin's New Position Unleashes Her Talents at Emerald Crest

by Christine Drasher
Emerald Crest of Victoria

Resident Director Arlene Martin couldn't be happier to be working at Emerald Crest by Augustana Care in Victoria. Yet, as a child, her first ambition wasn't to work with humans. In fact, she wanted to be a veterinarian.

Arlene grew up with 10 brothers and sisters in Manila, business capital of the Philippines. Her father was a veterinarian and she wanted to follow in his footsteps, opening her own clinic in Manila. As people did not typically bring animals to clinics at the time, Arlene's father worried her idea would not flourish. He suggested she become a doctor instead.

Arlene was more interested in caring for people rather than concentrating on the scientific subjects required of doctors. She opted to attend nursing school, still holding out hope for attending veterinary school after she received her nursing degree.

Fate intervened when a cousin who worked at a Montessori school in Manila asked Arlene to take a summer job teaching toddlers there. She enjoyed it, and when her cousin begged her to take a permanent position at the school, Arlene agreed.

"I fell for the kids who were different," she recalls. She was especially moved by three triplets who would hide under the table when Arlene turned her attention elsewhere.

Instead of pursuing veterinary studies, Arlene decided to get a master's degree in special education after talking with a woman named Dr. Matilde Valdez who encouraged her. Although the school term

had already started, Matilde gave Arlene a note that would open doors at the special education school.

Arlene was accepted and discovered, to her surprise, the woman who provided the note was her professor -- and the founder of the special education program at the

University of the Philippines.

After graduation, Arlene was married and she and her husband started a family. They moved to the western central region of the Philippines and Arlene worked in the special education field for many years.

In 2005, Arlene left her marriage and

moved to the United States. She found work as a nurse who cared for older generations and also taught as a substitute teacher on her day off, so she could still connect with children.

For the next seven years, Arlene worked at a faith-based organization in a long-term care, short-term rehabilitation and home health care. She especially enjoyed the wisdom and tenderness of older adults she encountered. "They reminded me to be mindful of what is around me and they showed me what life is all about," she says.

Arlene then worked for a home health care company, where she traveled extensively. After an illness, she began to look at life differently. She decided she wanted to return to working in a faith-based organization with older generations, especially those in memory care. When she saw an opening at Emerald Crest, Arlene applied immediately.

"The minute I saw the place, I fell in love with the home environment and the wonderful residents. I wanted to be with them. I wanted to bring out the best of me by taking care of them," she says.

Arlene joined Emerald Crest of Victoria soon afterward as resident director and feels blessed to be there. "I never get tired because I am unleashing all my talents here," she says. "I came to life again because of Emerald Crest."

Emerald Crest by Augustana Care is thrilled and excited that Arlene is sharing her many talents with residents and staff.



Arlene Martin is new Resident Director at Emerald Crest.

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