

# Mary Althea Valenzuela

# VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

Two years ago, Mary and her mother relocated to Canada from the Philippines. They were reunited with her father who had moved eight years before his family. While Mary was looking forward to being with her father again, she was reluctant to move to Canada because of having completed her second year for her Bachelor of Social Sciences. She was delighted to learn about the many social services available in Canada and continues to work towards a degree in Social Work. Mary likes to keep busy and enjoys cooking, painting, singing and says that music is an integral part of her life.

After being encouraged by her mother, Mary connected with CIWA staff. Through the services and referrals she received she began her journey in volunteerism. She says she has learned and grown greatly through her experiences. Volunteering with the Filipino Community Development Program offered her the chance to enhance her administrative skills as she has facilitated data entry, surveys, intakes and assisted with workshops. Volunteering with various Employment Program workshops she was able to assist with workshops, help with job searches, and mock interviews. She also volunteered many hours with the Volunteer Program.

She has learned a lot and received life impacting mentorship from many staff members. Her communication skills have been greatly enhanced and her confidence has grown beyond anything she had ever expected. One of the aspects she loves about volunteering for CIWA is that everyone is so kind and treats her with respect and equality.

Mary's outstanding contributions and integrity are being recognized because she has helped contribute significantly to CIWA programs and she also has a high attention to detail. She has a high level of dedication, professionalism and accountability. Her commitment and passion to help people has contributed to the success of workshops.

Congratulations Mary Althea Valenzuela for being Volunteer of the Month for February!



**CIWA**  
Calgary Immigrant Women's Association