



-SANDY SWANSON: A Life of Service

- Paul Healy

Times are changing at CSC. One of the most significant changes is the retirement of Sandy Swanson, our long-time staff member and Child Development Director. Sandy has been on our staff since 1979.

Several years ago Sandy was recognized at the CSC Banquet for her work and the great impact she has had on the lives of hundreds of our children

over the years. The theme for that banquet was "The Road to CSC," and we looked at the various avenues that led children and staff to our doors in Cebu. The feature on Sandy was introduced by these words: "At the end of the road is Auntie Sandy." For 36 years, Auntie Sandy Swanson has been there

to greet hundreds of children and young adults who have come to live at CSC, offering them love, hugs, encouragement and guidance.

Former residents in 15 countries around the world remember her with fondness and appreciation. Kirk Pilapil, who grew up at CSC and is now an elementary school teacher in Canada, honored Sandy by writing that "she is one of the

most generous, supportive and loving people I know. She is one of the most important persons that I looked up to as I was growing up in CSC."

One of the amazing things about Sandy is her near photographic memory about the children she has cared for at

CSC. Lynn Greene, a former staff member and one of Sandy's closest friends, describes her as "the only woman who can remember the birthdays of 750 children, the exact days they left for

adoption, the city they now live in and the anniversary of their adoptive parents!" Prior to the computerization of records, that memory allowed CSC to keep in touch with children with whom we might otherwise have lost

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Sometimes when people ask me what I do for a living, they respond to learning about CSC with “that must be so rewarding.” And then I say to myself, “That’s right; this is rewarding!” It’s easy to get so busy with policies, finances, and the project of the day that the amazing purpose of CSC gets momentarily lost in the shuffle. It can be easy to take for granted what a special place this is to be part of.

In the same way, I can get so accustomed to working with people I count as friends that I forget what a privilege that is. Sandy Swanson’s retirement is a good reminder of that. For as long as I’ve known her, I’d count Sandy as a friend as much as a colleague.

As Sandy retires, we have many tasks to cover. Reports need to be assigned, responsibilities need to be managed, and child development duties will shift, but all those things pale in comparison to not having our friend Sandy in Cebu anymore. As is true of the people you come to love in any organization, it’s the stuff that doesn’t fit in a job description that you really miss.

Luckily for me, Sandy and I only live a city apart in Minnesota. And she’ll still be around for another year at CSC—here in the States on home assignment. So don’t hesitate to arrange for her to speak to your group, and you’ll be sure to see her at our annual banquet. Still, Cebu won’t feel quite right for a while without her there.

We are extremely grateful for Sandy Swanson. You might know her best for writing FrontLine prayer updates, picking you up in Cebu, or answering an adoption question, but those of us on staff know her most for her friendship. Legacies where you work don’t get much better than that. ■

-COMING FULL CIRCLE-

It’s been 18 years since Roselyn Matugas arrived at CSC from a small mountain village north of Cebu City. CSC looked quite different in March, 1997. There were only two homes on the main campus, both just six years old. Our Cebu Children of Hope School hadn’t even opened yet.

Roselyn is 27 now and continues to live in our Wally Johnson Teen Home. Although we don’t have any age cutoffs that force young people to leave CSC when they’re not ready, both of Roselyn siblings have moved on. It likely won’t be long before Roselyn will be ready to do the same. She has made a lot of progress, especially the past few years.

School wasn’t easy for Roselyn. She even stopped high school at one point to seek work, but eventually committed to continuing her education. She didn’t give up. **She returned to high school and graduated from college in March with a degree in early childhood education. We are very proud of her.**

We’re also taking advantage of a Teen Home resident having this special skillset. At the start of the new school year (in mid-June), Roselyn began working for the organization that has given her a home these past 18 years. She is assisting in preschool, co-leading the toddler program, and working with students during afternoon special

classes: physical education, library, music, and art.

Roselyn is doing a great job in her new role, and she has been a welcome addition to the team with her upbeat personality and quick humor. It has been a blessing to all of us to see “our CSC kid” Roselyn become a blessing to the children who live at the shelter. ■



track. And her ongoing contact with former residents has been a source of encouragement and continuity in their lives.

It will not be the same at CSC without Auntie Sandy. "I cannot imagine CSC without her," reflected Kirk. "She has given her life to loving Jesus by loving all of us at CSC. She loved us even more when we were troubled and made poor choices. Auntie Sandy taught me what it means

to be kind and generous, and how to love and give without conditions. She has been one of my inspirations and I am where I am today, teaching little kids, because of her. I love Auntie Sandy!"

Children around the world share these sentiments about Sandy Swanson and her influence on their lives. And her contributions to the success of CSC for the past 36 years are so significant

that it is hard for any of us to envision new children coming up the road to the shelter and not having Auntie Sandy to welcome them.

God bless you, Auntie Sandy, for your huge investment in the lives of our children for these many years. May God richly bless you in this new chapter in your life. ■

"Auntie Sandy taught me what it means to be kind and generous, and how to love and give without conditions."

1981



With some of our first children in Bulacao, Pardo.

1985



With the staff and kids in our second home in Sun Valley.

1991



With Harry Schmidt, Marlys Healy and Jeannie Schodt in Banawa.

2004



Hugs all around with children in the Eicher Home.

1997



Spending time with toddlers in the Cherne Home.

2008



With Michelle Peterson after the CSC Banquet at Bethel University.

2011



With some of the staff on the 4th of July at the Children of Hope School.

2015



With her great buddy Joemar on the playground.

HIGHLIGHT ON CARMELITA

When a child is a hurting place of loss, and enters the admission process into CSC, Carmelita Baya is often the first CSC person they meet. As CSC's supervising Social Worker, she represents us well, working with dedication and integrity. Whether she is dealing with the government census office to procure a birth certificate, or with the court for an abandonment decree, Carmelita always puts a child's best interests first. She is a strong person—diplomatic but willing to stand firm and take on the bureaucracy if needed.

Sometimes Carmelita's work involves searching for people, both locally and nationally. She often needs to find birth parents or other relatives of

our children, either to sign surrender documents or provide birth or health information. A social worker from another child caring agency once described Carmelita as "part bloodhound," saying that she could "find a needle in a haystack, much less a person in a big city." Carmelita has traveled by boat, bus, train, plane, jeepney, and even helicopter to get where she needs to go for CSC, sometimes venturing into unsafe areas. **Her dedication to the task and her faith in God inspire her to do her very best for the children she represents.**

In the months following Typhoon Yolanda, CSC did some relief work to help families of our employees and former residents who had lost their homes in the deadliest storm in Philippine history. Carmelita led our small CSC relief team to Northern Cebu and the neighboring island of Leyte to assess needs

and distribute food, water, and building supplies. Carmelita took on the task with the same enthusiasm she has shown in working for CSC's children over the years, happy to be able to.

Another important part of Carmelita's job is to help former CSC residents find and meet their birth families. She finds families, determines their interest in reconnecting, and counsels them about their birth child's situation and the emotional issues involved in a reunion. She has helped hundreds of our former residents find and meet their birth families.

Carmelita Baya has worked for CSC since 1985. She is the face of CSC to many in the Philippines. We thank God for bringing her to us and for gifting her in such a wonderful way for the work that she does on behalf of CSC's children. ■



PRAYER REQUESTS and PRAISES

REQUESTS

We are currently hiring new “aunties,” the childcare employees who directly meet the needs of the children on behalf of all of us. Pray that we choose excellent new staff members.

The work to manage adoptions at CSC is as busy as ever. Please pray each child would end up in the very best family—their family.

Please pray for our Child Development Department as they make the transition surrounding Sandy Swanson’s departure in late August.

PRAISES

Children who have been waiting for adoption are seeing their prayers answered. We pray all those who wait would have a “yes” to their most heartfelt requests.

We are impressed by the contributions of our new employees, including those who have come from the US to serve. They are certainly answers to prayer!

Praise God for unexpected gifts. We never know who will give during a year, and those who surprise us when we’re wondering about our finances are a huge encouragement.

-ANOTHER NEW BEGINNING-

- Matt Buley

There’s going to be a shake-up soon in the Eicher Home. Rosetina and Rowena arrived in June, 2010, and at ages 11 and 10 they have lived at CSC longer than any of their housemates. That’s not going to be true much longer.

I’ll never forget when we got the call about these two girls. They were living with their mother in a small shack. It wasn’t a suitable home, and

we went was to share Christ’s love with Kristy.

Kristy accepted Jesus as her Lord that night. After Warlita shared and we prayed together, Kristy’s face lit up with a big smile. It was the first I had seen any expression but pain and weakness from her, and this moment of strength and joy lit up the dark place we were in. I will never forget how much we could feel God in that place.



their mother’s health had taken a sharp decline.

When we arrived to assess the situation, we could see immediately that the girls’ mom, Kristy, didn’t have much time left. She was incredibly ill and grossly underweight. The illness attacking her body was winning, and she was near the end of her life. We went to check on the girls, but our chief concern quickly became their mother. Unfortunately, there was little we could do to help her.

Before she passed away, Medical Director Marlys Healy, Senior Nurse Warlita Manlun and I went to visit Kristy. We brought food, but our hearts were set on bigger matters. The reason



When Rosetina and Rowena lost their mother days later, they didn’t lose her for good. They should have had her a lot longer, but I believe one day they’ll see each other again in heaven. Warlita showed Kristy the greatest gift she could receive, and she took it without a moment’s wait.

Rosetina and Rowena have come to know God as well. They moved to CSC and became dear additions to the Eicher Home. Soon, Rosetina and Rowena will move on again. A family in the US has decided to adopt them! What a blessing to see them have a family again. Out of hurt, God is restoring and healing because of CSC—and you who make us possible. ■

KIDS' KORNER

This might be the last Kids Korner I will write. That's a sad acknowledgment. I have enjoyed many years of writing about the amazing kids God has brought to CSC.

We have had 924 CSC children join our family over the last 36 years. Our newest CSC kid (#924) is **JACOB**. We now have three boys named Jacob! Our newest Jacob arrived early in July. He was born prematurely and his mother died shortly after his birth. He is four months old and has been getting good care. He has some medical concerns, but we are confident we can handle them.

JOHN BERT arrived at CSC in early May when he was four months old. John Bert is a handsome, happy, and healthy little guy. He joined our Duterte Home nursery, which has been a boys-only zone for a few months. We need some little girls!

JOEMAR was CSC Kid #88 when he arrived in 1985 at eight years of age. Joemar has been brightening our lives for 30 years! He has been blessed with a joyful spirit and a zest for life. Due to significant cognitive delays, Joemar is unable to live independently and will probably be at CSC for his entire life. Joemar volunteers at the local McDonalds and is very excited that they are giving out Minions now! He will be celebrating his 39th birthday in August.

JHAYCOB (almost 8), **JAIMAICA** (6), and **JOSEPH** (5) are siblings who have lived at CSC for four years. Jhaycob was nearly dead when police found his battered little body four years ago. We met him in a government hospital and wanted nothing more than to bring him home to care for him. We wanted him to know that he was lovable and that we loved him. I think we have convinced him of that. Jhaycob struggles socially and cognitively, but he is progressing and we are proud of him. Jaimaica is talkative and opinionated. She



Jacob



John Bert



Joemar



Jhaycob, Jaimaica and Joseph



- Sandy Swanson, Child Development Director

keeps her brothers in line by always reminding them of the rules and occasionally grabbing them and pulling them in the right direction. Joseph has been fearful of anything new and different for most of his life, but is now getting a little more independent. He is developing a darling sense of humor; his antics and his opinions make us smile many times a day.

We currently have 14 kids matched and accepted for adoption! I will just include a few of them here. Twin sisters **JOANNA** and **JONNALYN** are 14 years old and have lived with us for almost three years. They are excited to be going to the USA for adoption; we are all hoping they will be able to be with their family soon.

Siblings **DENMAR** (11), **JOHN ROBERT** (9), and **ROQUENA** (8 in August) had a chance to meet their adoptive family earlier this year, but they are still here and waiting for paperwork to be processed so they can join their new family permanently.

CYNTH ZANIAH (3 in August) will be joining her adoptive family in the USA. **CYRUS** (10 months) is matched with a family here in the Philippines. **SHAN** (2) will be going to Europe for adoption. Three little ones going to three different continents.

We also have 15 others who have families interested in them, but paper work is still in process. We have already had six kids leave for adoption this year. We currently have 608 CSC Kids in 14 countries all over the globe.

Joanna and Jonnalyn



Denmar,
John Robert
and Roquena

Cynth Zaniah



Cyrus

Shan





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—CELEBRATING SANDY—

It seems impossible that we are nearing Sandy Swanson's retirement. She has been helping lead CSC for 36 years, and has sacrificed a lot to serve her career in the Philippines. Giving the kids the best care possible has been Sandy's mission, and she has succeeded wonderfully. She was a house parent for years, has lead our Child Development department since its creation, and most importantly, has loved on hundreds of kids. In August, Sandy will step off the field as a missionary for the last time. We are going to miss her. ■

CSC and Constance Free Church in Andover, Minnesota will be throwing a party in Sandy's honor on

Friday September 11, 2015 at 6pm

at the church. We'd love to have you join us. Dinner will be served. Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$5 for children aged 4-17 and free for children 3 and under with a \$50 maximum for any immediate family. You may register on our website or by calling 651.493.1551.

Thanks for coming to honor Sandy!

