



# NEWS FROM CEBU

## Sweet Lan's Hope for Her New Home

When Sweet Lan thinks about moving into her new home, she imagines a soft place to land after intense hours at school studying science, technology, engineering, and math, "STEM." "I hope it's cozy!" she says. "Where it can feel like home."

Her "new home" will be the Hope for Youth Transitional House or "Hope House" which

is successful entrepreneur in the Philippines.

"I want to design and develop solutions that improve people's lives," says the 18-year-old high school senior. "(I) desire with my siblings to have our own construction company in the future."

Sweet Lan is one of four children in a sibling group that came to Children's Shelter of Cebu in 2015. Today, she is taking full advantage of the opportunities provided for her. She is looking forward to moving into Hope House, making new friends, and preparing for university.

"Right now, I am in an exciting and challenging part of my life," she says.

She enjoys her high school's STEM program, which is giving her a jump-start on earning her university degree in engineering. The curriculum includes critical thinking, collaboration, problem solving, creativity, and hands-on learning.

"This program will help me develop my skills in preparing me to meet my academic and professional goals," she says.

Her favorite class? "Math is fascinating and challenging," says Sweet Lan.

While she looks forward to her new bedroom and living space at Hope House, she'll probably stick with her favorite place to do homework. "The library at school is my go-to spot for studying!" she says.

When she thinks about the people in the U.S. and around the world praying for her, Sweet Lan says that she is filled with comfort and encouragement. **As she continues to plan her future, Sweet Lan asks for this specific prayer request:**

**"...that I can reach my goals in life with my siblings.** Pray that (we) can survive with the pressures at school and that I will continue to have that eagerness to learn and dream big for the future." ■

READ MORE ABOUT THE NEW "HOPE HOUSE" ON THE BACK PAGE!

is scheduled to open in early 2025. As Children's Shelter of Cebu continues to care for our growing number of older children and young adults — those who have not been adopted — **the need for a new Independent Living and Semi-Independent Living home was a vision that has become a reality, thanks to your support.**

Sweet Lan also dreams that Hope House will have a quiet spot where she can continue to ponder and plan the future for herself and her siblings. Her goal is to earn her engineering degree from university and become a

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# LOOKING for PEACE in CEBU

Kylie Gomez remembers growing up riding horses on her family's Colorado farm in the mountains, running through meadows of wildflowers with her siblings. "I had a great

family was really close," says Kylie. "We had a lot of fun."

On the weekends, her parents would take the family up to the mountains where they owned a cabin.

**Kylie says her parents have stayed connected with CSC all these years since they adopted her. "My parents praise CSC for the wonderful things they do for children," says Kylie. "They still get the newsletter!"**

childhood," says Kylie.

Born in Lapu Lapu, Philippines, the 29-year-old was adopted from Children's Shelter of Cebu when she was about 10 months old. She has no memories of her birth country or her life at CSC. But Kylie, and her husband, Garred, are hoping to make new ones when they visit the Shelter during their trip to the Philippines in January.

"We've talked for years about going to the Philippines," she says. **"We want to see where I came from. I'm excited but a little nervous, too."**

Kylie was adopted by Tom and Shelly Turner, of Ft. Collins, CO. The couple brought their new daughter home to her two brothers. Kylie would also get a new sister, adopted from Legazpi. The four children grew up in a loving home. "Our

"We would take our horses with us," she says. "And we'd go four-wheeling with these friends we had up there. I remember this meadow where all of us kids would play games and run around. We had dogs, too."

But as she grew older, she began to think about her birth mother. Her teen years were peppered with bouts of anger. Those emotions would ebb and flow over the years. Now she says that her feeling is simply gratitude to her birth mother who gave her the opportunity for a great life and to her parents who provided it.

**Now, with a daughter of her own—17-month-old Emory—Kylie has a yearning, once again, to see where she spent the first months of her own life and to visit with the children at CSC.**



*Kylie, her husband, Garred, and daughter, Emory*

After Emory's birth, doctors told Kylie that another pregnancy would be life-threatening. Wanting more children, the couple has decided to adopt.

Will they adopt from CSC? Kylie says she doesn't know but that she and Garred will follow the Lord's direction through this process.

**"We'll adopt where God tells us to adopt," she says.**

She is finding some resolve in where she is now in her life: An adopted child who will adopt a child. "It's like it's all coming full circle," she says. "There's peace about that." ■



## Help the HOPE HOUSE

Funding is still needed to complete and fully furnish Hope House. Would you consider a gift today? **Learn more and make a gift at [cebushelter.org/newbuilding](http://cebushelter.org/newbuilding)**

# PRAISES and PRAYER REQUESTS



From the Desk of  
**KIRBY STOLL**  
PRESIDENT

## PRAISE REPORTS

- Christmastime is upon us, and we are grateful for staff and caretakers who make this season so meaningful for our children.
- The new home and office complex, Hope for Youth Transitional House ("Hope House"), is nearing completion. Pray for the safety of all those who work on the building. Pray that the contractors are drawn into the purpose of why we do what we do.
- We are coming down to the homestretch of our fiscal year. Praise God for His continued faithfulness in every aspect of the ministry and for gifts given by CSC supporters around the world.

## PRAYER REQUESTS

- A number of children have been approved for placement into adoptive families. Join us in prayer for their upcoming transitions, whenever that may be.
- Pray for the Philippines, as there have been a number of natural disasters around the Cebu area. The Northern Philippines experienced a disastrous typhoon that left many without homes, and in and around the Cebu City area there are many who have lost their homes due to fire and other calamities.
- Pray as our ministry nears the end of our fiscal year that we would trust in God's provision for our every need.



**Hope: To cherish a desire with anticipation: to want something to happen or be true.**

*Merriam Webster Dictionary*

I hope for a lot of things, but what I most hope for is to be attentive to the promptings God brings my way and not miss opportunities to connect with people. That hope was realized the other day when a call came in from a friend.

We began with sharing how God was at work in each of our lives **and then this person shared how they heard from God that they needed to start giving to CSC.**

What struck me most was the specificity of their prayer. They didn't stop praying when it became clear supporting CSC was the answer — they asked God for a specific child or sibling group to support. Reading a story on the CSC website got them interested in a sibling group of four who are a part of our independent living program.

Our conversation ended with a prayer; and we said our "goodbyes." I hoped their giving to CSC would be meaningful to the ministry and the giver, too. I was so grateful for someone to come alongside these young adults that I didn't consider they would commit to a monthly gift far greater than our suggested amount. I may have let out an audible "WOW!"

**And now I return to hoping.** We may never see the full impact of our investment in CSC, but we will see an abundant harvest if we keep hope alive and put God first and then join Him in the amazing work He prepares for us to do.

Thank you for reading and thank you for your support,

*Kirby L. Stoll*

**"For in this hope we are saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have?"** *Romans 8:24*

# NEWS FROM CEBU

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CHANGE SERVICE  
REQUESTED



## From the Desk of **ROBERTO ATIENZA** EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

For our older children at CSC, a confident expectation of something good in the future — on this side of eternity — used to be hard to conceptualize.

**What does "hope" look like to an older child at CSC who has:**

- Survived trauma?
- Navigated life with a weight so few of us can understand?
- Lost best friends and roommates who were adopted?
- Contemplated life on

their own after CSC? Fortunately, because of our Independent Living Program, **I see hope in the eyes of every older child at the Shelter. Here is what hope looks like for them:**

- A healthy adult life
- A future with a degree/certificate in higher education
- A steady job

- An ability to stand on one's own

We currently have three children in college and over 30 in

high school. And now, thanks to your support, construction of the Hope for Youth Transitional House ("Hope House" for short) will be the new home to our Independent Living and Semi-Independent Living Programs. **In this beautiful new space, our older children will continue to learn independent living skills, complete degree and job training programs, and get a taste for the thriving life that the Lord has prepared for them.** Thank you for giving these older children the gift of hope.

Blessings,

*Roberto Atienza*



For a Hope House update & to donate visit [cebushelter.org](http://cebushelter.org)

Sweet Lan & her friends →