

ESSAY WRITING
HIGH SCHOOL CATEGORY

1st PLACE

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A good citizen; a good Kapampangan

Pampanga; a blinding glimmer amidst even the most overpowering brightness; an illuminating torch against the wild, roaring flames; A Polaris, unmoving and silent, shining above all, with its majestic and captivating spark.

Pampanga truly stands out.

In wealth and power, Pampanga has it all. Pampanga is an enticing hybrid of both the ancient and the vibrant. Pampanga is a spring of wisdom from the old age, as well as a fountain of fresh ideas among the youth.

Yet, with all these things, and if Pampanga is truly blessed and gifted as it can be, why can't our very own eyes witness significant improvements in our local society? Sure, countless roads are being constructed, foot bridges being built, and every corner are adorned with the most dazzling of decorations. Yet where are the schools? The beggar-free streets? The clutterless roads?

And looking father away and to a wider scope – towards our world. Everywhere is trash. I am not talking about the bountiful mountains of Payatas, although there is also a lot of that surrounding us. What I am talking about is the trash within people – their hearts made of crap, that yields them to perform very improper things like corruption, violence and crimes.

Looking at how somber our world is, can we come to the conclusion that our government is the one to blame for all these chaos?

I strongly disagree.

As citizens of a certain society, we are being guided by leaders who, most often, fail out tremendous expectations. Their promises never granted, the vows they uttered are never remembered. Yes, perhaps our leaders should be better and more honest than what we see today.

Yet, as citizens, we should know better, a lot better than just suffer within the bounds of silence, or protest on the top of our lungs among streets, yet no one is really hearing our voices muffled of injustices.

The change should start within us, dear citizens.

WAKE UP!!!

Yes, Kapampangans, wake up. Shake off your deep slumber of ignorance and indecision. Peel your eyes – see what is really happening! Why isn't anyone doing anything?

They say if you love someone, you will do everything for that person.

Now, isn't it wonderful to love your province? Your very own land of birth?

Then let me tell you this; I am not a Kapampangan. NO trace of Kapampangan blood runs through my veins. Yet, what am I doing here, trying to encourage Kapampangans to be good citizens of their province and eventually of the world?

Yet, here I am possessing not a single drop of Kapampangan blood, but a Kapampangan nonetheless. A Kapampangan, kindled by the love for the province not of her won, and striving to be a good example to others.

For I believe that starting small is the key; like dropping a single seed off to a healthy ground. At first silent, then slowly, it shed its inhibitions. It blooms into a very little sprout, almost unseen by many. Yet, this very little growth promises unconditional hope for all of us.

Kapampangans, and the whole world; why do we always think we need drastic changes to uphold change? Why do we recognize the vast ocean, yet not the humble lake? Why do we yearn for things that are unreachable and insurmountable, when the real hope is within our grasp?

All I am begging from you is a little change. A very little change. Changes you won't notice, changes we often take for granted. Like throwing your trash in proper places. Never tolerating bribery and harsh untruths. Never cheating others, even in simple acts like cutting the line on the bank and being the one to be served first, even if you came late, just because you are friends with the teller.

Because quicker than we know it, these little dirty deeds pile up. They make mountains of trashy deeds, indecent ideas, and garbage hearts. They will be high, higher, even higher until it all comes back, all crashing back towards us.

What goes around, comes around; What comes up, must come down.

Heed my warning. Every little thing we do is significant. Every little sacrifice we offer is priceless. I am not asking for everything; I am asking for a very little thing.

I know that perhaps, even these small deeds can pose a great challenge to us. We should remember yet again, start small. And what will be a better place to venture our reformations than to our most beloved province itself? A very promising beginning is ensured in the land of our identity, if we strive hard and relentlessly pursue success.

Today, I am very happy with what I see; slowly, I can see Pampanga giving birth to new lives of good governance. I see deserving people being elected within the post of Sangguniang Kabataan. And last May 2007, I witnessed how the Kapampangan spirit triumphed as Governor Ed Panlilio gets elected in the gubernatorial post.

Yet, these are not enough. A leader is just a guide. It is up to us, the citizens, to work with these leaders in achieving success and progress.

It is our turn to shower love to our dear province. Love is patient and kind. It does not act forcibly, it wishes not to hurt. It waits with grace, with great anticipation, yet with a calm heart. It works ardently, so passionately, yet it never rushes; it waits for things to unfold on its own accord, to bloom on its own time, for it to spread its wings when it can finally soar high and pierce the mighty winds of adversities.

And above all, love is blind; it compassionately caresses, embraces and radiates its warmth, without asking for anything, any little thing in return. Love forbids impurities; love sees beyond imperfections; Love walks towards an uncertain and perilous tunnel; a path of no return. It ceases to fear, it stands firmly, so as not to be a coward. And with all courage and fierceness, it advances towards its goal, a fruitful life beyond the darkness, a pledge of a revitalized life.

Pampanga; the world – take your time. The golden grains of sand slide down its glass prison, yet your passion shall never perish. Let all the light around you cease to enlighten the surrounding, but never let that fire within your heart dwindle of all love. For within this battle of faceless adversaries and unknown adversities, your heart is your only dagger – your love your only shield.

A blinding glimmer amidst even the most overpowering brightness; an illuminating torch against the wild, roaring flames; A Polaris, unmoving and silent, shining above all, with its majestic and captivating spark.

I see the brightness of this change to be brought towards the world. It all starts with us. It all starts with the faithful citizens of Pampanga.