



Registered nurse (RN) Rialyne Dalida is grateful to be back nursing in Linden after several years away from the profession. Trained in the Philippines, Dalida wasn't able to work as an RN in Alberta until completing further training. The Bursary for Internationally Educated Nurses (BIEN) program, administered by RhPAP, helps internationally trained nurses with some of the costs incurred while upgrading. In return, recipients commit to working for a period of time in rural Alberta. — Photo supplied by Rialyne Dalida

Rialyne Dalida has travelled the globe as a registered nurse (RN), but a village in central Alberta has captured her heart, with assistance from a provincial initiative administered by RhPAP.

Today, Dalida nurses in the community of Linden (about an hour northeast of Calgary) at Westview Care Community, a long-term care facility.

She has lived in Alberta since 2016, but she was unable to return to nursing as a RN until last year when she was able to bridge her nursing training from the Philippines through the [Bursary for Internationally Educated Nurses \(BIEN\) program](#). The program, funded by the Government of Alberta and facilitated by RhPAP, provides funding for internationally trained nurses to bridge their training in exchange for a period of time spent working in rural Alberta.

"It's rewarding. I feel like I'm back to my calling," recalls Dalida of the near decade-long hiatus on her nursing career.

"I would always say, 'nursing is not just an ordinary job, it's a way of life.'"

Dalida first trained on the archipelago after being influenced by an aunt who nursed in the United States. Following graduation, she discovered the salaries for Filipino nurses were low in the Philippines, about \$400 a month. So, within a year, she headed to the Middle Eastern countries of Saudi Arabia and Oman where she worked as an RN in hemodialysis and in neonatal intensive care unit.

After much research and prayers, Dalida and her husband, Remar Gabuyo (who also trained as an RN in the Philippines), moved to Canada.

“Alberta is the best place, it is Canada. It offers us a greener pasture,” says Dalida, noting they didn’t have any previous connections to the province.

Before Dalida was accepted at Mount Royal University (MRU) for her RN bridging, she worked at a number of other jobs including as a cashier, insurance agent, and community health worker.

“I’m just glad that I found BIEN. It truly is a blessing,” she says, noting that the BIEN program helped fund her tuition and books.

“It makes it possible for BIEN [recipients] like me to pursue our dream without a heavy financial burden.”

Dalida says her husband, sister, and sister-in-law are currently on waiting lists at MRU, and they also hope to access BIEN so they can resume their nursing careers.

“They have the skills, it’s just that they need to be refreshed and get a little bit of training or knowledge of [Aberta’s] way of nursing.”



Rialyne Dalida and her husband, Remar Gabuyo, spend time on vacation in Kelowna in a cherry orchard with their children, Seth and Tara. Dalida and Gabuyo both worked as registered nurses overseas before moving to Alberta.

— Photo supplied by Rialyne Dalida

She encourages other international nurses in the same situation to be patient and look to careers in rural Alberta.

“Success rates are much higher when they stay focused,” she says, adding juggling too many responsibilities along with the courses can be a challenge.

For Dalida, the wait to return to nursing paid off.

“Linden, indeed, is a great facility that’s friendly and supportive. That includes not just the nursing team but the leadership. What I like is that they treat everybody like family. It really is a wonderful place.”

“Working in a rural environment, the peaceful pace allows for more personal connection.”

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