

Conversations on Jesuit Higher Education

Volume 46

Article 16

9-1-2014

*my*MAGIS

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Recommended Citation

Uruburok-Castro, Paula (2014) "*myMAGIS*," *Conversations on Jesuit Higher Education*: Vol. 46, Article 16.
Available at: <http://epublications.marquette.edu/conversations/vol46/iss1/16>

myMAGIS

Paula Uruburok-Castro

February 6, 2008. It was my fifteenth birthday, one of the most important moments in the life of any Latina girl.

“You’ve got the universe in your hands, look for who are and what you’ll be,” mom wrote to me in a card. “There is a strong woman within that little girl’s soul.”

I didn’t understand her words to me that day. Yet, looking back at the glittery card taped to my wall I can almost hear her voice pushing me to look for more, to just go a little farther. I never thought I would make it this far; however, without realizing it my mom’s voice was always in the back of my head pushing me to take one more step, to walk just that extra mile, and to go beyond my own expectations. When the days of “It’s too much!” and “I can’t handle this anymore” come around, I sit back on my bed and look at the old birthday card. I remember the woman who taught me to push through the pain, to have faith in the world, and to be myself. And I realize what a true example of *magis* she was.

I’m a simple 20-year-old college student who came into her freshman year thinking, “Just go to class and head back to my dorm and I’ll get through.” But soon I realized that to make a difference I have to seek for more than the refuge of four walls. That to be more is to be me, to have no fears, to try new things, to appreciate others and the everyday blessings in my life. And to learn that a simple smile can change someone else’s life.

Paula Uruburok-Castro, a senior at Canisius College, represented her school in July 2013 at the University Leadership Summit of the Ignatian Solidarity Network.



myMAGIS

Mark J. Piatkowski

Living the *magis* is what I strive to do daily in Residence Life.

Since I arrived at Canisius in 2005, I have had a sign on my door that says, “If not for the student standing in front of me, I would not be here. My position exists because of this student.” This constant reminder of *cura personalis* is what keeps me motivated. Each student walks in my door and comes to see me for a need. Whether it is about living with a friend or a meeting about poor behavior in the halls, each student comes with a purpose. It is my goal to look beyond the issue and educate the individual. There is potential in every situation and every student...the *magis*.

As each student walks away, I feel gratification knowing that I made a difference. Even when the student’s action or conduct is in question, there is a silver lining. Learning comes in many forms and lessons are found in many experiences. As an educator it is my hope that in the future these students will discern and do “better”...the *magis*.

Sometimes the most rewarding moment comes years down the line, when a student who made a poor choice comes back and touches base and says, “Thank You!” Sometimes good people make bad decisions; and it is great to see these students learn, graduate, and reflect. St. Ignatius and other Jesuits would ask, “What have I done for God? What am I doing for God? What *more* can I do for God?” Well, as I continue my tenure at Canisius, I will strive to take the words of our Jesuit founder and ask, What have I done for this student? What am I doing for this student? What *more* can I do for this student? ...the *magis*.

Mark J. Piatkowski, is the assistant director of residence life at Canisius College.

