

Dean Alex Brillantes, my dear professors, NCPAG students, friends... Good morning.

When I found out that Dean Brillantes' term would be ending soon and that this would be his last flag ceremony as Dean, I felt sad...

Nalungkotakokasiibigsabihin, yungmukhako at ngbatchmateskosa tarpaulin sa lobby, mawawalana.

I was NCPAG chair during Dean Brillantes' 1st year as Dean. And I have to tell you that when he assumed office, he really hit the ground running.

We were all very happy to have such an energetic and innovative Dean who was very supportive of student council activities. His whole-hearted support and the good working relationship that we had with him inspired us to do more for the college.

I would like to congratulate Dean Brillantes for his remarkably successful term as the "big wheel" of this college. He has accomplished so much in his 6-year stint as Dean because for him, excellence is to do a common thing in an uncommon way.

Pagnagkikiakamingblockmatesko and fellow CIRCAns, palagikongsinasabi,
"Anggandanasa college! Tuwingpuntaako dun, merongbagonggawa obagong renovate na area!"

But more than the improvement of the facilities of the college, Dean Brillantes played a significant role in pushing for academic excellence in the college and in the fight for good governance in this country.

I am very thankful to all my professors here who, with the stewardship of Dean Brillantes, instilled in all of us *Iskolars ng Bayan* a sense of nationalism and deep gratitude for our countrymen.

The knowledge and wisdom that I gained from NCPAG greatly influenced the decisions that I made after taking the Bar.

Instead of joining a law firm, which was what almost every other UP law graduate was doing, I chose to get involved in the 2010 elections. I knew how monumental this elections was for our country and I wanted to be part of it as a way of giving back.

I worked for the People Power Volunteer Center or PPVC under Sec. Dinky Soliman. PPVC was organized to strengthen the spirit of volunteerism, consolidate the volunteer efforts all over the country and empower the people in the fight for a clean and honest government.

As events coordinator I went around the country, from Baguio to Iloilo to Zamboanga del Norte and organized several sorties – mostly sorties of Ma'am Pinky Aquino Abellada and Kris Aquino, but I had one with PNoy.

We worked mostly with volunteers and there were absolutely no funds for their day-to-day campaign or for the sorties. Despite the lack of financial support, the volunteers remained enthusiastic and optimistic. Although the volunteers had different backgrounds, ages, personalities and beliefs, they were bound by the same desire for moral change in national leadership.

To make sure that this passion and energy will not go to waste, Ma'am Dinky together with people like Karina David, Bam Aquino, Rapa Lopa, etc, convened the leaders of volunteer groups all over the country. In this assembly, which was held last week, the volunteers expressed their commitment to continue their advocacy of good governance and be the watchdogs against corruption, theft, waste and undesirable practices of those in the government.

As students of the Public Administration of the most prestigious university in this country, I urge you to take an active role in the present administration by being vigilant. Open your eyes and never be afraid to speak out against abuses of our government officials.

As a final note, I would like to share with you the two ways of spreading light. One is to be the candle OR the mirror that reflects it. Which would you rather be? Would you like to stand up in one corner and wait for people who need help and guidance to come near you before you lend a hand? Or would you rather be a reflecting glass that goes out of his way to reach out and give support to people?

In the 6 years that I have known Dean Brillantes, I can absolutely say that he has chosen to be the latter. Life is a long line of opportunities. Dean Brillantes, with all his brilliance, could have taken other career paths that offer material benefits. But he opted to embrace the academe. He can diffuse integrity, honesty, discipline and a quality of education that is par excellence.

Good morning once again and God speed our beloved Dean.