



**“Excel even in the small things because the quality of your work reflects who you are. Otherwise, how can you expected to be trusted with the big stuff?”**

**Carmela delos Santos**, General Manager  
Genesis Quezon Tugs, Inc., Philippines  
De La Salle University, CAM '00

**Quality work translates into tangible rewards**

“Take pride in your work, and do more than what you’re supposed to. In doing your best, you’re not just expecting to see promotion, you’re also honoring God with your work!”

For Carmela Del Santos, success is defined by her strong sense of ethics. Her 16-year career is a shining example of taking tremendous pride in her work. Her strengths include discipline, an eagle eye for detail, people skills and a glue-like tenacity to keep teams together.

**From summer intern to regional manager**

Carmela’s association with Global Sources, the business-to-business company that Mr. Hinrich founded, began during her sophomore year in college at De La Salle University, Manila, when she was awarded the scholarship. As part of the program, she spent her summer breaks in the Makati office as a student intern with the Global Sources Editorial team.

She learned web content HTML encoding, print magazine production and other publishing tasks required by the editorial team. “The internship program gave me an opportunity to work hands on in a professional environment. It prepared me for the career path I was pursuing.”

**Passion and flexibility opens new doors along the career journey**

Her head start into the export trade sector helped her realize that trade media is her niche. She started as a content assistant and held positions of progressive responsibility within Global Sources ranging from managing the print and online publication of its B2B magazines to leading a team of copywriters responsible for writing effective ads for Global Sources advertisers.

In 2016, Carmela joined the Hinrich Foundation as Content Integration & Marketing consultant, where she built a microsite on Global Sources Online (GSOL) to give buyers access to all of the Foundation’s proprietary product and supplier content.

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She currently leads the Foundation's Export Trade Assistance program, which supports small and medium-sized exporters (SMEs) across developing Asia in marketing their export-ready products to buyers worldwide. She is at the helm of a team of 13, comprising export consultants in the Philippines, Indonesia, India, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia who identify, interview and train quality SME exporters, and editors in Manila who edit the sourcing reports and upload it to the Developing Country Sourcing sites for buyers worldwide.



*Carmela (first row, far left), poses with her batch mates at De La Salle University's Commencement Exercises on March 2000. From 200 students, 17 graduated in their course of Bachelor of Arts in Communication Arts where she graduated top of her class*

Simply put, her team is the vital link between buyers' sourcing decisions and sellers' information. The result of this matchmaking is more orders for suppliers resulting in much-needed jobs for people across developing Asia.

### **New learning outside of her comfort zone**

After several years of editing Global Sources trade magazines and online content, Carmela was given an opportunity to spearhead the launch of Global Sources' iOS magazine app by Chief Operating Officer Brent Barnes. She admits that that opportunity was a moment of euphoria for her and the team.

"I was an editor for the longest time. But by necessity, I began learning a brand-new set of skills! I solicited advise through our dedicated project team, watched YouTube tutorial videos, read Adobe's and Apple's developer guide, and even talked to strangers who might know how to make an app!"

"App development was never my line of expertise," she admitted. "I was an editor for the longest time. But by necessity, I began learning a brand-new set of skills! I solicited advise through our dedicated project team, watched YouTube tutorial videos, read Adobe's and Apple's developer guide, and even talked to strangers who might know how to make an app!"

"At 3:00 am, April 11, 2012 we submitted our app to Apple and saw it live on the App Store seven days later! Using Client Service General



Carmela receiving her diploma from the University rector at De La Salle University's Commencement Exercises, March 2000.

Manager Bernie Holmbraker's words, I was 'midwifing the baby (app) through a complicated birth process.' And that's how it had truly felt!

"It was at this point where I realized that Global Sources is extremely good at bringing out the best in people."

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### Another challenge, another opportunity for success

In her management role with the Hinrich Foundation, Carmela lives by her tenet of promoting sustainable global trade. She views developing the New Markets Pavilion as one of her most valuable contribution to the Foundation: It has contributed to shaping the current phase of her career.



*Carmela at her first trade show assignment at Global Sources as copyeditor, the 92nd Session of the Chinese Export Commodities, more commonly known as "Canton Fair", held in 2002 at Guangzhou, China*

Every April and October, the Hinrich Foundation participates in the Global Sources Gifts & Home and Global Sources Fashion shows held in AsiaWorld-Expo in Hong Kong. The NMP showcases a curated selection of unique products from quality suppliers across the region.

In October 2016, Carmela took on the challenge of greatly enhancing the exposure of the booth. In order to make it bigger and more visible to buyers, she and her team created a brand for the booth called 'New Markets Pavilion' (NMP.)

She was at the helm of creating the new booth design, fine-tuning budgets, securing manpower, selection of products, ensuring smooth logistics, handling buyer inquiries - all vital functions that go in the making of successful trade show presence. NMP, as she fondly calls her baby, is for buyers wanting to expand their sourcing options beyond Greater China. It's where buyers can find a variety of unique, sustainable and environment-friendly products from the Philippines, Indonesia, India, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.

For Hinrich Foundation scholars studying in Hong Kong, NMP provides a foothold into International Trade right from the show floor. All scholars meet buyers from around the world and help promote exhibited products and



suppliers. They get valuable face-to-face sales experience, a chance to hone their business English and essential skills that make trade happen.

### **A bridge between buyers and sellers**

Often the team proves its mettle by changing the life of a product and its seller, like it was in the case of the 'beehive shaped Abaca lamp'. This was a hanging lamp created by Cagayan de Oro Handmade Paper, which is one of the supplier-beneficiaries of the Export Assistance Program Philippines. It was showcased at the October 2016 NMP. The owner, Mrs. Lolita Cabanlet, went to Hong Kong to personally see her product in the booth and meet with buyers face-to-face.

On the morning of day three, two Australian buyers took notice of her lamp and inquired about it. Carmela and her team were instrumental in introducing Lolita to the buyers. She secured a purchase order for her product on the spot and a few weeks later the transaction was completed successfully. What was heartwarming for the entire team was that the Abaca lamp was selected as one of the five Most Innovative Products in the Global Sources Gifts & Home Show.

For Carmela, it is victorious moments like these that justify the purpose of the Hinrich Foundation. A win-win situation when the work done on a certain project can impact buying decisions and change the life of the seller, along with giving much-needed work to the producers.



*Carmela visiting the the CECF Press Centre, Canton Fair's press contact on her first trade show assignment with Global Sources, year 2002 at Guangzhou, China*

"I owe a lot to the Foundation and Global Sources. The scholarship program not only provided me with financial support for the education, but also a career opportunity that turned me into who I am today,"

The NMP initiative generated more than twice the number of buyer inquiries as compared to previous years. Immediately following each show, Carmela and team analyze results and begin planning for an even better showing at the next exhibition – keeping clear focus on buyers needs while selecting products in order to deliver more quality sales leads for suppliers.

### **Lifelong thanks, lifelong opportunity**

"I owe a lot to the Foundation and Global Sources. The scholarship program not only provided me with financial support for the education, but also a career opportunity that turned me into who I am today," Carmela said.



*Carmela (second from left, 2nd row) meeting for the first time some Global Sources colleagues from Hong Kong, China and the Philippines*

She is most thankful for the trust and friendships that she has earned through relationships with her Global Sources teams, the kinds of managers she has worked with, and the stimulating, multi-cultural, multi-diverse people she has met in the trade industry.

Giving back to help the next generation of Hinrich Foundation scholars  
For this tireless alumna, the journey has just begun. Five years down the line, Carmela sees herself contributing more to various aspects of Hinrich Foundation work. She has a soft corner for training and would like to see herself mentoring young scholars through their Trade Scholarship journeys.

### **Always be a learner**

A strong advocate of the Hinrich Foundation, Carmela stresses that a typical Hinrich scholar needs to be generous with their time and effort. They have to be engaged and ready for a long-term commitment. They have to be open to working hand in hand with diverse cultures. And most importantly, always be eager to learn new skills.

Carmela's words of wisdom for current and future scholars: "Just do your best! Excel even in the small things because the quality of your work reflects who you are. First you have to be trusted with the small stuff to be trusted with the big stuff!"

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Read more stories of inspiration from our Hinrich Global Trade Leaders [here](#).



“My success is measured by my career achievements and my ability to try new initiatives at work.”

**Laura Xiao**  
Operations Director  
Workstem HR  
Management System  
Hinrich Foundation alumna  
Thunderbird School of Mg't  
MBA '10



“Success, for me, is practicing my daily ritual of adding value to my education and skills. It's new life experiences and the value that comes along with that!”

**Mai Nguyen,**  
Marketing &  
Research Manager  
AUSTRADE, Vietnam  
Hinrich Foundation alumna  
Hong Kong Baptist University,  
MAIJ '2011



“A Hinrich scholar values work-life balance. Peace of mind is as much a target as fame and material wealth.”

**Sophal Bun,**  
Associate Dean  
College of Media &  
Communications  
University of Cambodia  
Hinrich Foundation alumnus  
Hong Kong Baptist  
University, MAIJ '14

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