

DLSU-D iCON

Inspiring Conversation with Alumni

Sailing to Success: Leading the Way in Cruise Entertainment One Port at a Time

MA. CARMINA CAPILE

A. B. COMMUNICATION | CLASS OF 2009
TEATRO LASALLIANA ALUMNA

First Filipino Entertainment Director
of Carnival Cruise Line

University Years

Ma. Carmina “Minay” Capile’s career path vividly illustrates how life’s twists and turns can reshape our destinies. Inspired by her older sister, a Performing Arts Group scholar at De La Salle University-Dasmaringas (DLSU-D), Minay initially set her sights on a career in Broadcast Journalism. However, her journey took an unexpected turn as she enrolled in AB Communication at DLSU-D.

Her college years were marked by both significant challenges and profound personal growth. In an effort to secure scholarships, Minay joined Teatro Lasalliana. Despite her efforts, the financial strain of miscellaneous fees, transportation, and daily meals persisted, testing her resolve. Her resilience and faith were crucial in navigating these obstacles.





"During college, I commuted between San Pedro and Dasmarinas, never staying in a dorm," Capile recalls. Late-night rehearsals with Teatro Lasalliana often left her no choice but to stay at friends' dormitories. "I became quite familiar to the dorm landladies. There were days when I had no money for lunch, and classmates would kindly treat me."

Reflecting on her time at DLSU-D, Minay acknowledges the crucial support she received from various university departments. "I felt fortunate to be surrounded by supportive

people, from the Accounting Office and the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academics & Research to the Office of Student Services, Cultural Arts Office, POLCA, Alumni Association and the University Student Council," she says. "Their belief in my potential made a significant difference in my ability to continue my studies."

Life after Graduation

Immediately after graduation, she entered the workforce in the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) industry, where she found stable employment for more than a year. However, her true passion for entertainment soon pulled her in a different direction. This passion led her to the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP), where she worked tirelessly behind the scenes, earning a modest 250 pesos per show—a significant drop from her BPO earnings.

For four years, Minay Capile immersed herself in the theater world, where she honed her craft and accumulated invaluable experience. Despite the depth of her expertise, she recognized that it was time to embrace a new challenge. With a keen interest in exploring new horizons, she shifted her focus to the cruise industry. Her first attempt to break into this field was met with disappointment when she was rejected due to not meeting the height requirement.

Undeterred by this setback, Minay leveraged her extensive experience in Filipino theater to secure a new opportunity. She was hired as an entertainment production manager by Norwegian Cruise Line (NCL), where she thrived for nine years. Her successful tenure at NCL led to an exciting new chapter in 2022, when she was invited to join Virgin Voyages Cruise Line as a production stage manager, broadening her knowledge about the cruise industry, and seeing a different brand and product.



A Leap to Carnival

A year ago, a new opportunity presented itself—a position as Entertainment Director at Carnival Cruise Line. Her role is to oversee the entire entertainment program on the ship, including managing musical shows, game shows, and other activities. She ensures that all events run smoothly and adhere to safety and company regulations. The role involves leading a team of entertainment staff of diverse culture and background and enhancing the guest experience with engaging, family-friendly content. Additionally, as an Entertainment Director, she manages the entertainment budget and ensures high-quality performances.



A Filipina Leader in a Male-dominated Industry

The maritime industry, particularly the cruise sector, is largely dominated by male employees, managers, and officers.

Unfortunately, Filipinos are often stereotyped as cabin attendants or waiters and cooks on many cruises. That's why it's especially noteworthy when an Asian—specifically, a Filipina — takes on a leadership role, particularly within a renowned brand like Carnival Cruise Line.

Minay noted "I never feel diminished or inferior despite being surrounded by men in my field. I genuinely believe that I am made for this role. There's a strong sense of resilience within me—nothing seems tough. When faced with challenges or stress, I remind myself of the obstacles I've already overcome. Reflecting on these past achievements helps me maintain my confidence and perspective."

The challenges she experienced in life helped her to persevere with remarkable grit in achieving her goals. "I think more than anything, my experiences really shaped my character... I feel like I will always have the edge because of the character-building I had when I was younger," she said.

For Minay Capile, one of the most demanding aspects of her role is managing people. Given the nature of the cruise industry, where employee turnover is a constant due to the short-term nature of contracts, she frequently faces the challenge of integrating new team members. Additionally, the diverse backgrounds of the individuals she oversees add another layer of complexity. Navigating the varying cultural, professional, and personal experiences of her staff requires a high level of adaptability and interpersonal skill.



Looking Ahead

"I'm eager to transition to a land-based role, specifically within the production studios of Carnival Cruise Line in Miami. While traveling the world has been an incredible experience, I now find myself yearning for a different kind of fulfillment—starting a family." Minay said.

The joy and inspiration she drawn from the children she met during her travels have solidified her desire to settle down and create a family of her own. This new chapter represents not only a career shift but also a personal commitment to building a life that balances professional passion with family life.



Message to Young Lasallians.

"Don't overthink; just do it," she urged, emphasizing the importance of taking decisive action. The greatest obstacle to realizing our dreams is often the paralysis caused by hesitation and self-doubt. In many cases, the most effective approach is to follow your heart and pursue your passions with confidence. While financial considerations undoubtedly play a role, true satisfaction frequently comes from dedicating oneself to what genuinely inspires and fulfills us.

