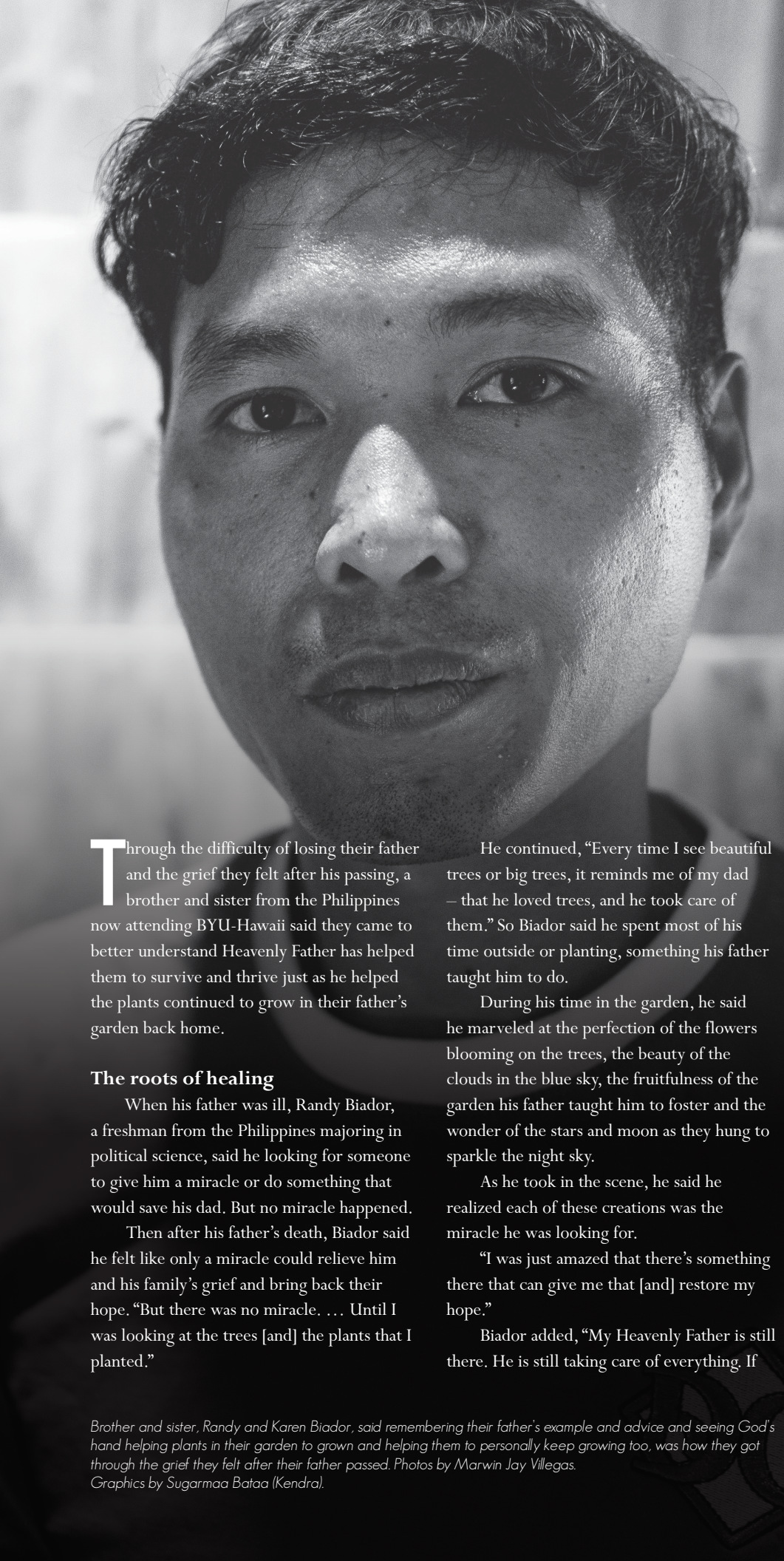


GROWING IN PAIN

Two siblings attending BYUH share how they overcame the grief of their father's death

BY NICHOLE WHITELEY



Through the difficulty of losing their father and the grief they felt after his passing, a brother and sister from the Philippines now attending BYU-Hawaii said they came to better understand Heavenly Father has helped them to survive and thrive just as he helped the plants continued to grow in their father's garden back home.

The roots of healing

When his father was ill, Randy Biador, a freshman from the Philippines majoring in political science, said he looking for someone to give him a miracle or do something that would save his dad. But no miracle happened.

Then after his father's death, Biador said he felt like only a miracle could relieve him and his family's grief and bring back their hope. "But there was no miracle. ... Until I was looking at the trees [and] the plants that I planted."

He continued, "Every time I see beautiful trees or big trees, it reminds me of my dad – that he loved trees, and he took care of them." So Biador said he spent most of his time outside or planting, something his father taught him to do.

During his time in the garden, he said he marveled at the perfection of the flowers blooming on the trees, the beauty of the clouds in the blue sky, the fruitfulness of the garden his father taught him to foster and the wonder of the stars and moon as they hung to sparkle the night sky.

As he took in the scene, he said he realized each of these creations was the miracle he was looking for.

"I was just amazed that there's something there that can give me that [and] restore my hope."

Biador added, "My Heavenly Father is still there. He is still taking care of everything. If

He was not there, then how come this plant is still growing, still alive and me still alive.

"I can still feel the beautiful creations, I can still feel the fresh wind, fresh air, and I can still see beautiful stars in the night."

The loss of their father

Looking back on when his father passed away, Randy Biador said their house was cleaned in preparation for his ill father to come home. But his father didn't come home. When his father was transferred to another hospital, he explained the nurses removed his oxygen. With the lack of oxygen combined with of COVID-19, pneumonia and prostate cancer, Biador said medical personnel were unable to revive his father,, he said.

"He's supposed to not die," said Biador, .

"I felt very down, like we're not important people. ... Like our lives are not important because we have no money. The



Brother and sister, Randy and Karen Biador, said remembering their father's example and advice and seeing God's hand helping plants in their garden to grown and helping them to personally keep growing too, was how they got through the grief they felt after their father passed. Photos by Marwin Jay Villegas. Graphics by Sugarmaa Bataa (Kendra).



only important life was those who [had] money, and so I was helpless,” Biador said.

He said what happened to his father hurt him deeply, but no matter what he could do, such as sue the doctors or file a case, he could not get his father’s life back. So, instead he said he focused all of his effort on caring for his family, planning the funeral and managing anything else needed. “It was just very painful,” he expressed.

After his father passed, he said took two months off work to focus on his family and healing.

He said he thought, “What’s the purpose of working? What’s the purpose of pursuing my dream to go to school?” But then he looked at his siblings and realized, “Who’s going to inspire [and] encourage them, or support them and help them?” Biador said he wondered.

But as he thought of his father’s garden and Heavenly Father’s love for all his creations including himself, he said he felt hope again.

Family grows together

Karen Biador, Randy Biador’s sister, a freshman majoring in hotel and tourism management, said, “I’m so grateful that there is a plan of salvation [so] that I can be with [my father]. I can see [him] again after this life.” She said there are 11 children in the Biador family and, after their father passed, they did their best to keep up their spirits in between the tears.

She said they used humor to cope with their father’s passing and tried their best to make each other happy and smile. Having fun together helped them to heal faster than crying, she explained. Karen Biador added it was easier to enjoy being together and enjoy life as much as possible.

“We just try to have fun, so we rent a videoke or karaoke, and we cook food together, and we sing because of my mom and my dad. ... They dance together,” she reminisced. After their father’s passing, she said even though their mother would dance alone when they sang, they still took videos and photos like they used to do.

How they got to BYUH

Karen Biador said her dad was always very supportive in whatever path she wanted

to take. “I hope that he’s proud that I am here, and I am just thinking I wish he’s still alive and witness this. That his two kids got here at BYU–Hawaii, because he knows that a lot of Filipinos want to get here. So hopefully he’s proud.”

Randy Biador said he applied to BYUH three times before being accepted and cried tears of joy when he received his acceptance letter. Still, he expressed his discouragement, “I felt that, ‘Why this time? My dad is already not here. My dad is not existing anymore, so he can’t see this. He will not be able to know about this. I feel that it’s kind of late.’”

Despite his disappointment with the timing, he said, “For the sake of my future, and my siblings [and] my mom, I love that this opportunity is a great blessing. ... If I keep on learning for my future, and to support my siblings and my mom, my dad will be proud.”

Randy Biador said he was inspired to study political science to learn more about how the legal process works and his and other’s rights in that area. He said, “I felt my rights as a human in the Philippines when my dad passed away - our rights, my dad’s rights - were abused.”

“I was amazed that truly the Lord can do miracles and can do everything.”

Karen Biador

Karen Biador said she also had difficulties getting to BYUH - issues with her visa, her flights and all the documents required to come to Hawaii. When she had to defer to this Fall, she said, “I just tried to be patient, but really, I am almost giving up. I already told my brother, ‘No, I’m not going to Hawaii. It’s not my plan.’”

But then she said she prayed and felt BYUH was where she was supposed to be. She applied and received her acceptance letter two weeks later, and said the Lord provided the way for her to get to Hawaii despite all forces working against her. “I was amazed that truly the Lord can do miracles and can do everything.”



Randy and Karen Biador plant taro in memory of their father.



Karen Biador said she recalled when she and her father would sit and talk about future career paths for her, discussing what was her best fit and which programs she should look into.

She said even though they were often just joking around because she knew they could not afford to send her to school, “[My father was] just encouraging me to pursue my dreams because he’s not forever by my side. ... At the end of the day, I’m going to stand by my own with my family in the future, and I need to have my own career. He’s just trying to help me dream.”

When she has felt overwhelmed during her first semester here, Karen Biador said she remembered her dad’s advice to pursue her dreams. “I know that if we stretch out, it means the Lord wants us to improve or to reach our capacity. It’s so scary sometimes, but those experiences that I’ve gone through are my inspiration. I can’t give up now. ... I can’t give up. I can do this. It’s hard but it is not impossible.”

Trusting in His plan

Karen Biador recalled, “The last time that I saw my father was when they were about to bring him to the hospital. I helped my mother change my father’s clothes.” She thought, “He’s so strong,” and that he would make it. She said her entire family regretted taking him to the hospital because they felt he would still be alive if they would have been able to take care of him. Despite this pain and regret, Karen Biador said, “I know that it’s the Lord’s plan as well. ... We’re not going to live here forever. ... Our life is very short, and we need to make the most of it.”

Randy Biador said his testimony of eternal families gives him “hope to still see my family [and] that we will be all together.”

Unbreakable bond

Recalling their connection with their father, Karen Biador said, “The only thing that I can remember and treasure are the experiences we have together.” She continued, “My father is so caring.” She said she remembers

he was always the one who took care of her when she was sick. He would be by her side, giving her medicine, feeding her and asking her how she felt.

Randy Biador shared their home was frequently hit with large typhoons and his father worked to protect their family. “I could see in his actions that he really loves his family and protects his family by doing that.”

During these times, he said he helped his father and explained, “We did not talk much when I helped him ... [but] that action and desire to work together and help each other ... with one purpose, one objective ... to support or to protect our home or family - it builds connection. •