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**ALUMNI-LED GRASSROOTS PROJECT HONORS
LONGTIME HOST FAMILY VOLUNTEER AND
METCHOSIN RESIDENT "TITA" DIEZA**

[Metchosin, BC] - Dieza Dolencio, or "Tita," as many students lovingly call her (Tita is an affection term for Aunt in the Philippine language Tagalog), first opened her heart and Metchosin home to hundreds of young people from Pearson College UWC more than 40 years ago.

In 1974, Tita Dieza became a member of the College's Host Family Program almost by accident when she met a Pearson student at the nursing home she worked at. Year after year, students from dozens of countries around the world would spend their holiday breaks in Tita's house. She made it her mission to give them a place to be at peace and well-fed with delicious homecooked Filipino meals.

Earlier this year, three Pearson alumni created the "Legacy Project for Tita Dieza" to honour their spiritual mentor and lifelong friend. In only a few short weeks, this project successfully raised the equivalent of a full one-year student scholarship to the College – funds that will be used to help a deserving student attend this Metchosin-based international school. Students, faculty, staff and alumni alike came together for Tita's 80th birthday this past May and presented her with the results of the fundraising campaign.

Needless to say, Tita was delighted with not only the outcome, but also with the generosity and ingenuity of the former students and guests in her house who helped raise these funds so quickly. "During our student days, Tita's residence was our home away from home," says Iggy Sison (PC YR 9/1983). "Tita was so much more than a host. She always made us feel at peace. She nourished us with a delicious meal, happy company and emotional support. I know that she would like to see us helping others, so we created this legacy project in her honour as she exemplifies and embodies the spirit of generosity."

MEDIA ADVISORY

About Pearson College UWC

Pearson College UWC (www.pearsoncollege.ca) is Canada's most globally-minded school and one of 16 United World Colleges around the globe. The College currently has 160 students, increasing to an enrolment of 200 within two years, and draws accomplished young leaders and change makers, ages 16-19, from up to than 150 countries and every province and territory of Canada. Pearson's two-year, pre-university curriculum is based on the International Baccalaureate (IB) program and features a strong emphasis on experiential education at the residential campus on Pedder Bay near the southern tip of Vancouver Island. The College opened in 1974 and was named after former prime minister and Nobel Peace Prize recipient Lester B. Pearson. The College purposely recruits a deliberately diverse student body, including young people from regions of conflict and challenging socioeconomic circumstances, to encourage young people to learn and live together to bring about meaningful changes in their communities and across the globe.

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