



As I look back on the path I've taken—as a student, as a leader, and as a person trying to understand myself—I realize how much of my journey has been shaped by quiet battles that no one else sees. Being an Electronics Engineering student and an organization officer has always required strength, commitment, and resilience, but somewhere along the way, I forgot that these roles also require a human heart that gets tired, overwhelmed, and unsure.

There were days when I pushed myself beyond exhaustion because others depended on me. Days when I showed up with a smile even when I felt empty inside. Days when I carried responsibilities that felt heavier than my own confidence. And as much as I wanted to be strong, I slowly realized that strength is not measured by how much I can endure—I am learning that it is measured by how honest I can be with myself.

I've come to understand that leadership is not about being perfect; it is about being present. It is about choosing to stand up for others even when life is testing me. It is about learning how to speak gently, decide wisely, and care deeply, even when I sometimes forget to extend the same care to myself. And being an ECE student, with all the academic pressures and moments of self-doubt, taught me that perseverance is not the absence of fear—it is the courage to continue even when fear whispers louder.

Through all the challenges, I realized something important: I grew in silence. Not in the moments where everyone saw my achievements, but in the quiet nights when I questioned if I was enough. In the early mornings when I forced myself to try again. In the moments when I thought about giving up but chose to take one more step.

I have also learned that it is okay to change, to feel lost, or to admit that I am struggling. It is okay to not always be strong. It is okay to ask for help and to rest without guilt. These realizations did not come easily—they came from being tested, from breaking down, from standing back up, and from learning to be kind to myself after everything.

Most of all, I realized that my journey—both as an officer and as an ECE student—is not just about accomplishments. It is about growth. It is about becoming someone who understands responsibility but also values their own well-being. It is about finding purpose in service and finding meaning in persistence.

I may still not have all the answers, and my future may still feel uncertain, but I've learned to trust the process. I've learned that every hardship shapes me, every setback redirects me, and every small victory reminds me why I keep going. And even though the road is long and often difficult, I know now that I am stronger than I thought, more capable than I believed, and more deserving of compassion—especially from myself.

For the first time, I am learning to see not just the pressure I carry, but the person I am becoming. And that realization, in itself, is a kind of peace.

The Weight I Carried, The Person I Became
Marielle Kingking