

GAINING SELF-RESPECT THROUGH SELF-RELIANCE

demanding job and work with me.

Someone recently asked me how my sales were going. I proudly told him I am now selling 12 kilos (26 lbs.) of rice cakes.

“12 kilos a week is great!” he said.

“No, brother,” I said. “I sell 12 kilos *per day*.”

My son later told me he was happy that my business could now provide for our needs.

“Looks like I can serve a full-time mission now,” he said.

He is now serving in the Philippines San Pablo Mission. I am so grateful for the self-reliance initiative. The Lord truly meant it when He said, “It is my purpose to provide for my saints” (D&C 104:15). ■

Lordita Yagomyom, Misamis Occidental, Philippines

During one self-reliance group meeting, I was prompted to go to a public market. I made a deal with one woman to sell my rice cakes.

I was married, I had three kids, and I was unemployed. A work drought left me feeling hopeless. I worried about the safety of my family, and I stopped believing in myself.

My wife, Carla, encouraged me to attend a self-reliance group. It was embarrassing for me to admit that I didn't have work, but she encouraged me to attend the group so I could take care of our family.

I reluctantly gave it a try. While attending the group, I realized that my English skills could be a valuable asset in the job world. I had studied English on my mission, but I only knew how to speak about religion. I enrolled in English classes offered by the Church to improve my vocabulary. When I returned home from English class one day, Carla handed me the phone.

“Who is it?” I asked.

“I don't know,” she replied. “They're speaking in English.”

It was a human resources representative from one of the biggest

companies in Costa Rica asking to interview me. I was stunned, but the interview went remarkably well. I later learned that Carla had set up the interview.

I got the job, and I remembered how my self-reliance group had helped me. Then I thought about how I could better apply what I learned. I started looking for an even better job and got one. Then I worked toward starting my own construction business.

I can't imagine where my family and I would be without the start we received from the self-reliance initiative. I learned to be humble and to ask the Lord for help. I also learned to allow those who wanted to help me to bless my life. We have so many blessings. I now have self-respect, and I can bless my family with the money I earn. I know the Spirit blesses us when we are humble. ■

José Alberto Navas (as told to Miriam Sweeney), San José, Costa Rica

