"I feel that the highest honor comes from serving people and the country". This was stressed by Austrian born American actor and governor, Arnold Schwarzenegger, in an interview. True it is that public service entails a package of rectitude and prestige whose very heartstring is rooted from quality and sincerity to deliver gilt-edged services for the great boon of the general public. However, this herculean call continues to cross paths with challenges as civil servants work for a gender-responsive, accessible, courteous, and effective public service. But just like heroes in contemporary films who are often ordinary persons in extraordinary circumstances, we can typically prevail in the end despite the many odds. For each one of us is a true hero. Yes! You and I are all prime movers of heroism.

As a public high school teacher, I am always amazed at the students' lives. One that caught my attention was the story of a female student taking Garments Technology who dropped out of school after finding out that two of her classmates were boys. Some may conclude this to be a silly reason or decision; however, this happens in real situations. Some, unfortunately, appear worse than this. Certainly, there are still people who may not be sensitive to the gender issue; yet, this is an issue that needs to be discussed because it shapes behavior and life circumstances. As a matter of fact, it has been noted that ample pieces of evidence show that continued gender inequality is a major factor in preventing progress towards the achievement of the internationally agreed Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).
I am a teacher. I am a servant-hero. I think of and use gender-responsive strategies and practices to create a classroom atmosphere that reflects an understanding of the realities of both women's and men's lives and that addresses the issues of both. Giving them opportunities to become leaders in school activities make their minds open for equal gender opportunity and responsibility. Likewise, I tackle gaps and biases which usually impact women's ability during the integration of Values Education in my subject area and during our Homeroom Guidance Program. This unleashes women's enormous untapped potentials. I offer capacity-building activities, training, and online tools, and search for gender-sensitive education curricula for both genders' participation. Consequently, this will be the start of producing a generation fully recognizing gender fairness.

I am one of the key vehicles for formulating interventions to eradicate barriers and to advance gender equity. I am harnessed to promote gender impartiality and to provide gender-responsive delivery. I am committed to building good governance and mandated to promote a better understanding of the multifaceted needs and challenges of all. Michelle Bachelet's assertion is a noble thing to do: "Gender equality must become a lived reality".

Meanwhile, as chief movers of heroism, we must be equally sensitive to the accessibility of service we provide for the public. We are required to ensure that the goods, services, or facilities that we supply are accessible even to people with disabilities and to those who belong to the grassroots of the society. Each must endeavor to demonstrate leadership for accessibility since it is our goal to ensure access for the public we serve. It is vitally important that one must receive accessible goods and services with the same quality and timeliness as the others. There must be a workplace culture founded on the principles of fair and transparent practices.

I am a teacher. I am a servant-hero. I contribute and ensure accessible learning to all students by exploring a range of options to help those who are physically
and mentally-challenged. For instance, I give the hearing-impaired text or video CDs; the visually-impaired information in accessible formats such as large print or video CDs; and the mentally-challenged remedial classes for remediation and intervention.

Likewise, part of being a modern-day hero is ensuring courteous public service; therefore, making it effective. Since a public service is a public trust, we must considerately serve people. In doing so, we build a positive contribution to the Filipinos’ quality of life. Undoubtedly, all civil servants hold a unique position of trust. In the performance of our responsibilities with high moral values, the public interest is always paramount.

I am a teacher. I am a servant-hero. I am an advocate of benevolence. I act with integrity. I conduct myself in a manner that will not reflect adversely on the public sector. I follow lawful and reasonable instructions. I exhibit honesty and highest standards of personal demeanor. I demonstrate good governance through courtesy. I strive at all times to provide goods and services in a way that regards the dignity and independence of all. I treat service users with respect and fairness; thus, free from discrimination and harassment. Even America’s 39th US President, Jimmy Carter, believed that we cannot divorce religious belief and public service, and that he never detected any conflict between God’s will and political duty; that if we violate one, we violate the other. We, the servant-heroes, are at the forefront of this advocacy – serving the public just like serving God.

I am a teacher. I am a public servant. I uphold the public trust. I serve for a gender-responsive, accessible, courteous, and effective public service. I am a hero. I am a prime mover of heroism just like you. I am Filipino.
References:

Interview with Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger