17 Things You Need to Know about the NYU Silver Philippines Project

1. You will have to eat a lot of food (pork, shellfish, regular fish, red meat, and few veggies).
2. Ambiguity is common, it WILL happen. Plans will suddenly change, you will be confused and you will be expected to roll with it.
3. You will be hot and it will be humid.
4. There is preparation before the trip that may not always feel important, but it is VERY important.
5. While your safety is primary, your COMFORT is secondary to showing respect to the community and its people.
6. You will have to attend some kind of formal presentation or gathering (likely several). Some will be expected and some will not. None will start on time. None will be short.
7. The answer to “Can’t we just say no?” (to an invitation) is “No.” See #5.
8. The poverty and how people live or even think of themselves will make you feel uncomfortable or even guilty at times. Just remember that they lived in these conditions before you arrived and will continue to do so after you leave.
9. You will be a celebrity and, in the spotlight, whether or not you want to be.
10. You will be asked your age and whether or not you are available for a relationship or other personal information (it does not necessarily mean anything and so not necessarily a “come on” but simply a curiosity. These are common questions).
11. It is NOT a vacation it just looks like one on Instagram, there is a lot of work to be completed.
12. You will have a roommate. (The hotel in Del Carmen only have so many rooms)
13. There will be stretches with no Wifi or cell service even if you have an international phone/data plan. If you think you are going to FaceTime or Skype, it won’t happen.
14. You will probably be stressed out by a toilet at some point.
15. You are making a voluntary commitment to this project and so the expectation will be that you will help to make it successful at every level, including attitude and flexibility.
16. This project is unlike other school “trips.” We will stay in the same hotel and do all local activities together, including travel within the country until the project is complete. You will almost never be alone. There are times to relax, but even those must be coordinated.

17. You WILL have fun and learn a lot!!!