

Running Head: Rob Travilla

Rob Travilla: Artist and Businessman

Marian Angel B. Danga

EN202 - 01

Dr. Kimberly Bunts-Anderson

Sept 2018

Rob Travilla

Very rarely do people who were born in poverty climb their way out, but the handful of exceptions are hopeful reminders that it is still entirely possible. The cofounder and creative director of clothes line Tribe Marianas' Rob Travilla is a local example of this. A business that started as a small clothing shop now works on collaborations with big names like DFS Galleria and Toyota, and remains active in community events such as the Marianas March Against Cancer and the Million Dollar Scholar clubs of PSS high schools. Setting aside Tribe Marianas' ongoing success and community presence, there were many factors that lead to Tribe Marianas' inception in the first place. This essay looks to present Tribe Marianas' Rob Travilla's art, his youth, and his experience as a businessman.

When talking about an artist, their art is an aspect of their career that can not be set aside. Rob Travilla's work is no exception. There's a common theme that persists in the designs on many pieces of Tribe merchandise, often featuring stylized art of familiar items of the Northern Marianas' culture: from traditional coconut meat shavers to the local flora. Embracing the island's culture and community is the heart of Tribe Marianas' identity. How easily Tribe merchandise has brought people of similar identities together is a testament to this.

Travilla's youth is a familiar story amongst those who grew up with financial issues. Travilla was something of a troublemaker, having stated that academics was never a strong suit in the past in an interview conducted by the writer of this essay. Art was one of the few things that provided a moment of respite from his many troubles. Money often got in the way of his dreams even a little later in life when Travilla had been accepted by several art schools in the United States but was not able to go. Despite this shortcoming, Travilla had built a career from the ground up with a skill that was initially thought to have been too expensive to pursue.

Rob Travilla

Professionalism is something Travilla had to realize through many, many instances of trial and error. In Tribe Marianas' earlier years, Travilla did not have the formal education that may have made the business-running a lot smoother. Though lacking in knowledge then, passion was always a constant factor throughout Rob Travilla's run with Tribe. Through the failures, he learned, and determination shone through with the eventual success of the clothing line.

Rob Travilla is an example of where someone can end up if the right skills and unwavering determination are possessed. A very influential individual on our small, modest islands, Travilla's work has brought people together in ways that have yet to be seen recreated in the same scale. Travilla's upbringing is a sad and all too common story amongst unprivileged youth around the world, but the future is uncertain, and there are exceptions. Travilla is a living example of a successful businessman.