

Hidilyn Diaz

By Avni Rao

Hidilyn Diaz, a weightlifter from the Philippines, just won her country its first Olympic gold after 97 years.

This isn't her first time making headlines, though. In the 2016 Summer Olympics, Diaz won the silver medal in the women's 53-kg weight division, ending the Philippines' 20-year Olympic medal drought. She has also won many other medals, notably, a gold medal in the Asian Games and Rome World Cup.

In 2013, Diaz was recruited into the Philippine Air Force, and then in 2014, she was given a promotion from Airwoman to Airwoman Second Class. She also received a Military Merit Medal and Presidential Citation Unit Badge. After her achievement at the 2016 Olympics, she was promoted to the rank of Airwoman First Class. Then, in 2018 (after the Asian Games), she was promoted to Sergeant. Then, following her recent achievement at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, she was promoted from Sergeant to Staff Sergeant!

Hidilyn Diaz attended Universidad de Zamboanga to pursue a degree in Computer Science. In her 3rd year, she stopped attending after realizing that it wasn't the field for her. Then, in January 2017, she got a scholarship to attend De La Salle-College of Saint Benilde and study Business Management. She took a break to focus on weightlifting, then rejoined following the pandemic.

During the pandemic, Diaz was isolated in Malaysia for about a year. And when the nation closed down all gyms, Diaz took to household items to train for the postponed games. She made use of water bottles, gym bags, and bamboo sticks as a DIY way to make barbells. Despite all of this, she went on to win the gold medal for her country this year. This accomplishment was awarded by the Filipino government, as they awarded her 35.5 million PHP (approx \$660,000) along with a house and lot.

Her story is truly an inspiration!

https://www.instagram.com/hidilyndiaz/?utm_source=ig_embed&ig_rid=75a492c6-c408-4617-b8d4-77e5826670eb



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Citations:

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