PRESS RELEASE (May 15, 2014)

The Filipino American Journal Special

"By their works you shall know them," the Good Book of Life says. What people do for a living says a lot about what they are interested in. So at the incoming advance celebration of the 153rd birth anniversary of the Philippine national hero, Dr. Jose Rizal and at the same time the induction of the newly elected officers of the Arizona Knights of Rizal - Mr. Leonardo Aromin, a leader of many talents, who had done and continue to do good work for the Filipino American community as publisher of the Filipino American Journal – a bi-weekly newspaper in Arizona since 1998 was selected to grace the occasion as the guest speaker with the theme, "Dr. Jose P. Rizal is Alive in Our hearts."

The induction of the officers of the Arizona Knights of Rizal, Inc. (AZKOR) during the gala night is headed by Sir Warren Cruz, KCR as chapter commander , which will be held at the Hilton Phoenix Airport Hotel on May 31, 2014 from 5:00 to 12 midnight.

Mr. Leonardo Aromin was invited the guest speaker because he holds the distinction of being the president or chairperson of three well-known organizations in the State of Arizona for the year 2014, namely, Chairperson of the Council of Filipino Organizations of Arizona , Chairperson of the Pacific Rim Advisory Council of the City of Phoenix, and President of the Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona - a feat that cannot be easily duplicated.

The Council of Filipino Organizations of Arizona (CFO-AZ) is a non-profit organization incorporated in the State of Arizona, which was officially convened in August 2010 and serves as the coordinating body of the various Filipino organizations in Arizona.

On the other hand, The Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona (PACCA) was established in 1994 by a group of Filipino small business owners. The main objective of the Chamber is to promote, foster and enhance the business relationships between the members of the Chamber and the general business community inside and outside of Arizona and in the Philippines.

Leonardo is also the Chairperson of the Pacific Rim Advisory Council of the City of Phoenix for the year 2014. One of the purposes of the Advisory Council is to act as a vehicle of communication between state, county and local governments and the Asian American Community. The Board and Commission members provide input to the Mayor, City Council, City Manager and city departments on a variety of issues affecting the city.

Leo - as he is fondly called - has shown his leadership in early life. He was born in Pangasinan but grew up in South Cotabato in Mindanao. He was the President of the Student Council when he graduated from High School in South Cotabato and consequently received the Gerry Roxas Leadership Award.

He went to Mindanao State University as a full scholar where he graduated with a degree of Bachelor of Science in Community Development and Bachelor of Laws. Even as a student, he became a radio announcer of a government radio station... becoming a News Director, Program Director and then a Radio Station Manager. (He was a broadcast journalist for 13 years.) (When he transferred his residence in Metro Manila while waiting for the release of the Bar, he had a brief stint as a Political Talk Show host and a Political Reporter of DZXL in Manila.)

He was likewise a graduate of the Future Leaders Program (FLP) of the National Defense College of the Philippines (NDCP)... (FLP is a short-term leadership training program for 'selected' young government employees at that time.)

In 1978, the Philippine Government appointed him as the Official Spokesperson of the Southern Philippines Autonomous Region – then comprising 13 provinces and 9 cities in Mindanao.

When he passed the Philippine Bar... he became a Hearing Officer of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) and had a brief stint as a Legal Officer of a quasi- government agency.

Immediately prior to his migrating to the U.S., he became a Senior Staff of Senator Santanina Rasul - being the Director of Public Affairs Department of the Office of Senator Rasul. He was also the official spokesperson of Sen. Rasul.
In the U.S., he had a one year stint with the media outfit and ministry of Pat Robertson in Virginia Beach.
After graduating with a Paralegal degree in Phoenix, he worked with the Legal Department of a banking institution in Phoenix for 5 years.

He was the founding pastor of local Christian church in Phoenix. (He retired as a pastor in 2011.)
In 1998, he and his family put up The Filipino American Journal - a bi-weekly newspaper in Arizona. His family also owned Aromin FilAm Travel - a travel agency specializing in travel from the U.S. to Asia - especially to the Philippines. He owns and manages the Aromin Paralegal Services.

For those who are not familiar with the Arizona Knights of Rizal, Inc, (AZKOR, Inc.) it is a civic, cultural, non-political, non-profit, non-sectarian Organization chartered under Republic Act 646 of the Philippine Congress, and incorporated under the Laws of the State of Arizona - the general purpose and specific objective is to study and spread the ideals, teachings and the exemplary life of Dr. Jose Rizal, the Philippine National hero and the pride of the Malayan race.

On March 13, 2014, the IRS approved its application for tax exempt status under 501 C(3) of the Internal Revenue Code as a non-profit public charitable organization retroactive to May 15, 2012. One of the many projects AZKOR are pursuing are:

Charity and social services program
- provide social support to new immigrants, seniors and veterans projects.
- to raise fund and be ready to respond to Philippine & American calamities.

Science and technology program
- *promote programs or projects of individuals or entities that help alleviate sufferings among the less fortunate and addresses the challenges of hunger, disease, insecurity and destitution.

Education, sports and scholarship program
- provide scholarship grants for deserving Fil-Am youth
- promote sports and cultural activities among Fil-Am.

Cultural and Rizal Literary Program
- to raise funds for the construction of the monument of Dr. Jose Rizal in one of the parks in the greater Phoenix area
- promote ten (10) outstanding Dr. Jose P. Rizal Excellence award in the field of education, entrepreneurship, government service, journalism, law, medicine, nursing, community and public service, science & technology, and youth leadership.
- sponsor oratorical and essay writing contest among high school and college students.
- Put up a Filipiniana/Rizal section in Phoenix Public Library or any other public library.

Sir Tom D. Rodriguez, KGOR, the USA Regional Commander of the Order of the Knights of Rizal, will induct into office the following officers of AZKOR:

Sir Warren Cruz, KCR – Chapter Commander

Sir Romeo Balasta, KOR – Deputy Chapter Commander

Sir Rene Borromeo, KOR – Chancellor

Sir Jerry Manuel, KOR – Pursuivant

Sir Rafael Ablao, Jr. KOR – Exchequer

Sir Jim Cox, KOR – Archivist

Sir Ruben Reventar, KOR – Auditor

Sir James del Mundo, KOR – Deputy Pursuivant

Sir Rudy Sanchez, KOR – Deputy Exchequer

Trustees:

Sir Bart Ganon, KOR

Sir Frank Rosales, KOR

Sir Rudy Lim, KOR

For further information about the Arizona Knights of Rizal, one can go to its web site at www.azkorinc.com.