



Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona (PACCA)

NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2026 EDITION

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PACCA UPDATE & NEWS

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**ROOTED IN COMMUNITY.
 RISING TOGETHER.**

PACCA's strength comes from deep community roots—culture, service, and shared history—while our collective vision lifts businesses, leaders, and future generations forward. In 2026, we honor where we come from as we grow together into what's next.

MISSION

WE ARE COMMITTED TO ASSISTING FILIPINO-AMERICAN ENTREPRENEURS AND PROFESSIONALS BY PROVIDING TIMELY AND INFORMATIVE RESOURCES, PROMOTING AND FOSTERING BUSINESS RELATIONSHIPS, AND MAKING A POSITIVE IMPACT AMONG OUR MEMBERS AND THE BROADER BUSINESS COMMUNITY, BOTH LOCALLY AND GLOBALLY

VISION

TO BE THE PREMIER RESOURCE FOR FILIPINO-AMERICAN ENTREPRENEURS, CREATING A THRIVING COMMUNITY THAT DRIVES INNOVATION, GROWTH, AND IMPACT IN THE LOCAL AND GLOBAL BUSINESS LANDSCAPE.

Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona (PACCA)



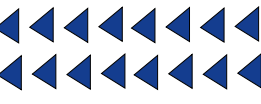
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Follow PACCA on social media for the latest updates, events, and community highlights — and visit our website for exclusive resources and news.

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MESSAGE FROM THE IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

Mabuhay and warmest greetings, PACCA Family!

It is with deep gratitude and pride that we share this message with you. Serving the Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona — whether in the past, present, or future — is truly an honor. Leadership within PACCA has always been rooted in service, collaboration, and a shared commitment to uplifting our Filipino-American business community.

As Immediate Past President and Director, we reflect with appreciation on how far our Chamber has come. Every milestone achieved, every partnership formed, and every event successfully hosted has been the result of teamwork and a collective belief in our mission. PACCA's strength has never depended on one leader alone — it thrives because of engaged members, dedicated volunteers, visionary officers, and a community that genuinely supports one another.

We are especially encouraged to see the continued momentum within the organization. New leaders are stepping forward. Fresh ideas are emerging. Stronger collaborations are taking shape. At the same time, the core values that define PACCA — integrity, professionalism, cultural pride, and community empowerment — remain firmly intact. That balance of honoring our legacy while embracing growth is what ensures long-term sustainability and impact.

The role of past leadership does not end when a term concludes. We remain committed to providing guidance, mentorship, and continuity to ensure smooth transitions and steady progress. Our responsibility is to help protect the foundation that has been built, while empowering current leadership to innovate and expand opportunities for our members.

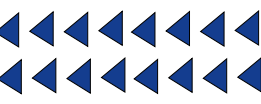
PACCA is more than a Chamber of Commerce — it is a network of relationships, a platform for opportunity, and a bridge connecting businesses, cultures, and generations. It is a space where entrepreneurs find support, professionals find connection, and community leaders find purpose. That spirit is what makes this organization special.

To our members, thank you for your trust and continued engagement. To our current officers and committees, thank you for your dedication and forward-thinking leadership. And to our future leaders, we encourage you to step in, get involved, and help shape the next chapter of PACCA's story.

Together, we honor our past, strengthen our present, and build a brighter future.

With appreciation and unity,
Edward Henry Lago





MESSAGE FROM THE 2026 PACCA STATE PRESIDENT

Greetings of peace and joy to each member of our PACCA family!

I am honored to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt appreciation for every one of you. You are the cornerstone of PACCA—our organization thrives because of your dedication, commitment, and unwavering support. Being part of this remarkable family fills me with immense gratitude.

To our new members, I extend a warm and sincere welcome—welcome to the PACCA family! To our long-standing members, thank you for your loyalty and continued commitment. Together, we have built a strong foundation, and your support inspires us to reach even greater heights.

The year ahead promises to be a season of growth, learning, and deeper connections. I recognize the demands of our busy lives, and please know that my team and I are fully committed to keeping you informed, engaged, and connected with all upcoming events. As we finalize our annual calendar, I humbly ask for your continued support, cooperation, patience, and understanding throughout the year.

We have ambitious and exciting events planned that build on the successes of previous years. I encourage you to stay engaged and be part of these moments as we continue to strengthen our bonds and advance our shared goals. Wishing you all peace, unity, and continued collective success!

With gratitude,
Atty. Luan Mai
State President
Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona



MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Hello PACCA Family,

What an incredible few months it has been for our community! Everywhere we look, Filipino talent, leadership, and heart are making waves — from the arts and culture to business, healthcare, and community service.

We've celebrated unforgettable performances and historic milestones in Filipino storytelling. Local artists and filmmakers have reminded us of the power of our voices and the richness of our culture, showing that when our stories are shared, they inspire, connect, and uplift.

Our leaders continue to guide with purpose, creating opportunities for members to grow, connect, and thrive. At the same time, our community service efforts are transforming lives, giving hope and opportunity to those who need it most. And cultural events like the recent Asian Festival beautifully illustrate the power of coming together — to honor our heritage, learn from one another, and strengthen the bonds that unite us.

All of these moments — the celebrations, the service, the leadership — remind us of something simple but powerful: when we come together as a community, amazing things happen. Every story, every effort, every connection matters, and it's what makes PACCA so special.

Thank you to every member, partner, and supporter who brings your energy, passion, and heart to this community. Together, we're not just building networks or celebrating milestones — we're creating a legacy of connection, inspiration, and pride.

Here's to more stories, more achievements, and more moments that make us proud to be part of this incredible community.

With gratitude and excitement,
Kristine Bartolome
Editor-in-Chief
Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona





Arizona Small Business Boot Camp Content Library: On-Demand Learning. Practical Tools. Real Growth.

The Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona (PACCA) is committed to equipping our members with meaningful resources that strengthen businesses at every stage. In this edition of our Business Resource / Toolbox Corner, we are proud to spotlight a powerful, free tool available to Arizona entrepreneurs: the Small Business Boot Camp Content Library, curated by the Arizona Commerce Authority.



Since its launch in 2020, the Arizona Small Business Boot Camp has evolved into a comprehensive, statewide educational platform designed to help small business owners learn, grow, and thrive. What started as a response to the challenges posed by the pandemic has grown into a rich collection of expert-led webinars and training sessions covering virtually every aspect of running and growing a business. The content library now serves as a virtual classroom for entrepreneurs across Arizona, available 24/7 and entirely free of charge.

What's Inside the Content Library?

The Boot Camp Content Library offers hundreds of recorded sessions, making it a flexible and practical learning resource for business owners at any stage of growth. The sessions cover topics essential to building, operating, and scaling a business successfully.

Accounting & Finance

Understanding your business finances is crucial for growth. Sessions in this category teach members how to:

- Interpret financial statements and key metrics
- Manage cash flow effectively
- Access small business loans and capital opportunities
- Build strong relationships with lenders and financial institutions

By strengthening financial literacy, PACCA members can make smarter decisions, secure funding when needed, and position their businesses for long-term sustainability.

Marketing & Brand Growth

In today's competitive marketplace, marketing is not optional – it's essential. The library offers practical guidance on:

- Building a strong digital presence through websites, social media, and email campaigns
- Creating effective branding and messaging that resonates with your target audience
- Leveraging SEO, content marketing, and analytics to reach more customers
- Engaging with your community and building loyal customer relationships

Legal & Compliance

Navigating legal and regulatory requirements can be intimidating for small business owners. Sessions focus on:

- Avoiding common legal pitfalls
- Understanding contracts, licenses, and permits
- Protecting intellectual property and trademarks
- Staying compliant with state and federal regulations

Proactive knowledge in this area minimizes risk, protects your assets, and allows you to focus on growth with confidence.

Leadership & Operations

Strong leadership and efficient operations are the backbone of every successful business. Topics include:

- Effective team management and leadership development
- Streamlining operations and workflow optimization
- Strategic planning for scaling and expansion
- Goal setting, performance measurement, and business analytics

These sessions provide practical advice that allows entrepreneurs to work on their business, not just in their business.

Additional Resources

The library also offers guidance on workforce development, digital tools, customer service, and community engagement – all tailored to the realities of small business ownership. With hundreds of recorded sessions, there's something for everyone, whether you are a first-time entrepreneur or an experienced business owner looking to refine your strategy.

Why This Matters for PACCA Members

For our PACCA members, the Small Business Boot Camp Content Library is more than just an online resource – it's a strategic advantage that complements our mission to support Filipino-American entrepreneurs in Arizona.

Here's why PACCA members should take full advantage:

1. Access to Expert Knowledge at No Cost
2. Members can tap into hundreds of webinars and learn directly from industry professionals without paying expensive tuition fees. From finance and marketing to legal and operations, these resources give members actionable knowledge to grow their business.
3. Strengthen Financial Foundations
4. Financial literacy is key to sustainability. By learning how to manage cash flow, prepare for funding, and navigate lending programs, members can position their businesses for financial stability and growth.
5. Boost Marketing & Brand Strategy
6. The library provides tools to refine branding, build an online presence, and engage customers effectively – helping businesses expand their reach and drive revenue.
7. Build Confidence in Legal & Compliance Matters
8. Understanding contracts, permits, and regulatory requirements protects your business from costly mistakes and ensures long-term viability.
9. Improve Leadership & Operations
10. By applying strategies for operational efficiency and effective team management, members can focus on growth and scale their businesses sustainably.
11. Support at Every Stage of Growth
12. Whether you're just starting, expanding, or mentoring other entrepreneurs, the library provides guidance tailored to your current needs and challenges.

PACCA Perspective

At PACCA, we believe that strong businesses build strong communities. By leveraging tools like the Small Business Boot Camp Content Library, our members can gain critical knowledge, implement practical strategies, and strengthen their competitive advantage.

This resource perfectly complements PACCA's mission to Connect | Engage | Thrive, providing members with the tools and guidance they need to succeed individually while uplifting the entire Filipino-American business community in Arizona.

Whether you are looking to refine your financial strategy, boost marketing, improve operations, or simply stay informed on the latest business practices, this content library is a must-use resource for every PACCA member committed to growth and excellence.

How to Access

PACCA encourages all members to explore the Small Business Boot Camp Content Library online through the Arizona Commerce Authority's website. The library is organized by topic, making it easy to find the sessions most relevant to your business needs. Sessions are available on demand, allowing you to learn at your own pace and revisit content whenever necessary.

Explore the library here:

[Arizona Small Business Boot Camp Content Library](#)



Leadership rooted in service. Vision grounded in impact. Commitment fueled by community.



For Atty. Luan, leadership is not about recognition or title. It is about building systems that work, empowering others to thrive, and creating sustainable growth.

"It is not the role that matters to me as much as being able to help grow the Chamber to provide meaningful impact to business owners and its members."

He believes that the true measure of leadership is seen in the strength of the team and the success of the community.

A Leadership Philosophy Built on Service

Atty. Luan is an experienced estate planning and business law attorney and the Founder and Managing Attorney of AZ Legacy Law Group, PLLC. Through his legal practice, he works closely with families, entrepreneurs, and business owners to protect what they have built and to create structures that allow their legacies to endure for generations. His work reflects precision, foresight, and deep care for the people he serves.

For several years, Atty. Luan has been an active supporter of PACCA. He previously served as a Board Director and has generously shared his expertise by conducting seminars for members of the Filipino American community. These educational sessions have empowered business owners and families with knowledge about estate planning, asset protection, succession planning, and business structuring — equipping them with tools to make confident, informed decisions.

His involvement with PACCA is more than professional — it is personal.

"I love the friendliness and welcoming spirit of the Filipino American community," he shares. "I value the Chamber's important role in supporting local business owners."

Managing the numbers can feel overwhelming for entrepreneurs, especially in the early stages of growth. From tracking income and expenses to preparing for loans, solid accounting skills are central to business success. Fortunately, the Arizona Commerce Authority's Small Business Accounting Academy offers a free, practical way for Arizona business owners to level up their financial confidence and capacity.

Key Goals During His Term

As President, Atty. Luan has outlined clear, strategic priorities designed to strengthen PACCA's foundation and expand its influence:

1. Increase the Value of the Chamber to Its Members

Atty. Luan is focused on ensuring that every PACCA member experiences tangible and measurable value. This includes enhanced networking opportunities, relevant educational programming, strategic partnerships, mentorship, and advocacy that directly supports business growth and professional development.

2. Grow PACCA Membership to 1,000 Members

Membership growth is not simply about numbers — it is about expanding the Chamber's collective voice and influence. Atty. Luan envisions a robust, engaged membership base that reflects the strength and diversity of Arizona's Filipino American business community.

3. Provide Meaningful, High-Impact Events

He is committed to curating events that are purposeful, educational, and relationship-driven. Whether through business forums, leadership panels, community celebrations, or industry-specific workshops, the goal is to ensure that members walk away informed, inspired, and connected.

Advice to Members and Future Leaders

For those considering deeper involvement, Atty. Luan offers practical guidance: "Start by attending an event. Support. Volunteer."

Engagement begins with participation. Leadership begins with service. Impact begins with showing up consistently.

He encourages members to view PACCA not just as an organization, but as a platform — a place where ideas can be shared, partnerships can be formed, and collective growth can happen.

Strengthening a Central Hub for the Filipino Community

Arizona's Filipino community is vibrant and growing — yet geographically dispersed across the state. Atty. Luan recognizes the Chamber's unique role as a centralized hub that connects professionals, entrepreneurs, and leaders. "The Filipino community is large and scattered throughout Arizona. It needs the Chamber to be a centralized point to help connect the community and business owners."

Through strategic collaboration and intentional outreach, he aims to strengthen PACCA's presence as a trusted resource and connector — bridging industries, generations, and regions.

Building a Passionate and Dedicated Team

Atty. Luan understands that growth is a collective effort.

"I hope to foster a team that is passionate and dedicated to the growth of PACCA." By cultivating a culture of accountability, collaboration, and shared ownership, he seeks to empower board members, ambassadors, and volunteers to take initiative and lead boldly. He believes that when leaders work together with clarity and purpose, the Chamber can create sustainable, long-term impact.

Outside of the courtroom and boardroom, Atty. Luan finds peace in simplicity. One fun fact that many may not know: he enjoys spending quiet time fishing at a calm lake. The stillness, patience, and reflection required in fishing mirror many of the qualities he values in leadership — focus, discipline, and calm under pressure.

His leadership philosophy is guided by a timeless principle from Lao Tzu:

"A leader is best when people barely know he exists. When his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say: we did it ourselves."



Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona Receives Champion of Community Collaboration Award

We are proud to share a truly special milestone with our PACCA family and the broader Arizona community.

The Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona (PACCA) was proudly recognized with the Champion of Community Collaboration Award at the prestigious ACElebration Gala, hosted by Asian Corporate and Entrepreneur Leaders (ACEL). The award was received on behalf of the chamber by President Emeritus Edward Lago and Director Priscilla Chesler, with other PACCA members proudly in attendance.

This honor celebrates our mission, our members, and our unwavering commitment to collaboration, leadership, and service. The **ACElebration Gala—founded through the vision of ACEL Founder Jason Wong**—is a premier event that convenes corporate executives, entrepreneurs, nonprofit leaders, and changemakers shaping the future of Asian American leadership in Arizona. Being recognized among organizations dedicated to advancing business excellence and community empowerment is both humbling and inspiring.



"We are truly honored to receive the 2026 ACEL Champion of Community Collaboration Award. This recognition affirms the hard work of our leaders, members, and partners, and it inspires us to continue strengthening partnerships and serving our community with purpose and unity."

—Edward Lago, President Emeritus
 Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona

A Recognition of Collective Impact

The **Champion of Community Collaboration Award** reflects PACCA's unwavering dedication to:

- Empowering Filipino American and minority-owned businesses
- Creating strategic partnerships across industries and organizations
- Building platforms for leadership development and mentorship
- Strengthening economic opportunities within our community
- Serving as a unifying force for the Filipino-American and broader Arizona community



The Power of Partnership

PACCA has always understood that meaningful growth does not happen in isolation. It happens when businesses support one another. When leaders share their knowledge. When organizations align their missions. When entrepreneurs collaborate instead of compete.

Through partnerships with fellow chambers, nonprofit organizations, corporate sponsors, and community advocates, PACCA has worked to create spaces where dialogue turns into opportunity and connection turns into action.

We are deeply grateful to Asian Corporate and Entrepreneur Leaders (ACEL) for recognizing the importance of collaboration and for honoring PACCA with this distinction. ACEL's commitment to elevating Asian American professionals and entrepreneurs aligns closely with our own values of unity, empowerment, and leadership.

Moving Forward with Purpose

Receiving the **Champion of Community Collaboration Award** is not just a celebration of past accomplishments. It is a renewed commitment to the future. As PACCA continues to grow, we remain focused on:

- Expanding membership and increasing value for our members
- Developing innovative and impactful programming
- Strengthening partnerships across Arizona
- Elevating Filipino-American leadership in business and civic spaces
- Creating economic opportunities that empower generations to come

We believe that when we lead with collaboration, we build more than networks — we build legacy.

To our members, partners, supporters, and friends: thank you for believing in PACCA's mission. Thank you for your trust. Thank you for your continued commitment to leadership and service.

This award is a testament to what we can accomplish together.

Collaboration is at the heart of everything PACCA does. Whether through business mixers, educational seminars, signature galas, youth and leadership initiatives, or cross-organizational partnerships, our work is rooted in the belief that we are stronger together.

This award is not simply about one event, one initiative, or one year of service. It represents years of intentional relationship-building, volunteer dedication, and a shared vision for a thriving, connected community.

A Shared Achievement

Most importantly, this award belongs to our community. It belongs to:

- Our members who show up, support one another, and actively engage
- Our volunteers who dedicate their time and energy behind the scenes
- Our board members and officers who lead with integrity and vision
- Our sponsors and partners who invest in long-term impact
- Every entrepreneur, professional, and advocate who believes in the power of Filipino-American unity

PACCA's strength comes from the people who make up this Chamber. Each connection made, each business supported, each collaboration formed — these are the building blocks of meaningful impact.

Together, we will continue to connect, empower, and thrive.



Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona Officers Strengthen Unity Through Pickleball Team Building

Unity. Connection. Collaboration.

Leadership is not built solely in boardrooms. Sometimes, the strongest bonds and the most effective teamwork grow from shared experiences — moments that bring people together, build trust, and inspire collaboration.

Recently, the Officers of the Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona (PACCA), under the guidance of State President Atty. Luan Mai, came together for a dynamic team-building session through pickleball. While the activity brought energy, laughter, and a little friendly competition, its deeper purpose was clear: to strengthen the unity, communication, and camaraderie of PACCA's leadership team.



Building Leadership Through Connection

Pickleball, a sport that blends strategy, coordination, and quick thinking, served as a perfect backdrop for leadership development. Each serve, volley, and rally became an opportunity for PACCA officers to practice skills that translate directly to their roles as leaders:

- Collaboration: Understanding each other's strengths and working together to achieve common goals.
- Communication: Sharpening the ability to convey ideas clearly and respond in real-time — on the court and in the chamber.
- Trust: Learning to rely on teammates, celebrate wins, and support each other through challenges.
- Problem-solving: Strategizing during games, adapting to changing situations, and thinking creatively — all key leadership skills.

Through these shared experiences, officers not only strengthened their interpersonal relationships but also reinforced the foundation of teamwork that drives PACCA forward.

Unity Beyond the Game

While the afternoon included friendly competition and lots of laughter, the bigger picture was about building unity and alignment. In any leadership team, the personal bonds between officers translate directly into organizational effectiveness.

Strengthening PACCA's Mission

PACCA's mission is clear: empower businesses, foster collaboration, and strengthen the Filipino-American community in Arizona. But behind every program, event, and initiative is a leadership team that must work in harmony to bring that mission to life.

By prioritizing connection and camaraderie, PACCA officers are modeling the very values the Chamber seeks to cultivate in its members: collaboration, service, and a spirit of unity. The skills honed on the pickleball court — communication, adaptability, trust, and encouragement — carry over directly into the Chamber's work, ensuring that every decision and every initiative is executed with excellence.

For PACCA, a united leadership team means:

- More cohesive planning and decision-making for programs, events, and initiatives
- Greater engagement with members, offering value and meaningful opportunities
- Enhanced collaboration with partners and sponsors across the Filipino-American and broader business communities
- Stronger mentorship and support for emerging leaders within PACCA

President Atty. Luan Mai emphasized, ***“Team-building is more than just a fun activity. It's a way to invest in our people — our leadership.*** When our officers are connected, we serve our members better, we make stronger decisions, and we create a positive culture that inspires others to get involved.”

Stronger Together, United in Service

Moments like these remind us that leadership is not only about strategy or goals — it's about people, relationships, and shared purpose.

The PACCA officers' team-building session is a testament to the organization's commitment to unity and collaboration, showing that investing in leadership strengthens the Chamber as a whole. When officers are aligned, connected, and motivated, that energy radiates outward to members, partners, and the broader community.

At PACCA, we believe that when we come together, we are stronger, smarter, and more impactful. Our leadership team's commitment to collaboration ensures that we continue to grow as a Chamber, empowering businesses and fostering meaningful connections across Arizona.



Celebrating Filipino Talent Together: A Night of Music, Film, and Community

The Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona (PACCA) recently had the privilege of highlighting an unforgettable evening of Filipino artistry, culture, and community connection at Halo Halo Kitchen. The event brought together families, friends, and supporters for a night that celebrated not just talent, but also the pride, creativity, and unity of the Filipino-American community in Arizona.



Adding a special layer of recognition to the event, **Honorary Consul Jenny Ho-Vijungco** attended to honor Bella Alejandro for her achievements in film. Bella received two prestigious awards for her work on Song of the Fireflies: the Best Asian Feature Film Award and the Mayor's Choice Award from the Chandler International Film Festival. These accolades celebrate Bella's excellence in storytelling, her dedication to her craft, and the power of Filipino voices to inspire and connect people across cultures.

The evening was also a reminder of the power of collaboration — from artists sharing the stage to community members showing up in support, to leaders like Honorary Consul Jenny Ho-Vijungco recognizing excellence. These collective efforts help create a strong and connected Filipino-American community in Arizona, where achievements are celebrated and talents are nurtured.



PACCA congratulates **Bella Alejandro, Nino, and Jordy Alejandro** for sharing their artistry and inspiring all those in attendance. We also extend gratitude to Honorary Consul Jenny Ho-Vijungco for her presence and support in honoring Filipino excellence.

The evening's concert featured **Bella Alejandro, Nino, and Jordy Alejandro**, whose performances captivated the audience with emotion, skill, and heart. From Bella's soulful voice to Nino and Jordy's energetic stage presence, the artists reminded everyone of the richness of Filipino talent and the important role of arts in building community.

Through moments like this, PACCA continues to demonstrate that celebrating Filipino talent is a way to unite, empower, and inspire the community. When the community comes together to lift up its artists, it strengthens not only individual careers but also cultural pride and collective identity.

PACCA was thrilled to see community members come together not only to enjoy incredible performances but also to celebrate the accomplishments of Filipino artists who are making a meaningful impact in Arizona and beyond. The night was filled with laughter, applause, and shared excitement as attendees cheered for the performers and recognized the value of arts, culture, and representation.

As a chamber committed to empowering Filipino-American professionals, entrepreneurs, and creatives, PACCA views events like this as essential to its mission. They are more than concerts; they are opportunities to strengthen connections, build cultural pride, and inspire future generations of Filipino leaders and artists.

Stronger together. Proud of our culture. Celebrating Filipino talent.



Asian Festival Celebrates Culture, Unity, and Filipino Pride



Thunderbird Photography

The Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona (PACCA) is proud to spotlight the Asian Festival, a vibrant two-day celebration that brought together Arizona’s Asian-American communities to celebrate culture, connection, and community. Graciously hosted by **Honorary Consul of Malaysia Winnie Kho Kaplan and Dr. Steve Kaplan**, the festival offered a rich and meaningful space for attendees to experience, learn, and celebrate the diversity of Asian traditions.

The festival featured cultural performances, exhibits, and hands-on experiences that showcased the unique heritage, artistry, and creativity of the participating communities. From traditional dances and music to culinary delights and handcrafted goods, every aspect of the festival highlighted the vibrancy of Asian cultures in Arizona. Local vendors and businesses played a key role, serving flavorful dishes, unique products, and beverages that added depth, texture, and taste to the celebrations.



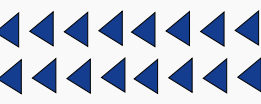
The event also demonstrated the importance of collaboration and representation. Attendees had the opportunity to connect with honorary consuls, international representatives, local officials, and community leaders, creating meaningful opportunities for cross-cultural dialogue and partnership. **The presence of the Phoenix Asian American Lions Leos Cubs representing the Philippines** brought a special moment of pride for the Filipino-American community, highlighting its contributions and active engagement in cultural celebrations.



The Asian Festival was more than just performances and food—it was a space for education, cultural exchange, and community pride. Visitors were able to learn about traditions from across Asia, witness performances rooted in heritage, and gain an appreciation for the shared values and connections that unite communities. It reminded everyone that diversity strengthens society and that celebrating differences can create lasting bonds.

PACCA sees events like the Asian Festival as essential opportunities to recognize and honor Filipino talent and contributions within the broader Asian-American community. Filipino representation at the festival, from youth organizations to cultural showcases, reflects the ongoing efforts of the community to preserve heritage, inspire future generations, and strengthen connections across Arizona.

Moments like these demonstrate the power of cultural celebration: they foster understanding, highlight the beauty of diverse traditions, and encourage collaboration between communities. By spotlighting the Asian Festival, PACCA emphasizes the value of coming together to celebrate culture, creativity, and shared identity while honoring what connects us all.



Celebrating Filipino Storytelling at the Chandler International Film Festival

The Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona (PACCA) is thrilled to celebrate a landmark moment for **Filipino artistry and storytelling**. Recently, **Honorary Consul Jenny Ho-Vijungco** had the honor of accepting two prestigious awards on behalf of the creative team behind **Song of the Fireflies at the Chandler International Film Festival**. The film was recognized with both the Best Asian Feature Film Award and the Mayor's Choice Award, reflecting the talent, dedication, and hard work of the directors, cast, and production team.

What makes this milestone particularly meaningful is that **Song of the Fireflies** was the first Filipino film entered into the Chandler International Film Festival. Its recognition marks not only a personal achievement for the filmmakers but also a historic moment for the Filipino-American community in Arizona and beyond. This acknowledgment showcases the richness of Filipino storytelling and highlights the global resonance of narratives rooted in Filipino culture, values, and experiences.



The recognition of *Song of the Fireflies* at a major festival such as Chandler International Film Festival sends a powerful message: Filipino stories matter, and Filipino artists have a place on the global stage. The film's success encourages emerging filmmakers, writers, and creatives in the community to pursue their vision, knowing that their work can reach wider audiences and earn recognition for excellence.



Honorary Consul Jenny Ho-Vijungco expressed her gratitude for being part of such a meaningful celebration, accepting the awards on behalf of the team and sharing the recognition with the entire Filipino creative community. "This achievement is a testament to the talent, perseverance, and dedication of Filipino filmmakers," she shared.



"It's also an inspiring moment for our community — proof that our stories, when told with heart and excellence, resonate far beyond our own circles."

PACCA was proud to witness this moment, as it reflects the Chamber's ongoing mission to support, celebrate, and elevate Filipino talent in all fields, from entrepreneurship to the arts. Events like this remind us that Filipino voices in film, music, and other creative industries contribute to cultural pride, community identity, and cross-cultural understanding.

PACCA extends heartfelt congratulations to the directors, cast, crew, and everyone involved in bringing *Song of the Fireflies* to life. We also extend our gratitude to the Chandler International Film Festival for supporting diverse voices and honoring the contributions of Filipino artists.

Here's to more Filipino films, more stories, and more milestones that celebrate the richness and diversity of our community!



Advancing Filipino Representation in Healthcare Leadership



A Foundation of Excellence

Roxanne began her nursing journey after earning her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the prestigious University of Santo Tomas. She later brought her talents to Arizona, where she built a diverse and impactful career.

She started as a telemetry registered nurse at Dignity Health, where her exceptional patient care earned her the **DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses** — a recognition of both clinical excellence and heartfelt compassion.

Driven to expand her scope of impact, Roxanne pursued advanced practice nursing.

She earned her **Doctorate degree from Arizona State University** as a Family Nurse Practitioner and completed post-graduate training as an Adult Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner.

During her doctoral studies, Roxanne conducted research focused on improving care transitions for individuals with substance use disorder, emphasizing continuity of care during vulnerable periods. Her work highlighted the importance of coordinated, community-based systems to improve long-term patient outcomes. In recognition of her research and leadership, she was selected as a speaker at Arizona State University's Annual Summer Institute for Applied Behavioral Health Policy, where she shared insights on strengthening healthcare systems through collaboration and integrated care.

Filipino Americans continue to make powerful contributions to the healthcare industry, and **Nurse Practitioner Roxanne Tenorio** stands as a strong example of leadership, excellence, and service in action.

A Filipino American Nurse Practitioner, Roxanne's career reflects an unwavering commitment to clinical excellence, compassionate care, and meaningful representation in healthcare leadership. From high-acuity lung transplant care to concierge medical aesthetics, she blends advanced medical expertise with a deeply patient-centered approach — demonstrating that technical skill and empathy go hand in hand.



Representation Matters

As a proud Filipina healthcare provider and member of the Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona, Roxanne values PACCA as a platform for connection, cultural pride, and professional growth. She recognizes PACCA not only as a business and entrepreneurial organization, but as a powerful network that fosters collaboration, leadership, and economic empowerment within the Filipino American community.

Through her membership, she actively supports PACCA's mission to build a strong, unified network of Filipino professionals, entrepreneurs, and leaders who inspire and uplift one another. Roxanne embodies a leadership philosophy grounded in continuous self-improvement, community engagement, and purposeful service. She remains motivated to grow — not only as a clinician and leader, but as a representative of Filipino excellence in healthcare.

Her journey reflects a larger truth: representation is not just about visibility — it is about impact, mentorship, and paving pathways for future generations of Filipino healthcare professionals.

As Roxanne beautifully states:

"Service is about showing up with purpose and leaving people better than you found them."

Through dedication, growth, and unwavering service, Roxanne Tenorio continues to advance **Filipino representation in healthcare leadership — strengthening both her profession and her community.**

Leadership and Advocacy Beyond the Clinic

Roxanne's commitment to advancing healthcare extends well beyond her clinical practice.

She serves as **Secretary of the Alliance of Arizona Advanced Practice Providers (AAzAPP)**, a statewide organization dedicated to empowering advanced practice providers through recognition, advocacy, professional development, and unity. Rooted in values-driven leadership, AAzAPP amplifies provider voices while fostering collaboration across disciplines.

Additionally, Roxanne contributes to the AAzAPP Newsletter Committee, helping educate providers on clinical topics and emerging healthcare trends. Through these leadership roles, she advocates for initiatives that strengthen both the profession and the communities it serves.



FilAm Beauty Queen Sharpens Focus on Continuing Her Family's Powerful Legacy



From academic excellence to international pageantry and nonprofit leadership, **Sol Aquino Tinio** represents the heart, resilience, and purpose-driven spirit of the Filipino American community.

In August 2025, Sol was crowned Miss Philippines USA 1st Runner Up and Miss Philippines USA Tourism, titles that deepened her calling to continue her family's inspiring and powerful legacy. Rather than viewing pageantry as personal recognition, Sol saw it as a platform for impact. That vision led to the establishment of the Heart of Sol Foundation in August 2025.

A proud graduate of Grand Canyon University, Sol earned her Bachelor's degree in Business Management as Magna Cum Laude, demonstrating early on her commitment to excellence. Professionally, she serves and cares for people as a mainline airline flight attendant – a role that reflects her natural heart for service and connection.

Launching the Heart of Sol Foundation

A Legacy Rooted in Humility, Faith, and Service

Sol's story is deeply anchored in family.

Her grandparents, Lola Geng Aquino and Lolo Erning Aquino, are well-respected pillars in Concepcion, Tarlac. From humble beginnings, the Aquino family raised ten ambitious and successful children, later establishing businesses that continue to serve and uplift their community. Their legacy is one of integrity, resilience, and servant leadership.

In 1999, Sol and her mother, Luz Aquino Dupas, arrived in America with nothing but a backpack, \$20, and a dream. Today, Luz proudly operates an award-winning assisted living home in Chandler, Arizona – built on compassion and an unwavering commitment to care for the elderly.

Sol has carried that same spirit forward. She is now:

- A Magna Cum Laude college graduate
- A mainline airline flight attendant
- A two-time beauty queen title holder
- A Top 16 Finalist in Elton John's Style Icon Trendsetter competition
- Founder and CEO of the Heart of Sol Foundation

Each accomplishment, she credits to deep faith in Jesus, a heart for service, a strong work ethic, clarity of personal mission, and a consistently positive attitude.



Established in August 2025, the Heart of Sol Foundation was created with a clear mission: to empower the next generation and lead youth toward discovering their personal mission and purpose.

Sol strongly believes that when individuals live in alignment with their calling, they not only transform their own lives but contribute to a more harmonious, joyful, and meaningful world.

The foundation began 2026 with powerful momentum. From January 16–26, 2026, Heart of Sol Foundation completed its inaugural mission trip to the Philippines, serving two underprivileged schools:

- San Francisco Elementary School in Concepcion, Tarlac
- Barangay Ninoy Aquino Daycare in Marisol, Angeles City – the very daycare Sol attended as a child
- During this first mission:
 - 400 individuals were provided nourishing meals
 - 300 children received essential school supplies

This inaugural outreach marks the beginning of a long-term commitment to creating sustainable, purpose-driven impact in Filipino communities that need it most. As the foundation grows, its vision expands toward serving communities globally.

Purpose Beyond the Crown

Sol Aquino Tinio plans to continue competing in future beauty pageants, expand her modeling and acting career, and speak to audiences about purpose, faith, and service. Through every stage, every screen, and every platform, she remains committed to using her voice not for recognition – but for impact.

Her journey is a testament to what is possible when passion aligns with service and legacy meets vision. Sol embodies a new generation of Filipino American leaders – bold in ambition, grounded in faith, and driven by a mission larger than themselves.



The Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona proudly celebrates leaders like Sol Aquino Tinio who uplift our community, honor their heritage, and transform success into service.



WELCOME TO PACCA!

Welcome to PACCA: Bayan Brews
Brewing Culture | Connection | Community

The Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona is proud to welcome our newest member, Bayan Brews!

Bayan Brews is a Filipino-owned mobile coffee cart brewing more than just exceptional beverages—they are brewing culture, connection, and community in every cup. Using premium Philippine coffee beans and Filipino-inspired flavors, their handcrafted drinks tell stories of home, heritage, and togetherness. Each cup is a celebration of Filipino pride and the rich agricultural traditions of the Philippines.

As the first and only coffee shop in Arizona serving coffee made exclusively with Philippine beans, Bayan Brews proudly advocates for Filipino farmers and is on a mission to put Philippine coffee on the global map. Their vision extends beyond serving great coffee—they hope to inspire more cafés and entrepreneurs to use Philippine-grown beans and elevate awareness of its world-class quality. Perfect for community festivals, corporate functions, weddings, private parties, school events, and fundraisers, Bayan Brews brings warmth, authenticity, and a meaningful experience to every gathering.

We are thrilled to have Bayan Brews join PACCA and look forward to supporting their continued growth and impact. Their passion for culture, entrepreneurship, and community beautifully aligns with PACCA's mission to uplift and empower Filipino-American businesses.

Welcome to PACCA, Bayan Brews—we're excited to brew success together!



Welcome to PACCA: David Pilar, Columbia Bank
Business Banking Expert | Community Advocate | Growth Partner

The Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona is proud to welcome our newest member, David Pilar of Columbia Bank!

David serves as a Branch Manager at Columbia Bank and brings over 20 years of experience in the banking industry. With deep expertise in Business Banking, he has successfully managed portfolios of small businesses, including extensive work supporting entrepreneurs in Nevada. His experience gives him a strong understanding of the financial challenges and opportunities business owners face at every stage of growth.

Passionate about education and empowerment, David is committed to helping entrepreneurs build strong financial foundations. He works closely with small business owners to strengthen cash flow strategies, navigate lending solutions, and position their companies for long-term success. His relationship-driven approach ensures that clients feel supported, informed, and confident in their financial decisions. David's dedication to uplifting entrepreneurs and strengthening the broader business community aligns perfectly with PACCA's mission to connect, engage, and empower Filipino-American businesses across Arizona and beyond.

We are excited to have David join our growing network and look forward to the expertise, leadership, and positive impact he will bring to our members.

Welcome to PACCA, David—we're grateful to have you with us!



Welcome to PACCA: Brett Bokel
Founder | Trusted Care Provider | Community-Focused Entrepreneur

The Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona is excited to welcome our newest member, Brett Bokel, founder of Brett's Pet Sitting Services!

Brett is dedicated to providing reliable, loving, and professional care for pets while their owners are away. With a genuine passion for animals and a strong commitment to exceptional service, he ensures every pet feels safe, comfortable, and cared for like family. His approach is built on trust, consistency, and personalized attention—giving pet owners peace of mind when they need it most. Through Brett's Pet Sitting Services, he supports busy professionals, families, and travelers by delivering dependable, high-quality care tailored to each pet's unique needs. His focus on building strong relationships with clients reflects the values of integrity and service that strengthen any thriving community.

Brett's dedication to trust, service excellence, and community support aligns beautifully with PACCA's mission to uplift entrepreneurs and empower local businesses.

We're excited to have Brett join our growing network and look forward to the positive impact he will bring to our community.

Welcome to PACCA, Brett—we're glad to have you with us!





Business 101: From Foundation to Growth — Money, Law & Strategy

Featuring the 2026 VIP Tour Launch

community leaders to an evening designed to inform, empower, and inspire.

Starting or growing a business can feel overwhelming. Questions about structure, funding, taxes, legal protection, and long-term strategy often stop great ideas before they even begin. That's exactly why Business 101: From Foundation to Growth — Money, Law & Strategy was created — to bring clarity, confidence, and connection to our business community.

Hosted at **Halo-Halo Kitchen**, this FREE educational event brings together trusted experts in law, banking, accounting, and lending who will break down complex topics into practical, easy-to-understand strategies you can apply immediately.

Whether you are:

- Thinking about launching your first business
- Already running a small business and ready to level up
- Exploring expansion opportunities
- Or simply wanting to better understand how business and community leadership intersect

This evening is for you.

Special Highlight: 2026 VIP Tour Launch

In addition to our Business 101 session, we are honored to present the **2026 VIP Tour Launch**, in partnership with the **Honorary Consulate of the Philippines—Arizona**, under the leadership of **Arizona Honorary Consul Jenny Lynn M. Ho-Vijungco**.

We are privileged to welcome distinguished guest speaker **Adelio Angelito S. Cruz**, Consul General of the Philippines in Los Angeles, joined by **Levi Anthony B. Malaylay**.

This special segment will highlight international collaboration, economic partnerships, and exciting opportunities that strengthen ties between Arizona and the Philippines.

Adding to the excitement, representatives from **STARLUX Airlines and China Airlines** will be present with exclusive giveaways for attendees.

BUSINESS 101
From Foundation to Growth—
Money, Law & Strategy

EXPERT INSIGHTS FROM

 Jeremy Jarrett Attorney Business & Corporate Real Estate & Property Sacks Tierney	 David Pilar VP / Branch Manager Columbia Bank Business Banking & Lending	 Priscilla Chesler Certified Public Accountant Tax Planning & Financial Strategy	 Edward Henry Lago President & CEO Our Community Mortgage Business Lending & Capital Structuring
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What You'll Learn:

- ✓ Choosing the right business structure
- ✓ Smart funding strategies
- ✓ Legal protection for your business
- ✓ Tax planning & compliance
- ✓ Growth strategies for long-term success

2026 VIP TOUR LAUNCH

ADELIO ANGELITO S. CRUZ
CONSUL GENERAL OF THE
PHILIPPINES IN LOS ANGELES

MARCH 5, 2026
START FROM 5:30 - 8:00PM
AT HALO-HALO KITCHEN
3553 W DUNLAP AVE, PHOENIX, AZ 85051

VP Events: Cabrina Sampaga
602-318-5263
www.paccaz.org

SCAN TO REGISTER

What You'll Learn

This session is intentionally designed to move you from uncertainty to clarity — from foundation to growth.

◆ Building the Right Foundation

- Choosing the proper business structure (LLC, Corporation, Sole Proprietorship, and more)
- Understanding liability and personal asset protection
- Setting up your business correctly from day one

◆ Money Matters

- Smart funding and financing strategies
- Building banking relationships
- Preparing for capital access and lending opportunities

◆ Tax Planning & Compliance

- Understanding tax responsibilities
- Strategic planning to maximize profitability
- Staying compliant while positioning for growth

◆ Legal Protection & Risk Management

- Contracts and compliance essentials
- Protecting your brand and intellectual property
- Avoiding common legal pitfalls

◆ Growth Strategy

- Scaling intentionally
- Strengthening operational systems
- Creating long-term sustainability

This is not just theory — this is real-world guidance from professionals who understand the unique challenges and opportunities within our business community.

Come Early, Connect Often

We encourage guests to arrive early, enjoy delicious Filipino cuisine, and connect with fellow entrepreneurs and professionals before the program begins.

Important Food Reminder:

The kitchen and short orders close at **6:00 PM**. Please pre-order in advance at **(602) 324-9670** to ensure you don't miss out.

Event Details

Date: March 5, 2026

Time: 5:30 PM – 8:00 PM

Location: Halo-Halo Kitchen

3553 W Dunlap Ave, Phoenix, AZ

This event is FREE and open to the community. Reserve your seat today:

<https://paccaz.org/events/#!event/2026/3/5/business-101>



Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona (PACCA)

NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2026 EDITION

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<https://paccaz.org>



FINAL THOUGHTS

As we step into a new year, we are reminded that progress is never achieved alone—it is built through collaboration, shared purpose, and a commitment to uplifting one another. The stories, initiatives, and milestones featured in this issue reflect the collective effort of individuals and organizations working toward a stronger Filipino-American business community.

We extend our sincere gratitude to our members, partners, and supporters who continue to believe in PACCA's mission. Your engagement and dedication drive our work forward. As we look ahead, we remain committed to creating opportunities, fostering meaningful connections, and championing growth for our community—together, with purpose and vision.

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Our Virtual Professionals

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- **Vice President for Events:** Cabrina Le Sampaga
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SHARE YOUR STORY WITH PACCA

Every PACCA story begins with people — our entrepreneurs, families, leaders, and community builders. The moments we share, the businesses we grow, and the culture we carry forward are what truly connect us.

We invite you to submit an article, share a personal story, or highlight a business, initiative, or meaningful moment that reflects the heart of our Filipino-American community.

From milestones and community impact to cultural celebrations and quiet wins worth celebrating, your story helps shape who we are and where we're going.

✉ Send your submission to:

kristine@ourcommunitymortgage.com

LET'S CONTINUE BUILDING THE PACCA STORY — TOGETHER.

Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona (PACCA)



Stay Connected with Us!
 Follow PACCA on social media for the latest updates, events, and community highlights — and visit our website for exclusive resources and news.

Facebook | Instagram | LinkedIn
<https://paccaz.org>

