



Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona (PACCA)

NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2026 EDITION

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**ROOTED IN COMMUNITY.
RISING TOGETHER.**

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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

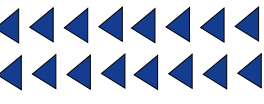
TO BE THE PREMIER RESOURCE FOR FILIPINO-AMERICAN ENTREPRENEURS, CREATING A THRIVING COMMUNITY THAT DRIVES INNOVATION, GROWTH, AND IMPACT IN THE LOCAL AND GLOBAL BUSINESS LANDSCAPE.

Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona (PACCA)



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MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

This issue of our newsletter is a reflection of something we all share, a community that continues to grow, step up, and build together with purpose.

We are pleased to welcome Managing Editor Richelle Caubang to the PACCA Newsletter Team. Her leadership strengthens not just our editorial work, but our shared commitment to telling stories that reflect who we are and what we are building as a community.

We also celebrate our newly inducted officers and members. Your commitment marks more than a transition in roles—it reflects a continued investment in service, collaboration, and community impact. PACCA moves forward because people like you choose to lead.

In this issue, our Member Entrepreneur Spotlight highlights the heart of our community. Entrepreneurs who are building businesses with resilience, vision, and purpose. Alongside these stories, we explore timely business insights, including how global shifts such as the U.S.–Iran ceasefire can influence local opportunities and challenges for Filipino–American entrepreneurs here in Arizona.

Through it all, one thing remains constant: none of this is possible without our community partners and sponsors. Your support is not separate from our mission—it is part of it. Every program, every story, and every opportunity we create is made stronger because of you.

At its core, PACCA is not just an organization, it is a shared space where people show up for one another, where stories matter, and where growth is built collectively.

Thank you for being part of this journey with us.

With appreciation and community spirit,
Kristine Bartolome



MESSAGE FROM THE 2026 PACCA STATE PRESIDENT

It is an honor to begin this new chapter with PACCA, surrounded by a community that continues to grow in strength, purpose, and unity.

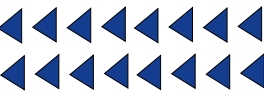
As we welcome new officers and members, we are reminded that PACCA is not defined by any one moment or title, but by the people who choose to be part of it. Every member brings something valuable to the table—ideas, experience, generosity, and a shared commitment to building something meaningful together. That collective spirit is what continues to move this organization forward.

At the heart of PACCA is community. A community that supports its entrepreneurs, uplifts small businesses, and creates space for collaboration and growth. Our members are not only building businesses—they are building relationships, opening doors for one another, and contributing to a stronger presence for Filipino–American professionals and entrepreneurs here in Arizona. As we move forward, we also remain aware of the broader world around us. Economic shifts, global developments, and changing markets remind us that adaptability and connection are more important than ever. In times of uncertainty, it is our unity that provides stability and direction.

This new chapter is an opportunity to continue strengthening what has always made PACCA special: genuine relationships, shared purpose, and a commitment to growing together. With every event, every partnership, and every member engagement, we are building something that extends beyond the present moment and into the future. I look forward to serving alongside each of you as we continue to elevate our mission and deepen our impact as a community.

With gratitude and respect,
Atty. Luan Mai





MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT EMERITUS

One of the greatest privileges of serving in PACCA has been witnessing the quiet strength of community—not just in moments of celebration, but in the everyday ways members show up for one another.

Community is not built in a single event or defined by a title. It is built in the consistent choice to support, to listen, to collaborate, and to lift others as we grow. It is found in shared introductions that turn into partnerships, in conversations that turn into opportunities, and in simple acts of encouragement that carry someone forward longer than we realize.

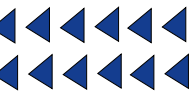
As PACCA continues to grow, what remains most powerful is not only the success of individual members, but the way that success is shared. Our entrepreneurs, professionals, and volunteers each play a role in shaping an environment where connection leads to progress and where progress is never made alone. This is what makes the PACCA community unique—it is rooted in generosity, collaboration, and genuine care for one another's growth.

Even as industries shift and the world changes around us, the foundation of community remains steady. It is what allows us to adapt, to remain resilient, and to continue building with purpose. When challenges arise, it is community that keeps us grounded. When opportunities come, it is community that helps us rise together.

Looking back, it is this sense of belonging and shared purpose that stands out the most. And looking ahead, it is this same spirit that will continue to guide PACCA forward—one relationship, one effort, and one connection at a time.

With appreciation,
Edward Lago





WELCOME TO THE PACCA NEWSLETTER TEAM

The Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona (PACCA) is pleased to welcome **Richelle Caubang** to the PACCA Newsletter Team in her role as **Managing Editor**.

Richelle also serves as a Membership Newsletter and Communications Ambassador, bringing a strong commitment to connection, clarity, and community engagement within the organization. She is the owner of Kumon of Gilbert-Lindsay & Warner and The Filipina Shop, where she continues to champion education, entrepreneurship, and cultural pride through her work and leadership.

Actively engaged in both business and community initiatives, Richelle has been a strong advocate for programs that support learning, empower small businesses, and strengthen professional networking within the Arizona Filipino-American community. Her dedication reflects PACCA's mission of building meaningful connections and fostering growth among its members.

In her role as Managing Editor of the Newsletter Team, Richelle will help guide the overall direction of PACCA's communications. Ensuring that stories, updates, and member highlights are delivered with purpose, consistency, and heart.

PACCA warmly welcomes Richelle Caubang and looks forward to the leadership, vision, and passion she brings to strengthening the organization's voice and community connection.





Global Shifts, Local Opportunities: What the U.S.–Iran Ceasefire Means for Filipino-American Entrepreneurs in Arizona

In today's interconnected world, global headlines don't just stay overseas, they shape the realities of local businesses, entrepreneurs, and communities right here in Arizona.

The recent decision by Donald Trump to extend the U.S.–Iran ceasefire has sparked renewed optimism across financial markets. U.S. stock futures rose, oil prices eased, and investors responded with cautious confidence. At first glance, it may seem like distant geopolitical news, but for members of the Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona (PACCA), the ripple effects are very real.

A Market Rebound—And What It Signals

Following the ceasefire extension, major U.S. stock indices—Dow, S&P 500, and Nasdaq—posted gains in futures trading.

This reflects a temporary easing of geopolitical tensions, encouraging investors to re-enter the market.

What this means for PACCA members:

- Increased investor confidence may improve access to capital and funding.
- Stronger stock performance can boost retirement portfolios and business investments.
- Opportunities may arise in sectors tied to innovation, tech, and services.



The Reality Behind the Optimism

While markets have reacted positively, the ceasefire is not without uncertainty. Reports indicate that Iran has not fully committed to the extension, and military activity in the region has not entirely ceased. This creates a fragile environment where conditions can shift rapidly.

For business owners, this underscores an important truth: optimism must be balanced with preparedness.

The current landscape presents a window of opportunity, but not long-term certainty.

Fuel, Costs, and the Everyday Business Impact

One of the most immediate effects of the ceasefire extension has been seen in oil prices, which dipped below \$100 per barrel. For many small and medium-sized businesses, especially those in food service, logistics, and retail, this is welcome news.

Lower fuel costs can ease operational expenses, from delivery and transportation to supply chain logistics. It also helps stabilize pricing for goods and services, allowing business owners to better plan and protect their margins.

However, the situation remains delicate. Critical global trade routes, particularly the Strait of Hormuz, are still under scrutiny. Any disruption in these channels could quickly reverse current gains and reintroduce volatility.

Turning Insight into Action: A PACCA Perspective

For PACCA members, the path forward lies in strategic, informed decision-making.

Here's how PACCA members can respond strategically:

1. Stay Financially Agile

Take advantage of favorable market conditions, but avoid overextending. Maintain liquidity in case volatility returns.

2. Monitor Supply Chains

If your business relies on imports or shipping, anticipate possible delays or cost fluctuations.

3. Leverage Growth Sectors

Tech, healthcare, and financial services are showing resilience amid global shifts, areas where many Filipino-American professionals already excel.

4. Strengthen Community Collaboration

Moments of global uncertainty highlight the importance of strong local networks like PACCA, where referrals, partnerships, and shared resources matter most.

Final Thoughts

The extension of the U.S.–Iran ceasefire has brought a temporary sense of relief to global markets, but the road ahead remains uncertain.

For PACCA members, success will not come from reacting alone, but from staying informed, adaptable, and deeply connected to the community.

Because in today's world, global change is inevitable, but with the right mindset and support system, so is growth.

PACCA Business Insights is committed to bringing you relevant, timely perspectives that help you lead, grow, and succeed.



A New Chapter Begins: PACCA Inducts Its Officers and Welcomes New Members

A spirit of pride, unity, and renewed purpose filled the room as the **Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona formally inducted its new set of officers and welcomed its newest members.** The ceremony marked not just a transition in leadership, but a powerful continuation of PACCA's mission to uplift Filipino-American entrepreneurs and professionals across Arizona.

This milestone event brought together community leaders, business owners, and supporters. Each one committed to fostering growth, collaboration, and cultural pride within the Filipino-American business community.



Welcoming New Members into the PACCA Family

Equally significant was the induction of new members, each bringing unique talents, experiences, and aspirations into the organization. Their addition signals PACCA's continued growth and its role as a thriving hub for connection and collaboration.

Joining PACCA means more than membership, it means becoming part of a supportive network that values:

- Meaningful relationships
- Business growth and mentorship
- Cultural pride and representation

As new members were officially welcomed, the room was filled with excitement for the partnerships, ideas, and successes that lie ahead.

Honoring Leadership, Embracing Responsibility

The induction ceremony symbolized more than titles and roles. It represented a deep commitment to service. Each officer took their oath with a shared vision: to lead with integrity, empower fellow members, and strengthen the organization's impact.

With a new leadership team in place, PACCA enters this chapter with fresh energy, innovative ideas, and a collective determination to expand opportunities for its members.

From seasoned professionals to emerging entrepreneurs, the diversity of leadership reflects the dynamic spirit of the Filipino-American community, resilient, driven, and forward-thinking.

Looking Ahead: A Vision for Growth and Impact

With its newly inducted officers and expanding membership, PACCA is poised for an exciting year ahead.

Plans for upcoming events, programs, and initiatives aim to:

- Support Filipino-American entrepreneurs in scaling their businesses
- Provide educational resources and networking opportunities
- Strengthen community partnerships across Arizona

The organization continues to stand as a bridge—connecting culture, commerce, and community.

ROOTED IN COMMUNITY, RISING IN LEADERSHIP

As the ceremony concluded, one message resonated clearly: PACCA's future is bright because of the people who believe in its mission.

The induction of officers and members is not just a tradition, it is a reaffirmation of purpose. It is a reminder that leadership is a responsibility, community is a strength, and together, growth is limitless.

A Celebration of Community and Collaboration

The event served as a reminder that PACCA's strength lies in its people. From the organizers and volunteers to the attendees and supporters, every individual played a role in making the induction ceremony a meaningful and memorable occasion.

Moments of reflection, inspiration, and celebration highlighted the importance of unity, especially in today's ever-evolving business landscape. Together, members reaffirmed their commitment to building not just businesses, but a legacy of empowerment for future generations.

Final Thought

In every oath taken and every new member welcomed, ***PACCA continues to build something greater than itself, a legacy of leadership, service, and shared success.***

Here's to a new chapter of impact, connection, and community.



Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona

Officers and Leadership Team for 2026 - 2027



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Kristine Bartolome
Vice President
for Membership



Cabrina Le Sampaga
Vice President
for Events



Princess Halasan
Secretary



Roxanne Angeles
Treasurer



Daniel Bartolome
PRO



Julián Gutierrez
PRO

Board of Directors



Edward Lago



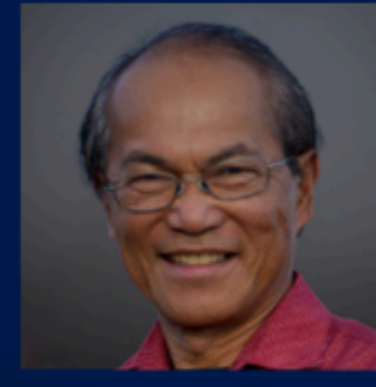
Judith Bandin



Amleth De Torres



Priscilla Chesler, CPA



Leonardo Aromin



Jason Dragon

Ambassadors



Tram Chu
Membership



Dr. Pam Zapanta
Membership



Joulienne Guda
Membership



Richelle Caubang
Membership



Nelver Nagera
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Vanessa Guido
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Government Relations



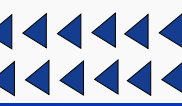
Rhia Luz
Government Relations



Vicky Perez
Learning & Development

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Philippine Holy Week & Easter | Faith, Tradition, and Community

In the Philippines, Holy Week, known as Mahal na Araw or Semana Santa, is more than a religious observance. It is a deeply rooted cultural experience that reflects the nation's faith, family values, and sense of community. As one of the most significant events in a predominantly Catholic country, this sacred week draws millions of Filipinos into reflection, devotion, and ultimately, celebration.

A Nation Pauses: The Meaning of Holy Week

Holy Week commemorates the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, beginning on Palm Sunday and culminating on Easter Sunday. It is widely regarded as the most solemn period in the Philippine religious calendar, marked by prayer, sacrifice, and spiritual renewal. Across the country, daily routines slow down. Businesses close, families travel back to their hometowns, and communities unite in shared observance. It is a time not only for faith, but also for reconnection with God, with family, and with one's roots.

Sacred Traditions That Define the Week

Palm Sunday (Linggo ng Palaspas)

Holy Week begins with the blessing of palaspas wherein woven palm fronds are carried to church to commemorate Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. These are later placed in homes as symbols of protection and blessing.

Visita Iglesia & Maundy Thursday

A cherished tradition is Visita Iglesia, where devotees visit seven churches to pray and reflect on the Stations of the Cross. This practice emphasizes sacrifice, humility, and spiritual discipline.

Good Friday: Reflection and Devotion

Good Friday is the most solemn day, marked by processions, the Pabasa (chanting of Christ's passion), and reenactments of biblical events. In some regions, dramatic expressions of faith, such as penitential rituals, highlight the depth of devotion among Filipino believers.

Communities also practice Caridad, offering food and water to procession participants—an act that reflects Filipino hospitality and bayanihan (community spirit).

Cultural Expressions of Faith

Unique traditions like the Moriones Festival in Marinduque bring the story of Christ's passion to life through theatrical reenactments and vibrant costumes, blending Catholic belief with local artistry and folklore.

From Mourning to Joy: Easter Sunday

After days of solemn reflection, Easter Sunday (Pasko ng Pagkabuhay) marks a powerful transition from grief to celebration.



One of the most beautiful Filipino traditions is the **Salubong**, a dawn ritual reenacting the meeting of the risen Christ and the Virgin Mary. A veil is lifted from Mary's statue, symbolizing the end of sorrow and the beginning of joy.

Families then gather for festive meals, often featuring beloved Filipino dishes such as lechon, pancit, and traditional desserts like binignit.



A Message for Our Community

As members of the Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona (PACCA), these traditions remind us that our heritage is not only something we celebrate; it is something we carry forward.

Holy Week and Easter invite us to:

- Reflect on our purpose
- Strengthen our faith and values
- Reconnect with our community

In both business and life, the Filipino spirit of resilience, faith, and unity continues to guide us.

Maligayang Pasko ng Pagkabuhay!

Faith, Family, and Filipino Identity

What makes Holy Week in the Philippines truly unique is how it intertwines faith with everyday life. It is not just a religious event; it is a lived tradition passed down through generations.

Filipinos observe Holy Week through:

- Fasting and abstinence as acts of discipline
- Prayer and reflection as spiritual grounding
- Family gatherings as expressions of love and unity

Even for Filipinos living abroad, these traditions remain a powerful connection to home. Whether through attending church, preparing traditional meals, or simply pausing for reflection, Holy Week continues to shape Filipino identity across the globe.

May this season bring renewed hope, purpose, and prosperity to you and your families.



Building Visibility, Empowering Growth, and Strengthening Community Through HubXpress Arizona

In every thriving community, there are individuals who quietly build bridges, connecting people, ideas, and opportunities. For the Filipino-American business community in Arizona, Jovito Soon, Owner and Founder of HubXpress Arizona LLC, is one of those individuals.

But HubXpress is not just what it appears to be.

More Than a Print & Shipping Store

At first glance, HubXpress Arizona offers essential services: professional printing, large-format banners, promotional materials, and all-carrier shipping. They also provide notary services, fingerprinting, mailbox rentals, and secure shredding. **Yet behind these services lies a deeper mission.**

Jovito and his team focus on one powerful idea: helping business owners be remembered. Because in today's fast-paced market, being forgotten is costly.

To address this, HubXpress created **Merj**, an innovative smart business card system designed to transform simple introductions into long-term client relationships –helping entrepreneurs move beyond exchanging contact information to building meaningful connections.

“HubXpress Arizona is a business growth hub disguised as a print and shipping store.”

A Unique Approach: Seeing Potential, Not Transactions

What sets HubXpress apart is its perspective.

While many businesses focus on transactions, Jovito and his team focus on transformation.

- Where others sell products, they see potential
- Where others move packages, they move progress
- Where others exchange contact details, they help build purposeful connections

This mindset allows HubXpress to serve not just as a service provider, but as a partner in growth for local entrepreneurs.

Impacting the Community Beyond Business

Jovito's work extends far beyond his storefront.

HubXpress actively supports:

- Local schools and student recognition programs
- Small businesses through affordable branding solutions
- First responders and community initiatives
- Educational workshops and networking events

Their mission reflects core Filipino values of bayanihan, service, and resilience.

“When local businesses succeed, the whole community rises.”

Milestones That Reflect Trust and Growth

In less than three years, HubXpress Arizona has achieved remarkable milestones:

- Became the only full-service shipping center in their area
- Expanded into large-format printing services
- Launched Merj, their smart business card platform
- Built partnerships with city leaders and business organizations
- Recognized as “Community Partner of the Year” for two consecutive years

Each milestone is not just a business achievement. It represents trust earned from the community.

A Family-Driven Mission

At its core, HubXpress is a family-run business fueled by purpose.

Jovito and his family are passionate about mentoring young entrepreneurs, celebrating student achievements, and helping others solve problems—whether it's designing a business card at the last minute or navigating complex logistics.

“We treat every challenge like a puzzle we're excited to solve.”



Jovito's journey is rooted in the immigrant experience of being resilient, resourceful, and deeply community-oriented.

When he and his family moved to the United States, they didn't just want to build a business. They wanted to create something meaningful not only for themselves, but for the community they would serve.

Recognizing that many entrepreneurs struggle not because they lack effort, but because they lack visibility, Jovito saw an opportunity.

“They work hard... but they are invisible.”

That realization became the foundation of HubXpress –a place where businesses don't just print materials, but position themselves for growth.

A Message to the PACCA Community

Jovito Soon's story is a reminder that entrepreneurship is not just about building a business—it's about building people, visibility, and community impact.

Through HubXpress Arizona, he continues to empower entrepreneurs to step out of invisibility and into growth—one connection at a time.

Connecting With HubXpress Arizona

📍 Website: <https://hubxpressaz.com>

📍 Merj Smart Cards: <https://merj.biz>

📍 Facebook: <https://facebook.com/hubxpressaz>

📍 Instagram: <https://instagram.com/hubxpressaz>



Celebrating Our Partners: A Heartfelt Thank You to Our Event Sponsors

A MESSAGE OF GRATITUDE

The Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona (PACCA) extends its deepest and most heartfelt gratitude to the incredible sponsors who made our recent event not only possible, but truly meaningful and memorable.

Your generosity, trust, and unwavering commitment to our mission continue to fuel the growth of our organization and empower Filipino entrepreneurship across Arizona and beyond.

More Than an Event—A Celebration of Community

This event was more than just a gathering, it was a powerful celebration of leadership, culture, resilience, and collaboration. It reflected what is possible when a community comes together with a shared vision.

Because of your support, we were able to bring together entrepreneurs, professionals, and leaders in a space where:

- Meaningful connections were built
- Ideas and opportunities were exchanged
- Stories of success and resilience were shared

OUR SPONSORS: PARTNERS IN PURPOSE

Our sponsors are more than supporters, they are champions of our cause.

Your partnership goes far beyond financial contributions. You are:

- Advocates for small businesses
- Believers in the power of unity
- Catalysts for growth and opportunity

Because of you, PACCA continues to serve as a platform that highlights innovation, strengthens relationships, and inspires future leaders in our community.

Looking Ahead, Together

As we reflect on the success of this event, we are reminded that our achievements are made possible through collective effort. Your belief in PACCA enables us to continue growing, evolving, and serving our community with excellence.

We look forward to building even stronger partnerships, creating more impactful programs, and celebrating many more milestones with you in the years to come.

THE IMPACT OF YOUR SUPPORT

Your support allows PACCA to:

- Expand programs that empower entrepreneurs
- Create meaningful networking and collaboration opportunities
- Promote Filipino-American businesses across Arizona
- Build a stronger, more connected community

Through your partnership, we are able to turn vision into action and purpose into impact.

MARAMING SALAMAT!

TO ALL OUR SPONSORS, THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED COMMITMENT AND FOR BEING AN ESSENTIAL PART OF OUR JOURNEY.

MARAMING SALAMAT FOR YOUR TRUST, GENEROSITY, AND PARTNERSHIP.

Together, we rise—rooted in community, strengthened by collaboration, and driven by purpose.



PHILIPPINE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF
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INDUCTION OF
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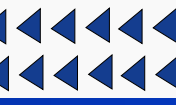
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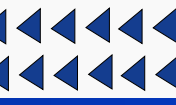
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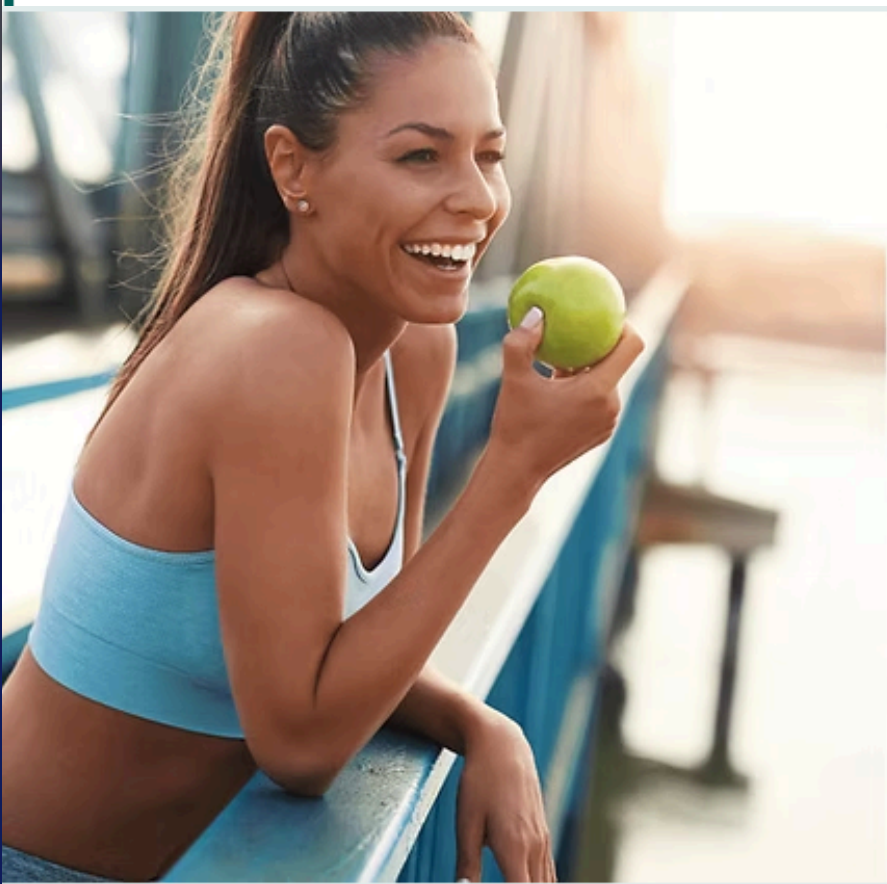


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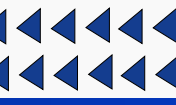
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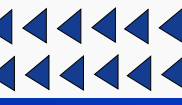
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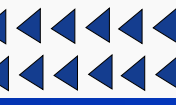
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BULLINER POOL PRE-GRADE IN ARIZONA

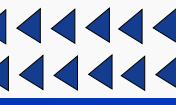


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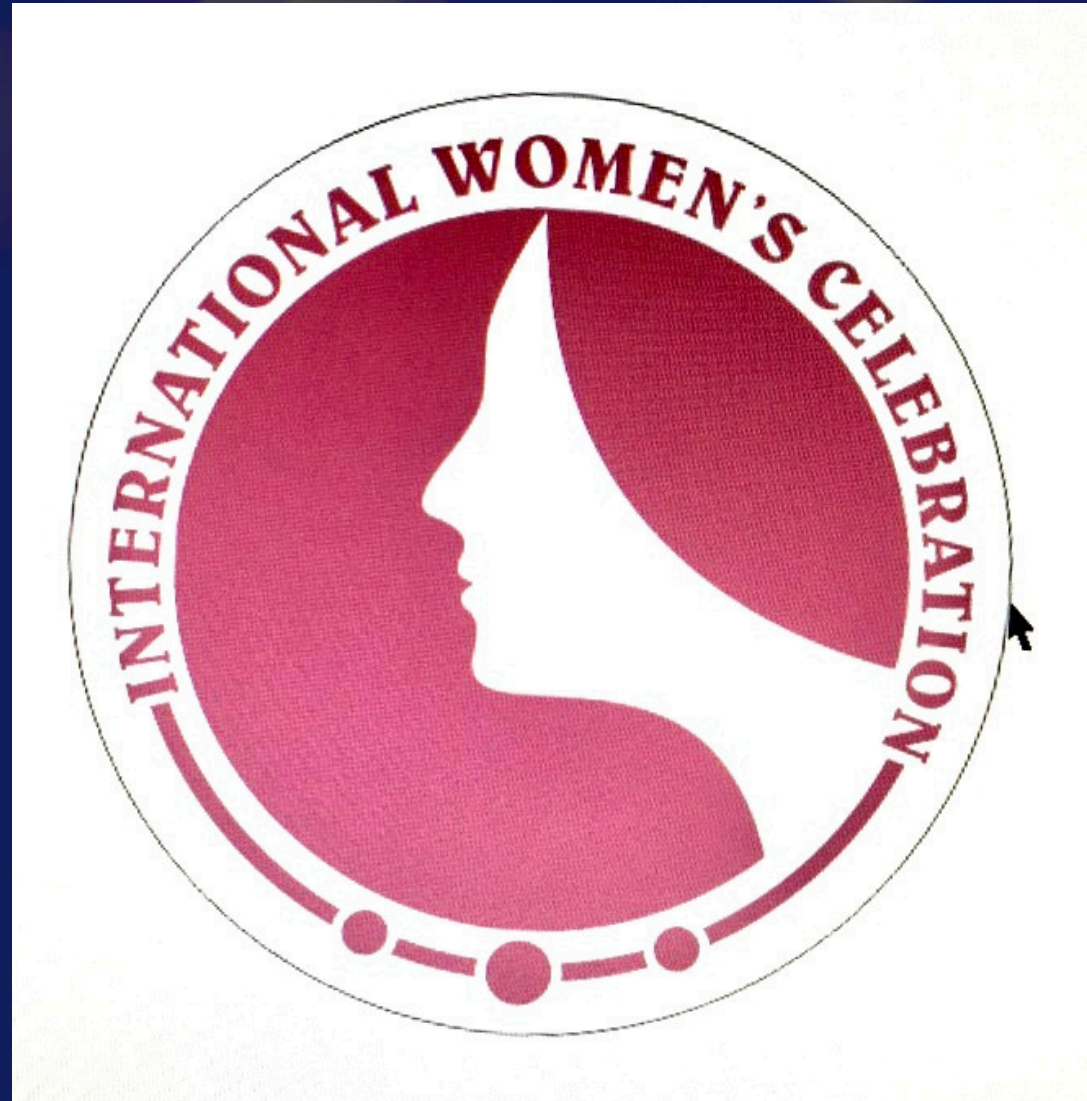
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Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona (PACCA)

NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2026 EDITION

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FINAL THOUGHTS

As we close out this March edition, we are reminded that the strength of our community lies in our shared commitment to growth, collaboration, and service. Each story, event, and milestone featured this month reflects the vibrant spirit of PACCA—a community built on connection and driven by purpose.

From empowering entrepreneurs to celebrating culture and supporting one another through meaningful initiatives, PACCA continues to serve as a bridge for opportunity and impact. For over three decades, the organization has remained dedicated to fostering relationships, supporting businesses, and uplifting the Filipino-American community in Arizona and beyond.

As we look ahead to the coming months, we are excited for what's to come—especially our upcoming Ceremonial Turnover & Induction of Officers and New Members, where we will celebrate leadership, welcome new members, and continue building a stronger future together.

Let us carry forward the spirit of bayanihan—working together, supporting one another, and creating opportunities not just for ourselves, but for the generations to come.

Thank you for being part of PACCA. Together, we grow stronger.

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2026 PACCA OFFICERS AND LEADERSHIP TEAM

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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.

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