

BAYANIHAN

"Bayanihan" literally means, "**being a bayan (village)**," and is thus used to refer to a spirit of communal unity and cooperation.

Project: Clean-up

There is one place in Chicago that is considered by many Filipino Americans as their "home away from home". This place is called Rizal Center which is named after the Philippine national hero, Dr. Jose Rizal (1332 W. Irving Park Rd., Chicago, IL 60613).

For the last five years, the facility became hostage by a litigation between two factions of the board of directors. After all is said and done, the facility's upkeep, to say the least, was neglected and is now loudly begging for a deep clean-up.

Dispute is resolved

On Friday, August 19, 2022, following a five-day bench trial that occurred in May 2022, the Circuit Court of Cook County, Hon. Clare Quish, ruled in favor of the "Clarito faction," restoring it as the "true and legitimate" Board of Trustees/Directors for the Filipino American Council of Greater Chicago (**FACGC**). Specifically, Judge Quish ruled that the Defendants, the "Gonzalez faction" and Elaine Lehman, wrongfully assumed control over the Board in January 2017 after (cont'd next page)



Come and join us!

After their hard day's work, these young people find the time to smile and invite more *kababayans* to join the *Bayanihan Volunteer Corps*. Their day started assessing the condition of the neglected facility. Thereafter, they suited their protective masks and gloves, armed themselves with mops and rags cleaning the unsightly filth covering the floors of the lobby and every room of the Rizal Center.

Join the fun of collective (bayanihan) work.

The work ahead is enormous and overwhelming but it can be done. In the words of Kaya Rial, a young volunteer who participated in reclaiming the building on the night of September 12, 2022, "the condition of Rizal Center is heartbreaking but our *Bayanihan* collective team will revitalize it and make it a safe space again"

To join the *Bayanihan Volunteer Corps*, please call Rizalina Velasco-Richmond at 773-541-1725 or email her at sallyvelascor@yahoo.com. For clean-up schedule, please call Bobby Luna at 773-524-9798 or email him at ncluna2121@gmail.com.

Dispute is resolved

(continuation) failing to adhere to the organization's constitution and by-laws, and that all actions taken by the Defendants over the last five years were invalid.

Judge Quish further ruled that Ms. Lehman invalidly self-appointed herself as claimed Executive Director, and had no authority ever residing in the Rizal Heritage Center, as she has for the past **five** years. Judge Quish's ruling enjoined Ms. Lehman both from representing the organization in any fashion or accessing organizational funds, and ordered her to vacate residence from the Rizal Heritage Center on or before **September 12, 2022**, as well as pay the organization \$105,980 in damages.

Board of Trustee/Director Chair, Jerry Clarito, stated: "We are very pleased with Judge Quish's ruling, finding what we all knew all along - that Elaine Lehman never had any authority to act on behalf of the **FACGC**. With this ruling, the rightful board is very excited to continue on with the mission of this proud, distinguished, and now nearly 70 year old organization -- serving as a uniting force for the greater Chicago Filipino community."



...we are totally in disrepair.....

Chicago, Illinois

The Filipino American Council of Greater Chicago will continue to pursue its charitable mission as set forth in the exempt purposes of section 501(c)(3) of IRS code: "The term charitable is used in its generally accepted legal sense and includes relief of the poor, the distressed, or the underprivileged; advancement of religion; advancement of education or science; erecting or maintaining public buildings, monuments, or works; lessening the burdens of government; lessening neighborhood tensions; eliminating prejudice and discrimination; defending human and civil rights secured by law; and combating community deterioration and juvenile delinquency."

<https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/charitable-organizations/exempt-purposes-internal-revenue-code-section-501c3>



Like the proverbial phoenix, the Center is rising from neglect...

