

People and Events

LOWELL ORIEL PALACPAC

In Quest for the Eagle



Photo shows Lowell at his Eagle Board of Review accompanied by Glenn Askland, former Scout Master Troop 1005, Rulan Miao (BOR member), Richard Brown Board of Review (BOR) Chair, Gary Singh (BOR member), Eric Wu, current Scoutmaster Troop 1005 and Mark Pulido (Guest Board member, who was the President of AABC School Troop in Cerritos at the time) at the High Council Room of Church of Jesus Christ of LDS.



Photo shows Council Members John C. Martins, Tony Lima and Larry R. Nelson; (front) Council Member Victor Manalo, Louis (father), Lowell Oriel Palacpac, Imelda (mother), City of Artesia Mayor Sally Zuniga Flowers, Lowell's former Scoutmaster Michael Choi, Lowell's Gahr High School teacher, Miguel Canales at receiving a Certificate of Recognition at the Artesia City Hall.

IN 1908, Lord Robert Baden-Powell founded Boys Scouts of America, an organization committed to developing character, citizenship, personal fitness qualities and an appreciation for the outdoors in young boys around the nation. Those who have participated in this organization have come out of the experience learning the importance of teamwork, social consciousness, and volunteerism, making them better prepared to become future leaders and responsible citizens actively participating in their communities.

Lowell Oriel Palacpac first joined the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) Troop 1005 when he was 11 years old. Now at the age of 17, he achieved the prestigious rank of Eagle Scout on Nov. 12, 2008. The Eagle Scout is one of the highest ranks attainable in the Boy Scouting program of the Boy Scouts of America. The prerequisite to be eligible for the Eagle Scout rank is to earn at least 21 merit badges demonstrating Scout Spirit, service, and leadership. Frequently, Lowell earned his badges in Swimming, Citizenship in the Nation and Community, Environmental Science, Emergency Preparedness, Personal Management, Personal Fitness, etc., at Summer Camps. He was also required to plan, develop, and organize a service project that would benefit another organization.

"I was born in Artesia, and I always wanted to give back to the community," he said so he eventually decided to execute a project for the benefit of his community, more specifically the Artesia Public Library, where he frequented as a child growing up.

"I researched and visited churches and schools and met with parish priest, city council members and other elected officials before deciding to landscape the garden near the entrance of the library. Later knowing that I had the support of my neighbors and the city residents, I was motivated to fulfill

the tasks I set out for myself and to exceed their expectations," he shares.

He underwent hours upon hours of planning and conference calls with the City Manager and his Scoutmaster in addition to raising funds for the tools and supplies that were key to the execution of his plan. In fact, the plants he used to landscape the library's garden came from the Palacpac residence and were planted and cared for by Lowell since he was 8 years old.

"I quickly learned that to be the most effective leader, I had to rely on the discipline and patience instilled in me by my parents (Louis Nafarrete Palacpac from Bani, Pangasinan and Imelda Oriel Palacpac from Binalonan, Pangasinan). I saw myself taking more initiative in recruiting volunteers, collecting donations and tools, and educating the neighborhood. In addition, my experiences helped me to grow as a leader and gain self-confidence. I am humbled and proud that my community is able to appreciate the completed project," he adds.

But the project was not without its setbacks and there were times when he got frustrated.

"I reminded myself of how the community would benefit. My hope was that the beauty of the garden would encourage them to utilize the library, a beautiful and safe environment for learning. This accomplishment has encouraged me to keep pushing myself in my new endeavors and to never lose sight of the bigger picture and rewards that would come at the end. As I end high school and my dreams of college take flight, I look forward to the bigger challenges that await me, which can only allow me to grow into a more confident, stronger person and to realize my full potential," he says.

All his hard work and dedication paid off as Lowell was given a special certificate of recognition twice for beautifying the Artesia Library and also for achieving the Eagle

Scout rank. Lowell, on the other hand, insists he could not have succeeded without the help of some people.

"I would like to thank the City Council of Artesia and staffs for all their help and for giving me the opportunity to be do a community project: Mayor Sally Zuniga Flowers, Mayor Pro Tem Tony Lima, and Council Members Victor Manalo, John Martins and Larry Nelson, City Manager Maria Dadian, Public work and Consultant Chuck Burkhardt, Communication Specialist Andrew Perry, and Ms. Amelia Nacu; Boy Scout of America Frontier District, LAAC, Advancement Chair Y. T. Chung, Council Advancement Committee Members, Dianne Culton and Diana Fournier; Eagle Character Board: Richard Brown, Gary Singh, Rulan Miao, Glen Askland and Mark Pulido; Troop 1005 Scoutmasters Eric Wu, Michael Choi and Glenn Askland; Nar Boribon, Nish Choksi, Scouts and parents of Troop 1005. Also to those that have given me recommendation: "Guro" Annalynn Catalasan of Team Enrique, Scoutmaster Michael Choi, Tony Manrique of All American Boys Chorus and Father Johnny Zulueta of Holy Family Church. Thank you for all their support."

These days, although he is already an Eagle Scout, he still actively participates in Troop 1005. He enjoys teaching the younger kids and is willing to help fellow scouts achieve the Eagle Scout rank. He further challenged himself by achieving the next higher rank, earning the Bronze Palm rank in February 2009.

It is true that Eagle Scouts go on to accomplish even greater feats in their future, which is also the case for Lowell. In the Fall of 2009, he plans to attend the University of California, Los Angeles, receiving scholarships and majoring in Electrical Engineering. ■

LEADERS' DIGEST

Filipinos are everywhere in America - from the East to the West coast. However, as the second largest Asian American community in America, we still have to empower ourselves to become more visible in the political mainstream. Unknown to us, fellow FilAms are making a difference across the US - as appointed and elected leaders in their respective areas. The Asian Journal Leaders' Digest aims to present to readers these leaders who have made - and continually making a difference for the Filipino American community.

Dennis Apuan

Colorado State Legislator

by JOSEPH PIMENTEL
AJPress

HE went from sweeping floors to becoming a member of the Colorado State House of Representatives.



Fil-Am Dennis Apuan is serving his first term as a member of the Colorado State House of Representative. He serves House District 17, which includes southwestern Colorado Springs and the Fort Carson military base. The 44-year-old Apuan narrowly won his seat by a margin of less than 600 votes last year. He won just over 51 percent of ballots cast in the race. His victory was the only Republican-held House seat won by Democrats in 2008.

Apuan was born in the Philippines and arrived in the US at the age of 20.

At the age of 33, he moved from Los Angeles to Colorado Springs.

He began his life in Colorado as a janitor sweeping floors at the Broadmoor Community Church. However, he moved up and became the church's business administrator.

Throughout that time, he was a relentless advocate and non-profit leader. He worked as a community organizer and a regional director for the Colorado Progressive Coalition and for four years, served as vice chairman of the El Paso County Democratic Party.

He's also been a member of the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs Diversity Strategic Planning Team, a program director and chairman

of the Pikes Peak Justice and Peace Commission, and of First Congregational Church in Colorado Springs.

Apuan also was never afraid of fighting for what he believed in.

In 2003, Apuan along with a few other activists were arrested for protesting nuclear weapons at Peterson Air Force Base. He's also participated in a number of other non-violent protests against the war in the Middle East.

He began his political career in 2008. When a state house seat was being vacated by Stella Garza-Hicks, a retiring Republican representative, Apuan decided to run for her seat.

He took a short leave of absence at the Colorado Progressive Coalition to make a run at the House.

He had no opposition in the Democratic primary. However, he faced Republican Catherine "Kit" Roupe, who had been favored to win the race, for the vacant seat in the 2008 general election.

Roupe tried to characterize Apuan as an anti-war and anti-military protester but Apuan said those were false claims.

Apuan won by a narrow margin of 600 votes.

Since being sworn in January 2009, Apuan has been kept busy. He is serving in the House Judiciary and Finance Committees.

Apuan has vowed to lower health-care costs; fostering

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