



Southern California
Chapter

FASAE SoCal Newsletter

SPECIAL EDITION **October 2012**

FSEF/FASAE SoCAL Passed Joint Resolutions Honoring Ali Alimento and Thanking The Alimento Family

On September 13, 2012, The FASAE SoCal Education Foundation (FSEF) members and Board of Directors met for a Special Session held at P.A. Arca Engineering office to pass two important resolutions in honor of our beloved colleague and friend, the late Isidoro "Ali" Alimento.

The first resolution was to rename the "FASAE SoCal Scholarship" to "ISIDORO ALIMENTO SCHOLARSHIP". It was after all Ali who spearheaded the effort to establish the FSEF as a registered non-profit tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code in October of 2004. He also served as the first President and Chief Executive Officer of the FSEF when it was officially recognized by the State until his passing in October 2011.

The second resolution was to thank the Alimento Family for their generosity in the donation of an endowment of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00) in Ali's memory. This Gift will carry Ali's continuing commitment of enabling the FSEF to facilitate FASAE SoCal in providing educational assistance by granting scholarships to deserving and qualified students enrolled in the fields of architecture, engineering, computer science, construction management, planning, surveying and other related technical disciplines among designated schools in Southern California, USA and in the Philippines.

These two resolutions were passed unanimously by the FSEF Board of Directors and subsequently ratified by the Board of Directors of the FASAE SoCal on October 1, 2012, thereby making these two significant resolutions as a Joint Resolution. These resolutions will be presented to the Alimento Family. ■

FASAE-SoCal Mission Statement

To advocate and promote the advancement and professional growth of the Filipino American Architects and Engineers for the public good.

A SPECIAL EDITION In Memory of ISIDORO "ALI" ALIMENTO A Dedicated Professional, a Great Leader, and a Loving Family Man

A Personal Reflection and Remembrance

By Peter Hsu, A.I.A.

In the spring of 1995, twenty-one founding members crossed paths to establish the beginnings of FASAE SoCal Chapter. Among these chartered members, Ali Alimento was the one colleague that stood out. His was not because we were the only alumni from UP though a consideration, but that his gentle and exemplary leadership, resourcefulness, and contributions were much evident. In time, Ali was the colleague I had the most engagement in seeking counsel and gave me an indelible impression of such privileged association. In our remembrance of Ali, I like to reflect and share a few personal and memorable experiences.

During the nascent years of the Chapter's development and National involvement over the years past, the dedicated and always solicitous Ali would travel faithfully northward on special annual events, and the once a month attendance at board meetings. In his travels, I would accompany him as he would with me and together, as traveling companions. And while the trekking up north was a distant and tiring enterprise, the drive was nevertheless a trip I looked forward to simply because to be in his company was a delight and an inspiration.

On traveling, Ali and I would share good meals; visiting our favorite restaurant that served the delectable giant clams we both enjoyed.

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FASAE SoCAL and FASAE National Leaders Expressed Their Sentiments In The Passing Of Ali Alimento

Leaders from the Filipino American Society of Architects and Engineers, Southern California Chapter and the FASAE National expressed their thoughts upon learning of the passing of Ali last October 21, 2011. The following are compilations of their expressed heartfelt sentiments:

"We were saddened by the passing of one of our great leader, the 20th President of FASAE National, '*The test of a Leader is that He leaves behind him in other men the conviction and the will to carry on*', Ali passed this test as proven by the continued success of FASAE SoCal in its endeavors" . . . *Ric Sitjar*

"As you have mentioned, Ali was a gentleman and a dedicated professional. I am honored to have known such a person with so much admirable traits and I am grateful for his leadership in uplifting the ideals of FASAE" . . . *Manny Fernandez*

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President's Message

Joseph Rigonon, Jr., P.E. Consultant

It was with pride and honor to have met and known Ali as a colleague and as one with a fatherly figure to many of us. When I first met Ali with his beloved wife Susuko and daughter Mariko, it was at the induction night of Pert Arca, the incoming 6th president of FASAE SoCal in 2003. I came to learn then that he was also from the Ilocos Region of the Philippines, a wounded World War II veteran, and to my surprise was married to a lovely Japanese lady, Suzuko. It had to be love that conquered all, I said.



In looking back and reflecting on my personal and professional relationships with Ali, I always came away with the fact that we had a relaxed, none confrontational, enthusiastic and serious engagement during our meetings and social gatherings. One trait that also stood out about his resolute intent and work as one of the framers of the FASAE SoCal Bylaws was when the Bylaws Committee tried to revised or challenged the content of the Bylaws, that he would defend against any proposed revisions by offering his defense and rationale as to why it was drafted as such.

I will miss Ali's wisdom and guiding hand. Hopefully, we can all benefit from his dedicated work and the good influences he showed when he was among us. ■

Father And Son Remember Ali

By Gil A. Dia, P.E.

Ali was a father figure to most if not all of us. His motivation and patience encouraged me greatly in my involvement with the Board of Directors. When we were in the By-Laws Committee, he meticulously guided, taught and showed me his sensitive side to strive for compromise and harmony among members.

On several occasions, he invited my wife and me to his house and showed us how bitter melon and tomato plants could be cross-pollinated without the dependence on nature's pollination but by human intervention. This knowledge really amazed me! He was not

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FASAE SoCAL and FASAE

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“This is a very, very sad day for FASAE SoCal and National and to most of us who have developed a sense of closeness with Ali. His kindness, gentleness, generosity, sense of humor, and dedication to the family and FASAE are but a few of the fine qualities that we have come to realize about this man. He will be greatly missed but will not be forgotten” *Cezar Aguilar*

“Ali epitomized the best of FASAE, and beyond that he was a man we could all be proud of as a colleague in profession. He had by his example, shown us that patience, sound argument, gentle approach and constancy are traits that get things accomplished, for in fact he had achieved much in life” *George and Josie Villareal*

“With the short time that I have been a member of FASAE SoCal Board of Directors, knowing Ali was an honor and privilege for me. He was a great and dynamic man, who truly put his heart into FASAE and our scholarship program. Following in his footsteps will be very difficult” *Larry Tortuya*

“Although Mr. Ali did not know me really, Mr. Ali has been accommodating to me, and treat me like a long time acquaintance. He is by nature a nice and very caring person, always wearing that welcoming jovial smile. He acted like a second father to all of us. God bless us by having Mr. Ali in our lifetime” *Key Ebarle*

“Ali had finished the last chapter is his life story. He leaves behind an organization that was built well on a solid rock foundation. He leaves a society strongly committed to reliability and integrity and Christian values as well. He was so instrumental in instilling this philosophy in the next generation of architects and engineers” *Frank Rodino* ■

only generous with his time but gave me some of his valued plants.

His talents, intelligence, enthusiasm and versatility, not to mention his concerns, care and love for the organization will all be missed.

By Gilbert J. Dia, E.I.T.

Whenever I saw Ali, he usually bore a smile on his face. I often looked forward to having a conversation with him during our meetings and for his advice. When it came to resolving a problem, he always approached the issue from all angles and with such detail. He was readily and willing to share his thoughts, life experiences, wisdom and guidance with me in the context of our organization. His love and dedication to FASAE SoCal was a glaring example for me to follow. I learned so much from him and trustingly, I could also give back and help many others as he did. We shall all miss you, Ali! ■

FASAE SoCal Newsletter

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Editors:

Wilfrido B. Simbol, P.E./Peter Hsu, A.I.A.

ON FOCUS

(Editor's Note: This is a reprint of the article that was originally published in the June 2001 edition of the newsletter. This special column features the achievements of our members.)

Isidoro A. "Ali" Alimento, P.E.

**Principal
Alimento Consulting Associates**

When FASAE SoCal was being organized in late 1994, the task of preparing the application papers for incorporation of the soon-to-be formed association as a California non-profit organization fell on the shoulders of Ali Alimento.



Ali brought to the organizing group years of in-depth experience in management and organizational skills, having earlier served as President of both the Los Angeles Chapter of the Construction Specifications Institute (CSI) and the Asian American Architects and Engineers Association, Southern California. In addition, Ali had just retired from his position as Vice President and General Manager of the Los Angeles Design Branch office of Pacific Architects and Engineers, Inc. (PAE) after 28 years of fruitful employment as an engineering manager. PAE is a multinational architectural and engineering firm with offices in various countries in Europe, the Middle East, Central America, Asia, and the Far East.

Ali earned his Bachelor's Degree in Civil Engineering from the University of the Philippines, at its Padre Faura campus in 1948. He would have graduated earlier but World War II and the Japanese occupation of the Philippines from 1941 to 1945 interrupted his schooling. Ali spent three of those war years as a guerilla fighter against the Japanese in northern Luzon.

Ali went back to college after the war, graduating in 1948. He successfully passed the Philippine Board of Examiners civil engineering examination in the year of his graduation. After working for three months in the Philippines as a civil engineer, Ali was offered a civil engineering position with the U.S. Army Guam Engineer District. He worked on Guam for a year when he decided to seek employment with the U.S. Army Okinawa Engineer District.

Okinawa, the southernmost prefecture of Japan, was captured and occupied by the U.S. Armed Forces in 1945. There was a huge construction program in support of the US occupying forces and the military administration of the occupied island. Ali worked on Okinawa for seven years after which he left Okinawa to go to Tokyo to work at the Tokyo office of an American architect/engineer firm.

An initially planned short assignment turned into a long and memorable 13-year employment in Japan. During that period, Ali lived on the local economy, belonged to local gun and golf clubs, interacted with the Japanese employees he supervised, and traveled a lot locally. From these experiences, he learned to appreciate the country that is Japan; he developed an admiration for the respectful ways of the Japanese people. These impressions encouraged him to marry a Japanese lady, Suzuko Umemura of Yokohama. Three children were born in Tokyo from the Filipino-Japanese couple.

In 1968, while Ali was in the employ by PAE at its Tokyo office, the company transferred him to its Los Angeles office as a company-sponsored transfer employee in recognition of his excellent service to the company. The transfer included the sponsorship and transportation of his family from Tokyo to Los Angeles. Unlike many Filipino immigrants, Ali did not have to look for a job when he arrived in Los Angeles. His job was waiting for him. Ali never left the employ of PAE from the time he joined them in 1962 in Tokyo. He worked hard on his assigned tasks, and took on positions of continuing responsibility with the company. He earned promotion from project manager to Vice President in 1976, a position he held till he retired in 1992.

During his employment with PAE, Ali was assigned as project manager for projects in Micronesia, Germany, Saudi Arabia, Guam, and Tokyo. These assignments took him on frequent trips overseas, entailing frequent stopovers in Singapore, Bangkok, Tokyo and Honolulu: Oftentimes, his wife accompanied him in his travels to Japan, Europe and Southern Asia, once on a round the world business trip.

After retirement, several architectural firms approached Ali to provide consulting services in specifications, project management, coordination review and management audits. In response to these numerous requests, he set up his own consulting firm and has been busy providing services to primarily minority-owned businesses.

Ali's children are all practicing professionals. Eric, the eldest child, graduated from UC Berkeley in Industrial Engineering, and later from USC with a Doctorate in Law. He was admitted to the California bar, and presently works with a law firm. Kenneth completed his undergraduate studies at UCLA and went to finish his Doctorate in Optometry at UC Berkeley. He is an optometrist at Kaiser Permanente; he also serves as a Clinic Director at a Laser Clinic. Mariko received her BSEE degree from UCLA and now works as a lead communication engineer at the Boeing's Space Communications Group in Torrance. ■



Ali Alimento was chosen as the recipient of the Lou Raymundo Achievement Award for 2005-2006 by the FASAE National. The award, named in honor of the FASAE founder, Lou Raymundo, represents the highest honor that FASAE can bestow upon its distinguished members. Ali is shown holding the LRAA Award plaque with wife Suzuko (on his right) and the entire FASAE SoCal delegation at the Awards night.

A Personal Reflection

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Along the way, I would strike inquisitive conversations on a wide range of topics from his knack for words which he occupied himself with crossword puzzles to sharpened the mind, to the politics of the day, religion and the affairs of the association among others. His good-natured personality often transcended any differences of views, and in my usual heated, passionate and emotive exchanges, would find his calm, soft-spoken intellect subtly engaging to further pull my strings. But in the end, however, my greatest satisfaction was when Ali would come around to be in agreement. And when that happened, there would be bursts of guffaws with victorious rants that he would gleefully enjoin and mimicked, and that was really fun.

Ali, was a modest man, who would readily acknowledge having to eat humble pie with a gentlemanly, dignified, humored and sportsman-liked fashion. He was the only one who would patiently absorb or met my occasional "youthful" petulance and irreverence with grace, for that matter with anyone. And when we were once stopped by an officer for speeding home from our national meeting, he was willing to take the fall, exchanged the violation to his name and sacrificed his pristine driving record if it may be allowed, to spare me the woes of collecting yet another ticket, this he later confided had the ticket was being issued.

Then there were the calls I placed late at nights requesting reviews of articles for his editing or questions. Without reservations he would gladly and courteously acquiesced even if it meant burning the midnight oil. For at the heart of Ali's persona was the masked strength of what he could accomplish and deliver by his unadulterated attention and dedication.

A true scholar and a gentleman who gave of his time, resources and of himself generously without so much as a whisper or whimper of complaint for being inconvenienced no matter the request, no matter the task, and no matter how many times.

And so, after 17 years of working with and knowing our late Ali up-closed, I can only extol his virtues and admire the legacy he left behind. Ali will be missed and remembered by the many that were fortunate to have crossed path with him, as I. As a close friend, if it can be said of one who was 27 years my senior, I shall miss his endeared greeting of addressing me "Don Pedro". But on that fateful

evening of October 24, 2011 when a call came from his daughter, my reactive shock before she could finish her sentence was "Oh no, don't tell me!" Saddened by the news, I raced to write with a heavy heart, to announce the death of our beloved colleague with a spontaneous abridged tribute that same night. ■

Email Announcement of Ali's Passing

(Editor's Note: The following is a reprint of the email sent by Peter Hsu to FASAE members immediately after learning of Ali's passing.)

October 24, 2011

Dear members of the FASAE family-at-large,

It is with deep sorrow and sadness that I convey to you on behalf of the Alimento family, that Ali, our most beloved and respected colleague, elder statesman and patriarch of the FASAE organization had passed away last Friday, October 21, 2011 at 6:22PM according to his daughter, Mariko Alimento Hama who called to inform me tonight at around 8:30PM of this hard news which I bear with a heavy heart and unbelief.

Many who knew Ali will always remember him first and foremost as the quiet quintessential gentleman, colleague and dedicated professional that he was. His close to two decades of invaluable and faithful services as the FASAE National President, FASAE SoCal Chapter President, Board of Adviser, Emeritus, Chairman of the FASAE SoCal Education Foundation, and the recipient of the prestigious LRAA award among other achievements were admirable and immeasurable. He was the guiding light amidst the confusing mires of the by-laws and crafted the administrative procedures as a companion to that which was lacking so as to define order and clarity just one aspect of his exceptional contribution. We shall sorely miss him, and I for one much more so for being such a close sparring and traveling partner, my counselor and comrade whom I learned and respected as a person, professional and in his service to our organization over these many years.

Let us pray for the family during these difficult times. I know Ali is in the best place now.

Peter Hsu ■



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