

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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### **El Pomar Foundation Emerging Leaders Development program announces Dennis Barcial Apuan as the 2021 Milton E. Proby Cultural Heritage Room Inductee**

Apuan to be inducted in a ceremony on August 20, 2021

Colorado Springs, CO – July 12, 2021 – Each year since 2006, El Pomar Foundation’s Emerging Leaders Development (ELD) program has recognized an ethnic minority leader in Southern Colorado in celebration of his/her civic contributions through the Milton E. Proby Cultural Heritage Induction Ceremony. This year, the honor is extended to former State Representative Dennis Barcial Apuan (1964-2020), a Filipino-American community leader and lifelong advocate for civil rights, equality and peace.

Mr. Apuan was born in Manila, Philippines before moving to the United States in 1984 and to Colorado Springs in 1997. Throughout his time in the Pikes Peak Region, Mr. Apuan was a tireless civic leader and represented a diverse constituency in southeast Colorado Springs’ 17<sup>th</sup> District during his tenure at the state house from 2009-2011. Outside of public office, Mr. Apuan served with the Pikes Peak Justice and Peace Commission, El Paso County Democratic Party, Colorado Unity, the UCCS Diversity Strategic Planning Committee and the National Federation of Filipino Americans Association.

In 2010, Mr. Apuan founded the Endowment for the Asian Pacific American Collection at the Pikes Peak Library District dedicated to building a substantial collection of books, DVDs and CDs that speak to the Asian American experience. He was awarded later that year with the Organization for Chinese Americans’ Asian American Hero of Colorado award.

Over the course of his life, Mr. Apuan founded multiple other civic ventures and organizations, including the Philippine-American Chamber of Commerce of Colorado, KCMU 93.9 Colorado Springs Community Radio/Colorado Media Justice Foundation, Colorado Springs Council for Justice and Colorado Springs Says Welcome.

As an extension of the ELD program, which helps cultivate diverse leadership potential in Southern Colorado, El Pomar established the Milton E. Proby Cultural Heritage Room at Penrose House in 2006. This room is dedicated to preserving and documenting the contributions of African-American, Asian, Hispanic/Latino and Native American individuals from Southern Colorado. Through the Milton E. Proby Cultural Heritage Induction Ceremony, ELD celebrates and honors the legacy left behind by those who embodied the ideals of civic involvement and leadership. Mr. Apuan’s image and story will be added to the Milton E. Proby Cultural Heritage Room, in the company of the 14 previous inductees: <https://www.elpomar.org/programs/emerging-leaders/milton-e-proby-room/>

**On August 20, 2021, from 5:30-7:30 p.m., ELD will memorialize and honor Mr. Apuan for this year's induction with a ceremony at El Pomar's Penrose House. The public may participate in the ceremony through a virtual program. Registrants for the online event may visit [elpomar.org/mep2021](http://elpomar.org/mep2021) to RSVP.**

**About El Pomar Foundation's Emerging Leaders Development Program**

*The Emerging Leaders Development (ELD) Program began in 2001 to help cultivate diverse leadership potential in Southern Colorado. The program convenes ethnic minority leaders in Colorado Springs and Pueblo, empowering them to engage in professional development opportunities and take on community leadership roles. ELD provides scholarships to leadership development programs and introduces participants to civic engagement opportunities such as service on nonprofit and statewide boards and commissions.*

**About El Pomar Foundation**

*El Pomar Foundation is one of the largest and oldest private foundations in Colorado. El Pomar contributes approximately \$22 million annually through grants and Community Stewardship programs to support Colorado nonprofit organizations involved in health, human services, education, arts and humanities and civic and community initiatives. Spencer and Julie Penrose founded El Pomar in 1937 with the mission to enhance, encourage and promote the current and future well-being of the people of Colorado.*

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