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Nareit Hawaii Donates \$50,000 to Support Statewide Expansion of the Filipino Community Center's COVID Vaccination Program

Next FilCom CARES Vaccination Drive Takes Place April 8 in Waipahu

HONOLULU – Mar. 31, 2021 – The Filipino Community Center, a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, is determined to see more families throughout Hawaii, especially those in the Filipino and Pacific Islander communities, get vaccinated from COVID-19. Nareit Hawaii is supporting that charitable goal with a \$50,000 donation to expand the FilCom CARES vaccination program statewide.

Edmund Aczon, Chair of the Filipino Community Center, stated, "Filipinos have been a part of Hawaii for over 115 years. Filipinos are the largest immigrant group in the state and they join the growing Hawaii-born Filipino community. Today one in four people in Hawaii are of Filipino ancestry. Filipinos make major contributions to the state but a significant number struggle economically and many face language barriers in obtaining information and services. We welcome Nareit Hawaii's support to help us reach more Filipinos to obtain needed vaccines and resources."

Aczon added that the FilCom CARES outreach to vaccinate residents, particularly those in Hawaii's Filipino and Pacific Islander communities, is essential to improving the overall well-being of Hawaii's population and restoring the state's economic strength.

Research data recently published by the Hawaii State Department of Health show that Filipino and Pacific Islander residents have contracted COVID at a higher rate than other ethnic groups in Hawaii, but are among the lowest to be vaccinated. The Filipino Community Center is intent on reversing that trend and the \$50,000 donation from Nareit Hawaii will help them fulfill that objective.

Nareit Hawaii Executive Director Gladys Quinto Marrone said, "We are honored to support the FilCom CARES vaccination program and this concerted community-wide effort to keep all families healthy and protect them from the spread of COVID-19. We strongly encourage everyone to get vaccinated as soon as possible and stop the scourge of this virus from causing so much heartache within our communities."

The next FilCom CARES vaccination program takes place Thursday, April 8, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., at the Filipino Community Center in Waipahu. Vaccinations are being provided by appointment only and can be scheduled by calling Kaiser Permanente at (808) 432-2273 or (808) 432-2260.

The April 8 program will be the third in a series of vaccination drives the Filipino Community Center is planning to organize for communities on Oahu and the neighbor islands. Other partners supporting the FilCom CARES program include the Hawaii State Department of Health, Kaiser Permanente, the Kalihi-Palama Center, and Project Vision.

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Initiated in 1991, the three-story Filipino Community Center covers 50,000 square feet on two acres in Waipahu. It is the largest Filipino Community Center outside of the Philippines. The Center's mission is to provide social, economic and education services, and to promote and perpetuate Filipino culture and customs in the state of Hawaii. For more information, visit filcom.org/center/.

Nareit Hawaii represents the interests of REITs in Hawaii and their participation in civic, community, and policy initiatives to benefit residents statewide, while also supporting community and charitable organizations that address social issues of importance. REITs are long-term property holders that own, renovate and manage affordable housing projects, commercial buildings, medical facilities, shopping centers, cell phone towers, public storage facilities, and hotels in Hawaii. For more information about Nareit Hawaii and REITs in Hawaii, please visit www.nareithawaii.com.

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