

## **New Board Chair Steve Aquino Eager to Increase Membership**

Steve Aquino is on a mission to show business owners what the Carroll County Chamber of Commerce can do for them. "The Chamber has been around for over 85 years, but we still need to educate local business owners on the value of membership," says the Chamber's newly appointed board chair.

And when it comes to member recruitment and retention, Aquino is somewhat of an expert. As a former president of the National Association of Insurance & Financial Advisors (NAIFA)-Carroll/Howard, Aquino received the organization's National Membership Award for exceeding the goal set by NAIFA for enlisting new members and retaining current ones. He also received NAIFA's 2008-2009 Jack E. Bobo Award of Excellence, a coveted honor that recognizes associations in NAIFA's federation that excel in areas critical to success and growth over a one-year period, including membership, advocacy and governance.

For the Chamber, Aquino's strategy will center on word-of-mouth advertising, which he believes is best way to drive membership. "I'm also looking forward to working closely with incoming president Mike McMullin to define the Chamber's vision and approach," he adds.

Aquino first joined the Chamber in 2005. "The Chamber has a great reputation in the community and as a business owner, I wanted to be a part of it," says Aquino. Two years later, he was appointed to the board and has since served on the Finance, Legislative and Corporate Challenge Committees. Most recently, he was appointed chairman elect. "I personally have benefited tremendously from all the networking and educational opportunities the Chamber offers, and I want to make sure others reap those benefits as well," he says.

Aquino is president and co-founder of Aquino & Wolpoff Financial Group, LLC, in Westminster, which provides financial planning and educational services to businesses and individuals. In 2009, Aquino & Wolpoff was one of a small group of businesses to receive the Chamber's prestigious Business of the Year Award. Aquino and his business partner Charlie Wolpoff also host the "Carroll County Buzz" on WTTR/1470 AM every Wednesday. Aquino's term runs from January through December 2011. He replaces outgoing board chair Nancy Lynch.

*Story by Theresa Fletcher, Carroll Hospital Center  
Public Relations Committee*