



ORGANIZATIONAL STATEMENT

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NFALA Mourns the Loss of San Francisco Public Defender Jeff Adachi

The National Filipino American Lawyers Association (NFALA) grieves with family and friends of San Francisco Public Defender Jeff Adachi. Jeff was a brilliant lawyer and zealous advocate for the poor, marginalized, and oppressed. His principles of fairness and justice were shaped by his own family's experience with the ugly legacy of Japanese American internment — his parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents were among the over 100,000 people of Japanese ancestry detained by the U.S. government in concentration camps during World War II. Accordingly, Jeff demanded outcomes based on facts — not stereotypes or prejudices. His parents taught him to be a man of action, and to never back down when fighting for justice and the rights of others.

Jeff dedicated his life to public service, joining the San Francisco Public Defender's Office 33 years ago shortly after graduating from UC Hastings College of Law. He was a rising star and quickly gained the reputation for being a relentless trial warrior. He swiftly came up the ranks from misdemeanor line deputy to senior felony attorney and became the Chief Attorney before he was elected as Public Defender in 2001.

"Jeff ran a world-class office, nationally recognized as the 'gold standard' for public defender offices," said Filipino Bar Association of Northern California (FBANC) past president Abigail Rivamonte Mesa, who worked at the San Francisco office for a decade. "He believed that people of color and the most marginalized deserved the best attorney that money can't buy. He invested so much of his own time and efforts mentoring young attorneys to become excellent trial warriors."

Jeff touched the lives of countless public defenders nationwide and was a mentor to many NFALA members. "He believed in me ever since I was a young intern. He was there to swear me in when I passed the bar, and has always been supportive of my work and commitment to LGBTQ issues and was a true ally for our community," said Joanne Badua of the Hawaii Filipino Lawyers Association (HFLA).

We will continue to mourn the loss of our friend, champion, and brother and reflect on the impact that he has made in our community.

NFALA is the national voice for the Filipino-American legal profession. It advocates for justice, civil rights, and equal opportunity for the Filipino-American community. It cultivates high standards of integrity and professionalism among its members and strives for the advancement and success of Filipino-Americans within the profession. NFALA is a family, comprised of members throughout the United States, with the shared goal of increasing its national growth, impact, and visibility while also celebrating its members' cultural heritage.

To learn more about NFALA, visit nfala.com, like us on [Facebook](#), and follow us on Twitter ([@NFALA1](#)) and Instagram ([@filamlawyers](#)).



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