

BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY

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Government officers and employees are oftentimes called public servants. This is an appropriate phrase since these government people continuously provide good service to the public. Just recently, two public servants who are both Certified Public Accountants (“CPAs”) went beyond the call of duty.

Bureau of Customs (“BOC”) Deputy Commissioner Arturo Lachica and Bureau of Internal Revenue (“BIR”) Regional Director Jonas Amora were killed in separate ambushes by unidentified murderers. Deputy Commissioner Lachica was shot on November 17 while on his way home from a conference in the BOC. Director Amora was killed in the early morning of November 21 while on his way to his BIR office in Makati.

I would say that both are dedicated public servants. I do not know personally Deputy Commissioner Lachica other than what I have read from news accounts. Prior his work at the BOC, Lachica served as deputy executive director of the Career Executive Board in 2006 and he also worked at the Civil Service Commission for 6 years. He hails from Isabela in Basilan.

I personally know BIR Director Jonas. It was in 2009 when I was first introduced to Jonas. I was then recently appointed as the BIR Commissioner. On one occasion, the regional director of the BIR in Quezon City introduced his assistant director Jonas to me. His boss was very enthusiastic in praising Jonas as his work horse and recommended Jonas to be promoted if the occasion fits it. I immediately sensed the validity of the good words about Jonas by his boss and since that time, I have been following the progress of his BIR career. However, due to my short stint as BIR Commissioner, I was not able to promote him to regional director, a position to which he was appointed to in the Aquino administration.

Jonas comes from Anda, Bohol and rose from the ranks starting as a BIR examiner to become the regional director in Quezon City then subsequently in Makati. Jonas performed well in these two postings where he consistently attained his tax goals and interacted well with his personnel and taxpayers. Jonas was also assigned by the BIR leadership several special assignments in the area of information technology and ISO standardization.

Over the past recent years, I occasionally would drop by in the BIR Makati office of Director Jonas, even without any appointment. He would gladly welcome me on these visits and we would have long talks of

anything under the sun. We frequently talked about how he can improve the services and performance of his office. He truly was passionate about what he can do as a public servant for the BIR and for the taxpayers. Jonas was that kind of tax collector who believed that treating the taxpayers well and fairly would go a long way in his effort of collecting taxes for the government. He also was dedicated towards uplifting the state of his subordinates and was always focused on their welfare. For the first time, I met his wife and children during the wake and I immediately felt their deep love for and painful loss with the passing of Jonas. To the family of Jonas, I extend my deep hearted condolence.

To these two CPA colleagues of ours, we thank you for your services beyond the call of duty.

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This column accepts contributions from accountants, especially articles that are of interest to the accountancy profession, in particular, and to the business community, in general. These can be e-mailed to boa.secretariat@gmail.com