TOM HOM INTERVIEW

Question: The Chinese translation project of your book *Rabbit on a Bumpy Road – A Story of Courage and Endurance* is a collaboration between you and the Confucius Institute. Could you talk about the collaboration?

Tom Hom: My background is Chinese-American. I worked with Dr. Lily Cheng, Managing Director of the Confucius Institute at San Diego State University, on some of the issues in the City of San Diego for many years. She was instrumental in assisting me in translating the title of my book into Chinese and wrote a brief review of the book after she read it.

Question: How do you collaborate with the Confucius Institute to translate the book into Chinese?

Tom Hom: Well, in talking to Dr. Cheng, we concluded that there was a lot of interest in how Western Culture and Chinese Culture blend. I’m a byproduct of this, and my book shares that background. Consequently, Dr. Cheng encouraged me to have my story translated into Chinese by the Confucius Institute. We periodically meet to discuss the progress of the book’s translation, its distribution, and how it will be used by students.
Question: The Confucius Institute's mission is to promote Chinese language and culture. Coming from a Chinese-American background, what do you think of this mission?

Tom Hom: I think it is a wonderful mission. Today, many public and private schools are teaching Chinese and Chinese culture. That never existed 10-15 years ago. I have several non-Chinese friends learning Chinese. As a matter of fact, a fifth of the languages spoken in the world today is Chinese. As a Chinese-American, I am happy to see there's been a dramatic change and this momentum of interest is happening all over the country.

Question: And as for your book, after the Chinese translation gets published, what do you hope that the Chinese readers can learn from your experience?

Tom Hom: I think that despite the discrimination that Chinese-Americans of my generation experienced, we and other minorities have come a long way. Many changes to correct discriminatory laws have been made over the course of many years. I always believed that the world has too many good people to allow injustice, and that is hopeful.
Question: I also learned that we are going to have a Tom Hom lecture series led by the Confucius Institute. Could you tell us what the Tom Hom’s lecture series is about? And what are your thoughts on that?

Tom Hom: I’m honored. I imagine it may be a series of lectures that share the journey of Chinese in America. I think it’s important for all people to understand each other for positive international relations.

Question: The Confucius Institute will have many cultural events in San Diego. Would you support these events? How would you like to support CI in the future?

Tom Hom: Yes. I’ve always supported the San Diego Chinese community and will continue to do so, including those sponsored by the Confucius Institute such as the Annual Moon Festival. My wife and I are very involved in sharing Chinese culture with our wider diverse community. American people want to know more about the world’s largest population. I consider working with the Confucius Institute a privilege and I look forward to future opportunities to strengthen our relationship.