



AABA Newsletter

WWW.AABA - BAY.COM | JULY 2006

AABA thanks the following sustaining members of 2006!

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- Edward Chen
- David Chiu
- Thomas C. Chow
- Rosemary Fei
- Samuel Feng
- Kevin Fong
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- Joel Hayashida
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- Ann Nguyen
- Scott Nonaka
- Rosemarie Oda
- Eugene Pak
- Paul Perdue
- Edwin Prather
- Garner Weng
- Darryl Woo
- Franklin Yap
- Stanley Young



David Chiu, AABA President

I hope everyone had a great July 4th, and that your summers are going well. We have quite a bit to celebrate, and a lot is going on. The highlights:

AABA JUDICIAL CANDIDATES WIN! A few weeks ago, AABA had a great Election Night, as two AABA-endorsed judicial candidates came in first in their respective campaigns. Judge Lillian Sing won her bid to rejoin the San Francisco Superior Court, and Dennis Hayashi came in first in a field of 6 to qualify for a November runoff for an Alameda Superior Court seat. Lillian is still retiring her campaign debt, and Dennis will need continued assistance in his runoff, so please visit www.lilliansing.com and www.dennishayashi.com to help.

NEW ELECTIONS COMMISSIONER! Former AABA President Victor Hwang was appointed by Public Defender Jeff Adachi to the San Francisco Elections Commission; read more in this newsletter. As I mentioned in my last President's Report, this year, AABA's priority is to increase the low representation of Asians on local commissions that have a critical role in public sector governance. If you are interested in a commission, let me know, so we can assist you and track AABA applicants.

AABA SUMMER RECEPTION! On Thursday, **July 13th**, we will be hosting AABA's Annual **Summer Law Clerk Reception** and the kick-off of AABA's new Attorney(-to-Attorney) Mentorship Program, thanks to our Employment Committee and the sponsorship of AABA law firm partners. All attorneys and law students are welcome! Read this newsletter for more details.

DO GOOD AND BARBECUE! Please join our Community Services Committee and AABA attorneys at a San Francisco Chinatown clean-up work-a-thon with the Chinatown Community Development Center on Saturday, July 15th. We promise a good time, good service and good barbecue. Read the article in this newsletter and RSVP.

WANT TO BE AN AABA COCHAIR? Due to recent job transitions and moves, we are looking to recruit one new CO-CHAIR for the Membership, Media and Website Committees. For those of you who have been interested in getting involved in AABA, please email me at david.chiu@grassroots.com.

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AABA Past President Victor Hwang appointed to the San Francisco Elections Commission

By Edwin Prather, AABA President-Elect

On June 15, 2006, former AABA President and community leader Victor Hwang was sworn in as the newest member of the Elections Commission for the City and County of San Francisco. The Commission has policy-making authority and oversight of all public, federal, state, district, and municipal elections in the City and County of San Francisco. The Commission is also charged with setting general



policies for the Department of Elections and is responsible for the proper administration of the Department subject to budgetary and fiscal provisions.

The Public Defender of San Francisco and another former AABA President, Jeff Adachi, made the appointment earlier this week. "Victor Hwang has spent his career serving under-resourced and underserved communities and he will bring his expertise in the areas of civil and voting rights to the Elections Commission," Jeff said. "I know that he will do an excellent job in ensuring that the elections process is fair, efficient, and accessible to all, and supporting the important work of the Elections department and its director."

A career dedicated to public service: Victor is the managing attorney of Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach, a community-based law office, providing legal services to the Asian Pacific Islander community. Prior to joining API Legal Outreach, Victor served as an attorney at the Asian Law Caucus where he directed its Voting Rights/Redistricting Project. Victor was also a deputy public defender in Los Angeles and is infamous for a closing argument in which he held up his client's photo and screamed "this case is about Rodney King," even though the case was not about Rodney King and even though the court had admonished him not to. His client was acquitted. Victor has received several award and accolades including notably, the AABA Joe Morozumi Award for Exceptional Legal Advocacy in 2000 and was named a "local hero" by both the Chinese World Journal in 2005 and by the San Francisco Bay Guardian in 2004.

A lack of Asian Americans on San Francisco Commissions: Victor is one of only a handful of Asian Americans serving the city as a commissioner. While

other AABA members also sit on commissions — AABA President David Chiu (Small Business Commission), Board Member Emi Gusukuma (Ethics Commission), and Ivy Lee (Immigrant Rights Commission) — but overall, Asian American representation on these committees is ridiculously low. On the whole, most commissions have none or one Asian American. According to SFGov.org, thirteen city

commissions, including the high-profile Police Commission, have no Asian Americans. Twenty-two other commissions have only one Asian American and many whose terms are ending this year. To say that the racial composition of the city's commissions do not reflect the diversity of San Francisco is an understatement.

Diverse commissions enhance city government. Asian Americans on commissions enhance city government. This is not to imply that somehow Asian Americans represent a segment of the population that has different issues than other citizens; that would fly in the face of the need for fair and objective, honest and impartial commissions. Rather, Asian Americans living in San Francisco (comprising approximately 33% of San Francisco's population) need to feel as if their city government understands and is sensitive to the vast number of problems and concerns faced by Asian Americans and that city government does not preferentially identify problems and concerns faced by a different segment of the population. Based on the number of Asian Americans currently serving on city commissions, it feels as if we have little voice in this process.

AABA has not been silent about this issue. AABA leaders met with Mayor Gavin Newsom in May and presented a number of issues facing Asian Americans in San Francisco. AABA highlighted, and Mayor Newsom shared his concern for, the lack of Asian Americans on city commissions. Mayor Newsom assured AABA that more Asian Americans would be appointed to commissions in the coming months and specifically invited more Asian American lawyers to apply. If you have the interest please do so.

AABA is proud to recognize Victor's achievement and the achievements of all of our AABA members serving on San Francisco commissions.

*Call for AABA Volunteers
to Lend a Helping Hand in
San Francisco's Chinatown:*

**KICK-OFF COMMUNITY
SERVICE WORK-A-THON
and BARBEQUE:**

**SATURDAY, JULY 15, 2006
9 am -1 pm**

Please join the Community Services Committee on Saturday, July 15th from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm for our kick-off event in partnering with the Chinatown Community Development Center (CCDC) to help better the living conditions of residents at the Ping Yuen Public Housing Development in San Francisco's Chinatown.

CCDC is committed to improving Chinatown's quality of life and ultimately, aims to nourish positive and healthy individual development and build a new generation of community leadership for San Francisco. AABA's Community Services Committee is excited at the opportunity to share in CCDC's commitment to the community and to make a difference in this meaningful way.

We need your help and show of support on July 15th in projects ranging from gardening to cleaning up the alleyways and buildings. We will be working side by side with other volunteers, many of whom will be youths of low-income families from local high schools, so it will be a good opportunity for us to reach out to high school students and make a connection. We will also co-host a fun-filled and entertaining BBQ in the early afternoon for all volunteers.

If you would like to join us for this worthwhile Community Services Event, please email CSC co-chair Dorothy (Dot) Liu at dliu@hansonbridgett.com or feel free to also contact co-chairs Jason Lee and Ruth Ann Castro. We look forward to seeing you there!

**AABA CIVIL RIGHTS
COMMITTEE 2006-07
MEETING DATES**

All dates are Thursdays, 7pm -
location (S.F.) to be announced

August 3

Panel on Human Trafficking

October 5 (date subject to change)
Forum on Criminal Justice & the API
Community

November 2

Panel on Diversity in Education

February 1, 2007

Panel on Deportation & the Impact on
APIs

**CALENDAR OF
UPCOMING EVENTS**

July 13 Summer Law Clerk
Reception at Yank Sing
restaurant in San
Francisco (Rincon Center
location)

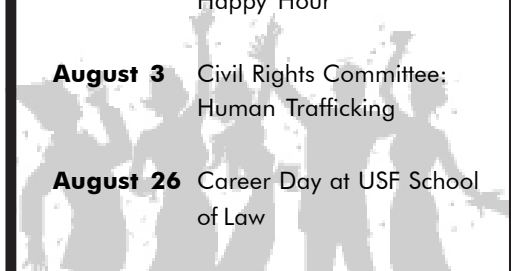
July 15 Community Services
Committee Chinatown
Work-a-Thon

July 26 Public Interest Student
Attorney Mixer

July 27 Civil Rights Committee
Happy Hour

August 3 Civil Rights Committee:
Human Trafficking

August 26 Career Day at USF School
of Law



Lawyer turned Musical Composer Has Eyes Set on Broadway

For Jay Kuo, writing a legal brief is like writing music

By Michelle Jew, Newsletter Committee Co-Chair

"Writing a song is not that different from writing an excellent appellate brief," Kuo said. "You start with more material than you need and other people look at it and you edit, edit, and edit until it sparkles and shines."

Kuo hopes his new musical, "Insignificant Others" is his ticket to the sparkle and shine of Broadway. "Insignificant Others," a romantic comedy which follows the stories of five friends who move to San Francisco from the Midwest, opens on **July 13th** at The New Conservatory Theatre Center in San Francisco. Tickets (\$15) are still available at the box office. This is the second original musical by Kuo, who started playing the piano when he was 3 years-old.

"My mother use to have to pull me off the piano. She only let me practice two hours a day because she didn't want me to become a musician," Kuo said.

When Kuo was 11, he started writing music and wrote his first musical in high school. Despite his love for music, Kuo didn't initially pursue a career in music. Instead, Kuo majored in political science at Stanford and made music his hobby. At Stanford, Kuo wrote and produced his first musical "Upwardly Mobile" in his junior year. The play was a hit, selling out its entire run. He also produced several plays and musicals, including *Evita*, which Kuo said was the first spring musical to make money at Stanford.

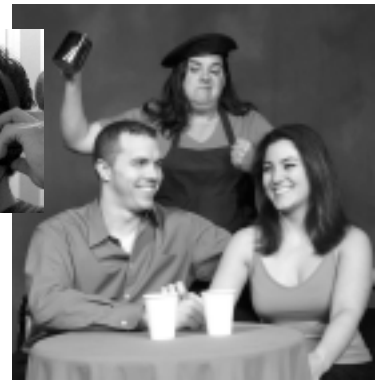
"Music was always something I wanted to do full time, but I wasn't sure how to make it work," Kuo said. "It wasn't the traditional way of making a living. I couldn't figure out how to make a living doing it."

Kuo continued writing music, even as a law student at Boalt Hall. He put on a musical review about the law called the "AmJur Show." Kuo said he would gather the upperclassmen in the assembly room by telling them he was going to pass out AmJur outlines. Instead, the upperclassmen were treated to a musical. Kuo also started penning the songs for "Insignificant Others" during law school.

"I started writing songs about the romantic problems my friends were having. It was such a mess. I was putting their stories to music. It was just a creative outlet," Kuo said. "I was more focused on doing well in school, and being a good Asian son."

After law school, Kuo put his music writing aside and went to work as a litigation associate at Howard Rice Nemerovski Canady Falk & Rabkin and at and Kecker & VanNest, LLP. At Howard Rice, Kuo argued one of the first "Don't ask, Don't Tell" challenges at the 9th Circuit in 1996.

"I loved being a lawyer. It was very theatrical in a sense. You have to be on stage for people," Kuo said. "The law was tapping into things I like in that you have to be creative and be a show man."



AABA Hosting MCLE Events

By Rita Hao, Education Committee Co-Chair

AABA is now approved by the State Bar to provide MCLE credit for the educational programs that we offer. For those of you with last names between the letters A-G, you may want to take note of the programs AABA is offering, before your State Bar MCLE deadline of Feb. 1, 2007.

The Education Committee is working with other AABA committees and APA community groups to offer credit for the continuing education programs they are offering. For instance, the Employment Committee will be offering MCLE credit to all attorneys giving presentations at their Career Day event for current law students on August 26, 2006; please contact Isabel Choi (ichoi@hansonbridgett.com) if you're interested in participating.

On May 9, 2006, the Education Committee offered MCLE credit for participants attending a well-attended and highly-informative panel on protecting immigrant rights in the current political climate, sponsored by the Asian Law Caucus. We will also be working with the Legal Aid Society-Employment Law Center to offer credit for its Elizabeth Cabraser Brown Bag Lunch Summer Lecture Series.

We also expect to offer MCLE credit for events sponsored by the Community Services Committee, the Civil Rights Committee, the In-House Committee, the Judiciary Committee, and the Practice Development Committee.

If you are interested in hosting an educational event, please don't hesitate to contact the AABA Education Committee. We can be reached at:

Rita Hao, committee chair, ritahao@earthlink.net
 Brian Kim, committee member, briank@mltsf.com
 Elizabeth Loh, committee member,
 eloh@truckerhuss.com

Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach (APILO) invites AABA members to the following training session at Morgan Lewis' San Francisco Office.

Representation of Victims of Human Trafficking

Thursday, July 20, 2006, 12:00 - 1:30 p.m.

Conference Room 2808

Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP

One Market, Spear Street Tower, San Francisco, CA 94105

(Bring your lunch! Drinks and cookies will be provided.)

Represent victims of human trafficking in obtaining immigration relief through the T visa process. People are recruited from all around the world and then exploited through forced labor. T visa applicants are required to cooperate with an investigation or prosecution of a case, so representation will also involve interaction with law enforcement investigators and prosecutors, ranging from one interview to several extended interviews. API Legal Outreach is the primary legal services provider for trafficked people from all parts of the world in the Bay Area.

Please RSVP to Patricia S. Kim at pskim@morganlewis.com

Direct Phone Number: 415.442.1306

Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach is a community-based, social justice organization serving the Asian and Pacific Islander communities of the Greater Bay Area. Founded in 1975, APILO's mission is to promote culturally and linguistically appropriate services for the most marginalized segments of the API community. APILO's work is currently focused in the areas domestic violence, violence against women, immigration and immigrant rights, senior law and elder abuse, human trafficking, public benefits, and social justice issues.

For information about human trafficking and pro bono representation, please contact Kavitha Sreeharsha at ksreeharsha@apilegaloutreach.org

Civil Rights Committee

By Juna Kim, Civil Rights Committee Co-Chair

On June 22, 2006, the Civil Rights Committee held its first meeting and invited Sheila Chung to discuss immigration reform. Sheila Chung is currently the founding Director of the Bay Area Immigrant Rights Coalition (BAIRC) and she also worked at the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, where she researched public policy developments affecting California's Latino population.

Sheila provided an overview of the immigration bills (as proposed by the House and Senate), and her thoughts on the recent mobilization of Latinos and other ethnic minorities in opposition to these bills. Sheila also shared her recent experience at the U.S. – Mexico border where she witnessed the extreme conditions that immigrants are undertaking to enter the United States.

The Civil Rights Committee discussed that these issues related to "illegal" immigration cannot be characterized simply as "lack of border enforcement" or "labor shortage" and should one of these problems be addressed by a "wall at the U.S. – Mexico border" or a "guest worker program" it would not alleviate the number of people entering the U.S. undocumented. Lastly, Sheila suggests that for immigration reform to succeed, it needed

to be rooted in four points: (1) Family Unification; (2) Civil Rights; (3) Legalization; and (4) Worker's Rights.

What can you do? The Civil Rights Committee will be further developing a position letter on this issue. We hope to reach out and to other Asian community groups and Asian media groups to further educate the community. If you are interested in participating, please contact Juna Kim at jkim@vanlevylaw.com or Jenny Chang at jchang@aclu.org

A special thank you to Charles Jung for coordinating the speaker for this event, Eumi Lee of Hastings College of the Law for hosting the event, and Chen-Wei Lee (2L at Hastings).

The Civil Rights Committee also took a position to support AB 2227. AB 2227 proposes to create an independent commission of interpreters and interpreter education experts to advise the Judicial Council and the Legislature on the recruitment and certification of court interpreters. The Civil Rights Committee agreed that there is a shortage of interpreters to provide access to the non-English speaking communities and that there is a great need for court interpreters in order for all California residents to gain access to justice.

Employment Committee

By Reichi Lee, Employment Committee Co-Chair

The **19th Annual Summer Law Clerk Reception** is right around the corner! We hope you will join us on **July 13, 2006 at Yank Sing restaurant in San Francisco** (Rincon Center location: 101 Spear Street) to celebrate this year's AABA summer grant recipients and mingle with fellow attorneys and law students. All attorneys and law students are welcome. There is no cost to attend and no RSVP required. The main reception is from **6:00 – 8:30 p.m.** There will be a pre-reception meet and greet from **5:00 – 6:00 p.m.** for those attorneys participating in or would like to find out more about the new **Attorney Mentorship Program**. If you have any questions about the Reception, please contact Ivana Lee at ilee@wsgr.com or Reichi Lee at reichilee@yahoo.com. We hope to see you there!

Mark your calendar for **AABA Career Day on August 26, 2006 from 8:15 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.** at **USF School**

of Law. Career Day is a great opportunity for law students to find out more from experienced attorney panelists on how to land a job in the public and private sectors. Students will also have a chance to brush up on their interviewing skills in one-on-one 30-minute mock interview sessions with an attorney. Lunch will also be provided. Please look for more details on the AABA web site (www.aaba-bay.com) in the coming weeks for a detailed breakdown of the schedule.

In the meantime, we need attorney volunteers to help conduct the mock interview sessions. Each year, we receive feedback from students who comment on how helpful the mock interviews are in preparing them for the job search process. The success of this event would not be possible without our attorney volunteers who generously share their time and insight. We provide attorneys with student resumes and sample interview questions ahead of time. If you are an attorney and would like to volunteer as a mock interviewer for one or two 30-minute interview sessions, please contact Reichi Lee at reichilee@yahoo.com or Isabel Choi at sichoi@usfca.edu.

*AABA Civil Rights Committee
invites you to a
Public Interest Student Attorney Mixer*

Medjool Rooftop Bar
2252 Mission Street, San Francisco, CA 94110

Wednesday July 26, 2006 6:00 PM

*For questions, please contact Kavitha Sreeharsha
ksreeharsha@apilegaloutreach.org*

**Lawyer turned Musical Composer Has
Eyes Set on Broadway** continued from page 4

Kuo didn't start writing musicals again until 2004.

"I went through a break-up and fell in love with someone. This is corny," Kuo said, while laughing. "All of those emotions needed a place to go so I started writing songs. It was a very personal musical journey."

Kuo said it took a year of writing music continuously to put "Insignificant Others" together. In May 2005, Kuo did an informal stage reading of "Insignificant Others." Kuo received positive feedback from the performance. He later received a cash grant to produce "Insignificant Others" into a musical. With Kuo's new found success on the musical scene, he quickly learned balancing music and the law was a tough challenge.

"Trying to produce a musical and work full time as a lawyer was pretty demanding. It was very draining on me," Kuo said. "I started thinking why I was getting up in the morning, and the real answer was because of the musical. The law was feeling a little stale. By comparison, writing musicals was so much more interesting."

With the law behind him, Kuo is now concentrating on writing musicals and pursuing his dream of one day making it to Broadway with one of his plays – although he will continue to pay his bar dues. He is currently working on his second commercial production, "Homeland," which is about immigration, abortion and interracial dating. Thanks to the law, Kuo said he doesn't have to go through the whole "starving artist routine."

What does Kuo advise other lawyers who want to leave the law for a different career: "Have a passion and no matter what it is, follow it. Don't look back and do what you need to do."



CORDIALLY INVITES YOU TO THE

**AABA 19TH ANNUAL
SUMMER LAW CLERK RECEPTION**

RECOGNIZING SUMMER ASSOCIATES AND LAW CLERKS IN THE S.F. BAY AREA
AND HONORING AABA'S 2006 SUMMER GRANT RECIPIENTS
FOR THEIR DEDICATION TO COMMUNITY SERVICE
AND CLIENT ADVOCACY

THURSDAY, JULY 13, 2006

**5-6 PM – ATTORNEY MENTORSHIP PROGRAM:
PRE-RECEPTION MEET & GREET**

If you have been assigned a Mentor or Mentee, come meet them! If you have not been assigned
a Mentor or Mentee, come join us and find out more about how you can get involved.

6-8:30 PM – MAIN RECEPTION

Yank Sing Restaurant – Rincon Center Location

101 SPEAR STREET (AT MISSION STREET)

SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94103

We hope you can join us!

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT
BICH LEE at relchil@york.com OR TWAN LEE at lee@york.com

**THE UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO
SCHOOL OF LAW** is seeking to fill one or two

positions on its full-time faculty for Fall 2007. Although the School welcomes applicants with other teaching interests, applications from those with interests in the areas of commercial law, creditors' and debtors' rights, or estates and trusts are particularly encouraged; beginning and experienced teachers will be considered. Applicants should have an excellent academic record, experience in the legal profession and a record of, or the promise of, achievement as a teacher and scholar. Applications from minority group members, women and others whose background or interests will contribute to the diversity of the faculty are encouraged. Hiring will occur by August 2006. Contact: Professor John Adler, Chair, Faculty Appointments Committee, USF School of Law, 2130 Fulton Street, San Francisco, CA 94117. E-mail: adlerj@usfca.edu

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