



ASIAN AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION
of the Greater Bay Area

AABA Newsletter - April 2017

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President's Message: A Call to Action

Thank you to our sponsors, host committee, honorees, and attendees who made the Asian American Bar Association (AABA) 41st Annual Dinner such a memorable evening. We were inspired by Khizr Khan's story about a letter from fifth-graders, Chief Justice Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye's letter condemning immigration arrests in

California courthouses, Judge Lucy Koh's powerful images of Auschwitz and the Korematsu coram nobis legal team, Kiran Jain's remarks on the vital role of local leaders, and Jennifer Liu's reminder of the work that corporate counsel can do for the community. It is now time to use that inspiration to fuel concrete action for the sake of justice.

My first official act as AABA president is to issue a call to action. In partnership with the AABA Civil Rights Committee, I call upon all AABA members to stand up against discrimination, hate crimes, and religious intolerance. As members of the legal profession, we have the interest and knowledge to take concrete action. There is so much that you can do.

Educate yourself on key issues and do one or more of the following:

- Call or write to your government representatives about issues you care about. You can use the "Town Hall" feature on Facebook to find your representatives.
- Organize or participate in an outreach event at a mosque, church, or community center regarding discrimination and hate crimes.
- Donate to nonprofit organizations protecting civil rights.
- Do pro bono work or volunteer at the **AABA clinics**. The Oakland clinic is every third Wednesday, and the San Francisco clinic is every fourth Wednesday of the month.



Join the AABA Civil Rights Committee or a sub-committee:

Join the Civil Rights Committee (CRC) as a general member and receive periodic updates about events and volunteer opportunities. If you would like to increase your involvement, join a CRC subcommittee:

- The Rapid Response Subcommittee is involved with AABA's issuance and endorsement of press releases and other requests that AABA may receive from sister organizations.
- The Amicus Brief Subcommittee organizes AABA's amicus curiae efforts, including drafting and reviewing amicus briefs for AABA.
- The Corporate Outreach Subcommittee will encourage corporations to engage with AABA in its civil rights work, and will serve as a bridge between corporations and community nonprofits that are fighting for our rights and our community.

Please fill out this [form](#) if you would like more information about joining CRC and its subcommittees.

Get social: Set "SMART" goals to accomplish together

Get together with family, friends, and colleagues and discuss how you can accomplish these goals together. Keep each other accountable!

S - specific, significant, stretching

M - measurable, meaningful, motivational

A - agreed upon, attainable, achievable, acceptable, action-oriented

R - realistic, relevant, reasonable, rewarding, results-oriented

T - time-based, time-bound, timely, tangible, trackable

Outgoing President's Speech from AABA's 41st Annual Dinner

By Hung Chang

When I stood before you last year, I encouraged all of us to take smart risks. I wanted us to challenge the status quo, and to improve on things that we may have accepted as the way they are.

Before November, it meant improving membership engagement. We took a closer look at our event attendance, and we have made a lot of incremental changes based on your suggestions. With the help of my team, we have nearly doubled our paid

membership from 570 to over 1,000. We have made significant progress in engaging our senior members. We have a monthly newsletter. We increased the overall participation in our programs. We have even quadrupled the number of followers from 35 to 150 on our Instagram account!

After November, taking smart risks meant only one thing, and AABA pivoted to address the relentless assaults on our civil liberties and on our community. We have organized community forums, naturalization and immigration workshop, issued countless press releases, and have participated in the resistance effort with our sister organizations. We were able to accomplish so much because of my extremely competent and dedicated team members, from long-time AABA leaders like Miriam Kim and Charles Jung, to upcoming rockstars like Jason Yee. I was able to do what I needed to do because of the support of my wife and my children, who I am sure are as happy as I am with the prospect of completing my term tonight. To all of you who made AABA possible, I thank you. We took smart risks this year, and we are rewarded with our success.

Tonight, we are reminded that while we have done a great deal for our community in the last 40 years, our work is not done. I am honored to have been part of this organization, and I am confident that AABA will continue to stand up for justice in the years to come. Thank you again for this great opportunity.



President's Remarks from AABA's 41st Annual Dinner

By Miriam Kim

Esteemed members of the judiciary, Honorable Khizr Khan, and ladies and gentlemen, good evening.

Congratulations to our honorees and outgoing president Hung Chang. Thank you to our board, sponsors, and host committee. I would also like to thank my colleagues at Munger, Tolles & Olson. I would not be here without your support and commitment to diversity.

And thank you to my family – my parents Rev. Jae Youn Kim and Hye Sook Kim, my siblings, my extended family, and my sons John and James. Most of all, thank you to my husband Henry Kim for his patience, love, and support.

Why does AABA stand up for justice?

People often ask me how AABA has been able to stand up for justice since 1976 without any full-time staff, and how I balance AABA with my litigation practice and family. The key to those questions is not HOW we do it, but WHY. **AABA Stands Up For Justice** because we know the dangers of prejudice, and we believe in justice and equality for all.

AABA has a spiritual ethos that is borne out of a deep understanding of the dangers and harms of misperception and prejudice. For many AABA members, this understanding comes from discriminatory laws and orders, such as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, Executive Order 9066, or the recent immigration Executive Orders. My understanding of these dangers stem from my grandfather who was persecuted for his Christian faith without due process of law.

During World War II, he was persecuted and forced to hide in the mountains for 15 months. His only visitor was a good Samaritan who periodically brought him food. During the Soviet occupation of northern Korea, he was imprisoned for 29 days in an upright coffin-size cell, 2 ft x 2 ft x 6 ft. He was supposed to die, but didn't because of the generosity of a Russian soldier. During the early years of Kim Il Sung's rule, he was tortured in prison for about two years until he escaped and hid for 103 days in a hole under a good Samaritan's stable.

Twenty five years ago, my father taught me the importance of justice and equality in the wake of the LA civil uprisings when he marched with Koreans, blacks and Latinos, crying for justice and peace for all people of color. Because of my grandfather and my dad, I share AABA's belief in justice, equality, and the rule of law.

How will AABA stand up for justice this year and what can you do to get involved?

We will stand up for justice by coming together as a community and mobilizing our 1,000 members to defend civil rights and the Constitution and to advance to higher positions of influence in the legal profession. This isn't a new strategy. In the early 1980's, as Judge Lucy Koh mentioned, a group of AABA members in their 20's and 30's mobilized with others to overturn Fred Korematsu's conviction. We're fortunate to be joined tonight by Fred Korematsu's daughter Karen Korematsu.

Today, we continue to see haunting parallels to past wrongs against minorities and other diverse communities. When we see Constitutional rights threatened, we cannot stand idly by. I'm proud that AABA publicly



denounced the recent immigration Executive Orders, and we applaud our members and partnering organizations that were on the ground at the airports.

If you want to stand up for justice with AABA this year, I want to share a few things you can do to get involved:

First, as my first official act as President of AABA, I am issuing a call to action to our members to speak out and take concrete action against discrimination, hate crimes, and religious intolerance. I invite you to join one of three new sub-committees of the AABA Civil Rights Committee formed in response to this call to action: rapid response communications team, amicus briefs, and corporate outreach sub-committees.

Second, you can join our educational efforts to remember past wrongs as a means of warning our leaders of the perils of injustice. Upcoming events include a screening next week of a documentary on the right to be an American citizen, and in partnership with the United States District Court and the Federal Bar Association, a re-enactment of the trial of Minoru Yasui who challenged the incarceration of Japanese Americans all the way to the Supreme Court.

Finally, you can help AABA empower the next generation of leaders for the sake of justice. A study by Justice Goodwin Liu shows that Asian Americans have made great strides in the legal profession but remain significantly under-represented in leadership positions in law firms, government, and academia. We have a wide range of programs to support our members, but for our in-house lawyers, I'm excited to announce that AABA, in partnership with the Bay Area Asian American General Counsels Network will launch a one-year fellowship program for senior in-house lawyers nominated by a general counsel as rising stars on the path to the GC spot.

Friends, this is a critical time for our nation, and our community needs us for such a time as this. Just as my grandfather needed the help of a good Samaritan. Just as Fred Korematsu needed the help of his legal team. Our community needs us, and we will not let them down.

AABA Membership Spotlight: Garrick S. Lew (1950 - 2016)

One year ago, we lost AABA sustaining member and former board member Garrick S. Lew. On this one year anniversary, we pay tribute to him with words from other AABA members.

"We lost our dear friend and former law partner Garrick Lew one year ago on March 19. It's still hard to believe he's gone. We remember Garrick on this anniversary with love to his family – wife Diane Hiura, sons Dillon and Brandon, father Share, sister Sherene, and brother Rictor and Rictor's wife Patty. Hundreds of Garrick's friends last year attended a celebration of his life and legacy last year. Garrick wanted his life remembered with laughter and friendship. He brought that to us, and we threw him one hell of a farewell party. This led to a number of generous donors contributing to a fund that the MTYKL Foundation was able to grant to the AABA Law Foundation in creating the Garrick S. Lew Scholarship, which awards \$10,000 to a third-year law student committed to a criminal defense practice after graduation. Throughout his life, Garrick stayed true to the principles that guided his life: advancing justice, fighting for the underdog, mentoring young attorneys, and

being fiercely loyal to family and friends. There will never come a time when he won't be greatly missed." -- Dale Minami, Don Tamaki, Minette A. Kwok, Jack W. Lee, and Brad Yamauchi.

"My Partner and friend for over 40 years. One of the best criminal defense attorneys, craziest, big-hearted, most disruptive, generous, funny and strangest dude ever. Instrumental in starting the Asian Law Caucus and our private firm. Spent a lot of money on clothes, cars and dates. Gave a lot of money away too. I had to bail him out of jail twice at 4 am. He saved my ass a lot of times too. Never be another one like him. He was greatly loved by us all." --Dale Minami



"Garrick was a spectacular lawyer, and an even better friend. He practiced law with incredible passion, thought, energy, aplomb, honesty, integrity, caring, kindness, professionalism and civility. His brain constantly fired on all cylinders with his equal facility with the written and spoken language, and with complex legal and theoretical concepts, as well as with fast cars, state-of-the-art computers, audio-visual equipment, cooking, fine dining, extravagant watches, popular music, sports, and men's fashion. And he was a blur on black diamond ski runs. Life was always special around Garrick. He had an incredible sense of humor, loved challenges and taking risks, could carouse with the best, and was the life of every party. He cared deeply about social values, justice and equality, and he was totally devoted to, and engaged with, his extended family and friends. He was absolutely one-of-a-kind, and I will always miss him terribly." --Michael Lee

"He was a champion of justice, a comedian with a quick wit, and a man with a heart as vast as our galaxy. His ability to love, give back, and be empathic truly knew no bounds. I marvel still at his quality to make you feel like the most special person in the room, his ability to embrace those in need whatever the consequences, and his unfailing commitment to social justice. I see your smiling face now, Garrick, and I hope you know how much we all love you, miss you, and still mourn your passing. I know you would say get over it, but I say right back, that's not going to happen anytime soon bro." --Joan Haratani

"Although it is impossible to describe Garrick in words alone, I will try. As a criminal defense lawyer, he was a tour de force. His deep, commanding and powerful voice filled many a courtrooms and his sense of style, always wearing the most fashionable suits and ties, set a new standard of cool. Garrick once gave me an Armani tie and said, "This is how you need to look when you walk into a holding cell." But most of all, I learned from his generous mentorship that preparation was the key to success. No one prepared a case better than Garrick, considering every potential advantage and pitfall, ensuring that his case was fully supported by the best and most learned experts, the mightiest briefs, the most comprehensive investigation and the ideas of the brightest criminal defense attorneys, who Garrick constantly consulted with. I can honestly say that he did more for me than anyone else I'd ever known, providing me with opportunities I would have never had, including helping me to be hired as a Deputy Public Defender, and I will always be in his debt. The only way I can cope with his absence is to honor it by following his example, and trying to provide new lawyers and law students with the selfless support he provided me." --Jeff Adachi

"Garrick Lew was a true original. Brash, irreverent, and irrepressible. Some might say borderline obnoxious. He loved to represent the underdog, advocate against conventional wisdom, and challenge authority. He could be pugnacious and combative and true to his upbringing, was a street fighter but with high intellect and integrity. He had an unmistakable presence and was the antithesis of BORING. He loved nothing better than to stir things up. We got to know one another when we served together with Joan Haratani on the AABA Social Committee. He proposed some crazy ideas to bring lawyers together that invariably involved serving booze. Always dressed to the nines. When we first met, he chastised me for wearing a button down shirt with an Armani suit and tie. I haven't worn a button down shirt since." --Wesley Lowe

"While I didn't have the opportunity to know Garrick during his legendary younger days, the man I knew was kind, generous with his time and talent, and loved and admired by many, especially within the criminal defense community, the civil rights community, and the Asian American legal community. He was also known as a fearsome fighter on behalf of his clients and his community, never backing down from a fight or an injustice. His life is an inspiration to all us fighting in the trenches." --John Hamasaki

"More than being a great lawyer, Garrick was just a great guy. He was well liked even among the prosecutors who regularly did battle with him. He had a larger-than-life persona -- charismatic without even a trace of bombast. Whether he was in a courtroom, an attorneys meeting, or a cocktail party, he could command a room like few others. While I regret that I won't be able to attend tomorrow's celebration, you can rest assured that I will have a drink to his life at some point in the near future. And, of course, it will be a martini with two olives." --Sol Wollack

For more information about Garrick, please visit <http://www.garricklew.org/garrick>.

AABA Law Foundation Scholarship Winners

Congratulations to the recipients of the 2017 AABA Law Foundation Scholarships, recently announced at the Annual Dinner:

- **Garrick S. Lew Scholarship:** Christopher Gueco (U.C. Hastings College of the Law)
- **Raymond L. Ocampo Jr. Family Scholarship:** Ana Duong (U.C. Berkeley School of Law)
- **Joe Morozumi Scholarship:** Christopher Gordon (University of Michigan Law School)
- **AABA Law Foundation Scholarship:** Wendell Lin (U.C. Hastings College of the Law)
- **Asian Pacific American Judges' Scholarship:** Tarah Powell-Chen (USF School of Law)



Each winner will be profiled in the AABA newsletter, beginning with **Christopher Gueco**, recipient of the Garrick S. Lew Scholarship. AABA thanks the MTYKL Foundation for the grant that enabled the AABA Law Foundation to create this new scholarship for a third-year law student committed to a criminal defense practice after graduation.

Profile of Christopher Gueco (U.C. Hastings College of the Law, Class of 2017)

This is the personal statement Christopher submitted with his application for the Garrick S. Lew Scholarship.

In 2007, I was incarcerated for serious juvenile charges—two counts of assault with a deadly weapon with gang enhancements. By 2014, I became the first person in my family to graduate from a four-year university and attend law school.

My personal experience in the criminal justice system has led me to a deep appreciation for education. Not only has education allowed me to better myself, it has empowered me. It enabled me to utilize my personal experience within the system to give back to my community—to turn something negative into something positive.

MY BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE REFLECT THE VALUES GARRICK S. LEW EXHIBITED OVER HIS LIFETIME

I spent my elementary years living in San Jose. My parents both immigrated from the Philippines and we lived in a one-story house along with my grandmother, six aunts, and their children. Although this house seemed crowded with seven families living under one roof, our home enabled our family to remain close and build bonds that extended beyond our immediate family. We may not have had much, but we had each other and our community.

Growing up, I personally witnessed and experienced the obstacles that many individuals in my neighborhood faced. From poverty and discrimination, to violence and police brutality, I witnessed it all. I always knew that I wanted to be an advocate for my community; I just needed the right tools.

I received my G.E.D. while incarcerated, received my AA degree from a community college shortly after I was released, then transferred to San Francisco State University (SFSU). At SFSU, I was awarded a fellowship from the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). As an NIMH fellow, I focused on juvenile justice reform. I conducted a study that explored the success rates of formerly incarcerated youth and presented my findings at the Association for Psychological Science Convention. I also wrote a thesis that aimed to provide a greater understanding of how Asian American youth are viewed in the criminal justice system and presented my findings at the Association for Asian American Studies Conference.

Through these studies I was able to educate the public on the need for criminal justice reform. However, I wanted to have a more direct effect in my community. I wanted to be in the “front lines” in the fight for change. It was during this time I realized that my goal was to be a public defender, and decided to pursue a career in law.



As a student at the University of California, Hastings College of the law, I understand the responsibility and duty I owe to my community. During my first year at Hastings, I was a youth mentor for the Supporting Transitions & Aspirations Mentorship Program. Currently, as the Co-President for the Hasting Association of Youth Advocates, I aim to use my experience as a youth mentor to establish a Hastings' youth mentorship program.

I believe that my personal experience and dedication to serve as an advocate for my community is closely related to my success in law school. I have received several awards, including the Hastings Public Interest Award and the Hastings Public Interest Law Foundation Grant. These awards, among other things, serve as motivation to continue towards my goal of being a public defender.

I AM COMMITTED TO A CAREER IN CRIMINAL DEFENSE

The only reason I went to law school was to be a public defender. My father once told me, "If you can handle or do what many cannot, then it is your responsibility [to do so]." I know how it feels to have the odds against me and how important it is to have someone by your side. I have had the odds against me prior to my incarceration, during, and after my release. However, I come from a family and community of fighters and fierce advocates. These individuals went above and beyond their roles and ensured that I did not face these odds alone. It was with their support that I am here today.

During the last conversation with my grandmother, she told me "É mu kakalingwan ing pibatan mu" ("don't forget where you came from"). I will never forget where I came from. I am a fighter, I am an advocate, and I will be a public defender.

In law school, I spent every summer and two semesters interning for public defender's offices. In these offices, I participated in essentially all phases of the criminal justice process. Whereas my personal experience in the criminal justice system led me to a deep appreciation for public defense work, the experience I gained while working in these offices has provided me with the initial training required to be a public defender.

As a third-year law student, I have been offered post-bar positions at two public defender's offices. Regardless of which office I work in, I know I will continue to serve my community, while gaining the experience required to be an advocate for change. The Garrick S. Lew Fellowship will provide me with the financial support needed as I take the next step towards my goal of becoming an individual who ensures that his community never faces "the odds" alone—a public defender.

Reflections on President Trump's Travel Ban

By Kathy Aoki, Co-Chair of AABA's Newsletter Committee

When I worked as a newspaper reporter, my former co-workers asked me "Kathy, where are you going next?" I did not take a vacation every year but I traveled to Europe and Japan many times and also attended Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) conventions across the United States as an official delegate from the Contra Costa JACL.

The difference between traveling at that time compared to now is there was no travel ban. When my Mother and I traveled to Romania and Ukraine in 2009 we never encountered any problems despite tight security at the airports.

Recently, a guest from Japan who came to visit us was detained at San Francisco International Airport for an hour. When we asked what happened, our guest tried hard to answer our questions but said little about this unpleasant experience.

Our guest was asked to get out of the line in customs and go with the police (I do not know if the person was actually a police officer, someone from customs or airport security) who detained our guest in a room with other people of Asian descent for an hour. When our guest tried to ask questions, the people in charge were not agreeable. Our guest's English comprehension is not great so I do not know how much he really understood when someone spoke to him.

My parents think our guest was singled out because he was an Asian man traveling alone. Our guest told us another Japanese man from Japan who did not speak much English was told to "get off his phone." I have the impression nobody knew what was happening and any questions asked were not answered or the response was vague.

President Donald Trump's revised travel ban was effective from March 16, 2017. Our guest arrived on March 17, 2017. Trump's travel ban probably makes traveling more worrisome and more of a hassle for foreign visitors.

During my lifetime I never remember a president who is so intent in making life more difficult for minorities and taking aim at people from certain countries coming to the United States. I recall during the 70's there was an oil embargo and talk about rounding up people who were Muslims living in the U.S. and putting them in camps like Japanese Americans had to endure during World War II.

Traveling is already complicated since I have to take off my shoes, go through all kinds of screenings, and have employees check to see if I look like the photo in my passport. I will never look exactly the same since my passport is valid for 10 years. There may be differences in weight, hair style and my glasses.

If I were to get detained when traveling the people in charge would find me a nuisance because I would ask many questions and take notes on everything that happened. I would not be satisfied until I get answers about my detention.

Trump's desire to protect Americans from terrorism is probably genuine but I do not agree with the way he wants to accomplish this. Immigrants from many nations have come to the U.S. and have endured many hardships to become successful and help make this country what it is today.

The travel ban has a global impact that has stirred much emotion from leaders around the world. Below is a quote that addresses how I am feeling right now about the situation:

"I am heartbroken that today President Trump is closing the door on children, mothers and fathers fleeing violence and war. I am heartbroken that America is turning its back on a proud history of welcoming refugees and immigrants — the people who helped build your country, ready to work hard in exchange for a fair chance at a new life."

— **Malala Yousafzai, a Pakistani activist for female education who was the youngest-ever recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014.**

Student Corner: 41st Annual Dinner Reflection

By *Raymond Ngai*

The best word I would use to describe the Asian American Bar Association of the Greater Bay Area 41st Annual Dinner is inspirational. It was an absolutely astonishing event comprising of almost a thousand lawyers and judges. But before attending the dinner, I had a contrary feeling of disheartenment. I had the honor to hear California Supreme Court Justice Goodwin Lui speak at the Bay Area Asian Pacific American Law Student Association conference. His keynote speech on his research on Asian Americans in the legal system found that Asian Americans were highly underrepresented in the field and in leadership positions. Asian Americans make up over 5% of the U.S. population and an even larger percentage of law school student bodies. Although Asian Americans are the fastest growing racial group in the U.S., few ever reach the top of the legal profession as judges, U.S. attorneys, elected state prosecutors, or partners. The research also found that Asian Americans were the largest minority group at major law firms but had the highest attrition rates and lowest ratio of partners to associates among all racial groups.



This is important information that Asian Americans in the legal field and prospective law students should be aware of. Personally knowing this and after attending the annual dinner, I have never been more confident in becoming a lawyer. I see these barriers more as an opportunity to change the current legal mold and break biased stereotypes of minorities in the legal field. I describe the dinner as inspirational because I saw that night those same obstacles can be overcome by Asian Americans. It was an absolute honor to hear California Supreme Court Chief Justice Tani Cantil-Sukauye, Khizr Khan, and other distinguished Asian American leaders speak. This event has inspired me not only to continue the path of a legal profession but also become a leader for change and stand up for justice.

Event Photo Galleries



March 1 - Mentorship End of Year Celebration



March 16 - Monthly Solo & Small Firm Happy Hour



March 23 - 41st Annual Dinner "Stand Up for Justice"

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