



AABA Newsletter

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President's Column

Welcome to our new AABA year!

Our Annual Dinner on March 7 was a smashing success. It was wonderful, as always, to see old friends and make new acquaintances. If you missed the dinner, you can feel like you were there by reading Kathy Aoki's article and seeing the photos in this issue of the newsletter. I've also received numerous requests for the text of my address at

the dinner, and the keynote address by City Attorney Dennis Herrera. Both are re-printed in this issue, with my address appearing at the end of this Column.

In preparing for this year, I found it helpful to review our organization's stated "purposes" as contained in our bylaws and summarized on the website.

"The objects of this Association are to foster the exchange of ideas and information among and between Association members and other members of the legal profession, the judiciary and the community; to encourage and promote the professional growth of the members of the Association; to provide an opportunity for fellowship among the Association's members; to provide coordinated service to the general and local community; to develop and encourage inter-cooperation with other organizations of minority attorneys; and to provide a vehicle and forum for the unified expression of opinions and positions by the Association upon current social, political, economic, legal, or other matters or events of concern to the members of the Association."

Early in our AABA year, we're well on our way to fulfilling these objectives, and we're not above doing some manual labor to do so. On March 22, a beautiful Saturday, our energetic Community Services Committee, in conjunction with the Chinatown Community Development Center (CCDC), helped serve the Chinatown community with another Work-a-Thon. Over 20 volunteers from AABA helping to beautify a garden at the Ping Yuen

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Housing complex by shoveling, pulling weeds, and toiling away for hours before enjoying the AABA-sponsored barbecue. Thanks to all our great Community Services co-chairs – Brian Wang, Rob Uy, Daisy Hung, Richard Cooc, Kevin Chen, and Hung Chang – for organizing AABA's volunteers.

We have much more planned for this year. In addition to a myriad of activities being planned by our committees, we'll also be continuing our long-term strategic planning efforts. These efforts will include an opportunity for all of you to voice your opinion regarding AABA's activities and how AABA's leaders can best serve you.

While we continue our planning process, please remember to check our website for upcoming events in the community that may be of interest to you. I hope to see you at one of these events soon!

As mentioned above, the text of my President's Address at the dinner is below.

President's Address

Thank you Marissa, for your kind and ...revealing words. For a moment, this was looking suspiciously like a roast, and not an introduction.

Thank you all for coming tonight. This is at least my 10th AABA Dinner. I always feel tremendous energy and excitement at this event.

As incoming President of AABA it was my responsibility to plan and produce this event tonight. As you can imagine, this dinner is a large undertaking with a lot happening behind the scenes. Its success year

after year is due to the teamwork and dedication of many people. Time constraints prevent me from naming everyone now, but I do want to say special thanks to the entire Board of Directors. Every single board member had a part in putting on tonight's event. I especially wish to thank Billy Chan, Garner Weng, Reichi Lee, Malcolm Yeung, AABA's Operations Director Rhean Fajardo, and last but not least, Lisa Herico – who has provided her invaluable assistance with this event for several years.

I'd also like to acknowledge once again the generous sponsors of our dinner who are listed prominently in your program. I also wish to thank those who made it possible, early in the planning stages, for several law students and public interest lawyers to attend tonight's event.

I would also like to thank Dennis Herrera and all of my colleagues at the City Attorney's Office, especially all of the folks on the 6th Floor of Fox Plaza, for their unstinting support. You are phenomenal lawyers and professionals and dear friends. Amongst you, there is an embarrassment of riches in your legal talent, your commitment to public service, and your humanity. It's a privilege to work alongside you every day.

Finally, I'd like to thank my family and especially my parents, Wally and Virginia Lee, for all their love, encouragement, and support.

I am humbled and privileged to be here as your new president. The list of past AABA presidents, many of whom are here tonight, reads like a Who's-Who of the legal community. They have inspired so many to achieve fulfilling legal careers, and helped build AABA to be the respected, and vital, organization that it is today. I am particularly indebted to our outgoing president and my friend Edwin Prather, who has done so much and has left some very large shoes to fill.

You have before you, in AABA's March newsletter, a summary of AABA's accomplishments over the past year as we've been skillfully led by Edwin. I'm immensely proud that our attorney and student members have participated and assisted in such a broad range of activities throughout the Bay Area. I can't resist mentioning a few highlights:

- Through our Community Service Committee, we've assisted over 1000 low-income clients in San Francisco and the East Bay with their legal problems, participated in neighborhood clean-up efforts in Chinatown, and extended our outreach to college students.
- Through our Judiciary Committee, we've endorsed and advocated for the appointment of more Asian American attorneys to the bench in the Bay Area. We at AABA were proud to support the appointment of Lucy Koh, recently sworn in as Judge of the Santa Clara County Superior Court.
- Through our Mentorship and Scholarship committees, we continue to encourage and provide financial support to members of our law student community.

AABA has played an important part in my own personal journey so far as a lawyer. I'd like to tell you a bit about that. I vividly recall my first AABA-related experiences. My former colleague Phil Shinn, himself a past president of AABA, got me involved in volunteering at our Community Services clinics that were held at the Asian Law Caucus. At the time, I had newly passed the bar and was riding the steep learning curve of being a first-year litigator. I needed something other than answering hundreds of discovery responses to sustain my professional aspirations.

My very first experience at the Clinic was, shall we say, less than auspicious. The first client to whom I was assigned told me that she had brought a federal court action against the United States Government in pro per, and sought assistance with her 9th Circuit Appeal. I thought, great. This is going to be interesting work. She then went on to tell me what her claim was. She alleged that the post-office had given her the wrong number of stamps in response to her mail order.

Fortunately, my second client had a more lasting effect on me, and I hope I did the same for her. She ran a small bakery in the Mission. She was having landlord problems. She was confused and desperate. I spoke to her and explained the unlawful detainer complaint she had received, and then referred her to a real estate lawyer who could help her further. I did what I could—which wasn't much, really—I could see that she really appreciated someone trying to understand her problems and help her through the legal maze. This was a very short encounter, but it stayed with me and it certainly whetted my appetite for more.

As time passed, I saw more clients at the clinics, and I handled similar matters. These may have been small matters in the greater scheme of things perhaps, but I know they were very important to those who were impacted. I like to think that these clients, like the bakery owner, came away with more confidence in the legal system and the feeling that they were not alone and that the legal community was there to help.

These clinic experiences made me realize some things: there is immense satisfaction in using our education and skills to help people who need it and can't get that help elsewhere. Also, I realized that there is so much more good that can be done if we work

collectively than if we do things on our own.

As I became more involved with AABA over the years, I saw firsthand the impressive people who have nurtured and empowered AABA. I saw the many contributions that AABA makes, including inspiring, mentoring and financially assisting the next generation of lawyers. Even from the time that I started to be involved, around 12 years ago, AABA has grown dramatically in both numbers and influence.

We help build the awareness of our Asian American community in our legal institutions and our community's confidence in what ought to be the responsiveness of those institutions to the needs of ordinary people. People need to feel that they are not forgotten, that they have representation, and that they have a visible presence in society.

In fact, if I had to articulate a connective thread to all of AABA's endeavors throughout its existence, I would say that we strive to increase visibility and combat invisibility of our members, and all persons in the APA community. That sounds like a nice platitude, but what does that really mean?

- That means that we continue to fight for, intensify our efforts to increase the presence of Asian Americans on the state and federal benches, so we are visible to attorneys and parties who appear in court.
- That means that we continue to engage in the vital legal battles of the day, including safeguarding civil liberties during the post 9/11 backlash. AABA's role in exposing efforts to erode anyone's civil rights helps decrease the invisibility and helplessness of innocent individuals who are caught in efforts to fight

quote, unquote, the war on terror.

- That also means that AABA continues to stand up for those who suffer from the same invisibility and lack of legitimacy under the law as our community did in the days of exclusionary legislation.

We enjoy unique historical perspective and experience. And with that perspective and experience, we have the obligation to constantly remind society that tradition, while at times worthy of respect, should not be unalterable. A recent example of this was AABA's amicus brief, along with 62 other Asian Pacific American organizations, to the California Supreme Court supporting marriage equality. This brief was written by our past president Kevin Fong of Pillsbury Winthrop. AABA is committed to fighting for the recognition of LGBT couples' commitment to each other, and to ensure that all couples may visibly reap the security and benefits in society of having their bonds be seen and sanctioned by the world at large.

We also increase our visibility by participating in a wide range of civic and governmental activities. I'm proud to say that several AABA leaders have prominent and public roles in Bay Area civic life. Here are just a few examples.

- Current board members Yu-Yee Wu and Emi Gusukuma sit on City Commissions – the Civil Service Commission and the Ethics Commission, respectively.
- Our current Civil Rights Committee Co-chair, Steve



DENNIS HERRERA
City Attorney of San Francisco

“National Leadership, Local Imperatives”

Thank you for that very kind introduction.

You know, having the opportunity to keynote the Annual Installation Dinner of the Asian American Bar Association of the Greater Bay Area would be a great honor in *any* year. But I must say I’m especially proud and honored to have been asked this *particular* year, because Celia Lee — the newly installed President of AABA’s Board — is a deputy city attorney from my office.

Now, I certainly acknowledge that I inherited some extremely capable attorneys when I took office in 2002. But I’m very proud to point out that Celia Lee is one of my hires.

I think I recognized exactly what you did: that Celia is someone who brings a great deal of energy, talent and professionalism to what she does. I know she will serve the AABA extremely well in helping to fulfill its mission.

So, on behalf of everyone in the San Francisco City Attorney’s Office, I want to congratulate Celia on her installation as president of the Asian American Bar Association of the Greater Bay Area.

I also want to acknowledge two *other* Deputy City Attorneys in my office who have served as past presidents of the AABA — Teresa Tan and Joanne Sakai. Both are extremely talented and dedicated public servants, and I’m proud of them for their leadership as well.

So, it’s a very special honor for me to keynote tonight’s annual dinner for an organization that continues to have such a strong connection to the office I lead.

You know, this year I myself became Chair of the Board of Directors for the California Minority Counsel Program, which — like AABA — seeks to promote a more diverse and inclusive legal profession.

In post-Prop. 209 California, the importance of organizations such as these really can’t be overstated.

Over the last dozen years, we’ve seen state government’s role in reaching out to minority communities diminished dramatically.

And as a result, it has increasingly fallen to us — both as individuals and as organizations — to play a more activist role in fulfilling the worthy objectives that affirmative action sought to accomplish.

- Today, we *all* need to do our part to encourage a more inclusive workforce.
- Today, we *all* need to push for greater diversity on the judiciary.
- And today, we *all* need to ensure that our profession is more sensitive to the needs of minority communities.

And — what’s more — none of us needs to apologize for it. Because the objectives we seek aren’t intended to advance a narrow self-interest, or to be ends unto themselves.

At the end of the day, to encourage diversity and sensitivity and inclusion of those who’ve traditionally been left out, is to ensure that our profession is more deeply committed to justice.

And we all benefit from that — whether we be members of minorities communities or otherwise.

As you probably saw, my office was in the California Supreme Court earlier this week, arguing to strike down state marriage laws that discriminate against gay and lesbian couples.

In this potentially landmark case, I’m very proud to have been joined by more than 60 Asian Pacific Islander groups — including this one — to support marriage equality. That amicus brief described the long history of marriage discrimination against API communities here in California. I think this week’s oral arguments made clear that past discrimination against minority groups — and the high court’s past role in addressing it then — weighs heavily on several of the court’s justices today.

I’m extremely grateful for the support of this organization. I’m also very proud to have seen such a diverse and wide breadth of support for the cause of justice.

Far better than I could articulate, I think it demonstrates the important role that strong, vibrant minority bar associations play in our legal community.

You know, few years ago, on the day we were heading into the trial court on the marriage case, the *San Francisco Chronicle* wrote a very nice front-page feature story about me.

Now, I’ll confess that I largely agreed with all of the flattering and laudatory things they wrote...

But there was *one* disagreement I had with the story. The headline described me as an “unlikely advocate” for marriage equality. And the subhead read: “Straight family-man Herrera an improbable gay rights defender.”

The story mentioned my Latino heritage, my Catholic upbringing, my wife and son, and the fact that I myself am the son of an immigrant — as though these were reasons why I would predictably *oppose* marriage equality.

And the truth is, it's probably for most of those reasons that I support it.

Like most of you, I'm sure, my commitment to diversity, inclusion and equality for those who've been denied it isn't *restricted* by my own background.

Rather, it's *informed* by my own background.

- I don't know how I could be the son of parents whose own marriage may once have been illegal — and oppose equal marriage rights today.
- I don't know how I could be a father and husband — and support discrimination that would deny the benefits of marriage not just to other couples, but their children as well.
- I don't know how I could be a Catholic who obstructs social justice; or a lawyer who opposes equality before the law; or a San Francisco elected official who abides discrimination that tangibly harms the City I serve.

I think that last point is one that is the most consistently overlooked — not just on the marriage case, but on many of the issues we've taken on in the City Attorney's Office.

I don't believe it's enough for us to simply insert ourselves into national debates for the sake of making a point — or merely to advocate for *national* change from a *local* platform.

If I'm to truly and effectively do my job as a leader in the City I'm elected to serve, I need to advance a *genuine* local interest in the kinds of cases I pursue.

Now, I know that may seem counter-intuitive for San Francisco, which has a knack for finding itself in national debates — often for seemingly symbolic reasons.

But the truth is, there's nothing *symbolic* about the denial of marriage rights to same-sex partners, whether in San Francisco or anywhere else.

In one example of that, we submitted a declaration from the City Controller analyzing the fiscal impact that discriminatory marriage laws hold for City taxpayers — straight and gay alike.

And the findings were anything but symbolic. It's conservatively estimated that the costs exceed \$20 million annually.

Fewer marriages mean foregone revenues and increased costs for the City and its taxpayers.

- The City is a public benefits provider that can pick up the tab for unmarried partners — from public assistance to healthcare.
- Tax delinquency rates are higher without the benefit of two legally obligated adults responsible for one another's finances.
- And as a destination City, it costs us revenues from hotel taxes, sales taxes and all the economic benefits that tourism affords.

When we filed the case in 2004, it was very first *government* litigation in America ever to challenge the constitutionality of marriage laws. No government entity had ever been on our side of the marriage issue.

Today — just four years later — we stand alongside some 21 city and county governments who've joined us as friends of the court. We've improbably received backing from 7 of the 8 largest cities in California in our fight for marriage equality, including relatively conservative bastions like Sacramento and San Diego.

cause they recognize the tangible importance — far more than mere symbolism — for local governments and their residents.

I'm proud to represent those tangible local interests in everything we take on — whether they're cases that seize national headlines, or ones you may only read about in neighborhood papers... or hear on Spanish language radio... or see on Cantonese TV.

- I was proud to stand with Chinese Hospital in 2006, when we sued Brown & Toland to protect culturally competent care in Chinatown at one of San Francisco's oldest medical institutions.
- I was proud to have worked with the Chinese Progressive Association — which has offered invaluable assistance to immigrant workers in San Francisco — to make sure that working families aren't cheated of the minimum wages that are owed to them.
- And I'm proud to be standing today with other elected officials, labor and neighborhood groups to defend our groundbreaking "Healthy San Francisco" program — to make healthcare coverage culturally-sensitive, and universally available to all our residents.

It's another example of how we show national leadership by representing our local imperatives.

You know, it always hard for me to come before an organization like AABA — which I know includes so many current and future leaders — without making a shameless pitch.

Not for my office alone, necessarily, but for the important role of public sector legal practice — especially at the local level.

Like the minority legal organizations we're all here to support, I see local law offices like mine doing so much today to advance the values of diversity, inclusion and equality. To make our profession more committed to justice.

With the federal and state governments seeming to be in continual retreat, the cause of progress has not only fallen to organizations like this one, but also to local governments.

Justice Louis Brandeis wrote that one of the benefits of our federal system

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Celia W. Lee Installed as New President of AABA

By Kathy Aoki, Nichi Bei Times

Celia W. Lee, a Deputy City Attorney in the San Francisco City Attorney's Office, was installed March 7 as the 31st president of the Asian American Bar Association of the Greater Bay Area (AABA) during AABA's Annual Installation Dinner held at the Hyatt Embarcadero Grand Ballroom in San Francisco. There were over 700 guests in attendance at this event in its new venue. In the past, this opening social event of the year was held at restaurants located in or near San Francisco Chinatown.



Celia Lee

Yul Kwon, best known for being the winner of "Survivor: Cooks Islands," served as the emcee for the evening and gave welcoming remarks and introductions.

Billy Chan, Law Offices of Billy Chan and **Garner Weng**, Hanson Bridgett Marcus Vlahos & Rudy LLP introduced the dignitaries attending the dinner, in boxing ringside fashion.



Yul Kwon



Billy Chan



Garner Weng



Malcolm Yeung with Edwin Prather



Christine Noma

There were many introductions including San Francisco County Superior Court Judges **Garrett Wong, Lillian Sing, Julie Tang, Susan Breall, Wallace Douglass, Kathleen Kelly, A.C. Massullo, Thomas Mellon, Marla Miller, Donald Mitchell, Mary Wiss, Charlotte Woolard**, and SF County Superior Court Commissioners **Bruce Chan, Sue Kaplan, Gerry Rosen**, Alameda County Superior Court Judges **Delbert Gee, Jo-Lynne Lee** and **Ken Kawaichi, Ret.**, Contra Costa County Superior Court Judge Joni Hiramoto, San Mateo County Superior Court Judges **Elizabeth Lee**, Santa Clara County Superior Court Judges **Lucy Koh** (newly appointed), and United States District Court, Northern District of California Magistrate **Ed Chen**.



Hon. Garrett Wong and Scholarship Committee Co-Chair Candice Jan

Also, present were San Francisco City and County District Attorney **Kamala Harris** and San Francisco City and County Public Defender **Jeff Adachi**, San Francisco City and County City Attorney **Dennis Herrera**, San Francisco City and County Assessor/Recorder **Phil Ting** and San Francisco City and County

Supervisors **Aaron Peskin** and **Gerardo Sandoval**.

Malcolm C. Yeung, Asian Law Caucus, introduced his friend and outgoing AABA President **Edwin K. Prather**, Clarence & Dyer LLP, before Prather gave his outgoing president's message. Prather spoke about AABA's accomplishments and his involvement in the organization.

Christine K. Noma, Wendel Rosen Black & Dean LLP introduced the 2008 AABA Service Award recipient **Rita**

Hao, University of California Office of the General Counsel.

San Francisco Superior Court Judge **Garrett Wong** and Contra Costa County District Attorney's Office's **Candice Jan** presented the 2008 AABA Law Foundation Scholarships to the following: **Sarah Chilim Ihn** – Raymond L. Ocampo, Jr. Past Presidents' Scholarship; **Warren Ko** — AABA Asian Pacific American Judges' Scholarship Recipient; **Jimmy Chu** — Joe Morizumi Scholarship Recipient and **Nai Saelee** — AABA Law Foundation Scholarship Recipient.

Richard G. Konda, Executive Director of the Asian Law Alliance and **Dean Ito Taylor**, Executive

recently became a new mother. AABA Director **Marissa Tirona** introduced President **Celia Lee**, who in her address, focused on her beginnings with AABA, some of the organization's accomplishments in the last year and looking towards the future. She also thanked the AABA board for their participation in planning the installation dinner especially **Billy Chan, Garner Weng, Reichi Lee, Malcolm Yeung, Rhean Fajardo and Lisa Herico**. Her address has been reprinted in its entirety in this issue.



San Francisco City Attorney **Dennis J. Herrera** gave the keynote address before **Yul Kwon**, who is also an attorney, gave closing remarks. Herrera expressed that he was honored to give the keynote address to AABA this year because **Celia Lee** was his hire when he was elected into office. He also mentioned that two



Rita Hao



Richard Konda



Dean Ito Taylor

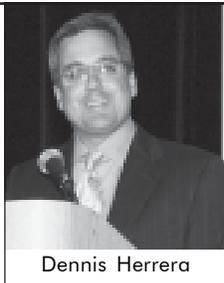


Chris Ho



Hon. Ken Kawaichi

Director of the Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach received the 2008 Joe Morizumi Award for Exceptional Legal Advocacy presented by **Christopher Ho**, AABA's immediate past recipient of the Morizumi Award.



Dennis Herrera



Marissa Tirona

past presidents of AABA, **Teresa Tan** and **Joanne Sakai**, had also been Deputy City Attorneys in his office. As the current Chair of the Board of Directors to the California Minority Counsel Program, he encouraged attorneys to do their part for a more inclusive work force,

Ken Kawaichi, JAMS and a retired Alameda County Superior Court Judge, introduced and installed the 2008-09 AABA Officers and Board of Directors. Serving with President **Celia Lee** are **Garner Weng**, Vice-President/President-Elect, **Billy Chan**, Treasurer and **Malcolm Yeung**, Secretary. **Eugene Pak, David Sohn, Ted Ting, Reichi Lee, Marissa Tirona, Yu-Yee-Wu, S. Isabel Choi, Emi Gusukuma**, and **Juna Kim** will serve on the Board of Directors.

AABA's Operations Director **Rhean Fajardo** was also recognized as being the first employee in the history of AABA. She was unable to attend this year as she

to push for greater diversity on the judiciary and to ensure that the legal profession was more sensitive to the needs of the minority community. He spoke about and cited examples of how the work of the City Attorney's office show national leadership by representing its local imperatives including the more recent case on marriage equality (for same sex couples).

Opportunities were available to the guests to mingle with one another —to catch up with old acquaintances and colleagues and to meet new friends during the pre-dinner reception, during the dinner break and following the end of the program, including an After-Dinner Mixer held at The Gallery Lounge, located South of Market.



photo credit to Jim Block and Alice Chin







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David Lee









AABA Past-President Margaret Fujioka Elected to the Piedmont City Council

By Alice Chin, Newsletter Committee Co-Chair



photo credit to Paul Kuroda

Margaret Fujioka was sworn in as a member of the Piedmont City Council on March 17, 2008 at the Piedmont Community Hall. She is the first Asian Pacific American woman and the first Japanese American to serve on the 5 member City Council in Piedmont’s 100-year history. She will be the only woman serving on the current council.

Margaret was the top vote getter coming in first in all six Piedmont precincts.

In a hotly contested 3-way race for 2 seats, Margaret ran against an incumbent and a newcomer who hired a professional campaign consultant and spent the most money. Margaret campaigned aggressively for 5 months prior to the election on March 4, 2008. She walked precincts, spoke at numerous neighborhood “coffees,” engaged in a spirited lawn sign war, participated in a televised (KCOM) debate, organized a cadre of energetic campaign volunteers, and garnered the endorsements of the Alameda County Democratic Club, the National Women’s Political Caucus-Alameda North, and the Piedmonter newspaper, as well as hundreds of Piedmont residents from a broad cross section of the community.

Margaret has been an 11-year resident of the City of Piedmont, an affluent community located in the East Bay hills and surrounded by the City of Oakland. Over the years, Margaret became active in her community starting with serving as Vice President of Enrichment of the Wildwood School Parents Board in Piedmont and then progressing to volunteer service on several important city committees. Prior to vying for a seat on the Piedmont City Council, she served as a committee member on the Capital Improvements Project Committee for six years and was chair of that committee for the last two years. She just completed a year of service on the Piedmont Centennial Committee. Piedmont’s centennial anniversary was celebrated in 2007.

Margaret is Senior Deputy City Attorney in the City Attorney’s Office for the City of Oakland where she has worked for more than 18 years. She received her

undergraduate degree from the University of California, at Berkeley and her law degree from Hastings College of the Law.

Margaret served as president of AABA in 1994 and as president of NAPABA in 1997. She is the current co-chair of the Women’s Leadership Committee of NAPABA, a position she has held for 7 years.

She is married to attorney Cedric Chao, a partner at Morrison & Foerster, and also a past president of AABA in 1982. She and Cedric have two teenage children, Stephen and Caroline.

This month, Margaret will begin serving a 4-year term at the end of which she will decide whether to seek a second term. The Council position is a volunteer position, which means that she serves the community without compensation. The Piedmont City Council meets the 1st and 3rd Mondays every month.

As she is beginning her official civic duties, she took some time from her very busy schedule to give us an AABA exclusive interview.

What inspired you to run for public office? Running for City Council was a natural “next step” for me as a long-time volunteer in Piedmont which I have enjoyed immensely. I also wanted to give something back to the wonderful community in which Cedric and I have raised our two children.

How does it feel to prevail in a hotly contested and expensive race for a seat on the council? I couldn’t have been more pleased and gratified with

continued on next page

MARGARET FUJIOKA *continued from page 16*

the results. The downside is that like any campaign, it is all consuming. The upside of this race is that the results validate that voters agreed with my message. I also learned a tremendous amount about Piedmonters and the issues that are important to them. It was especially gratifying to meet so many engaged, concerned, and supportive citizens.

How did your family's support gain you confidence to win the election? I simply would not have run without the support of my family. They have been there for me throughout an intense campaign, helping out in innumerable ways, while balancing their own demanding schedules. My son is a high school senior who was applying to colleges the same time I was ramping up my campaign, and my daughter is balancing the academic rigors as a high school junior while simultaneously living the life of a competitive tennis player. And of course, Cedric was very supportive and helped me immensely, despite the demands of his thriving practice and world wide business travels.

How will your work experience in serving the Oakland City Council add to your service on the Piedmont City Council? My work experience in the City Attorney's Office in Oakland has provided me with great exposure to the broad range of municipal law and policy issues facing cities. I am lucky to have had the opportunity to provide legal advice and counsel to a wide range of Oakland departments, boards, and commissions, as well as the Oakland City Council, over the course of more than 18 years. I believe this experience will be valuable in grappling with the issues Piedmont faces.

What three goals do you plan on accomplishing during your tenure on the city council? I would like to see the Civic Center Master Plan move forward in a way that insures the public process is open and transparent, that the plan to finance it is sound, and that traffic and congestion issues are carefully considered. On a broader level, I want to see the preservation of Piedmont's high level of municipal services, the preservation of the small town feel, and the continuation of a strong City – School partnership.

What lawyering skills do you possess that will help you best serve the community at large? I believe lawyers are generally good communicators, and I hope to work collegially with my fellow Council members and

the citizens to listen to their concerns, weigh the facts fairly, and decisively take action for the benefit of all Piedmonters.

What one experience in your community work have you cherished the most? That's a tough one. It's a toss-up between chairing the Piedmont Capital Improvement Projects Committee for the past 2 years, and being president of AABA and NAPABA. All were very personally satisfying, yet very different experiences. Serving as NAPABA president involved leading a national organization to further the interests of a diverse group of APA lawyers, while serving as AABA President and volunteering on the CIP Committee involved helping to improve the professional lives of local APA lawyers and Piedmonters, respectively, on a local level. All require synthesizing diverse views and bringing consensus so that the organization and the committee are able to improve and move forward. And all have given me the opportunity to meet some phenomenal people, and make many wonderful friendships. Professionally, it is extremely gratifying to have had the privilege of leading 2 great bar associations. I see serving on the Piedmont City Council as an extension of community service closer to home.

If you had not chosen the career path of an attorney, what would you have chosen as a career? I almost applied to the Masters program at Stanford in East Asian Studies, my major in college, but decided to go to law school because I wanted to couple law with policy, and public service was always in the back of my mind. So, I'm just grateful that I was able to practice in the City Attorney's Office while at the same time serve the legal profession, and my community.

What living person do you most admire? Elizabeth Edwards.

What do you enjoy doing when you are not working? I enjoy reading, traveling, and watching my kids' tennis matches and tournaments.

Fill in the blank. Most AABA members probably don't know that I lost the election for homecoming queen by 3 votes in high school, because I didn't feel comfortable asking others to vote for me. I learned a valuable campaigning lesson that I vowed not to repeat in the race for City Council!

Exam time: Are you ready?

By Nikki Dinh, AABA Student Member (Golden Gate University School of Law '10)

April brings showers and tax deadlines, but for AABA student members, something even drearier looms during this month: law school exams. In April, law students are preparing to battle the fast paced, tedious and perhaps overwhelming final exams of the school year.

As crunch time approaches, AABA compiled some tips to cope with exams, thanks to the help of Bay Area professors and law students. There is no doubt that changing natural study habits may be hard, but if you have not been receiving the grades that you have been striving for, then try to put in some effort to adopt one or two changes to your study habit. It could make a world of difference.

I. Preparation: Exam taking actually begins in April when students start understanding and synthesizing the concepts of the course. The tools commonly used are outlines, flashcards, practice tests and study guides.

Do: Attend all professor reviews. They are the ones writing and grading the test.

Do: "Use the exam as a learning opportunity." - Professor Edith Ho (USF Professor). Recognize the mistakes you made in your last exams to improve upon your next.

Do: Outline one topic at a time and try to do it in one longer sitting. This gives you a chance to think about the law and the connections within the law.

Do: Condense your outline. Many students will have 20-40 pages of information in their outline. Try to derive from your large outline a mini-outline or checklist to focus on key concepts.

Do: Practice, practice, practice. "Take practice exams early, often, and under timed conditions. Even if you're not done with your outline, taking exams will help to refine what you do know and give you clues about what you didn't know." -Professor Grace Hum (USF Professor, Legal Writing Coach, and CA Bar Exam Tutor).

Don't: Don't think that all outlines are created equally. The most effective outline will be the one you make yourself because you are taking the time to synthesize the concepts and form the bigger picture.

Don't: Don't forget to keep a balanced life. Avoid burnout by staying healthy, working out and taking breaks.

II. Exam day: "In law school, we test skills, not knowledge." -Professor Reichi Lee. (GGU Professor, Academic Development). So remember not to just show the professor what you know, but that you can apply that knowledge.

Do: Organize your answer on a large scale and small scale. Strategize before you write. "The difference between a good answer and a really great answer is organization." -Professor Grace Hum

Do: Analyze! "What we have found is that students are not using the facts." - Professor Reichi Lee. She stresses that students should spend more time analyzing than regurgitating the rule. In IRAC, the analysis/application should be the bulk of the paper. Analyzing requires using key words, answering why the facts are significant in light of the rule, looking at the strengths and weaknesses of both sides of the argument and analogizing to other cases.

Do: With multiple choice questions, read the call of the question carefully.

Don't: Don't stress out before the exam. Try to keep a calm, collected and confident persona.

Don't: Don't make up your own facts.

Don't: Don't misallocate your time. This may be remedied by doing a quick outline of your exam response so you may prioritize the issues.

Lastly, exams are not perfect indicators of a student's potential and definitely not the only measure of success. You'll be surprised at how many leaders and accomplished attorneys were not at the top of their class. Continuously striving for improvement and being well rounded will be any student's ultimate key to success. Good luck!

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS *continued from page 3*

Ngo, has thrown his hat in the ring for election to the College Board in San Francisco.

- One of our Past Presidents, David Chiu, has declared his candidacy for the District 3 seat on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors.
- And just this past Tuesday, March 4, another AABA Past President Margaret Fujioka won a seat on the Piedmont City Council. She is the first Asian American woman to sit on the council in its 100 year existence, and captured the most votes out of any other candidate in the election. Congratulations Margie!

AABA's goal and reason for being is to ensure our community's equality in the eyes of the law, and our community's visibility and full participation in all aspects of public life. It is part of our birthright to be recognized and to be counted, and to trumpet our successes and acknowledge our struggles as part of an open society.

As the year begins, there is so much more to be done, as new challenges never fail to present themselves. It's an honor to be entrusted with the stewardship of this organization for the upcoming year. I pledge to you that I will work hard to honor and continue AABA's rich history of advocacy, mentorship, service, and – above all – ensuring our visible presence in the Bay Area. Thank you.

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was that a single courageous city or state could "serve as a laboratory; and try novel social and economic experiments without risk to the rest of the country."

He famously concluded: "If we would guide by the light of reason, we must let our minds be bold."

I think we can be certain that tomorrow's national progress will owe much to today's local governments. In the practice of public law today, I really think local government really is where the action is.

We demonstrate national leadership not by making symbolic gestures, but by tangibly representing our community's imperatives.

Doing that, America has much to gain — if we let our minds be bold.

Thank you.

Upcoming Calendar of Events

APRIL

- State Bar of CA – "Access to Justice" Symposium: **April 23**
- KABA Spring Mixer & Membership Drive, **April 24**
- IPBA 18th Annual Conference, **April 27-30**, Los Angeles
- FBANC Annual Installation Dinner, **April 25**, 6:30pm, The Four Seas Restaurant, SF Chinatown

MAY

East West Eats: An Evening with the Bay Area's Best Chefs, **May 8**. Ferry Building, 7:00 pm.

JUNE

- Chinese for Affirmative Action Dinner: **June 11**
- Centro Legal de la Raza/Youth Law Academy: **June 26**
- ABA Nat'l Conference for the Minority Lawyer: **June 26-27**, San Jose

AUGUST

National Conference of Vietnamese American Attorneys/ Vietnamese American Bar Association of Northern California 10th Anniversary Dinner: **August 15-16**, SF

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