



AABA Newsletter

WWW.AABA - BAY.COM

MAY 2009



President's Column

Garner Weng, AABA President

It is, of course, traditional for the media to review presidential performance after 100 days, or 81 days, whichever fits more comfortably within the AABA Newsletter publication schedule. To that end, the crackerjack AABA Newsletter reporters hit the streets to interview AABA members about The First 81 Days.

Interested in the feedback, I asked to hear what people were saying. Here's a sample of what they reported back to me.

"Not bad. No scandals yet, right?"

"Is Garner President? What happened to Celia? I've always liked Celia."

"When's Billy coming up? I've always liked Billy."

"Gardner who?"

"Did those nice girls get their puppy yet?"

The presidential approval ratings show a little more traction, hitting an AABA record all-time high of 89% (statistical margin of error of $\pm 88\%$). The administration's efforts are also reflected in broader areas. From the beginning of the presidential term until the 81st day, the Dow rose over 1053 points (over 14%). Other trend lines were also positive: nationwide, fewer lawyers were laid off in April than in any other month in 2009. So hey, not a terrible start.

Especially if you overlook this whole swine flu business.

Really though, credit must as always go to our hard-working committees, which are the lifeblood of our organization and put on so many of our events and programs. Here's just the briefest snapshot of some of our recent committee work:

- Our Judiciary Committee has been a whirlwind of activity, just as we hoped. If you didn't already know, this Committee undertakes a pretty exhaustive approach to reviewing requests for endorsing judicial candidates, combing through application materials and interviewing myriad references. It has also been working behind the scenes, arranging meetings with folks who oversee appointments, and pushing the media and news to keep the APA voice heard on the issue of diversity in the judiciary.

continued on next page

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN *continued from page 1*

- Our Employment Committee is putting the finishing touches on the upcoming Lawyer-to-Lawyer Mentoring Program Mixer on May 19 and the Summer Associate Reception on June 18. Summer is a busy time, as the Committee is also working on a revamped Career Day/Resume Workshop type of event for early August.
- Our Civil Rights Committee is putting the finishing touches on their upcoming program on June 25—Asian American Civil Rights Lawyers: Reflections on Their Path and Advice on How to Join Their Fight.
- Our Community Services Committee put on a fantastic Law Day clinic, which you can read about in this very newsletter; and our Social Committee organized a successful mixer with our sister APA bar association, SABA.

What was it that Dale Minami once said? Ask not what your AABA can do for you; ask what you can do for your AABA. If you are still looking to get involved or more involved in AABA, joining a committee is a great place to start. Feel free to contact me directly, or any of the committee co-chairs listed on the AABA website.

At the Board level, we began the term by wrestling with our budget in the 2009 economic climate and had to make some difficult decisions—but I was proud to see our Board continue to place strong emphasis and priority on areas such as our support of legal clinics, our scholarships and grants in furtherance of the public interest, and our other commitments to the community.

There are two other major efforts in which we are engaged. First, we continue to try to figure out how we can help our APA brothers and sisters who have been laid off—or who are just graduating from law school jobless, in this severe downturn. We've been talking to judges, in-house counsel, law-firm types, law students, organizations who might be able to use more interns or volunteers, and folks who have been laid off—in coordination with our Employment Committee—and hope to launch some additional programs and events specifically to try to help people. If you have any ideas, please send them our way!

Second, we have begun long-range strategic planning. AABA is in a wonderful position. We are long-established; we have a large and robust membership; and though we are trying to ride out a tough time, we have relatively healthy finances. So as much as we have accomplished and are accomplishing, we believe we can accomplish more. We launched the strategic-planning process at our annual Board/Committee Chair retreat, and we are dedicating our in-person Board meetings specifically to this process. Again, if you have any thoughts about this, please reach out to me.

Otherwise, we'll just see what the opinion polls say in another 100 (or 81) days.



To get more involved with AABA, please email President at gweng@hansonbridgett.com

AABA THANKS THE FOLLOWING SUSTAINING MEMBERS OF 2008!

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photo credits: Jayne Salinger (BASF)

The ABA's "State of Diversity in the Legal Profession" Regional Hearing in San Francisco

By Daisy J. Hung, AABA Director

This year, the American Bar Association (ABA) organized a number of "State of Diversity in the Legal Profession" hearings in select cities across the nation, including Boston, Atlanta, Columbus, and San Francisco. At these hearings, leading diversity experts gave testimony about racial, ethnic, gender, LGBT and disability rights issues in the legal profession context.

On March 25, 2009, the ABA held the West Coast Regional hearing in San Francisco, at the California State Bar building. With the help of The Bar Association of San Francisco, speakers were chosen to testify on the following panels: Academia, Bar Associations, Corporate/Law Firm, and Non-Profit/Government/Judiciary.

Each speaker was given seven minutes to discuss (1) diversity efforts that they or their organization do to promote diversity, (2) the success of their program(s), (3) what the future holds for diversity in the legal profession in terms of efforts, challenges, and opportunities, and (4) how the current economic climate may affect diversity efforts. A brief question and answer period followed each panel. A court reporter transcribed all the testimony, and a professor took notes on the presentations.

With about 20 speakers, a wealth of information was shared with the ABA and the audience. Topics ranged from LSAT accommodations for persons with disabilities, identifying mental illness among attorneys, glass ceiling concerns for

women and minorities, diversity pipeline programs, current attorney layoffs and the transformation of the legal profession, to Indian law and challenges for Native American lawyers.

Assistant Dean Rod Fong, from Golden Gate University, spoke on the Academia panel, and discussed bar exam passage rates for minority law students and what could be done to improve those numbers. Past AABA President, and current Asian Pacific Bar of California President Edwin Prather spoke about the need to have more Asian Americans on the bench, and what Asian American bar associations have been doing to advocate for more Asian American judges. Edwin stated, "[w]hen a minority is appointed to the bench, he or she represents an entire community. By achieving an institutionalized role in the administration of justice, in many ways the pinnacle of that institution, the appointment helps judges combat institutional racism."

The ABA will be gathering all the testimony at each of the regional hearings, and will culminate in the ABA's June 2009 Diversity Summit.



COBLENTZ, PATCH, DUFFY & BASS PARTNER A. MARISA CHUN TAPPED FOR TOP JUSTICE POST

San Francisco, April 20, 2009 - Coblentz, Patch, Duffy & Bass LLP Partner **A. Marisa Chun** has been appointed to serve as Deputy Associate Attorney General at the U.S. Department of Justice, starting May 1, 2009. Ms. Chun, who has practiced at the Coblentz firm for nearly a decade, brings civil litigation and leadership experience, in returning to the Justice Department, where she began her legal career.



The Associate Attorney General is the third-ranking official at the U.S. Department of Justice. The Office of the Associate Attorney General advises and assists the Attorney General and the Deputy Attorney General in formulating and implementing the Department's policies and programs pertaining to a broad range of civil justice, federal and local law enforcement, and public safety matters. The Office oversees the Department's civil litigating components, including the Antitrust, Civil, Civil Rights, Environmental and Natural Resources, and Tax Divisions. A Principal Deputy and four Deputies, including Ms. Chun, will assist Associate Attorney General Thomas J. Perrelli with respect to his responsibilities.

Richard R. Patch, the Firm's Litigation Chairman, said, "We are thrilled that Marisa has been selected by the Obama Administration for this position. Coblentz, Patch, Duffy & Bass has a longstanding tradition of public service and we are proud that Marisa will be continuing this Coblentz tradition, by serving the nation."

Ms. Chun joined Coblentz, Patch, Duffy & Bass in 1999 and became a partner in 2003. She practices complex civil litigation, with an emphasis on business litigation, consumer protection and unfair business practices actions, appellate litigation, and employment law. At Coblentz, she has worked on a wide variety of cases in the federal and state courts, including disputes involving breach of contract, business torts, unfair competition and antitrust, cable and tele-

communications, trade secrets, employment, securities, and First Amendment claims.

"I am honored to have this opportunity to serve the American people and the Justice Department at this critical time in our history," said Ms. Chun. "At the same time, I will miss my colleagues at Coblentz very much. Coblentz, Patch, Duffy & Bass has always stood for excellence in lawyering and the best values of our profes-

sion, so I hope to apply what I have learned here in Washington, D.C."

Ms. Chun first joined the Department of Justice in 1992, through the Attorney General's Honors Program. She served as a Trial Attorney and Senior Trial Attorney in the Civil Rights Division, from 1992 to 1996, where she investigated and prosecuted public employers for violations of federal civil rights laws.

Ms. Chun has been actively involved in the legal community. She has served as Chair of the State Bar of California's Federal Courts Committee, Chair of the Bar Association of San Francisco's (BASF) Litigation Section, a Lawyer Representative for the Northern District of California to the Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference, and President of the Korean American Bar Association of Northern California. She was appointed by Chief Judge Vaughn Walker to the Northern District's Federal Magistrate Judge Merit Selection Review Panel, which recommended the re-appointment of Magistrate Judges Edward Chen and Richard Seeborg. Her *pro bono* work at Coblentz has included serving as a mediator for the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California.

Ms. Chun received her B.A. from Yale University, *summa cum laude*, in 1987. She graduated from Harvard Law School, *cum laude*, in 1991, where she served as Developments Editor of the Harvard Law Review. She served as a law clerk to the Honorable Robert Boochever of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.



From L to R: Eric Wu, Jim Yu, and Dan Sakai.

Oakland Police Sergeant Daniel Sakai, the Immigrant Experience, and the Law

By Jim Yu

My friend Dan Sakai was one of the four Oakland police officers killed recently. A member of the SWAT team, Dan tried to apprehend a man who had gunned down two motorcycle officers and a fellow SWAT officer.

Dan and I met in college in 1993. We both worked as Community Service Officers for the campus police, patrolling the school and walking people home or to the library at night. We became friends almost instantly. When I returned to the Bay Area after law school, we were roommates. I was his best man at his wedding. He was my best man at my wedding.

At first glance, it is hard to imagine how we became friends. We were truly the Odd Couple and had nothing in common. In college, he was gregarious and I was introverted. He was an ultra-competitive skier and cyclist and I was always one of the last to be chosen for basketball or touch football teams. So what was our bond?

continued on next page

DANIEL SAKAI *continued from page 8*

First, there was our immigrant experience. Dan's paternal grandmother and his then seven year old father immigrated to America from Japan. His father, through hard work and sacrifice, built up a successful landscaping business. Along the way, he taught Dan the importance of honor, duty, respect and instilled a strong work ethic. Dan embraced these values and excelled at everything he put his heart and mind into, whether it was athletics, academics, or his career.

Coincidentally, I was also seven when my mother and I moved to America. Dan's grandmother and my mother gave up their homelands, and almost everyone they knew and loved, for a foreign land known only for its potential opportunities. They gave us a brighter future.

Second, Dan and I chose careers in law because we wanted to do our part to make this country, which had given us so much already, an even better place.

When Dan graduated from college, he had lots of options: He could have chosen a challenging and lucrative career in medicine, could have taken over his family's business or could have used his forestry degree and satiated his love for nature by working outdoors as a guide or researcher. These would have all been "easy" choices to make.

Dan wanted to be a police officer. He wanted to use his exceptional social skills, intellect, and athletic abilities to make a positive impact by working in the neglected parts of Oakland where help was desperately needed. He knew the risks and sacrificed his life with honor to make Oakland a safer place for people to live, work, and learn.

Like Dan, I entered the legal profession in the belief that what makes America a great nation is that it is based on the rule of law. Cops and D.A.s enforce the law; public defenders and de-

fense attorneys protect the rights of the accused; businesses rely on our justice system to arbitrate transactions gone wrong and when intellectual property rights have been violated; the injured are compensated by those who cause harm.

Although we ended up in very different professions, I can relate to Dan's motivations because of the similarities in our backgrounds. I share my story to honor my very good friend but also to remind everyone in my community that we share connections with these exceptional people who, unfortunately, passed before their times. (Dan was just 35 years old.) Instead of turning to despair, we should remember that their positive traits are in all of us. I hope that every AABA member can relate to Dan's exceptional qualities. We are all immigrants or the descendants of recent immigrants. We grew up in households in which honor, duty, respect, and a strong work ethic were instilled in us. We all chose a career in law because we believe in the American justice system and want to help our country and her people.

Dan leaves behind his wife Jenni and four year old daughter Jojiye. Dan once said that his goals were to do great things and to do good. He wanted his daughter Jojiye to have and to accomplish these same goals. If you would like to contribute to a 529 college savings account set up for Jojiye, please make the check payable to "Fidelity Brokerage Services, LLC". In the check's memo section, please write "Jojiye Sakai #615588270". Please mail the check to Jim Yu, 3 Altarinda Road, Suite 202, Orinda, CA 94563. Thank you.

Jim Yu is a sustaining member of AABA. He was elevated to partner in January 2008 at Balamuth Harrington, LLP in Orinda, which specializes in representing plaintiffs in personal injury and professional malpractice actions. Jim can be contacted at 925-254-1234 with any questions or comments you may have about this story. For more information about Jim and his law firm, please see the firm's website at www.balamuth.com

Please mark your calendars!

**Asian American Bar Association's (AABA)
22nd Annual Summer Law Clerk Reception**

Thursday, June 18th

Yank Sing Restaurant

One Rincon Center, 101 Spear Street, San Francisco

The event provides a great forum for Bay Area law students and attorneys to meet or catch up with one another, and also recognizes this year's AABA grant recipients. Last year we had nearly 200 people in attendance and hope to have an even better turn out in 2009.

No RSVP is required. However, partners and other attorneys who may be interested may contribute \$95 to help defray the costs and will be recognized in the annual event program. Please email Phil Lee (plee@qual-comm.com) if you are interested in contributing or have any other questions about the event. The contribution is entirely optional and we would simply appreciate any of your help in spreading the word about the reception.

Spring SABA/AABA Mixer

By Lynn Phan, Social Committee Co-Chair

Thanks to everyone who came out for the SABA/AABA mixer at Cigar Bar on April 23! The turnout was fantastic - about 60 AABA attorneys mixed and mingled with our friends from SABA. The joint event was a success!

If you missed it, keep checking your calendars because there will definitely be more Social events coming later this summer.



L to R: Darren Chan, Nikki Dinh, Robert Uy, Richard Cooc

photo credits: My Linh Nguyen and Nikki Uyen Dinh

AABA Law Day – March 28, 2009

by Richard Cooc, Community Services Committee Co-Chair

On March 28, 2009, the AABA Community Service Committee, API Legal Outreach, and UC Hastings APALSA sponsored the first annual AABA Law Day. The event took place from 9:00 am until 4:00 pm at UC Hastings School of Law.

AABA Law Day is an expansive legal clinic where AABA attorneys and law students got together to help low-income members of the community with legal issues such as: Wills/Trusts, Public Benefits, Immigration, Family Law, Bankruptcy, Small Business/Incorporation, Housing, Foreclosure, Employment, Wage and Hour, Discrimination, Tax, and Landlord-Tenant.

The event was a resounding success due to the help of all of the volunteers. AABA served over 30 clients who were in dire need of legal advice. All of the clients obtained valuable legal information and advice.

All of the volunteers involved had a great time. AABA also received great feedback from clients, volunteers, and attorneys.

The gratification of helping individuals who needed legal help certainly outweighed the hours that everybody sacrificed on a Saturday and redefined our roles as API lawyers.

AABA would like to thank all of the volunteer attorneys and law student who attended the event. AABA would like to especially thank the community service committee, including Rob Uy, Eumi Lee, and Richard Cooc and UC Hasting's APALSA, including Jay Chen, Eugene Wu, George Kawamoto, Yvonne Pham, and Darren Chan for coordinating the event.

The AABA community service committee will continue to set up events like this throughout the year.

continued on next page



Morning Shift



Jay Chan, Yaei Kim, Yvonne Pham, and Darren Chan



Jeff Lowe



Jennifer Lee and Nikki Dinh



Tina Pham and Grace Ho



Afternoon Shift



L to R: Dennis Chin (Burnham Brown, VLSC Volunteer), Elizabeth A. Clark (Wiley W. Manuel Pro Bono Recipient and VLSC Board Member), and Ronnie R. Gipson, Jr. (Burnham Brown)

Ronnie R. Gipson, Jr. and Aimee G. Hamoy-Perera of Burnham Brown, one of sponsoring firms for the ACBA VLSC Dinner



photo credits: Michelle Jew

Alameda County Bar Celebrates Giving Back To The Community

By Michelle Jew, Newsletter Committee Co-Chair

On May 7, 2009, the Alameda County Bar Association celebrated the pro bono spirit of its members who have volunteered their time and resources to the bar association's Volunteer Legal Services Corporation ("VLSC"). The dinner and the silent auction was hosted by Sherry Hu from CBS 5 Eyewitness News and was sponsored by Burnham Brown, Donahue Gallagher Woods LLP, Kazan, McClain, Lyons, Greenwood & Harley, PLC, and Morrison & Foerster LLP. VLSC President Larry E. Lulofs told the packed dining room at Scott's Seafood in Oakland that VLSC has had a record number of volunteers. The number of clients has risen from 700 clients last year to about 900 clients so far this year. The spike in the number of clients, Lulofs said, is partially due to the downturn in the economy and the increase of bankruptcy cases. He encouraged everyone to volunteer in these hard economic times because "[i]n these economic times, we cannot rest on our laurels." The dinner also featured a dialog on volunteerism between Karen Baker, the California Secretary of Service and Volunteering and Holly J. Fujie, who is the first Asian American President of the State Bar of California. As part of the discussion, Fujie reminded why attorneys should volunteer time. "We as lawyers have the ability to do amazing things" because of the ability to access the legal justice system. Tushar Shan (Volunteer of the Year) and Bruce S. Eads (Mentor of the Year) were honored for their volunteer work with VLSC. Eads summed up the night by explaining why he and others volunteer their time: The "simple act of caring" is something that is "always uplifting."



Irene Lee, Rita Mah, Dr. Tom Peters, Joanne Sakai, and AIISF

Invite you to a fundraising brunch to benefit
Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation on:
Sunday, May 17, 10:30 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.
at the Dynasty Restaurant
(1881 Tiburon Blvd, Tiburon, CA)

Special guest speakers include, playwright and poet Genny Lim and
San Francisco Supervisor Eric Mar

Tickets are \$40/per person or \$70/ per couple. Tickets are available at www.aiisf.org.
The Dynasty Restaurant features a ten-course buffet.
Seating is limited to 200 people, so please respond by May 12.

At the conclusion of the brunch, please join us at the Immigration Station for a poetry
reading from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. with public tours of the Detention Barracks and
grounds. The ferry leaves at Noon from the Tiburon dock, located across the
street from the Dynasty Restaurant.

Free Parking is available at the Dynasty Restaurant.

AABA Lawyer-to-Lawyer Mentoring Program Mixer

Tuesday, May 19, 2009

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Dear AABA Attorney Members,

The AABA Employment Committee is happy to announce the first Lawyer-to-Lawyer (L2L) Mixer. The L2L mentoring program is under way and allows new attorneys to form relationships and gain insight into legal careers from more experienced attorneys. Many of the participating mentors and mentees have been matched and we hope this program is already proving itself useful.

It's not always easy to find free time so the L2L Mixer is a great opportunity for mentors and mentees to gather. We also welcome those who are interested in joining our program as new mentors and mentees. And for those already participating, but have not yet been matched up, this is an ideal opportunity to meet other available mentor/mentees.

We hope you can make this event. The event details are as follows:

Date: Tuesday, May 19, 2009

Time: 6-8:30pm

Location: 260 King Street, San Francisco, in the clubhouse on the 4th floor of The Beacon, a residential complex next door to AT&T Park in San Francisco

RSVP: By May 5, 2009, to Phillip Lee at phillip.lee43@yahoo.com.

Snacks and Drinks will be provided

Open to AABA attorney members only.

Space is limited, so if venue capacity limitations becomes an issue, priority will be given to program participants enrolled as of the date of this message.

This event is sponsored by Qualcomm Incorporated, the world's biggest maker of computer chips for mobile phones.

We hope to see you there,

AABA Employment Committee

THE BAR ASSOCIATION OF SAN FRANCISCO PRESENTS ITS

MINORITY *Summer Associates* RECEPTION

Celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the Goals and Timetables
for Minority Hiring and Advancement Initiative

Thursday, June 11, 2009

5:30 - 8:00 p.m.

BASF Conference Center, 301 Battery Street, Third Floor

Please join us at our annual Minority Summer Associates Reception as we celebrate the 20th Anniversary of BASF's "Goals and Timetables for Minority Hiring and Advancement" initiative, and honor its founders Robert Borton, Jim Brosnahan, Kevin Fong, Sergio Garcia, Ray Marshall, Dru Ramey, Guy Rounsaville and Therese Stewart.

The reception will be a great opportunity to celebrate "Goals and Timetables" in action today, honor these champions of diversity for their groundbreaking contributions to the legal profession, and welcome minority summer associates and law clerks to the San Francisco legal community to encourage them to continue their legal careers in San Francisco.

Please RSVP by June 4 to DiversityEvents@sfbar.org. Make sure you specify that you are attending the June 11 reception.

For more information, visit www.sfbar.org/calendar.



THE BAR ASSOCIATION OF
SAN FRANCISCO



AABA Members Receive Discounts on ILRC Webinars & Seminars

AABA is pleased to announce a partnership with the Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC) to offer members a discount rate on all webinars and seminars for MCLE credit.

ILRC is a national non-profit resource center that provides legal training, educational materials, and advocacy to advance immigrant rights.

AABA members can attend any training event hosted by ILRC at the "nonprofit" rate by typing in the code "AABA member" when registering for an event. A full list of the courses offered by ILRC can be accessed at their website at: www.ilrc.com/seminars

For any questions about this program, please call David Lim on the Education Committee at (510) 639-7205.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

MAY

Bay Area Minority Law Student Scholarship Program. Deadline for completed applications **May 15**.

Talking Story. **May 16**. Northside Community Center, 488 North Sixth Street, San Jose.

Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation Fundraising brunch. **May 17**, 10:30 am to 11:45 am. Dynasty Restaurant. 1881 Tiburon Blvd., Tiburon.

AABA Lawyer-to-Lawyer Mentoring Program Mixer. **May 19**. 6-8:30pm. 260 King Street, San Francisco in the clubhouse on 4th Floor of The Beacon.



JUNE

AABA 22nd Annual Summer Law Clerk Reception. **June 18**. Yank Sing Restaurant. One Rincon Center, 101 Spear Street, San Francisco.

Asian American Civil Rights Lawyers: Reflections on Their Path and Advice on How to Join Their Fight. **June 25**. Time and place tbd.

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