



AABA Newsletter

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President's Column

By Malcolm Yeung

The month of May has been a remarkable month for Asian Americans and the law. We have seen an incredible high and an incredible low. On a high note, we saw the confirmation of Judge Edward Chen (FINALLY!!!) on May 10 to the bench of the Northern District of California.

In a disappointing low exactly a week later, we saw the Senate fail to reach cloture on Professor Goodwin Liu's nomination for the Ninth Circuit. It sounds clichéd, but this May showed us how far Asian Americans have come, and how far we have yet to go.

For Judge Chen, community level advocacy can and did matter. For all of the two years and each of the eight nominations that Judge Chen faced, community organizations throughout the country stuck with it – organizing members to send countless thousands of letters, make thousands of calls, and submit and publish numerous op-eds.

Collectively, we sent the right and consistent message to the White House and the Senate, "We are not going to stop until you do the right thing and confirm Judge Ed Chen." President Obama and Senator Dianne Feinstein carried that message forward and never let us down. We should carry this victory with us as a reminder that what we do here on the "ground" really does matter. I'm proud to say that AABA contributed a small part to the overall effort.

Community momentum, unfortunately, could not carry the day for Professor Liu. In this instance, the ugly specters of political ideology and racial undertones carried the day.

From the first testimony by Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT), it was clear that Republicans were on a mission to block Professor Liu's nomination. Senator Hatch invoked the memory (or specter) of the failed Robert Bork nomination from over two decades ago. It clearly had nothing to do with Professor Liu. But it had its intended effect as a rallying cry to fellow Republicans to "get with the program" and "hold the line."

In perhaps the ugliest moment, Senator Chuck Grassley (R-IA) stoked racial fears and threw in red baiting for good measure by reminding Professor Liu that America is not, in fact, similar to communist China. I'm sure Professor Liu had forgotten this so was grateful for the reminder.

So what's the take away? Our communities matters. Our politics matter. And, even in a post-racial Obama world, our race and ethnicity still matter.

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PLEASE SAVE THE DATE FOR AABA's
24th ANNUAL SUMMER LAW CLERK RECEPTION
Thursday, June 23rd, 6pm

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 2011.

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 Olivia Lee (olee@minamitamaki.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.



The members of Alameda Contra Costa Trial Lawyers Association
send our congratulations to the

Honorable Edward M. Chen

on his elevation to federal judge for the Northern District of California.

As a public interest attorney, Your Honor fought for the rights of the powerless and voiceless. As a magistrate judge, Your Honor ensured that every litigant was treated fairly and equitably. We wish you continued strength, wisdom, and conviction.

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED WITH AABA

1 Join a committee!

We have 12 committees who would all love your help! Please contact one of our committee chairs to learn more.

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2 Co-host a CLE with AABA!

AABA is a certified Continuing Legal Education (CLE) provider and if you want to join AABA to put on a CLE class, please contact our Education Committee!

3 Advertise with AABA!

Advertise in AABA's newsletter to reach out to our large membership base. Our newsletter is sent out to over 2,000 people each month.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

JUNE

Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach (APILO) / AABA Pro Bono Legal Clinic. **June 15.** 6:00pm - 8:00pm A1305 Franklin Street, Suite 410, Oakland.

AABA's 24th Annual Summer Law Clerk Reception – **June 23.** 6pm. Yank Sing Restaurant, One Rincon Center, 101 Spear Street, SF.

Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach (APILO) / AABA Pro Bono Legal Clinic. **June 27.** 5:45pm - 8:00pm. UC Hastings Civil Justice Clinic, 100 McAllister Street, Suite 300, SF

JULY

Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach (APILO) / AABA Pro Bono Legal Clinic. **July 20.** 6:00pm - 8:00pm. 1305 Franklin Street, Suite 410, Oakland

Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach (APILO) / AABA Pro Bono Legal Clinic. **July 25.** 5:45pm - 8:00pm UC Hastings Civil Justice Clinic, 100 McAllister Street, Suite 300, SF.

Legal Advice and Referral Clinic. **July 30.** All-day legal clinic AABA will collaborate with VLSP's Legal Advice and Referral Clinic to host an all-day legal clinic.

AUGUST

KABANC Annual Dinner, **August 26.** TBD

OCTOBER

VABANC Annual Dinner, **October 7.** TBD



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JOIN AABA NOW!