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ASIAN AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION
of the Greater Bay Area

AABA Newsletter - July 2018

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If you are interested in contributing to a future newsletter, please contact the Newsletter Committee Co-Chairs **Kathy Aoki** (Kathyaok@aol.com) and **Candice Shih** (cshih@hansonbridgett.com).

President's Message

Dear AABA Family,

We are living through challenging times. It can be tough and disappointing to read today's headlines. Nevertheless, I try to find spaces of refuge, to see the humanity that exists around us, to connect with others who want to make a meaningful impact in their communities, and to help the next generation be more accepting of diversity. That is what I value about AABA -- since our inception 42 years ago, we've been a

voice for Asian Americans and other minorities. As we face challenges in protecting the rights and lives of

minority communities, we have the opportunity to grow stronger united and be better together. As AABA President this year, I constantly ask myself, "How can AABA be more effective?"



One place we can start is by being active constituents in our cities, regions, states, and country. We have already celebrated some victories these past few months, from renaming a San Francisco public playground that was originally named after a racist politician, to the appointment of John Hamasaki to the San Francisco Police Commission, and to the reelection of Judges Cynthia Lee and Andrew Cheng and appointment of more Asian Pacific American judges in the Bay Area. With over 1,000 members, we have a strong collective voice that can make an impact.

This November, we will be going to the polls, and I hope that AABA can play an active role in the upcoming and future elections. We are planning a poll monitoring workshop and a voter registration drive for this Fall. We are also participating in exit polls with the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund. **You can volunteer** to conduct nonpartisan exit polls to get a snapshot of Asian American candidate preferences, party enrollment, and issues of significance to Asian American voters. Please join us for any or all of these initiatives! If you want to get involved, or have other ideas about what else AABA can do, please email me at President@aaba-bay.com and AABA Operations Director Tina Hsu at Info@aaba-bay.com.

I hope you enjoy this issue of the AABA newsletter, featuring our law firm partner sponsors from the 31st Annual Summer Diversity Reception, tips for attorney wellness, a profile on Santa Clara County Deputy District Attorney and outstanding AABA community member, Johnny Gogo, a feature on AABA Law Foundation scholarship awardee Anita Suen, and some photos from our recent events. Thank you for being engaged. We are Better Together, Stronger United!

In unity,
David Tsai
President

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AABA's 31st Annual Summer Diversity Reception Brings Together APA Law Community and Celebrates Grant Winners

By Irene Yang

Co-Chair of AABA's Professional Development Committee

The Asian American Bar Association of the Greater Bay Area (AABA) hosted its 31st Annual Summer Diversity Reception on June 28, 2018 at Fang Restaurant in San Francisco. Over 170 attended the reception, bringing together law students, summer associates and law clerks from the Bay Area and around the country, attorneys, and Asian Pacific American law firm partners.

Charles Jung, AABA Vice President, welcomed attendees and recognized newly elevated Asian Pacific Islander (API) partners. Salle Yoo presented two grants to law students, courtesy of the Salle Yoo and Jeff Gray Charitable Fund and AABA Law Foundation. Crystal Kim, a rising 2L at Berkeley Law who is externing for California Supreme Court Justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye this summer, received a Judicial Externship Grant. Jeremy Chan, a rising 3L at UC Hastings who is working with Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach (APILO) this summer, received a Public Interest Grant. Deanna Gan presented the AABA Law Foundation Grant to

Kayla Liu, a rising 2L at UC Hastings who is externing for San Francisco Superior Court Judge Andrew Y.S. Cheng this summer. Kelly Craven and Irene Yang, co-chairs of the AABA Professional Development Committee, presented closing remarks.

The Reception was organized by AABA's Professional Development Committee co-chairs Kelly Craven, Aseem Gupta, and Irene Yang and AABA's Operations Director Tina Hsu. It was co-sponsored by the Justice & Diversity Center of the Bar Association of San Francisco.

This year's Reception was made possible through individual contributions from over 60 Bay Area APA partners.

AABA is dedicated to supporting the professional growth of its members and developing relationships with the community. We appreciate your continued support and look forward to your attendance at future events.



[More event photos here](#) and [here](#)

Photos courtesy of John B. Lough Jr. and Jason Yee

Thank you to all our generous sponsors for supporting our 31st Annual Summer Diversity Reception!

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Attorney Wellness Topic: How to Approach Difficult Conversations

Excerpted from “Avoiding Tough Conversations? Welcome to Being a Lawyer (6 min read)” by Rudhir Krishtel, executive coach focusing on workplace intensity and lawyer well being.

Brought to you by AABA’s Wellness Task Force, which will be planning upcoming wellness events for members and community. If you are interested in joining the Wellness Task Force, send an email to andrea@lohlegal.com.

Although lawyers are incredible at arguing on behalf of their clients, many don’t welcome having tough personal conversations. Naturally, these people are worried about all of the negative consequences of their interactions.

But, what if the conversations went swimmingly, or at least better than expected? More importantly, what's the cost of inaction? Ongoing tension and stress. Never pursuing the dream of having your own book of business. That feeling of being 'stuck' that only compounds over time.

If you have a difficult conversation that you've been avoiding, consider the following:

Pay Attention to How Avoidance Feels—Yes, I said feelings. Are you paying attention to how you feel when you are avoiding that conversation? What's actually happening? Is there anguish? Are you concerned? Try to understand the consequences you're worrying about. For example, is it being disrespected or rejected? Take a moment to understand the underlying stress. Perhaps it's some form of fight (e.g., I need to win this!) or flight (e.g., what can I do to avoid?). Pay attention to where these feelings show up in your body—possibly a mild tightness in the chest, or maybe pangs in your stomach. Do this same investigation or inquiry of yourself, during, and after the difficult conversation—continue to pay attention to how it makes you feel. Don't discount your own experience.

Assume Positive Intent or Mindset. It's not always "we're the good guys," and "they're the bad guys." When having a tough conversation, instead try assuming that the person you're planning to speak with actually means well; that they ultimately want to support you, and believe you're doing your best. For example, if someone sends a rude email while cc'ing teammates, we may assume that they want to embarrass us. We could instead assume that they were in a hurry, stressed, and didn't realize the negative tone. If we're meeting with a potential client, we may assume they think we're "begging for business." Instead, imagine they need additional support from outside counsel because they're underwater with deadlines. Not much comes from assuming the worst, so stay away from assumptions and give the alternative a shot.

Listen First. Rather than trying to score a win, or beat the other side, think long term about what actually listening in this conversation can do for the relationship you have with this person. For example, in a conflict, you might think listening first means conceding your argument time, letting them score points, or even acquiescing to their position. In a personal conversation, however, you don't actually have to meticulously address every point. To start, imagine the best listener you know, and picture yourself as that person. Simply "hearing out" the other side can do a lot including reducing the tension, making the other person feel "heard," and give you information on what might really be at issue.

Be Clear and Succinct With Your Needs. Know and express specifically what you want, focusing more on the other person's actions, and less on their feelings. If you're dealing with insubordination, stick with the specific behavior you observed, the impact of that behavior, and what needs to change, without judging intent. Avoid putting them on the defensive by blaming or using generalizations ("you always" or "you never") or asking why they went down that path. If there's push-back, go back to the deep listening mentioned above, without interrupting, disagreeing, or necessarily countering, and then briefly restate your needs.

Vision for Positive Outcomes. Rather than doubt yourself, and brainstorm what could go wrong, start to imagine all of the things that may go right by having the conversation. You might land the client. You might start to smooth out issues with your colleague. Imagine the potential benefits even if you don't hit your ultimate goal. Focus on other potential long-term gains. For example, consider the importance of improving your connection with a colleague rather than making sure the colleague understands they did something wrong. With a client pitch, you might not get it this time, but maybe this is just the beginning of a long-term business relationship.

Shifting your approach and repeatedly stepping into these conversations, you'll find yourself feeling more excited about the people, relationships, and scenarios that often caused you difficulty, and ultimately feeling much better about your work and life.

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AABA Membership Spotlight: Johnny Gogo

Johnny Gogo's legal career began as a prosecutor in Guam's Attorney General's Office and he also worked as an associate attorney at Calvo & Clark (Guam). He received a B.A. from the University of California, San Diego in Political Science and a J.D. from Thomas Jefferson School of Law, graduating cum laude.

Since 1999, Mr. Gogo has worked in the Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office and worked on cases/trials ranging from child support enforcement to major narcotics. He is currently assigned to the Community Prosecution Unit where our primary mission is to prevent and reduce juvenile crime through our Law Related Education program 5th graders, our Parent Project education program and our Truancy Abatement program.



"Probably the most significant trial I handled involved a violent felon who was charged with providing narcotics to a 14-year old and then sexually assaulting her," said Mr. Gogo. "There were a number of challenging hurdles to the case including late reporting, no physical exam and the fact that the 14-year old was a run-away at the time of trial. Through direct evidence as well as strong circumstantial evidence, the jury came back with guilty verdicts."

Some of Mr. Gogo's favorite projects include the D.A.'s Law related Education Program which helps teach 5th graders about law and government and the Parent Project which helps parents with difficult adolescent youth.

Mr. Gogo was honored on July 10, 2018 by the Santa Clara County Bar Association as one of their Unsung Heroes Awardees. In 2017 he was recognized by NBC Bay Area during Asian Pacific Heritage Month for outstanding community service in the community. Among his numerous honors include the San Jose Police Department's 2013 George W. Kennedy Excellence in Prosecution Award based on his outstanding work as a community prosecutor.

Mr. Gogo currently serves as the President for the Northern California Chapter of the National Asian Pacific Islander Prosecutors Association (NAPIPA).

What are some of the most memorable moments from your childhood? Because I grew up in a military family (my father served 20 plus years in the U.S. Army), the most memorable moments of my childhood are from the traveling we did as a family. I remember some of the great moments we had living in Japan and experiencing the culture, the sights (Tokyo, the bullet trains, the night markets) and the food. I also remember living in Alaska and playing in the woods and streams during the summer months of the "midnight sun." The

best road trip we took as a family was when we drove and camped through the beautiful "ALCAN" Highway (approximately 1,700 miles). Some of my favorite childhood moments come from the time we were living on Guam and the family BBQ's at the beaches with many of my aunts, uncles and cousins. I was also fortunate to spend parts of my childhood in Germany and southern California too.

What was your first job? As a kid, I did a lot of jobs (mowing lawns, washing cars, etc) to earn some money, but my first "payroll" job was delivering newspapers for the San Bernardino Sun.

What is your favorite food? Japanese.

What is your favorite book? My favorite book is "The Outsiders" by S.E. Hinton which was later adapted into a 1983 film in that featured a young cast of actors including Matt Dillon, C.Thomas Howell, Tom Cruise, Emilio Estevez, Rob Lowe, Ralph Macchio and Patrick Swayze.

What do I like about my job? My current assignment is as a Community Prosecutor and I like this assignment because I get to focus my efforts on juvenile crime prevention and helping the community.

What is the one thing you feel most passionate about? After practicing law for the last 20 years, one of the things I feel most passionate about is helping to diversify our legal profession. I believe that there is strength in diversity, thus, I spend a lot of time trying to help attract, recruit and mentor students of color to go to law school and become attorneys.

What have you been doing for fun lately? I love to travel and just recently returned from a twelve day trip to Spain at the end of May. I also just took a few days enjoying Seattle. Trips to New York city, Chicago, San Diego and Los Angeles are already on the calendar.

Photo courtesy of Nam Le.

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2018 Asian Pacific American Judge's Scholarship: Anita Suen

This month, we feature Anita's personal statement submitted with her scholarship application:

Before attending Berkeley Law, I was a caregiver and advocate for three young children with special needs. The family I worked with was a monolingual Asian immigrant family, and like too many within the APA community, they viewed disability as a form of stigma and a source of shame. Initially, they also believed that our institutions worked against them rather than for them and felt that the systemic barriers to accessing essential services were so great that they need not bother applying for services at all.

It is unfortunate that this family's outcome is considered relatively fortunate. The three children and their family currently receive some of the specialized care and services they need, but not all of them. The family still feels that the institutional barriers are significant, but they no longer feel insurmountable. They are a little more willing to seek services and a little more confident in challenging the system when they are not granted equal services. They feel a little more represented in mainstream society and a little less distrustful of our institutions. These

are small but necessary steps in achieving equality and justice not just for this family, but for the entire APA community and other minority communities.

This summer, I am interning at Disability Rights California, working in the Youth and Intellectual/Developmental Disability practice groups to secure equal rights for people with disabilities in the special education and regional center systems. The family I worked with may have gained access to these systems, but many more like them continue to be excluded and slip through the institutional cracks. Legal advocacy is a powerful tool for social change, but it is only powerful when utilized. During my time as a caregiver, I was surprised by the dearth of culturally-competent legal services for people of color with disabilities, despite San Francisco's minority-majority population. People who would benefit most from such a powerful tool were also the same people who lacked access to legal advocacy as well as essential services.



I am incredibly grateful to have received the AABA Judge's Scholarship, not only because of what the AABA's support means to me personally in my educational journey, but also because of what it means for my mission and the community I aim to serve. Receiving an AABA scholarship means that I have the opportunity and privilege to obtain a legal education and learn the requisite skills to protect and advance the interests of the chronically under-served. It means I can remain in the San Francisco Bay Area and continue to serve and represent its APA community. It means I can continue working to foster institutional trust within the APA community, and to destigmatize disability issues so that those who are among the most marginalized in our community can finally obtain equal rights and equal representation. For these reasons and many more, I would like to thank the AABA for their generous support.

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Event Photo Galleries





June 23 - Joint Hike Series with ABL-SF and Nakayoshi Young Professionals

Courtesy of John B. Lough Jr.

June 21 - Thirsty Third Thursday Happy Hour at Papi Rico

Courtesy of John B. Lough Jr.



June 24 - Mentorship Family Reunion Picnic

Courtesy of John B. Lough Jr.



July 11 - How to Market to Corporations

Courtesy of Stephanie Yee



July 11 - AABA Wellness Task Force Presents: Managing Workplace Intensity

Courtesy of John B. Lough Jr.

We asked member Jason Yee the question, "What does AABA mean to you?"

Membership is 50% off until July 31, join or renew today!

Jason Yee

AABA Member since 2013



"As an attorney, you need to know more than just the law. You need to be aware of community issues, and find mentors and friends who can provide guidance to your success. That's what AABA is here for."

**JOIN OR RENEW MEMBERSHIP
FOR 50% OFF UNTIL JULY 31**

www.aaba-bay.com/join



Civil Rights Committee Wants to Hear From You!

If you have current news, pertinent legal cases, and other events of interest to the Asian American civil rights community and would like AABA to take action or make a statement, fill out this [form](#). If you have any questions, email the CRC co-chairs, Theresa Zhen, Katherine Chu, and Mike Chang, at aaba.bayarea@gmail.com.

AABA and Community Events Calendar

July

July 18 - Oakland APILO/AABA Clinic

6:00 - 8:00 p.m. | Oakland APILO/AABA Clinic, 310 8th Street, Suite 308, Oakland 94607

Contact the co-chairs if you are interested in volunteering

July 19 - Social/Public Law Summer Thirsty Thursday Mixer

5:30 - 7:30 p.m. | SomaR Bar, 1727 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, CA 94612

Register here

July 24 - What's #MeToo Got To Do With Me?: Sexual harassment as it impacts Asian American female lawyers

5:30 p.m. | Lief Cabraser Heimann & Bernstein, LLP, 275 Battery Street, 29th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94111

[Register here](#)

July 25 - San Francisco APILO/AABA Clinic

5:30 - 8:00 p.m. | UC Hastings School of Law 100 McAllister Street Suite 300 San Francisco, CA 94102

Contact the co-chairs if you are interested in volunteering

July 26 - Minority Nonprofit Social Justice Community Dinner

6:00 p.m. | East Bay Community Law Center, 1950 University Ave, Suite 200, Berkeley CA 94609

[Register here](#)

August

August 8 – Attorney Malpractice and Insurance Panel (1 HR MCLE credit pending)

6:00 to 8:00 p.m. | HISCOX Insurance, 101 California Street, Suite 1950, San Francisco, CA

[Register here](#)

August 15 - Oakland APILO/AABA Clinic

6:00 - 8:00 p.m. | Oakland APILO/AABA Clinic, 310 8th Street, Suite 308, Oakland 94607

Contact the co-chairs if you are interested in volunteering.

August 16 – In-House Counsel Panel: Upward Mobility in-House

6:00 to 8:30 PM | Alston & Bird Silicon Valley Office, 1950 University Ave., East Palo Alto, CA 94303

[Register here](#)

August 16-17 - 2018 NAPABA Western Regional Conference in Las Vegas

Park MGM Las Vegas, 3770 South Las Vegas Boulevard, Las Vegas, NV 89109

More information and register here

August 21 – Overcoming Cultural and Gender-biased Expectations Part 2 (1 Hour California Elimination of Bias MCLE Credit)

5:30 to 8:00 PM | Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP, One Market, Spear Street Tower, San Francisco, CA 94105

[Register here](#)

August 22 - San Francisco APILO/AABA Clinic

5:30 - 8:00 p.m. | UC Hastings School of Law 100 McAllister Street Suite 300 San Francisco, CA 94102

Contact the co-chairs if you are interested in volunteering.

August 28 - Joint AABA Baseball Game Social (Sold Out)

5:30 to 7:30 p.m. | Game: AT&T Park, ARI@SF

More Upcoming Events

November 8 - 11 - 2018 NAPABA Convention

Sheraton Chicago Hotel & Towers

[Register here](#)

November 29 - SAVE THE DATE: 2018 AABA Holiday Party.

6:00 p.m. | Location to be announced

Registration will open in August

[See more events here](#)

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