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ASIAN AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION
of the Greater Bay Area

AABA Newsletter - March 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,

I am honored to serve as the 42nd President of AABA. Since AABA's inception in 1976, AABA's members and leadership have been involved in a variety of civil rights issues, mentoring young attorneys, providing legal education programs, performing community service, and organizing legal clinics in the Bay Area. AABA has worked hard make the U.S. more inclusive and safe so that all Asian-American children can achieve whatever their dreams are.

2018 is no exception. AABA has already held programs dealing with issues from immigration rights and LGBT rights, how to become a judge, and how to become a general counsel. Organized by our Community Services Committee this past month, "The Pathways to Law: Pre-Law Diversity Conference" showcased some of our most experienced judges and attorney members. Our members encouraged the diverse high school, college, and post-college student attendees to consider a legal profession and public service.



We celebrate the great work of AABA at the upcoming **42nd Annual AABA Gala “Better Together, Stronger United”** on Thursday, March 22, 2018. We hope you will be able to join us at this black tie event where we recognize some of the greatest contributors to our community, including **San Francisco Superior Court Judge Cynthia Lee** and **Judge Andrew Cheng**, the late **Mayor Edwin Lee** (award to be accepted by his wife **Mrs. Anita Lee**), Minami Tamaki LLP Associate and AABA Board Member **Lisa Mak**, and leading activist in the immigration rights movement, **Jose Antonio Vargas**.

At the Judges and General Counsel Reception preceding the Gala, we will honor **Caroline Tsai**, Western Union Executive Vice President and General Counsel. Ms. Tsai is the 20th Asian-American general counsel at a Fortune 500 company. We celebrate this milestone by recognizing the Asian-American leaders who challenged the Fortune 500 companies to put 20 Asian-Americans in the general counsel seat by the year 2020. That 20x20 challenge was put forth by **Don Liu** (Executive Vice President and Chief Legal & Risk Officer at Target Corporation), **Wilson Chu** (Partner at McDermott Will & Emery), and **Jean Lee** (President & CEO of the Minority Corporate Counsel Association), who will all be recognized at the Reception. They were instrumental in putting together programming to enable candidates to be considered for these general counsel positions.

I hope you enjoy this newsletter. We have a special letter written by AABA Member **Justice Harry Low** regarding the independence of the judiciary. As always, we encourage members to contribute to our newsletter. I look forward to seeing you at the Gala next week!

In solidarity,
David Tsai
President

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A Letter from Justice Harry Low on the Importance of an Independent Judiciary



To AABA Members:

I write as a concerned AABA member regarding the upcoming judicial elections in San Francisco. As a former Presiding Justice of California Court of Appeal, I understand the importance of having an independent, impartial judiciary that is connected and accountable to the community it serves. In California, judges may face election challenges for a number of legitimate reasons. However, when judges facing election challenges have years of experience handling a wide variety of complex cases, as well as a demonstrated record of fairness and commitment to the community, the independence and impartiality of the judiciary is directly challenged. Judges must not be challenged just because of the party affiliation of the governor who appointed those judges. Challenging judges based on who appointed those judges represents precisely the type of generalized stereotyping that every fair and impartial judge must seek to avoid.

I ask all AABA members to join me in supporting Judges Cynthia Ming-Mei Lee, Andrew Y.S. Cheng, Jeffrey S. Ross, and Curtis E.A. Karnow in the June 5 election.

Justice Harry Low (Presiding Justice, California Court of Appeal, 1983-1992)

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The Ninth Annual Pathways to Law Conference Held at UC Hastings College of the Law

By Rebecca Tseng

AABA Community Services Committee Co-Chair

On March 3, 2018, over 80 high school and college students and their parents gathered at the Louis B. Mayer Lounge at University of California, Hastings College of the Law to hear distinguished and diverse lawyers and local law students share their experiences about becoming part of the legal profession at the Ninth Annual Pathways to Law conference, formerly known as Legally Asian. In the current political climate, the students were keen to learn how a legal education could be leveraged to bring about positive social change and to meet lawyers and law students if they do not currently have those connections in the legal community.

As in past years, Pathways was structured so that high school and college students heard from lawyers who work in different areas of law and who use their law degrees in various ways. The students were also “treated” to a mock class taught by AABA Board Member John B. Lough, Jr. There was even a special appearance from NAPABA President Pankit Doshi, who encouraged the students in his opening remarks to pursue a career in the legal profession, and shared with the audience the fulfillment he has received from being a lawyer.



The first panel of the day was the Private Practice Panel moderated by former AABA Community Service Co-Chair Claire Choo (Associate, Danko Meredith and former CSC Co-Chair). This panel featured Lin Chan (Partner, Lief Cabraser Heimann & Bernstein and AABA Board Member), David Tsai (Partner, Vinson & Elkins LLP and AABA President), and Shantel Williams (IP counsel at Facebook). During this panel, students learned about working at firms of different sizes and companies, including big law, smaller firms, and in-house positions.

Following the Private Practice Panel was an insightful discussion with Bay Area law students. Wendell Lin (UC Hastings) led the discussion among his peers: Jeremy Chan (UC Hastings), Kiet Lam (UC Berkeley), Adrian Van (USF). The students gave their perspectives on how they decided to attend law school, what to do in college to prepare, the value of work experience, and tips on the law school admissions process.

“Professor Lough” then led the mock class component of the program. Students first watched a fictional depiction of the first day of law school classes in the film, *Legally Blonde* (in years past, students were also shown scenes from *The Paper Chase*, but the planners this year decided that it might be too old for the students now!) The students then broke up into small groups, and with the help of attorney and law student volunteers, they read and discussed *Oncale v. Sundowner Offshore Services, Inc.*, 523 U.S. 75 (1998), a U.S. Supreme Court decision involving sexual harassment in the workplace. “Professor Lough” led a class discussion of the case using a soft version of the Socratic method where attendees volunteered (and were not cold-called!) to answer questions about the case, respond to hypos, and think about the issues involved. Essentially, the students got a taste of what it meant to “think like a lawyer.”



The attendees next heard from practitioners in the Public Interest/Public Service world. Katherine Chu (Staff Attorney, Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Asian Law Caucus and AABA Civil Rights Committee Co-Chair) was both a moderator and panelist, and she engaged the Honorable Judge Benjamin T. Reyes II (Contra Costa Superior Court) and Minming Wu (Assistant Regional Counsel at the Federal Transit Authority’s Region IX Office) in a thoughtful discussion. The panelists conveyed a real sense of how their work impacted their clients and society, and

discussed the importance of mentorship and remembering your roots and community.

The final attorney panel of the day was the Alternative Careers Panel, where the panelists showed that lawyers can have successful, unique careers outside the traditional practice of law. Darryl Woo (Partner at Vinson & Elkins LLP, CSC Co-Chair) moderated this diverse panel that featured David King (Director of Diversity and Belonging at Airbnb), Linda Lee (Manager of Associate Career Development at Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati), and Anthony Wan (Managing Member and Founder of WealthBoost Advisors, LLC). The panelists shared with the students their journeys to the law and how the skills they gained from law school are useful in non-traditional legal roles.

Besides the panels and mock class, the day included a networking lunch for the attendees, where a number of Asian-American guest attorneys and law students came to speak with the students and share their experiences. Students also learned about California Law, Inc.’s 2+2+3 program, in which students could enroll in a participating California community college for two years, transfer to a partner four-year university for two years, and gain automatic acceptance into one of the participating law schools in California.

The Pathways to Law 2018 planning committee included Community Services Committee Co-Chairs Stephen Chong, Claire Choo (as our recently former CSC Co-Chair), Pamela Chung, Rebecca Tseng, and Darryl Woo, as well as an army of attorney and law student volunteers: Alston Lew, Danielle K. Lewis, John B. Lough, Jr., Jane Ma, Lisa Mak, Derrek Tomine, Elisha Yang, Jason Yee, Stephanie Yee, and Angelica Zabanal. A big thank you to our sponsors this year – NAPABA for providing a grant for this year’s programming, AABA, and the Princeton Review.

What We've Been Up To: Event and Mentorship Family Highlights

In-House Mixer

February 22, 2018

The In-House Counsel (IHC) Committee hosted its 12th annual mixer at Hazel Southern Kitchen in SF. The event was open to all attorneys, and it was a great success, with more than 150 people RSVP'ing for the event. Thanks to our generous sponsors, BDO and Dechert LLP, AABA was able to provide plenty of drinks, food, and give away Bose speakers and two Sharks box tickets as raffle prizes. AABA received overwhelmingly positive feedback about the spacious venue, which was completely booked for AABA. The IHC was also able to allow AABA members to use Birdnest's co-working space without cost in order to allow people to arrive early to SF to attend the event. Special thanks to the IHC members Sandy Liu (Yapstone), Gabe Lau (Autodesk), Suzette Torres (North American Title), Adonica Wada (Varian Medical Systems) and Sofia Jeong (Facebook) for all their hard work!



[See more photos here](#)

2018 Mentorship Family Highlights



Family of the Year: Mentor Olivia Lee with her mentees, Gabe Law, Leo Liu, and Jason Yee



Best Family Event: Dumpling making with mentors and mentees

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Event Photo Galleries



February 22 - Learning From Experience: Making Arbitration Work



February 27 - Mentorship End of Year Celebration



March 3 - The Ninth Annual Pathways to Law: Pre-Law Conference

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AABA and Community Events Calendar

March

March 22

42nd Annual Gala: Better Together, Stronger United

5:00 - 6:00 pm | VIP General Counsel and Judges Reception

6:00 - 10:00 pm | Gala

Bently Reserve, 301 Battery St, San Francisco, CA 94111

Join us to honor San Francisco Superior Court Judge Cynthia Lee and Judge Andrew Cheng, the late San Francisco Mayor Edwin Lee, Pulitzer-Prize winning journalist Jose Antonio Vargas, and Joe Morozumi Award for Exceptional Legal Advocacy awardee Lisa P. Mak. At our VIP Reception, we will honor the success of the "20x20" challenge, to goal to reach twenty Asian American General Counsel in Fortune 500 companies by 2020. We will celebrate Caroline

Tsai, Executive Vice President and General Counsel of Western Union, and the twentieth Asian American to become General Counsel at a Fortune 500 Company, plus other leaders of the 20x20 challenge.

Thank you to our Title Sponsor Minami Tamaki LLP and all our other **generous sponsors!**

March 24

Shut Up and Dance! Civil Rights Dance Party

8 pm to 11 pm

Cornerstone, 2110 Durant Avenue in Berkeley

Music provided by DJ Crimson followed by live music performed by the Coolerators, whose band members include David Chiu on violin, Bill Hing on bass and Bill Tamayo on keyboards and accordion. Food and no-host bar.

Admission is pay what you wish.

This is not a fundraiser or supports a particular cause. This is PURE FUN! RSVP online at

<http://shutupanddance2018.eventbrite.com>.

March 27

Community Services Committee Kickoff Strategy Meeting Tuesday, March 27

6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Location TBD

Are you interested in getting more involved in community service? Come on out to the Community Services Committee's kickoff strategy meeting for the 2018-2019 AABA year! We are looking to add new members to our committee, who will be in charge of planning our fun volunteer events and providing hands-on assistance at these events. This is your first step in getting more involved with AABA, learning about our slate of events, and becoming more active in your local community. Please feel free to invite friends, family, and coworkers. Happy hour cocktail fare will be provided. **RSVP here.**

March 30

SCU APALSA 37th Annual Banquet

5:30 pm - 10:00 pm

China Stix Restaurant, 2110 El Camino Real, Santa Clara, CA

You are cordially invited to the 37th Annual Banquet for Santa Clara University School of Law's APALSA. We hope you will join us in celebrating another successful year for SCU APALSA over a 10-course meal, raffle, and so much more. We are also pleased to present our keynote speaker, Honorable Drew C. Takaichi of Santa Clara County Superior Court.

Tickets can be purchased at: <https://commerce.cashnet.com/LAW3APALSA>. For sponsorship pricing information and other inquiries, please contact Iris Chiu (ichiu@scu.edu) or Kelli Nishimori (knishimori@scu.edu).

March 21 (Oakland) and March 28 (San Francisco)

APILO/AABA Clinics

The AABA Community Services Committee and Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach (APILO) operate a pro bono legal clinic that is staffed by volunteer attorneys and law students. The clinic helps ensure that low-income Bay Area residents, including many mono-lingual immigrants, will receive free legal information and advice from AABA

volunteers. The APILO/AABA clinic assists individuals in a number of areas, including immigration and family law issues.

The Oakland clinic is held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at APILO's office at 310 8th Street, Suite 308, Oakland 94607. The San Francisco clinic is held on the 4th Wednesday of each month from 5:45 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at UC Hastings' Civil Justice Clinic at 100 McAllister Street, Suite 300.

If you are interested in volunteering at the clinic, please contact the AABA Community Services Committee co-chairs for more information about the clinic.

April

April 12

2018 Spring Mixer Invitational

6:00 - 8:00 pm

Ozone Thai Restaurant & Lounge, 598 2nd St., San Francisco, CA 94107

You're invited to join AABA as we hold our annual social mixer. Reconnect with old friends, learn about how you can join AABA and make new friends. Appetizers and limited drinks will be provided. Weather permitting, we will be located in an outdoor patio space, so please plan accordingly. Jackets are recommended.

For any questions please contact elvin.vu@gmail.com. **RSVP here.**

April 27

46th Anniversary Dinner: Celebrate the Power of Resistance for Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Asian Law Caucus

6 pm to 9pm

Hilton Union Square Grand Ballroom, 333 O'Farrell Street in San Francisco

In the past year, we've seen the power of our communities coming together to resist. This April, join us for our 46th Annual Gala. Each year, our annual gala features a keynote speaker and an awards presentation honoring individuals or organizations who have made a significant impact in the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community through their exemplary works in defense of civil rights. With an attendance of more than 800 attorneys, civic leaders, and business professionals representing the robustness and diversity of the AAPI communities, your support of our annual banquet helps to continue our legal services and civil rights work on behalf of AAPIs and all underserved communities.

April 18 (Oakland) and April 25 (San Francisco)

APILO/AABA Clinics

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