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California Asian-Pacific American Judges Association

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May 2022 CAPAJA Newsletter

Dear CAPAJA Member:

As we approach the halfway point of 2022, we hope everyone is having a happy, healthy and productive year. Here is the news for this month.

NEWS

CAPAJA Holds its Midyear Membership Meeting

CAPAJA held its Midyear Membership Meeting on Zoom on April 26. The meeting was well attended, with over forty members present to hear reports from many of CAPAJA's Committee Co-Chairs (a full roster of which is listed below), reporting on the exciting activities that CAPAJA has held since the 2021 Annual Meeting and is planning for the rest of this year. President Audra Ibarra presided over a fun ice-breaker activity, asking "What character from TV or film do you identify with or aspire to be?" We learned that new Commissioner Christine Gonong identifies with the Red Panda from Pixar's Turning Red! President Ibarra encouraged the members present to join CAPAJA's committees and participate in its events and invited everyone to attend CAPAJA's Annual Meeting to be held at the CJA Annual Meeting in San Diego September 15-18.

At the meeting, the CAPAJA membership unanimously approved the CAPAJA Mission Statement, which reads: "California Asian Pacific American Judges Association works to increase equal access to justice, to promote diversity and inclusivity in the legal profession and the judiciary, and to support judicial officers, especially Asian Pacific Americans, in achieving excellence and becoming leaders in our courts and communities."

Two CAPAJA Members Honored at Central California Asian Pacific American Bar Association First Annual Banquet

Newly appointed Judge and CAPAJA member Charles Lee of the Fresno County Superior Court will be honored at the First Annual Banquet of CCAPABA, to be held on May 26, 2022. (Flyer attached). CCAPABA will also present the first Hon. Mikio Uchiyama Memorial Scholarship, honoring the late Judge Uchiyama. The keynote speaker for the event will be CAPAJA member Judge Anthony Ishii of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California. CAPAJA members are encouraged to attend to celebrate the honorees.

May is Asian Pacific American Heritage Month!

All through this month, there will be celebrations for APA Heritage Month, including a panel which CAPAJA is co-sponsoring with Asian Pacific American Women Lawyers Alliance of Southern California on "Trailblazers on the Federal Bench," a virtual conversation moderated by CAPAJA's President, Judge Audra Ibarra and featuring Senior Judge Susan Oki Mollway (USDC D. Ha.), CAPAJA member Judge Dolly Gee (USDC CD CA) and Judge Miranda Du (USDC D. NV) on May 11 at 6 pm (Flyer attached or go to CAPAJA.com). This panel is based on Judge Mollway's book based on her book: "The First Fifteen: How Asian American Women Became Federal Judges."

The ABA Judicial Division will also host an APA Heritage Month webinar on “Advancing a Diverse Judiciary – Soft Skills for a Hard Path” on May 12 from 10 am-11:30 PDT (Flyer attached). The panel will be moderated by Judge Benes Saldana (Ret.), President and CEO of the National Judicial College and will feature Judge Cathy Bissoon of the USCD WD PA, Judge John Chun of the USDC WD WA, Associate Justice Carla Wong McMillian of the Georgia State Supreme Court and CAPAJA member Judge Holly J. Fuijie of the Los Angeles Superior Court.

CJA Members Participate in California Judges Association Midyear Meeting

CJA held its Midyear Meeting in Santa Barbara on April 28-30 in Santa Barbara. CAPAJA President-Elect Judge Sonny Sandhu served on the Meeting’s Planning Committee, which was co-chaired by CAPAJA Member and CJA Past President Judge Tam Nomoto Schumann (Ret.). Past CAPAJA President Judge Erica Yew spoke on a panel called “When a Judge Has a Mental Illness – Generalized Anxiety Disorder and Serving Successful on the Bench” and Past CAPAJA President Judge Roberta Hayashi served as a leader on the QE8 Ethics Seminar Sessions.

Two CAPAJA members to be Honored by PABA

On May 31, 2022, the Philippine American Bar Association of Southern California will honor two CAPAJA members at its sold out 35th Annual Installation & Awards Gala in Marina Del Rey. Judge Rick Ocampo will receive the PABA Distinguished Jurist Award and Commissioner Christine Gonong will receive the PABA Leadership Award. Congratulations to you both!

CAPAJA Members Shine in L.A. Superior Court Newsletter

CAPAJA members featured prominently in the issue of the LASC Bench News distributed by the Court on April 29. Under the category of “Bench Stars” the following was noted: Commissioner Jenny Cheung Marino was the Moderator of a CJA webinar held on April 19 on “Attorney Job Opportunities Within the Court System,” Judge Tammy Chung Ryu was a panelist on a discussion held in March at the UCLA School of Law called “From the Front Lines” and Judge Robert Wada, Assistant Supervising Judge of Probate, will be presenting to the LACBA an “Update From LASC Probate Department: New Enhancements to LACourtConnect” on May 9. LASC Bench News also featured fascinating profiles of the following CAPAJA members: Judge Firdaus Dordi (written by CAPAJA member Judge Neetu Badhan-Smith); Judge Fred Fujioka (written by CAPAJA member Judge Kim Nguyen); Judge Esther Kim and Judge Tony Cho (a joint profile written by CAPAJA member Judge Julian Recana); Judge Michelle Kim (written by CAPAJA member Judge Anne Hwang); Judge Elaine Lu (written by CAPAJA Secretary Judge Michelle Ahnn); Judge Sam Ohta (also written by Judge Kim Nguyen); Judge Tammy Chung Ryu (also written by Judge Michelle Ahnn); Judge Jana Seng (written by Commissioner Jenny Cheung Marino); and Judge Bryant Yang (written by Judge Rob Villeza). The profiles make for exceptional reading and our colleagues’ stories will make you proud. As a bonus, thanks to his profile, we know that we should search for “Sam Ohta” on YouTube...

CAPAJA Honors Its Committee Chairs!

CAPAJA has many active committees which perform so much of CAPAJA’s important programming and activities. President Audra Ibarra and President-Elect Sonny Sandhu wish to acknowledge the hard work of their co-chairs this year and thank them for their continuing efforts for our members. They are:

CAPAJA COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS 2021-2022

EDUCATION COMMITTEE - Hon. Sunil Kulkarni (Santa Clara), Hon. Joanne Motoike (Orange County), and Hon. Johnny Gogo (Santa Clara)

BAR ASSOCIATION OUTREACH COMMITTEE - Hon. Jeff Mangar (Stanislaus) and Hon. Wes Hsu (Los Angeles)

SURVEY COMMITTEE - Hon. Nathan Vu (Orange County)

TRAVEL COMMITTEE - Hon. Roberta Hayashi (Santa Clara)

SCHOLARSHIPS COMMITTEE - Hon. Frederick Chung (Santa Clara) and Hon. Jana Sang (Los Angeles)

MENTORING COMMITTEE - Hon. Michelle Ahnn (Los Angeles) and Hon. Erica Yew (Santa Clara)

LAW SCHOOL OUTREACH COMMITTEE - Hon. Jayne Lee (San Joaquin) and Hon. Terry Truong (Los Angeles)

JUDICIAL ELECTIONS COMMITTEE - Hon. Victor Hwang (San Francisco) and Hon. Tony Cho (Los Angeles)

JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE - Hon. Lee Tsao (Los Angeles) and Hon. Richard Sueyoshi (Sacramento)

WEBSITE COMMITTEE- Hon. Pelayo A. Llamas, Jr. (Alameda)

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGES COMMITTEE - Hon. Dorothy Chou Proudfoot (San Francisco Rent Board) and Hon. Minh Le Quang (California Department of Social Services)

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE - Hon. Kawika Smith (San Bernardino), Hon. Joni Hiramoto (Contra Costa), and Hon. Nathan Vu (Orange County)

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE - Hon. Raj Chatterjee (Alameda County) and Hon. Chris Lui (Los Angeles County)

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS COMMITTEE - Hon. Holly Fujie (Los Angeles) and Hon. Johnny Gogo (Santa Clara)

CAPAJA Members Nominated for Leadership Posts for CJA

The following CAPAJA members have been nominated for offices by the California Judges Association Nominations Committee: for District 2 Representative to the CJA Board, Stanislaus County Superior Court Judge and District 5 Representative to the CAPAJA Board Jeff Mangar; and for Commissioner Representative, CAPAJA Treasurer and LA Superior Court Commissioner Terry Truong. If elected, they will be sworn in at the CJA Annual Meeting on September 17 in San Diego.

CAPAJA Member Profiled in Daily Journal

APAJA Past President Justice Nathan Mihara (ret.) was profiled in the April 29, 2022 edition of the Daily Journal. The article, entitled: “Chaos Theory: ADR Services neutral Nathan Mihara tries to restore order in the confusion and conflict of disputes,” discusses Justice Mihara’s perspective on mediating disputes as well as his long history on the bench, most recently on the 6th District Court of Appeal. He is quoted as saying, “There’s something very gratifying about bringing people together and reaching a common agreement and helping them find common ground.” CAPAJA wishes Justice Mihara good luck in this new stage of his career.

Support the CAPAJA Scholarship Fund!

Please consider providing financial support to CAPAJA’s first scholarship for law students intending to serve as summer judicial interns/externs for Summer 2022. We will be awarding at least two \$1,500 scholarships this year and hope our scholarships will continue to grow with your help. If you are a judge, please consider contributing here: www.capaja.org/student-scholarship

2022 CAPAJA Member Dues Are Due!

Thanks to so many of our members who have paid either Lifetime Dues or CAPAJA Annual Dues for 2022. If you have not yet done so, please pay your Annual Dues of just \$50 so that you will be paid-up through the end of 2022, or level up to Lifetime Membership for \$500 so you never have to worry about paying your CAPAJA Annual Dues again! Here is a [link](#) for easy payment. If you first became a judicial officer in 2022, your membership is free through the end of the year, although getting a Lifetime Membership would be a wonderful way to celebrate your new career.

With CAPAJA’s best wishes to all its members for a healthy, productive May!

Audra Ibarra, CAPAJA President
Sonny Sandhu, CAPAJA President-Elect

If you have news or know of any CAPAJA member who has been or will be honored, has spoken, or will speak at an event or is taking a new position, or of a new potential CAPAJA member, please send an email to Newsletter Editor Holly Fujie at HFujie@LACourt.org, and we will feature it in the next newsletter.