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February 2023 CAPAJA Newsletter

Dear CAPAJA Member:

Happy Lunar New Year! CAPAJA hopes everyone is having a wonderful start to the new year. Here is the CAPAJA newsletter for February.

NEWS

Two CAPAJA Members Nominated for Courts of Appeal

On January 31, Governor Gavin Newsom nominated CAPAJA Member Judge Audra Mori of the Los Angeles Superior Court to serve as an Associate Justice of the Second District Court of Appeal, Division Four. Judge Mori has served on the LASC since 2018. Governor Newsom also nominated CAPAJA Member Associate Justice Tracie L. Brown to serve as Presiding Justice of the First District Court of Appeal, Division Four. Apparently, the number Four is, for once, the lucky number for API jurists! Congratulations, soon-to-be Justice Mori and soon-to-be-Presiding Justice Brown!

Governor Brown Appoints Two APIs to Superior Courts

In the same announcement, Governor Newsom appointed Rei Onishi to the Sacramento County Superior Court and Geraldine Wong-Williams to the San Bernardino County Superior Court. Soon-to-be-Judge Onishi has served as a Deputy Legal Affairs Secretary in the Office of the Governor since 2017. Judge Wong-Williams has served as a Commissioner at the San Bernardino County Superior Court since 2021. Both are being notified that they are now members of CAPAJA with a free membership until the end of the year, and that they may request a CAPAJA judicial mentor. Best wishes for long and successful judicial careers for you both!

CAPAJA Meets with California API Legislators' Caucus

CAPAJA started the New Year with an extremely successful Zoom meeting between CAPAJA's Board and Strategic Partnerships Committee and the California API Legislators' Caucus on January 5, 2023. The Board and the Caucus shared a frank and enlightening discussion about the ways in which CAPAJA and the API Legislators can benefit each other, leading to new initiatives. One such project is to provide the Legislators and the Governor with qualified API candidates for the California Supreme Court on a running basis, so that when openings occur on the Court, the Governor is immediately apprised of available API candidates and their qualifications, and the Caucus can act to support them. CAPAJA's Judicial Endorsements Committee, chaired by Judge Lee Tsao and Judge Rick Sueyoshi, will be working on effectuating this initiative.

CAPAJA Member Profiled in Daily Journal

CAPAJA Member Judge Lana Kim of the Los Angeles Superior Court was the subject of a great profile in the January 26 issue of the DJ. The profile emphasized Judge Kim's fairness and her excellent demeanor. Congrats, Judge Kim!

CAPAJA Meets with Judicial Appointments Secretary

On January 12, CAPAJA's Board and Strategic Partnerships Committee met by Zoom with Governor Gavin Newsom's Judicial Appointments Secretary Luis Céspedes to discuss the ways CAPAJA can assist him in increasing the diversification of the California judiciary with great API candidates. CAPAJA's Secretary Michelle Ahnn informed Secretary Céspedes of CAPAJA's very active Judicial Endorsements and Mentoring Programs, which is successfully identifying and assisting great API judicial candidates and bringing them to the attention of the Secretary. Secretary Céspedes spoke very highly of the reports generated by the CAPAJA Judicial Endorsements Committee and discussed the importance of implicit bias training for those evaluating candidates. The Secretary also discussed the importance of diversity on County Bar Association judicial candidate vetting committees, as well as on JSACS and JNE. CAPAJA plans to work with local API bar groups to increase API representation on all of these committees. The Secretary expressed that he was very happy to have had this meeting with CAPAJA, and that he looked forward to future discussions on issues of common concern.

API Elected as Commissioner of Los Angeles Superior Court

Philip Peng, Jr. was elected by the judges of the LASC to become a Commissioner of the Court. He has been informed of his free membership in CAPAJA and the availability of mentorship from any of the numerous other CAPAJA Members at the Court. Welcome to the bench, Commissioner Peng!

CAPAJA Member Speaks on Implicit Bias

On January 23, CAPAJA Past President Judge Holly Fujie spoke on a Zoom panel sponsored by the Beverly Hills Bar Association entitled "Winning the War on Implicit Bias." Judge Sunshine Sykes, US District Court, Central District of California, and Judge Esther Salas, United States District Court for the District of New Jersey, were co-panelists. Also present at this event was Karen Korematsu, the daughter of Fred Korematsu. Judge Fujie told the audience that "as a Japanese American, I am most over-awed by the presence here of Karen Korematsu, whose father showed the world how an American citizen's rights can be taken away from them based solely on their ethnicity. Growing up hearing about my parents' incarceration during World War II has always made me think that if there had been an Asian American, or indeed any minority justice on the Supreme Court, his conviction would have not been affirmed. This is an example of how important diversity on the bench is, and its benefits can be seen from the members of this panel."

CAPAJA Members Featured in Videos for QE8 Program

CAPAJA Treasurer Santa Clara Superior Court Judge Sunil Kulkarni and Past CAPAJA President and fellow SCSC Judge Erica Yew revealed previously untapped acting chops in illustrative video vignettes that are being played as part of the mandatory QE8 training for all California judges. Judge Kulkarni plays a judge badly in need of a vacation and Judge Yew portrays a friend-in-need to an exhausted judge falling behind on her work. Thanks to Judges Kulkarni and Yew for representing API Judges in this important training exercise!

Invitation to Judge/Justice Mesiwala's Confirmation Hearing

As previously announced, CAPAJA's own **Judge (soon to be Justice) Mesiwala** has been nominated to the **Third District Court of Appeal**. Her confirmation hearing will be on **Feb. 14, 2023 at 2 pm** in the Supreme Court Courtroom. <https://newsroom.courts.ca.gov/event/commission-consider-judge-shama-hakim-mesiwala-third-district-court-appeal-sacramento>

CAPAJA Member Featured at National Judicial College's 60th Anniversary Celebration

On January 19, the NJC celebrated its 60th anniversary with a gala reception held at the Beverly Hilton in Beverly Hills. CAPAJA Past President Judge Holly Fujie was honored for "Making the World a More Just Place," along with several other judges from around the country. The honorees took part in a spirited "Fireside Chat," discussing the need for more diversity in the judiciary and the importance of the rule of law.

CAPAJA Members in "The Bench"

CAPAJA Members again feature prominently in the Bench, the Official Journal of the California Judges Association. In the Winter 2023 issue, Vol. 63, Issue 1, LASC Judges Elaine Lu and Curtis Kin authored an article on "Waiver of Arbitration & Prejudice." The "In Chambers" article featured an interview with newly-appointed LASC Judge and CAPAJA Member Adrian Roxas, in which he reveals that if a fire alarm caused him to evacuate his chambers with only one item (no humans!), he would take a framed photograph of his parents taken at the Manila Airport in 1976 when they left for the United States from the Philippines. In the Book Review section, San Diego Superior Court Judge Rohanee Zapanta called upon her 10-year-old daughter to list her top five reasons why she loved the musical "Hamilton." Judge Zapanta also wrote an article called "Winter Self-Assessment: Goals for the Judicial Mind."

CAPAJA Co-Sponsors Zoom Program with CalAPABA on API Women in the Law

On February 9, CAPAJA and CalAPABA will present a program together with the State Bar of California on "Disparities in Advancement of API Women in the Law: Evidence & Action Planning." This novel program will not only present the statistics on the lack of relative advancement of API women, but will also feature a unique workshop for API women lawyers, in which over twenty of California's most prominent and accomplished API women lawyers and judges will serve as facilitators for small group in-depth discussions of how organizations, both API and mainstream, can move the needle forward faster for API women lawyers. The small groups will also work with each participant to create an action plan to further their own careers. The workshop leaders, including a number of CAPAJA Members, will offer themselves as mentors to achieve their goals. Encourage your mentees, including law students, to sign up for this innovative program.

When: Feb. 9 @ 12 to 1:15 pm PT

Where: via Zoom (provided upon RSVP)

What: Presentation following by workshop breakout rooms

Who: lawyers, law students, and judges of all seniorities

RSVP: <https://tinyurl.com/calapaba>

Save the Date!

CAPAJA's Law School Committee presents

Mentoring Judicial Interns & Externs: Dos and Don'ts of Mentoring

March 10, 2023, 12:15-1:15 p.m.

Faculty:

Judge Deborah Servino and Judge Tim Saito

Email CAPAJA President-Elect Terry Truong (TTruong@LACourt.org) to register.

Survey on Japan Trip

If you can remember back to the days before COVID, CAPAJA began to explore the possibility of organizing a trip to **Japan** for CAPAJA members in 2019. Then the world came crashing down, so the planned trip was postponed. CAPAJA is now hoping to organize a Japan trip for this November, but **we need your input**. Please take this short (about 2 min) survey to help us gauge interest and start planning the trip. It can be accessed here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NZTRZYS>.

CAPAJA Seeks Co-Chair for Bar Association Outreach Committee

Are you a CAPAJA member who has been, is, or wishes to become connected with the California API bar associations? CAPAJA is looking for a co-chair to serve with Judge Jeff Mangar of Stanislaus County to work on outreach to the API bar associations. It's a great opportunity to become more active with CAPAJA and to interact with API lawyers throughout the state. If you are interested, contact CAPAJA President Judge Sonny Sandhu (Sonny.Sandhu@stanct.org) or President-Elect Judge Terry Truong (ttruong@lacourt.org) or Board Member Judge Mangar (Jeff.Mangar@stanct.org).

With CAPAJA's best wishes to all its members for a healthy, happy and productive year of the Rabbit!

Sonny Sandhu, CAPAJA President
Terry Truong, 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, has written an article or is taking a new position, or if you learn 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.