



A California not-for-profit membership organization

Executive Board

President

Hon. Sonny Sandhu
Stanislaus County

President-Elect

Hon. Terry Truong
Los Angeles County

Immediate Past President

Hon. Audra Ibarra
Santa Clara County

Secretary

Hon. Michelle Ahnn
Los Angeles County

Treasurer

Hon. Sunil Kulkarni
Santa Clara County

Judicial Appointments Committee

Hon. Richard Sueyoshi
Sacramento County

Hon. Lee Tsao
Los Angeles County

1st District Representative

Hon. Joni Hiramoto

2nd District Representatives

Hon. Christopher Lui
Hon. Jana Seng

3rd District Representative

Hon. Kara Ueda

4th District Representatives

Hon. Corey Lee
Hon. Nhan "Nathan" Vu

5th District Representative

Hon. Jeff Mangar

6th District Representatives

Hon. Frederick Chung
Hon. Johnny Gogo

**California Asian-Pacific
American
Judges Association**

11138 Del Amo Blvd. #453
Lakewood, CA 90715-1103
www.CAPAJA.org
capaja2020@gmail.com

July 2023 CAPAJA Newsletter

Dear CAPAJA Member:

We hope you are having a great Summer! Here is the July CAPAJA newsletter!

NEW API JUDICIAL OFFICERS

New API Judges Appointed

On June 27, Governor Gavin Newsom appointed two new API judges. Peter Chang was appointed to the Contra Costa County Superior Court and Vinita Bali was appointed to the Santa Clara Superior Court. Both have been welcomed to membership in CAPAJA and notified of the exciting opportunities we offer. We look forward to seeing new Judges Chang and Bali at future CAPAJA events!

LASC Elects New API Commissioner

On June 20, the Los Angeles Superior Court announced that its judges elected a new Commissioner, Michelle Lim. Ms. Lim is currently an Assistant City Attorney in the L.A. City Attorney's Office. She has been welcomed to membership in CAPAJA and informed of her free membership through the end of 2023. Welcome to the Bench, soon-to-be Commissioner Lim!

UPCOMING EVENTS

CAPAJA Members To Be Honored by OCAABA

Justice Joanne Motoike of the 4th District Court of Appeal will be honored with the Judicial Trailblazer Award by the Orange County Asian American Bar Association at a dinner on Thursday, July 6 at 6 pm at the Hyatt Regency, Newport Beach. Also being honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award is CAPAJA Member and Orange County Superior Court Judge Kazuharu Makino (ret.). As of July 1, the event is sold out but there is a waiting list - <https://ocaaba.org/event-5178690>. Congratulations, Justice Motoike and Judge Makino!

CJA Annual Conference/CAPAJA Annual Meeting and CAPAJA Welcome Dinner.

CJA will hold its **annual conference** in San Diego from September 21st-24th. Mark your calendar for this weekend of exciting events. CAPAJA will also have its **annual meeting** in person and via Zoom. More information to follow!

CAPAJA and San Diego APA judicial officers invite you to join us for a **Welcome CAPAJA Dinner** on Friday, Sept. 22, at 7:00 PM. The dinner will be at Lotus Thai restaurant which is a short drive away from the CJA annual conference. Lotus Thai will be closed to the public so there will be plenty of room for mingling. Judicial officers, significant others/spouses and family are welcome to join us. Attendees will be provided with two kinds of soup (Tom Yum with tofu and Tom Kha with chicken), appetizer platters, papaya salad and an entrée of their choice (either a stir-fry, noodles, fried rice or a curry with

protein options) and dessert (mango with sweet sticky rice). We will also have our world-famous APA judicial officers trivia contest and gift bags for out-of-town folks. Price is per person and the link to RSVP will be announced in August. Please email Selena Epley at selena.epley@sdcourt.ca.gov if you have any questions!

CAPAJA MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

Just announced:

On June 29, Chief Justice Guerrero appointed Judge Erica Yew to be one of two new advisory (non-voting) members of the Judicial Council. It is for a one-year terms starting Sept. 15. Congratulations Judge Yew and thank you for your commitment to making the court system accessible and impartial!

“Retired” CAPAJA Member Remains Active in the Community

Recently retired Alameda County Superior Court Judge Delbert Gee formally administered the oath of office to Lena Tam, the newest member of the Alameda County Board of Supervisors, this past December 21. He also addressed the APA Law Student Association for the University of California, Davis School of Law at their annual dinner on April 13, and spoke to prospective law students at the Santa Clara University School of Law on their Admitted Student Day on April 15. Way to relax, Judge Gee!

CAPAJA Members Attend Celebration of Life for Judge Ron Lew

On Saturday, June 24, many CAPAJA members attended the Celebration of Life for CAPAJA Member Retired Judge Ronald S.W. Lew, who passed away on May 19. Attached is a copy of the program and a picture from the event. Judge Lew was celebrated for his skill as a judge, and for his kindness and his widespread mentoring.

This message was circulated by CAPAJA Member and NAPABA – Judicial Council President Judge Curtis Kin:

I hope you are all doing well this Summer. For those who could not attend, I thought you might be interested in the attached program from the Memorial Service for our dearly departed friend and colleague, Judge Ron Lew. It was a beautiful tribute to him on Saturday, including a wonderful remembrance by our own Judge Dolly Gee, who spoke lovingly of her “Uncle Ron.” ...If you have any stories or thoughts you would like to share with the Lew family, they would welcome hearing from you. Please send to: The Lew Family 11221 Wilbur Avenue #4, Porter Ranch, CA 91326.

CAPAJA Member Chief Justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye (Ret.) in a Zoom presentation by the Beverly Hills Bar Association

On June 28, Chief Justice Cantil-Sakauye (Ret.) spoke on an installment of Bench Stories sponsored by the BHBA. It was good to see the Chief again and to be reassured that she will remain an active force for good in our community even after her retirement.

Daily Journal Profile of Incoming CJA President Judge Erica Yew

On May 24, CAPAJA Member Judge Erica Yew was profiled in the DJ as the CJA president for 2023-2024. The profile discussed her priorities for her year, including a push for increased remote Court proceedings.

Past CAPAJA President co-writes article in California Litigation Magazine

In the June 2023 edition of California Litigation, a publication of the California Lawyers Association, Past CAPAJA President Judge Audra Ibarra and Justice Jon Streeter published an article called “A Visionary In Times of Crisis” about Justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye (Ret.). The article presented a comprehensive view of the Chief’s career, including the exact circumstances of her interview with Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, in which the Governor challenged her to pronounce his name and she responded with the correct pronunciation and a similar challenge to the Governor to pronounce hers! A fine profile with much information not previously seen in discussions of her career.

Past CAPAJA President Honored by LA County Bar Association

On June 22, 2022, Past CAPAJA President Judge Holly Fujie received the Los Angeles County Bar Association’s Philip H. Lam Diversity Award at the LACBA Annual Installation and Awards Dinner. Judge Fujie received her award from LACBA’s first API President, Ann Park. We congratulate Judge Fujie on receiving this award which recognizes her tireless work towards diversifying the legal field and the judiciary.

CAPAJA Past President John Ing to Retire

On June 8, the Metropolitan News-Enterprise reported that Los Angeles Superior Court Judge John Ing will retire from the bench effective July 15. Judge Ing, who served as President of CAPAJA in 2008-2009, was an LA County Deputy DA from 1979-83 and a part-time Court referee for eight years while in private practice. He then served as a Commissioner for ten years before being appointed to a judgeship in 2007. CAPAJA wishes our former leader a long, healthy and happy retirement.

CAPAJA Members Featured at APABA Installation Dinner

On June 8, the Asian Pacific American Bar Association held its 25th Annual Installation Dinner at the Omni Los Angeles Hotel. Headlining the event were CAPAJA Members LASC Judge Bryant Yang and U.S. District Judge Dolly Gee. Judge Yang participated in a Conversation with Associate Justice Kelli Evans of the California Supreme Court and Judge Gee administered the Oath of Office to APABA’s Officers and Governors.

KCLA Features CAPAJA Members in Program

On June 21, CAPAJA Secretary Judge Michelle Ahnn and CAPAJA Former President Holly Fujie presented a program before the membership of the Korean Community Lawyers Association on Implicit Bias in Jury Trials. KCLA Members enjoyed a delicious Korean dinner while listening appreciatively to the Judges’ thoughts on dealing with implicit bias in jurors.

CAPAJA NEEDS YOUR HELP!

Membership List Update

CAPAJA Members' assistance is requested in updating the CAPAJA Membership and Email address list. CAPAJA does not have a current email address for **Justice Steven Suzukawa (ret.)**. We like to keep in touch with all our members, both active and retired, so if any of you out there have Justice Suzukawa's current email address, please send it to CAPAJA Secretary Michelle Ahnn (mahnn@lacourt.org).

CAPAJA's Judicial Applicant Mentoring Program

Do you know of attorneys who are interested in being a judge? CAPAJA offers a mentoring program for attorneys who have been active Bar members for five years. We want to mentor attorneys at any stage in the process, especially those who are still early on in deciding whether to apply. If you know anyone who may be interested in applying for the bench, please ask them to visit our website at <https://www.capaja.org/student-scholarship> (scroll down to the mentoring section). On the website is the application form that should be sent to Judge Charles Lee (Fresno) at Clee@fresno.courts.ca.gov.

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.