



# AABANY ADVOCATE

Asian American Bar Association of New York

Winter 2018  
Volume XIV  
Issue I

## The AABANY Pro Bono Clinic Serving Our Community, Advancing Our Profession

By: Albert W. Suh

The massive curving red-brick bulk of 33 Bowery towers over Confucius Plaza. It stands sentinel at the mouth of the Manhattan Bridge, a lone high-rise looking out upon the sprawl of Chinatown. From the outside, it's just another apartment complex, standing out mostly for its size. But past the faded signage for florists and dentists—lit up in both English and Chinese—up the shadowed stairs, and inside its fluorescent hallways, there is something special happening.

Samuel Lui, co-chair of the AABANY Pro Bono Committee, and June Lee began the pro bono clinic little more than two years ago at the invitation of the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association. Since then, the AABANY Pro Bono Legal Advice Clinic has grown and established itself as a mainstay in the Chinatown Community. Clients come from all over New York City, from every background and culture, with needs as varied as understanding simple forms to desperately needing assistance in housing court. And on the second Wednesday of each month, AABANY members—with Sam Lui at their head—come to meet them, to offer whatever help they can.



Volunteers at the June 14, 2017 Pro Bono Clinic

At the clinic, the clients line up and wait for their chance to be heard. They are signed in by volunteers and brought to one of several volunteer attorneys. Often, their time is brief—the needs are many but the attorneys are few. Still, each month, the attorneys come in and do their best with what they have.

(Continued on page 4)

### Inside this Advocate

Letter from the President . . . . .	2
Letter from the President-Elect . . . . .	3
Korematsu's Legacy. . . . .	5
AABANY Quarterly Report . . . . .	6
Profile: The Hon. Doris Ling-Cohan . . . . .	8
NYCBA's Diversity Benchmarking Report . . . . .	9
..	
In Memoriam: Hon. Charles Y.J. Liu ...	10
AABANY Membership Form. . . . .	11

## SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

# Paul | Weiss

By Maisa Chiang

As part of this Sponsor Spotlight, AABANY is proud to announce Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP as the recipient of the 2018 AABANY Law Firm Diversity Award. Since 2014, AABANY has selected a law firm to recognize for its commitment to improving diversity and inclusion within the legal profession.

For Paul, Weiss, diversity and inclusion can be traced back to its foundation in 1927, a time in which Jewish and non-Jewish attorneys did not mingle. Dissatisfied with the status quo, two Columbia law school classmates—one a Jew and one a Gentile—decided to found a firm together. Thus, began the partnership of Weiss & Wharton which would eventually expand to be the Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton, & Garrison of today.

That commitment to engaging diverse talent continued throughout the decades. In 1949, when no law firm would hire a black man regardless of his qualifications, Paul, Weiss hired William T. Coleman, a top-of-his class black graduate of Harvard Law School and a former Supreme Court clerk. In the early 1950s, Paul, Weiss was the first major law firm to elect a woman to its partnership, Carolyn Agger.

The Advocate regularly spotlights AABANY's corporate sponsors and gives our sponsors an opportunity to showcase how their work aligns with AABANY's mission and contributes to the legal community at large.



AABANY leaders, members and friends at the Paul, Weiss Citywide Diversity Reception.

(Continued on page 9)

# A Letter From The President

Dear AABANY members and supporters:

I feel privileged to have served as President of the Asian American Bar Association of New York (AABANY) this past year. One of the largest and most active minority state bar associations, AABANY continues to be a leading voice for Asian Pacific Americans (APA) and has been instrumental in advocating for and executing positive changes in law firms, companies, the judicial branch, government, the public sector, law schools and the broader APA community.

I want to say thank you to our talented and driven board of directors, committee chairs, and staff. While it has not been easy for me to balance the demands of law firm partnership, family life, volunteer commitments, and faith with the demands of this leadership position, your passion and dedication have consistently inspired me and kept the organization moving forward.

AABANY should be proud of the many accomplishments it has achieved over the past year, many of which are described in detail in AABANY's 2017 Year End Report and on its website [www.aabany.org](http://www.aabany.org). We, however, should be cognizant that there is still work to be done. I am encouraged by the significant interest expressed by our members and supporters to lead or participate in our many initiatives, including a soon-to-be-launched initiative to address the disproportionate underrepresentation of APAs in law firm partnerships and to help talented APAs achieve the promotion they deserve.



Dwight S. Yoo  
AABANY President

I believe AABANY is in a much stronger place today compared with where it was in the past, and similarly it will be in an even stronger position next year under the leadership of James Cho, our incoming President. I look forward to working with you on AABANY initiatives in AABANY's new fiscal year and seeing firsthand the progress AABANY makes.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Dwight S. Yoo", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dwight S. Yoo

The AABANY newsletter endeavors to share in a non-partisan fashion information of concern to the Asian American legal community of New York. The officers and directors of AABANY do not necessarily share or endorse any particular view expressed in articles published in this newsletter. Statements published herein are those of persons concerned about the Asian American legal community and willing to share their concerns with their colleagues. Proposed articles or letters to the editor should be sent to AABANY Newsletter, Asian American Bar Association of New York, 45 Rockefeller Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, New York 10111 or e-mail: [main@aabany.org](mailto:main@aabany.org); submissions may be excluded or edited by virtue of space or other reasons. Private individuals may publish notices and advertisements, which the editors feel are of interest to members on a space available basis at the following rates: 3.75" x 1" - \$40.00; 3.75" x 4.5" (quarter page) - \$70.00; half page - \$120.00; full page - \$220.00. For advertising information call AABANY at (718) 228-7206 or e-mail [main@aabany.org](mailto:main@aabany.org).

## AABANY OFFICERS

*President*

**Dwight Yoo**  
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP

*President-Elect*

**James Cho**  
U.S. Attorney's Office

*Immediate Past President*

**Susan Shin**  
Arnold & Porter LLP

*Vice President, Programs and Operations*

**Naf Kwun**  
Lee Anav Chung White Kim Ruger & Richter LLP

*Vice President, Programs and Operations*

**Jeff Ikejiri**  
UnitedLex Corporation

*Treasurer*

**Amy Ngai**  
The ONE Group Hospitality, Inc.

*Secretary*

**Dai Wai Chin Feman**  
Dorsey & Whitney LLP

*Membership Director*

**Tristan Loanzon**  
Loanzon LLP

*Development Director*

**Kevin Kim**  
Tactile Brain LLC

*Technology Director*

**Francis Chin**  
Brooklyn Law School

## AABANY DIRECTORS

**Jung Choi**

Bristol-Myers Squibb Company

**Marianne Chow**

Hearst Corporation

**Diane Gujarati**

**Suhana Han**

Sullivan & Cromwell LLP

**Bobby Liu**

MD Sass Investor Services, Inc.

**Sonia Low**

The ONE Group Hospitality, Inc.

**Sapna Palla**

Wiggin and Dana LLP

**Terrence Shen**

Kramer Levin Naftalis & Frankel LLP

**Manisha Sheth**

New York State Attorney General's Office

**Brian Song**

Baker Hostetler LLP

**Irene Tan**

AIG Property Casualty

**Lawrence G. Wee**

Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP

## AABANY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Yang Chen**

## THE AABANY ADVOCATE

*Editor-in-Chief*

**Naf Kwun**

*Associate Editor*

**Albert W. Suh**

*Guest Writers*

**Maisa Chiang**

**Joshua Gelinas**

**Sarah Lu**

**Quentin Wong**

**Steven De Castro**

*Photo Credits\*\**

*\*\* All event photos by AABANY staff unless otherwise indicated.*

# A Letter From The President-Elect

The Asian American Bar Association of New York ("AABANY") has adopted the theme "Serving Our Community, Advancing Our Profession" to guide its activities in 2018. On February 28th, at our annual dinner, AABANY will honor the following four prominent lawyers who have made a significant impact both in serving our community and advancing our profession: Alphonso David, Counsel to the Governor of New York, has dedicated years to serving the public; Kathy Hirata Chin, Senior Counsel at Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft LLP, has been a leader in the private sector and tirelessly served the bar and local Asian American community; Mark Steffensen, Senior Executive Vice President & General Counsel, HSBC North America Holdings Inc., has been a staunch advocate for in-house diversity; and the Honorable Goodwin Liu, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of California, has highlighted the challenges Asian American lawyers face in the legal profession through his seminal "Portrait Project" research.

Consistent with this theme, AABANY intends to focus on those same two priorities this year and work to serve our community and advance our profession. We highlight below two of AABANY's many programs designed to meet the challenges facing vulnerable members of our community and the professional hurdles our members encounter.

## 1. Focus on Community Service: Giving Back to Those in Need

As lawyers, we have an obligation and responsibility to give back to the community, and to help those in need. This is particularly important in New York City, where more than one-quarter of Asian Americans live in poverty, and Asian Americans have higher poverty rates than other minority groups. AABANY recognizes that the most vulnerable Asian Americans in the city often lack access to legal services. To provide greater access to legal services, AABANY holds a monthly pro bono clinic in Manhattan where volunteer attorneys and students provide free legal services to the local Asian American community.

Our pro bono clinic has been well received. Clients have hailed from all five boroughs, New Jersey and Long Island. Last year, more than 50 volunteer attorneys and 23 interpreters served more than 300 clients in their native language, including Mandarin, Cantonese, and Japanese, and donated more than 327 hours of pro bono services. Volunteer attorneys have fielded questions in the areas of housing, immigration, family and criminal law.



James R. Cho  
AABANY President-Elect

Because of the success of AABANY's pro bono clinic, we will continue to expand the pro bono services that we provide and we will offer local services in the outer boroughs as well. We hold our clinic the second Wednesday of every month in Chinatown. If you are looking for ways to serve our community, we encourage you to volunteer at our pro bono clinic.

## 2. Professional Development: Training Tomorrow's Leaders Today

While Asian American attorneys have found remarkable success within the legal profession, not all attorneys have shared in this success and many continue to face challenges as they progress in their career. Justice Liu's 2017 "Portrait of Asian Americans in the Law" study found that even though we have been the fastest growing minority group in the legal profession for the past three decades, we have made only limited progress in reaching the top ranks of the profession. We continue to face challenges in the legal profession with respect to advancement to the partnership ranks, in the corporate boardroom, and in the public sector, often still hitting the "bamboo ceiling" when it comes to leadership positions.

Recognizing these professional challenges and in order to address the under-representation of Asian Americans in leadership positions at law firms, companies, and the government, AABANY is launching a "Leadership Development Program." In this first year of the program, AABANY will cultivate a select group of law firm associates, and help them navigate the law firm partnership-selection process.

The Program will provide participants with a unique opportunity to interact with partners, in-house attorneys, and business development coaches, who will provide participants with practical insights into the partnership process, help participants refine their "soft skills," and guide participants in developing a plan for making partner. AABANY also hopes to expand this leadership development program to other areas as well.

These programs highlight two of AABANY's important priorities, and we hope you will join us as we look to serve our community and advance our profession.

**James R. Cho**

AABANY President-elect



(Continued from page 1)

Ming Chu (Judy) Lee, an immigration attorney, has made the trek down each month from her offices in midtown for more than a year. While she specializes in the immigration cases, she'll do whatever she can to help – whether it be a housing dispute or family law issue. Her heart reaches out to her clients, many of whom have no idea where to turn to for help, or who lack the resources to hire an attorney.

It isn't easy. The clinic has moved locations several times, relying on the good graces of other organizations to provide a usable office or meeting area, but space is always in short supply. Volunteer attorneys and their clients are crammed together, often with a volunteer interpreter. Language can be an issue – many of the attorneys speak languages other than English and sometimes there are student volunteers who do their best to interpret, but the clients come from all cultures and sometimes there just isn't anyone around who can meet that particular language need.

Sam Lui is, in a way, grateful for these needs. He has led the clinic from its very inception, when it was just a handful of attorneys and clients thrown together out of his desire to help and serve the public. The fact that they seem now to always have too many clients means that they've grown and become established. That clients come from so many different backgrounds means that word is spreading and that the Asian American communities of New York have found that they can rely on the AABANY clinic to help them. One day, Sam hopes that the clinic will expand to Queens and Brooklyn, to serve the needs of the API communities in those boroughs. And it isn't just New York anymore. Sam recalls that at one clinic he met a woman who had travelled down into the city from Connecticut in hopes of seeing an attorney.

And so, the clients come. They line up in the hallway and wait their turn. Though the clinic doesn't start until 6:30 in the evening, there is often a queue before the attorneys even arrive. Sam Lui notes that, "There were times when I was told that certain clients had been waiting for us to come since 3PM, when the clinic did not start until 6:30 PM. It showed that people who came to the clinic were desperate for legal help, willing to travel long distance or wait for long hours."

For Pauline Yeung-Ha, an elder law and estate planning attorney and a co-chair of the AABANY Pro Bono Committee, the journey from her practice in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, is worth it. Her passion is for the elderly, especially those who don't know where to turn and who often don't even realize that they need an attorney. She joined the clinic team after her experiences working with the New York State Bar Association's Elder Law Section Clinic because she wanted a way to reach out to the elderly API community, a group often in desperate need of help but who face seemingly insurmountable barriers of language, access, and resources.

The clinic continues to grow and expand. In 2017, the clinic served more than 300 clients from all five boroughs and beyond. Late



Volunteers at the December 13, 2017, Pro Bono Clinic

last fall, the Pro Bono Committee spun off a clinic task-force to guide the clinic as it expands. It was good timing. In January of this year, Samuel Lui handed off the reigns for both the committee and the clinic as he left to pursue new opportunities in California. He leaves the clinic in good hands: Theresa Lau, the NAPABA Law Foundation Fellow at NCLEJ, now leads the Pro Bono Clinic Task Force.

Theresa is no stranger to the needs of these communities. As co-chair of the Community Response Task Force, she has led the organization of emergency DACA clinics and other rapid responses to legal needs. She's joined by Annie Wang of AALDEF and Karen Yau, one of the original members of the clinic, as well as committee co-chairs Pauline Yeung-Ha and Ariana Pabalan. Like Sam before them, the clinic team hopes to provide more and more services to those in need, expanding to other counties and other practice areas, drawing in more people from more diverse communities. The clinic needs a bigger space. The clinic needs more translators and interpreters. The clinic needs many things.

But more than anything else, the clinic needs attorneys.

Sam knows that the attorneys are out there – several dozen have contributed their time, energy, and expertise, over the years. But the clinic is always looking for more. Judy Lee notes that they're often down to only 30 minutes of consultation with each client because of the shortage of attorneys and the number of people waiting to be heard and to be helped. Pauline Yeung-Ha wonders if attorneys want to help but just don't know how – she wants attorneys not to be afraid to volunteer even if they're uncertain of what they can contribute.

Perhaps it is all too appropriate that AABANY's overarching theme for the year is "Serving Our Community, Advancing Our Profession." For the members of the AABANY Pro Bono Clinic, the message is all too clear – the Community needs us and we're here.

Anyone who is interested in volunteering, whether as an attorney or an interpreter, can email [Ariana.Pabalan@AABANY.org](mailto:Ariana.Pabalan@AABANY.org).

**About the Author:** Albert W. Suh is the acting Editor of the AABANY Advocate and co-chair of the Young Lawyers Committee and the Community Response Task Force

# Korematsu's Legacy

## How His Spirit Lives On Today

By: Joshua Gelinas

On February 19, 1942, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, ordering the mass removal and incarceration of roughly 120,000 American citizens with Japanese ancestry. Following the order, tens of thousands of Asian Americans were forced to leave their homes and report to government concentration camps.

However, Fred T. Korematsu, a 23 year-old born and raised in Oakland, California, refused to comply with the order. He believed that it unfairly discriminated against Asian Americans and violated the freedoms enshrined in the United States Constitution. Korematsu's case reached the United States Supreme Court and, in 1944, the nation's highest court declared that Korematsu, and all of the Japanese Americans detained under EO 9066, were rightly detained. In a 6 to 3 decision, the court denied that racism motivated the internment and stated that national security trumped the rights of the Japanese Americans. Korematsu was forced to remain in a concentration camp until the end of the war.

In 1980, under President Jimmy Carter, the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians concluded that the Japanese internment camps of World War II were the result of "race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership." In 1983, Korematsu's conviction was formally vacated after new evidence emerged that showed government misconduct in justifying the incarceration during the war. However, to this day, the Supreme Court ruling remains, having never been overturned by the Court.

In remembrance of Korematsu's bold act, Senator Tammy Duckworth from Illinois and Senator Mazie Hirono from Hawaii recently introduced the *Korematsu-Takai Civil Liberties Protection Act of 2017*. The *Korematsu-Takai Act* seeks to ensure that such discriminatory detentions and similar human rights violations never again occur in the United States. The bill serves to make an official Senate record about violations against Asian Americans as well as to amend the Civil Rights Law to prohibit detention based on protected characteristics, such as race and religion. The Act has been endorsed by NAPABA and is co-sponsored by Senators Blumenthal, Booker, Feinstein, and Schatz.

"We, as a nation, must never forget or repeat the horrors thousands of Japanese Americans experienced as prisoners within our own

borders. We must also continue to do everything we can to ensure such a national travesty never happens again," said Senator Duckworth when she introduced the bill in December 2017. Recognition of Mr. Korematsu's bravery and the injustice of the Japanese internment camps has continued to spread. The Fred T. Korematsu Institute, led by Fred's daughter, Karen Korematsu, has focused on increasing education about the government's treatment of Asian Americans during the war and had led efforts to establish a national Fred Korematsu Day.

Indeed, on January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2018, New York City celebrated its first annual Fred T. Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution. The inaugural celebration took place at NYU Cantor Film Center and marked the success of Resolution 792, passed by the City Council on December 19, 2017. During hearings for the resolution, AABANY Executive Director Yang Chen testified before the City Council in support of Korematsu Day. New York City now joins California, Hawaii, Virginia, and Florida in recognizing Korematsu Day.

At the celebration, Karen Korematsu spoke about the bullying her father faced both before and after the internment. Students from the Asian American Student Advocacy Project spoke to the audience about what Korematsu Day means to them. One student lauded Korematsu for serving as a role model. To her, Korematsu's legacy dispels stereotypes and encourages Asian Americans to create bridges within their communities.

Rocky Chin, a founder of AABANY, also moderated a panel discussion centered on Korematsu's legacy and its relevance to recent events in the United States such as the Muslim Ban proposed by President Trump. The panelists all spoke in support of making these important issues more visible in educational curricula at all levels. Education about important API figures such as Fred Korematsu

will allow future generations to feel empowered to take similar stands against the marginalization of minority groups.

In 1998, President Bill Clinton presented Fred Korematsu with the Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian award in the United States. Fred Korematsu was an ordinary person who took a stand against unjust governmental actions that he knew were wrong. "Stand up for what is right," Fred Korematsu said. "Protest, but not with violence. Don't be



AABANY co-founder Rocky Chin moderates a panel discussion at the first annual celebration of Fred T. Korematsu Day in New York City.

**"Stand up for what is right. Protest, but not with violence. Don't be afraid to speak up. One person can make a difference, even if it takes 40 years."**

**- Fred T. Korematsu**

**About the Author:** Josh Gelinas is a senior at New York University studying history. He worked for AABANY as an intern during the fall semester of 2017.



# AABANY Quarterly Report

During this quarter, AABANY continued to hold networking events for its members and informative panels and programs for the community, from talks with leaders in the Asian American legal community to a bowling night. AABANY, through its Executive Director, testified before the New York City Council in support of a resolution to make January 30 each year Fred T. Korematsu Day. AABANY also prepared for the new year, particularly the 2018 Annual Dinner and the election of new board members and committee co-chairs. Registration for the Annual Dinner, which is taking place on February 28 at Cipriani Wall Street, opened in December. On January 12, AABANY sent out the notice to its members of the Annual Meeting of Members, which will take place on February 13 at Dorsey & Whitney, at which members will elect the officers and directors for FY 2018.

## Special Events

*October 14, 2017* **The Northeast Regional of the 2017 Hon. Thomas Tang National Moot Court Competition**, sponsored annually by the NAPABA Law Foundation and co-sponsored by AABANY, took place at Brooklyn Law School, with special thanks to Francis Chin and Samuel Yee for coordinating the event.

*October 17, 2017* In conjunction with Arnold & Porter Kaye Scholer, LLP, AABANY co-sponsored a **Portrait Project Panel with Justice Goodwin Liu**, a discussion between California Supreme Court Justice Goodwin Liu and a panel of members of the federal judiciary, private sector, and academia about Justice Liu's study, *A Portrait of Asian Americans in the Law*.



*November 16, 2017* AABANY co-sponsored with Shearman Sterling **Distinguished Alumni Perspectives with Justice Chin Brandt**, where Justice Chin Brandt, the first Asian American elected official and the first Asian American female jurist in New York, shared personal and professional insights on lessons she has learned from a long and distinguished career on the bench.

*December 6, 2017* AABANY's **"How to Become a Committee Co-Chair" Information Session** brought current AABANY committee co-chairs into conversation with members interested in becoming co-chairs or learning about AABANY's various committees.

*December 8, 2017* More than 30 AABANY members and friends came out for a **theater outing** to see **"A Deal,"** at Urban Stages Theater on West 30th Street. A talkback with the playwright Zhu Yi, moderated by Issues Committee Co-Chair Chris Kwok, took place after the show.

*December 15, 2017* AABANY held its **holiday party** once again at **Dave & Buster's** in Times Square. More than 100 members registered, and brought along their families and friends for a night of food, drinks and games.

## Panels & CLEs

*October 16, 2017* Together with ADR provider JAMS, AABANY co-sponsored **The Evolution of ADR Services for Inbound and Outbound Investment**, at Fordham Law School, featuring a panel which included two high-ranking Chinese judges and a talk on the use of ADR services in China and among Chinese companies around the world.

*October 17, 19 and 25, 2017* AABANY and AALDEF co-sponsored an **Asian American Election Protection Volunteer Training** for volunteers who monitored polling sites for potential violations of the Voting Rights Act.

*October 18, 2017* AABANY's Real Estate and Solo and Small Firm Committees partnered with the Korean American Lawyers Association of Greater New York to hold **Selling and Purchasing Real Property from an Estate**, a discussion between Margaret Ling, Real Estate Committee Co-Chair, and Pauline Yeung-Ha, who practices Trusts and Estates Law.

*October 23, 2017* AABANY co-sponsored the Muslim Bar Association of New York's **How to Go In-House and Succeed**, which featured a dynamic panel of senior in-house attorneys from Mitsui, Bristol-Myers Squibb (represented by AABANY Board member Jung Choi), Bank of America, and Bloomberg, discussing their transition into an in-house role and tips on succeeding in the corporate environment.

*November 14, 2017* AABANY's Women's Committee held **Women Rainmakers: Creating and Cultivating (Potential) Successful Client Relationships**, a discussion on growing a client base, with practical tips and advice from a panel of experienced woman attorneys.



*November 15, 2017* AABANY's Intellectual Property Committee presented **IP Prosecution 101**, a dinner reception and skills workshop on filing a trademark, a copyright, and a design patent in U.S.

*November 29, 2017* Partnering with Phillips Lytle, LLP, and the University of Buffalo School of Law, AABANY co-sponsored the trial reenactment, **Justice Denied (Wards Cove Packing Co. v. Atonio)**,

*(Continued on page 7)*

## Quarterly Report, cont'd

(Continued from page 6)

about the struggle of Filipino activists protesting unfair and discriminatory working conditions that had prevailed for decades against Asian American cannery workers.

**December 6, 2017 Building a Taller Flushing: Zoning, Air Rights & Development** brought together professionals from law, real estate, and banking to discuss the future of Flushing's construction and growth, co-sponsored by AABANY's Real Estate and Solo and Small Firm Committees.

### Community Outreach

October 11, November 8, December 13, 2017 and January 10, 2018 AABANY held its monthly **Pro Bono Legal Clinic** at the Chinese Chamber of Commerce of NY, Inc.

October 25, 2017 The New York City Council's Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations, chaired by Council Member James Van Bramer, held a **hearing on Res. No. 792 to name January 30 annually as Fred T. Korematsu Day in New York City**. AABANY Executive Director Yang Chen testified on behalf of AABANY. On December 19, 2017, the New York City Council passed Res. No. 792, and the very first Fred T. Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution was celebrated on January 30.

### Networking

October 19, 2017 AABANY's quarterly **Tax Club Dinner** was held at Tang Pavilion. Rich Williams, Partner at Dentons, and Shiukay Hung, Associate at Morrison & Foerster, discussed the recent GOP tax plan and issues of tax reform.

October 24, 2017 AABANY's LGBT Committee co-sponsored **LGBT Asian American/South Asian Attorney Networking Reception**, to celebrate the diversity within the LGBT and Asian American/South Asian communities and provide peer-support to LGBT API attorneys in corporate, commercial, government, and public interest practice.



November 8, 2017 Partnering with the Korean American Lawyers Association of Greater New York, AABANY co-sponsored the **KALAGNY Veterans & Military Networking Event**, where Hon. Randall T. Eng was the honored speaker, in conversation with AABANY's Military and Veteran Affairs Committee Co-Chair and AABANY Board Member Brian Song.

November 17, 2017 AABANY's IP Committee held a **bowling night** with NYU APALSA, at which law students got to meet and network with practicing lawyers at Lucky Strike Manhattan.

## SUMMIT IS PROUD TO BE A DIAMOND SPONSOR

We recognize and support the value AABANY brings to the Financial, Legal and Business Communities.



### Capital Markets

Superior service at significantly reduced rates versus what our competitors' charge. IPO's, 144's, M&A's and other major transactions.

### ProFile

Innovative software to simplify and streamline SEC disclosure compliance.

### Investor Services

For mutual funds and institutional investors.

### Proxy Statements / Annual Reports

From simple 10-K wraps to sophisticated enhanced proxy statements.

For more information please call 212-913-0510

[www.summitfinancialprinting.com](http://www.summitfinancialprinting.com)

# The Honorable Doris Ling-Cohan

## Inspirational Trailblazer and Role Model

By: Sarah Lu

One of the first things that Justice Doris Ling-Cohan did after welcoming me to her chambers was offer me tea and cookies. Throughout our brief time together, Justice Ling-Cohan's kindness and warmth would continue to resonate as she talked about her experiences as an Asian American woman in the legal field.

Justice Ling-Cohan's list of accomplishments could span pages. But throughout all her time in law, she has maintained a sense of humility and patience that is incredibly inspiring. After graduating *summa cum laude* with a degree in Psychology from Brooklyn College, she attended New York University (NYU) School of Law. Once out of law school, she committed herself to a life of public service, working first for various New York legal services organizations representing indigent persons, and then for the Consumer Fraud Protection Bureau. She is revered throughout the Asian American community as a champion of Asian American causes; she co-founded AABANY and the Jade Council, both of which serve to advance Asian Americans in the legal profession. She has received numerous awards for her activism and she was also the first API attorney to be elected to the New York State Supreme Court and then the first to be appointed to the Appellate Term.

Justice Ling-Cohan speaks without hesitation about how her identity and her past have shaped her experiences in the legal profession and on the bench. Born in Manhattan's Chinatown to Chinese immigrants, Justice Ling-Cohan was the daughter of a seamstress and a laundry worker. When she was a teenager, Justice Ling-Cohan was profoundly affected by her mother's frustrating and daunting experience with the legal process. Her mother was the victim of an assault but was never provided with an interpreter or any instructions on how to proceed with her case. During her journey through the drawn-out legal process, Justice Ling-Cohan's mother sometimes ended up in the same rooms and elevators with the defendant while her case was pending. In the end, nobody explained how the case was resolved.

"The law seemed to be outside my reach," Justice Ling-Cohan said, after recalling the story of her mother. This frustrating experience permanently shaped Justice Ling-Cohan's idea of "the lawyer I wanted to be and the judge I wanted to be". She reiterated that growing up in an immigrant family has made her aware of the fact that, while immigrants often have to deal with the legal system more than other groups, they are not always able to face the intricacies and challenges that come with it.

It is no surprise, then, that Justice Ling-Cohan has advocated for traditionally underrepresented groups, such as immigrants, women, and LGBTQ+ people, throughout her career. From the victims of domestic violence that she encountered during her tenure at Womankind (formerly the New York Asian Women's Center) to the immigrants who were tricked into a "free public housing" scam when she was working for the Consumer Fraud Protection Bureau, Justice Ling-Cohan stressed that her goal was to help her clients understand the legal process in a way that would not echo her own frustrating experiences growing up.

In recalling her work with victims of domestic violence, Justice Ling-Cohan notes that judges must not be hindered by emotion but should have enough sensitivity and empathy to place themselves in the shoes of those who are fearful of coming to court. "It is easy to be jaded and assume that

everyone understands the language of the court and law, but sometimes, a person with a college degree may not understand what the judge is saying--much less someone who is fearful, anxious, and does not speak English."

She was the third trial judge in the entire country and the first judge in New York to rule in favor of marriage equality in *Hernandez vs. Robles*, citing the injustices of interracial marriage bans to justify her decision. While the decision was reversed by the Second Circuit, Justice Ling-Cohan's position was eventually vindicated by the Supreme Court's *Obergefell v. Hodges* decision in 2015, which legalized gay marriage nationwide.

Justice Ling-Cohan is also an advocate for Asian Americans and women in the legal profession. In fact, in 2017 she was received the NAPABA Women's Leadership Award. While Asian American and female representation in the law have increased manifold since she first entered the field, Justice Ling-Cohan believes that there is more to come.

She thinks back to her own challenges as someone at the intersection of both identities. On multiple occasions as a judge and an attorney, Justice Ling-

Cohan was mistaken for a translator when she entered the courtroom, and in other instances, she realized that she was the only woman in the entire courtroom. The vulnerability and fear she experienced as an Asian American woman resonates with many, and she believes that the challenges faced by both groups have not completely gone away.

In her experience, the lack of Asian American mentorship in the legal profession continues to contribute to the problem of the "Bamboo Ceiling" in law and it drives her to be a mentor to others. When it comes to her

experience as a woman in the law, she cites a roundtable discussion she had hosted with Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, wherein Justice Ginsburg talked about the conflicts between motherhood and pursuing a law career. While Justice Ginsburg was a law professor, she had been getting calls every day from the kindergarten her son went to because he had been

"troublesome"—when she redirected the school to call her husband, however, the calls stopped. "They were too embarrassed! Even if she was a full-time law professor, they wouldn't call him instead!" Judge Ling-Cohan exclaims, then shakes her head.

At the end of our time together, I asked Justice-Ling Cohan if she has any advice for me, an Asian American woman aspiring to go into the legal profession. Her advice? "Don't be afraid to be challenged--you'll surprise yourself."

**About the Author:** Sarah Lu is AABANY's Spring 2018 intern. She is an aspiring attorney and Chinese-food aficionado currently studying at Columbia University.



The Honorable Doris Ling-Cohan

**Judges must not be hindered by emotion but should have enough sensitivity and empathy to place themselves in the shoes of those who are fearful of coming to court**



# NYCBA's 2016 Diversity Benchmarking Report: Implications for the API Attorney Community

By Quentin Wong

On November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017, the New York City Bar Association (NYCBA) released its *2016 Diversity Benchmarking Report*. The *Report* consolidates data from 88 New York City law firms that are signatories to the NYCBA Statement of Diversity of Principles. To supplement their empirical findings, the *Report* also summarizes more than 40 hours of qualitative interviews from partners and associates alike. The *2016 Report* notes both positive and negative trends in diversity and representation at law firms throughout New York City.

The continuing emphasis on diversity initiatives by these firms may be having a positive effect on the number of Asian/Pacific Islanders in law firm associate positions. Compared to the *2015 Benchmarking Report*, the percentage of Asian/Pacific islanders in associate positions rose from 9.9 percent in 2015 to 10.7 percent in 2016. As a whole, there was an increase of 25.9% to 27.9% for 2016 for minority representation across associate positions.

However, the 2016 report highlights a continuing and troubling trend for diversity in firm partnership: over the last four years, the proportion of minorities in law firm partnership positions has remained the same, with only 8.4% of law firm partners identifying as minorities. For Asian/Pacific Islanders, the figure stands at 4.1% of all firm partners, a slight increase from 3% in 2016. Furthermore, only 1.4 % of all firm partners are female API lawyers, in contrast with Caucasian women, who make up 16% of partners. Furthermore, women make up only 18.6% of partners, overall.

The *Report* notes that one possible explanation for the lack of growth in the percentage of minorities in firm management is that voluntary attrition rates for minority attorneys exceed those of white men and women. In 2016, 15.6% of all attorneys who left the surveyed firms were minorities, while Caucasian men made up 10.6%. Internally, Asian/Pacific Islanders had the highest attrition rate, with 12% of API firm associates voluntarily leaving the firm, in contrast to the 4% of African Americans and 5% of Hispanic attorneys who left their associate positions.

These attrition statistics correspond with those found in *A Portrait of Asian Americans in the Law*, the 2017 report published by Yale Law School under the leadership of Justice Goodwin Liu of the California Supreme Court. The *Portrait* noted the same high attrition rate of API attorneys at law firms across America. The authors of the *Portrait* found that API attorneys cited "inadequate access to mentors and contacts" and a "lack of formal leadership training programs" as the two greatest barriers to career advancement.

On a positive note, the *2016 Diversity Benchmarking Report* did find that the surveyed law firms continue to support diversity efforts by increasing resources and implementing internal policies aimed towards achieving greater diversity and representation. For instance, the *Report* found that in 2016, 63% of the firms had tied equity partner compensation to diversity metrics, a massive increase from the 33% of firms in 2013. In addition, more than three quarters of the firms surveyed now have dedicated diversity staff.

To conclude, the *2016 Benchmarking Report* illustrates the accomplishments and the challenges ahead to build a more diverse profession. The *Report* applauds the surveyed law firms' initiative to implement diversity policies and goals. Nonetheless, in order to build a more inclusive profession, with greater representation of Asian Americans in associate positions and leadership roles, would take continuing effort from all parties in the legal industry. This would include better engagement between law firms, clients, bar associations and other stakeholders in the profession. The *Report* recognizes that there is a "long road ahead," but it is with hope that one day a more representative legal workplace will emerge from the efforts of today and tomorrow.

The *2016 Diversity Benchmarking Report* is available on the New York City Bar Association website at: <http://documents.nycbar.org/files/BenchmarkingReport2016.pdf>. *A Portrait of Asian Americans in the Law*

**About the Author:** Quentin Wong is a LLM graduate from the New York University (or NYU) School of Law from Hong Kong. He was an AABANY Legal Intern in the Summer of 2017.

## Sponsor Spotlight, cont.

Today, the effort to recruit diverse attorneys continues through their involvement in diversity-related recruiting events at law schools across the country, resulting in a 2017 summer class that was 50% racially diverse or LGBTQ. Furthermore, Paul, Weiss has participated in diversity scholarships and fellowship programs such as the New York City Bar Diversity Fellowship, which Paul, Weiss has supported since its inception.

To create a more inclusive culture that successfully retains and promotes APA talent, Paul, Weiss has also implemented a firm-wide diversity and inclusion strategy, led by the firm's Chief Inclusion Officer, Danyale Price. Within their offices, they support an Asian Pacific Lawyers Network; a Diversity Mentoring Program, which pairs junior associates with a partner mentor within the same department; and they offer training programs for women and minority attorneys on topics like leadership, effective public speaking, and relationship building.

Paul, Weiss serves as an example of how diversity can form the backbone of a successful firm, bringing new and different perspectives together into an inclusive environment. AABANY proudly recognizes Paul, Weiss as the 2018 Law Firm Diversity Award recipient.



Lawrence Wee, partner at Paul, Weiss, speaks to students at Columbia Law APALSA's 5th Annual Conference

**About the Author:** Maisa Chiang is an AABANY member who kindly volunteered her time to help with the Annual Dinner 2018 Planning Committee.

# In Memoriam Honorable Charles Y.J. Liu

By: Steven De Castro

There is a bar in Albany where the Buffalo Bills play on the TV screen and the neon lights of the beer signs shine out the windows. It is the same as any bar in upstate New York, except that its proprietors have made an unusual addition to their staff. The bar's front door is guarded by a burly Chinese American bouncer with a big smile, a mickey mouse T-shirt, and a leather motorcycle jacket who speaks with a recognizable New York City accent. The big man has graduated from SUNY Albany and has embarked on a brilliant career of aggravating his mother, who, for 22 years, has been pushing him into the medical field. Obviously, Momma Liu does not care about resembling an Asian stereotype. And her son does not care about fitting into one.

The bouncer's name is Charlie Liu. Charlie reveled in the nightly dramas that play out in the bar; that's why he loves the books of 60's author Charles Bukowski (writer of *Barfly*). Currently, as he is checking ID's and resolving interpersonal conflicts, it would be difficult for the denizens of the place to imagine how their favorite Clash-rocking, head-banging bouncer would eventually become a Judge of the Housing Court for the City of New York. What makes this evolution even more difficult to fathom is the incredible logjam in his life: his recalcitrant feud with his mother. Momma Liu wants Charlie to be a doctor. Charlie, for his part, wants to keep doing what he is doing.

Who knows where Charlie would have ended up if not for one snowy Albany morning? He woke up in his apartment (provided by his employer, directly above the bar). Emerging from his bedroom, Charlie could not have been more terrified had he seen his living room engulfed in flames. Because, to his surprise, sitting in his unkept living room was his Momma incarnate. She had driven 150 miles from Staten Island to unleash some Chinese momma-thunder, an innovative rendition of an otherwise familiar tune. "WHY ARE YOU NOT IN MEDICAL SCHOOL!"

But whatever happened in that living room between mother and son was to change their relationship. Because, for the first time in world history, Momma Liu compromised. Charlie, for his part, recognized the short-term nature of his arrangements, that someday he would outgrow the leather jacket. And so, medical school was out.

And Charlie went to law school.

Let's back this story up about ten years. Charlie was in 7th grade when I met him on the schoolyard of Blessed Sacrament Elementary School. We became best friends immediately. My family moved onto his street. I am Filipino. My next-door neighbor was Filipino. Across the street lived a Puerto Rican kid, and then Charlie was up the street. Accordingly, they used to call our street "Chinatown."

In every way that is important, Charlie in 7th grade was just a miniature version of Judge Liu of late. When I arrived in school, he seemed to know everyone, their life stories, where they lived, and a million other details. His NSA-like knowledge included our teachers, including the all-powerful, fearsome, loving Sister Patrick, who knew each student

by SRA score and resembled Darth Vader, wielding a yardstick in place of a lightsaber. Charlie's knowledge helped to steer me clear of many danger areas and helped get me out of trouble, which was important, because, unlike Charlie, I was a miscreant troublemaker with a big mouth. On one or two occasions, Charlie's superior bulk, or fat, or whatever you call it, was placed to my advantage. I think Charlie got to play football for Stuyvesant High School because he got so much practice playing defense for me.



The Hon. Charles Y.J. Liu being sworn as a judge of the New York City Housing Court

Not that it was all gloom and doom. Charlie had a lot of laughs, often at my expense. Early on, I privately asked a girl out and was roundly rebuffed. Of course my private exchange got around the school within minutes. Charlie called, "Hey! I heard that you asked X out!!!" And the laughing didn't stop for a year. I was glad to provide a source of mirth for my buddy, if not Sister Patrick and the whole school.

When we got to high school, I would meet Charlie on the ferryboat going back to Staten Island. He would be wearing his Stuyvesant football jersey. I would be wearing a military uniform or a blue blazer. Of course I was the preppy for going to Xavier, although Stuyvesant is known to be the better school.

And then, by the strangest of coincidences, we both ended up as housing lawyers in the same courthouse. Since he became a court attorney and I was a litigator, we knew complementary areas: as usual, he knew everything about everybody on the court side, and I was involved in politics and the bar associations. Just like in Blessed Sacrament, Charlie's inside knowledge served me very well in keeping me and my clients out of trouble and helping me to navigate the system. I guess I was useful with providing him the real-world skills of navigating the bar associations. Our friendship turned into a bridging of the two worlds of the public courtroom areas and the private judges' areas of the courthouse. Because of Charlie, I learned a lot about judges and thus became a better lawyer.

One night we were hanging out downtown when a friend brought an Irish girl to the party. I was leaving, and Charlie decided to stay. He said, "Hey, I told her I play rugby, and she plays baseball! I think we could get along!" And they sure did. That was Caroline, who would become his wife.

Looking back on Charlie's life as we all try to come to terms with his sudden passing, I know what made Charlie so successful, how he was able to treat people with such a sense of humanity. It was because he was always curious about where people came from -- what country, what neighborhood, what family, how they grew up. Like his favorite author, Charles Bukowski, he was forever interested in how your past influenced and motivated the choices you make. And that's because he never forgot where he came from, the places he'd been, and the people he'd met.

**About the Author:** Steven De Castro was a practicing attorney and former AABANY Board Officer. He is now a filmmaker. A childhood friend of the Hon. Charles Liu, Mr. De Castro volunteered to write this tribute for his friend.

# AABANY • MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



Asian American  
Bar Association  
of New York

## Asian American Bar Association of New York

The Asian American Bar Association of New York was formed in 1989 as a not-for-profit corporation to represent the interests of New York Asian American attorneys, judges, law professors, legal professionals, legal assistants, paralegals and law students. Today AABANY has over 1100 members.

The mission of AABANY is to improve the study and practice of law, and the fair administration of justice for all by ensuring the meaningful participation of Asian Americans in the legal profession.

## Member Benefits and Activities

- **LEARN**  
Attend interesting and relevant Continuing Legal Education (“CLE”) accredited programs on a wide range of topics for free or at discounted rates.
- **NETWORK**  
Connect with a diverse network of attorneys in every type and size of practice in a variety of networking settings, including social, community service, and physical wellness events.
- **COLLABORATE**  
Get involved in the organization by joining one of AABANY’s 30 different committees, participating in AABANY’s Mentorship Program, or volunteering at one of our signature events.
- **ACCESS**  
Access AABANY’s members-only career center database for legal job openings and consult with AABANY’s Career Placement Committee for targeted job advice/guidance.
- **CONNECT**  
As an Active Member, get a free membership in the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association “NAPABA” and connect with a vast network of APA attorneys in North America, from coast to coast and in Canada.
- **GROW**  
Take on a leadership role within a committee, highlight your practice by speaking on a panel, and raise your profile in the legal community.
- **SAVE**  
Get discounted memberships at other bar associations and discounts on entertainment, travel, and shopping with the Working Advantage Program.

## Membership Types

- A Active Member** – Any attorney admitted in any state, territory or possession of the United States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, or foreign country jurisdiction who works and/or resides in New York State.
- Annual Fees: Private Sector (10 or less years since admission) - \$75  
Private Sector (More than 10 years since admission) - \$125  
Public Sector - \$40
- B Associate Member** – Any attorney admitted in any state, territory or possession of the United States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, or foreign country jurisdiction who does not work or reside in New York State.
- Annual Fee: \$50
- C Law Student Member** – Any individual enrolled at an American Bar Association accredited law school who resides or attends a law school in New York State or intends to sit for the New York State Bar Examination, or any graduate of an ABA-accredited law school who is pending admission to the New York State bar and works or resides in New York State.
- Annual Fee: \$15
- D Affinity Member** – Any individual supporting the legal community who is not a licensed attorney, law school graduate, or law student.
- Annual Fee: \$30

AABANY

45 ROCKEFELLER PLAZA, 20TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10111  
MAIN@AABANY.ORG | (718) 228-7206 | JOIN ONLINE AT WWW.AABANY.ORG





# APPLICANT INFORMATION

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



Asian American  
Bar Association  
of New York

☐ MR. ☐ MS. ☐ DR. ☐ HON.

NAME FIRST MIDDLE LAST  
HOME ADDRESS PHONE FAX  
CITY STATE ZIP CODE EMAIL

### Employment Information

FIRM OR ORGANIZATION NAME  
BUSINESS ADDRESS PHONE FAX  
CITY STATE ZIP CODE EMAIL

### Membership Type

I WOULD LIKE TO: ☐ JOIN ☐ RENEW

**A Active Member** Please select one of the following categories:  
☐ Private Sector (10 or less years since admission) - \$75  
☐ Private Sector (More than 10 years since admission) - \$125  
☐ Public Sector - \$40

**B Associate Member - \$50**  
**C Law Student Member - \$15**  
**D Affinity Member - \$30**

### Contact Preferences

SEND EMAIL TO: ☐ HOME ☐ WORK ☐ DON'T SEND EMAIL

SEND POSTAL MAIL TO: ☐ HOME ☐ WORK

AABANY IS THE NEW YORK AFFILIATE OF NAPABA. SHARE INFO WITH NAPABA? ☐ YES ☐ NO

PROVIDE CONTACT INFORMATION IN THE DIRECTORY? (Check all that apply) ☐ HOME ☐ WORK ☐ DO NOT LIST

### Profile

LAW SCHOOL: GRADUATION YEAR:  
PROGRAM: ☐ JD ☐ LL.M. ☐ SJD/PH.D. STATE BARS ADMITTED: ☐ NY ☐ NJ ☐ CT ☐ OTHER ☐ PENDING YEAR FIRST ADMITTED:

☐ FIRM/SOLO PRACTICE ☐ IN-HOUSE ☐ GOVERNMENT ☐ JUDICIARY ☐ STUDENT ☐ EDUCATOR ☐ NON-PROFIT/PUBLIC INTEREST ☐ OTHER

PRACTICE AREA(S):

NON-ENGLISH LANGUAGES:

### Committee Participation - I WOULD LIKE TO PARTICIPATE IN (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

<input type="checkbox"/> ACADEMIC	<input type="checkbox"/> FINANCE	<input type="checkbox"/> LABOR & EMPLOYMENT LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> AUDIT	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT SERVICE & PUBLIC INTEREST	<input type="checkbox"/> LGBT	<input type="checkbox"/> PROSECUTORS
<input type="checkbox"/> AWARDS	<input type="checkbox"/> IMMIGRATION & NATIONALITY LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> LITIGATION	<input type="checkbox"/> REAL ESTATE
<input type="checkbox"/> CAREER PLACEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN-HOUSE COUNSEL	<input type="checkbox"/> MEMBERSHIP	<input type="checkbox"/> SOLO & SMALL FIRM PRACTICE
<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL BANKRUPTCY & RESTRUCTURING	<input type="checkbox"/> INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY & VETERAN AFFAIRS	<input type="checkbox"/> STUDENT OUTREACH
<input type="checkbox"/> COMPENSATION	<input type="checkbox"/> ISSUES	<input type="checkbox"/> NEWSLETTER	<input type="checkbox"/> TAX
<input type="checkbox"/> CORPORATE LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> JUDICIARY	<input type="checkbox"/> NOMINATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> WOMEN'S
		<input type="checkbox"/> PRO BONO & COMMUNITY SERVICE	<input type="checkbox"/> YOUNG LAWYERS

☐ CHECK ENCLOSED (MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO ASIAN AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK)

**Credit Card Payment** - IF PAYING BY CREDIT CARD, I AGREE TO PAY DUES SELECTED ABOVE ACCORDING TO MY CARDMEMBER'S AGREEMENT.

PLEASE CHARGE MY: ☐ VISA ☐ AMERICAN EXPRESS ☐ DISCOVER ☐ MASTERCARD

CREDIT CARD NUMBER EXPIRATION DATE

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT DATE

AABANY

RETURN THIS FORM TO:  
45 ROCKEFELLER PLAZA, 20TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10111  
MAIN@AABANY.ORG | (718) 228-7206 | JOIN ONLINE AT WWW.AABANY.ORG

