



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 9, 2025

Contact: Yang Chen, Executive Director
(646) 653-2168

**ASIAN AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK APPLAUDS
APPOINTMENT OF PEI PEI CHENG DE CASTRO TO THE NEW YORK STATE
INTEREST ON LAWYER ACCOUNT FUND AS TRUSTEE AND CHAIR**

NEW YORK – July 9, 2025 – The Asian American Bar Association of New York (“AABANY”) congratulates Pei Pei Cheng de Castro on her appointment by Governor Kathy Hochul, as announced on June 27, 2025, to the New York State Interest on Lawyer Account (IOLA) Fund, where she will serve as Chair and Trustee.

Pei Pei Cheng de Castro is the Vice President of Programs and Operations at AABANY. She is also a partner at Barclay Damon LLP, focusing on Commercial Litigation & Complex Trials and White Collar & Government Investigations. Cheng de Castro earned her J.D. from New York Law School.

After law school, Cheng de Castro entered private practice, managing a wide-ranging caseload that included commercial real estate and criminal defense matters. In 2012, she co-founded the Central Queens Academy Charter School, which focuses on serving immigrant children who are English language learners.

In 2014, Cheng de Castro transitioned to public service by joining the New York State Joint Commission on Public Ethics (JCOPE). She rose to become Director of Investigations and Enforcement, working with a team that investigated potential violations of state ethics and lobbying laws.

After leaving JCOPE in 2019, she joined the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) as Executive Deputy Inspector General, overseeing investigations into capital projects and service contracts. In 2021, she was appointed Deputy Counsel to Governor Kathy Hochul, where she managed high-profile disputes, oversaw executive state litigation, executed special projects, and acted as liaison to both the Attorney General's office and the State Comptroller.

Since 2024, she has been a partner at Barclay Damon LLP, where her extensive experience both inside and outside government enables her to advise clients on government procurement, ethics, lobbying, regulatory compliance, congressional inquiries, and representation before city, state, and federal agencies.

The New York State Interest on Lawyer Account Fund (IOLA) assists low-income New Yorkers in obtaining civil legal services to meet their basic needs, including food, shelter, jobs, and access to health care. In 1983, with support from the New York State Bar Association, IOLA was created as a means to support civil legal service organizations that had been affected by federal budget cuts. At no expense to either the public, attorneys, or their clients, the interest generated from pooled lawyer trust accounts is used to fund legal assistance for low-income individuals and to enhance the justice system. IOLA's current two-year grant cycle allocates \$70

million to civil legal aid providers serving low-income New Yorkers, supporting its mission of ensuring equal access to justice for all.

“AABANY is delighted to congratulate Pei Pei Cheng de Castro on her appointment as chair and trustee,” said Benjamin C. Hsing, President of AABANY. “As a dedicated member of our Board and someone whose career exemplifies public service, she brings both integrity and expertise to her new role. We are confident that her unwavering commitment and skillset will greatly advance the mission of the New York State Interest on Lawyer Account Fund in expanding civil legal services to low-income New Yorkers.”

For more information, please contact Yang Chen, AABANY Executive Director, at (646) 653-2168, or direct any inquiries to main@aabany.org.

The Asian American Bar Association of New York is a not-for-profit 501(c)(6) professional membership organization of attorneys concerned with issues affecting the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community. Incorporated in 1989, AABANY seeks not only to encourage the professional growth of its members but also to advocate for the AAPI community as a whole. AABANY is a New York regional affiliate of the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA). AALFNY is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization that has helped to fund the production of the documentary.

###

Additional information about AABANY is available at www.aabany.org

Follow our blog at www.blog.aabany.org

Follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/aabany

Find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/aabany