



**Asian American
Bar Association
of New York**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 24, 2019**

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**ASIAN AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK CONGRATULATES
KATHY HIRATA CHIN ON BEING SELECTED TO RECEIVE THE INAUGURAL
HONG YEN CHANG AWARD BY THE COLUMBIA LAW SCHOOL ASSOCIATION
AND ASIAN COLUMBIA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION AT THE NEW YORK COUNTY
LAWYERS ASSOCIATION**

NEW YORK – May 24, 2019 – The Asian American Bar Association of New York (“AABANY”) is proud to announce that Kathy Hirata Chin, Partner at Crowell & Moring LLP and longstanding member of AABANY, will be honored at the New York County Lawyers Association (NYCLA) at the Inaugural Hong Yen Chang Reception on Tuesday, May 28, 2019. The Columbia Law School Association and Asian Columbia Alumni Association are recognizing Ms. Chin with this honor, and the reception is co-sponsored by AABANY, the Asian Practice Committee of NYCLA, the Korean American Lawyers Association of Greater New York, and the Network of Bar Leaders. Ms. Chin is a 1980 graduate of Columbia Law School.

In 1872, 13-year-old Hong Yen Chang came to the United States to be groomed as a diplomat. He earned degrees from Yale University and Columbia University’s law school and passed the bar exam. However, after passing the bar examination, he was first denied admission because of his lack of U.S. citizenship due to the Chinese Exclusion Act. A special act of the New York Legislature (N.Y. L.1887 c. 249) allowed his admission despite this bar and in 1888, Hong Yen Chang reportedly became the first Asian American attorney admitted to the bar in New York. Hong Yen Chang then moved to California and applied for admission to the bar there but was denied in 1890 due to his lack of citizenship. Not until 2015 was this exclusion remedied, when the California Supreme Court granted an application from members of the UC Davis Asian Pacific American Law Students Association for posthumous admission of Hong Yen Chang.

“Although the very first Asian American lawyer in New York State was admitted over 130 years ago, the legacy of exclusion, discrimination and bias continues to preserve a Bamboo Ceiling in 21st century America,” states AABANY President Brian Song. “We are grateful that Kathy Hirata Chin has been a vital champion, role model and trailblazer in the fight for diversity and inclusion in the legal profession and are proud to count her among our most prominent members. We congratulate her on being selected to receive the Hong Yen Chang Award.”

Kathy Hirata Chin is an accomplished litigator who has handled dozens of appellate cases, concentrating her practice in healthcare and real estate. After graduating magna cum laude from Princeton University and graduating from Columbia University School of Law, where she was a Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar and Editor-in-Chief of *The Columbia Journal of Transnational Law*,

Ms. Chin joined Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft LLP, becoming one of the first minority and women Partners in 1990.

Nominated by Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, Ms. Chin served on the New York City Planning Commission from 1995-2001. Nominated by Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, Ms. Chin served on the New York City Commission to Combat Police Corruption in 2003. She has also served on Governor Mario M. Cuomo's Judicial Screening Committee for the First Judicial Department from 1992-1994; the Magistrate Judge Merit Selection Panel for the Eastern District of New York from 1992-1999; the Gender Bias Committee of the Second Circuit Task Force on Gender, Race, and Ethnic Fairness; the New York County Lawyers' Association's Task Force to Increase Diversity in the Legal Profession; and Chief Judge Judith S. Kaye's Commission to Promote Public Confidence in Judicial Elections from 2003-2006; and the New York County Lawyers' Association Board of Directors.

In December 2012 and again in December 2014, she was nominated for appointment to the State Court of Appeals by the New York State Commission on Judicial Nomination. In April 2016, she was appointed by Gov. Andrew Cuomo to the First Department Judicial Screening Committee. Since January 2016, Kathy has served as a member of the Second Circuit Judicial Council Committee on Civic Education & Public Engagement, focusing on historic reenactments as a teaching tool. With her husband, the Hon. Denny Chin of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, and teams of lawyers and judges from AABANY, she has developed and presented reenactments of famous cases such as *Korematsu vs. U.S.*, to teach lawyers and the community about the significant contributions made by Asian Americans to the social, political and legal history of the United States.

Ms. Chin has played a critical role in initiating and sustaining change within many organizations, in the legal profession and the community. Please join AABANY in congratulating Ms. Chin on this well-deserved honor.

For more information, please contact Yang Chen, AABANY Executive Director, at (212) 332-2478, or direct any inquiries to main@aabany.org.

The Asian American Bar Association of New York is a professional membership organization of attorneys concerned with issues affecting the Asian Pacific American community. Incorporated in 1989, AABANY seeks not only to encourage the professional growth of its members but also to advocate for the Asian Pacific American community as a whole. AABANY is a New York regional affiliate of the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA).

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