



# NAPABA LAWYER

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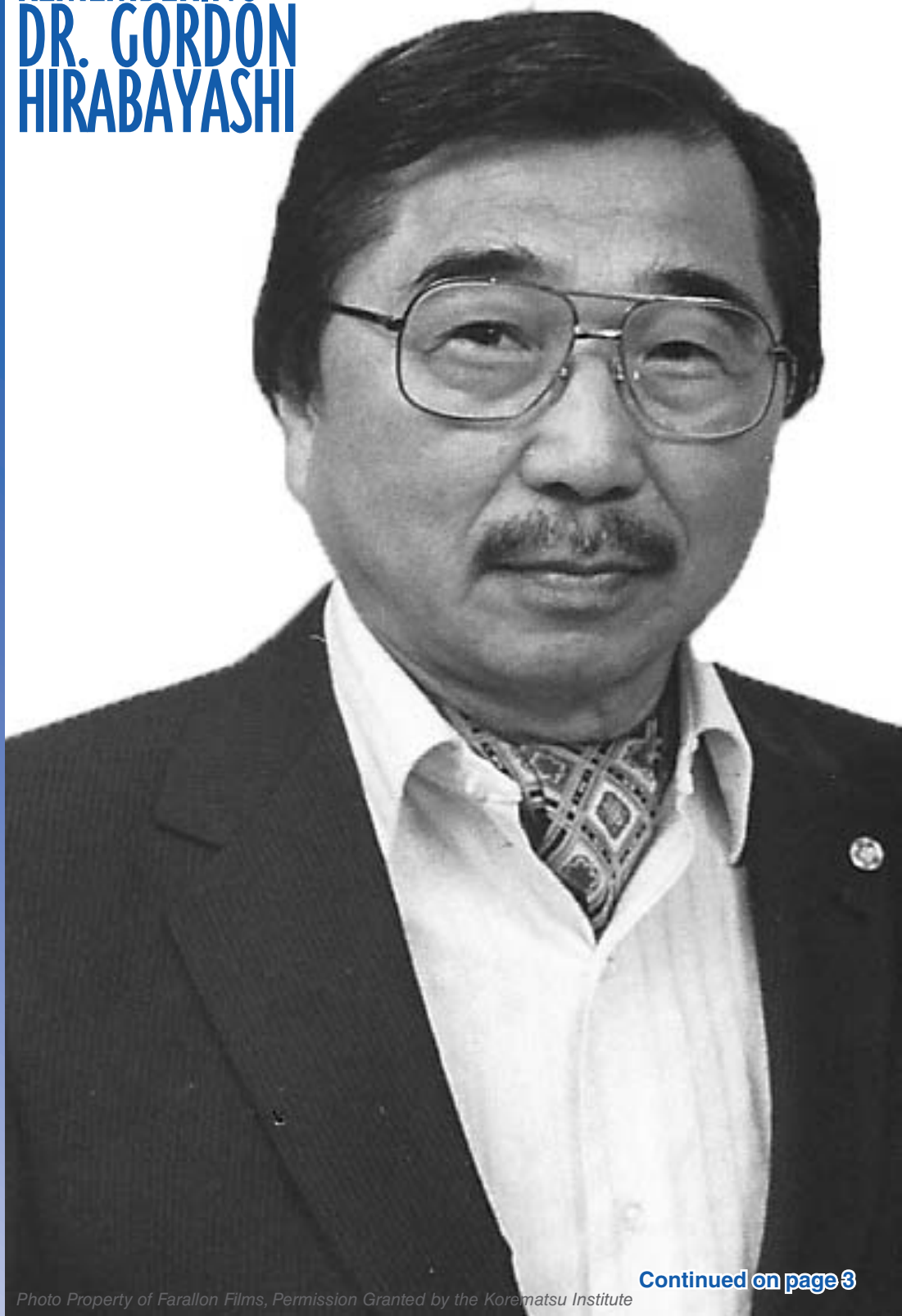
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## REMEMBERING DR. GORDON HIRABAYASHI



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## Dear NAPABA Members and Friends,

The 23rd Annual NAPABA Convention in Atlanta was an extraordinary success, featuring an exceptional group of speakers and panelists. The highlight of the Convention was a celebratory night featuring as keynote speaker the Honorable Denny Chin, recently elevated to the United States Second Circuit Court of Appeals, with an introduction by the Honorable Ed Chen, district court judge for the Northern District of California. We also had a great community service project — convention attendees created and shipped over 100 care packages to our service members stationed in Iraq. On behalf of NAPABA, I would like to express my deep appreciation to Han Choi, for his outstanding leadership as

Chair of the Atlanta Host Committee, and to the entire Host Committee for their countless hours of planning and executing such a memorable Convention. Our most sincere gratitude to all of our sponsors as well. Your support makes our Convention possible and enables NAPABA to carry on our other efforts throughout the year. Of course, a huge thanks also to all those who were able to join us in Atlanta. NAPABA's signature event is an opportunity for our members to come together to see old friends, meet new ones, discuss developments in a range of practices, and celebrate accomplishments.

NAPABA's new Board of Governors was installed at the Convention. This is a dedicated group of individuals committed to the continued growth and success of our organization. I look forward to working with the Board and our fantastic NAPABA staff over the course of this year to bring enhanced attention to two areas in particular — membership services and partnership.

Membership services is at the core of NAPABA — it goes to the fundamental question of why we become involved with NAPABA. There are so many ways to get involved with NAPABA — with over 60 affiliates in the U.S., and now extending into Canada, and more than 30 nationwide committees. We will explore opportunities for NAPABA to provide more support to our affiliates and our committees to enable more people to get involved. The more you get involved with NAPABA at the

affiliate or national level, the more you receive.

The other area that I would like to focus on is deepening our existing partnerships. This includes our long-standing partnership through the Coalition of Bar Associations of Color — which connects NAPABA to the National Bar Association, the Hispanic National Bar Association, and the National Native American Bar Association. There are so many areas of common interests and opportunities for us to work together. Deepening our strong partnerships with other APA organizations is also critical. All of these partnerships represent a tremendous means of amplifying our voice and influencing outcomes on a range of issues.

Whether at the local or national level, this is your organization. Help us to continue to build this extraordinary organization and you will also build friendships that will last a lifetime.

Thank you,



Nimesh M. Patel

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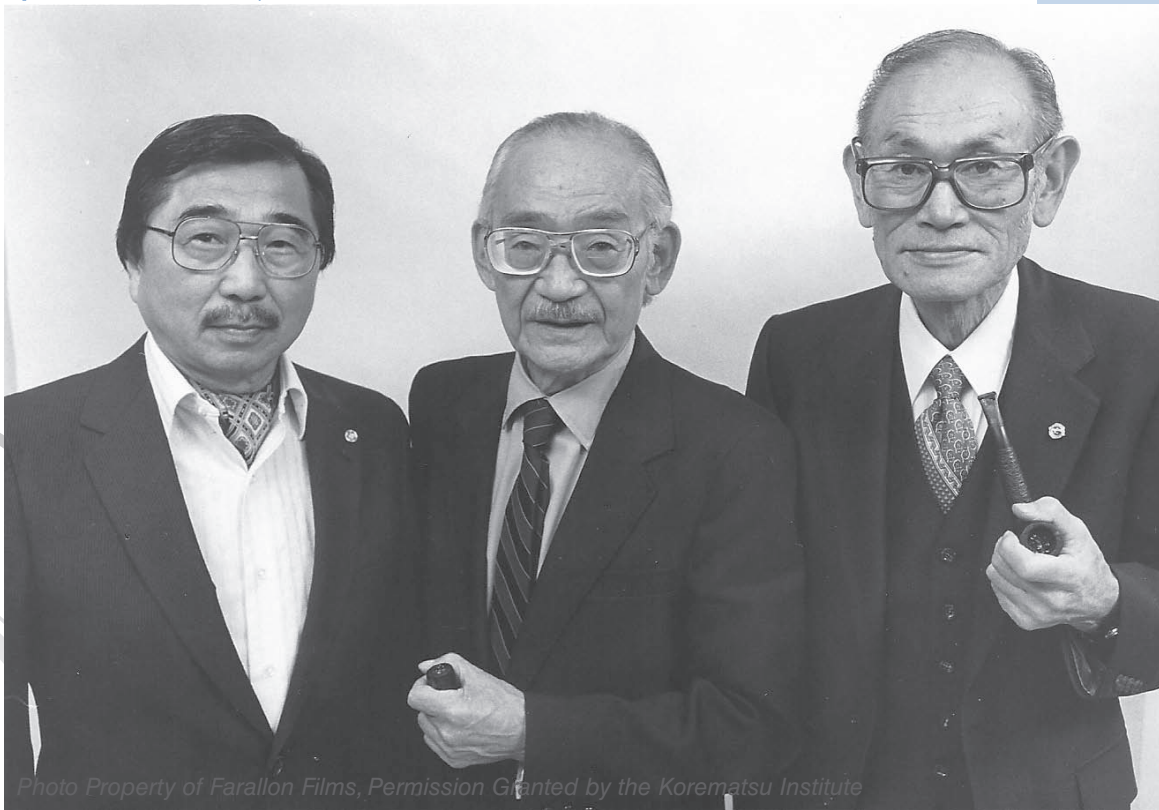
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# REMEMBERING DR. GORDON HIRABAYASHI

April 23, 1918 - January 2, 2012



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Pictured (L-R): *Coram Nobis* plaintiffs Gordon Hirabayashi, Minoru Yasui, and Fred Korematsu

"When my case was before the Supreme Court in 1943, I fully expected that as a citizen the Constitution would protect me. Surprisingly, even though I lost, I did not abandon my beliefs and values. And I never look at my case as just my own, or just as a Japanese American case. It is an American case, with principles that affect the fundamental human rights of all Americans." – Dr. Gordon Hirabayashi

Dr. Gordon Hirabayashi's legacy started when he intentionally defied President Franklin Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066. Hirabayashi, then a 24-year-old University of Washington student, turned himself in to the FBI and was subsequently arrested and convicted of violating curfew and the exclusion order. He appealed his case in *Hirabayashi v. United States* (1944) and like his peers, Fred Korematsu and Minoru Yasui, the courts held that the curfew and exclusion order of Japanese Americans were justified. Hirabayashi was subsequently sentenced to a Tucson, AZ prison camp. Being the honorable person that he was, Hirabayashi hitchhiked from Washington to Arizona to serve his sentence because the courts did not have money to transport him.

After being released from federal custody, Hirabayashi went on to complete his studies at the University of Washington where he received his BA, and later on his MA and PhD in sociology. He went on to teach sociology at the University of Alberta until his retirement in 1983.

A few years after Hirabayashi's retirement, Peter Irons, a political science professor at UC San Diego, found documents proving that the US government withheld information from the US Supreme Court that showed Japanese Americans were not a threat to national security and that there were no grounds for internment. This was the catalyst for reopening the cases of Yasui, Korematsu, and Hirabayashi.

Led by a legal team of *sansei* (third generation) Japanese Americans, all three cases were reopened under the writ of *coram nobis*, a rare petition to correct a court error of erroneous use of evidence against persons who have been convicted of a crime and have served their sentences. Hirabayashi's conviction of defying the curfew and exclusion was eventually overturned in 1987.

Dr. Gordon Hirabayashi passed away in Alberta, Canada on January 2, 2012. He is survived by his wife, children, and a legacy of civil rights.

## REFLECTIONS FROM THE *CORAM NOBIS* LEGAL TEAMS

"Gordon had a strong anchor in justice and a fervent belief in righting the wrongs. When I worked with the Hirabayashi team and saw Gordon there, you could tell he was the moral grounding for the work done on his case."

-Peggy Nagae, lead attorney for Yasui legal team

"It was the opportunity of a lifetime - to challenge some of the worst decisions ever penned by the Supreme Court; to correct the historical record that Japanese Americans presented no danger when they were incarcerated without due process; to impair the precedent of indefinite incarceration based on race and to vindicate our parents' illegal imprisonment. What could be better?"

Gordon was one of the most principled persons I ever met. He accepted imprisonment and ostracism at the price of following his conscience and

taught us that dissent is not equivalent to disloyalty and truly can be the highest expression of patriotism and love for one's country."

-Dale Minami, lead attorney for Korematsu legal team

"Gordon is a hero. He was the epitome of what Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. talked about as a master of nonviolent resistance. Dr. King said people used to mistake nonviolent resistance as passive nonaction but really nonviolent resistance is strong moral action to get oppressors to confront the immorality of their behavior. Like Dr. King and the thousands of others who later marched, who registered voters, who sat at lunch counters, who boycotted segregated buses, in violation of unjust laws, Gordon purposely violated the curfew and internment orders and went to jail to make his point and get his voice heard. While he lost initially, he never gave up. Like Dr. King, he was deeply rooted in his faith. While he had a gentle manner, he had a core of steel."

-Karen K. Narasaki, attorney for Hirabayashi legal team



# ALIEN LAND LAWS

## Florida Retains a Discriminatory Constitutional Provision Against Asian Pacific American Homeowners

by Jessica K. Hew and Christine M. Ho

In November of 2008, Florida voters considered a ballot initiative known as “Amendment 1,” entitled “Declaration of Rights.” Amendment 1 had the following language:

Proposing an amendment to the State Constitution to delete provisions authorizing the Legislature to regulate or prohibit the ownership, inheritance, disposition, and possession of real property by aliens ineligible for citizenship.

Until that voting day, most Floridian voters had never heard of Amendment 1. This lack of knowledge compounded with the ballot initiative’s ambiguous language resulted in confusion over Amendment 1. Voters also saw the term “aliens ineligible for citizenship” and assumed that it had something to do with illegal immigration. Amendment 1 failed by a vote of 47.9% (3,369,894 votes) to 52.1% (3,669,812 votes).

What exactly are “aliens ineligible for citizenship”? The term actually refers to Asian immigrants. It has nothing to do with illegal immigration.

Florida voters did not know that Amendment 1 sought to repeal a provision added to Florida’s Constitution in 1926, designed to prohibit Asians immigrants from owning real estate. While Article I, Section 2 of the Florida Constitution guarantees that all natural persons are “equal before the law and have inalienable rights,” it also provides that “the ownership, inheritance, disposition and possession of real property by aliens ineligible for citizenship may be regulated or prohibited by law.” Art. I, § 2 of FLA. CONST. (emphasis added). This provision of the Florida Constitution became known as the “Alien Land Law,” because it targeted Asian immigrants, who, at that time, were known as “aliens.”

Asian immigrants were also described as being “ineligible for citizenship” because contemporaneous federal law did not allow Asian immigrants to become citizens through naturalization, even if they were in the United States legally. The first federal naturalization statute of 1790 limited naturalization to “any alien, being a free white person.” Post-Civil War, persons of “African nativity or descent” were added to those eligible for citizenship through

## Comparison of New Mexico’s and Florida’s alien land law repeal efforts

State/Year	Language	Passed
New Mexico 2002	Proposing to repeal Article 2, Section 22 of the Constitution of New Mexico, which states that aliens cannot own land or any interest in land in the state unless otherwise provided by law.	No
New Mexico 2006	Proposing to repeal Article 2, Section 22 of the Constitution of New Mexico, in order to protect the right of all persons to acquire and possess real property.	Yes
Florida 2008	Proposing an amendment to the State Constitution to delete provisions authorizing the Legislature to regulate or prohibit the ownership, inheritance, disposition, and possession of real property by aliens ineligible for citizenship.	No
Florida 2010	The Florida Constitution would state that all natural persons, female and male alike, are equal before the law and have an inalienable right to acquire, possess, and protect property, without exception.	No; died in committee

naturalization. Thereafter, various courts ruled that various different ethnic groups, mostly of Asian origin, were ineligible for citizenship since they were not white or of African nativity or descent. These types of racist naturalization laws remained in place in the United States until the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952 eliminated the racial restrictions found in earlier immigration statutes.

Although the term “aliens ineligible for citizenship” is today confused with illegal immigrants, it was actually meant to refer to Asian immigrants, regardless of whether they were in the United States legally.

During the early twentieth century, with anti-Asian sentiment at an all-time high, many other states in the United States passed similar alien land laws. In 1913, California passed the first law due to the racial animosity against Japanese farmers who had recently started acquiring and owning agricultural land. By the end of World War II, Arizona, Washington, Louisiana, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Kansas, Wyoming, Utah, Arkansas, and New Mexico had all passed their own versions.

Gradually, all of these states repealed their respective alien land laws. In 2001, New Mexico attempted to repeal its law by the following ballot initiative: “Proposing to repeal Article 2, Section 22 of the Constitution of New Mexico, which states that aliens cannot own land or any interest in land in the state unless otherwise provided by law.” It is noteworthy that this ballot initiative also contained the term “aliens.” Similar to Florida in 2008, this New Mexico ballot initiative failed to

obtain sufficient votes to pass.

Not to be deterred, in 2006, the New Mexico ballot contained an initiative providing, “Proposing to repeal Article 2, Section 22 of the Constitution of New Mexico, in order to protect the right of all persons to acquire and possess real property.” This 2006 ballot initiative passed with a vote of 69.9% (330,309) for yes and 30.1% (97,095) for no. Not using the term “alien” in its second attempt to repeal its law worked in New Mexico.

Florida is currently the only state in the United States to retain its discriminatory Alien Land Law.

Even though the Alien Land Law has never been enforced in Florida, it remains as a racist and discriminatory blot in the Florida Constitution. Moreover, due to the potential misunderstanding and confusion surrounding the Alien Land Law, foreign investors may be deterred from investing in the Florida real estate market. With the real estate market in Florida suffering tremendously from the economic downturn, any possible barrier to investors owning real estate in Florida is unacceptable. The Alien Land Law, although never enforced, may in fact contribute to further depressing the Florida real estate market. It is time to remove this provision from the Florida Constitution.

Although Amendment 1 failed as a ballot initiative in 2008, supporters of the repeal of the Alien Land Law from throughout the State of Florida are currently working together to get another ballot measure before Floridian voters in November 2012. The lesson to be gleaned



## Photos from GOAABA'S event on the Alien Land Law

1. Dr. Piyush Argawal - speaker
2. (from left to right) Robert Lee, Christine Ho, Winnie Tang, and Becky Malicsi
3. (from left to right) William Voight, Donna Hung, Lisa Gong, and Felipe Guerrero

from New Mexico is that in Florida's next ballot initiative, Florida needs to use more neutral language and not refer to Asians as "aliens ineligible for citizenship."

In June 2010, the Greater Orlando Asian American Bar Association (GOAABA) received a grant from the Florida Bar Foundation in order to educate the public about Florida's Alien Land Law. Funded by this grant, GOAABA hosted and started a dialogue about the Alien Land Law. GOAABA, in association with these community leaders and other bar associations in Florida, are committed to repealing Florida's antiquated Alien Land Law once and for all.

Through GOAABA's collaborative efforts, Senate Joint Resolution 1102, is currently pending at press time. Sponsored by Senator Oscar Braynon, II (D-33rd Dist.), SJR 1102 seeks to delete the offending provision as follows:

### ARTICLE I DECLARATION OF RIGHTS

**SECTION 2.** Basic rights.—All natural persons, female and male alike, are equal before the law and have inalienable rights, among which are the right to enjoy and defend life and liberty, to pursue happiness, to be rewarded for industry,

and to acquire, possess and protect property; ~~except that the ownership, inheritance, disposition and possession of real property by aliens ineligible for citizenship may be regulated or prohibited by law.~~ No person shall be deprived of any right because of race, religion, national origin, or physical disability.

The confusion as to constitutional amendment language has also been resolved as follows:

### CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT ARTICLE I, SECTION 2

**DECLARATION OF RIGHTS.**—This amendment to the State Constitution eliminates authority granted to the Legislature by a constitutional amendment adopted in 1926 which allowed the Legislature to regulate or eliminate the real property rights of individuals based on race or national origin. The Florida Constitution will now state that all natural persons, female and male alike, are equal before the law and have an inalienable right to acquire, possess, and protect property, without exception.

The removal of this discriminatory provision of the Florida Constitution must be achieved to remove all vestiges of these past acts of discrimination.

If you have any questions concerning Florida's Alien Land Law or would like to assist in the efforts to repeal it, feel free to contact, Jessica K. Hew, at [jessica.hew@burr.com](mailto:jessica.hew@burr.com), or Christine M. Ho, at [cho@bakerdonelson.com](mailto:cho@bakerdonelson.com).

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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Jessica K. Hew is an attorney at Burr & Forman LLP. Ms. Hew is also President of the Greater Orlando Asian American Bar Association.

Christine M. Ho is an attorney at Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz, PC. She is also Chair of the Alien Land Law Committee for the Greater Orlando Asian American Bar Association.



## SARAH G. KIM

**Counsel, Bingham McCutchen, LLP**

### Q - What type of law do you practice and where?

I am a Counsel in the Boston office of Bingham McCutchen, LLP. My practice focuses on securities enforcement, securities litigation, broker-dealer defense, and general commercial litigation and I defend public companies, investment companies, broker-dealers, investment advisers and individuals in enforcement matters brought by the Securities and Exchange Commission, industry self-regulatory organizations, and various U.S. Attorneys' offices. Many of the cases in which I have been involved with include allegations of insider trading, market timing and late trading. A substantial portion of my practice also includes representing clients in shareholder class actions. I have also represented clients in complex commercial disputes, including breach of contract and violations of unfair business practices laws, in state and federal court as well as in matters before the American Arbitration Association.

One of my most memorable cases occurred early in my Bingham career and gave me the opportunity to work in Tokyo, Japan for four months. I was part of a team of Bingham attorneys and paralegals helping a client to respond to a sanction imposed by a Japanese regulatory authority, working at the client's offices near the Imperial Palace. Our task was to evaluate the appropriateness of customer investments, working closely with the client at its offices. Although we put in incredibly long hours, we were fortunate to have time to explore Tokyo's different neighborhoods and the experience was amazing.

**Do you want to get involved with NAPABA? Are you interested in how current board members and committee chairs got involved? You can learn about NAPABA's leadership in this feature of NAPABA Lawyer. This quarter, we get to know Sarah Kim.**

More recently, as lead counsel, I was part of a team that obtained a \$3 million judgment on behalf of our client, a small school for girls, which is the beneficiary of two historic trusts established by a former President of the United States and his grandson. At issue in the case was whether the trustee had prudently administered the trusts' assets over a period of 50 years. Some of the most intriguing parts of the case involved working with experts to analyze whether the sale of undeveloped trust land or the trustee's investment strategies were appropriate. Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly recognized me as a 2011 Lawyer of the Year for my work on this matter.

### Q - What role do you currently hold with your affiliate? What position have you held in the past?

I am the current president of NAPABA's Massachusetts affiliate, the Asian American Lawyers Association of Massachusetts (AALAM) and have been on the AALAM Board since 2005. AALAM was started in 1984 by a handful of APA practitioners who got together on a regular basis for support and camaraderie, as at that time, there were very few APA attorneys in the greater Boston area. From these humble beginnings, the organization has grown significantly and currently, we have about 300 active members. We have events and programs almost every month, and partner with our sister affinity bar associations, the Boston Bar Association, and the Massachusetts Bar Association, to regularly host joint events.

### Q - How did you first get involved with AALAM?

I am just the latest in a long line of Bingham attorneys who have been part of AALAM. Meerie Joung, an APA female partner at Bingham, first prodded me to join the Board. Judge Sabita Singh, then a senior associate, also encouraged me to get involved with AALAM. In the first few years that I was involved with AALAM, I was part of its annual banquet planning committee and, one year, I was one of the banquet committee's co-chair.

### Q - What do you most enjoy about being involved with AALAM?

I love being one of AALAM's ambassadors, helping the organization grow, and supporting its members. I have received real and tangible benefits from being involved in AALAM and

would like to see others involved with the hope that they will also enjoy those same benefits.

Through AALAM, I have met so many friends and mentors whom I might not have otherwise had the honor and privilege of knowing. The current AALAM board is a dedicated and diverse array of attorneys from different practices and fields: private practitioners, government attorneys, young associates, partners, corporate attorneys, and litigators. These individuals are what make the organization what it is and I have learned a great deal from each of them, both professionally and personally -- one of my closest friends, Emily Yu, was co-chair of the annual banquet with me and is currently AALAM's Vice President.

In the past couple of years, thanks in large part to Peggy Ho, AALAM's Clerk and Membership Committee Chair, we have seen a doubling of our active membership. We continue to improve upon the marquee events that AALAM is known for, including a speed mentoring event, summer family picnic, and annual kick-off reception. In response to the challenging economic times, we began hosting an annual holiday party to raise money and collect nonperishable foods for area non-profits that provide services to the APA community. We modernized our website and revamped our regular e-newsletter through the hard work of Romeo Camba, our Communications Committee Chair. A group of over forty of AALAM's in-house members formed an in-house counsel forum, which meets regularly for dinner and discussion about issues unique to their work.

### Q - How would you recommend others get involved with AALAM?

Come to AALAM's events and get to know other members and directors. Information about our up-coming events and programming can be found at: [www.aalam.org](http://www.aalam.org) Participate in event planning and, if you like us enough, join the Board!

### Q - Is there anything interesting about yourself that you would like to share?

Last fall, I ran a 200 mile/24 hour relay as part of a 12 person team, which included a number of my close friends. The relay started at Cannon Mountain in New Hampshire and ended at Hampton Beach on the coast. I ran 3 legs of varying lengths at different times during the day. The most memorable part of the weekend was starting a nine mile run at 4:30 a.m. and watching the sun rise.



# 2011 NAPABA CONVENTION SUMMARY



*The fist bump: Immediate Past President Paul O. Hirose (right) passes on NAPABA leadership to President Nimesh M. Patel (left).*

Sustainability 2011: Renewal and Growth for Today and Tomorrow was the theme for the 23rd Annual NAPABA Convention in Atlanta, Ga. Held at the Omni Hotel at CNN Center, the Convention hosted over 1200 attendees from November 17-20, 2011. The Convention's theme of sustainability, renewal, and growth echoed throughout the 4-day Convention as NAPABA launched its new logo and made an effort to reduce waste with the Convention iPhone application.

The Convention kicked off on Thursday with the Bar Leadership Institute, 2nd Annual Pro Bono/Public Interest Summit, and the 5th Annual International Law Symposium. The evening concluded with the Welcome Reception overlooking the CNN Center.

Friday's breakfast plenary, sponsored by Alston & Bird LLP, featured a line-up of some of the best legal minds in the nation including Stuart Ishimaru, Neal Katyal, Karen K. Narasaki, Margo Schlanger, and Amardeep Singh, who discussed the tenth year anniversary of 9/11 and its impact on the APA community. The plenary followed with a plethora of panels that ranged from birthright citizenship to trends in intellectual property law.

Yale law professor and acclaimed author of "Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother" Amy Chua was the highlight of Friday's lunch plenary. Chua gave a candid look into her life when she

spoke about the controversy over her book being based mostly on misrepresentations, her children's war against her tiger parenting and her experience as an APA lawyer and law professor. The road was not always easy for Chua and she left the audience with this advice: "If the deck is stacked against you, then play a different game."

Friday night continued with the Trailblazers Reception sponsored by Walmart. where the 2011 class of Trailblazers, NAPABA's highest award, was presented. The night concluded with Game Night where attendees had fun karaokeing, playing with X-Box Kinect, and competing in the highly coveted Poker Tournament.

Saturday continued with an exciting jam-packed day. The morning opened with the Women's Leadership Committee honoring Executive Director of the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders Kiran Ahuja at the breakfast plenary sponsored by Microsoft Corporation. Ahuja spoke about growing up in the South and learning, at a very young age, the importance of giving back to the community as she watched her mother help disadvantaged community members with everything from giving medical advice to helping them fill out applications. Later that day, Hon. Goodwin Liu remarked, "Last year I was a bumper sticker, this year I'm a judge," during his hilarious opening speech before introducing state

supreme court justices, Hon. Ming W. Chin, Hon. Fernande R.V. Duffly, and Hon. Sabrina S. McKenna for the Saturday lunch plenary.

The mood was festive at the Anniversary Gala, sponsored by Mercedes-Benz USA, as hosts Gurvir Dhindsa (Good Day Atlanta) and Richard Lui (MSNBC News) welcomed attendees. The night continued with remarks from NAPABA President Nimesh Patel, recognition of the 2011 Best Lawyers Under 40 honorees, installation of the 2011-12 NAPABA and NAPALSA boards, and the announcement of the 2011 Affiliate of the Year Award. The night concluded with keynote speaker Hon. Denny Chin's interactive talk about his career and experiences with high-profile cases such as U.S. v. Madoff and the Google Books settlement.

The Convention concluded with the farewell breakfast and making finishing touches to the community service project where 100 care-packages were made and sent to the G/1-299th Aviation Regiment currently deployed in Iraq.

NAPABA thanks everyone who attended the Convention and the continuing support from our sponsors. We look forward to seeing you as we reach *Monumental Heights* at NAPABA's 24th Annual Convention on November 15-18, 2012, at the JW Marriott in Washington, DC!



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1. NAPABA members with Professor Amy Chua
2. Women's Leadership Honoree Karin Ahuja (center)
3. President Nimesh M. Patel addressing the crowd at the Gala
4. Friday judges lunch plenary, "Supreme Minds"
5. Host Committee Chair Han Choi during the Welcome Reception
6. Emcees of the Gala, Richard Liu and Gurvir Dhindsa
7. Hon. Ed Chen's introduction speech during the Gala
8. Thomas Tang Moot Court Competition winners Erin Phan and Elaine Kuo from U.C. Hastings
9. Trailblazers Awards
10. The 2011-2012 NLF Board
11. Partners and In-House Counsel dinner at the Georgia Aquarium
12. NLF President Sang-yul Lee with the Mercedes raffle winner Jeannie Lee, and Tommy Shi of Mercedes-Benz USA
13. Friday breakfast plenary, "Ten Years Later: The Impact of 9/11 on the APA Community"
14. NAPABA Annual Game/Karaoke Night
15. Anniversary Gala keynote speaker Hon. Denny Chin
16. View of Centennial Park from the Omni CNN Center
17. Hon. Goodwin Liu introduction speech for the judges plenary
18. NAPABA members at the Welcome Reception overlooking the CNN Center
19. (L- R): NAPABA Immediate Past President Paul O. Hirose, President Nimesh M. Patel, and President-Elect Wendy Shiba
20. 2012 Annual Convention Co-Chairs
21. Friay lunch plenary speaker Professor Amy Chua



*MAABA President Alexander S. Y. Lee giving his acceptance speech during the 23rd NAPABA Anniversary Gala.*



*Top: MAABA members during the Gala  
Bottom: MAABA members with their Affiliate of the Year Award*

## 2011 NAPABA AFFILIATE OF THE YEAR Missouri Asian American Bar Association

by Johnny Wang

One can say that the Missouri Asian American Bar Association (MAABA) believes in "beginner's luck" after being named the Affiliate of the Year at NAPABA's 23rd Annual Convention in Atlanta, Georgia. Each year since 2007 NAPABA has awarded the Affiliate of the Year to one affiliate out of the approximately 60 affiliate APA bar associations from across the country. The award recognizes the outstanding achievements, commitment, and leadership of regional bar associations that make exceptional contributions to the local community. After a banner year in which MAABA championed efforts in international trade, community service, and membership development, MAABA sought the Affiliate of the Year award for the very first time in its existence. It is safe to say that MAABA's 2011 efforts did not go unrecognized!

In his speech, NAPABA Immediate Past-President Paul Hirose congratulated MAABA and recognized MAABA's outstanding best practices and accomplishments for 2011. In his acceptance remarks, MAABA President Alex S.Y. Lee thanked MAABA's founders for their role in starting MAABA, including three founders who were in attendance at the NAPABA Anniversary Gala: Hon. Judy Draper, Maylin Mahoney, and

James Robinson. He also thanked current MAABA leaders in attendance at the Convention including President-Elect Johnny Wang, Vice President David Kim, Secretary Lilian Doan, Board Member Daniel Sakaguchi, and Board Member Angela Yee for their hard work over the past year which made the award possible. He closed his remarks by promising that MAABA would continue to work hard to "live up to this award."

MAABA was formed in 2001 and the association's first president, Diane Yu (now residing in New York City), was also a founding member of NAPABA. Since 2001, the organization has been graced with talents and visionary leaders over the years who have consistently pushed the organization to the forefront of St. Louis's legal community. Needless to say, without the leadership and guidance of prior presidents and board directors, MAABA would not have accomplished everything that was done in 2011 without this strong foundation of diverse leaders.

### PROGRAMMING

The hallmark of any successful organization is the level and depth of its programming and activities. Beginning in 2011, MAABA became heavily involved with St. Louis's efforts to establish a Midwest-China trade hub in Missouri. MAABA hosted three separate trade delegations from China, including providing private tours to the Vice-Chairman of China's National Chamber of Commerce. In hosting these delegations, MAABA members presented on a variety of

topics, ranging from the legalities of international mergers and acquisitions to why St. Louis is a great place to raise a family. MAABA members were also instrumental in providing insight and advice to local politicians when hosting Chinese nationals and translation support.

Any successful organization also knows how to have fun! MAABA hosted a number of happy hours with St. Louis's Young Asian Professional Association to provide an environment for its members to network with likeminded APA professionals, and, of course, hosted a Lunar New Year Karaoke Event. MAABA members also attended golf outings to support other local bar associations and sponsored dinner events.

One of MAABA's biggest accomplishments for 2011, was hosting the NAPABA Central Regional Conference in August 2011. Attorneys from all over the Central Region attended a two day conference that included CLE presentations and social events (yes, there was karaoke!). MAABA was honored to welcome Hon. Edmond E. Chang as the conference's keynote speaker. Judge Chang was unanimously confirmed as a United States District Judge for the Northern District of Illinois by the Senate in December 2010, and began service on the court in January 2011. At that time, he was the youngest federal judge in the nation. He is also the first APA Article III Federal judge in the Seventh Circuit.

MAABA also held its annual Unity Dinner, a fundraising dinner co-sponsored with its sister St. Louis bar association, the Mound City Bar Association (MCBA). The MCBA is the oldest



African-American bar association west of the Mississippi River. Over 300 people attended the event, more than double any prior year. At the event, MAABA presented its Torchbearer Award. Since 2007, MAABA has presented its annual Torchbearer Award that recognizes attorneys for dedicated leadership and service as a guiding light to MAABA and the APA community. MAABA's 2011 Torchbearer award was presented to Ari Bai, an attorney at Polsinelli Shughart PC.

### COMMUNITY SERVICE

MAABA strongly believes that as individual attorneys benefit from the community in which they live, there is an obligation to give back, and reinvest in the community from which they benefit. In the spring of 2011, MAABA members came together to provide monetary and legal support in the aftermath of a horrible crime against an elderly Vietnamese couple. Its members helped translate for the surviving spouse and arranged for her transportation to health care providers. MAABA actively monitored and updated the surviving spouse on criminal prosecution for the charged individuals. MAABA also donated funds to the relief fund for the Japanese tsunami and earthquake victims, as well as the tornado victims in Joplin, Missouri.

In October 2011, MAABA members founded Sua Sponte, a pro bono legal clinic that provided access to legal resources for recent immigrants with limited English proficiency. The clinic partnered with a local immigrant social services center that provides legal interpreters. MAABA attorneys met with individuals in need of legal services and provided free 30 minute consultations.

Lastly, MAABA hosted a holiday party with the Young Asians Professionals Association that adopted two disadvantaged Asian families that recently immigrated to the area. MAABA members provided them with a host of Christmas presents and gift cards for basic necessities. These efforts were rewarding for MAABA members and reminded them to be thankful for what they have, and to give back to those still in need.

### PATH TO SUCCESS

MAABA's achievements stemmed from a group of committed leaders who were focused on providing a return on investment to the members they served. These leaders frequently sat and discussed what, as members, would they want from the organization and sought to provide it. After ideas were set, constant communication and excitement led to involvement from the general membership. These ideas included the revamping of the MAABA website, and providing constant e-mail updates to members. They successfully conveyed to their membership and the legal community as a whole, that MAABA was here, actively programming, and that everyone

needed to be a part of it. Its leadership leveraged and engaged contacts for their participation, and spent time on a personal level with members to receive feedback and listen to what members wanted out of the organization. There is no quick fix or easy solution to being a successful affiliate. It takes time and commitment, and if the return on such investments is worth it, members will in turn give back their time and commitment – this is MAABA's formula for success and one of many distinguishing factors that resulted in being recognized as the 2011 NAPABA Affiliate of the Year.

One last thing: MAABA leaders greatly appreciated meeting representatives from other affiliates during the 2011 Convention and would be happy to discuss with and/or exchange ideas that MAABA employed. The momentum that was built from 2011 culminated in MAABA and the Asian American Bar Association of Kansas City being selected to co-host NAPABA's Annual Convention in 2013. See you all in Kansas City!

About the author: Johnny Wang is the current President-Elect of MAABA and an attorney at Gallop, Johnson & Neuman, L.C. in St. Louis, MO.

## Save the Date

Mark your calendars for these NAPABA events!

May 9  
2nd Annual Lobby Day  
Washington, DC

May 31 - June 2  
Eastern Super Regional Conference  
Trump Taj Mahal Hotel Casino  
Atlantic City, NJ

July  
Central Regional Conference  
Chicago, IL

Western Regional Conference  
Orange County, CA





# 2011 NAPABA TRAIL BLAZERS



*Hon. Edmond Chang  
Han C. Choi  
Kathleen Ja Sook  
Bergquist*

*Wilson Chu  
Don H. Liu  
G. Monty Manibog*

*Peggy Nagae  
Hon. Kirk Nakamura  
Hon. Donna Ryu*



# 2011 NAPABA BEST LAWYERS UNDER 40

*Proloy K. Das  
Princeton Kim  
Sarah G. Kim  
Curtis A. Kin  
Eumi Kim Lee  
Bobby Liu  
Jessie K. Liu*

*Anh-Thu P. Mai-Windle  
Jane Oak  
Byung "BJay" Pak  
Julian Poon  
Liani Jean Heh Reeves  
Willard C. Shih  
Bryce A. Suzuki*

*Shiraz D. Tangri  
Vivian Lee Thoreen  
Mi Chi To  
William K. Tong  
Kay K. Wakatake  
Pauline Yeung-Ha*

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# “Hero Day” a Huge Success

by Samantha Harrykissoon

2011 Convention Community Service Committee Chair

The 2011 NAPABA Convention in Atlanta continued the commitment of holding a community service day, which began last year, with its “Hero Day” project. The Convention’s “Hero Day” community service project supported the dedication and commitment of our military men and women. Convention attendees took the time out of their busy schedule to assemble and ship care packages, and email messages of support to deployed soldiers. NAPABA was honored to have Major General Steven Lepper, Deputy Judge Advocate General, U.S. Air Force introduce the 2011 community service project at the beginning of the Trailblazers reception on Friday, November 18, 2011. On Saturday morning the “Hero Day” event was kicked-off with special remarks from Brigadier General John Miller, Assistant Judge Advocate General, U.S. Army and from Rear Admiral Steven Talson, Deputy Judge Advocate General, U.S. Navy. Within one day, convention attendees, along with members of the U.S. Army, Navy and Air Force, came together to assemble and fill 100 care packages with items that were requested by troops stationed overseas. The care packages consisted of items such as coffee, bar soaps, snack foods, toothpaste, shampoo, batteries, DVDs and much more.

The event was a great success, and NAPABA convention attendees’ words of support and caring gestures was a wonderful way to lift the spirits and honor the service of our brave military men and women. The 2011 Convention Community Service Committee would like to specifically thank Newell Rubbermaid for their in kind contribution and to all the volunteers, sponsors, and individuals who made monetary donations by purchasing a “Hero Day” care package and for their assistance in making “Hero Day” possible.

1. NAPABA members filling up their “hero boxes”.

2. Convention Community Service Chair Samantha Harrykissoon welcoming volunteers.

3. (left to right): Major General Steven Lepper, Brigadier General John Miller. and NAPABA President Nimesh M. Patel leading by example.

4. One hundred “hero boxes” were made for troops overseas.

5. Hon. Kirk Nakamura enjoying the community service event by filling two boxes.

6. (left to right): Samantha Harrykissoon; Nimesh M. Patel; Brigadier General John Miller, Assistant Judge Advocate General, U.S. Army; Rear Admiral Steven Talson, Deputy Judge Advocate General, U.S. Navy; and Major General Steven Lepper, Deputy Judge Advocate General, U.S. Air Force





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