



National Asian Pacific American Bar Association

News Release

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NAPABA Names Michelle K. Lee as its 2015 Women's Leadership Award Recipient

WASHINGTON – The National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA) has named Michelle K. Lee, under secretary of Commerce for intellectual property and director of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), as the recipient of the 2015 NAPABA Women's Leadership Award. This award recognizes the accomplishments of women lawyers and is presented to an individual who has achieved professional excellence in her field, demonstrated leadership and understanding of women's issues, and made significant contributions to the Asian Pacific American (APA) legal community.

Ms. Lee will be honored at the Women's Leadership Breakfast at the 2015 NAPABA Convention on Nov. 7, 2015, in New Orleans, La.

As the first woman and person of color to head the USPTO in its 225-year history, Ms. Lee leads almost 13,000 employees with an annual budget of \$3 billion and is also the principal advisor to the President – through the Secretary of Commerce – on domestic and international intellectual property (IP) policy. Prior to her current role, she served as deputy director of the USPTO, and before that as the first director of the USPTO's Silicon Valley office.

Ms. Lee has spent most of her professional career advising some of the country's most innovative companies on technical, legal, and business matters. Prior to joining the USPTO, she was Deputy General Counsel for Google and the company's first Head of Patents and Patent Strategy. She was formerly a partner at the Silicon Valley-based law firm of Fenwick & West LLP, where she specialized in advising a wide range of high-technology clients – from start-ups to Fortune 100 companies – on patent law, IP, litigation, and corporate matters.

In 2004, Ms. Lee co-founded Chief Women IP Counsels (ChIPs), whose mission is to support and promote the advancement, development, and retention of women in technology and IP through substantive and inspiring speakers, relationship building, mentoring, education, best-

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practice sharing, and other forms of support. Since the organization's inception, membership in CHIPs has steadily grown from a small group of women in the Silicon Valley to over one thousand members internationally.

"Ms. Lee has long been a pioneer and innovator in the IP field," said NAPABA President George C. Chen. "She has had, and continues to have, an incredibly distinguished career, and we applaud her commitment to advancing women and people of color in the workforce. NAPABA is proud to honor Ms. Lee as this year's Women's Leadership Award recipient."

Previously, Ms. Lee was named a 2015 Washingtonian Tech Titan by Washingtonian Magazine and one of D.C.'s Top 50 Women in Tech in 2015 by Fedscoop. She was also the recipient of the 2015 ICAS Liberty Award from the Institute for Corean-American Studies and was named one of 2015's top 50-most influential visionaries in American public policy by Politico Magazine. The San Francisco Business Times and San Jose Business Journal recognized Ms. Lee as Best Bay Area IP Lawyer in 2012 and one of the top 100 most influential women in the Silicon Valley in 2013.

For more information, the media may contact Brett Schuster, NAPABA communications manager, at 202-775-9555 or bschuster@napaba.org.

The National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA) is the national association of Asian Pacific American attorneys, judges, law professors, and law students. NAPABA represents the interests of over 40,000 attorneys and approximately 75 national, state, and local Asian Pacific American bar associations. Its members include solo practitioners, large firm lawyers, corporate counsel, legal services and non-profit attorneys, and lawyers serving at all levels of government.

NAPABA continues to be a leader in addressing civil rights issues confronting Asian Pacific American communities. Through its national network of committees and affiliates, NAPABA provides a strong voice for increased diversity of the federal and state judiciaries, advocates for equal opportunity in the workplace, works to eliminate hate crimes and anti-immigrant sentiment, and promotes the professional development of people of color in the legal profession.

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