



AALAM NEWS

The Newsletter of the Asian American Lawyers Association of Massachusetts
Volume XVIII, No. 5, March 2003

AALAM Members Discuss Asian Gangs in Massachusetts



Lt. Mark Buckley, Michelle Wynn, Saroem Phoung, and AALAM Director Myong Joun

On Tuesday, **February 25, 2002**, AALAM held its February membership meeting at **Choate Hall & Stewart** to discuss the growing phenomenon of Asian gangs in Massachusetts. The guest speakers were **Lieutenant Mark Buckley** of the Lowell Police Department who is in charge of detectives; **Michelle Wynn**, the executive director of Project Prentiss; and **Saroem Phoung**, a former gang leader who now works with law enforcement, court and probation officials as well as gang members to combat gang membership and gang-related activities.

Lt. Buckley started off the discussion by defining a "gang" as a group of people not unlike other social groups that we all belong to, except that gangs engage in illegal or criminal activities. Mr. Phoung stated that Asian gangs started to form in Massachusetts in the late 1970s and 80s when recent immigrants from the Vietnamese, Cambodian and Laotian communities felt they were victims of racial/ethnic prejudice and discrimination. They formed gangs to support and protect each other - much like the earlier generations of Irish and Italian immigrants did before them.

Many younger Asian immigrants (as young as 8 or 9 years old) join gangs for a sense of belonging. They may not receive the love, support and attention they need from their parents (many of whom do not have time to spend with their children because they are too busy working to provide the basic needs of the family). They feel they do not fit in their ethnic community because they are too Americanized yet they feel they do not fit in the larger community because they are not American enough. They feel misunderstood and underappreciated by both communities. In gangs, they find the middle ground, a place where they feel secure, comfortable and accepted.

Asian gangs, like other minority gangs, engage in violent acts as a way of providing protection to (or retribution for) its members from racial/ethnic acts against them. It is also a method of gaining respect. To finance their activities, gangs resort to petty theft, robbery and burglary. Frequently, Asian gangs target other Asians because they understand the culture. They know that many Asian families come from countries where the police are seen as being corrupt, ineffective or conspiring with gangs and will not report the crime. The families may also fear retaliation from the gang if they report the crime or cooperate with the police.

When Mr. Phoung was involved with his gang, he used to bring a gun to school, carried an axe around with him, broke into peoples houses and robbed people in order to make money. Times have changed. Local Asian gangs have now evolved by accepting members outside the racial/ethnic line and forming connections with (or controlled by) larger and more established gangs from other parts of the country such as California and New York or organized crime groups such as the Chinese "triads", resulting in more elaborate criminal activities such as prostitution, gambling, extortion, drug trafficking, counterfeiting and money laundering.

Police have not been very successful in dealing with Asian gangs because of language and cultural differences. According to Lt. Buckley, the police have been unable to get leads and tips from the Asian community about gang activity because of fear, mistrust and misunderstanding of the police by the community. For example, police used to tell the people they stop to put their hands on their head and get on their knees. This was police procedure. Police officers did not understand that, based on past experience in the old country, many Asians feared that they were being told to get on their knees for their execution. Like other police departments across the country, Lowell has hired Asian police officers from the community in an effort to educate the community about American law enforcement and the legal system.

ASIAN GANGS – Continued on Page 4

Inside this Issue:

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| Announcements..... | 2 |
| AALAM in the News..... | 3-5 |
| Calendar of Events | 5 |
| Professional Opportunities | 6 |



AALAM NEWS

March 2003

AALAM

Asian American Lawyers
Association of Massachusetts

P.O. Box 5655
Boston, MA 02114

www.aalam.org
aalamass@hotmail.com

President

Theodore D. Chuang

Vice President

Eunice Kim Chapon

Secretary

Elizabeth E. Nam

Treasurer

Chinh H. Pham

Board of Directors

Flora W.L. Chan
Stephen Y. Chow
Jeffrey D. Hsi
Myong J. Joun
Meerie M. Joung
Sherry Yee Mulloy
Michelle H. Rhee
Ingrid C. Schroffner
Elaine Tung
Lena M. Wong
G. Perry Wu
Onyen Yong

Newsletter Editors

Ingrid C. Schroffner
Onyen Yong

Professional Opportunities Editor

Elizabeth E. Nam

Webmaster

PlexCom Online Services

Announcements

2003 AALAM Scholarship Information

AALAM is pleased to announce its **sixth annual AALAM Scholarship** in the amount of \$1,000 which will be awarded to one law student for the 2002-2003 academic year. The scholarship is awarded each academic year to an Asian American law student who demonstrates leadership potential, maturity and responsibility, a commitment to making a contribution to the Asian American community and other indicia of excellence, whether personal, professional or academic.

The scholarship recipient will be announced at the AALAM Anniversary Banquet on April 30, 2003 (see page 3 for details). For more information about the scholarship, please contact Jeffrey D. Hsi, Esq. at (617) 542-5070.

NAPABA Northeast Regional Conference

The **2003 National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA) Northeast Regional Conference**, entitled "Strengthening Our Communities: Unity and Diversity," will take place on **Saturday, May 3, 2003** in Hartford Connecticut. The Conference, which will be hosted by the **Connecticut Asian Pacific American Bar Association (CAPABA)** will bring together members of affiliated Asian American bar associations from Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania.

The program will include the following panels:

- Judiciary: Where Are All the APA Judges – Where is Our Pipeline?
- In-House and Law Firm Attorneys: Shameless Groveling...and Other Winning Tactics: A Mock Beauty Contest.
- GP/Solo/Small Firm: Everything You Wanted to Know (But Were Afraid to Ask) About Hanging Up Your Own Shingle.
- Intellectual Property: What You Need to Know About IP Law in 2003.
- Government Attorneys: New Developments in Anti-Terrorism and the Law.
- Politics: APAs in Politics.

In Addition, several judges attending the Conference are interested in meeting with law students. If you are a student interested in this opportunity, please contact **Susan Kim** at susan.kim@bingham.com.

For more information, and to register online, visit:

<http://www.napaba.org/napaba/showpage.asp?code=2003NERegionalConference>

Discounts on hotel and registration fees expire on April 1, 2003. Registration is free for law students, with the exception of the conference dinner (\$35). If you have any questions about the Conference, contact **Amy Lin Meyerson** at (203) 324-4200 or ameyerson@MLC-Law.com.

NAPABA Job Fair

A Job Fair will be held as part of the **NAPABA 2003 Northeast Regional Conference** on **Saturday, May 3, 2003** at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford, Connecticut. If you would like to have your resume included in the Resume Booklet to be distributed to law firms and companies participating in the Job Fair, please forward a copy of your resume to **Susan Kim** at susan.kim@bingham.com by April 1, 2003.

AALAM Director named to Mass. Judicial Nominating Commission

AALAM Board of Director member **Stephen Y. Chow** of **Perkins, Smith and Cohen, LLP**, was appointed a member of the 21-member **Massachusetts Judicial Nominating Commission (JNC)** by **Governor Mitt Romney** and JNC Chairman **Ralph C. Martin, II**. At the press conference detailing the appointments, Governor Romney empha-sized that the new JNC will mean a de-politicization of the judicial selection process (minimizing lobbying and endorse-ments as well) with which Chow heartily agrees. This is not the first statewide commission that Chow is involved in. "This is the second volunteer



Commission to which I will be devoting time, the other being the Uniform Law Commission on which I am serving a second five-year term. I'm passionate about keeping the judiciary from being corrupted by favoritism or by ten-second media bites. I concur with Governor Romney and Chairman Ralph Martin that diversity of experience and thought are important qualities for our judges." AALAM President **Theodore Chuang** had this to say about the appointment and Chow, "...This is a significant event not just for [Steve] personally, but for AALAM. We are all fortunate to have someone serving on the JNC whose background and experience will certainly carry respect with the JNC."



AALAM Anniversary Banquet

Please join us for AALAM's **2003 Anniversary Banquet**, to be held on **Wednesday, April 30, 2003** at **Pinang Restaurant** at Faneuil Hall Marketplace in Boston. Pre-banquet reception will begin at 5:30pm and dinner will begin at 7:00pm. This year's Anniversary Banquet will feature a keynote address by **Ralph C. Martin, II**, a partner at **Bingham McCutchen LLP**, the former District Attorney for Suffolk County, the incoming chair of the Judicial Nominating Commission, and one of the most prominent attorneys of color in the Commonwealth. It will also include the presentation of the **AALAM Scholarship**, awarded annually to a deserving Boston-area law student who has demonstrated both academic excellence and a commitment to the Asian American community.

The Anniversary Banquet, which marks the eighteenth anniversary of AALAM, provides an opportunity for AALAM members, as well as supporters of AALAM throughout the Massachusetts legal community, to gather and celebrate AALAM's accomplishments of the past year and to renew their commitment to AALAM in the coming year. For more information and tickets, please contact **Eunice Chapon** at (617) 248-5256 or echapon@choate.com.



Advertisement



BOSTON BAR ASSOCIATION
REAL ESTATE SECTION DIVERSITY
COMMITTEE ANNOUNCEMENT

The Real Estate Section Diversity Committee presents the first segment of a three-part seminar entitled:

RESIDENTIAL CONVEYANCING

This program is designed for attorneys interested in acquiring the basic skills necessary to build a residential real estate practice in Boston. Whether you have hung your shingle on Beacon Hill, Dorchester or Roxbury, and you're trying to enter the confusing world of residential conveyancing, you probably have some serious questions:

- How do I get started?
- How do I attract lenders?
- How do I attract buyers and sellers?
- How do I become an agent for a title insurance company?
- Where can I get information about day-to-day practice?
- What are some issues that are unique to practice in Boston's neighborhoods?

The panel will include several Boston real estate attorneys who can share their insights into the growing pains involved in becoming a conveyancer. Representatives of LandAmerica Commonwealth and LandAmerica Lawyers Title will be available to discuss the title agency arrangements, the setup process, accounting and insurance issues, as well as the support network available to assist and guide you in the development of a successful practice, including a demonstration of software for title agents.

When: Wednesday, March 12, 2003 from 5:30 p.m.-7:00 p.m.
 Where: Boston Bar Association
 16 Beacon Street
 Boston, MA

*** Please RSVP to the BBA by calling (617) 742-0615, ext. 272 or email sections@bostonbar.org. ***

BBA MEMBERSHIP NOT REQUIRED TO ATTEND

Part II – **Wednesday, May 7, 2003: The Role of the Residential Real Estate Broker – the Gate Keeper – an invaluable source of business.**

Part III- **Wednesday, June 18, 2003: The Role of the Residential Lender – a networking opportunity for BBA members to meet loan officers interested in learning more about your market and opportunities to work together.**

Advertisement

SAVE THE DATE

Asian American Lawyers Association of Massachusetts

Anniversary Banquet

Wednesday, April 30, 2003

**Pinang Restaurant, Faneuil Hall
 Boston, Massachusetts**

Invitations and details will be sent out at a later date.

For more information, contact Eunice Kim Chapon at (617) 248-5256 or echapon@choate.com

AALAM/BBA April Event

AALAM and the **Boston Bar Association** are co-sponsoring a seminar entitled **“Cultural Considerations in Divorce and Child Custody Matters”** on **Tuesday, April 1, 2003** at the Boston Bar Association Headquarters, 16 Beacon Street, Boston, MA. Speakers include, **Hon. Spencer M Kagen, Maria C. Walsh, Esq., and Zenobia T. Lai, Esq.** For more information (see announcement, upper right), please contact **Ingrid Schroffner** at ischroffner@b-l.com.

AALAM to Host Legal Workshop

On **Monday, April 7, 2003**, **AALAM** will host educational legal workshops for members of the Asian American community to provide general information on recurring legal issues in the area of citizenship, health insurance, real estate, small business, and employment (see announcement, at lower right) The workshops will take place in at the **Asian American Civic Association** in Chinatown and will be presented by Asian American attorneys who practice in these areas, with translation in Mandarin Chinese. Future workshops may be held in other Asian communities with translation in other Asian languages. The workshops are cosponsored by the **Asian American Civic Association, Greater Boston Legal Services, and the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law of the BBA.** To register for the workshop, please contact **Emily Damiano** at (617) 426-9492 x212. For more information, or to volunteer to assist with the workshops, contact AALAM Director **Flora Chan** at caymuscs@yahoo.com.

AALAM Elections

AALAM's annual Executive Board elections for officers (President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer) and directors will take place in April 2003. Service on the Executive Board provides a unique opportunity for members to become more involved in the planning of AALAM's agenda and activities for the coming year. As always, AALAM is interested in including several first-time Board members on next year's Executive Board. If you have any questions about the elections or the Board, please contact **Theodore Chuang** at 617-748-3173 or chuang@post.harvard.edu, or any AALAM officer or director (listed on page 2 of this Newsletter or at www.aalam.org). Anyone interested in being a candidate for a position on the Executive Board should notify Theodore Chuang by **April 15, 2003**.

The Boston Bar Association Family Law Section

Co-Sponsored with

The Asian-American Lawyers Association of Massachusetts

invite you to attend

CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS IN DIVORCE AND CHILD CUSTODY MATTERS

AT

BOSTON BAR ASSOCIATION HEADQUARTERS

16 Beacon Street Boston, MA

ON

TUESDAY, APRIL 1, 2003 AT 5:00 PM

FEATURING

Hon. Spencer M. Kagan, Massachusetts Probate and Family Court

Maria C. Walsh, Esq., JAMS Mediator and Arbitrator,
Perkins, Smith & Cohen LLP

Zenobia T. Lai, Esq., Managing Attorney, Asian Outreach Unit
for the Greater Boston Legal Services.

A must attend panel discussion that offers practice tips and pointers in dealing with clients/potential clients/witnesses, etc./preparing a case for divorce and other family law matters given cultural considerations, including and particularly those of Asian Americans (i.e. considerations of property, language barriers, how to ask and word questions to elicit facts, etc.). The 2000 U.S. Census reports that the Massachusetts Asian American population is the state's fastest growing racial group, increasing 68% since 1990. In 2000, the total Asian American population numbered 238,246, or 3.8% of the total Massachusetts population.¹ Learn the importance of these cultural considerations in your practice!

Introduced and Moderated by **Ingrid C. Schroffner, Esq.**, an associate at Burns & Levinson LLP, a member of the BBA Family Law Section Steering Committee, and a member of the Executive Board of the Asian American Lawyers Association of Massachusetts.

The BBA Family Law Section is comprised of attorneys who practice in all areas of family law be it divorce, custody, adoption, guardianship, non traditional families, paternity, domestic violence, and the care and protection of children. The Asian-American Lawyers Association of Massachusetts (AALAM) is a non-partisan, non-profit organization of over one hundred Asian-American lawyers, judges, and law professors. Since its incorporation in 1984, AALAM has devoted its energy and resources to a variety of civic and professional activities at the local, state, and national levels. AALAM's mission is to promote the Asian-American legal profession by furthering and encouraging professional interaction and exchange of ideas among its members and other with individuals, groups and organizations; and to improve and facilitate the administration of law and justice through various means.

Please come and bring your colleagues and friends to meet and network with members of the BBA Family Law Section as well as members of AALAM, new and old, and discover more about both!

EDUCATIONAL LEGAL WORKSHOPS:

HOW DO I BECOME A CITIZEN?

HOW DO I APPLY FOR HEALTH INSURANCE BENEFITS?

HOW DO I BUILD CREDIT AND APPLY FOR A LOAN?

WHAT ARE MY LEGAL RIGHTS AS AN EMPLOYEE?

HOW DO I PURCHASE A HOME AND HOME INSURANCE?

HOW DO I START A BUSINESS?

WHEN: **MONDAY, APRIL 7, 2003, 9:00 A.M. TO 12:00 P.M.**

WHERE: **200 TREMONT STREET (ASIAN AMERICAN CIVIC ASSOC.).**

COST: **FREE BUT SPACE IS LIMITED.** REGISTER BY 03-31-03.

TO REGISTER:

1. PICK UP A FORM AT 200 TREMONT ST (AAC); OR
2. SEE WWW.AALAM.ORG, PRINT FORM AND MAIL TO AAC, 200 TREMONT STREET, BOSTON, MA 02116 ATTN: **EMILY DAMIANO**; OR
3. CALL MS. DAMIANO AT 617-426-9492 X212.

*The Asian American Lawyers Association, Asian American Civic Association, Greater Boston Legal Services and Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights are the sponsors of the workshops. The purpose of the workshops is to educate you to common legal issues found in citizenship, health insurance, loans, employment, home ownership and starting a business. The lawyers speaking at these workshops are not being paid to speak at these workshops. Any information the lawyers provide on that day is for informational purposes only. Also, the lawyers will not be able to give you any legal advice to your specific legal issues on that day. The workshops will be conducted in English and Mandarin.

AALAM January Membership Meeting "Marketing and the Current Legal Climate"

By Lena Wong

On January 21, 2003, stalwart members of AALAM braved the deep chill to reach the offices of **Choate Hall & Stewart** to participate in a discussion with Attorney **Thomas E. Dwyer, Jr.** on "Marketing and the Current Legal Climate." Dwyer, founder of the law firm **Dwyer & Collora, LLP**, is past president of the Boston Bar Association and one of the most prominent attorneys in the Boston area. His firm has grown from two attorneys in 1980 to twenty-four today.

Dwyer began the discussion by describing the actions taken by his firm in response to the changing legal market. The firm started in the "Boutique" concept, with its "brand" being business litigation and white-collar crime. In the 1990's, the definition of a "Boutique" firm expanded to mean 15-20 attorneys. His firm doubled in size from 1990-1993. At this point, Dwyer made a business plan and started developing a marketing strategy and program. The firm hired a marketing consultant and, along with advertising in publications such as Lawyer's Weekly and American Lawyer, developed brochures, and eventually a website. The firm has a detailed "Associate Marketing List" with specific tasks and goals. He stated that a small firm should devote at least 25% of its time to marketing itself.

Dwyer made suggestions for developing and maintaining client contacts. These include keeping in touch with clients and other attorneys through events and holiday cards, and monitoring news coverage on clients and their companies. Send a clipping to the client with a note "I saw this and thought you might be interested." Join and be active in bar associations, and go outside minority bar associations. Dwyer also emphasized press relations. If he has an interesting case, he contacts the press so that reporters know he has a specialty in a particular topic. In that way, the reporter then thinks of Dwyer when a similar matter comes up and contacts him for comments.

Dwyer concluded with a new definition of "boutique law firm". In terms of the future for small or "boutique" law firms,

Dwyer predicted that the definition will soon require as many as 50 attorneys or as few as 5-10. According to Dwyer, there is a role for a small firm if it is well-run and the attorneys "hustle." However, "the firm has to be different and sell it's product in a different way."

Many thanks to Attorney Dwyer, the attendees, and especially to Eunice Kim Chapon and Choate Hall for once more providing gracious hospitality.

ASIAN GANGS – continued from page 1

Mr. Phuong reported that he has started his own consulting firm advocating the concept of restorative justice. He believes that in order to stop the vicious cycle of gang-related violence, we must include fully all who are affected by the crime (victim, offender, community and government) in the discussion on how to make amends and help offenders reintegrate into the community. To do that, Mr. Phuong brings together gang members, police officers, judges, probation officers, jail officials and social service providers so that they can jointly come up with innovative systemic solutions.

Ms. Wynn spoke about how Project Prentiss helps former gang members reintegrate into society as responsible citizens by providing free laser surgery removal of gang related tattoos. The stigma of having visible tattoos on the hands, arms or face can be an insurmountable barrier to leading a straight life. They can also be fatal since other gang members may target them on the basis of the tattoos. Doctors volunteer their time and services to remove these tattoos. In return, the former gang members undertake community service which establishes positive connections between the former gang members and their communities. Project Prentiss also provides counseling, job placement, peer counseling, education, and outreach programs.

AALAM thanks the firm of Choate Hall & Stewart for hosting this event and providing the fresh sushi, sandwiches, dessert and refreshments that the attendees enjoyed while getting to know each other better. We hope that you can join us at our next membership meeting!

Calendar of Events

Please check our website www.aalam.org for updates on events and other current AALAM information.

| | |
|---|---|
| March 27, 2003 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm | AALAM Board of Directors Meeting Burns & Levinson, 125 Summer Street, 36 th floor, Boston, MA Contact: Ingrid Schroffner at ischroffner@b-l.com . |
| April 1, 2003 5:00 pm – 8:00 pm | Cultural Considerations in Divorce and Child Custody Matters Boston Bar Association, 16 Beacon Street, Boston, MA Contact: Ingrid Schroffner at ischroffner@b-l.com . |
| April 7, 2003 9:00 am – 12:00 pm | AALAM Community Service Workshop Asian American Civic Association, 100 Tremont Street, Boston, MA Contact: Flora Chan at caymuscs@yahoo.com . |
| April 30, 2003 5:30 pm – 9:00 pm | AALAM Anniversary Banquet Pinang Restaurant, Faneuil Hall Marketplace, Boston, MA Contact: Eunice Chapon at (617) 248-5256 or echapon@choate.com . |
| May 3, 2003 | NAPABA Northeast Regional Conference Hartford, Connecticut Contact: Theodore Chuang at (617)748-3173 or chuang@post.harvard.edu . |

AALAM NEWS

March 2003

CONTRIBUTE TO THE AALAM NEWS

If you have an announcement or article for inclusion in the AALAM News, or would like to write articles or otherwise assist with the production of the newsletter, contact any of the following:

Ingrid C. Schroffner: (617) 345-3235, ischroffner@b-l.com
Onyen Yong: (617) 619-4042, onyen.yong@suf.state.ma.us

Professional Opportunities

For employment and professional opportunity announcements, visit the AALAM website, www.aalam.org, under "Professional Opportunities":

If you have a job announcement you would like posted on the AALAM website, send the announcement, preferably by e-mail, to: Elizabeth E. Nam, Esq. at een@rackemann.com



AALAM

Asian American Lawyers
Association of Massachusetts
P.O. Box 5655
Boston, MA 02114

Membership Reminder!!!

Have you forgotten about your membership dues?? You must be a dues-paying member in order to continue receiving this newsletter and future e-mail announcements from AALAM. Go to www.aalam.org for information.

Thank you!