



AALAM NEWS

The Newsletter of the Asian American Lawyers Association of Massachusetts
Volume XVIII, No. 3, November 2002

AALAM Discusses What it means to “Save Chinatown”

Despite the dismal weather on **October 16th**, AALAM members trudged over to **Bingham McCutchen** for a lively discussion about the past, present and future of Boston’s Chinatown, featuring guest speakers **Andrew Leong** and **William Moy**. Leong, a professor of Asian American Studies at the University of Massachusetts Boston and an outspoken leader of the grassroots organization “Campaign to Protect Chinatown” (CPC), and Moy, a civil engineer for the Central Artery Project (Big Dig), and the Moderator of the Chinatown Neighborhood Association for many years, were asked to provide some perspective about the gentrification debate that has been raging in Chinatown for the past few years. In particular, the speakers were asked to provide their viewpoints on the current debate surrounding the possible construction of the proposed Liberty Place housing development at the corner of Beach Street and Washington Street.

Leong began the discussion by providing Chinatown’s historical background. Boston’s Chinatown, one of the oldest Chinatowns in North America, was illustrated as a place where immigrants of Chinese descent congregated as early as the mid-1800’s. The subjects of severe discrimination, immigrants from China would flock to Chinatown in search of a safe place to assimilate into American culture. Once there, they would find jobs, and sympathetic neighbors who could help them learn English and American social mores. After reaching a certain comfort level, the immigrants would relocate elsewhere and attempt to blend into mainstream American communities. Residents of the Chinatown community have historically been among the poorest in the city, earning less than \$17,000 per year. Leong compared Chinatown to being a “weigh station” where people generally did not intend to stay for very long, but which served an important purpose by assisting people to move onto the next phase of their lives in the U.S. Chinatown continues to serve the same purpose

today as it did a century ago for those looking to start new lives in America.

The discussion then turned towards the metamorphosis of Boston’s Chinatown into the neighborhood that it is today. Once a neighborhood that included not only the small commercial area between Essex and Kneeland Streets (north-south boundaries), and

Atlantic Avenue and Washington Street (east-west boundaries), but also substantial parts of the South End, Chinatown has been reduced over the years to a few crowded city blocks. Residential communities bordering the South End, once part of Chinatown, have been cut off from the commercial thoroughfare by large-scale construction projects such as the Massachusetts Turnpike, the New England Medical Center, and now, the Big Dig.

Moy explained that political forces within the City Council caused Washington St. and its environs to be zoned for adult entertainment, which was the birth of the so-called “Combat Zone.” Though Boston City Councillors generally agreed that Chinatown should not be the city’s adult entertainment center, they suffered from what Moy aptly described as the “not in my backyard” syndrome, and thus, given Chinatown’s lack of representation in city government, Chinatown became Boston’s “red-light” district, bringing prostitution and other criminal elements into what used to be a residential area.

To control the further development of Chinatown, a pact was made between the Chinatown community and the City of Boston, now commonly known as the “Master Plan.” The Master Plan encouraged “controlled” development of Chinatown, setting restrictions as to land use and building requirements for new projects within the Chinatown neighborhood. Its purpose was to foster the preservation of Chinatown as an ethnic community and prevent the erosion that would result from unbridled commercial and residential development. Examples of such destruction could be seen in Chinatown communities across North America including those in San Francisco, Washington, DC, Philadelphia and Montreal. The CPC and the Asian American Resource Workshop have likened Boston Chinatown’s struggle with the historic International Hotel movement in San Francisco’s Filipino community during the 1970’s.

Both speakers expressed passionate views about the future of Chinatown with their contrasting positions illustrating the two sides in the ongoing debate. Leong, as a proponent of controlled development and the preservation of the “weigh station” for new immigrants, emphasized that the City of Boston has a responsibility to keep its end of the bargain and uphold the Master Plan by not issuing nonconforming use permits and variances to commercial developers. According to Leong, the unveiling of plans to build the new “Liberty Place” residential complex, a towering structure of over 25 stories, is in clear violation of the Master Plan and shows disrespect for the agreement with the community.

Chinatown - Continued on Page 3



*Site of proposed Liberty Place Development
Corner of Beach and Washington Streets.*

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AALAM

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Announcements

Dow Fund to Host 17th Annual Celebration

The **Harry H. Dow Memorial Legal Assistance Fund**, an affiliate of AALAM, will host its 17th annual fundraising dinner on **Friday, December 6, 2002** from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. at **Chau Chow City Restaurant** in Chinatown. The Dow Fund, named after the first Asian American attorney in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, is a permanent endowment to support work that improves the access of Asian Americans to the legal system. The Dow Fund launched the Anti-Asian Violence Project, the Asian Battered Women Project, and the Asian Immigrant Rights Initiative and provides ongoing financial support to the Asian Outreach Unit of Greater Boston Legal Services. Because of AALAM's ties to the Dow Fund and the important work supported by the Dow Fund, AALAM strives to have a strong presence at the Dow Fund Dinner. As an AALAM member, you should be receiving an invitation in the mail shortly. If you do not receive an invitation, or would like more information, contact **Zenobia Lai** at (617) 603-1612 or **Grace Lee** at (617) 603-1723. If you would like to sit at an AALAM table at the Dinner, please notify Theodore Chuang at (617) 748-3173 or chuang@post.harvard.edu.

AALAM to Receive Briefing on Asian American Voter Participation

The next **AALAM General Membership Meeting** will be a brown bag lunch at 12:00 p.m. on Wednesday, **November 20, 2002** at the offices of **Perkins, Smith & Cohen**, 1 Beacon Street, Boston, Massachusetts. We are honored to have as guest speakers, **Paul Watanabe** and **Michael Liu** of the Institute for Asian-American Studies at the University of Massachusetts in Boston.

"In a recent groundbreaking study, Msrs. Watanabe and Liu found a big "voter registration gap" between the number of Asian-Americans who can register to vote and those who actually do. Studying voter lists in 10 Massachusetts communities with significant Asian populations, the researchers found that only half of the adult Asian-Americans who were eligible to vote were registered, well below the 70 percent figure for the overall population." (See *Boston Globe Article dated October 16, 2002*).

Liquid refreshments will be provided. Please bring picture identification in order to gain access to the building. We hope you will be able to attend this timely and interesting discussion. If you have any questions, please contact AALAM Board member **Elaine Tung** at (781) 861-8833.

NAPABA Convenes in Atlanta

The 2002 **National Asian Pacific American Bar Association** (NAPABA) National Convention took place **November 7-9** in Atlanta, Georgia. In addition to panel discussions and continuing legal education programs, the Convention highlights included the presentation of the annual NAPABA Trailblazer Awards and the final round of the Thomas Tang Moot Court Competition. In addition, the Convention hosted a Bar Leaders Roundtable, at which the leadership of local affiliates of NAPABA exchanged ideas on improving the effectiveness of local Asian American bar associations. AALAM President **Theodore D. Chuang** represented AALAM at that session. For more information about the Convention, visit www.napaba.org. A full report on the Convention will appear in the next issue of the AALAM News.

(Announcements continued on next page)

Announcements (Cont.)

Boston University APALSA Dinner

Boston University School of Law's **APALSA** holds an annual dinner for BU Law alums and friends in Chinatown. This year's dinner will be on Thursday, **November 14, 2002** at 7pm at **Penang** in Chinatown. If you are interested in attending this dinner, please contact Michelle Rhee at michelle.rhee@haledorr.com or (617) 526-6064 no later than Tuesday, November 12. You do not need to be a Boston University alum to attend. The APALSA members would appreciate hearing about your experiences as practitioners in Massachusetts, so please consider joining us for a great meal with friendly students.

**AALAM joins in
Minority Bar Association Reception**

On **October 2, 2002**, AALAM members joined with members of the **Massachusetts Association of Hispanic Attorneys**, the **Massachusetts Black Lawyers Association**, and the **Massachusetts Black Women Attorneys** to welcome the first year law students of color in the greater Boston area. **Mintz Levin** hosted the joint minority bar association reception, which boasted attendance of over 60 current practitioners and students. The president of each hosting bar association spoke about his or her experience as a lawyer and as an active member of his or her bar association and reflected on past days as a law student. **Theo Chuang**, president of AALAM, spoke on AALAM's behalf and detailed upcoming AALAM's programs and initiatives for the coming year. (see pictures on right)



AALAM President Theo Chuang Addresses the Audience



First Year Law Students Enjoying the Reception

Chinatown — continued from Page 1

In addition to decrying the gradual squeezing of a substantial ethnic enclave into still smaller spaces, Leong also identified as significant concerns facing Chinatown the community's lack of political and economic clout and its inability to fight the forces of big business.

Moy, however, argued that the continuing viability of Chinatown depends on the influx of new capital into the neighborhood. He says that Chinatown businesses are friendly with Mayor Menino and support the construction of new luxury residences in hopes that the occupants of these new structures will increase foot traffic in neighboring restaurants and shops. Moy is quite certain that the construction of these new complexes will not displace Chinatown's immigrant residents because many of the large apartment complexes that have been occupied by Asian immigrants over the years are specifically designated for subsidized housing for a lengthy number of years into the future, so that rents in those buildings will not increase significantly for the foreseeable future. Moy also pointed out that undesirable development is less likely because much of the land and buildings in Chinatown are owned by Chinese Americans.

He acknowledged, however, that Chinese American business people are entrepreneurs who, like other capitalists, likely will not pass up a desirable offer for their apartment buildings. He stresses that Chinese business people are entrepreneurs who are, like all other like-minded capitalists, trying to make money and that good economic opportunities should not be passed up.

By the end of the discussion, participants had received a lot of good food for thought. Both sides of the debate had its merits and, unfortunately, it seemed difficult to find a viable middle ground. From what the speakers shared with the audience, the political disenfranchisement of the Asian immigrant community is palpable, and fighting for controlled development will be an uphill battle; but ideally, a reasonable balance will be reached that would take into account Chinatown's continuing social significance for immigrants, as well as its business interests.

- By Elizabeth Nam

Committee Reports

AALAM Community Service Committee

There will be a planning meeting of the Community Service Committee at **Sherry Yee Mulloy's** office, Meehan, Boyle, Black & Fitzgerald, Two Center Plaza, Suite 600, on **December 10, 2002** at 6:00 pm and all interested attorneys and students are invited to attend. Please RSVP to smulloy@mddf.com by December 9.

The Community Service Committee is looking for attorneys who speak Mandarin to conduct a one-hour session at the Spring Legal Workshop in April 2003 with a focus on any one of the following areas:

1. Citizenship and naturalization
2. Health insurance
3. Banking (credit/debt/bankruptcy)
4. Employment (employees' rights/discrimination)
5. Homeowner's or auto insurance (not health)
6. Small businesses

For more information, contact Flora Chan at caymuscs@yahoo.com

AALAM Student Outreach Committee

On **October 4, 2002**, AALAM director **Jeffrey Hsi** visited **Boston College Law School** to attend the BC Law APALSA

meeting. Jeff introduced AALAM to the growing membership of Boston College's APALSA, including the Mentor/Mentee Program and Scholarship Program. Jeff also spoke briefly about his experience as an Asian American attorney and shared insights into the mentoring process and career development. The BC APALSA, under the leadership of current president **Janelle Kuroda**, is continuing to recruit active members and is in the process of arranging a number of community service activities, including pro bono immigration assistance, tax assistance, and English as a second language (ESL) projects. AALAM looks forward to the participation of BC APALSA in AALAM activities.

On **November 9, 2002**, **Michelle Rhee**, co-chair of the Student Outreach Committee represented AALAM at the Student Outreach Project, a joint program by the **Massachusetts Bar Association** and the **American Bar Association** was held at Hampshire College. The purpose of the Project is to encourage college students of color to attend law school and choose a career in the law. Students of color from the five college area in western Massachusetts (Hampshire College, Smith College, Mt. Holyoke College, Amherst College and University of Massachusetts at Amherst) were invited to attend. The Project included participation from a number of bar associations in Massachusetts.

Calendar of Events

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

November 7-9, 2002	NAPABA National Convention Atlanta, GA Contact: Theodore Chuang, (617) 748-3173, theodore.chuang@usdoj.gov
November 14, 2002 7:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Boston University School of Law APALSA Dinner Penang Restaurant, Washington Street, Chinatown Contact: Michelle Rhee: (617) 526-6064, michelle.rhee@haledorr.com
November 18, 2002 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm	AALAM Board of Directors Meeting Hale and Dorr, 60 State Street, Boston (at the corner of State and Congress) Contact: Michelle Rhee: (617) 526-6064, michelle.rhee@haledorr.com
November 20, 2002 12:00 pm – 2:00 pm	AALAM General Membership Meeting: Brown Bag Lunch on Voter Participation Perkins, Smith & Cohen, 1 Beacon Street, Boston, MA Contact: Elaine Tung at (781) 861-8833
December 6, 2002 6:00 pm – 9:00pm	Harry H. Dow Legal Assistance Fund Dinner Chau Chow City Restaurant, 83 Essex Street, Chinatown Contact: Zenobia Lai at (617) 603-1612 or Grace Lee at (617) 603-1723
December 10, 2002 6:00 pm – 8:00pm	Community Service Committee Meeting Meehan, Boyle, Black & Fitzgerald, 2 Center Plaza, Suite 600, Boston, MA Contact: Sherry Yee Mulloy at smulloy@mddf.com .
TBA 5:30 – 7:30 pm	AALAM Monthly Social Event TBA Contact: Elizabeth Nam, (617) 248-5241, enam@choate.com

AALAM Seeks Information on MBA Involvement

AALAM is currently in discussions with the **Massachusetts Bar Association** about the possibility of AALAM becoming an affiliated organization of the MBA and thereby receiving representation in the MBA's House of Delegates. To assist in these discussions, AALAM needs to gather information on the past involvement of AALAM members in the MBA. If you have not already responded to the prior e-mail inquiry, please send the following information via email to Theodore Chuang at chuang@post.harvard.edu: (1) whether you are a current MBA member; (2) whether you have been (past or present) a member of an MBA section council (and the name of the section); (3) whether you have taught or presented at an MBA CLE event (and a description of your participation); and (4) any other significant involvement with the MBA. Please respond by December 1, 2002.

AALAM Profile

Ms. EUNICE KIM CHAPON

In an effort to introduce you to the members of AALAM we will be profiling one or more of our members in each newsletter.

Eunice Kim Chapon is the 2002-2003 Vice President of AALAM. Chapon served as a member of the 2001-2002 Board of Directors and as a member of the committee that organized the 2000 NAPABA Northeast Regional Conference, and currently coordinates AALAM's social and networking events. Outside of AALAM, Chapon currently serves as legal counsel to the National Association of Asian American Professionals (NAAAP).

Chapon received her law degree from William & Mary School of Law and graduated with the Order of the Barristers. She served as the Chief Justice of the Moot Court program at William & Mary from 1998-1999 and received the award for Best Brief at the Fordham Securities Law Moot Court competition in 1999.

Chapon is currently a fourth-year corporate and securities associate with Choate, Hall & Stewart. As a member of the Corporate Department, Chapon's practice includes the representation of public and private companies in matters of general corporate law, mergers and acquisitions, commercial lending transactions, and securities transactions, including debt and equity financings, initial public offerings, secondary offerings, Rule 144A offerings, exchange offers, and consent solicitations. Chapon has also been actively involved in the representation of corporate clients on a broad range of corporate and securities matters, including SEC reporting and compliance, disclosure, and corporate governance issues, particularly in the energy and public utility industry.

Over the next five years, Chapon hopes to see AALAM continue its current record of growth and development. She supports AALAM's dedication to building and strengthening relationships with Asian American law students in the Boston area and hopes that AALAM continues to provide opportunities that encourage Asian American law students to remain in the Boston legal community. She also supports AALAM's initiatives to provide increased networking opportunities for lawyers in Boston and hopes to see more opportunities for community building in the Asian American legal community in Boston and Massachusetts.

Chapon is married to Eric Chapon, who is an IT Systems Administrator for Mathworks, a software company in Natick. She and Eric have a one-eyed tabby cat. In her free time, she enjoys seeing her friends, working on her house, and traveling.

-By Brad Chin

AALAM Member Represents Chinese Girl Seeking Asylum

Attorney **Shen-Shin Lu**, an AALAM member, filed a political asylum petition on behalf of **Yukun Jia**, a 12-year-old Chinese girl who escaped while on a school trip on August 1 and went to meet her father in Amherst, Massachusetts.

Her mother, **Hong Jia**, has been victimized by the Chinese government's one child policy and was forced to have two (2) abortions in 1992 and 1995. Her father, **Bing Jia**, came to the United States in December 2000 under a business visitor's visa and overstayed his visa. The Jia family planned to bring Hong Jia to U.S. to join her husband and apply for asylum. After asylum was granted, the parents had planned to bring Yukun to United States

Yukun is so talented that she was selected to attend a "Space Camp" in Alabama. After she arrived at San Francisco International Airport with other Chinese students on August 1, she managed to leave her team and flew to Massachusetts with her uncle to see her father. Yukun planned to return to her team after meeting her father, whom she had not seen for a year. However, the media reported that Yukun might have been kidnapped and later described her as a defector of China. Because of the publicity in both the United States and China, she cannot go back to China anymore, especially since newspapers in China described her as a betrayer. If she went back, she would suffer from persecution as a defector. She would undoubtedly be expelled from school, and other schools would not accept her. She would have no future in China. Therefore, Lu has filed a political asylum petition on her behalf.

Bing Jia was served with a Notice to Appear by the Immigration and Naturalization Service and is currently in removal proceedings because he has overstayed his visa. His hearing is scheduled for February 6, 2003. Lu will file a separate asylum petition for him based on persecution arising from China's one-child policy. This petition will include Yukun as well.

Lu, a Boston immigration lawyer, is representing the Jia family pro bono.

Student Outreach Committee Visits Suffolk University School of Law APALSA

On October 10, 2002, board member **Steve Chow** joined **Fred Dow** in honoring Fred's father, **Harry Dow**, at a reception at Suffolk Law School organized by **Suffolk's APALSA**. Harry Dow was the first Asian American graduate of Suffolk Law School and was active in advancing the Asian American community of Boston. Fred Dow has continued his father's activism in community service. Steve Chow, who teaches technology counseling and litigation on the adjunct faculty of Suffolk, shared his experiences as an Asian American practitioner, as a teacher and as a Uniform Law Commissioner for Massachusetts. Some thirty APALSA members, faculty and administrators attended.

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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

The following employment and professional opportunity announcements are posted on the AALAM website, www.aalam.org, under "Professional Opportunities":

- Assistant Executive Director, Boston Bar Foundation
- Assistant Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General, Commonwealth of Massachusetts
- Referral Paralegal, Volunteer Lawyers Project of the Boston Bar Association
- Assistant General Counsel, Dartmouth College
- Community Outreach Coordinator, Economic Justice Project
- Deputy Director of Labor and Employee Relations, Gatti and Associates
- Risk Manager, Fidelity Investments
- Senior Attorney, IMS Health
- Law Clerks (2003-2004), The Superior Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts
- Clinical Instructor/Attorney, Harvard Law School

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., Choate, Hall & Stewart, enam@choate.com, Tel: (617) 248-5241, Fax: (617) 248-4000



AALAM

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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!