



AALAM NEWS

The Newsletter of the Asian American Lawyers Association of Massachusetts
Volume XIX, No. 1, October 2003

AALAM Comes Together at Anniversary Banquet



Keynote Speaker **Ralph C. Martin, II**, Appeals Court Justice **Fernande R.V. Duffly**, Superior Court Justice **Richard Chin**, and Boston Municipal Court Justice **John T. Lu**.

AALAM's Anniversary Banquet was held on Wednesday, **April 30, 2003** at Pinang Restaurant in Faneuil Hall. Over 110 AALAM members, distinguished guests, supporters and volunteers attended the Banquet, which featured 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.

AALAM Director and Co-Chair of AALAM's Student Outreach Committee, **Stephen Y. Chow**, presented the annual AALAM Scholarship to **Allyson Mangalonzo**, a first year law student at Boston College Law School. Allyson received her Bachelor of Arts, magna cum laude, in Political Science from Rutgers University - Douglass College. She was an intern with the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF) in New York City and was a recipient of Rutgers University's Human Dignity Award, which is awarded each year to three students, faculty, or staff for outstanding contributions to diversity awareness in the university community.

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of AALAM's Banquet Committee, which included **Eunice Kim Chapon** (chair) **Dongsup Samuel Kim**, **Quan Le**, **Kalun Lee**, **Lisa Nam**, and the ever-dedicated **Carolyn Hunt**, the evening was declared a success by all who attended. Many thanks to all who contributed towards the event and to those who volunteered their time and efforts on behalf of AALAM.



AALAM President **Theodore Chuang**, AALAM Scholarship winner **Allyson Mangalonzo**, and AALAM Director **Stephen Chow**



AALAM Banquet Committee: **Quan Le**, **Eunice Kin Chapon**, **Dongsup Samuel Kim**, and **Lisa Nam**



Banquet guests enjoying the cocktail hour on the patio at Pinang

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AALAM

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Announcements

AALAM Elects New Executive Board

In May 2003, AALAM elected its officer and directors for 2003-2004. The sole addition to the officer ranks is **Myong J. Joun**, a civil rights attorney at the Law Offices of Howard Friedman, who is AALAM's new vice president. Myong has served as an AALAM director, as chair of AALAM's Advocacy Committee, and as AALAM's representative to the Massachusetts Law Reform Institute's Board of Trustees. Last year's vice president, **Eunice Kim Chapon**, stepped down after a year of extraordinary service, during which she chaired the Banquet Committee and oversaw AALAM's membership database. Eunice remains active with AALAM as a member of the Board of Directors.

Newly elected to the Board of Directors this year are **Quan Le** of Murtha Cullina & Roche LLP; **Jan-Yung Lin** of Goodwin Procter LLP; **Thanh Nga Nguyen** of Bingham McCutchen LLP; and **Geoffrey G. Why** of the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office. In September 2003, the AALAM Executive Board appointed **Kalun Lee** of Foley Hoag LLP to complete the term of **Bao Nguyen**, who resigned from the Board in August upon moving to California.

The Board bade farewell to several longtime officers and directors this year, including former vice president **Elaine Tung**, former Community Service Committee co-chair **Sherry Yee Mulloy**; former Student Outreach Committee Chair **Michelle Rhee**, and former Scholarship Committee chair **Meerie Joung**. AALAM thanks these dedicated members for their service and looks forward to their continued involvement and participation in AALAM activities.

NAPABA to Host 2003 National Convention in Hawaii

The **National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA)** National Convention, entitled "Asian Pacific American Currents: Surfing the Pacific Basin Network," will take place **November 11-15, 2003** at the Renaissance Ilikai Waikiki on the island of Oahu, Hawaii. The convention will feature CLE panels and programs, keynote speakers, the Thomas Tang Moot Court Competition, the annual Trailblazer Awards, a golf tournament, and a luau. For more information about the Convention or to register, go to www.napaba.org or contact **John Yang**, NAPABA President, at 202-719-7000 or jyang@wrf.com.

AALAM Seeks Community Service Awards Nominations

AALAM is seeking nominations for the annual **AALAM Community Service Award**, given each year at the **Harry H. Dow Memorial Legal Assistance Fund Dinner** to an individual who has made extraordinary contributions, through legal activities or otherwise, to the Asian American community in Massachusetts. Past recipients include **Paul Lee**, **William Chin**, **Zenobia Lai**, and **Andrew Leong**. If you would like to nominate someone for the award, please contact **Flora Chan** at caymuscs@yahoo.com.

AALAM Hosts Kickoff Event for 2003-2004 Year

On **Wednesday September 24, 2003** at 5:15pm, AALAM is kicking off the year with a Reception and Career Panel to be held at **Goodwin Procter LLP**, Exchange Place, in Boston. For more information, contact Stephen Chow @ (617) 854-4000 or stephen_chow@pscoston.com.



CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS IN DIVORCE AND CHILD CUSTODY MATTERS



AALAM Director Ingrid C. Schroffner, Zenobia T. Lai,
Hon. Spencer M Kagan, and Maria C. Walsh

On April 1, 2003, an AALAM sponsored event with the Boston Bar Association took place at the Boston Bar Association headquarters. The panel discussion offered practice tips and pointers for recognizing and addressing cultural considerations, particularly those of Asian Americans that arise when dealing with clients, potential clients, and witnesses in divorce and other family matters. The 2000 U.S. Census reports that Asian Americans are Massachusetts' 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

The program was 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 AALAM Executive Board.

The panelists brought different views to the table. **Maria C. Walsh, Esq.**, of Perkins, Smith & Cohen LLP and a JAMS Mediator and Arbitrator, gave an overview of cultural considerations for professionalism. Maria discussed how we recognize our own assumptions. Further, Maria outlined the influence of our background on our attitudes towards others and suggested some guidelines for enhancing multicultural confidence as an attorney.

Zenobia T. Lai, Esq., Managing Attorney, Asian Outreach Unit for the Greater Boston Legal Services, discussed language and effective cross-cultural communication. Zenobia discussed communication in different cultures as well as different perceptions of kinship and family. She drew upon her own personal background as a Chinese-American to discuss gender

¹ "A Survey of Health Services and Identification Needs for Asian American Elderly Women in the Greater Boston Area" by Connie S. Chan, Ph.D and Lin Zhan, Ph.D, Institute for Asian American Studies, UMass Boston. This Article can be found at www.iaas.umb.edu.

roles, including the perception of the first son in a family and the views of grandparents. Zenobia further discussed societal values and norms. She discussed nonverbal behavior (body movement and facial expressions, touching behavior, tone of voice, eye movements and eye contact). She also discussed authority conception and the power that attorneys wield with respect to immigrants. Zenobia further discussed what she called the "yes phenomenon," the tendency of people from immigrant cultures to nod and agree with things that people say either because of a fear of appearing ignorant or unintelligent, or simply because they perceive the person speaking to them in English to be the person with authority.

Hon. Spencer M. Kagan, Massachusetts Probate and Family Court Judge, discussed the view from the bench. Recently the Supreme Judicial Court ruled on his fascinating First Amendment case, **Sagar v. Sagar**, 57 Mass. App. Ct. 71 (2003), in which a Hindu couple disagreed about whether or not their daughter should undergo a Hindu ceremony. Judge Kagan discussed the four day trial and how he heard the evidence filtered through the litigants from a different culture. Judge Kagan noted that in such cases, although the Court looks at the cultural background of the parties, ultimately, it rules based on the legal standard of the best interests of the child. Aside from discussing the Sagar case, Judge Kagan made some general comments and perceptive observations about cultural considerations in the Massachusetts Probate and Family Court, especially with respect to determination of family issues. According to Judge Kagan, when a cultural difference has a role in a case, it is the attorney's duty to bring it up to the court. Judge Kagan further suggested that, rather than rely on the court interpreter, when there is an issue of language, that attorneys seek to bring a family member of the litigant to translate. A family member is more likely to be trusted by the litigant, he said. Furthermore, if you consider that the litigant is in a foreign legal establishment, surrounded by people who do not speak the litigant's language, the cause for concern is readily evident.

The Judge also addressed questions of cultural considerations with respect to marriage and legality – i.e., the situation of parents with a fourteen year old who wish the fourteen year old to marry for cultural reasons, even though in Massachusetts the age of fourteen is not the age of majority. The Judge noted that Massachusetts is one of those states in which marriage is not an exception to the statute concerning rape.

The discussions concluded with a question and answer period and remarks on the need to pay attention to cultural considerations in the court system. Cultural aspects of a problem may be viewed in a negative way, but in the end, such considerations are simply another piece of evidence to be given appropriate consideration by the court.



AALAM Participates in NAPABA Northeast Regional Conference

On Saturday, May 3, the **Connecticut Asian Pacific American Bar Association** hosted the **NAPABA Northeast Regional Conference** at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford, Connecticut. The annual conference, which was last hosted by AALAM in 2000, brings together members of the Asian American bar associations of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and Massachusetts for a day of panel discussions, workshops, speakers, and networking.

This year, AALAM members played a prominent role in the conference. In one of the plenary sessions, Justice John T. Lu of the Boston Municipal Court joined other Asian American judges on a panel entitled, "Where are all the APA Judges – Where is Our Pipeline?" Justice Lu's comments centered on the need for successful Asian American attorneys and judges to make efforts to assist other Asian American attorneys to advance in the profession.

The other plenary session, entitled, "Shameless Groveling . . . and Other Winning Tactics: A Mock Beauty Contest," featured two teams of leading Asian American law firm partners competing with each other to convince a panel of prominent Asian American in-house counsel to retain their mock firms to represent a corporation in a major piece of litigation. The in-house counsel panel featured two AALAM members, **Ho-il Kim**, General Counsel of Cabot Corporation, who played the role of the mock company's CEO; and **Vivian S.Y. Tseng**, General Counsel of Welch Foods, Inc., who acted as the company's CFO. The panel was moderated by former AALAM President **Paul W. Lee** of Goodwin Procter LLP.

Another panel discussion on "New Developments in Anti-Terrorism and the Law" included remarks by AALAM President **Theodore D. Chuang**, an Assistant U.S. Attorney in Boston; and **Glenn D. Magpantay**, a Staff Attorney at the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund in New York. A graduate of New England School of Law, Magpantay is a past recipient of the AALAM Scholarship. Other panels focused on developments in intellectual property law, the role of Asian Americans in politics, and strategies for solo practitioners.

The evening keynote speaker at the conference was **Dr. Henry C. Lee**, a renowned Connecticut-based forensic scientist, who has worked on such high-profile cases as the O.J. Simpson trial, the investigations relating to JonBenet Ramsey and Elizabeth Smart, and the reinvestigation of the Kennedy assassination. The lunchtime speaker was **Diane C. Yu**, Chief of Staff and Deputy to the President of New York University.

The NAPABA National Convention is scheduled for Honolulu, Hawaii in November 2003. The next NAPABA Northeast Regional Conference will take place in New Jersey next May.

AALAM HOSTS CHINATOWN LEGAL WORKSHOPS

On Monday, April 7, 2003, AALAM, in conjunction with the **Asian American Civic Association (AACA)**, **Greater Boston Legal Services (GBLS)**, and the **Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law of the Boston Bar Association (LCCR)**, hosted a series of free educational legal workshops for members of the Chinatown community. The half-day event, which attracted over seventy-five participants, offered six different legal seminars addressing various legal issues ranging from how to verify employment eligibility to tips on establishing a good credit history. Volunteer translators attended each of the workshops and provided immediate translation in Mandarin and/or Cantonese for the participants.

AALAM Director **Flora Chan**, who was the chairperson of the event's steering committee, and **Emily Damiano**, a Program Counselor at AACA, began the workshop with a brief introductory session about the civil legal system and information about obtaining general legal services. Participants then attended one or two hour-long legal workshops, which each attracted approximately ten to thirty-five people.

Early in the planning process, the steering committee prepared and, with the assistance of AACA, distributed surveys to members of the Chinatown community to assess the specific legal needs faced by the community. Once these surveys were completed, the steering committee determined the six topic areas that would be most helpful to the Chinatown community – citizenship, health and benefits, credit and loans, employment issues, home ownership, and small business issues – and then contacted AALAM members who volunteered to speak at the workshops.

The **Citizenship and Naturalization Workshop** was presented by AALAM member **Francis E. Chin**, who is the managing partner of the immigration law firm **Chin & Curtis, LLP**. This session focused on the U.S. citizenship and naturalization process. Attorney Chin discussed the application process, the typical questions asked during the citizenship test, and the eligibility requirements for naturalization.



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The **Health Insurance and Benefits Workshop** was presented by AALAM member **Zenobia Lai**, who is the managing attorney of the Asian Outreach Unit at GBLS. Attorney Lai spoke about the various alternatives



available to individuals who do not have health insurance coverage. She also discussed eligibility requirements for state and federal public assistance and health care programs.

The **Credit and Loans Workshop** was presented by AALAM member **Chi Chi Wu**, who is a staff attorney at the **National Consumer Law Center**. Attorney Wu reviewed various consumer credit issues, including building a credit history, how to review a credit report, and how to apply for loans.



The **Employment Rights Workshop** was presented by AALAM member **Kay Hodge**, who practices labor and employment law at **Stoneham, Chandler, & Miller**. Attorney Hodge focused on various employment laws, including those concerning discrimination, wages, and leaves of absence. She also discussed workers' compensation and unemployment benefits.

The **Home Ownership Workshop** was conducted by AALAM member **Jeanne Fong**, who has been a sole practitioner in the greater Boston Asian community for the past twenty-three years. This session provided information about the issues involved when purchasing a

home. Attorney Fong explained the different types of ownership options, various property types, and ways to decrease the risks of home buying.

The **Starting a Business Workshop** was conducted by **Jill Feldman**, who is the intake coordinator at LCCR, and **Laurie Hauber**, who founded the **Economic Justice Project** at LCCR. Ms. Feldman and Attorney Hauber provided general legal information for individuals who own, or are thinking of starting, a small business. They discussed business entities, tax and liability concerns, the employer–employee relationship, and contracts and leases.



Flora Chan (AALAM), Emily Damiano (AACA), Jill Feldman (LCCR), Laurie Hauber (LCCR), and Zenobia Lai (AALAM) were on the steering committee that organized the legal workshops. AALAM members who helped plan the workshops included **Theodore Chuang, Sherry Yee Mulloy, Geoffrey Why, Tina Matsuoka, Lena Wong**, and student intern **Jen Lin**. **Brad Chin**, a student member of AALAM, was instrumental in organizing translators and publicity for the event. **Dan Flynn** and **Eric Slagle**, both law student interns at the LCCR's Equal Justice Project, and **Alice Leung** and **Karlo Ng**, both interns at GBLS, provided additional support. **Ming Han Chang, Li Feng, Kevin Tsai, and Bun Yu** volunteered as translators for the workshops.



Calendar of Events

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

September 24, 2003 15:15 pm – 7:30 pm	AALAM Kickoff Reception and Career Panel Goodwin Procter LLP, Exchange Place, 2 nd Floor, Boston, MA Contact: Stephen Chow at (617) 854-4000 or stephen_chow@pscoston.com .
October 16, 2003 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm	AALAM Board of Directors Meeting TBA Contact: Theodore Chuang at (617)748-3173 or president@aalam.org .
October 25, 2003	Silk Road Gala – 10th Anniversary Celebration Marriott Copley Place, Boston, MA Contact: (617) 338-2350; www.atask.org .
November 2003 Date TBA	AALAM/MAHA Judicial Nominating Commission Information Session Suffolk University Law School, Boston, MA Contact: Lisa Nam at enam@rackemann.com .
November 11-15, 2003	NAPABA National Convention Honolulu, Hawaii Contact: John Yang at (202) 719-7000 or jyang@wrf.com .



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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:

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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



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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

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for information.

Thank you!