

ASIAN PACIFIC INTEREST SECTION

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Greetings from APIS



2015 – 2016 Officers

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Lunar New Year Trivia

You are a Monkey if you were born in: 1920, 1932, 1944, 1956, 1968, 1980, 1992, 2004, 2016, or 2028.

Monkeys are witty, intelligent, and have a magnetic personality. Personality traits, like mischievousness, curiosity, and cleverness, make them very naughty.

Monkeys are fast learners and great at problem-solving.

Famous people born in the Year of the Monkey: Julius Caesar, Daniel Craig, Bette Davis, Jake Gyllenhaal, Eleanor Roosevelt, Betsy Ross, Diana Ross, Will Smith, Elizabeth Taylor, Harry S. Truman, and Leonardo da Vinci.

New Year's Message from the Chair

We are excited to represent you this year. Our membership boasts 320 members with the prospect of gaining more. Asian American attorneys are the fastest growing demographic according to the State Bar. To sustain healthy and robust growth, our goals are to encourage and lead with innovative, stimulating dialogue. We also are committed to work more closely with local Asian American Bar Associations. On this note, we will also share their news and upcoming events.

For those who celebrate Lunar New Year, we welcome in the Year of the Monkey with curiosity and some playfulness. We invite you to participate in greater conversations with us and the State Bar of Texas, and we look forward to hearing more from you. Happy New Year!

Catherine A. Le, Chair



Save the Date: April 8 - 9, 2016 21st Annual APIS Conference in Austin, Texas

Mark your calendars for this year's Conference. It will be held at the Westin Downtown in Austin, Texas. This year's theme is *Discover New Heights*.

Growth and Innovation.

We hear these words often. We are evolving in all aspects of our lives, and this year, APIS's programming will be reflective of this understanding. This year's Conference will include CLEs and also business development and business-centric topics to strengthen your leadership and work skills.

We will keep you posted with updates in our next newsletter and on our Facebook group page at facebook.com/groups/texasapis.

Nominations

Please also send in nominations for special attorneys and individuals who have excelled in their practice or in some way in the legal field. We will recognize the achievements of our members by awarding a Pro Bono Attorney of the Year Award, an Affiliate of the Year Award, a Champion of Diversity Award, an Outstanding Mentor Award, and a Best Under 40 Award. In addition, the annual Justice David Wellington Chew Award will be presented at the conference to an exceptional individual who has significantly contributed to the APA community in Texas. Please visit our [website](#) for the nomination forms that are due by Friday, March 4, 2016.

Local Bar Association Events & Member News



HOUSTON

AABA

Thursday, January 28 – Annual Members Meeting and Kickoff Dinner at Ouisie’s Table, 6:30 – 9pm

Saturday, February 13 – Lunar New Year Dim Sum at Fung’s Kitchen, 11am – 1pm –

Thursday, February 25, 6pm – 8pm – AABA Mentorship Kickoff Reception (location TBD)

Saturday, February 27, 9am – 12pm – AABA/HBA Law Day Poster Workshop at the Chinese Community Center

Houston AABA’s President is Chris Lee, Chris.Lee@superiorenergy.com For RSVP and information, visit www.aabahouston.com

SABA

Thursday, February 8 – February Happy Hour D & T Drive Inn, 6pm – 8 pm

Saturday, March 8 – Gala at Marque, 7:30pm – 10pm

May 12-15 – SABA North America Annual Convention at Hilton Americas-Houston

Houston SABA’s President is Tej Paranjpe, tparanjpe@pandmllp.com. For more information, visit www.houstonsaba.com

Texas APA Attorneys in El Paso, San Antonio and other great cities, please send us your news.

AUSTIN

Wednesday, February 10 – Annual Lunar New Year Dinner at New Fortune Chinese Seafood Restaurant, 6:30pm

Austin AABA’s President is Laurie Velasco, info@austinaaba.org. More info at www.austinaaba.org

DALLAS

Thursday, February 11 – Lunar New Year Dinner at Tokyo One, 6:30pm–8:30pm

Dallas AABA’s President is Monika Singh Sanford, monika.sanford@haynesboone.com More information at www.daaba.org

SABA of North America

FUELING OUR FUTURE

13th Annual Convention
May 12-15, 2016
Downtown Houston, Texas

Contact Houstonsaba@gmail.com



STATE BAR OF TEXAS ANNUAL MEETING FORT WORTH, JUNE 16-17, 2016

Getting to Know Our Partners

President, Dallas AABA



Monika Singh Sanford graduated from UT Austin with a BBA in finance and obtained her law degree from SMU Dedman School of Law in 2007. Monika practices banking and finance law with Haynes and Boone, LLP in Dallas. Monika has been married to Quinn for 8 years. They both enjoy travelling and any kind of vacation generally, trying out new recipes, checking out concerts and comedy shows, and all things DAABA-related.

President, Houston AABA



Chris Lee is Associate General Counsel at Superior Energy in Houston, where he practices general corporate and commercial law. He attended college and law school at The University of Texas at Austin, and started his legal career in Bracewell & Giuliani, LLP's Houston office. Chris has been involved in the Houston AABA since his first year of practice in 2007 and has held various committee and officer positions during that time.

COUNCIL MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Cindy Y. Lin represents clients in corporate matters, including negotiating purchase and sale of companies and drafting complex partnership agreements. Cindy graduated from The University of Texas School of Law, where she was a member of the Texas Journal of Women and the Law and President of the Asian Law Students Association.

Employer(s): Andrews Kurth LLP

Practice Areas: Mergers and Acquisitions, Private Equity, Venture Capital

Law School and Graduation Date: University of Texas School of Law, 2005

Hometown: My family moved around a lot when I was younger. If I had to pick two places, it would be Austin and South Padre Island.

Why did you become a lawyer? I was motivated by hardworking, good-willed immigrants who could have benefited from having an advocate. It is still my passion to find ways to help those who are at a disadvantage.

Favorite and least favorite parts of your job: My favorite part is working on deals. Every deal is unique and complex. I love the challenge of putting together the pieces, understanding my client's position versus the counterparty's position and negotiating on behalf of my client. My least favorite part is filling out timesheets!

Do you have any advice for new attorneys or those looking to move to a new area?: Don't get bogged down trying to figure out if you want to do something or not. Decide quickly what your goal is. That way you can spend your energy on achieving that goal. If it is not working out, create a new goal!

Interests/Hobbies: Snowboarding, Crafting, Knitting, Cooking, Tennis, Riding Motorcycles, Formula 1, and tons of other things. If only I had more time!

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Bill Richmond is a business litigation attorney at Platt Cheema Richmond PLLC in Dallas, where he represents companies and entrepreneurs in contract and tort disputes across the country. Previously, Bill was an attorney at Gruber Hurst Elrod Johansen Hail Shank LLP and Sedgwick LLP. Bill served as the 2015 President of the Dallas Asian American Bar Association and a past-Chair of the APIS.

Law School and Graduation Date: Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law, May 2009

Hometown: St. Louis, MO

Why did you become a lawyer? Mary Kay wouldn't take me.

Favorite and least favorite parts of your job: Favorite part is doing great things for clients. Least favorite part is dealing with lawyers.

Do you have any advice for new attorneys or those looking to move to a new area?: On any given evening, choose networking over Netflix.

Interests/Hobbies: Violinist in a folk band, reading, golf, travel, shooting sports.

APIS COUNCIL MEMBERS

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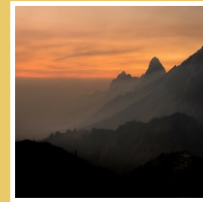
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We Want to Hear from You



Challenge

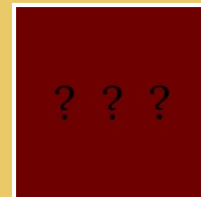
As an attorney, what is the biggest challenge that you face?

Email catherine@calfirm.com, and we will include your comments in our next Newsletter.



And the Survey Says...

Fill out this quick [survey](#) for a chance to be featured in the next newsletter.



Logo Re-design

We are revamping our logo. Please email catherine@calfirm.com to participate in branding discussions.

Call for Presenters/Hosts

If you are interested in presenting a CLE topic or to host meetings in your city, please contact Punam Kaji at punam.kaji@haynesboone.com.

APIS OFFICERS



(L to R: Catherine, Ann, Punam, Paul, Sadaf, Albert)

Chair - Catherine Le is a solo practitioner at the Law Firm of Catherine Le PLLC in Houston. Catherine devotes her practice to business law, real estate matters and commercial litigation. Catherine is also General Counsel of Greatland Investment, Inc. and SCL Realty Investment, Inc., handling all aspects of civil litigation in the field of commercial real estate. A community activist and an entrepreneur, Catherine serves as Past Chair and Board Member of the Asian American Chamber of Commerce and Board Member of Organization of Community Advocates (OCA).

Vice Chair – Punam Kaji is a graduate from the University of Texas at Austin and SMU Dedman School of Law. Punam practices Labor and Employment at Haynes and Boone, LLP. Punam has provided assistance to clients on various employment litigation disputes, including occupational safety and health issues, wage and hour claims, defending clients during EEOC and state investigations, handling settlement negotiations for discrimination claims and employment-related torts, assisting in litigation involving non-compete agreements and related claims. She is an active member of a number of bar organizations including the South Asian Bar Association of Houston and was honored as Member of the Year (2013) by the Dallas Asian American Bar Association. She volunteers with various domestic violence organizations and is on the Board of the Young Professionals for DAYA.

Secretary – Sadaf Usmani is Legal Counsel at Luminex Corporation in Austin. Sadaf is a Houston native and moved to Austin in 2012 to join Luminex. Sadaf graduated from University of Houston with a Bachelor of Science in Political Science and went on to graduate from South Texas College of Law in 2011. She is a member of Austin's Volunteer Legal Services Pro Bono Program and Austin Young Lawyers Association.

Chair Elect - Ann Chao Sheu is General Counsel of BT Furnishings, a furniture and home decor retailer, and she also maintains an employment and business litigation practice at Farrow-Gillespie & Heath LLP. Ann received her J.D. from SMU Dedman School of Law, where she was a Sarah T. Hughes Scholar, an editor of SMU International Law Review, and selected to Order of the Barristers (top 10% of law school advocates nationwide). She also holds both a Master of Arts in Dispute Resolution and a Bachelor of Business Administration from SMU. Ann is an active volunteer for Bar None, which has raised over \$1.7 million for diversity scholarships, and is a founding board member of the non-profit ATG Against the Grain Productions.

Treasurer – Paul Yin is an attorney at Thompson & Knight in Houston. Paul provides federal and state tax planning advice on the formation, operation and disposition of partnerships and limited liability companies. Paul is also experienced in mergers and acquisitions, private equity fund formations, Texas state and local tax incentives for wind-energy projects, and tax controversy matters. Paul is an active Board Member of the Organization for Community Advocates (OCA) and previously served on the Social and Mentorship committees of the Asian American Bar Association of Greater Houston.

Senior Advisor – Albert Lin is a Partner at Husch Blackwell, LLP and has represented hospital districts, large hospital systems, physician groups of all sizes and practice specialties, management companies, and nonprofit healthcare organizations in a variety of corporate merger and acquisition transactions. He has significant experience in the nonprofit, tax-exempt organizations area and has been a frequent writer on the topic for national publications, such as the Texas Tax Lawyer and Wolters Kluwer Exempt Organization Reports.

SBOT Member Benefits

Texas Lawyer's Creed Poster and Brochure — As a State Bar of Texas member, you can receive a **free** Texas Lawyer's Creed poster and brochure to display in your law office or chambers. The Texas Lawyer's Creed is designed to eliminate abusive tactics within the legal profession in Texas and to promote respect and confidence in the practice of law. Request your free poster and brochure by email professionalism@texasbar.com or call (512) 427-1726.

Blue Nile Special — Make the holidays special for that special someone with your State Bar of Texas Member Benefits Program. Shop from the comfort of your home and save 10 percent with Blue Nile, the leading online retailer of diamonds and fine jewelry. Find more information and other exclusive offers and limited-time deals through the Member Benefits Program by clicking [here](#).

Godiva Chocolatier Discounts — Through the State Bar of Texas Member Benefits Program, members can save money on decadent chocolates, exquisite truffles, buttery biscuits, gourmet gift baskets, and more. Visit the member benefits [Web page](#) and search in the flowers and gifts section for gourmet baskets.

Please send updates and news to sbotapis@gmail.com for inclusion in our newsletters.

Click [here](#) to receive our newsletters.

Asian Pacific Interest Section

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