



# ASIAN PACIFIC INTEREST SECTION

State Bar of Texas

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Dear APIS members,

As the calendar year comes to an end, it is a natural time to reflect on the things that APIS has accomplished in 2017. Here are just a few moments that come to mind:



- We continued a tradition of hosting a Texas Triangle happy hour at the National Asian Pacific Bar Association (NAPABA) Convention with other Texas Asian Bar Associations.
- We hosted our own successful annual conference in Austin, Texas, in conjunction with a NAPABA SW Regional Conference.
- Our members responded to the needs of the community at critical times, such as by serving as volunteer lawyers at the airport after the travel ban, or helping after Hurricane Harvey.

In 2018, APIS will continue to lead and serve the legal community and community at large. That is why our upcoming conference is themed “**Our Time is Now!**” Please join us for our **23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference on April 26-27, 2018 in Austin, Texas at the Hilton Downtown**. Visit and join our Facebook page where we regularly post information and updates: [APIS Facebook Page](#)

Please use these newsletters as an opportunity to learn about events, issues, and legal resources. Also, please contact me and share with me information, ideas, or questions at any time through my term, which ends in the Summer of 2018. My contact information is [punam.kaji@gmail.com](mailto:punam.kaji@gmail.com).

Sincerely,  
Punam Kaji  
APIS Chair

## 2017 - 2018 OFFICERS

Chair	Punam Kaji
Chair Elect	Chi Reece
Vice Chair	Paul Yin
Treasurer	Jim Thomas
Secretary	Teresa Messer

[www.TexasAPIS.org](http://www.TexasAPIS.org)  
[www.facebook.com/groups/TexasAPIS](https://www.facebook.com/groups/TexasAPIS)

## Table of Contents

<b>Message from the Chair</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Member Spotlight: Y.W. Peter Chen</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Member News &amp; Accomplishments</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Current and Incoming Leaders of Local Bar Associations</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Local Bar Association Events</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Hurricane Harvey Relief Efforts</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Recap of Texas Triangle Happy Hour at NAPABA Convention</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>2018 Annual APIS Conference</b>	<b>8</b>

---

**Member Spotlight**

---

**Y.W. Peter Chen**

**Title and Firm/Company:** Attorney - Chen Dotson PLLC , Dallas, Texas

**Practice Area(s):** Civil/Business Litigation, Full Service Legal for Small Businesses

**Hometown:** College Station, Texas

**Undergrad Education:** BA English, Business Administration: Texas A&M University

**Law School Education:** University of Texas School of Law (2008)

**Describe a Career Highlight:** Starting my own law firm and not having to declare bankruptcy.

**Involvement with Community Activities and Professional Organizations:** Board Member and Public Relations Committee Co-Chair for DAABA

**Favorite Movie:** Dogma

**Favorite Sports Team:** Any team that starts with "Dallas"

**Interests/ Hobbies:** Anything classified as a "Game of Chance"

**Favorite Restaurant:** Slim Chickens

---

**Member News & Accomplishments**

---



**James C. Ho**, partner of Gibson, Dunn, & Crutcher and former solicitor general of Texas, was sworn in on November 15, 2017, to serve on the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. He will serve as the first Asian American judge on the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals.



**Paul Yin**, previously with Thompson & Knight LLP, is now Assistant General Counsel at the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts in Austin.



**Punam Kaji**, previously with Haynes & Boone LLP, is now Assistant General Counsel of Ben E. Keith, a food service and beverage distributor in Fort Worth.



**Toni Nguyen**, previously with Luminex Corporation, is now Senior Vice President & General Counsel of Upland Software in Austin.

Current and Incoming Leaders of Local Bar Associations

**Austin Asian American Bar Association**

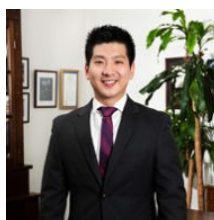


President  
Drew Harris  
Assistant Attorney General  
Texas Attorney General Office  
drewlharris@gmail.com



President-Elect  
Shirley Vu  
Owner  
Law Offices of Shirley Vu, PLLC  
scu@shirleyvulaw.com

**Houston Asian American Bar Association**



President  
Sang Shin  
Attorney  
Foster LLP  
sshin@FosterGlobal.com



President-Elect  
Jennifer Fung  
Attorney  
Associate Health Care Management,  
Inc.  
jfung@familycarecard.com

**Dallas Asian American Bar Association**



President  
Shruti Krishnan  
Associate Legal Counsel  
Tabletop Media, LLC d/b/a Ziosk  
shruti@ziosk.com



President-Elect  
Jason Shyung  
Senior Counsel  
Accudyne Industries  
JASON.SHYUNG@  
accudyneindustries.com

**South Asian Bar Association of Houston**



President  
Tej R. Paranjpe  
Managing Partner  
Paranjpe & Mahadass LLP  
tparanjpe@pandmllp.com



President-Elect  
Poorav Rohatgi  
Associate  
Haynes and Boone, LLP  
Poorav.rohatgi@haynesboone.com

**South Asian Bar Association Dallas**



President  
Shivan Mehta  
Corporate Counsel  
Oracle Corporation  
shivan.mehta@oracle.com



Vice President  
Jay Tatachar  
Counsel  
Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld  
LLP

To submit member news or accomplishments, please email [tmesser@teresamesser.com](mailto:tmesser@teresamesser.com)

---

**Local Bar Association Events**

---

**NATIONWIDE****NAPABA Convention 2018**

November 8-11, 2018

Sheraton Grand Chicago, IL

**STATEWIDE****Annual APIS Conference**

April 26-27, 2018

Hilton Downtown, Austin, TX

- Join APIS for Business Development, Networking, CLE, and Reception.
- For more information, see page 8 of this newsletter.

**State Bar of Texas Annual Meeting**

June 21-22, 2018

Marriot Marquis, Houston, TX

- Join APIS for a Section Meeting, CLE, and Reception.
- For more information, visit [here](#).

---

To submit local bar association events, please email [tmesser@teresamesser.com](mailto:tmesser@teresamesser.com)

---



## Harvey Relief Efforts



On October 11, 2017, Sandra Brown, of Lone Star Legal Aid's Disaster Relief Unit, led a disaster relief legal training at South Texas College of Law Houston that focused on Federal Emergency Management Agency applications and how to file an appeal for a FEMA denial. Local non-profits in Houston are anticipating that more FEMA denials will be coming in

so there will be a need for pro bono attorneys to assist in filing FEMA appeals. While there has been some legal trainings that have discussed how to file a FEMA claim, there had not been any that really focused on what happens when the claim is denied and how to appeal that claim as this training had offered.

The training was sponsored by the Asian American Bar Association of Houston, State Bar of Texas Asian Pacific Interest Section, Boat People SOS-Houston, Hispanic Bar Association of Houston, Houston ECI, Houston Lawyers Association, Lone Star Legal Aid, OCA Greater Houston, South Asian Bar Association of Houston, and South Texas College of Law Houston.

One of the goals of the collaboration between the diverse bar associations and the non-profit organizations is to ultimately reach communities that have been impacted by Harvey but where there may be language or cultural barriers to those individuals seeking legal assistance. Because the legal needs for Harvey survivors will vary and last



for several years, this will likely be one of many pro bono efforts that will be organized by the local community. For instance, there may be Harvey-related property disputes, on-going FEMA issues, or insurance claims that could last months or years.

The leaders of the various diversity organizations that co-sponsored this event shared a common goal to help the people of Houston rebuild what they have lost by providing some form of pro bono assistance. Access to affordable or pro bono legal assistance is already a challenge for many Texans. After a natural disaster, our obligation as attorneys to help and serve our community is amplified.

To submit announcements, please email [tmesser@teresamesser.com](mailto:tmesser@teresamesser.com)

---

## Recap of the Texas Triangle Happy Hour at the NAPABA Convention

---



APIS, the Austin Asian American Bar Association, the Asian American Bar Association of Houston, and the Dallas Asian American Bar Association successfully hosted a Texas Triangle Happy Hour in Washington D.C. at the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA) Convention. The Happy Hour gave attorneys across Texas an opportunity to reconnect and meet. This was the second time the organizations co-hosted this type of event at the NAPABA Convention. We hope to continue the tradition for years to come.

---

To submit announcements, please email [tmesser@teresamesser.com](mailto:tmesser@teresamesser.com)

---

## APIS 23rd Annual Conference

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**APIS 23rd Annual Conference**  
**Our Time Is Now**

Hilton Downtown (Austin, TX)  
April 26 - 27, 2018

Do not miss this opportunity to network with an incredible group of attorneys, including outside counsel, in-house counsel, government lawyers, and public interest lawyers.

The APIS community is robust and growing – come be a part of it. The conference includes a Thursday evening kick-off event, breakfast, CLEs, an awards luncheon, an evening reception, and countless opportunities for networking and growth.

Registration details are coming soon at [TexasApis.Org](http://TexasApis.Org).

A promotional graphic for the APIS 23rd Annual Conference. The background is a dark, moody photograph of a person in a blue suit holding a white object, possibly a pen or a small device. The text is overlaid in white and light blue. The main headline reads 'OUR TIME IS NOW' in large, bold, white letters. Below this, on the left, is the text 'ASIAN PACIFIC INTEREST SECTION' in a similar font. On the right, there is a box containing the event details: 'APIS 23RD ANNUAL CONFERENCE', 'APRIL 26-27, 2018', 'HILTON DOWNTOWN', 'AUSTIN, TEXAS', and 'WWW.TEXASAPIS.ORG'. At the bottom of the graphic, a thin line of text lists the conference activities: 'CLE | SPEAKERS | WORKSHOPS | NETWORKING | LUNCHEON | AWARDS RECEPTION | BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT'.

**What:** APIS 23rd Annual Conference

**Where:** Hilton Downtown, Austin, TX

**When:** Thursday and Friday, April 26-27, 2018

### Call for Speakers

Do you want to speak about your area of legal expertise or important legal matters regarding the APA community? APIS wants to hear from you! Fill out the [Call for Speakers Application](#).

### Call for Sponsors

APIS appreciates our sponsors. In exchange for sponsorship, APIS will highlight your firm or company in a number of ways during the conference and on our materials, and provide attendance passes. See the [Sponsorship Form](#) for more details. Individuals will also have the opportunity to sponsor as a "Friend of APIS." Your name will be highlighted in our newsletters, our website, and our [facebook](#) page. For questions, contact Jim Thomas, APIS Treasurer, at [Thomas@fyiplaw.com](mailto:Thomas@fyiplaw.com).

To submit announcements, please email [tmesser@teresamesser.com](mailto:tmesser@teresamesser.com)



---

APIS 23rd Annual Conference

---

THANK YOU TO OUR 23rd ANNUAL APIS CONFERENCE SPONSORS

**Silver Level Firm Sponsor**

Fletcher Yoder, PC

**Friends of APIS Sponsors**

Lisa Tsai

Daniel Hu

Teresa Messer

Albert Lin

Gina Shishima

Chi Reece

Patsy Yung Micale

Albert Tan

Jim Thomas

Charlene Tsang-Kao

Punam Kaji

Paul Yin

---

To submit announcements, please email [tmesser@teresamesser.com](mailto:tmesser@teresamesser.com)

---

---

## APIS 23rd Annual Conference

---

### SEEKING APIS AWARD NOMINATIONS

Do you know a fellow APIS member who deserves recognition? Nominate a deserving attorney who has excelled in the legal arena by **12:00 a.m. midnight CST January 19, 2018** in one of the following categories!

**Award nomination forms can be found [here](#).**

Awards will be presented at the Awards Ceremony Luncheon on April 27, 2018 at the Annual APIS Conference "Our Time is Now" to be held at the Hilton, Downtown Austin. We hope to see you there!

**Nominations are sought for the following awards:**

- **Justice Chew Award (Highest Honor Awarded)** – recognizes the achievement and leadership of a lawyer who has paved the way for the advancement of Asian Pacific attorneys by making lasting contributions to the APA legal profession and community.
- **Champion of Diversity Award** – recognizes an individual whose actions and activities facilitate diversity in the hiring, retention, and promotion of attorneys to leadership positions within their organizations.
- **Best Lawyer Under 40 Award** – recognizes those under the age of 40 who have achieved prominence and distinction in their fields, including in their legal practice, business, civic, charitable affairs, the judiciary, or politics.
- **APIS Pro Bono Award** – recognizes an attorney or a team of attorneys for outstanding achievement in pro bono service that involved impactful litigation or other legal assistance to advance or protect civil rights or provided direct legal services to individuals in furtherance of legal and social justice.
- **Outstanding Mentor Award** – awards a lawyer who has consistently demonstrated a commitment to mentoring young lawyers in his or her legal community by serving as a role model, fostering the development of young lawyers, and contributing to the profession and community.
- **Affiliate of the Year Award** - awards an APIS affiliate (a local Asian Bar Association) for its achievements and community involvement.

**Eligibility and Nomination Process:**

As of January 1, nominees must be licensed to practice law in Texas, have paid membership dues prescribed by the Supreme Court of Texas, and be members in good standing of the State Bar. An attorney cannot nominate him/herself. There is no limit to the number of attorneys one can nominate. **All information regarding both the nominee and the nominator must be completed and submitted to APIS Vice Chair Paul Yin at [paulyin88@gmail.com](mailto:paulyin88@gmail.com) by 12:00 a.m. midnight CST January 19, 2018.**

---

To submit announcements, please email [tmesser@teresamesser.com](mailto:tmesser@teresamesser.com)

---