



**ASIAN PACIFIC  
INTEREST SECTION**  
State Bar of Texas

**MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR**

Dear APIS Members:

I hope each of you are having a great start to 2019! With every new year, we not only reflect on our achievements from the prior year but look forward to what the new year has in store. Last year's highlights include:



In April, APIS held its 23rd Annual Conference and donated proceeds to Hurricane Harvey Clinics through the South Texas College of Law.

In June, APIS and the African American Lawyers Section presented a CLE panel on Hate Crimes at the State Bar of Texas Annual meeting, and co-sponsored a happy hour.

In November, APIS once again co-hosted a Texas Triangle happy hour at the annual National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA) convention, alongside our Austin, Dallas, and Houston affiliates.

We hope to continue these traditions and hope that you will be able to join us in 2019 at our APIS events. You will be hearing more about our 24th Annual Conference on April 25-26, 2019, at the Hyatt Regency Downtown in Austin, Texas!

Please contact me with any questions, events, or ideas at [creece@vk-c.com](mailto:creece@vk-c.com). I look forward to sharing our APIS accomplishments with all of you!

**Sincerely,  
Chi Reece  
APIS Chair**

**2018 - 2019 OFFICERS**

<b>Chair</b>	<b>Chi Reece</b>
<b>Chair Elect</b>	<b>Paul Yin</b>
<b>Vice Chair</b>	<b>Jim Thomas</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Hao Ni</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Amar Raval</b>

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

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**Member Spotlight**

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**Jo Ann Merica**

**Title and Firm/Company:** Partner-- Duggins Wren Mann & Romero

**Practice Areas:** Commercial, real estate, construction and family litigation

**Hometown:** Lakewood, Colorado

**Undergrad Education:** University of Texas at Austin

**Law School Education:** University of Texas at Austin

**Describe a Career Highlight:** President of the Austin Young Lawyers Association, Texas Young Lawyers Association and Austin Bar Association

**Involvement with Community Activities and Professional Organizations:** Deacon, First Austin; Volunteer, Mobile Loaves and Fishes; former Director, State Bar of Texas; former Trustee, Texas Bar Foundation

**Favorite Movie:** Casablanca

**Favorite Sports Team:** Kansas City Royals

**Jonathan Koh**

**Title and Firm/Company:** Managing Attorney, The Koh Law Firm, PLLC

**Practice Areas:** Civil Litigation

**Hometown:** West Monroe, LA

**Undergrad Education:** SMU

**Law School Education:** SMU

**Describe a Career Highlight:** Serving as Co-Chair of the DAABA Awards Night Gala in 2017 and 2018

**Involvement with Community Activities and Professional Organizations:** Dallas Asian American Bar Association, SMU Board of Advocates, Young Adult Leader at Arlington Chinese Church

**Favorite Movie:** Thank You For Smoking

**Favorite Sports Team:** New Orleans Saints

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## Member News & Accomplishments

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**AABA Dallas** held its 30th Anniversary Gala on October 26, 2018, featuring Lily Yan Hughes, Senior Vice President and Chief Legal Officer of Public Storage as the keynote speaker. AABA Dallas members **Hon. James Cho** and **Hon. Karen Gren Scholer** were honored for their elevation to the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit and United States District Court for the Northern District of Texas, respectively.

**SABA Dallas** held its 3rd Annual Gala on October 12, 2018. Due to the generous support of sponsors and members, they were able to donate \$18,000 to their charity of choice, Night of Superstars and Communities in Schools Dallas.

**SABA Dallas** members **Samir Kaushik** (Partner, Jones Day), **Dilen Kumar** (Partner, Kirkland Ellis), **Bina Palnitkar** (Shareholder, Greenberg Traurig), **Jay Tatachar** (Counsel, Ericsson), and **Artoush Varshosaz** (Partner, K&L Gates) were all named to D Magazine 2019's Best Lawyers Under 40.

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*To submit member news or accomplishments, please email [araval@bergplummer.com](mailto:araval@bergplummer.com).*

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## Current and Incoming Leaders of Local Bar Associations

### Austin Asian American Bar Association

President  
Shirley Vu  
Owner  
Law Offices of Shirley Vu, PLLC  
svu@shirleyvulaw.com

President-Elect  
Ranjeev Singh  
Singh Law PLLC  
ranjeev@singhlawtx.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  
General Counsel Development  
Southwest Airlines  
Jason.shyung@wnco.com

### South Asian Bar Association of Austin

Chair  
Jolsna Thomas  
Business Development Representative  
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers  
jolsna@gmail.com

Chair Elect  
Leena Chaphekar  
Employees Retirement System of Texas  
Leena.Chaphekar@gmail.com

### South Asian Bar Association Dallas

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

Vice President  
Jay Tatachar  
Counsel  
Ericsson, Inc.  
jay.tatachar@ericsson.com

### Houston Asian American Bar Association

President  
Jennifer Fung  
Associate General Counsel  
U.S. Physical Therapy  
jfung@usph.com

President-Elect  
Judith Kim  
Senior Counsel  
EDF Energy Services, LLC  
Judith.kim@edfenergyservices.com

### South Asian Bar Association of Houston

President  
Poorav Rohatgi  
Judicial Law Clerk  
U.S. District Court for Southern District of Texas  
Poorav.rohatgi@gmail.com

President-Elect  
George Samuel  
In House Counsel  
Houston Methodist Hospital  
george.samuel.esq@gmail.com

## Bar Association Events



### STATEWIDE

**Texas Minority Attorney Program (TMAP)** will hold its 17th annual CLE program on April 5, 2019 at South Texas College of Law in Houston.

### LOCAL

#### **Austin AABA Lunar New Year Banquet**

February 13, 2019  
China Spice Seafood Restaurant, 9710 N. Lamar Blvd  
\$20 for non-members

#### **Austin AABA Networking Lunch**

February 7, 2019  
Fly at Trace Austin

#### **Austin AABA Networking Mixer**

March 7, 2019  
Ciclo at Four Seasons Austin

#### **AABA Dallas Annual Lunar New Year Dinner**

January 30, 2019  
Check <https://www.daaba.org/activities/events> for more details.

### LOCAL (cont.)

#### **AABA Dallas General Membership Meeting**

February 13, 2019  
Check <https://www.daaba.org/activities/events> for more details.

#### **AABA Houston Breakfast**

Meet Helen Zia, an accomplished activist and author.  
February 21, 2019 at 8:00 a.m.  
Check [www.aabahouston.com/calendar-of-events](http://www.aabahouston.com/calendar-of-events) for more details.

#### **AABA Houston, SABA Houston**

Reception Celebrating Diversity and Newly-Elected Judges  
February 4, 2019 at 6 p.m.  
RSVP at [http://bit.ly/DiverseBarEvent-Feb4\\_2019](http://bit.ly/DiverseBarEvent-Feb4_2019)

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

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**APIS 24th Annual Conference**

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**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**APIS 24th Annual Conference**  
Hyatt Regency (Austin, TX)  
April 26, 2019

Make sure you attend this conference 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 – join us! 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).

**What:** APIS 24th Annual Conference

**Where:** Hyatt Regency, 208 Barton Springs Rd., Austin, TX 78704

**When:** Friday, April 26, 2019

**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! Contact Amar Raval at [araval@bergplummer.com](mailto:araval@bergplummer.com) and submit your suggested topic.

**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. 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 Hao Ni, APIS Treasurer, at [hni@nilawfirm.com](mailto:hni@nilawfirm.com).

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*To submit announcements, please email [araval@bergplummer.com](mailto:araval@bergplummer.com).*

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