



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

**MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR**

Dear APIS Members:



I hope you are as excited as I am about the upcoming 24<sup>th</sup> Annual APIS Conference which is less than a month away! The conference will take place again in Austin, this time at the recently renovated Hyatt Regency Downtown on April 26, 2019. We have a fantastic lineup of CLE programming featuring "APIS Talks", judicial luncheon keynotes by Judge James C. Ho (US 5<sup>th</sup> Circuit) and Judge Peter Sakai (Bexar County), and evening awards gala keynote with Albert Li (Ottobock North America).

Please join us to celebrate the accomplishments of this year's APIS award winners and immerse yourself with distinguished APA attorneys from all over Texas. This year's conference marks a very special time, as it coincides with NAPABA's annual conference returning later in the fall to Austin, Texas. This year's APIS Conference will boost the momentum and enthusiasm of the Texas APA legal community for hosting NAPABA.

I am looking forward to seeing all of you there!

Sincerely,  
**Chi Reece**  
APIS Chair

**2018 - 2019 OFFICERS**

Chair	Chi Reece
Chair Elect	Paul Yin
Vice Chair	Jim Thomas
Treasurer	Hao Ni
Secretary	Amar Raval

[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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**Mala Sharma**

**Title and Firm/Company:** Sharma & Associates

**Practice Areas:** Personal Injury, Family Law

**Hometown:** Houston, TX

**Undergrad Education:** University of Houston Honors College and Bauer College of Business

**Law School Education:** Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law

**Describe a Career Highlight:** 1. Appointed by Governor Abbott as Commissioner to Texas Commission on Fire Protection . 2. Selected as 2019 Texas Rising Stars by Super Lawyers.

**Involvement with Community Activities and Professional Organizations:** Leadership roles in the American Bar Association GP Solo Women Initiative Network and GP Solo YLD division, board member of the Houston Trial Lawyers Association, past President of the Houston Northwest Bar Association, past board member of the South Asian Bar Association of Houston, past chair of the Houston Young Lawyers Association Solo & Small Firm Committee, past member of the Houston Bar Association Bench Bar Conference Planning Committee. Selected as 10 Best Attorneys by the American Institute of Personal Injury Attorney for 2018-2019, Top 40 Under 40 by the National Trial Lawyers for 2018-2019, and Texas Top 10 Personal Injury Attorney by Attorney and Practice Magazine for 2019.

**Favorite Movie:** Armageddon

**Favorite Sports Team:** Houston Astros

**Interests/Hobbies:** Playing with Milo (my pet Cavadoodle), traveling, and figure skating

**Favorite Restaurant:** Uchi

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To submit announcements, 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  
Jason Shyung  
General Counsel Development  
Southwest Airlines  
Jason.shyung@wnco.com

President-Elect  
Andrew Spaniol  
Associate  
Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner  
Andrew.spaniol@bclplaw.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. The program includes 6.5 hours (0.75 Ethics) of MCLE Credit for only \$90 (early registration ends March 22nd, thereafter \$100), with breakfast and lunch included, and complimentary for qualifying judges or judge's staff attorney! Register at <http://www.texasbarcle.com>.

### LOCAL

#### **Austin AABA Volunteer Legal Services Clinic**

April 3, 6-8 p.m.

Members will take 2 hours out of their day to help the local community. Join AAABA in volunteering for a great cause!

VLS Clinic + free food/drinks afterwards at [Easy Tiger](#) at the Linc [Webb Middle School](#), 601 E St Johns Ave

### LOCAL (cont.)

#### **UT Asian Law Student Association Banquet**

The University of Texas Asian Law Student Association (ALSA) invites you to the ALSA annual banquet on April 25, 2019 at 7pm after the APIS Conference happy hour. Please attend to catch up with friends and meet some current students!

[Zax Restaurant & Bar](#), 312 Barton Springs Rd.

#### **AABA Houston Wills Clinic**

May 8, 2019, 11:45 a.m.-1 p.m.

Volunteer attorneys are needed to prepare and review estate planning documents with clients. Attorneys do not need prior wills and estate planning experience. Vietnamese translators and notaries will be available.

Check <https://aabahouston.com/events> for more details.

#### **SABA Houston Federal Practice Do's and Don'ts Discussion**

Featuring U.S. District Judges Alfred Bennett, Keith Ellison, and U.S. Magistrate Judge Dena Palermo

April 4, 2019 at 6 p.m.

RSVP to [houstonsaba@gmail.com](mailto:houstonsaba@gmail.com) by Tuesday, April 2.

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

2019 APIS Conference Schedule



24th Annual APIS Conference

April 25-26, 2019 - Hyatt Regency Downtown Austin, Texas

April 25th, 2019	
5:00 - 7:00 PM	<b>Welcome Social - Mandala Kitchen &amp; Bar, 1100 S. Lamar, Austin, TX</b> Kick-off the Annual APIS Conference with food and drinks.
April 26th, 2019	
8:00 - 9:00 AM	<b>Breakfast, Registration and Welcome - Room Texas 1</b>
9:00 - 10:00 AM	<p><b>Panel:</b> Data Privacy and Cybersecurity  <b>Speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kaylee A. Bankston, Holland &amp; Knight</li> <li>• Alamdar Hamdani, U.S. Attorney's Office</li> </ul> <p><b>Panel:</b> IP4All – Hot Topics and Trends in Intellectual Property for All Attorneys  <b>Speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chad Anson, Forcepoint L.L.C.</li> <li>• Lisa Thomas, Reed Smith</li> <li>• Kenneth Liu, Texas Instruments</li> </ul> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Brian Prewitt, Jackson Walker</p>
10:00 - 10:30 AM	<p><b>APIS Talk:</b> Interactive Ethics  <b>Speaker:</b> Drew Harris, Office of the Attorney General</p> <p><b>Panel:</b> Taking a Pro Bono Immigration Case (And Avoiding Compassion Fatigue)  <b>Speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teresa Messer, Law Office of Teresa Messer</li> <li>• Chris Meuse, KoonsFuller</li> <li>• Sang Shin, Foster LLP</li> <li>• Yen Tran, Yen H. Tran, P.C.</li> </ul> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Punam Kaji, Ben E. Keith Company</p>
10:30 - 11:00 AM	<p><b>APIS Talk:</b> Defeating Racial Bullying When a School Ignores Your Child's Constitutional and Statutory Protections  <b>Speaker:</b> Dan Neelson, Boston International Law Group</p> <p><b>Panel:</b> Legal Issues in State Government Practice  <b>Speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cory Liu, Office of the Texas Governor</li> <li>• Kyle Hawkins, Solicitor General of Texas</li> <li>• Zeena Angadicheril, University of Texas (Austin)</li> </ul> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Paul Yin, Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts</p>
11:00 - 11:30 AM	<p><b>APIS Talk:</b> Probate Not as Simple As You Think  <b>Speaker:</b> Joseph Jaroudi, Jaroudi Law P.C.</p>
11:30 - 12:00 PM	<p><b>APIS Talk:</b> How to Make Partner  <b>Speaker:</b> Erwin Nepomuceno, Manning &amp; Kass, Ellrod, Ramirez, Trester</p>
12:15 - 1:30 PM	<p><b>Keynote Luncheon "A View From the Bench"</b> featuring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Judge James Ho, Judge of the United States Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals</li> <li>• Judge Peter Sakai, Judge of 225th District Court, Bexar County</li> </ul> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Daniel Hu, U.S. Department of Justice</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Room Texas 1</p>
1:45 - 2:30 PM	<b>Networking Event: Speed Networking - Room Texas 1</b>
2:30 - 3:30 PM	<p><b>Panel:</b> Are You Watching Your Back? Common Scenarios and Recent Trends in Legal Malpractice Law  <b>Speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lisa Tsai, Reid Collins &amp; Tsai</li> <li>• Michael W. O'Donnell, Norton Rose Fulbright</li> </ul> <p><b>Panel: Powering Change:</b> Considering a Run for Office?  <b>Speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Judge Ravi Sandhill, Judge of 127th Civil District, Harris County</li> <li>• Ketan Kharod, Sunset Valley</li> <li>• Salman Bhojani, Eules City Council</li> </ul> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Jim Thomas, Fletcher Yoder</p>
3:30 - 4:30 PM	<p><b>Panel:</b> Moving the Goalposts: Recent Updates in Business Immigration  <b>Speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caroline Tang, Ogletree, Deakins, Nash, Smoak &amp; Stewart, P.C.</li> <li>• Corona Wang, Ogletree, Deakins, Nash, Smoak &amp; Stewart, P.C.</li> <li>• Sujata Ajmera, Clark Hill Strasburger</li> <li>• Ronald Rohde, Ronald Rohde Law</li> </ul> <p><b>Panel:</b> Regulatory Issues for Healthcare Employers to Consider  <b>Speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chris Kang, Haynes &amp; Boone</li> <li>• Phil Kim, Haynes &amp; Boone</li> <li>• Chandrika Narula, Texas General Hospital</li> </ul>
4:30 - 6:30 PM	<b>Break</b>
6:30 - 9:00 PM	<p><b>Awards Reception:</b> Drinks, Dinner and Award Ceremony  <b>Keynote Speaker:</b> Albert Li, General Counsel, Ottobock North America</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Foothills II, 17th Floor</p>



2019 APIS Award Winners

# 2019 APIS AWARD WINNERS

Affiliate  
of the Year  
SABA DFW

Champion of Diversity  
AUDREY CHANG

Outstanding  
Mentor  
JASON SHYUNG

Justice Chew  
Award

RUSSELL  
T. WONG

Pro  
Bono  
MICHAEL  
LEE

Best  
Under  
40

ALBERT LIOU  
SHRUTI KRISHNAN  
BILL RICHMOND



ASIAN PACIFIC INTEREST SECTION  
State Bar of Texas

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**APIS 24th Annual Conference**

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**REGISTER NOW!**  
**APIS 24th Annual Conference**  
Hyatt Regency (Austin, TX)  
April 25-26, 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. Register at <https://statebaroftexassections.redpodium.com/24th-annual-apis-conference>

**What:** APIS 24th Annual Conference

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

**When:** April 25-26, 2019

**Thursday: Welcome Social**

5:00-7:00 p.m.

Mandala Kitchen & Bar

1100 S. Lamar

Kick off the annual APIS Conference with food and drinks.

**Friday: APIS Conference Highlights**

12:15-1:30 p.m. Keynote Luncheon “A View From the Bench” featuring  
Judge James Ho, United States Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals  
Judge Peter Sakai, Judge of the 225th District Court, Bexar County

6:30-9:00 p.m. Awards Gala featuring  
Keynote Speaker Albert Li, General Counsel, Ottobock North America

Don't miss this incredible event. Register today!