

National Asian Pacific American Bar Association

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NAPABA ANNOUNCES 2009 TRAILBLAZER AWARD HONOREES

Washington, D.C. – The National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA), which is the national association of Asian Pacific American attorneys, judges, law professors and law students, announced the 2009 recipients of NAPABA’s highest honor, the NAPABA Trailblazer Award, at an awards ceremony on Friday, November 20, 2009, at its 21st Annual Convention in Boston, Massachusetts.

The Trailblazer Award recognizes the outstanding achievements, commitment, and leadership of NAPABA lawyers who have paved the way for the advancement of other Asian Pacific American attorneys. Each year, NAPABA honors a member from each of its nine membership regions who meets these criteria. Awardees are selected by the regional governors and the affiliates of each region and represent diverse paths and achievements. Each of the award recipients has demonstrated vision, courage, and tenacity in their careers, and has made substantial and lasting contributions to both the legal community and the broader Asian Pacific American community. For their extraordinary accomplishments and for serving as role models who inspire other Asian Pacific American lawyers, NAPABA congratulates these trailblazers:

- **The Honorable Susan Nolting Burke**

Judge Susan Nolting Burke is the first and only Japanese American to become a judge in the State of Minnesota. On November 8, 2004, she became the first Asian American initially elected to the bench in Minnesota’s history. Before her election to the bench, Judge Burke served as an Assistant United States Attorney for the District of Minnesota from 1994 to 2004 and was the first Asian American appointed to that position.

- **William M. Kaneko**

William M. Kaneko is currently on a leave of absence as President & CEO of the Hawaii Institute for Public Affairs (“HIPA”), Hawaii’s first nongovernmental and independent public policy institute, to serve as Campaign Manager for Congressman Neil Abercrombie’s Hawaii gubernatorial race in 2010. Mr. Kaneko is also an attorney with the Honolulu law firm Alston Hunt Floyd & Ing, where he specializes in government relations and administrative law.

- **The Honorable Lucy Haeran Koh**

Judge Lucy Haeran Koh was appointed to the Santa Clara County Superior Court bench in January 2008. Before her appointment, she a partner at McDermott Will and Emery from 2002 to 2008 and a Senior Associate at Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati from 2000 to 2002. Judge Koh has also served as an Assistant United States Attorney in Los Angeles. A jury instruction from one of her trials is a Ninth Circuit Model Criminal Jury Instruction.

- **The Honorable Kiyo A. Matsumoto**

Judge Kiyo A. Matsumoto is a United States District Judge for the Eastern District of New York. She was nominated by President George W. Bush on March 11, 2008, and was unanimously confirmed by the United States Senate on July 17, 2008. Judge Matsumoto began her judicial career with the Eastern District of New York in 2004 as a U.S. Magistrate Judge. Prior to her appointment as a federal magistrate judge, she served in the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of New York for over twenty years.

- **Jessie Morris, Jr.**

Jessie Morris, Jr., was instrumental in the founding of the Sacramento Association of Black Attorneys (now named Wiley W. Manuel Bar Association) and the Asian/Pacific Bar Association of Sacramento (ABAS). In 1992, he became the first legal counsel for ABAS. Mr. Morris has had over 200 jury trials, is certified by the California Board of Specialization in criminal law, has served on numerous boards and committees, taught at various colleges and universities, and is the recipient of pro bono awards from organizations including the California Bar Association.

- **Paul D. Nguyen**

Paul D. Nguyen has been a member of the New York Bar since 1979 and recently retired from the Law Department of The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey as Senior Attorney. During his tenure at the Port Authority, Mr. Nguyen was one of the lead negotiators for the agency's seaport and airport development transactions. Before joining the Port Authority, Mr. Nguyen was Counsel and Country Manager at White & Case and served in the City of New York Corporation Counsel's Office.

- **The Honorable Roxanne K. Song Ong**

Judge Roxanne K. Song Ong has served as a judge for the Phoenix Municipal Court since 1991 and was appointed as the Chief Presiding Judge of the Phoenix Municipal Court in 2005. Judge Ong served as a judge for the Scottsdale City Court from 1986 to 1991. Before her career on the bench, Judge Song Ong practiced in the areas of criminal prosecution, defense, and immigration law.

- **Peter Quon, Jr.**

Peter Quon is a supervising deputy attorney general in the California Attorney General's office in San Diego and has been with the office for twenty-nine years. He has spent most of his time in the criminal division (1980 to 1996 and 2000 to present). He is the lead attorney in 6 published cases in the California Supreme Court, 26 published state appellate court and 2 published federal appellate court decisions. He has tried over 40 jury trials including a multi-defendant first degree murder trial.

- **Wendy Shiba**

Wendy Shiba is Executive Vice President, General Counsel, and Secretary of KB Home, a NYSE-listed company headquartered in Los Angeles and the #1 homebuilder on FORTUNE® magazine's 2009 "World's Most Admired Companies" list. Previously, she was Senior Vice President, Chief Legal Officer, and Secretary of PolyOne Corporation from 2001 to 2007 and Vice President, Secretary, and Assistant General Counsel of Bowater Incorporated from 1993 to 2001, both NYSE-listed global manufacturing companies.

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The National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA) is the national association of Asian Pacific American attorneys, judges, law professors and law students. NAPABA represents the interests of over 40,000 attorneys and 61 local Asian Pacific American bar associations. Its members represent solo practitioners, large firm lawyers, corporate counsel, legal service and non-profit attorneys, and lawyers serving at all levels of government. NAPABA continues to be a leader in addressing civil rights issues confronting Asian Pacific American communities. Through its national network of committees and affiliates, NAPABA provides a strong voice for increased diversity of federal and state judiciaries, advocates for equal opportunity in the workplace, works to eliminate hate crimes and anti-immigrant sentiment, and promotes professional development of minorities in the legal profession.