



**39<sup>TH</sup>**  
**ANNUAL**  
**BANQUET**

**October 6, 2023**

Virtual & Sheraton Hotel  
Philadelphia, PA 19104

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We also congratulate **Sophia Lee** and all the other honorees

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# APABA-PA

Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Pennsylvania

Susan Lin  
President  
(215) 915-3147  
president@apaba-pa.org

October 6, 2023

Kathleen Chen  
President-Elect  
(215) 662-2190  
kcc@upenn.edu

Dear Colleagues:

On behalf of the Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Pennsylvania (APABA-PA), welcome to our 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Banquet!

Rose Marie Wong  
Vice President  
(570) 856-6679  
rmwong03@gmail.com

Tonight we come together to celebrate and affirm our mission statement: to support the advancement of Asian Pacific American attorneys and to promote justice, equity, and legal access, especially for all Asian Pacific American communities. We recognize the achievements and leadership of our members, especially our Key Note Speaker, Janet Lee, and our Attorney of the Year, Sophia Lee. We also applaud the historic appointment this year of the first person of Asian descent to the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, the Honorable Cindy K. Chung.

Angela Ruan  
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A significant portion of the proceeds from the Annual Banquet will benefit the William M. Marutani Fellowship, created to honor Judge Marutani's legacy as a civil rights advocate, jurist, and pioneer in the law. The Fellowship provides financial support to APA law students who take summer positions with non-profit or governmental organizations in Pennsylvania and the Greater Philadelphia region. We welcome and support all of our law student members and congratulate this year's recipients of the Marutani Fellowship: Neeraja Aravindan of Rutgers Law School and Guozhen Xiao of Penn State Dickinson Law School.

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Tonight's honorees, from Pittsburgh to Carlisle to Philadelphia to Camden, who have worked as general counsel for a NASDAQ-listed company, in non-profit administration, in prosecutor offices, in international law, and in direct legal services for the indigent, truly reflect the range of our membership.

We thank our generous sponsors for their contributions to this evening and we thank you, all of our honored guests, for your support and friendship. We are here this evening to connect with each other, to advance our joint interests in the professional development of our community, diversity in the legal profession, and improvement of access to justice and legal resources for the APA and other diverse communities.

Thank you for being here and enjoy!

Warmest regards,

Susan M. Lin  
President, APABA-PA



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Jones Day proudly supports the Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Pennsylvania's 39th Annual Banquet. We applaud APABA-PA's mission to support the advancement of Asian Pacific American attorneys and to promote justice, equity, and legal access, especially for all Asian Pacific American communities.

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**JAMES F. KENNEY**  
Mayor

October 6, 2023

Greetings!

It is my pleasure and a great privilege to welcome you to the 39th Annual Banquet of the Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Pennsylvania (APABA-PA).

The Annual Banquet represents one of our city's preeminent annual events in the legal community and is attended by 200 or more guests. APABA-PA, which began in Philadelphia, has devoted itself for over three decades to the interests of the Asian Pacific American community throughout the Delaware Valley and the Commonwealth in Pennsylvania. Your extraordinary service and unwavering advocacy have served the Asian Pacific American community with an emphasis on professional development for attorneys of color in our region.

Tonight's event is intended to support both APABA-PA and the organization's William M. Marutani Fellowship, established in 2003 to honor Judge Marutani's legacy as a civil rights advocate, jurist and pioneer in the law. Commendably, each year a first-year law student who exhibits the same commitment to social justice as Judge Marutani is selected to receive this financial award in support of summer employment with a public interest organization or government agency.

Please accept my best wishes for a memorable event, and for continued success inspiring future leaders to excel in the legal profession.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James F. Kenney".

James F. Kenney  
Mayor



The logo for Ballard Spahr LLP is displayed in white text on a yellow rectangular background. The text is arranged in three lines: "Ballard" on the top line, "Spahr" on the middle line, and "LLP" in a smaller font on the bottom line.

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# **Proud to Support APABA-PA's 39th Annual Banquet**

Thank you for supporting the advancement of Asian Pacific American attorneys and promoting justice, equity, and legal access—especially for Asian Pacific American communities.

**DIVERSITY  
EQUITY + INCLUSION**



## GOVERNOR JOSH SHAPIRO

October 6, 2023

Greetings:

It is my pleasure to join the Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Pennsylvania (APABA-PA) for its 39<sup>th</sup> annual banquet.

Since its inception, the APABA-PA has remained devoted to the advancement of Asian Americans in the legal profession. Throughout the Commonwealth, this organization has provided its members with the resources to succeed and develop their practice. The APABA-PA's unwavering advocacy and commitment has opened wide the doors of possibility and promise for individuals by establishing a much-needed network to address the Asian Pacific American community's needs. The members of this organization share a commitment to fostering dynamic relationships and building a stronger, more diverse Commonwealth. I applaud the APABA-PA and their diligent work and expertise that plays a paramount role in the success of our Commonwealth and will continue to do so for many years to come.

On behalf of all Pennsylvanians, I am honored to recognize APABA-PA on this occasion. Please accept my best wishes for a memorable evening and continued success.



GIVEN under my hand and the Seal of the Governor, at the City of Harrisburg, this tenth day of September two thousand twenty-three, the year of the Commonwealth the two hundred forty-eighth.

Governor Josh Shapiro



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# APABA-PA

Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Pennsylvania

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# APABA-PA

Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Pennsylvania

## Banquet Program

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### Opening Remarks

**Rose Marie Wong**, Vice President, APABA-PA

### Welcome from APABA-PA

**Susan Lin**, President, APABA-PA

### Presentation of the Judge Marutani Fellowship

**John Yi**, Co-Chair, Marutani Fellowship Committee

### Marutani Fellowship Recipients

**Neeraja Aravindan**, Rutgers Law School

**Guozhen Xiao**, Penn State Dickinson Law

### Presentation of the 2003 Attorney of the Year

**Hon. Stella Tsai**, Judge, Court of Common Pleas

### 2003 Attorney of the Year Recipient

**Sophia Lee**, Chief Administrative and Engagement Officer, Girl Scouts of Eastern Pennsylvania

### Keynote Speaker

**Janet Lee**, Senior Vice President, General Counsel & Secretary for ANSYS, Inc.

### Closing Remarks

**Rose Marie Wong**, Vice President, APABA-PA

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the Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Pennsylvania  
and its Annual Banquet.



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# Marutani Fellowship

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## About the Honorable William M. Marutani



The Hon. William M. Marutani was a second-generation Japanese American who served six months in an American internment camp following the Pearl Harbor attack in 1942.

As an attorney, Judge Marutani participated in the civil rights drives in the South and helped organize the 1963 March on Washington for the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL). In 1967, Judge Marutani appeared on argument before the United States Supreme Court in *Loving v. Virginia*, a seminal case which struck down anti-miscegenation laws in 17 states.

In 1975, Judge Marutani became the first Asian Pacific American judge in Pennsylvania and the first Asian Pacific American outside of the Pacific Coast to preside as a judge of a court of general jurisdiction. As a judge, he issued the decision requiring the all-boys Central High School to admit female students in 1983.

Up until his death in 2004, Judge Marutani served on numerous civic and charitable boards and commissions. Notably, in 1981 he was appointed by President Jimmy Carter to the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, which concluded that the internment of Japanese Americans was the unjust result of racism, wartime hysteria and a failure of political leadership.

## The Marutani Fellowship

The Judge William M. Marutani Fellowship was established by APABA-PA in conjunction with the Philadelphia Bar Foundation. The Fellowship award provides a stipend for an Asian Pacific American law student taking a summer internship position with a public interest law organization or a government agency (including the judiciary) in Pennsylvania, in the hopes of giving Asian Pacific American law students a greater opportunity to gain employment in areas in which Asian Pacific American attorneys are currently underrepresented.

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# Fellowship Recipients



## Guozhen Xiao

Guozhen Xiao is a third-year J.D. student at Penn State Dickinson Law School. Before coming to the United States, Guozhen taught herself law and passed the Chinese bar exam in 1998. For 10 years in Beijing, she served as a pro bono human rights lawyer, defending democracy activists and religious peoples in criminal cases, while working as the primary legal counsel for corporate clients, developing their internal systems of contract review, labor relations, and intellectual properties.

During her studies at Dickinson, Guozhen writes and translates American news and opinions, advocating for judicial justice and equal protection under the law. This summer, she served as a certified legal intern for the SeniorLAW Center (Philadelphia).

Guozhen is the single mother of two teenage daughters, who joined her from China, and who keep her on her toes. She says, "Life is generous to give me more than I dreamed."



## Neeraja Aravindan

Neeraja is a New Jersey native and 2019 graduate of the College of William & Mary, where she graduated cum laude. While at William & Mary, Neeraja served as a President's Aide, director of the Orientation Program, and as a member of the Undergraduate Honor Council. Neeraja went on to work as a Research Editor at TED Conferences LLC.

As a 1L, Neeraja worked as a part-time clerk with Calderone Bullock LLC, a patent firm in New Jersey. In Summer 2022, she was a 1L LCLD Scholar and Summer Associate at Faegre Drinker in Philadelphia. As a 2L, Neeraja externed for U.S. District Court Judge Renee Marie Bumb in Camden, New Jersey.

This past summer, Neeraja was a Marutani Fellow and Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network Martin Luther King, Jr. intern for Community Legal Services, Inc. in Philadelphia, litigating debt collection defense for low-income Philadelphians. Neeraja is passionate about public service and providing high quality legal representation.

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**KRMFL supports APABA-PA and congratulates the 2023  
Marutani Fellowship Recipients and  
the Attorney of the Year Awardee**

Best Regards From:  
David Rudovsky  
Paul Messing  
Jonathan H. Feinberg  
Susan M. Lin  
Jules Epstein  
Grace Harris

Kairys, Rudovsky, Messing,  
Feinberg & Lin LLP  
The Cast Iron Building  
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Philadelphia, PA 19106  
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**White and Williams LLP**  
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# Attorney of the Year

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## Sophia Lee



A Philadelphia lawyer, Sophia Lee currently serves as the Chief Administrative and Engagement Officer for Girl Scouts of Eastern Pennsylvania; she leads its Human Resources, Talent Management, Property Management, Legal and Risk Management, and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) efforts. Prior to this role, she served as Chief of Staff and Interim Senior Vice President for Engagement at Temple University. She also served as Special Advisor to the President at Temple University.

Sophia was a Litigation Partner and Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer at Blank Rome LLP. She helped lead the firm's service capabilities in DEI and environmental, social, and governance (ESG) concerns. Sophia also served as chief litigation counsel at Sunoco, Inc.; in the litigation department at Reed Smith LLP; and as a federal judicial law clerk to the late Honorable James McGirr Kelly, U.S. District Judge for the E.D. Pa.

Sophia is active in the civic and charitable communities, with significant experience on the boards of nonprofit and municipal organizations and in leadership roles for professional and bar associations. She is a past president and current board member of APABA-PA and a past Northeast Regional Governor for the NAPABA. She has also served on the cabinet of the PBA, including as its Diversity Chair, Secretary and Assistant Secretary.

Sophia is a thought leader and frequent speaker on matters involving DEI and ESG and serves as an adjunct professor at Temple's Beasley School of Law teaching courses on DEI in the legal profession. She has been recognized by, among others, The Philadelphia Inquirer, the Philadelphia Business Journal and The Legal Intelligencer for her achievements.



APALA-NJ is proud to support APABA-PA's 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Banquet.

Congratulations to all of the night's honorees, who have done so much to advance Asian American and Pacific Islander representation in the legal community. We wish you the best of success in the future.



We are proud to support the **Asian Pacific American Bar Association** of Pennsylvania and its mission to promote justice, equity, and legal access.

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# Keynote Speaker

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## Janet Lee

Senior Vice President, General Counsel & Secretary of ANSYS, Inc.



Janet Lee brings over 25 years of legal experience in international technology, software licensing transactions, corporate governance and risk management. She currently serves as Senior Vice President, General Counsel & Secretary for ANSYS, Inc., a NASDAQ 100 industry leader in engineering simulation software and services with headquarters in Canonsburg, Pennsylvania. From 2010 to 2017 she was Vice President, Legal & Intellectual Property for HERE Technologies. From 2007 to 2010 she was the Director of Nokia Research Center, Legal & Intellectual Property. She served as Assistant General Counsel for America Online, Inc., from 1999 to 2007. Janet was an attorney at Cooley Godward LLP from 1996 to 1999. From 1995 to 1996 she was General Counsel to the Renaissance Capital Group. She was an attorney in the Moscow office of Clifford Chance from 1993 to 1995, and for Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison from 1991 to 1993. Janet is a graduate of Stanford Law School, the Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, and the University of Michigan.

Janet currently serves as a member of the Board of Directors of L.B. Foster Company, a global technology solutions provider of engineered, manufactured products and services that builds and supports infrastructure. She is a proud member of the Board of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Red Cross.



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# Acknowledgements

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The Annual Banquet is a huge undertaking and tonight would not be possible without the time and commitment of our volunteers and vendors.

We would like to thank our volunteers and:

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The Banquet Committee

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**APABA-PA**

Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Pennsylvania

Congratulations to the 2023  
Marutani Fellows and  
Keynote Speaker Janet Lee!

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MARUTANI FELLOWS!!!!



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# **Faegre Drinker Supports APABA-PA and Celebrates the 2023 Marutani Fellows!**

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# APABA-PA

Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Pennsylvania

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