



VIETNAMESE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

VABANC LAW FOUNDATION

FALL 2015

UPCOMING EVENTS

2016 VABANC LAW
FOUNDATION FELLOWSHIP
ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

2016 Public Interest Fellowship
applications will be accepted
from 3Ls and recent law
graduates between November
16, 2015 to January 15, 2016.

For more information, visit
www.vlawfoundation.org or
contact us at
vlf.fellowship@gmail.com.

THANK YOU TO OUR 2015 SPONSORS



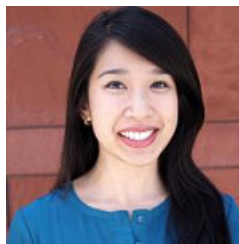
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And to our
generous supporters in the
VABANC Law Foundation
Trailblazer's Circle

MEET OUR 2015 VLF FELLOWS

2015 marked the first time that the VABANC Law Foundation awarded a total of \$100,000 to two fellowship recipients to serve both Southern and Northern California. Although all the candidates interviewed were remarkable, the selected fellows were exceptionally qualified and demonstrated deep commitment to public interest. These awards help VLF move closer towards our mission of building a vibrant network of culturally-competent, public interest attorneys. A sincere thank you from the VLF Board of Directors for your support in helping us meet these goals.



JACQUELINE DAN

Asian American Advancing Justice Orange County

Jacqueline Dan graduated from Rice University and UCLA School of Law. She serves as a staff attorney with Advancing Justice-OC, where she has been practicing immigration law for more than four years. Jacqueline has also served as a judicial extern with the Immigration Court of Los Angeles, interned at the National Immigration Law Center and the Esperanza Immigrant Rights Project with Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, Inc.

"Growing up in a community of Vietnamese refugees where many struggled to recover from trauma taught me that many immigrants from war-torn countries face significant challenges to thriving in the U.S. These issues are often poorly understood, not only by society as a whole, but especially within our own community," said Jacqueline.

Through the VLF Fellowship, Jacqueline intends on expanding her work with Southeast Asian immigrants challenging unlawful immigration detention or deportation. Specifically, she will focus on providing services to refugees and long-term residents who face immigration consequences through the criminal justice system - an area of law that has significant need yet lacks resources as it has largely been overlooked.



DAVID TA

Asian American Advancing Justice Asian Law Caucus

David Ta graduated from the University of California, Davis and the University of San Francisco School of Law. Prior to law school, David worked as a case manager in the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, in addition to assisting immigrant taxi drivers comply with San Francisco's regulatory scheme. He has served as a NAPABA summer law fellow at Advancing Justice-ALC to represent low-income monolingual immigrant workers at administrative hearings.

"I am honored for the opportunity to make a difference by providing legal access to underserved communities. Labor law is designed to protect those in poverty and I plan on bringing awareness to those issues through outreach, direct services and impact litigation," says David.

Through the VLF Fellowship, David plans to continue his commitment to improving access to justice for immigrant workers by focusing specifically on taxi drivers, shuttle drivers, and other non-union transportation drivers. David has observed firsthand the long hours, low pay, and hazardous health conditions in which many drivers work. He plans to provide direct legal services to drivers related to their workplace rights.



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VABANC LAW FOUNDATION

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VLF Coffee Celebration & Meet and Greet

On Friday, October 9 the VLF Fellows were recognized at the annual VABANC Scholarship Dinner at the Hiller Aviation Museum in San Mateo. The following morning, the VLF Fellows held a Celebration Launch & Coffee Meet and Greet with local Vietnamese American community leaders, including elected officials and their representatives, in San Jose. In addition, VABANC Community Service co-chair, Hai Dao, was on hand to share information about VABANC's free monthly legal clinics held at the Katharine and George Alexander Community Law Center. There was much enthusiasm for their work and the community leaders offered their support in the form of in-language outreach, meeting spaces, and more. The consensus between the attendees was that the Vietnamese American community still lacks vital access to legal representation and more must be done.

Top Left: Binh Ton, David Ta, Councilmember Tam Nguyen, Councilmember Manh Nguyen, Christine Pham, Alphonse Le-Duc from Senator Jim Beall, Jacqueline Dan, Andy Le. Top Right: Jacqueline Dan, Hai Dao, and Nam-Giao Do. Bottom Right: VLF Fellows with Councilmember Ash Kalra, Prof. Ruth Silver-Taube, Christine Pham.

Case Highlight

Despite strong resistance from Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Jacqueline successfully represented Touch Hak, who was granted a second stay of removal in September 2015 to continue his efforts to obtain a kidney transplant for his brother. The case was covered widely by the mainstream news in Southern California. Touch came to the U.S. as a refugee from Cambodia at the age of 8 where his family resettled in Stockton. In the fifth grade, he survived a shooting at Cleveland Elementary School where gunman killed five other Southeast Asian children. He received no crisis counseling and began abusing drugs. He received a deportation order after completing a sentence for possession of a controlled substance with intent to distribute.

He was released from custody last year on a one-year stay of removal to allow him to undergo medical testing to determine whether he could donate a kidney to his brother, Puthy, who is in end-stage renal failure. Immediately before his stay of removal was set to expire, the transplant center informed him that he was not a match, and while Touch could improve his brother's chances of receiving a life-saving donation by participating in a paired donation exchange program with other incompatible donor-recipient pairs, the transplant center declined to enroll him with such little time left on his stay of removal. Jacqueline reached out to other advocates and formed a coalition of local and national organizations to pressure ICE into exercising its discretion and grant a second stay of removal to give the brothers another chance. She continued to follow up with the transplant center, ICE, and elected officials to extend the stay of removal from the standard grant of one year to an unprecedented 3 years to ensure that Touch and Puthy can enroll in the paired donation program.



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PAST VLF FELLOWS

2011 Fellowship (\$25,000): Nikki Dinh with Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach (APILO) focused on legal services for the Asian American community, specifically the Vietnamese-American community in the East Bay.

2012 Fellowship (\$30,000): Gina Szeto with Asian Law Caucus (ALC) focused on legal services for immigrant workers, especially in the nail salon, caregiving, and restaurant industry.

2013 Fellowship (\$50,000): Betty Duong with the Legal Aid Society, Employment Law Center/Katharine and George Alexander Community Law Center focused on legal services relating to workers' rights.

ACCEPTING 2016 FELLOWSHIP APPLICATIONS

The VLF Fellowship Program builds on VABANC's goals of supporting a law graduate who will serve the greater community and whose work will achieve a richer and more inclusive vision of social justice in underserved communities. To that end, VLF provides a competitive award of \$50,000 to one recent law graduate or new attorney to provide direct legal services on timely and critical practice areas within reputable non-profit legal organization.

Fellowship Requirements

- Recent admission to a state bar association;
- Strong demonstrated interest and desire in working with the Vietnamese American community and/or social justice work with marginalized communities;
- Unique life experiences or other experiences in overcoming personal adversity/challenges;
- Overall academic excellence;
- Sponsoring non-profit organization with a demonstrated commitment towards providing legal services to the underserved and under-resourced communities.

Application Requirements

1. VLF Application Form (available online)
2. Resume
3. Law School Transcript (Official Transcript will be required if selected)
4. Two (2) Letters of Recommendation
5. Project Proposal (3 pages max, 12 point, Times New Roman, 1 inch margins) covering the following topics:
 1. The proposed public interest project describing which legal rights being enforced;
 2. The project's relevancy in advancing the legal and civil rights of the Vietnamese American community and/or other underserved and marginalized communities.
6. A commitment letter (1 page) from the potential sponsoring non-profit organization.

Instructions: Please send all materials in a single .pdf file to [vlf.fellowship\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:vlf.fellowship[at]gmail.com) by **JANUARY 15, 2016**. Interviews will be conducted shortly thereafter in the San Francisco Bay Area.

For more information, including how to apply for the fellowship or how to support the VABANC Law Foundation, visit us online at www.vlawfoundation.org