



VIETNAMESE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

VABANC LAW FOUNDATION

FALL 2017

2016 VLF Public Interest Fellowship

SAN FRANCISCO – Currently in its sixth year, the Vietnamese American Bar Association of Northern California (VABANC) Law Foundation (VLF) is proud to announce the 2016 Public Interest Fellowship award of \$50,000 to Ms. Jaimini Parekh with Communities for a Better Environment. "The VABANC Law Foundation recognizes that environmental justice issues must be included in the ongoing conversation about social justice for underserved communities. We are proud to be able to provide this timely award to Jaimini Parekh and Communities for a Better Environment with the hope that it will continue to increase access to legal services for all." -- Christine M. Pham, president of VLF.

Meet Our Fellow

JAIMINI PAREKH

Communities for a Better Environment

"Everybody has the basic human right to a healthy environment where they live, work, and play. I am honored to be working with Communities for a Better Environment to secure that right for Los Angelenos unjustly impacted by toxic contamination in their backyards due to oil drilling."



Jaimini Parekh graduated from UCLA School of Law with a specialization in public interest law and policy. Prior to law school she completed her Masters in Environmental Management at Yale University with a focus on international human rights and environmental degradation. During law school Jaimini externed on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit with the Honorable Judge Harry Pregerson. She also clerked with the U.S. Department of Justice and worked on enforcement of federal environmental laws. In her final year of law school, Jaimini clerked with Communities for a Better Environment and began working on the environmental justice issue of oil drilling in the communities of South Los Angeles and Wilmington.

Through the VLF Fellowship, Jaimini will expand on her work in environmental justice and human rights advocacy by pursuing a multi-faceted strategy of impact litigation, policy analysis and community organizing to protect the right of South Los Angeles and Wilmington communities to be free from toxic air emissions from oil drilling occurring in their backyards.

Founded in 1978, Communities for a Better Environment (CBE) is one of the preeminent environmental justice organizations in the nation. The mission of CBE is to build people's power in California's communities of color and low income communities to achieve environmental health and justice by preventing and reducing pollution and building green, healthy and sustainable communities and environments. For more information, please visit www.cbecal.org.

NOW ACCEPTING 2017 PUBLIC INTEREST FELLOWSHIP APPLICATIONS

VLF will be accepting 2017 Public Interest Fellowship applications from 3Ls and recent law graduates through December 23, 2016. Interviews will be held shortly thereafter in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Continue to Page 3 for more information.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



VABAnc

With special recognition to the
VABANC Law Foundation
Trailblazer's Circle.

The VABANC Law Foundation is a 501(c)3 organization (Tax ID# 27-3666589). Donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowable by law.

To donate today, please visit us online at www.vlawfoundation.org.



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VABANC LAW FOUNDATION

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Top Left: Honorees Art Nguyen and Jaimini Parekh with San Jose Councilmembers Ash Kalra (D2) and Manh Nguyen (D8); Top Right: Jacqueline Dan, AAAJ-OC with Hai Dao, Bay Area Legal Aid; Bottom Left: Public interest panelists Hai Dao, Tuyet Duong, Jacqueline Dan, and Christine Pham; Bottom Right: Andy Le, VLF Secretary; Santa Clara County Supervisor Cindy Chavez; Nguyen Luu, VABANC President; Kiet Do, KPIX CBS; Mai Luu, VLF Board of Directors; and Councilmember Ash Kalra.

2016 NCVAA CONFERENCE- INNOVATE

This October, VABANC hosted the 10th Anniversary of the National Conference of Vietnamese American Attorneys (NCVAA), which returned to the San Francisco Bay Area where the conference was first held 10 years ago in San Jose. On Friday, October 14th, several hundred attendees gathered at Dynasty Restaurant to celebrate VABANC's 18th Annual Scholarship Dinner. The evening's master of ceremony was Kiet Do (KPIX CBS), followed by notable speakers and presenters such as Justice Nathan Mihara (California Court of Appeals 6th District), Judge Erica Yew (Superior Court), and keynote speaker Professor Joseph Thai (University of Oklahoma, College of Law). The honorees included VABANC Scholarship Recipient Art Nguyen (Golden Gate University, School of Law); VLF Public Interest Fellow Jaimini Parekh (Communities for a Better Environment); and Trailblazer Ann A.P. Nguyen (Robinson & Wood).

On Saturday, October 15, 2016, NCVAA held its all-day conference and gala at San Jose City Hall. The VABANC Law Foundation organized an elimination of bias MCLE panel for attendees titled "Dismantling Biases: From Client Relationships, Telling Their Stories, to Creating Policy." Speakers on the panel included 2015 VLF fellow, Jacqueline Dan with Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Orange County; Hai Dao with Bay Area Legal Aid Society; Tuyet Duong with the Office for Victims of Crime within the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs; and moderated by Christine M. Pham, VLF. The gala capped off with keynote speaker Viet Thanh Nguyen, the 2016 Pulitzer Prize recipient for his novel "The Sympathizer" and Judge Jacqueline Duong receiving the Cornerstone Award.



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PAST FELLOWS

2011 (\$25,000):

Nikki Dinh; Asian Pacific
Islander Legal Outreach
(APILO)

2012 (\$30,000):

Gina Szeto; Asian
Americans Advancing
Justice - Asian Law Caucus
(ALC)

2013 (\$50,000):

Betty Duong; Legal Aid
Society, Employment Law
Center/Katharine and
George Alexander
Community Law Center

2015 (\$50,000): Jacqueline
Dan; Asian Americans
Advancing Justice - Orange
County

2015 (\$50,000):

David Ta; Asian Americans
Advancing Justice - Asian
Law Caucus (ALC)

2016 (\$50,000):

Jaimini Parekh;
Communities for a Better
Environment

ACCEPTING 2017 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 [info\[at\]vlawfoundation.org](mailto:info[at]vlawfoundation.org) by **JANUARY 8, 2017**. Interviews will be conducted shortly thereafter in the San Francisco Bay Area.

For more information, visit us online at www.vlawfoundation.org