

# AsianAttorneys@Weil

## Mission Statement

**AAW** promotes the recruitment, retention and professional development of Asian attorneys, including attorneys of East Asian, Pacific Island, Southeast Asian and South Asian descent. **AAW** fosters a better understanding at the Firm of Asian cultures and the unique issues confronting Asian attorneys. **AAW** promotes and encourages diversity in coordination with other affinity groups to support the overall interests of the Firm. **AAW** offers a forum for its members to network and develop mentoring relationships with other Asian attorneys across and within the Firm's offices, as well as Asian attorneys elsewhere. **AAW** encourages its members to participate in recruiting activities geared toward Asian law students, promotes client outreach programs, pro bono and other philanthropic activities, and provides a platform to raise issues to the management of the Firm. Members of **AAW** serve as leaders at the Firm and in the Asian and legal communities.

## Our People

- Of the Firm's Asian attorneys, there are 5 partners, 4 counsel, and 68 associates in the U.S. offices.
- In 2013, Weil was ranked fifteenth in "Best Law Firms for Diversity" and thirteenth in "Diversity for Minorities" by Vault. The Firm was also ranked fourteenth on the 2013 AmLaw Diversity Scorecard.
- Management Committee sponsors demonstrate the strength of our leadership commitment. These appointed senior leaders serve as a sponsor to an affinity group for which they are not already a member. They are charged with understanding key issues the group members face and advocating for necessary change. Marcia Goldstein is the Management Committee Sponsor for Asian Attorneys@Weil.



*Don Liu, General Counsel of Xerox, with Weil partners and associates after his Asian Pacific Heritage Month presentation.*

## Event Highlights

- In September 2014, the AsianAttorney's@Weil Conference will be held in New York City. The conference will include an alumni panel, client networking reception and leadership development workshops covering topics such as executive presence, selling & client relationships, and dispelling myths of Asian leadership.
- Weil annually celebrates Asian Pacific Heritage Month. In May 2013, AAW invited Don Liu, General Counsel of Xerox, to share highlights of his inspiring career journey, and promote what individuals and organizations can do to remove the barriers of advancement for Asian Americans and other minority groups, and build inclusion in the legal profession. The event was streamed live to all of the Firm's U.S. offices.
- Weil annually celebrates Lunar New Year. AAW invited clients to networking events and private exhibit viewing at the Japan Society in 2014 and the Museum of Chinese in America in 2013. Attendees included representatives of Barclays, Citigroup, JPMorgan Chase & Co., MetLife, NBC Universal, and Wells Fargo.
- Annually, AAW holds celebrations for Diwali and Eid. In 2013, Weil co-hosted a Diwali event with Barclays' Cultural Awareness Network. In November 2012, a dinner was held at Sapphire Indian Cuisine to celebrate both holidays and welcome new associates.
- Weil is the sole law firm participant in the Asian Enterprise Network (AENW), which is comprised of Asian affinity groups at 34 companies. Through our participation, our AAW members have participated in numerous networking and professional development opportunities. For example, Asian Attorneys@Weil held an Executive Insight series for up-and-coming Pan-Asian leaders on "Taking Risks" and "Your Personal Branding."
- In July 2014, AAW members welcomed the summer associates by hosting a dinner at Soju Haus.
- In September 2013, Weil hosted the annual Asian American Bar Association of New York and North American South Asian Bar Association conference.



Partners Jackie Marcus and Marcia Goldstein with associate Yvanna Custodio at the AAW Lunar New Year networking event.

## Sponsorships and Community

- In 2011, Weil launched a Diversity Fellowship Program to first-year law students offering \$10,000 in scholarship awards to recipients. The program was expanded in 2012 to include second-year law students.
- In 2014, the Firm sponsored the Asian American Bar Association of New York's annual banquet, the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund's Lunar New Year Gala, the North American South Asian Bar Association's annual convention, the International Association of Korean Lawyer's 22nd Annual Conference and the National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance's LGBT Asian American/South Asian Lawyers Reception.
- Weil has been a longtime supporter of PALS (Practicing Attorneys for Law Students), a nonprofit organization committed to enhancing the skills and careers of minority attorneys and law students. In 2013 and 2014, the Firm hosted a panel and reception for New York racial/ethnic minority law students on "Thriving as a Summer Associate of Color." The panel consists of partners of color representing Weil among other law firms. Weil has hosted a PALS "1L Exam Writing Workshop for Law Students of Color: How to Write an "A" Quality Exam" since 2012.
- In the summer of 2012, the Firm hosted its Diversity Recruiting Boot Camp for rising second year law students in New York. The workshop included a panel of Weil attorneys describing "a typical day in the life" of a junior associate. There were small breakout sessions where attorneys and staff shared the written and "unwritten" rules of on campus interviews and large firm practice areas. The Boot Camp helps to build the legal talent pipeline by introducing law students to global law firm practice.
- In New York's inaugural team charity challenge, Weil Pay It Forward, selected beneficiaries included Chinatown Youth Initiatives and the Community Fund for Manhattan. Teams hosted an ice cream social at the Museum of Chinese in America and a Charity Chowdown Challenge to garner donations for each charity. Funds raised for the Community Fund through Weil Pay It Forward and a Jeans Fridays fundraiser went toward the translation of an Immigrant Rights and Services manual into Chinese, Korean, Russian, and Spanish. One of the 2013 teams chose to benefit Roots of Health, a charity that focuses on improving the health of women and girls, and their communities, in Puerto Princesa, Palawan, in the Philippines. The team hosted a charity bartending competition between the senior restructuring leaders of various firms at Public House.

## Pro Bono

- For several years, Weil attorneys have been working on the Election Protection Program with the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund, and the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund as part of the nation's largest nonpartisan program working to break down barriers to the ballot box for traditionally disenfranchised voters. Our multi-office effort aids the overall program by meeting with election officials, staffing hotlines to address voting rights, and serving as mobile legal volunteers on Election Day. Where necessary, our lawyers also litigate for improvements to the election process. The program is available to all voters across the country, but finds its greatest relevance in communities where voter disenfranchisement is a continuing challenge including African Americans, Asian Pacific Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, senior citizens, young people, low-income voters, and individuals with disabilities.
- In a significant voting rights litigation, Weil's Miami office, along with attorneys from the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law and the American Civil Liberties Union, helped stop the Florida Secretary of State from improperly purging alleged non-citizens from the state's voting polls. Weil and the two civil liberties groups filed a lawsuit on behalf of Mi Familia Vota Education Fund (an organization that aims to increase the participation of immigrant voters) and two registered Florida voters in June 2012 claiming that the Secretary's new voter purge program violated Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act. In September 2012, less than two months before the general election, a Florida federal court ruled in favor of Weil's clients by denying the Secretary's motion to dismiss the plaintiffs' amended complaint, thereby securing a major victory for the voters of Florida.

As a result of the litigation, Florida's Secretary of State and Division of Elections changed their voter purge program to address the plaintiffs' concern that the purge procedures erroneously targeted a disproportionate share of racial and language minorities. The court's denial of the motion to dismiss, and subsequent motion to stay, also enabled the team to conduct discovery regarding these changes, which led the Secretary of State to extend his office's decision not to apply its prior voter purge procedures during the 2012 election process.

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