

PRESS RELEASE:

**VIETNAMESE AMERICAN LEGAL CONFERENCE IN WASHINGTON D.C.
APRIL 1-2, 2011**

Nhat Nguyen, a young Washington, D.C.-area attorney, and May Nguyen, a UCLA law student, spent much of the past year sorting out the complicated legal issues uniquely confronting Vietnamese Americans in the Gulf Region affected by the BP oil spill. They joined other attorneys and students from around the country to conduct community meetings, hold audiences with members of Congress, write white papers to President Obama, and scrutinize the claims procedure set up by “compensation czar” Kenneth Feinberg.

They will be in Washington in April, among the famed cherry blossoms, to discuss their experience at the National Conference of Vietnamese American Attorneys (NCVAA). This will be the first NCVAA to take place outside California. Previously organized by local bar associations in northern and southern California, the conference this year will advance the “national” part of its name with the help of the Vietnamese American Bar Association of the Greater Washington D.C. Area (VABA-DC).

“We are excited to host our friends and colleagues in the nation’s capital,” said Mai Pham Robertson, co-chair of the conference planning committee and president of VABA-DC. “We’ve put together an insightful program that addresses many of the issues directly affecting the Vietnamese American legal community.”

“Vietnamese Americans are a relatively new group in America with issues common to other Americans and other immigrants, but also challenges unique to us,” said San Jose, California, attorney Mai D. Phan, president of NCVAA and co-chair of the conference planning committee. She emphasized that the conference is open to all, and the legal issues relating to the Gulf oil spill should be of interest to many.

Community mobilizers recently scored a victory when Feinberg agreed to recognize “subsistence” claims by Vietnamese American fishers. For generations, such fishers caught seafood not just to sell but also to feed extended families and to satisfy community obligations, even though such use is difficult to document for compensation.

Phan believes NCVAA, which has evolved from an ad hoc event to a permanent national organization, can promote diversity in the profession. “Only recently has the language-intensive legal profession become an attractive career option, so everywhere, Vietnamese Americans are underrepresented in the law.”

NCVAA and VABA-DC will award three scholarships at the conference to law students who have demonstrated a commitment to the Vietnamese American community. The conference will also highlight the accomplishments of legal professionals in the community, with speakers such as Viet Dinh, Assistant Attorney General in the Bush

administration, and New York attorney Paul D. Nguyen, who began practicing in the United States in the 1970's.

Vietnamese American judges from various jurisdictions will discuss their experience to guide others to seek appointment. Other panels will cover intellectual property, immigration, federal agencies practice, the foreclosure crisis, and the variety of legal career paths.

The NCVAA conference will take place April 1 and 2, in Washington, D.C. Registration and other information is available at www.ncvaa.org.

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National Conference of Vietnamese American Attorneys 2011

RAISING THE BAR IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL

April 1-2, 2011 Washington, D.C.

WELCOME RECEPTION

Friday Evening, April 1

Arent Fox LLP

1050 Connecticut Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20036-5339

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS AND PANELS

Saturday Daytime, April 2

District of Columbia Bar Association

1101 K Street NW, Suite 200

Washington, DC 20005

CLOSING GALA and VABA-DC SCHOLARSHIPS PRESENTATION

Saturday Evening, April 2

Tony Cheng's Restaurant

619 H Street NW

Washington, DC 20007

Registration and other information available at www.ncvaa.org.