

# VABASC

Newsletter

LUẬT SU' ĐOÀN VIỆT MỸ NAM CALIFORNIA

www.VABASC.com

May 2008



Luan K. Phan  
President

## President's Message

It is an honor to serve as the President of the Vietnamese American Bar Association of Southern California. I join the VABASC Board with great enthusiasm and optimism about its future. Our members consist of attorneys in various areas of law and practice. As a group, we are members working toward one common goal: helping and serving the Vietnamese-American community.

As President, I hope to bridge the generation gap within the Vietnamese-American community. In addition, I plan to promote the interests of our members through exciting networking events and encouraging public service throughout the year.

I am also honored to work with such a diverse and scholarly board this upcoming year. Vice President Hoa Van Tran has held various jobs from picking strawberries to being a custodian. He served in the U.S. Army for 15 years. Realizing that education is the path to the American Dream, Mr. Tran returned from service to become an attorney representing consumers and small businesses.

Secretary Thu-Huong Duong is currently a law clerk to the Honorable Robert J. Kelleher, Senior U.S. District Judge for the Central District of California. In addition, Ms. Duong volunteers on a tax advisory committee for the State Board of Equalization Member of the third district, Michelle Park Steele, serving as liaison between the Vietnamese business community and Michelle Park Steel.

Board member Tita Nguyen is a Deputy Attorney General for the State of California, Department of Justice. Ms. Nguyen was also a founding organizing committee member of the National Conference for Vietnamese American Attorneys and co-chaired the second annual, which took place in October 2007.

Treasurer Yen "Jeannie" Nguyen practices a wide range of civil litigation before both federal and state courts. Ms. Nguyen has co-authored numerous appellate briefs to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Board member Cheri Pham completed her undergraduate studies at UCLA where she graduated Summa Cum Laude. Ms. Pham began her legal career at the Orange County Public Defender's Office, specializing in criminal defense. Currently, she is working for the District Attorney's Office and is assigned to the Felony Charging Unit prosecuting general felonies.

Board member Christopher Vinh Phan runs a successful law firm, Phan & Thieu, LLP, which specializes in business litigation, criminal defense, immigration and family law. In addition, Mr. Phan is currently in the Naval Reserve and is authorized to wear various medals, including (but not limited to) the Navy Commendation Metal and the National Defense Service Medal. Board member Dominique Thieu is a partner at Phan & Thieu, LLP. Prior to her legal career, Ms.

### In This Issue

President's Message.....	1-2
Officers & Board Members.....	2
Committees.....	2
Officer & Board Bios.....	3-7
Calendar of Events.....	7
Phan & Thieu, LLP Flier.....	8
Membership Form.....	9

Thieu was the General Manager for Profession Engineering, Inc. Ms. Thieu also enjoys working with children and is a very talented floral designer.

Board member K. Luan Tran holds three law degrees, one from Harvard Law School. Mr. Tran was selected as among the "Best Lawyers Under 40 in American" by NAPABA and "Top 20 Under 40" in California by the Daily Journal.

Last, but not least, board member Nhan Thien Vu has a wide range of experience in complex business litigation. Mr. Vu graduated near the top of his class from Yale Law School and he has spoken about and been widely published on topics of unfair business competition law, antitrust law, employment law and international business law.

In closing, I will strive to help and serve the Vietnamese-American community, and I hope that everyone will join me as we carry on the legacy initiated by this organization's founders.

#### OFFICERS:

##### President

Luan K. Phan 310-208-1182  
Richardson & Patel, LLP

##### Vice President

Hoa Tran 714-590-1700  
Do Phu & Anh Tuan, APLC

##### Secretary

Thu-Huong Duong 213-894-2009  
U.S. District Court, Los Angeles, CA

##### Treasurer

Yen Jeannie Nguyen 714-898-0708  
Charles H. Manh, PC

#### BOARD MEMBERS:

Luan K. Phan 310-208-1182  
Richardson & Patel, LLP

Hoa Tran 714-590-1700  
Do Phu & Anh Tuan, APLC

Thu-Huong Duong 213-894-2009  
U.S. District Court, Los Angeles, CA

Tita Nguyen 714-608-6457  
Deputy Attorney General for the State of California

Yen Jeannie Nguyen 714-898-9999  
Charles H. Manh, PC

Cheri Pham 714-834-7527  
Deputy District Atty, Orange County, CA

Christopher Phan 619-793-9461  
Phan & Thieu, LLP

Dominique Thieu 714-822-6093  
Phan & Thieu, LLP

K. Luan Tran 213-612-3737  
Lee & Tran APLC

Nhan Vu 213-955-9240  
Willenken, Wilson, Loh & Lieb, LLP

#### COMMITTEES:

##### Social Committee

###### Co-Chairs:

Phu Nguyen, 714-590-1700  
Phu & Anh Tuan, APLC

Hoa Tran 714-590-1700  
Do Phu & Anh Tuan, APLC

##### Professionals Networking Committee

###### Co-Chairs:

Chris Phan, 619-793-9461  
Phan & Thieu, LLP

Thu-Huong Duong 213-894-2009  
Career law clerk to the Honorable Robert J. Kelleher

##### Pro Bono Services Committee

###### Co-Chairs:

Lan Nguyen 714-891-1901  
Law offices of Lan Quoc

Luan Tran 213-612-3737  
Lee & Tran PLC

##### Legal Training Committee

###### Co-Chairs:

Cheri Pham, 714-834-7527  
District Attorney's Office

Jeannie Nguyen 714-898-9999  
Charles H. Manh, PC



**President  
Luan K. Phan**

Mr. Phan received his B.S. in Economics from Loyola Marymount University, where he graduated magna cum laude. Mr. Phan was Articles Editor of the Loyola Law Review, a member of the St. Thomas More Honor Society, a Sayre MacNeil scholar (1995) and a recipient of the law school's Presidential Scholarship. Mr. Phan served as a judicial extern to the Honorable William D. Keller, United States District Judge for the Central District of California, and to Los Angeles Superior Court Judges Frederick J. Lower, Jr. and Daniel A. Curry. Mr. Phan is a member of the American Bar Association and the Los Angeles County Bar Association. Mr. Phan began his career as an associate at Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP and is a former partner of O'Neill, Lysaght & Sun LLP and Paz & Phan LLP.

Mr. Phan dedicates a portion of his practice to Bet Tzedek Legal Services assisting with the voluntary provision of legal services to the poor. In 2004, Mr. Phan won a two week trial on behalf of five Chinese immigrant garment workers against their sweatshop employer and the manufacturer of the clothing lines who failed to pay the workers minimum wage. In addition to substantial economic damages, Mr. Phan obtained an award for attorneys' fees which he donated to Bet Tzedek Legal Services. The State Bar of California presented Mr. Phan with the Wiley W. Manual Award for Pro Bono Legal Services.

Mr. Phan serves as a volunteer trial instructor for the Southern California Chinese Lawyers Association and for the National Association of Vietnamese American Attorneys. Mr. Phan is committed helping other minorities develop their careers and actively serves as a mentor to Loyola Law students. Through SCCLA and the Asian Business League, Mr. Phan has helped to raise funds for scholarships and bone marrow transplants for disadvantaged minorities.

Beginning in 2008, Mr. Phan was elected to serve on the Board of Directors for the Western Center on Law & Poverty, California's oldest and largest legal services support center dedicated to advancing the rights of low income families.



**Vice President  
Hoa Van Tran**

In search of freedom, Hoa Van Tran escaped by boat in 1980 from the Communist Regime of Vietnam. Since arriving in Orange County in 1980, he has fought against adversity. He has held various jobs from picking strawberries to being a custodian while attending high school

To protect freedom and democracy, Hoa Van Tran joined the U.S. Army in 1984. His brother, Su Van Tran, also joined the U.S. Navy at the same time. Hoa Van Tran is a former Military Intelligence Officer with the U.S. Army. He served during the First Gulf War in Saudi Arabia in 1991 and in West Germany during the Cold War between 1984 and 1986. He served in the U.S. Army and U.S. Army Reserve for over 15 years and received numerous medals and awards. After coming back from the Gulf War, he worked full time for the Orange County Public Defender Office and attended law school at the same time.

Hoa Van Tran is a practicing attorney in Garden Grove, representing consumers and small businesses. He is also the Vice President of the Vietnamese American Democratic Club (VADC) and a Board Member of the Democratic Foundation of Orange County.

Hoa Van Tran has always been a 1st District resident, alternating between the cities of Santa Ana and Garden Grove. He has been married to Amy for twelve years, and together they have a two-year-old daughter. His wife works as an engineer in defense and aerospace for Boeing Company. They now live in Garden Grove, Orange County.



**Secretary  
Thu-Huong Duong**

Thu-Huong Duong is a career law clerk to the Honorable Robert J. Kelleher, Senior U.S. District Judge for the

Central District of California. Previously, she clerked for the Honorable Sheri A. Bluebond, U.S. Bankruptcy Judge for

the Central District of California. Thu-Huong attended Southwestern University School of Law where she also externed for the Honorable Barry Russell, U.S. Bankruptcy Judge for the Central District of California. She completed her undergraduate studies at the University of California, Irvine, with a major in English Literature.

Thu-Huong volunteers on a tax advisory committee for the State Board of Equalization Member of the third district, Michelle Park Steel, serving as liaison between the Vietnamese business community and Michelle Park Steel. The tax advisory committee identifies opportunities for changes in state law, provides a forum to share problems local businesses experience, and updates the business community on changes in state laws and regulations.

Thu-Huong also has served as a member of the organizing committee for the National Conference of Vietnamese American Attorneys (NCVAA) 2007, which took place in Anaheim, California and is also on the organizing committee for 2008.



**Board Member  
Tita Nguyen**

Tita Nguyen is a Deputy Attorney General for the State of California, Department of Justice. As a state prosecutor in the Appeals, Writs, and Trials section in Los Angeles, she represents the People of the State of California, handling post-conviction proceedings, including prosecuting felony criminal appeals in state court, responding to petitions for writs of habeas corpus in state and federal courts, and prosecuting death penalty appeals. She has litigated evidentiary hearings in federal district court and has also handled special trial matters in various local county state courts.

Prior to joining the Attorney General's office, Tita was an associate at Townsend and Townsend and Crew LLP in Palo Alto, California. There, she litigated patent and other intellectual property cases from 2000 to 2003.

She began her legal career in 2000 as a Deputy District Attorney for the County of Santa Clara, where she prosecuted jury and court trials. Tita has been involved in various local bar organizations in Northern and Southern California. She was a founding organizing committee member of the National Conference for Vietnamese American Attorneys (NCVAA) and co-chaired the second annual NCVAA which took place in October 2007.



**Board Member  
Yen Jeannie  
Nguyen**

Yen "Jeannie" Nguyen practices a wide range of civil litigation before both federal and state courts, such as bankruptcy and adversary proceedings, personal injuries, real estate transactions and litigation, business and general civil disputes, family and dependency laws, and all areas of immigration law, etc. Ms. Nguyen also prosecutes civil appeals, and has extensive appellate experience on immigration law, from obtaining writs of habeas corpus to appeals to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeal.

While attending law school, Ms. Nguyen worked full-time as a law clerk for an immigration law specialist where she gained valuable experience in employment-related matters, in addition to family-related immigration petitions. Ms. Nguyen also co-authored numerous appellate briefs to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. It was due to Ms. Nguyen's legal research skills that helped won her client's arguments against deportation in the District Court of California, Central District, in the case of Song vs. I.N.S. (C.D. Cal.2000) 82 F.Supp.2d 1121. Since becoming an attorney in 2001, Ms. Nguyen has actively performed pro bono services to the poor and indigent clients from various local bar associations in the areas of immigration, family law, domestic violence and landlord/tenant issues.

Prior to her legal profession, Ms. Nguyen's professional career includes various management positions in the mortgage banking and real estate industries for over ten years. Ms. Nguyen has held active memberships in various local business organizations, real estate professional organizations, businesswomen associations, Los Angeles County Bar Association, Arcadia schools PTAs, and the Vietnamese American Bar Association of Southern California (VABASC) where she was elected to the VABASC's Board of Directors since 2006.



**Board Member  
Cheri Pham**

Cheri Pham completed her undergraduate studies at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), where she graduated Summa Cum Laude in 1987 with a Bachelor of Arts in Economics/Business. She went on to study law at Boalt Hall School of Law at U.C. Berkeley where she received her Juris Doctor in 1990. After passing the bar that same year, Ms. Pham began her legal career at the Orange County Public Defender's Office, specializing in criminal defense from 1990 until March, 1997. In April, 1997, Ms. Pham switched "hats" and became a criminal prosecutor for the Orange County District Attorney's Office. Between 1997 and 2007, Ms. Pham was assigned to the Felony Panel, Gang/Target Unit, Felony Charging Unit, and Consumer and Environmental Protection Unit. After a very brief three-month stint in private practice between October and December 2007, she has returned to the District Attorney's Office and is currently assigned to the Felony Charging Unit at the Central Justice Center in Santa Ana, prosecuting general felonies



**Board Member  
Christopher  
Vinh Phan**

Mr. Christopher V. Phan runs a successful law firm, Phan & Thieu, LLP, with his partner, Ms. Dominique Thieu, in Fountain Valley, California. The firm specializes in business litigation, criminal defense, immigration, and family law.

He immigrated to the United States from Vietnam when he was nine years old. His family and he settled in Carmel, Indiana. After high school, Mr. Phan attended college at Indiana University. Mr. Phan graduated from Southern Illinois University School of Law in 1999 and joined the Navy Judge Advocate General's Corps.

After completing Officer Indoctrination School and Naval Justice School in Newport, Rhode Island, Mr. Phan reported to Naval Legal Service Office, Branch Office Earle, New

Jersey in April 2001 for his first tour of duty. At Earle, Mr. Phan served as defense counsel, legal assistance attorney, and Branch Head. He drafted over two thousand wills and powers of attorney for deploying troops after 9/11.

Mr. Phan reported to the Trial Service Office, Yokosuka, Japan in July 2003 and served as trial counsel. He prosecuted over 100 cases including rape, murder, and aggravated assault. He also served as detachment training officer for 15 personnel and provided command services to 14 different commands concerning military justice issues.

Mr. Phan served as Staff Judge Advocate for Commander, Naval Special Warfare Group One from May 2005-May 2007. During this time, he deployed to Iraq with a SEAL squadron for six months. His primary duties there included detainee operations and advising Commanders on the rules of engagement and the Geneva Convention regulations.

Mr. Phan then served as Staff Judge Advocate for Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton and then as trial counsel at the Region Legal Service Office Southwest in San Diego, California. He is licensed to practice law in Illinois and California.

He is currently in the Naval Reserve and is authorized to wear the Navy Commendation Medal (gold star in lieu of 2nd award), the Navy Achievement Medal (gold star in lieu of 3rd award), the National Defense Service Medal, the Iraqi Campaign Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Medal, the Sea Service Deployment Ribbon, the Overseas Service Ribbon, the Marksman Rifle Ribbon, and the Sharpshooter Pistol Ribbon. In his spare time, Mr. Phan enjoys working out, running marathons, and spending time with his friends and family.



**Board Member  
Dominique Thieu**

Ms. Dominique N. Thieu is a partner at Phan & Thieu, LLP. She graduated from the University of California, Los Angeles (B.S., 1997, Biochemistry) and Western State University - College of Law (J.D., 2003). While in law school, Ms. Thieu also attended the Santa Clara Law International Law Program (Summer 2002) associated with National University in Singapore with a legal internship in Ho Chi Minh City (Sai Gon), Viet Nam through Open University.

Prior to partnering up with Mr. Christopher V. Phan, Ms. Thieu was an associate with Liebhaber & Masserman, LLP, counsel for Mercury Insurance Company, managing catastrophic personal injury matters. She was also an associate with Lee & Tran, APLC, where she gained vast and valuable experience in litigation and trial, handling trademark, breach of partnership, breach of contract, fraud, quiet title and business contingency litigation matters.

Prior to starting on her path in the legal field, Ms. Thieu was the General Manager for Professional Engineering, Inc. She managed construction projects ranging from room additions to new construction to reverse engineering for remedying code violations and sunken foundations without destruction of the existing buildings. Ms. Thieu also enjoys working with children and worked with several tutoring associations including tutoring algebra, trigonometry, calculus and SAT Math I & IIC with Ivy West (an affiliate with Sylvan Learning Center). Ms. Thieu was also a floral designer with Twigs Flower Shoppe and White Lilac, Inc., with clientele including The Mighty Ducks, ESPN, Pepsi and the YUM Corp., St. John Knits and Cartier. Her claim to fame is that her floral wedding work graced the pages of Town and County Magazine.

Currently, Ms. Thieu practices in Fountain Valley, focusing on business litigation, commercial litigation, business and consumer law, trademark, immigration, corporate law and international business law. Amongst the various organizations she is involved with, Ms. Thieu is a committee member for the National Conference of Vietnamese American Attorneys. In her spare time, Ms. Thieu enjoys traveling, snorkeling, photography, crocheting, watching anime, reading manga, playing Sudoku and doing crossword puzzles.



**Board Member  
K. Luan Tran**

K. Luan Tran is a founding partner of Lee Tran & Liang, a business litigation boutique with offices in Los Angeles and Orange County (and an affiliated office in Beijing). He was previously with Quinn Emanuel. Luan holds three law degrees, including one from Harvard Law School. He was selected as among the “Best Lawyers Under 40 in America” by NAPABA, “Top 20 Under 40” in California by the Daily

Journal, and “Super Lawyers’ Rising Stars” by the Los Angeles Magazine. Luan also sits on the Board of several NGOs, including the Center for Asian Americans United for Self Empowerment, VietAct, and the Institute of Vietnamese Studies.



**Board Member  
Nhan Thien Vu**

Nhan T. Vu is a partner with Willenken, Wilson, Loh & Lieb, LLP, a Los Angeles litigation boutique, and is currently taking a leave of absence to act as the general counsel of Robinson Pharma, Inc., a manufacturer of vitamin supplements with annual revenues of approximately \$80 million. Nhan received his bachelor’s degree from Harvard University, graduated near the top of the class from Yale Law School and served as a law clerk to the Honorable Alex Kozinski of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. He then began his career with Latham & Watkins and later with Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher. He was also a certified foreign attorney in Vietnam and a professor at Chapman University School of Law.

Nhan has spoken about and been widely published on topics of unfair business competition law, antitrust law, employment law and international business law. He has also served on the Advisory Committee to Governor-Elect Arnold Schwarzenegger on Legal Reform and worked to gain passage of Proposition 64, which amended California’s Unfair Business Competition Law to make it more difficult to bring frivolous lawsuits. Nhan is active in the legal community and has served on the boards of the Orange County Asian-American Bar Association, the Vietnamese-American Student Bar Association, and the Public Law Center. Nhan currently serves as a temporary judge for the Orange County Superior Court.

#### Calendar of Events

- |               |                                     |
|---------------|-------------------------------------|
| May 24, 2008  | Grand Opening of Phan and Thieu LLP |
| July 25, 2008 | VABASC Installation Banquet         |

MR. CHRISTOPHER V. PHAN  
L/S PHAN VINH CHINH

&

Ms. DOMINIQUE N. THIEU  
L/S THIỀU BỬU QUANG-NGHI

REQUEST THE PLEASURE OF YOUR COMPANY AT

THE *GRAND OPENING GALA* OF

THE LAW FIRM

**PHAN & THIEU** LLP

ATTORNEYS & COUNSELORS AT LAW

SATURDAY, TWENTY-FOURTH OF MAY  
TWO THOUSAND EIGHT  
AT ELEVEN O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING

AT

METRO CENTRE  
11770 WARNER AVENUE, SUITE 103  
FOUNTAIN VALLEY, CALIFORNIA 92708

PLEASE RSVP BY MAY 16, 2008  
WEBSITE: [WWW.PTATTORNEYS.COM](http://WWW.PTATTORNEYS.COM)

CHRIS @  
**619.793.9461**  
CVP@PTATTORNEYS.COM

DOMINIQUE @  
**714.822.6093**  
DNT@PTATTORNEYS.COM

*WE LOOK FORWARD TO SHARING OUR SPECIAL DAY WITH YOU.*