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(Pwd: **GA-AL-M3MB3R5!**)

May 18, 2018 Chapter Newsletter

Chapter Events

Chapter Elections Open

It's time to vote for your GA-AL AILA Executive Committee for the 2018-2019 year! Electronic voting is now open and will close on June 1st at NOON. Any member in good standing may cast a secret ballot for any opposed nominee. In person voting will take place at our Annual GA-AL Chapter Luncheon on Friday, June 1, 2018, at Maggiano's PERIMETER. If you haven't done so already, you should probably sign up to be there!

Here's the link to cast your vote: <https://ailagaal.wufoo.com/forms/z1h6m8qh139bne4/>

We have a contested election for Treasurer. As of 3pm on Friday, the 18th, one of those candidates has passed along a short statement. As others come in, we'll be sharing them here in our newsletter.

Dear Chapter Members:

Thank you for taking the time to read this message. I'll keep this brief.

I wish to continue my involvement with the Chapter next term as Chapter Treasurer. I believe that I have learned a lot about advocacy for our Chapter members in my role this past term as Chair of the USCIS Liaison Committee and previous experience on both the USCIS and CBP Liaison Committees and wish to "capitalize" (pun intended) on this knowledge as Chapter Treasurer. Especially in light of the potential movement to raise Chapter dues, I believe that my experience with both the USCIS and CBP Liaison Committees make me an ideal candidate to knowledgeably and properly maintain the Chapter's finances.

Thank you again for your time.

Sincerely,

Sam

#VoteForSam #AnUncleSamWhoCaresAboutImmigration

Chapter Dues Survey Update

Thank you to the over 40 people who have responded to our survey regarding Chapter Dues. The feedback has been helpful and informative. Although **we are not going to take a vote on June 1st for raising chapter dues**, we encourage members to complete the [survey](#) and share their insights with us.

As an Executive Committee, we realize that we need to provide you with a full overview of our financials before we contemplate raising dues. At the June 1st Annual Meeting, we will provide a financial statement that shows our expenses (including donations and travel reimbursements) and income. The Executive Committee is committed to figuring out ways to reach out more to our Alabama members, providing better events to increase attendance (all events have been down 20-50% this year, including our chapter conference), and how to make more resources more available to all members with the use of technology.

This is a start to a good and necessary conversation. Again, we welcome your comments through the [survey](#).

Registration for Annual Chapter Meeting June 1, 2018

Our Annual Meeting is just **two** weeks away! Join us for our annual meeting on June 1, 2018! We'll have election results, awards, reports for the year from the Chapter Chair and Treasurer, speakers and our essay winner will present his/her winning work!

When: Friday, June 1, 2018

Where: Maggiano's Perimeter - 4400 Ashford Dunwoody Rd, Dunwoody, GA 30346

Time: 11:30-12:00 Networking; 12:15 Presentation Begins

Cost: \$30.00

Registration: [Through the chapter website.](#)

RSVP for Chapter Meeting at AILA AC18 June 14, 2018

Will you leave your heart in San Francisco? I hope not...but you won't leave hungry if you come to our Chapter meeting at the Annual Conference! This lunch is free to chapter members, but we need an accurate headcount. **Please RSVP by June 1st.**

Thursday, June 14th

12 pm-1 pm

Hotel: Hilton San Francisco Union Square

Meeting Room: Union Square 22, Tower 3, 4th floor

Registration: [Online](#)

Volunteer for Unaccompanied Children in the Atlanta Immigration Court

From our Pro Bono Committee -

Our chapter's Attorney of the Day Program is always looking for new volunteers. We have received the new juvenile docket dates through the end of July. If you would like to volunteer by providing informational consults to UAC's who are appearing before Judge Houser for the first time, you may sign up at:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/508084eabaf22a2f85-aila>

If you have not volunteered before, we have training videos available and a sign up sheet (full disclosure: you must be either fluent in Spanish or have an interpreter available when you volunteer, and you must also have your own malpractice insurance).

Please email Killa Marti at killai.marti@gmail.com if you have any questions!

Local News and Events

Citizenship Drive TOMORROW Volunteers Still Needed

Our friends with Asian Americans Advancing Justice Atlanta, the Vietnamese-American Community of Georgia, the South Asian Bar Association - Georgia, and the New Americans Campaign are hosting a citizenship drive tomorrow, May 19th. Volunteers are still needed. Please see the attached flyer for more information the drive and how to volunteer.

South Asian Bar Association 4th Annual Charity Dinner - Featuring Susan Coppedge - May 23, 2018

Seats are still available for this wonderful dinner that will benefit the Georgia Asylum and Immigration Network (GAIN). The keynote speaker, Susan Coppedge, is the former Ambassador at Large to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons at the State Department. Susan has returned to Georgia where she spent much of her career prosecuting federal crimes at the US Attorney's office in Atlanta.

Susan has been a warrior in the fight against human trafficking in Georgia and around the world.

Here is the Link to purchase tickets:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/saba-ga-4th-annual-charity-dinner-tickets-45209356402>

New American Dreams Series at Horizon Theater

The Horizon Theater is pleased to share the first of three American Dreams plays. Citizen's Market "follows a hopeful group of immigrants as they form an unlikely family, working to master the ups and downs of language, love, and staying afloat in the city." The show runs from May 18th through June 24th.

Tickets and information are available [online](#). Use the code "Neighbors" for free tickets through the weekend!

Access to Law Hosting Citizenship Drive June 14, 2018

Access To Law is offering a FREE Citizenship Clinic on National Flag Day 6/14/18 9am -8pm.

*There will be a nominal fee of just \$25 to cover LLX admin costs, photos and mailing expense.

Experienced and licensed attorneys will be on site for consultation with LPR's

Please see attached flyer or contact Rebecca Salmon for more information.

Wine and Tapas Festival at Clarkston Community Center July 21, 2018

Save the Date! The Wine and Tapas Festival will be held on July 21, 2018 from 7pm - 9pm at the Clarkston Community Center.

For tickets [Click here](#).

For more information about the event, please [Click here](#)

Ethan Pham Running for U.S. Congress, District 7

From the Ethan Pham for Congress campaign...

Ethan Pham was born in South Vietnam. His father fought for the South Vietnamese military against communism, standing alongside American forces. After the communists took over, Ethan's father was imprisoned in a "re-education camp" for several years, where he was worked and tortured. On his release, the family applied to come to the United States.

Ethan arrived with his family when he was 11 and worked his way through college and John Marshall Law School to become a city attorney advising local governments. While doing so he met an equally talented lawyer named Jenny, and the pair married last year. Together they own a law practice on Jimmy Carter Boulevard that now employs a talented and diverse staff of six.

Now that Ethan has achieved his own version of the American Dream, he's returning the favor. In 2017 he teamed up with Gwinnett County Solicitor Rosanna Szabo and other community leaders to form a task force combating scammers who take advantage of new immigrants. Ethan and Jenny also co-founded a non-profit organization, the Vietnamese American Bar Association of Georgia, that helps educate Vietnamese immigrants on American law.

We need more people like Ethan Pham running for office, to change the tone of our fractured political climate and focus on the values we all share: healthcare as a right for every American, fair and compassionate immigration policies, and leadership in our nation's capital.

Despite being out spent 2-1 Ethan is tied for first place in a recent poll in District 7. Donating now could help him reach out to undecided voters and secure a victory for them on May 22nd. You can [contribute online here](#).

For more information on his campaign and platform, you can go to <http://ethanphamforcongress.com/> or watch Ethan's campaign video [here](#).

National News

The End of Administrative Closure

On May 17, 2018 the Attorney General issued a ruling in *Matter of Castro-Tum*, 27 I&N Dec. 271 (A.G. 2018). <https://www.justice.gov/eoir/page/file/1064086/download> AILA's press release says it best:

Today, in a precedent decision, the Attorney General of the United States announced that immigration judges and members of the Board of Immigration Appeals no longer have the authority to "administratively close" court cases before them, with the exception of cases that meet very narrow criteria. With this move, the Attorney General has eliminated a critical docket management tool, effectively ensuring that the immigration court system will remain encumbered with massive case backlogs well into the future.

AILA President Annaluisa Padilla responded, "In today's decision the Attorney General grossly misinterprets the law and disregards existing federal regulation and decades of immigration court practice. The Attorney General cherry-picked a case that is not reflective of the universe of cases that have been administratively closed and with the stroke of a pen, dismissed the inherent authority of judges to manage immigration court proceedings, an authority that has been recognized for more than 30 years and that the [National Association of Immigration Judges](#) strongly supports as a matter of court efficiency. Unfortunately, today's decision represents the first in a series of efforts by the Attorney General to single-handedly rewrite immigration law."

AILA Executive Director Benjamin Johnson stated, "This decision is yet another effort by this administration to undermine due process in immigration proceedings. Due process demands that we maintain an immigration court system with independent judges who have the authority and flexibility to make decisions that are not only legally correct but are also grounded in fundamental fairness. Immigration judges use administrative closure for many legitimate reasons, including court efficiency. But it is also often employed when an immigrant is eligible for some type of legal status that can be pursued outside of court with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). Forcing these cases through the court system while another agency is determining the person's eligibility for an immigration benefit wastes finite court resources that can and should be used on more pressing cases. Today's decision erodes judicial independence and strips due process from immigrants, turning the court into a machine for deportations rather than an arbiter of justice."

AILA News and Events

AC 2018 Updates

Xavier Becerra, the Attorney General of the State of California was just announced as the keynote speaker.

Don't forget about the special events that happen at the Annual Conference like the "Taste of San Francisco" networking dinners, the "After Hours at the Hawthorn" fundraiser for the AIC, AILA online resources trainings, a special session on managing stress and avoiding substance abuse and SO MUCH MORE. Check it all out online:

<http://aila.org/conferences/in-person/annual/special-events-and-activities>.

Board of Governor Candidates

A few BOG candidates have asked us to share their bios with the chapter. In no particular order - here we are:

Mike Jarecki: See attached flyer.

Kevin Miner: I am writing to ask for your vote. AILA needs Board members with experience in policy development and advocacy, and that is what I bring to AILA.

I have been active with AILA for more than 15 years, and was honored to serve as Chair of the Department of Labor Liaison Committee from 2015 to 2017. As DOL Chair, I worked to foster an atmosphere of trust and open communication, combining zealous advocacy for AILA members with collegiality and professionalism. During this time I have been involved in numerous comments, amicus briefs, and other advocacy activities. I was particularly proud to have been part of the team that convinced DOL to withdraw the ill-conceived "H-14 FAQ" that would have wreaked havoc on thousands of pending PERM applications. I am also a co-author of Business Immigration: Law & Practice, Second Edition, which

provides a detailed explanation of the law combined with practical advice on preparing and filing strong and effective petitions.

These are challenging times. Legal immigration is under attack. We need to be focused on practical and realistic solutions. We need to spend as much time -- and likely more -- stopping bad changes from happening than we spend advocating for positive reform. During my past three years on the Board, I was actively involved in the Board's H-1B task force helping to identify the kinds of restrictions that might be acceptable in the H-1B program, and what kinds of changes we would need to actively fight against. I have done this kind of work on behalf of clients for more than a decade, and AILA needs leaders with this kind of expertise.

Thank you for your vote, which is easy to do online here:

<https://eballot4.votenet.com/aila/login.cfm>

Ellen Freeman: Over the past 17 years, I have proudly served AILA at local, national and international levels. I currently serve as Chair of the Global Migration Section Consular Liaison Committee and Chair of the 2018 Annual Conference Fundamentals and Special Session Tracks, as well as on the National 2018 Fall Conference Planning Committee, the Business Taskforce and the Pennsylvania Ambassador to the American Immigration Council's AILA Ambassador Program. For 10 years, I've been active in the International Medical Graduate Taskforce, and since 2011, I've planned numerous Global Immigration Forums.

I am honored to be nominated for the offices of Director of the Board for 2018, and I request your vote in election to the AILA Board. As a refugee from the former Soviet Union, if elected, I would serve as the first Russian-speaking member of the Board. Every day, I am proud to serve both my clients and the AILA membership with a clear perspective on the personal refugee experience, having lived it myself.

In my service to AILA and as partner-in-charge of Porter Wright's Pittsburgh office, I am dedicated to advancing our immigration legal community through (1) collaboration and sharing ideas on global migration, (2) mentoring one another as we navigate today's challenging immigration laws and regulations and (3) advocating for our profession and our clients in light of the political environment.

I am devoted to the advancement of the immigration bar and excited at the opportunity to take on a higher role in its education and development through a position on the AILA Board. If elected, my goals to best serve the membership include:

- Engaging in strong public and media relations to emphasize our attorneys' pro bono contribution, dedication to our clients beyond the practice of law, and willingness to forgo profit and fight for basic human rights and dignity.
- Providing our attorneys with practical advice, from starting and selling an immigration practice to all aspects of wellness. AILA raises the bar on professionalism—it's a strength of the organization. We can take that same energy and do more from the practice management angle.

- Addressing both current and upcoming impediments to the practice of immigration law. To grow and sustain our membership, we need to challenge these sources aggressively while also learning to adjust and adapt to a new era of immigration practice.
- Focusing outreach to new members and leaning on the younger generations for their vision of the future for AILA. It's a group effort, and we need to ensure we are heading in the right direction with their input at every step.
- The political environment has backed our profession into a corner and vilified our daily actions to serve others. I promise to advocate strongly on AILA's behalf when it comes to today's adverse immigration climate and shine a light on our tireless work to promote justice and liberty.
- Building a strong mentorship network for our women AILA members to ensure all voices are heard and give our women a forum to achieve goals and discuss work/life balance challenges.

The opportunity to serve you in these ways would be an honor to me. I look forward to the prospect of serving on the Board, and thank you for your consideration as you vote this Spring.

[Ellen Freeman](#), Partner-in-Charge
Porter Wright's Pittsburgh Office

AILA National Elections Voting Information

Just a reminder to vote for AILA National Leadership -

The Annual Membership Meeting will be held at 5:30pm on Thursday, June 14, 2018 at the Hilton, Plaza, Lobby Level, San Francisco, CA, and the elections will conclude at that time. The results of the election will be announced before the meeting adjourns.

Simply click on the link and follow the step by step instructions. You will need your member number in order to login. If you wish to request a paper ballot, please contact elections@aila.org. Candidate information is included on this voting site so you can make an informed decision. You may also view the candidate statements through aila.org.

Ballot Link: <https://eballot4.votenet.com/aila>

Contact Us

- Like us on Facebook! <https://www.facebook.com/ailagaal/>
- Tweet with us! <https://twitter.com/@ailagaal>
- Chapter Website: www.ga-al.com
 - Password for AILA Members Only Page: GA-AL-M3MB3R5!
- Chapter Yahoo Group: As chapter members, you get to use it. Send anyone on the Executive Committee an email if you want in on the action - the ability to post responsibly and search older threads.



Tracie L. Klinke
Chair

Georgia Alabama Chapter
American Immigration Lawyers
Association