

CRIMINAL COURTS BAR ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

PUBLISHED BY THE CRIMINAL COURTS BAR ASSOCIATION

February 2024



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CCBA FEBRUARY EVENT

CCBA is excited to announce its February Event. CCBA partnered with the Los Angeles County Bar Association and the Westside Bar Association to cohost a panel discussion with the LA District Attorney candidates.

This event will be held at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in Beverly Hills on Thursday, February 8th, 2024. Admission is complimentary and all members of the legal community are invited to attend. CCBA members will receive MCLE credit.

The WBA, CCBA, and LACBA Proudly Present

Panel Discussion with the
2024 Los Angeles County
District Attorney Candidates

At the Beverly Hills Waldorf Astoria

RSVP: tinyurl.com/LADA2024

February 8, 2024 | 6 - 8 pm
Complimentary Admission
Doors Open 5:00 p.m.

LACBA

WESTSIDE
BAR
ASSOCIATION



SELECTED NEW LAWS FOR 2024

Assembly Bill 600: Amends Pen. Code, § 1172.1 allowing trial courts to recall and resentencing on its own motion when the sentencing law(s) changed to the defendant's benefit.

Assembly Bill 1118: Revises Pen. Code, § 745 to allow a defendant to stay an appeal and request remand to file a motion alleging a violation of the Racial Justice Act.

Rule 8.3: An attorney who does not report misconduct by another attorney required under this rule may be subject to discipline by the State Bar.

Assembly Bill 2778: Adds Pen. Code, § 741 requiring prosecution agencies to enact race-blind charging procedures.

Senate Bill 14: Amends Pen. Code, § 1192.7(c) making human trafficking of a minor a strike.

Senate Bill 601: Amended Pen. Code, § 802 to extends the statute of limitations to 3 years for misdemeanor crimes involving contractor licensing offenses.

Assembly Bill 1412: Borderline personality disorder is removed from the disqualifying mental illnesses under Pen. Code, § 1001.36.

Senate Bill 46: Adds additional drug education requirements to Pen. Code, § 1000.

Assembly Bill 806: Amends Pen. Code, § 784.7 to allow a single jurisdiction to prosecute multiple specified domestic violence crimes against the same victim in a one jurisdiction.

Assembly Bill 732: Amends Pen. Code, § 28910 requiring out-of-custody defendants to surrender their firearms within 48 hours after an applicable conviction.

Assembly Bill 701: Amends the drug sentencing enhancement under Health & Safety Code § 11370.4 and 11372 to include fentanyl.

Assembly Bill 92: Amends Pen. Code, § 31360 making it illegal to possess body armor if a person is prohibited from possessing a firearm.

Assembly Bill 2644: Adds Welfare & Institutions Code § 625.7 where an officer shall not employ threats, physical harm, deception, or psychological manipulative interrogation tactics during a custodial interrogation of a minor.

SAVE THE DATE

CCBA's 69th Annual Awards Dinner

will be held on

Saturday, April 20th, 2024

at the Omni Hotel in downtown Los Angeles.

Tickets for this event will be available in the upcoming weeks. All members of the legal community are welcome to attend and celebrate the accomplishments of the awardees.

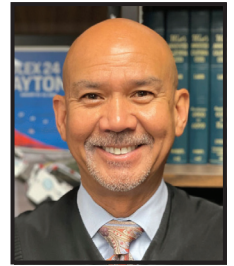
CCBA MARCH WEBINAR

CCBA is hosting its March webinar featuring Attorney Anthony Solis. Mr. Solis' presentation will hone in on the overlap between state and federal crimes. Keep an eye out for webinar registration opening later this month to secure a spot in what promises to be an informative and engaging session.

Congratulations
JUDGES

HONORABLE KELLY BOYER
HONORABLE STEPHANIE DIXON
HONORABLE CHRISTINE GONONG
HONORABLE MARISA HERNANDEZ-STERN
HONORABLE ANNE KILEY
HONORABLE CRISTINA LEGASPI
HONORABLE PARIS G. LEWIS
HONORABLE LOWRIE J. MENDOZA
HONORABLE NATALIE NARDECCHIA
HONORABLE SCOTT NORD
HONORABLE MELANIE OCHOA
HONORABLE STEPHANIE SANTORO
HONORABLE MICHAEL D. WEINSTEIN

SUPERVISING JUDGE OF THE CRIMINAL DIVISION: RICARDO R. OCAMPO



Introducing the Honorable Ricardo R. Ocampo, the distinguished Supervising Judge of the Criminal Division at the Los Angeles County Superior Court. His honor's previous roles include Supervising Judge of the South Central District from 2016 to 2021 and Assistant Supervising Judge from 2011 to 2015, where he presided over long-cause criminal jury trials.

Judge Ocampo's career in law started at the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office as a Deputy District Attorney, contributing to various units such as Public Integrity, Sex Crimes, Hardcore Gangs, and the Major Crimes Divisions.

Born in the Philippines, Judge Ocampo's education took him from high schools in the Philippines and Spain to Northern California. He completed his undergraduate studies at San Francisco State University before pursuing law at Southwestern University. Notably, Judge Ocampo is the first Filipino-American to serve as the Supervising Judge of the Criminal Division.

In 2008, Judge Ocampo received his appointment to the bench from then-Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, a moment he remembers with disbelief. This appointment marked a pivotal change in his career, introducing him to new challenges. Serving as a judge, he finds it rewarding to identify policy issues and find solutions, alongside enjoying interactions with fellow judges.

Beyond the judiciary, Judge Ocampo has a passion for auto racing, frequently attends Cars & Coffee events, and is an avid supporter of the Real Madrid soccer team. He currently presides over the master calendar in department 100 at the Clara Shortridge Foltz Criminal Justice Center. CCBA acknowledges and thanks Judge Ocampo for his dedicated service and contributions to the bench.



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**MEET THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY:
LEILA TAHMASSEBI**



Leila Tahmassebi is a native to Los Angeles, and completed her undergraduate education at the University of Southern California. Interestingly, Ms. Tahmassebi had a completely different career prior to becoming a lawyer. She started her professional career in the field of public relations. While Leila excelled in this area and achieved success, deep down inside she knew she was meant to serve the community in a different capacity. That's when she decided to go to law school.

Ms. Tahmassebi attended Loyola Law School in Los Angeles. During law school, she was interested in many subjects, but criminal law stood out to her because of the impact she could make on people's lives. She knew that she didn't want to use her time and resources to fight about contracts or money, such as business disputes or divorce. Instead, she was interested in a field that would be personally rewarding by directly impact the community, which led her to criminal law. In 2013, Ms. Tahmassebi was selected as a graduate law clerk for the San Diego County District Attorneys' office, which led her to work for the San Diego City Attorney's office upon passing the bar exam. She joined the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office in 2015.

She currently works for the District Attorney's Community Violence Reduction Division, formerly known as the hardcore gang division, where she handles gang homicides. Ms. Tahmassebi took this assignment during the pandemic, as it gave her the opportunity to learn and grow, utilizing her skills to tackle complex issues and legal theories not commonly arising in other divisions within the District Attorney's office.

Ms. Tahmassebi says that she loves her job because she not only gets to work with wonderful colleagues and bosses, but she gets to provide justice to families who have lost loved ones to the tragedy of gang violence. Still, engaging in these types of trials is personally taxing, and Ms. Tahmassebi gives it her all, knowing that this is where she wants to remain in the near future.

When she's not serving the community through her work with the DA's office, Ms. Tahmassebi loves to cook, read, and spend time outdoors. The CCBA sincerely thanks Ms. Tahmassebi for sharing her journey with our members.

**MEET THE
PUBLIC DEFENDER:
JESSICA ARTEAGA**



Meet Deputy Public Defender Jessica Arteaga, who is currently assigned to the newly enacted Racial Justice Act Unit in the Los Angeles County Public Defender's Office. Ms. Arteaga, a Los Angeles native and Southwestern University law school graduate, has roots in a first-generation American family, with her mother hailing from El Salvador and her father from Honduras. Her upbringing in South Central Los Angeles during the late 1980s exposed her to the underrepresentation of minorities, fueling her passion for public service and desire for change.

Before joining the Racial Justice Act Unit, Ms. Arteaga served as a central felony trial deputy public defender. She shares the story of her journey to the Public Defender's Office, highlighting the intensive application process and her eventual hiring by former Public Defender Ronald Brown after her third interview. Ms. Arteaga vividly remembers her first trial as a public defender before the Honorable Upinder S. Kalra at the Airport Courthouse, where she successfully achieved an acquittal for a client charged with possession of methamphetamine.

Ms. Arteaga finds it rewarding to help clients during their most vulnerable moments, particularly those without any support. Developing relationships and positively impacting her clients' lives is at the heart of her work.

What stands out for Ms. Arteaga in her office is the camaraderie and support among her colleagues. She values the collaborative environment, lifetime friendships, and the shared commitment to justice, which make the challenging workload more manageable and meaningful.

She attributes her commitment to helping the less fortunate and finding fulfillment in public service to the values instilled in her by her mother. Additionally, she recognizes the influence of fellow Deputy Public Defender Eyvin Hernandez on her professional growth. Serving as her mentor, Mr. Hernandez played a crucial role in her training and development, molding her into a fervent advocate for her clients.

Outside the courtroom, Ms. Arteaga enjoys swimming and attending live music shows. CCBA expresses gratitude and recognition for Ms. Arteaga's dedication and service to her clients.

CCBA MEMBERSHIP

You are hereby cordially invited to join or renew your membership in the Criminal Courts Bar Association. The first meeting of the Criminal Courts Bar Association took place in 1954 at the old Levy's Restaurant located on Spring Street in downtown Los Angeles. Among the founders and active practitioners who helped form our organization were Al Matthews, Abbot Bernay, Max Solomon, John Marshall, Forrest Appell, Dick Erwin, Harold Ackerman, Joe Rosen, Maury Lavine, and Al Garber. Jerry Giesler actively participated in the organization in its initial stages and he was the only president to serve two terms.

The Articles of Incorporation state that "the specific and primary purpose of this corporation is to form a professional association of attorneys actively engaged in the practice of law who are dedicated to upholding and improving the standards for the administration of justice."

Quoting a revered past president, James G. Cooney, "since the beginning that statement of purpose has been and is the reason for our existence. Our association will grow in size, strength, and respect only to the extent permitted by the force, vigor, and diligence generated by the membership."

Reasons to join the Criminal Courts Bar Association:

- Networking opportunities through our monthly dinner meeting and social events.
- MCLE credits.
- Newsletter: Keeping you up-to-date with current case law and events of importance.
- Charitable opportunities through our fundraising, golf tournament, and annual clothing drive.
- Annual Awards Dinner where the best and brightest of our profession are honored.
- Lend your voice to the other professionals who make a difference in the criminal justice system.
- Be a part of the history and tradition of the CCBA.

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