

BTAPA provides our Asian Pacific American (APA) teammates and allies with opportunities to collaborate with members across the firm and to feel a sense of connection through shared experiences and backgrounds.

Supporting Asian bar associations at national and local levels

BTAPA focuses on providing professional development and networking opportunities to our members by supporting local and national Asian Pacific American bar associations. We encourage members in different regions and departments not only to get involved, but also to coordinate their efforts.

“Before we started BTAPA, I recall colleagues not even knowing that other people were attending the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA) convention until after the event was over. Everyone was working alone in their own markets,” said BTAPA co-chair Mark Kittaka. “Now, we have a centralized location and contact people who can request funds for national conventions or local sponsorships to better showcase the individual attorney’s talents.”

Encouraging the advancement of APA lawyers

We take the lead in fostering a community of support, respect, and advancement of the APA talent within Barnes & Thornburg while also broadening cultural awareness in our organization and beyond.

“There’s a shunning feeling, or the feeling of the ‘other’ that Asian Americans can feel in the workplace,” said BTAPA member Sarah Hawk. “There’s the impact of the feeling ... that you can’t grow in your career because of a stereotype that you’re not a leader or you’re not outspoken enough or don’t seem to be at a senior level in your organization. I think law firms, especially our law firm, have an opportunity now to come forward with support.”

Our group advocates for targeted recruitment and retention efforts, as well as advancement opportunities for APA lawyers and business professionals. We also work to create opportunities for new attorneys and associates to benefit from the collective knowledge and experience of APA partners at the firm.

A few of our programs and community conversations:

- Written reflections from members sharing their countries’ cultures
- Law student receptions hosted by our new Law School Outreach Committee in partnership with regional APABA chapters
- Discussion of the significance of National Asian Pacific American Heritage Month during the Stop Asian Hate movement

For information regarding BTAPA, please contact co-chairs [Mark Kittaka](#) and [David Wong](#).



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