

HKASC Initiative Award Application

**Incentive Scheme
Outstanding Initiative Award
(To enhance the profile of the HKBA and KH overseas)**

Application Form

Please return the Application Form to the Federation Secretariat by Sept 30, 2005 by Fax: (852) 2169 9516 or Email: winnie.chiu@tdc.org.hk

FOR: HONG KONG ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Part 1: Basic Information of the Initiative

1) Nature of the Initiative:

Bridging the Gap: An Appreciation of The Independence of The Legal System of Hong Kong and its Impact on Doing Business in Hong Kong and China.

2) Date/Duration

2004-2005

3) Objectives of the initiative

To give citizens of the United States, especially members of the U.S. Judiciary, a better understanding of the Hong Kong Legal and Judicial System and the Rule of Law in the Hong Kong SAR and how Hong Kong's Legal and Judicial Systems impact the business environment in Hong Kong, China and throughout Asia.

4) Target audience and number of attendance

Our target audience consisted of: Members of the Judiciary in both the State and Federal Courts of California; members of the State Bar and Los Angeles County Bar Association; Teachers and Educators at local schools and Universities, as well as the business community of Southern California. All events were well received and very well attended.

5) Project Manager/Team of the initiative

The Project Manager was John M. Coleman, Past President of The Hong Kong Association of Southern California.

6) Concept and key action Plan (use separate sheet, if necessary)

Hong Kong, through its various business associations, has always placed the focus on Hong Kong as "a great place to do business" and as "a springboard for business in

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Mainland China and throughout the Asia-Pacific Region." The Hong Kong Association of Southern California, through its Board of Directors, embarked on a Program to highlight the sound Legal and Judicial Systems that exist in Hong Kong and how each is a major foundation to the business climate in Hong Kong. Simply stated, the Board assumed that if Hong Kong did not have a sound Legal and Judicial System, the business environment would deteriorate and the International Business Community would move elsewhere. Thus, focusing on and highlighting the soundness of the Hong Kong Legal and Judicial Systems was, indeed, good for business.

The Program got off to an excellent start in October 2004 when Team Leader John M. Coleman led a Delegation of leading Judges and Trial Lawyers from Southern California to Hong Kong. The Delegation met with members of the highest levels of the Hong Kong Judiciary, and the Secretary of Justice, as well as members of the Hong Kong Bar Association for both Solicitors and Barristers. The Delegation put on a very successful Seminar at the Hong Kong University Law Center. A copy of the Law Center Flyer is attached (see Appendix IA and IB). This Seminar at Hong Kong University Law Center was attended by well over 200 individuals comprised of both members of the local Bar and Judiciary, law students and University Law Center Administrators.

The Delegation had private one-on-one sessions with the Chief Justice of the Court of Final Appeal (Chief Justice Andrew Li); as well as the Chief Judge of the High Court, The Honorable Justice Geoffrey Ma. The Honorable Elsie Leung, Secretary of Justice, hosted the Delegation for an exchange of ideas on the independence of the Judiciary and Rule of Law.

On return to the United States, the Association embarked on a series of Programs at Breakfast Briefings with members from the Southern California Judiciary. Breakfast Briefing Speakers included The Honorable S.W. Lew, Judge of The U.S. District Court. Judge Lew is the first Chinese American appointed by a President of the United States to a Federal District Court. Other Speakers included The Honorable Michael Antonovich, Supervisor of County of Los Angeles, and a frequent visitor to Asia, who spoke on the Rule of Law and the need for a sound legal system in Hong Kong. Supervisor Antonovich also commented on the unique business relationship in terms of trade and manufacturing that exist between Hong Kong and Southern California. (see Appendix IIA, IIB, & III)

The highlight of our Objective occurred when The Hong Kong Association of Southern California hosted The Honorable Geoffrey Ma, Chief Judge of the High Court of the Hong Kong SAR on his visit to Southern California in May 2005. Justice Ma spoke to a capacity audience (300 plus) at a Luncheon co hosted by The Hong Kong Association of Southern California (see Appendix IVA & IVB), The Asia Society and the Chinese Lawyers Association of Southern California. In attendance at that Luncheon were members of the Judiciary from The Los Angeles Superior Court as well as Judges from The U.S. District Court (Federal Court). Moreover, The Hong Kong Association of Southern California was delighted to host as its very Special Guest, The Honorable Ming

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Chin, Associate Justice of the California Supreme Court. Justice Chin is the first ever Chinese American to be appointed to any Supreme Court in the United States.

That same evening, John Coleman, Past President of The Hong Kong Association of Southern California and Program Chair and Project Manager for this Objective hosted a Cocktail Party at his home in Pasadena, California in honor of Justice Geoffrey Ma.

Among the 100 persons in attendance were over 30+ members of the Southern California Judiciary, including members of the Superior Court, the California Court of Appeal, and Justice Ming Chin of the California Supreme Court as well as members from the Bench from the U.S. District Court. Additionally, John Van De Kamp, President of the State Bar of California, two (2) Past Presidents of the Los Angeles County Bar Association, as well as the Past National President of the American Board of Trial Advocates and the current President of the International Academy of Trial Lawyers were present to welcome Justice Ma. Speakers on behalf of bellweather Hong Kong connected businesses such as Cathay Pacific Airways and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council welcomed Mr. Justice Ma to Southern California at the party.

Significant publicity was generated at many of these events. (see Appendix V)

Part 2: Evaluation on the results achieved from the initiative

The results of this Initiative have been nothing less than **astounding!**

As set forth in Part Three below, the Hong Kong Association of Southern California (HKASC) has been contacted by both Federal and State Courts to embark on a series of Seminars for Judges on Hong Kong and Rule of Law. This includes not only the United States District Court (which has thirty plus judges), but also the Courts of Santa Barbara County, Orange County, Riverside County, and Los Angeles County – which happens to the largest court system in the world, with over five hundred (500) judges.

Attendance at our Breakfast Briefings was excellent. The interaction between both English and Chinese media and the HKASC has improved dramatically. Speakers such as the Honorable Geoffrey Ma, Chief Justice of the High Court of the HKSAR, and guests such as the Honorable Ming Chin, Associate Justice of the California Supreme Court, tend to generate significant media interest.

Moreover, John Van de Kamp, current President of the State Bar of California, has expressed an interest in having the HKASC liaise with the State Bar of California for future programs, especially with the International Law Section of the State Bar.

Part 3: Description of the initiative in terms of the selected criteria

1) Innovativeness

This concept of not only exploring, but marketing the strength of the Hong Kong legal system vis-a-vis the Hong Kong business environment is unique. No other organization in the United States or, for that matter, the world, has attempted to parlay an understanding of Hong Kong's Legal and Judicial Systems into a better understanding of Hong Kong's business environment.

2) Impact on the local business community

Our efforts generated significant media coverage both in the English and Chinese Press in Southern California as well as a day-long media coverage while the Delegation was in Hong Kong.

Moreover, The Hong Kong Association's standing within the Judiciary of Southern California has improved significantly not only at the State level but within the Federal Court system as well. The Project Leader (Coleman) has subsequently been approached by the Chief Judge of the local Trial Courts for information on the Hong Kong Association. The HKA is currently setting up Speaking Engagements for members of the Federal Bench as well as a series of speeches to Judges throughout Los Angeles County Superior Court; Orange County Superior Court and Santa Barbara Superior Court. These Chief Judges entertain cases involving Immigration, Conflicts of Law, and Service of Process in Mainland China and Hong Kong SAR.

A better understanding and appreciation of the Hong Kong legal system as well as confidence in that system can only bring improved understanding between our two (2) legal systems and the international business community.

3) Active participation of members

The Hong Kong Association of Southern California has a "open door" policy with respect to meetings. Accordingly, participation in all events has been at all levels from our membership as well as from segments of the Southern California Community to which our Association has not heretofore reached out. That would include the Judiciary of both the Superior Court for the State of California as well as as well as the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California. Moreover, the California Court of Appeals, Second District, and the Supreme Court for the State of California, were also part of our marketing efforts.

As set forth elsewhere in this Report, participation from all levels of the Judiciary as well as the highest levels of the State Bar of California and Los Angeles County Bar were not only earmarked but such efforts were indeed successful as part of our Association's initiative.

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- 4) Ability in attracting new members.

The number of new members generated from this objective exceeded 20% of our current membership. I do know for a fact at least 75% of our Association's new members were generated as a direct result from these legal forums and legal functions.

- 5) Financial gain

Revenue generated from these various activities was in keeping with standard admission fees at Luncheons and Breakfast Briefings. However, the financial gain realized from the abundance of new members especially law firms as well as the media exposure takes precedence over the dollars generated.

- 6) Value created in enhancing HK image overseas

Hong Kong's image, especially its independent Judiciary, and Hong Kong's adherence to the Rule of Law, was clearly enhanced by the Association's Directives. Articles that appeared both in the American Board of Trial Advocates National Journal as well as local media (both English and Chinese) enhanced Hong Kong's image significantly.

- 7) Other achievements

To our knowledge, Justice Ma's appearance in Los Angeles was the first ever visit to the U.S. by a leading Jurist from the Hong Kong Judiciary. We can only hope future exchanges with Jurists from Hong Kong and other cities in the U.S. will benefit from the leading role taken by The Hong Kong Association of Southern California!

Part 4: Supporting information

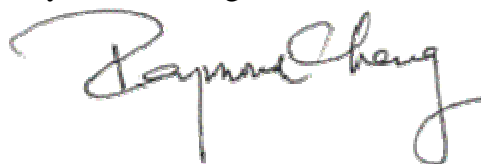
It is optional for the applicant to provide additional supporting information of the initiative, such as photos, press clippings, recognition letters, comments from members, etc.

Yes, the supporting information will be sent to the Federation Secretariat together with this application form/by separate mail/by separate email. (see attachments)

No, there is no supporting information.

I certify that this submission is endorsed by our board.

Submitted by: Raymond Cheng



Signature: _____

Date: September 30, 2005