

JULIE D. SOO

Julie D. Soo, Esq.
May 2021

Biography

Julie D. Soo is a senior staff counsel with the California Department of Insurance and is charged with prosecuting enforcement cases among her regulatory duties. In 2017, she prevailed in a \$12 million settlement against a surplus line insurer, one of the largest of its kind for the Department. She volunteers in a variety of community causes, including addressing hate crimes, civil rights education, campaign work, and community health advocacy. Julie served on the San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women (SFCOSW) from 2009 to 2021 and is a past president. She is active with the California Democratic Party Executive Board as a lead co-chair of the Platform Committee and served two terms as the chair of the Asian Pacific Islander Caucus. Julie also served nine years on the Board of Trustees for Saint Francis Memorial Hospital. Along with other Asian American attorneys who sit on the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association's Civil Rights Committee, Julie tackles civil rights issues affecting Asian Americans and their communities. From her experience working on the Dr. Wen Ho Lee case with the Asian Law Caucus nearly 20 years ago, Julie is again tackling racial profiling of Chinese American scientists. A fourth-generation San Franciscan, she is a Lowell High School alumna and holds an A.B. with a double major in Pure Mathematics and Statistics from U.C. Berkeley, an M.A. in Applied Mathematics from U.C. San Diego, and a J.D. from Golden Gate University School of Law.

Julie is well-known for her past work as a journalist with *AsianWeek*, a pan-Asian national weekly based in San Francisco, where she covered breaking stories, provided legal and political commentary, and wrote about Asian American history and notable figures. She appeared on *New California Media*, a public television news roundtable for California's ethnic news community, and served as a guest host for *Voice of the Neighborhood*, a political radio talk show targeted to the Bay Area Cantonese-speaking community. She was selected as a 2006 California Endowment Health Journalism fellow based on her story about a Chinatown shooting where six youths were wounded and her discovery that San Francisco's leading trauma center lacked interpreters past late evening hours to help non-English proficient patients and families. The story caught the attention of the Mayor, Chief of Police, and hospital administrators and led to policy changes. Julie has also served as a legislative aide and advisor to members of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors.

Julie received a Women Making History Award in 2004 from the Democratic Women's Forum of San Francisco for engaging more young women in politics and being elected as a district-level delegate for presidential candidate John Kerry, representing Nancy Pelosi's Congressional District. In August 2007, as Statewide Chair of the California Democratic Party's Asian Pacific Islander Caucus, Julie announced her support of Senator Hillary Clinton for President and in October 2007, she was named as a California co-chair of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) for Hillary. In May 2008, she was named as an at-large alternate to the Democratic National Convention.

Julie is a 2012 recipient of the Filipina Women's Network Vagina Warrior Award and the 2013 recipient of the Asian Women's Resource Center's Outstanding Giving Back Award for her work in fostering culturally and linguistically competent services for families affected by domestic violence and human trafficking. In 2015, Julie received a Best Community Leader Award from the Korean American Journalists Association for her contributions in seeking justice for the "comfort women" of World War II and their families. In 2018, Julie was recognized by the San Francisco Collaborative Against Human Trafficking (SFCOHT) with an Inspiring Leadership Award for her role as a former co-chair and bringing greater attention to labor trafficking. In 2019, the Pacific Asian American Women Bay Area Coalition (PAAWBAC) honored Julie with a Women Warrior Award for distinguishing herself in her profession while advancing Asian Pacific Islander women and promoting the interests of API communities. She collaborated on a documentary film on the 14th Amendment and birthright citizenship, *14: Dred Scott, Wong Kim Ark & Vanessa Lopez*, and has gone on to speak at film screenings about *United States v. Wong Kim Ark*, the 1898 case wherein the United States Supreme Court articulated the term "birthright citizenship" in its interpretation of the 14th Amendment, the Chinese Exclusion Act, and the historic exploitation of immigrants. Julie has conversational abilities in Cantonese and has recently studied Mandarin to further her community work.