



VIRTUAL

2021 NLG-LA AWARDS GALA

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 7 AT 5 PM



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We also salute the invaluable work of the National Lawyers Guild of Los Angeles and congratulate the 2021 NLG-LA award honorees.



NATIONAL LAWYERS GUILD
LOS ANGELES CHAPTER

VIRTUAL

ANNUAL AWARDS GALA

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 7, 2021



HONORING

SUPERVISOR HOLLY MITCHELL

ROGER CLARK

VICKI SARMIENTO

**MEMBERS AND
MOVEMENT LAWYERING
OF UNITE HERE LOCAL 11**

MICHAEL LEE

MUSIC BY

**John Douglas and Songon,
Kayo and Anastasia with the
Freedom Singers, Johnny Brantley,
Mia Yamamoto, Jazmine Williams**

EMCEE

Kent Wong



NATIONAL LAWYERS GUILD / L.A. CHAPTER

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SUPERVISOR HOLLY MITCHELL

On November 3, 2020, Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell was elected to serve the Second District of Los Angeles County. Throughout her career in public service, she has worked with the understanding that creating a California where all residents can thrive—means investing in the communities, families and children of Los Angeles County.

Having authored and passed over 90 laws in the California Legislature, Supervisor Mitchell brings an extensive public policy record to the Board of Supervisors. Many of her bills have been at the forefront of expanding healthcare access, addressing systemic racism, and championing criminal justice reform.

During her tenure in the California State Legislature, she represented the 54th District for three years as an Assemblymember and later served seven years as State Senator for the 30th District.



As State Senator, she also held the distinction of being the first African American to serve as Chair of the Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee. In this capacity, she led passage of state budgets, each totaling over \$200 billion, for the fifth largest economy in the world.

Prior to serving in elected office, Supervisor Mitchell was CEO of Crystal Stairs, California’s largest nonprofit dedicated to child and family development. In this role, she ensured that families across Los Angeles County gained access to childcare and poverty prevention resources. Before leading Crystal Stairs, she worked as a legislative advocate at the Western Center on Law & Poverty.

Supervisor Mitchell’s leadership has been recognized by over 100 community and business groups. She recently was honored as a



2020 Visionary by Oprah Winfrey’s *O Magazine* for making California the first state in the nation to ban natural hair discrimination under the CROWN Act.

As Supervisor, she is proud to serve the two million residents of the Second District, which includes the neighborhood she grew up in, Leimert Park, and the following cities: Carson, Compton, Culver City, Gardena, Hawthorne, Inglewood, Lawndale, Lynwood, parts of Los Angeles, and dozens of unincorporated communities.

Supervisor Mitchell is a University of California at Riverside Highlander, a CORO Foundation Fellow, and mother to Ryan.



ROGER CLARK



Roger Clark began his law enforcement career in 1965 when he was sworn in as a Los Angeles County Deputy Sheriff. He remained with the Department for the next 28 years—retiring as a Lieutenant in 1993. His career provided assignments in Administration, Custody, Patrol, Investigations, Training, Planning, and Technical Projects as a line officer, supervisor, manager, and commander. He was cited in particular by the Los Angeles Sheriff’s Department (LASD) as an expert “Trainer and Academy Instructor on Ethics, Use of Force, Tactics and Demographics.”

Following Basic Academy, Roger’s first assignment was the early-morning watch at the Men’s Central Jail. On his first night working, he was approached by a group of deputies and informed that working on the early-morning shift required that he join a “special group” that physically assaulted “problem inmates” and was supported by the shift sergeant. Roger refused the demand, expecting that that night would be his first and last day of employment with LASD. He never imagined that overt brutality existed in the LASD and refused to become a part of it. Roger



returned home after his shift that night expecting to be fired the next day. However, when he returned to work the group simply ignored him. He shortly came to realize that despite his refusal, he would remain in the department. That was his first exposure to the existence of rogue “Peer-Clan” groups in law enforcement organizations, an exposure that eventually came to a head in 1984 when he became aware of the “Vikings” while in command of the Crescenta Valley Station.

During his LASD career, Roger had a wide range of duties. His last assignment before retirement was as commander of the North Regional Surveillance and Apprehension Team (NORSAT). NORSAT was an elite, covert, multi-jurisdictional team that investigated, observed, and apprehended career criminals and was the department’s equivalent to LAPD’s Special Investigations Section (SIS). However, while SIS boasted 300 arrests a year, NORSAT arrested 500 per year. Nonetheless, SIS routinely shot and killed six suspects a year and shot and wounded 24 suspects a year, while NORSAT had no shots fired (by either deputy or suspect) for 61 consecutive months. The NORSAT record of safe apprehensions has never been matched.

Roger became aware of the propensity within law enforcement agencies in general—and the LASD in particular—for rogue groups to develop and flourish. When Roger was promoted, he frequently wrote and submitted in-house memoranda regarding the destructive influence these groups had on the LASD; he identified them in his writings as “Peer-Clans.” Although Roger repeatedly warned Department executives of these destructive and dangerous groups, his memos did not produce the results necessary to deal with them.

Roger learned and wrote about the “Vikings” more than any other group. The Vikings were a vigilante racist group of deputies assigned to Lynwood Station.

They used extreme tactics and illegal force on the pretext that these were necessary to keep citizens “safe.” To solidify their bond and commitment to each other, members were required to tattoo the head of a Viking on their legs. Roger learned firsthand of this group from a former Viking deputy—Robert Armstrong—who had been fired, prosecuted, and convicted of murder as the result of an on-duty shooting. Upon conviction, Armstrong was placed at Crescenta Valley Station (Roger’s command) as a “trustee.” Roger produced a series of detailed in-house memoranda regarding his discussions with Armstrong and the existence of the Vikings group.

Roger retired from the department in March 1993 and relocated to Rexburg, Idaho, to teach in the local school district. His work with at-risk juveniles led to being appointed by the Governor to establish the State of Idaho Department of Juvenile Corrections. Within months of retirement, he was contacted by John Burton, one of a number of (now-distinguished) attorneys in the *Thomas v. Los Angeles County* case.



In that case, a group of 100 residents of the city of Lynwood sued the LASD citing racial abuse, violence, and brutality at the hands of the Vikings. Roger was deposed by Mr. Burton and testified in the *Thomas* trial.

These events opened the door of opportunity and incited Roger’s passion for civil rights and police procedures required by the Constitution. From 1993 on, he has been involved as a police procedures expert with cases involving excessive use of force, lethal force, tactics, training, and other violations of Constitutionally required police policy and procedure. Sadly, Peer-Clan groups continue to exist in the LASD and other departments. Departments—including the LASD—have not done what is necessary to combat them. Peer-Clans are a particularly evil poison that continues to leach into law enforcement.

Since his involvement in the *Thomas* case and for 28 years since retiring from LASD, Roger has provided written opinions and sworn testimony in 2,250 cases throughout the nation. Several published opinions regarding his cases have cited him by name and have been cited in subsequent legal briefs. His persistence in expressing professional core values continues to provide positive results.



As an example, Roger had written from his first opinions dating to 1993, that “Law Enforcement Officers are trained that they are responsible for their tactical decisions that result in the use of lethal force.” Finally, the California Supreme Court agreed in *Hayes v. County of San Diego*. As a result: “In *Hayes v. the County of San Diego*, the California Supreme Court found that, under California negligence law, an officer’s pre-shooting conduct leading up to a deadly use of force may affect whether a use of force is ultimately reasonable and therefore may be considered in the analysis of a use of deadly force. Following this finding, in April 2014, the Department’s policy regarding the use of deadly force was updated with the addition of the following language: ‘The reasonableness of an officer’s use of deadly force includes consideration of the officer’s tactical conduct and decisions leading up to the use of deadly force.’” (LAPD Policy Change)

These are brief examples of Roger’s involvement in cases citing racial profiling, brutality, and violence against citizens, by those sworn to uphold the law and to serve and protect. Roger’s dedication and humanity toward all individuals, no matter what their background, has contributed to garnering justice for those desperately needing it.



VICKI SARMIENTO

Vicki Sarmiento is a graduate of Hastings College of Law, and her interest in civil rights is a result of her upbringing and activism dating back to her undergraduate and law school years. After admission to the Bar, from 1988 to 1991, Vicki was a trial attorney for the Los Angeles City Attorney’s Office. She soon realized that the prosecution side of law was not her calling, and after obtaining significant trial experience, she opened her own law office.

From 1991 to the present, Vicki has been in private practice and has handled scores of civil rights cases ranging from unlawful entries, racial profiling, in-custody deaths in jails, assaults and sexual abuse of minors in juvenile detention, wrongful convictions, and serious injury and death from the use of excessive force by the police. She has handled many cases of public interest covered by the media. Most recently, her cases covered by the media include the police shooting of actress Vanessa Marquez, who played a lead role in “Stand and Deliver,” one of the few all-Latino cast mainstream movies; the assault on minor JMM in juvenile detention that left him severely brain injured; and the death of 11-year-old Ashley Flores due to gross mishandling of 911 calls in the City of Lynwood. The *Miami Herald* also covered extensively the case of Darren Rainey, a schizophrenic inmate who was scalded to death by correctional officers at a Florida prison. Vicki came into the *Rainey* case *pro hac vice*, and her extensive litigation revealed the cover-up that occurred within the prison to hide the true facts of his death.

Vicki has obtained multi-million dollar verdicts and settlements on behalf of many civil rights litigants.



She has been a guest speaker on civil rights at NPAP (National Police Accountability Project), CAOC (Consumer Attorneys of California), and has volunteered to teach a civil rights clinic at U.C. Irvine’s Law School. Vicki was one of the “Top Lawyers” in Pasadena Magazine 2017-2018.

Vicki’s cases also have led to published opinions that have established important precedent, notably *Blankenhorn v. City of Orange*, 485 F.3d 463. A lead case on the issue of “integral participation,” *Blankenhorn* establishes liability on all officers who aid and abet in the use of force.

Vicki was born in La Paz, Bolivia. At the age of six she came with her family to Santa Ana, California, and Santa Ana became their hometown. Her brother Vicente Sarmiento is currently the Mayor of Santa Ana. Like many hard-working Latino immigrants, Vicki’s parents, Vicente and Irma, worked in manual labor, and their strong work ethic was demonstrated daily. Vicki’s love for reading and learning was evident since elementary school. On a weekly basis, she took the bus to her local Santa Ana public library and brought home an armful of books that she would read late into the night; often she was caught reading with a flashlight under the blankets.

Following graduation from Santa Ana High School, Vicki was accepted to U.C. Irvine, where she



obtained her B.S. in Social Science and a B.A. in Spanish Literature. Thereafter, she was accepted to law school at Hastings College of Law, where she earned her juris doctor degree. At U.C. Irvine, Vicki became involved in organizing for the rights of minorities and women and was a founding member of “Mujeres Latinas.” At Hastings College of Law, she served as President of “La Raza Law Students Association,” an organization focused on the recruitment of Latino law students and involvement of law students in community work for the indigent in the San Francisco area.

Compassion, empathy, hard work, and persistence have been the guideposts that have allowed Vicki to flourish as a civil rights attorney. Mentoring young lawyers to continue this challenging work is of utmost importance to her. The camaraderie she has developed amongst her peers in the civil rights community is the result of her willingness to share information and to offer assistance based on her vast experience.



MEMBERS & MOVEMENT LAWYERING OF UNITE HERE LOCAL 11

UNITE HERE Local 11 is a social justice-oriented, movement-based labor union for hotel room attendants, cooks, servers, and other hospitality workers in Southern California and Arizona. Currently representing over 32,000 hospitality workers, it is one of the fastest growing unions in the country.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the predominantly Spanish-speaking membership of Local 11 fought for fuller participation in their union against a largely Anglo leadership. In 1989, Local 11 President María Elena Durazo became the first Latina to lead a major Los Angeles union. She began reorienting the local towards greater membership participation and a more assertive stance with employers. Taking inspiration from the legendary civil rights leader Rev. James Lawson, Jr. and with the support of many National Lawyers Guild members, Local 11 also embraced nonviolent civil disobedience as a strategy to call attention to labor abuses. Durazo—now a state senator—was succeeded by veteran leader Tom Walsh Garcia, who served as president for a decade of continued activism and growth. The union is now led by three co-presidents—Susan Minato, Ada Briceño,



Legal team: Jeremy Blasi, Zoe Tucker, Jordan Palmer, and Alyssa Peterson..

and Kurt Petersen—and executive vice-presidents Martha Santamaria and Karine Mansoorian.

While union membership has continued to decline at a national level, Local 11 has managed to grow rapidly and to dramatically improve working standards through bottom-up organizing focused on developing worker leadership. This commitment to organizing—complemented by creative legal and policy work and community alliances—has helped the revitalized union double its membership and lift thousands of families out of poverty and into the middle class.

During its most recent contract cycle in 2018, Local 11 won historic gains for its members working in hotels. Led by co-president Kurt Petersen, the union won agreements that will guarantee a minimum of \$25.00 an hour by the contracts' end in 2023, along with affordable family health care, paid almost entirely by the employer, and a strengthened pension. The contract also ensures that room attendants are provided with panic buttons and other measures to protect against sexually threatening conduct by hotel guests and secures new protections for immigrant workers.

Local 11 has also won groundbreaking laws to raise labor standards. These efforts include a city-wide living wage for hotel workers in Los Angeles, now set at \$17.64, as well as living wage laws in Long Beach, Santa Monica, and Anaheim; worker retention laws guaranteeing job security for airport workers; and "hotel housekeeper bill of rights" laws providing critical protections against sexual assault and fair compensation for heavy workloads. Most recently, in the wake of mass layoffs of hospitality workers during the pandemic—with 90% of such workers losing their jobs virtually overnight in March 2020—Local 11 won laws at both the city and state levels guaranteeing that

workers at hotels, airports, event centers, and arenas have the right to return to their jobs.

Through its organizing, Local 11 has also helped transform the political landscape in Southern California and Arizona. These efforts began in Los Angeles, where the union played a critical role in organizing immigrant communities to wield political power and turn back a tide of xenophobic policies during the 1980s and '90s. More recently, the union has played a leading role in turning Orange County from a region known as a bastion of white nationalism to one where immigrants and communities of color have a strong political voice. In 2015, led by co-president Ada Briceño—an immigrant from Nicaragua who joined the union as a teenager working as a hotel clerk—Local 11 helped win district elections in Anaheim, enabling greater representation of people of color in public office and opening the door to other cities in the region to follow suit. In 2018, the union helped send the OC's first all Democratic congressional delegation to Washington. Briceño now also serves as chairwoman of the Orange County Democratic Party.

The union led a similar political revolution in the historically deep red state of Arizona. A much smaller affiliate of UNITE HERE, Local 631, had worked since the early 2000s to organize in working class and immigrant communities and fight back against brazenly racist policies. Many of the union's leaders joined the union through efforts to challenge the campaign of civil rights violations against immigrants by the notorious—and since-indicted—Sheriff Joe Arpaio. In the wake of the election of Donald Trump as president in 2016, Local 11's members voted to formally merge with Local 631 so that the union could put its full weight behind efforts to transform Arizona into a purple and ultimately blue state.

During 2018 and 2020, led by co-president Susan Minato, hundreds of Local 11 members from Southern California joined their colleagues in Arizona to register voters and get out the vote. As the first campaign in the field during the COVID-19 pandemic, the union's members canvassed 6-days-a-week in 100-plus-degree heat wearing masks and face shields—part of a rigorous protocol that prevented any outbreaks—ultimately knocking on 900,000 doors and winning enough votes to tip the election for Joe Biden. The same team then traveled to Georgia to help Stacey

Abrams elect that state's first African American and Jewish senators and turn Georgia blue. In the meantime, the local's grassroots organizing has helped raise labor standards and transform the political landscape in Phoenix, the country's fifth largest city. A former hotel room attendant and leader of the union, Betty Guardado, now serves as a Phoenix city council member and served a term as vice mayor.

Local 11's work is supported by a model of movement lawyering focused on building worker power. The union's legal team—which includes general counsel Jeremy Blasi and staff attorneys Zoe Tucker, Jordan Palmer, and Alyssa Peterson—together with outside firms and many NLG members have helped workers exercise their right to organize and protest in the face of employer retaliation, combat sexual harassment and race discrimination, win compensation due under wage laws and union contracts, ensure safe workplaces, and pass pro-worker legislation. Among



Co-Presidents: Susan Minato, Kurt Petersen, and Ada Briceño .

others, collaborators have included McCracken, Stemerma & Holsberry; Gilbert & Sackman; Schwartz, Steinsapir, Dohrmann & Sommers; Rothner, Segall & Greenstone; Lauren Teukolsky; Gideon Kracov; Fred Thiagarajah; John Lee, Mia Yamamoto, and Willard Yamaguchi; Colleen Flynn; the ACLU of Southern California; and Hadsell Stormer Renick & Dai, which runs an affordable legal services program for the union's Legal Fund. The union's legal work has also been advanced by an army of talented students, including hundreds who helped laid-off workers obtain unemployment insurance benefits during the pandemic.

MICHAEL LEE

From his history, fifty plus years of progressive political activism is not to be expected from our honoree Michael Lee. His parents were a WWII bomber pilot and a college homecoming queen. A good, solid, conservative heritage. His father, an airline pilot, moved to El Paso, Texas, blessed with two large, then newly integrated, military bases and the Mexican border close by. Unlike so many of the era, Michael was exposed to many racial and cultural differences, which came to shape his political future. With a highly conservative family background, his move to Los Angeles was life-changing.

As a student at San Diego State, he was already involved with the civil rights struggle, beginning in November 1965, and while there, he joined SNCC, CORE, and newly formed SDS in crashing a White Citizen's Council fundraiser featuring Sheriff Jim Clark of Selma, Alabama. From then on, the war in Vietnam and the struggle for civil rights would dominate, as he rapidly moved left. After transferring to San Fernando Valley State College (SFVSC, now known as CSUN), he became active with the Farm Workers Union, and other issues of 1967 lead to his alliances with the Black Students Union around issues of racism on campus.

Meanwhile, he was an organizer for the Century City march against Lyndon Johnson, where LAPD exposed its bloody tactics to a largely white, middle-class crowd, forever changing police-citizen relations in the city. In late 1968, relations on campus at SFVSC, particularly with black students, reached a climax with the takeover of the administration building. Work by BSU, SDS, and other campus groups had brought 200 new black and brown students to the campus from central city and barrio communities, and for the first time, minority students had a voice. Michael was one



of those arrested. In January 1969, police violence and the mass arrest of 300 students, where he was arrested again, led to negotiations and formation of the first Black and Chicano full departments in any public university in the country. After being arrested again in 1970 after demonstrations

had shut down the school over the killings at Kent State, Michael was expelled from SFVSC.

He then became a student organizer for the Peace Action Council, an umbrella organization that opposed the war in Vietnam. Working with everyone from clergy, unions, college campuses, and Vietnamese students to the Black Panther Party, the Council organized several large 10,000 plus marches in L.A. and larger ones in San Francisco. While an organizer for the Council, Michael worked on campuses to help enlarge the turnout at the Chicano Moratorium in East L.A., and was present at the Sheriff's attack on the Moratorium crowd.

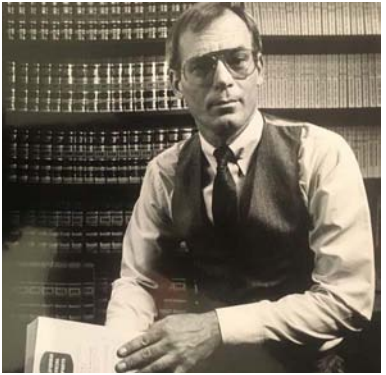
Guild lawyer's defended him in two trials and two pleas, and he eventually served sentences totaling 180 days in various county facilities.

Before expulsion from SFVSC during his last semester in college, he was preparing to be a secondary school teacher, but realized that with his political history, he would never be hired. A sympathetic dean at SFVSC recommended law school. Between jail terms, he started at a small law school in the San Fernando Valley, while working at a foundry and driving a large dump truck, and he got involved on the National Lawyers Guild board, as well.

Studying his final semester in Paris, France, served to reawaken his interest in international affairs, and that interest stayed throughout his many years of political activity. Hired by the Los Angeles Public Defender Office in 1979 meant he could not directly practice law outside the office, so he integrated his law training with international issues.



"Since Vietnam, I clearly realized that this period of history was motivated by anti-colonialism and imperialism and became heavily involved in various groups dedicated to liberation struggles, from South Africa, Asia, South and Central America, and the Middle East." Traveling a dozen times to Central America, he supported CISPES and other similar groups. Twice the Guild SoCal chapter president,



and longtime board member, most of this liberation work was shared through the Guild.

Michael was a board member when the Peoples College of Law was created by Hank DiSuvero and others, and he taught there in the '70s. While President of the Guild and also on the board, he participated in the creation and growth of the legal observer program. "As a public defender, I could not practice criminal law directly, but could do organizational work around legal defense."

As Chapter President, he was heavily involved in the Iranian student movement against the Shah of Iran and was invited to Iran in the middle of the hostage crisis. However, the political situation changed while he was there. The American response to the hostage taking weakened the National Front "social democrats," and Khomeini gained more power. "In the end I was just an observer, but talked a lot with the students in the embassy. It clearly was an internal



political ploy to weaken the nonreligious left, and I was happy to leave." In 1984, Michael was nominated to be a national delegate representing Jesse Jackson in the San Fernando Valley and appeared on the ballot. He was nominated again in 1988. From 1984 to 1992, he was nominated to the state party conventions as part of a group attempting to bring progressive voices into the political party system. Civil rights, Palestinian issues, internal party racism and gender discrimination in representation, and major foreign policy decisions were seriously debated for the first time in decades in the Democratic state political party. He also served on the Los Angeles Democratic Party Central Committee and political committees of SEIU Local 660.

"Imagine their shock when a reactionary judge saw me on the union-endorsing committee, as we controlled hundreds of thousands of endorsement mailings through the L.A. County Central Labor Council," says Michael, with a chuckle.

In 1988, he was arrested again for obstruction of a police officer, when various skinhead and Nazi groups went to Glendale to hear a speech by one of the alleged 1963 Birmingham church bombers. Glendale Police attempted to break up the picket line, and Michael attempted to reason with them, but was charged with obstruction of a police officer.



He survived a jury trial with an 11-1 not guilty verdict and was represented by Lennie Weinglass and Hugh Manes. The Guild was well represented in that courtroom.

Journeys to Palestine, Syria, and Lebanon exposed him to major issues in the Muslim world. With Black Lives Matter, Dreamers, and other movements confronting the courts and law enforcement, Michael used his long experience to teach criminal law MCLEs for the Guild and made himself available to answer any questions about court practice and criminal law. After retirement in 2010, he helped organize defense of the Occupy-LA participants and represented students arrested at CSUN protesting tuition increases, thereby returning to his old alma mater. The complaining dean responded with "Oh no! Not that Mike Lee," apparently aware of Mike's past history. Life goes in full circle.

YEAR IN REVIEW:



The L.A. Chapter's Work in 2021

As the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic continues to exacerbate social, racial, and economic injustice at every level, the Los Angeles Chapter of the National Lawyers Guild has been hard at work helping to alleviate economic hardships for the most vulnerable, fighting back against the onslaught of targeted police violence toward political protests, protecting the right to humane housing for all, shielding workers from exploitation, and standing up for tenants' rights in the face of looming evictions. No other organization has stood the test of time like the Guild. Formed in the 1930s in response to the racist American Bar Association, and in support of Unions, Immigrants, People without power, and Poor People, it stands for the same principles today. When few others would step forward, the Guild led the way in fighting back against anti-immigrant policies, lynchings, racism, nationalism, fascism in its many forms, misogyny, homophobia, transphobia, the police state, and many other horrors our society has inflicted on its less powerful members. Over the past three decades, the Guild has never wavered from its mission of ensuring that human rights are more sacred than property interests. And today, the Guild remains as committed as ever before to advancing justice and equity and dismantling racist and oppressive systems through its esteemed network of volunteer attorneys, legal workers, law students, and jailhouse lawyers. Below is a sampling of the Guild's work in 2021:



We deployed hundreds of legal observers at protests, rallies and political actions—Our Green Hats continue to be on the front lines of political protests in Los Angeles County to help deter police violence and misconduct against protestors. In 2021, the Guild's Legal Observer volunteers were called on to support NLG-LA's ally groups such as Black Lives Matter Los Angeles, LA Tenants Union, Garment Workers Center, Stop LAPD Spying Coalition, and Essie Justice Group. Our legal observers were also present at dozens of community-based actions such as the 50th Anniversary of the Chicano Moratorium and the Angelversaries of Anthony Vargas, Vanessa Marquez, Paul Rea, Eric Rivera, and far too many others who have been murdered by

law enforcement. We have also been busy training law students at UCLA, USC, and Southwestern Law School to become Legal Observers and join our ever-growing army of volunteers. In the aftermath of the national racial justice uprising that we saw in 2020, the Guild continues to receive an overwhelming number of requests for Legal Observers each week to support protests against tenant evictions, the assault on immigrant rights, environmental degradation, and ongoing police violence.

We continued to push for no filings of criminal charges against political protestors and coordinated post-arrest legal support & pro bono criminal defense representation for Guild clients—we successfully

secured an agreement from the LA City Attorney's to not prosecute the 180 protestors who spoke out against the cruel displacement of unhoused community members at Echo Park Lake, as part of Park Rise Up action. We coordinated pro bono criminal defense representation for tenants' rights activists leading eviction defense actions and provided post-arrest legal support to more than 60 folx arrested in East Los Angeles, while pushing the state to repurpose vacant El Sereno homes for unhoused community members. We facilitated Know-Your-Rights and Civil Disobedience trainings for our community partners, developed a two-part webinar series exposing the nefarious impact of misdemeanor prosecutions within the City of Los Angeles, and published two resource guides designed to help folx navigate the criminal arraignment process and understand the collateral consequences of a protest related arrest/conviction.



Long-standing Guild attorneys have led crucial legal battles to address police misconduct and repeated violations of protestors' civil rights—Whether its suing LAPD in Federal Court on behalf of Black Lives Matter Los Angeles for its unconstitutional policing of the George Floyd Solidarity protests or suing LASD for its excessive use of force against protestors and unlawful seizure & retention of protestors' personal property, Guild attorneys remain at the forefront of protecting peoples' constitutional rights.

Our Immigration, Housing, & Workers' Rights Committees have been hard at work this year—opposing ICE and advocating to disentangle immigration enforcement from local government; supporting local sanctuary ordinances; representing and advocating for immigrants in the region as well as at the border; documenting the latest protections for workers' rights through Know Your Rights in the Workplace Guides (which are now available in English, Spanish, Mandarin, and Tagalog); hosting Continuing





Legal Education (CLE) sessions on topics such as “Trauma Informed Lawyering,” designed to empower housing advocates to better support their tenant clients during periods of crisis; and holding educational panels & community based trainings on topics of interest to attorneys and advocates in these practice areas, as well as those from impacted communities.

We continued supporting efforts to legalize street vending

and promote street vendor rights in collaboration with community partners. We recently released a report on the City of Santa Monica’s treatment of low-income street vendors, which is now available on the Guild’s website at www.nlg-la.org. Guild attorneys continue working with street vendors to help vindicate their rights, and the Guild has also deployed its legal observer volunteers to Santa Monica to document law enforcement confiscations of street vendor property and police use of force against street vendors.

The Guild continues to play a central role in the Check the Sheriff Coalition, working alongside other community partners and impacted family members to address the deep-rooted corruption, violence, and lawlessness within the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department (LASD). Earlier this year, the Guild released a report titled “No Justice, No Peace” detailing LASD’s targeted harassment of



grieving families and making several recommendations for the Board of Supervisors to take immediate action. Guild staff have also been working closely with the Board of Supervisors’ Justice Deputies, the Civilian Oversight Commission, the Office of the Inspector General, and the Attorney General’s Office to help bring an end to LASD’s reign of terror on Black and Brown communities and seek justice for family members impacted by police violence.

Our monthly legal clinics are as strong as ever—in partnership with LA-CAN and the Venice Justice Committee, the Guild continues to run legal clinics in Venice and Skid Row to help unhoused community members fight infractions related to the criminalization of homelessness. Volunteers conduct clinic intakes, and lawyers provide free representation to community members. Clinic attorneys routinely get cases dismissed in the interest of justice and otherwise obtain favorable outcomes for clients.

We continue to provide a progressive voice in the media— through our weekly public affairs radio show on Pacifica Radio, The Lawyers Guild Show. It airs Wednesday afternoons at 2pm on KPFK 90.7 and provides a platform for Guild attorneys, allies, and community partners to uplift critical social justice issues and the advocacy work being done to tackle these issues.

In October, we hosted our annual Law Student Disorientation Retreat with student representatives from all major regional law schools. Over 100 Students registered to attend this incredible all-day retreat featuring panel discussions about housing law, employment law, police misconduct & qualified immunity, movement lawyering, and public interest pathways for social justice lawyers. We also hosted



a networking mixer after the retreat as part of our ongoing efforts to foster mentorship relationships between Guild attorneys and law students.

We have accomplished a lot since the last Annual Awards Celebration, but there is still so much more work to be done! We have every reason to believe that the Guild’s critical advocacy and legal support services will be called upon in 2022 and beyond. We want to THANK YOU for your ongoing support as friends and members of the Guild, which allows us to continue fighting the good fight! We welcome your renewed membership and active participation in the Guild. It is an honor to work by your side to advance justice.

Yours in Solidarity,
Krithika Santhanam,
Executive Director
Morgan Ricketts &
Gilbert Saucedo,
Co-Presidents



**CONGRATULATIONS TO HONOREES
JEREMY BLASI & UNITE HERE,
ROGER CLARK, MICHAEL LEE,
HOLLY MITCHELL AND
VICKI SARMIENTO:**

WHAT AN AMAZING CONSTELLATION OF
STELLAR ADVOCATES AND ACTIVISTS!

WE ARE HONORED TO HONOR EACH OF YOU.



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**Congratulations to all of this
year's great honorees! Thank
you for your inspiring work in
the struggle for social justice!**

**In solidarity,
Immigration Committee of the
National Lawyers Guild
Los Angeles Chapter**

**Thanking
UNITE HERE Local 11
and Jeremy Blasi
for all they have
done to empower
working people and
advance the cause
of social justice**

From the
Workers Rights Committee
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Los Angeles Chapter

CONGRATULATIONS!
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Congratulations
NLG 2021 Honorees!
Supervisor Holly Mitchell,
Roger Clark, Vicki Sarmiento,
Michael Lee and the
Members & Movement Lawyering
of UNITE HERE Local 11
You Inspire us all! Thank you!

Isabelle R. Gunning

Congratulations to this year's
illustrious group of Honorees!
Holly Mitchell
Roger Clark
Vicki Sarmiento
Mike Lee
&
Jeremy Blasi & Unite Here!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

With appreciation,
Cynthia Anderson-Barker and Tim Barker



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TO THE
HONOREES**

SINCERELY AND FRATERNALLY YOURS

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**The Past Presidents of the Los Angeles Chapter
of the National Lawyers Guild
congratulate this year's warrior honorees—
Mike Lee, past president of the NLG-LA
Roger Clark
Supervisor Holly Mitchell
Vicki Sarmiento
Jeremy Blasi with UNITE HERE Local 11**

Cynthia Anderson Barker	Bob Newman
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**We will continue to strive for justice and equality for all
as we have done since the NLG's founding in 1937.**

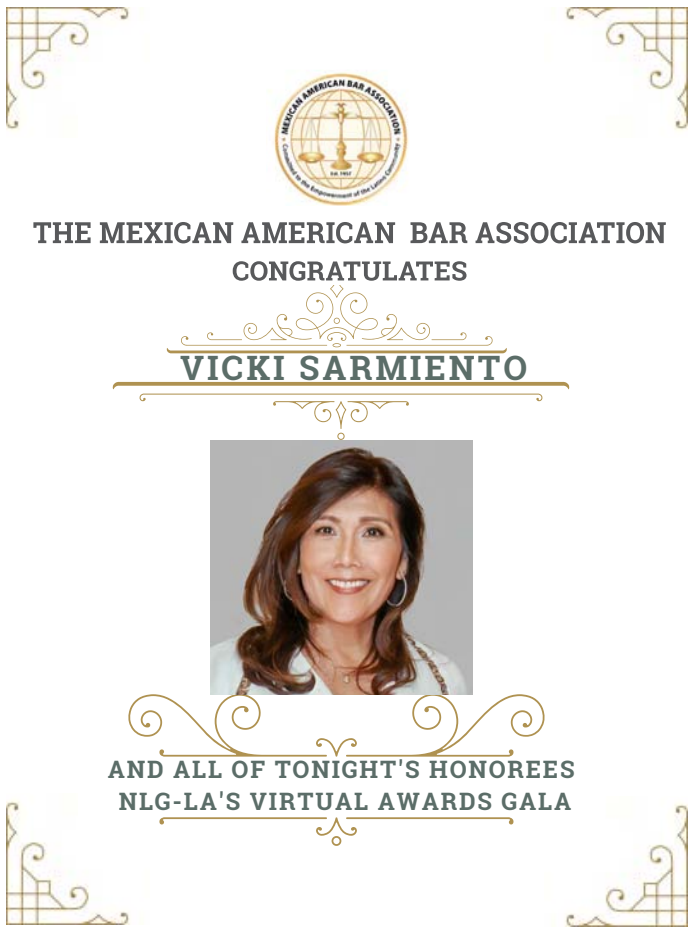
CONGRATULATIONS to VICKI SARMIENTO
for being recognized as a 2021 Honoree by the
National Lawyers Guild of Los Angeles.

Thank you for your years of unfaltering dedication
to fighting the good fight.

I am honored to call you a mentor.
Forever grateful to call you a friend.



Bernadine T. Tsung-Megason
The Tsung-Megason Group @ Compass



Roger and Vicki,
On behalf of my office, and my family, Maribel, Saul, and Eva, I wish to congratulate both of you. I am so pleased that the National Lawyers Guild has decided to honor the two of you, two of my closest friends, and invaluable colleagues in our struggle for fairness and justice.
Just think of all we have learned together over the years. PRICELESS!

Jorge Gonzalez
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of tonight's honorees

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CONGRATULATIONS TO
Holly MITCHELL AND
THE OTHER HONOREES,
YOU HAVE STAYED TRUE
TO YOUR BELIEFS.

Bob NEWMAN

María Elena Durazo
California State Senator, District 24



Thank you to the National Lawyers
Guild-Los Angeles. We honor the incredible
work of individuals and groups that are at the
forefront of social justice movements. In
particular, **UNITE HERE Local 11** for their
dedication to uplifting working families through
union organizing.

Congratulations to Supervisor Holly Mitchell,
Roger Clark, Vicki Sarmiento and Michael Lee.

Congratulations to
Roger Clark and Vicki Sarmiento
for their outstanding careers
supporting the cause of justice
and civil rights.

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**Congratulations to the Guild
& to the honorees.
Thank you for your important work.**

Carol Watson

“Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable . . . Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals.”

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

**Congrats to
Vicki Sarmiento
and Roger Clark
for their tireless
dedication toward
Justice for all.**

—Cara Eisenberg, Esq.
The EISENBERG LAW Firm

**Congratulations
Vicki Sarmiento, Esq. !**

**It has been with
pleasure and pride to
watch you grow into a
fine Warrior for Justice.**

**Law Offices of
Milton C Grimes**

CONGRATULATIONS TO MIKE LEE
ON BEING HONORED BY THE NATIONAL LAWYERS GUILD
OF LOS ANGELES!

YOU TRULY DESERVE THIS RECOGNITION. I WANT TO
THANK YOU FOR YOUR COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL
JUSTICE, AND FOR ALL YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS AS AN
ATTORNEY AND AS AN ADVOCATE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS.

YOU ROCK!!!

GILBERT SAUCEDO



Congratulations to all the
honorees but especially
to my friend and mentor
Michael Lee.

Colleen Flynn
Law Office of Colleen Flynn
3435 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 2910
Los Angeles, CA 90010

TO OUR LEGAL OBSERVERS—
YOUR WORK MAKES FREEDOM
OF SPEECH REAL.
THANK YOU, AND PLEASE KEEP
UP THE GOOD WORK.

THE EXECUTIVE BOARD
OF THE NATIONAL LAWYERS GUILD
OF LOS ANGELES

CONGRATULATES MIKE LEE
(aka The Red Aviator)
for his life-long commitment to the
struggle for social justice and for the
tremendous contributions he has made
to the civil rights movement, both in the
courts and in the streets.

MIKE, you are a true warrior for justice!

With Gratitude,
The NLG-LA Board



THE NATIONAL LAWYERS GUILD IS AN ASSOCIATION DEDICATED TO THE NEED FOR BASIC CHANGE IN THE STRUCTURE OF OUR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SYSTEM. WE SEEK TO UNITE THE LAWYERS, LAW STUDENTS, LEGAL WORKERS AND JAILHOUSE LAWYERS OF AMERICA IN AN ORGANIZATION WHICH SHALL FUNCTION AS AN EFFECTIVE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL FORCE IN THE SERVICE OF THE PEOPLE, TO THE END THAT HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE RIGHTS OF ECOSYSTEMS SHALL BE REGARDED AS MORE SACRED THAN PROPERTY INTERESTS... .

—PREAMBLE TO THE NLG CONSTITUTION

