

Spotlight on Affiliate Leaders

Ireneo Reus—A Short Journey to Long Beach

By Rebecca Cross

Running your own law firm is a proud accomplishment for any young attorney, but for Philippines-born Ireneo A. Reus III of Long Beach, California, it's a symbol of coming full circle.

Reus migrated with his family from the Philippines to Long Beach, California, when he was eight years old. "Being an immigrant, I didn't really know many attorneys in my life," Reus said. "When I was at Whittier [College] I met a few attorneys at career events, and attorneys became mentors for me. I learned from them that being an attorney can give someone many options throughout their careers but also the opportunity to help people."

After graduating *summa cum laude* from Whittier with a degree in economics and political science, Reus attended law school at UCLA, where he served as Senior Articles Editor for the *UCLA Journal of Law and Technology*. In addition to heading his own practice representing businesses, Reus serves on the boards of the California Young Lawyers Association (CYLA) and Philippine American Bar Association of Los Angeles (PABA).

Professional Growth

Reus credits his luck in finding mentors to guide him in his career as a major contribution to his success. "My mentors had confidence in me and encouraged me," Reus noted. One such mentor was fellow ABA YLD leader Andrew Schpak, who prepared Reus to be more active in the ABA YLD after his first conference last year in San Diego.

"He said, 'Here's what you need to do in terms of being more active,'" Reus explained, adding that ABA YLD staff offered support as well. Reus was awarded an ABA YLD General Practice, Solo & Small Firm Practitioners Scholarship to cover the costs to attend ABA YLD meetings. He's been a member of the American Bar Association (ABA) since law school.

Bar Leadership

Reus's relationship to the ABA YLD is multifaceted. Reus serves on the Diversity team in his two year role as the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association's (NAPABA) National Affiliate Representative to the ABA YLD. As the ABA YLD liaison to the ABA Standing Committee on Technology and Information Systems, Reus helps oversee how the ABA uses technology. Reus says one of the concerns of the Committee is to address how technological resources can be used to increase membership. The Committee is also developing policies for and advising the ABA on online social media use.

Reus also serves on the ABA YLD Member Service Project team. The team's goal is to create a curriculum for affiliates throughout the country that provides both soft and hard skills on how to be a better lawyer, networking and business development opportunities, and so on, and that emphasizes the benefits of developing these skills early in one's career.

"This year I really want to build on the relationship between NAPABA and the ABA," Reus said. He is excited about NAPABA's new telepanels feature, through which young attorneys can call in and hear a speaker address a range of different issues, such as job search concerns. "I really want to use and leverage the resources of each group," Reus said.

Ironically, Reus's bar participation has gone from the local level to the national level and finally to the state level. Reus's involvement with the ABA YLD led to him being selected as an alternate delegate to the State Bar of California's delegation to the ABA House of Delegates. Reus then became more involved and has just begun serving a three-year term on

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the CYLA Board of Directors. “We focus a lot on pro bono matters,” Reus said. This includes the Jack Berman Award of Achievement that honors California lawyers who contribute pro bono work and service. “I am looking forward to seeing how this group is run and how I can contribute,” Reus stated.

Day-to-Day Practice

Today, most of Reus’s clients are in the health care, media, and entertainment industries. He hung out his shingle in 2005 and specializes in business litigation and corporate counseling. Reus said his deceased father, who managed to raise seven children and bravely move to another country and culture, was a huge inspiration to him.

When he was looking to set up his law practice four years ago, Reus was struck by how much had changed for the better in Long Beach. He appreciates the panoramic views from his office, including both the inland parts of Long Beach, which are home to many low-income, newly immigrated families, and also the beautiful ocean views. “I have a better appreciation for how far my family has come,” Reus said, “and I always feel grounded and humbled. It’s sort of like a homecoming for me in a way.”

When not practicing law, Reus enjoys spending time with his family and traveling. He is also happy to mentor other attorneys, law students, and college students. “I enjoy giving back.” Reus stated.

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