

MEDIA ALERT

For Immediate Release, June 3, 2004

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OAKLAND CHINATOWN AFFORDABLE HOUSING LAWYERS HONORED

Oakland, California, June 3, 2004 - One year after the attempted mass evictions of low-income, predominantly elderly Asian tenants in Oakland's Pacific Renaissance Plaza, members of the tenants' legal team are being honored for their work in stopping the evictions and seeking redress for their clients and the broader Oakland community. The lawsuit filed last June alleges that the Pacific Renaissance Developers violated agreements with the City of Oakland to maintain low-income affordable housing, overcharged low-income tenants by over \$2 million, failed to repay a loan from Oakland worth \$16 million, committed self-dealing transactions and failed to provide accounting records, among other wrongdoing.

While the litigation continues, the East Bay Community Law Center (EBCLC) is honoring the lawyers and law firms for the community benefits already achieved and for the enormous commitment of resources provided by the pro bono law firms. According to Jeff Selbin, Executive Director of EBCLC, "As a legal services organization with limited resources, we could not have brought this case without the involvement of the pro bono attorneys and large firm resources. As a result, 50 low-income families would have lost their homes and serious violations of the public trust and misuse of funds would have gone unaddressed. The hundreds of thousands of dollars in attorneys' time on the side of the Pacific Renaissance tenants and community goes a long way to leveling the playing field between our low-income elderly Asian tenants and the Developers."

At a reception on Monday, June 7, 2004. 5-7:00 p.m., at the Law Offices of Paul, Hastings, Janofsky & Walker LLP, 55 Second Street, 24th Floor, San Francisco, the East Bay Community Law Center and the Pacific Renaissance Affordable Housing Community Coalition will honor The California Affordable Housing Law Project, and the law firms of Heller Ehrman White & McAuliffe LLP, Paul, Hastings, Janofsky & Walker LLP, and Siegel & Yee, and present COMMUNITY JUSTICE FOR LAWYERING awards to the following attorneys from these firms:

Adam Mizock, Paul Hastings

Warrington Parker, Heller Ehrman

Mike Rawson, The California Affordable Housing Law Project

David Stuckey, Paul Hastings
Alan Yee, Siegel & Yee

WHY: Key speakers from the legal team, community, and tenants will be on hand to speak to the following actions:

- History of the development of the Pacific Renaissance Plaza and wrongdoings committed by the Developers.
- Tenant stories on what the lawsuit means to them.
- Role of pro bono lawyers in supporting campaigns for community justice.

The East Bay Community Law Center was founded by law students at Boalt Hall School of Law in 1988 with the dual mission of providing high quality legal services to low-income clients in Alameda County and clinical legal education opportunities for law students. EBCLC is now the largest provider of free civil legal assistance to the poor in Alameda County and a nationally-recognized poverty law clinic, with services including eviction defense and housing advocacy, employment and income support, HIV/AIDS law, and community economic development. The overall goal of EBCLC's work is to help make the lives of Bay Area community members more healthy, secure, productive, and hopeful.

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