

## NITA J ITCHHAPORIA FOR AILA BOARD OF GOVERNORS



My family's story is the true American dream. My parents came to the U.S. to create a better life for all of us and to give us (their two daughters) all of the opportunities available regardless of color, gender or race. I immigrated to the U.S. at the age of seven (7) from Mumbai, India. Today, my parents are successfully retired, my sister is an Interventional Cardiologist and currently the first Indo-American woman to be the Chair of the Board of Governors of the College of Cardiology, and I am the founder and Managing Attorney of Counsellaw a Professional Law Corporation in Silicon Valley since 1994. We provide businesses and individuals with personalized, professional Business, Family and Naturalization Immigration services. I have been a member of AILA for over 15 years. I feel blessed that my parents brought us to the U.S. and had the vision to see what could be and I am delighted to assist others to realize their American dream.

AILA has been phenomenal partner and support in the growth of my business. Thus, after being active on both the local and national level for several years and dealing first hand with the difficulties in Immigration, I would like to get more involved with the AILA Board of Governors. I was the prior Chair of the AILA Santa Clara Valley Chapter, I have held and continue to hold several different AILA local and national liaison roles (SJCIS, CSC, NSC, Benefits Policy), I have worked and continue to work on many AILA national committees (CIS Ombudsman (both Chair and member), Advocacy (Business Immigration), Transformation, Finance, National and Midyear Conference, etc.), I speak on Immigration topics both at AILA and non-AILA events, and I continue to work hard to keep a positive relationship and an open dialogue with USCIS. I also continue to work within the community with several non-profits providing pro bono legal services. I believe only in partnering to deal with the issues at hand can we come up with a win-win solution for all.

#### **1. The major challenges AILA and its members face over the next year.**

- I believe that the biggest challenges Immigration attorneys will face will be business and Immigration related with the continued drain of the professional work force and the lack of consistency within Immigration.
- The challenges will be how to sustain and grow one's business with all the competing forces from the downturn in the economy globally, the anti-immigration lobbying that continues, the increase in outsourcing and pressures to decrease prices versus the increased complexity within the field of Immigration law, greater expectations and demands of clients (both Employers and Candidates), and the continued volatility and changes in Immigration.
- The field has become more stressful with greater burn out rates. With the increase in the number of RFEs, denials, motions and appeals, Employers and Candidates are becoming more frustrated and impatient. Companies are not able to grow as fast as they can due to inability to get the appropriate human resources they require. Entrepreneurs are hesitant about establishing their new ventures in the U.S. particularly with the uncertainty as to whether they will be able to receive the necessary visas and extensions to build the next Yahoo, Google, etc.

#### **B. How AILA can improve its services and relevance.**

- I believe AILA already has a great infrastructure in place. We need to continue to work with DHS/ USCIS, CBP and ICE, DOL, DOS, and the Consulates to build better and more open communication channels and relationship where we emphasize working together instead of against one another. I also strongly believe that we need to jointly partner with the government agencies to educate them on the various industries and the change taking place globally as to how businesses operate today and what their needs are. In addition, we should hold joint conferences in different sectors of the U.S. to show how business differs within different market segments.
- For its membership, I believe AILA needs to be conscious of the immense amount of pressures that are on the members and provide avenues where they may be able to release some of these pressures but gain insight on changes in the law, on Law Office Management issues, and about taking care of themselves. I think having seminars on other areas of law such as Tax/ Investments, Estate Planning, Compliance, etc. would be worthwhile.

#### **C. My strengths and leadership style.**

- My over 15 years of experience in Immigration Law and growing my firm from the ground up. My strong business background and communication skills. My ability to interact and work with all different types of people from all backgrounds. My relationship with USCIS at both a local and national level. My leadership style is to select the right individuals, provide them with the best tools, create a holistic space to achieve, and empower them for excellence.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT- NITA J ITCHHAPORIA FOR AILA BOG**