



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Six months and counting .....

A little over six months ago I was sworn in as the CHBA President, and I set goals for myself, as did the CHBA Board. One of those goals was to bring CHBA to another level; and I believe that with our collective efforts, we have done that.

We clarified the mission of CHBA which is to: improve access to justice; promote equal protection under the law; increase diversity; bring services to the community; support our attorneys and law students. We have accomplished much in these past six months, including, but not limited to, launching a new website; reinstating our newsletter; hosting monthly legal clinics; implementing our MCLE program; assisting and mentoring our law students and new attorneys; and, reaching out to and supporting our community. From building homes in Bay View Hunter's Point to hosting legal clinics in Richmond to writing letters of support for judicial and federal appointment candidates, we have fully embraced the mission of CHBA. We have exemplified what it means to be a social engineer.

However, even with all of our accomplishments, we still have a void in our community. The children of Oakland, San Francisco and the Bay Area need our help. They need our guidance, direction and support.

### Features

#### Message From The President

**Featured Attorney:  
Thomas J. Broome  
"A CHBA History  
Lesson "**

**Charles Houston Bar  
Membership Called  
To Support Demetrius  
Shelton for NBA  
President**

**Join CHBA**

### Save the Date!

July 11, 2009	August 1-8, 2009	September 19, 2009	October 17, 2009
CHBA Annual Membership BBQ	National Bar Association Annual Conference	CHBA Family Law Clinic Law	Rebuilding Together Oakland

[www.charleshoustonbar.org](http://www.charleshoustonbar.org)

## Presidents Message- Continued from Page 1

CHBA is developing a Pipeline Program, whose primary goal is touch the lives of our youth from elementary school to college. We will reach out to our youth and expose them to the legal arena; encourage them to become involved in the legal field; mentor and counsel them; and ensure that they know and understand the power of the law and, more importantly how to utilize this power to better their lives, their circumstances and situations.

However, in order to accomplish all that we do, CHBA needs the support of its members. With over 1000 African American attorneys and judges in the Bay Area our active membership is slightly at 30%. We have come up with innovative ways to increase our membership – and I thank and appreciate our members. But, we need more members, support and money. If you have not paid your 2009 dues or made a donation to the Student Achievement Fund, I ask that you do so. If you have not made a commitment to our Annual Dinner Dance and Gala, I ask that you do so. Even if you have donated I am asking everyone to do a little more.

Remember we are here to assist African American's in their endeavors; to bring attorneys together and assist them; to make a difference in Black community; to encourage African American's to enter legal profession and to excel in this profession; and to lay the foundation for future. I ask that you help me reach these goals and be the change that we seek.

Nedra Shawler

CHBA President

## “A CHBA History Lesson” Interview with Thomas J. Broome

### What has been your involvement with CHBA since becoming an attorney?

I became a member of the Charles Houston Bar Association in 1974, right after becoming an attorney. I became President of CHBA in 1980, after serving on several committees during the tenure of Hon. Ben Travis, Robert L. Harris and George Holland as CHBA Presidents.

Shortly after becoming a member of CHBA, with Robert L. Harris leading the way, CHBA successfully sued the Alameda County Bar Association over unfairness in the assignment of criminal defense cases involving indigent defendants. The Alameda County Criminal Court Appointed Panel made it difficult for young attorneys (including myself at the time) to meet the requirements to work on more serious criminal matters. CHBA sued the Alameda County Bar Association, and we were able to change the guidelines for attorney's on the Alameda Court Appointed Panel, which are still in existence today. As a result of the litigation, I was able to move forward with my legal career and handle serious felonies, including defending clients charged with murder. I was also appointed to the Alameda County Bar Associations' Criminal Court Appointed Governing Committee, on which I now serve as Chairman.

During the time that Hon. Ben Travis, Robert Harris, and George Holland served as Presidents, CHBA was an activist Bar and truly embodied the legacy of CHBA-advocating for the rights of the poor and minority. "A Lawyer is either a social engineer or a parasite on society" as Charles Hamilton Houston once said, and CHBA lawyers were definitely social engineers.

In 1980, I became President of CHBA.

I continued to pursue the mission of social justice, which my predecessors had fought for. That year, with a partnership with then National Bar Association President, Robert Harris, CHBA received national attention for its hosting of the Black on Black Crime Conference held in Oakland, CA. The Black on Black Crime Conference brought together African Americans of all professions to address and create solutions facing African Americans in the US. CHBA received national acclaim for their work on the Black on Black Crime Conference and was even featured in a Special Edition of Ebony Magazine.

### When you served as President of CHBA, what were your goals?

When I served as President of CHBA, my goal was to raise awareness of the injustices facing African Americans on a local, state and national level. As President of CHBA, I wanted to provide the African American community with a voice, and provide a realization of social justice through the law. I remember making speeches in front of the superior court as CHBA's President when Huey Newton was arrested, and fighting against police brutality by representing several clients who had been victims of police violence through CHBA.

As CHBA President, I wanted to provide various channels to apprise community members of their rights. One way this was accomplished was through the television show "Law and the People", where lawyers discussed the law with moderators. Robert Harris was the initial host of that television show, followed by Ruth Herch. As CHBA President, my mission was to ensure the poor and disenfranchised knew their rights, and had advocates to provide a voice for them. After serving as President of CHBA in 1980, I then moved on to serve as the National Bar Associations Region IX Director in 1981-82 and Vice President of the NBA in 1983-84, and then the President of the National Bar Association in 1986. -Continued on page 4.

### Charles Houston Bar Membership Called To Support Demetrius Shelton for NBA President



Our own past president Demetrius Shelton is running for President of the National Bar Association, one of our country's oldest and strongest civil rights advocacy organizations. The National Bar Association is the national body of predominantly African American lawyers and judges of which CHBA is an affiliate. In these times, the National Bar needs Mr. Shelton's expertise at its helm. CHBA members are urged to support Mr. Shelton's bid with donations, volunteering, and by joining the CHBA contingent at the NBA Annual Convention and Exhibits in San Diego this summer (Aug. 1 – 8) to cast your vote. Visit [www.electdemetrius.com](http://www.electdemetrius.com) to learn more.

Few jurists of any age come close to rivaling the depth of Shelton's leadership and management experience. He leads firmly and by example. He is unafraid to make the tough calls. He has committed himself wholly --- through his career in public to the many hours of unrecorded volunteer service to his community --- to the task of improving the lives of others, and African Americans in particular. He is proactive and fearless in his advocacy.

Shelton has successfully led an assortment of local, state, and national organizations

within the legal community. He has served as a Vice President and Governor of the State Bar of California, the largest state bar association in the country. He has experienced the National Bar Association, in particular, from every vantage point along its chain of command, as president of CHBA, president of the California Association of Black Lawyers (CABL), Director of Region IX, and as a constant fixture on the NBA Board of Directors.

A constant feature of Shelton's leadership is his outspoken commitment to push for increased diversity within the legal profession and to reach out to like-minded organizations to build consensus and caucuses of influence. Shelton provided an instrumental force in the creation of the State Bar of California's historic "Pipeline Task Force," an entity created to study and address the issue of diversity in the legal profession. Shelton's work also contributed to the state's first Judicial Summit on Diversity.

Shelton already has a national presence and an appreciation for the global influence of the NBA. Even as the statewide CABL President, he took the national stage to direct relief and fundraising events for Hurricane Katrina victims while simultaneously applying strong pressure on national and state governments to investigate the lackluster emergency response America witnessed on television. And, as NBA Vice President of Regions and Affiliates, Shelton led the NBA's historic Election Protection efforts as well as spearheaded efforts opposing the split of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeal.

CHBA has the rare distinction of having three of its past presidents become presidents of the NBA: Robert L. Harris, James Cole, and Thomas Broome. Each of these men, along with seven other past NBA presidents, endorse Shelton's candidacy. The people who understand the demands of this position choose Shelton. He is also backed by every predominantly African American bar association in California.

When elected with your help, Shelton has pledged to continue to advocate and work toward diversifying the judiciary, to combat the "pipeline to the prisons," and to improve the NBA's influence in matters of interest by developing a rapid response system to broadcast the NBA's position in timely response to matters of importance.

Shelton works as a Deputy City Attorney with the City of Oakland in its litigation division. In that office, he has been selected to serve as chief advisor, and special counsel for various city projects and agencies. He has been responsible for handling high profile cases and issues on behalf of the city. Shelton received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics from the University of California, Los Angeles, a certificate in Public Policy/Administration from the University of California, Berkeley's Graduate School of Public Policy, as an Alfred P. Sloan (Ford) Foundation Fellow, and his Juris Doctorate degree from the University of California, Davis School of Law (King Hall).

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Attorneys at Law

Every few days, new court decisions affecting California attorney conduct are filed. We summarize these cases on a *What's New* page at [www.fishkinlaw.com](http://www.fishkinlaw.com)

Jerome Fishkin is A-V Rated by Martindale-Hubbell

Continued from Page 2- **"A CHBA History Lesson"**

**What do you think is the greatest impact CHBA has had on the African American Community?**

CHBA gave the average citizen access to legal services, specifically through the federally funded Judicare Program.

The Judicare Program allowed CHBA attorneys to represent community members at low cost rates, and many times, no cost. In addition, CHBA has proven to be an organization that gives back- through the Moot Court Competitions Program, the Various community service projects and legal clinics, CHBA has proven to be a "legal monster" in California.

**What is your fondest moment of being a member of CHBA?**

It was an excited and incredible moment for CHBA to be nationally recognized for its work on the Black on Black Crime Conference. This event made me proud to be a CHBA member.

**Thomas J. Broome Bio.**

Thomas J. Broome, was born in Hinds County, Mississippi on January 6, 1938. He attended local Oakland area schools including McClymonds High, Oakland Junior College, San Jose State University and San Francisco Law School. He is licensed to practice before the Supreme Court of the State of California and the Supreme Court of the United States.

Upon admission to the California Bar in 1974, Mr. Broome joined in the creation of the Law Firm of Broome, Cooper & LaBrie, which later became Broome, Cooper & Associates. The firm practices Criminal, Juvenile, Personal Injury, Family Law and Insurance Civil defense. The Firm is highly regarded in the community. Mr. Broome is a nationally prominent trial lawyer who received nationwide publicity and acclaim in the "Wolfpack", People vs. Randolph;

"Faye Stender", People vs. Brooks; "brain damage/paralysis" shooting, People vs. West; and the "PCP" killings, People vs. Braeseke. In the latter case, California's Shield Law was declared unconstitutional based on a motion by Mr. Broome. Though the issue was rendered moot in the Braeseke case, the unconstitutionality of the Shield Law was later affirmed by the California Supreme Court in a subsequent case on the rationale established in Braeseke. In the latter case, California's Shield Law was declared unconstitutional based on a motion by Mr. Broome.

Mr. Broome has been chief trial counsel in hundreds of cases and has argued before the Superior Courts and the Court of Appeal of the State of California. Mr. Broome has tried over Forty murder cases with acquittals in ten, lesser offenses of manslaughter in eleven others, and dismissals short of trial in eight others, and has obtained verdicts of acquittal in more than thirty criminal cases. He has obtained dismissals short of trial in an additional eight murder cases and many other felony cases.

**CHBA Membership**

There's never been a more important time for you to join the Charles Houston Bar Association! The Charles Houston Bar Association, an affiliate of the National Bar Association represents the interests of African American lawyers, judges and law students throughout Northern California. Celebrating it's 54th year, CHBA is committed to working within the African American community to facilitate access to the justice system and to promote equal protection under the law. To become a members please visit <http://charleshoustonbar.org> or e-mail membership chair Andrew Houston at [andrewwhouston@gmail.com](mailto:andrewwhouston@gmail.com)

**National Bar Association 84th Annual Convention & Exhibits**

**"Unleashing the Power of Our Legacy: The Time is Now"**

San Diego, California The Hilton San Diego Bayfront Hotel August 1--8, 2009 San Diego, California will be the host city for the National Bar Association's 84th Annual Convention. The convention will be hosted by the Earl B. Gilliam Bar Association. The convention will take place at the Hilton San Diego Bayfront Hotel.

**REGISTRATION INFORMATION**

Register now for the National Bar Association's 84th Annual Convention and Exhibits and save. The registration fee includes Continuing Legal Education (CLE) Seminars and course materials, the President's Reception, and the Annual Banquet. Register now. Please do not mail or fax the enclosed registration form after July 10, 2009.

**HOTEL INFORMATION**

The Hilton San Diego Bayfront Hotel, 1 Park Boulevard, San Diego, California, 92101. The National Bar Association Convention room rates are \$229.00 per night, single or double occupancy not including applicable state and city taxes, currently totaling 12.64%. To make reservations and take advantage of the Convention room rate call the Hilton at (619) 564-3333 or fax requests to (619) 564-3344. NBA special rates are good until July 2, 2009.

Verleana D. Green, Esq.

CHBA Newsletter Editor