



AMERICAN SAMOA

BAR ASSOCIATION

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American Samoa Bar Association News Release

For Immediate Release
Sean Morrison, President
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American Samoa Bar Association Press Release – 2012 Arthur A. Morrow Justice Award to be Presented to Ipu Lefiti

The American Samoa Bar Association is honored to announce that it will be presenting the first ever Arthur A. Morrow Justice Award to Ipu Lefiti during the 40th Anniversary Law Conference at the American Samoa Community College Lecture Hall on April 28, 2012. Ms. Lefiti has shown true commitment to providing justice to the people of American Samoa. For years, she has been a stalwart advocate to victims of domestic and sexual violence by breaking the barriers of silence and shame through speaking out and reporting.

Ms. Lefiti has been instrumental in organizing family violence diversity training, cultural sensitivity awareness programs, and communications seminars. She champions the victims of child abuse, domestic violence, and sexual assault through editorial writings, public speaking and through Court Watch. She has been a strong activist of promoting awareness through church and community partnerships.

Ms. Lefiti is a strong community leader and has been very active in a number of organizations that seek to promote justice and the people in American Samoa:

- Vice-Chair for the Multi-Disciplinary Task Force against family violence;
- One of the founders of the American Samoa Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, serving as Vice Chair from 2004-2007 and as Executive Director from 2009-2010;
- Co-founder of American Samoa's Task Force on Faces of Abuse;
- Secretary for the Women in New Dimension, a domestic violence transitional facility;
- Secretary on the governing board of the Boys and Girls Club of American Samoa; and
- Member of the First Lady's Ta'ita'itama Executive Board on prevention of underage drinking initiative.

Ms. Lefiti is a graduate of Samoana High School, and served in the U.S. military until 1994. She is now retired from her job as a surgical technician at the LBJ ER, but she continues to work

there part time to assist LBJ with their staff shortage. Ms. Lefiti is the third child of Vailu'u Failautusi Avegalio (Leone) and Ema Toomalatai Lauolefiso (Mataututai Apia). She is married to Taupau Kaluse Lefiti (Tau, Manua) and has two sons, Vainu'upo Pelekina and Lui Edward, both following in her footsteps by serving in the United States Army.

The Arthur A. Morrow Justice Award is presented to an individual or organization that has, through their actions, made significant improvements to the justice system and the rule of law in American Samoa. This may be demonstrated through improving access to the judicial system, showing superior professional competence, demonstrating outstanding integrity, professionalism, and civility, expanding pro bono services to the territory, upholding the highest principles and traditions of the legal profession, or otherwise empowering the legal profession in the territory.

Arthur A. Morrow was American Samoa's longest serving Chief Justice, sitting on the bench from 1937-1966. His term created much of the jurisprudence that is the foundation for American Samoa's legal system. Chief Justice Morrow's commitment to the territory and its justice system serve as the basis for the Justice Award.

The 40th Anniversary Law Conference will celebrate 40 years of promoting justice in American Samoa. The conference will include a presentation on the history of the Bar Association, the awarding of the first annual Arthur A. Morrow Justice Award, a panel discussion on citizenship and what it means for American Samoa, and a presentation on the High Court's revised case management system.

This event is free and open to the public. This is a great opportunity to learn about key legal issues and gain valuable insights into the administration of justice in the Territory.

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