

PRESS ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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San Luis Obispo Unity Bar Celebrates First-Year Anniversary with Website Relaunch Focused on a Diverse and Highly Qualified Bar and Bench

SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA. Formed in October 2023 and guided by a vision of a highly qualified judiciary that reflects the richness and diversity of California, the San Luis Obispo Unity Bar is an alliance of law students, attorneys, and judicial officers dedicated to promoting diversity in the legal profession and in the judiciary through outreach, education, mentorship, and the endorsement of highly qualified judicial candidates committed to access to justice. We are pleased to celebrate our first-year anniversary with a website relaunch and continued commitment to our mission and values.

For the last year, San Luis Obispo Unity Bar has met monthly and worked closely with leaders of San Luis Obispo College of Law, the San Luis Obispo County Bar Association, and the Women Lawyers Association of San Luis Obispo County to facilitate educational programs, welcome California Attorney General Rob Bonta to our community for a free-ranging discussion, mentor college students, law students, and attorneys, conduct K-12 outreach about the legal profession, and endorse highly qualified individuals for judicial appointment by the California Governor.

As San Luis Obispo County Superior Court Judge and San Luis Obispo Unity Bar leader Matthew Guerrero explains, “An inclusive bar and bench fosters legitimacy in our court system, which is necessary to promote equality and fairness in the law.”

The revamped San Luis Obispo Unity Bar website showcases the organization’s work over the last year and provides new resources to support outreach, education, mentorship, and judicial endorsement.

San Luis Obispo College of Law Campus Dean Erica Flores Baltodano said “The mission of San Luis Obispo Unity Bar closely aligns with the mission of our community-based law school, which draws upon local attorneys and judges to serve as adjunct faculty and is committed to making law school more accessible and affordable to a diversity of law students. Many of our law students and alums have taken on leadership roles with San Luis Obispo Unity Bar to encourage and elevate groups who have historically been excluded from the bar and bench and continue to face barriers to access.”

San Luis Obispo Unity Bar is modeled after the Sacramento Unity Bar, which formed 37 years ago when the leaders of various affinity bar associations, including Law Raza Lawyers, the Asian Bar Association of Sacramento, and the Wiley Manuel Bar, formed an alliance to work together, lift up each other, and collectively nurture and support diverse candidates for judicial appointment. Sacramento Unity Bar also includes bar associations representing South Asians, Filipinos, women, and the LGBTQ+ communities.

The Sacramento Unity Bar has inspired generations of lawyers and judges across California and sister Unity Bars have formed in counties across the state. One co-founder of the Unity Bar of Sacramento, Luis Céspedes, currently serves as the Governor's Judicial Appointment Secretary. Secretary Céspedes says "now more than ever, the work of the Unity Bar is critical" for educating the public about the importance of our judiciary in an era of significant divisiveness and conflict.

San Luis Obispo Unity Bar is aligned with the mission of Unity Bar chapters across California and will continue working collaboratively to accomplish our shared vision.

Please visit www.slounitybar.com to learn more about San Luis Obispo Unity, join our mailing list, and connect with our members regarding outreach and speaking engagements, upcoming events, mentorship, and the process for seeking judicial endorsement.

San Luis Obispo Unity Bar | info@slounitybar.com | www.slounitybar.com