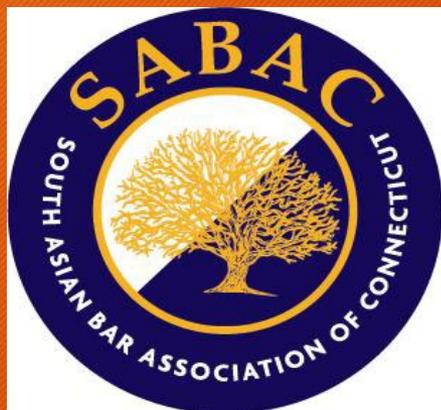


South Asian Bar Association of Connecticut



2026 Board of
Directors Elections

Candidates

Attorney Fizza Alam



Fizza is Muslim and Pakistani-American who calls Waterbury home. She is also a junior associate at Wiggin and Dana.

Fizza received her J.D., summa cum laude, from the University of Illinois College of Law where she was inducted into the Order of the Coif. Fizza received her B.A., summa cum laude, in political science and economics from the University of Connecticut with a minor in human rights.

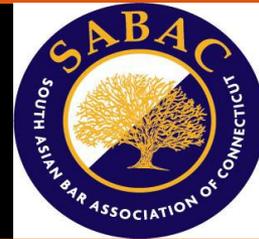
During law school, Fizza competed in negotiation and moot court competitions placing as the champion of the annual Anderson Center Negotiation Competition and as a Finalist in the ABA First Amendment Diversity Moot Court Competition. As a law student, Fizza worked in the Illinois College of Law Immigration and Intellectual Property clinics where she assisted clients with asylum and trademark applications.

She was also actively involved with numerous organizations including as Founder and President South Asian Law Students Association and President of Muslim Law Students Association.

Fizza is especially passionate about mentorship, and in November, was a panelist for Quinnipiac School of Law's MLSA and BLSA "Women of Color in Big Law" event. Before law school, Fizza served as a Director of Be (A)Part, a nonprofit which arose in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, through which she helped Waterbury high school students prepare materials for college and job applications. In 2021, Fizza was acclaimed as one of three "Heroes of Our Time" by UConn Early College Experience Magazine.

Fizza also speaks Urdu, her favorite Urdu song is "Painyon Mein" by Sajjad Ali

Attorney Sarina Bhargava



Sarina Bhargava is a corporate associate at Robinson+Cole. She was recently sworn into the CT Bar after graduating from UConn Law in May 2025.



Prior to law school, Sarina worked at RTX in both the Finance Leadership Development Program (FLDP), and as a Senior Analyst on the Corporate Strategy & Development Team.

Sarina hopes to join the SABAC Board to 1) continue to enhance her sense of community and belonging in a group she has always considered home, and 2) to begin making an impact through her leadership as a young attorney.

Sarina looks forward to the opportunity to join the Board and help this organization grow in any way she can. From running social media, to helping to set up and organize events, to supporting all members of the organization - there is no task that is too big or too small for her to assist with.

Attorney Anand O. Gupta



I am an Associate with Robinson + Cole and have worked for many years in contract procurement, engineering programs, accounts, and sales. In my current role at Robinson+Cole, I draft and negotiate design and construction contracts for commercial, health care and industrial projects and advise clients on construction contract performance issues.

I would like to continue the work that the Board has begun in 2025 to expand our outreach into our local law school communities. It is important that SABAC and its resources are visible and accessible to law students in our community. I hope to further those efforts by continuing to manage our new law student mentorship program, and possibly expand the program to include early-career attorneys

Attorney Bhanuka Y. Mahabamunuge



Attorney Bhanuka Y. Mahabamunuge is a 2019 graduate from the Maurice A. Deane School of Law at Hofstra University. He is currently a commercial litigation associate at McCarter & English, LLP. His areas of practice revolve around real estate litigation and business disputes. He have been practicing for 5 years and currently practices in both CT and NY State Courts at all levels. Recently, Attorney Mahabamunuge was recognized by Super Lawyers as a Rising Star in Business Litigation in Connecticut for 2024. Prior to joining McCarter and immediately after graduating from Hofstra, he prosecuted child abuse and neglect cases on behalf of New York City's Administration for Children's Services for approximately two years. He transitioned into civil litigation and worked for two regional firms in Connecticut based out of Boston focusing on professional liability, wrongful death, and construction defect cases.

Attorney John Mutchler



John H. Mutchler is a Partner at Robinson+Cole in the Intellectual Property and Technology practice group and a member of the Robinson+Cole DEI committee. His global practice includes patent prosecution and Reexamination Proceedings, IP licensing, U.S. government and private company contracting, copyright and trademark consulting as well as litigation and IP due diligence in bankruptcy proceedings, asset purchase and sales agreements, business formation and mergers and acquisitions.

John is a Professional Engineer (PE), registered to practice in Connecticut. He also has been an adjunct professor of law at Western New England University School of Law, Rensselaer Polytechnic University and the University of Hartford where he taught IP, IP Licensing and Entrepreneurship courses.

John serves on the SABAC Executive Board of Directors as its Treasurer, Trustee of the SABANA Foundation and as the Treasurer/President Elect for the Lawyers Collaborative for Diversity (LCD).

John received his law degree from Quinnipiac University School of Law, his M.S. degree in Metallurgy from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, as well as his M.S. degree in Engineering Management from Western New England University

Attorney Vanitha Patil



Attorney Vanitha Patil is the founding attorney and principal of Patil Law Group, specializing in Immigration Law. She assists a diverse clientele, including startups, IT and FinTech companies, pharmaceutical and manufacturing corporations, investors, and individuals with extraordinary abilities, as well as family and humanitarian applicants. Passionate about community engagement, Attorney Patil contributes to the American Immigration Lawyers Association's Military Assistance Program and Sneha Inc., a Connecticut nonprofit supporting South Asian families. She also serves on the board of the Farmington Library, playing an active role in her local community. Recognized for Excellence in Immigration Law by Lawyers of Distinction, Attorney Patil previously served as in-house counsel for VLink, Inc., and as an associate at the Law Office of Wayne E. Chapple. She holds an LLB from SDM Law College (India), an LLM from the University of Connecticut School of Law, and a mini-MBA from Boston University.

Attorney Prerna Rao



Attorney Prerna Rao currently serves on the SABAC Board of Directors.

She is a principal of Omnia Law, LLC,

focusing on general civil and commercial trial and appellate litigation, and

select personal injury, and medical malpractice cases. Prerna has been

recognized for her work as a litigator, including by Senator Blumenthal in

2021 and by the CT Law Tribune as a New Leader in the Law in 2019,

and most recently by the Quinnipiac University School of Law Alumni

Association in 2024 and the New Haven County Bar Association in 2025.

Prerna is also an adjunct professor at Quinnipiac University School of

Law. She enjoys being active in her local community and regularly

volunteers with area high school and law school mock trial and moot

court events and serves as an elected official on her town's zoning

board of appeals.

Attorney Sanjiv Reejhsinghani



Attorney Sanjiv Reejhsinghani currently serves on the SABAC Board of Directors. He is a 2011 graduate of Western New England University School of Law in Springfield, MA, and has been an active member of SABAC since 2009, having volunteered and/or attended almost every SABAC Awards Dinner since that year, and serving as a Board of Director for the 2021 year. While in law school, Sanjiv co-founded, and was the first President, of the South Asian Law Students Association (SALSA) chapter. He was also the 2010 recipient of the Connecticut Hispanic Bar Association (CHBA) Student Health Law Award.

Attorney Reejhsinghani is also a graduate of the 2018-2019 Massachusetts Bar Association (MBA) Leadership Academy, and he currently serves as a member of the MBA Business Law Section Council, along with 15 other attorneys across the state. Furthermore, he is the Justice of the Central Connecticut Alumni Chapter of Phi Alpha Delta (P.A.D.) Law Fraternity, International, which is the largest law fraternity in the United States. Attorney Reejhsinghani is also very active with the Hampden County (Mass.) Bar Association, and specifically within the Real Estate Section and the New Lawyers Section. His solo practice focuses mainly on transactional, real estate, and landlord-tenant-based law.

Attorney Nandita Ruchandani



I am writing to express my interest in running for the position of Director. Since my term as Immediate Past President is now ending, I would like to be able to continue to support the organization and the new leadership in a meaningful way. I believe that my experience in shaping and guiding the organization during my term as President, as well as my experience on the Executive Committee of SABA NA, makes me well-qualified for the position. I am excited to see in what new ways SABAC will strengthen and deepen its influence and impact in the coming year. I hope that you will afford me the chance to do so.

Attorney Vinay Thakur



Vinay Thakur is a seasoned intellectual-property attorney and Senior IP Manager at University of Connecticut (UConn), where he oversees life-sciences inventions arising from UConn, the University of Connecticut Health Center (UCHC) and other state academic institutions. With a foundational background as a research scientist in both academia and industry, Vinay brings six years of hands-on experience in IP management to his current role. He provides strategic protection and commercialization guidance to licensing directors and the UConn research community, including evaluation of invention disclosures, patentability assessments, and strategic licensing advice.

Vinay holds a Ph.D. from the National Chemical Laboratory in India, and earned his J.D. from UConn Law. Beyond his institutional role, he is an active volunteer—as a mentor for career counseling sessions and judging city and state-level science fairs, and mock trial competitions. He is looking forward to deepening his involvement in SABAC events and the South-Asian legal community, promoting networking and mentorship among emerging diverse legal professionals.