

VETERANS DAY
FEATURE

Q&A WITH ARMY VETERAN & SOLO PRACTITIONER YUN HEE KIM

Interviewed by Student LEADer Jessmine Lee

The logo for UCLA Law Women LEAD is a large yellow circle with a dark blue border. Inside the circle, the text "UCLA LAW" is written in dark blue, and "WOMEN LEAD" is written in yellow, with "LEAD" in a larger, bold font.

UCLA LAW
WOMEN LEAD

- (1) What is the best thing about being a double Bruin?** Simply, the pride I feel when I say I am a double Bruin!
- (2) What does Veterans' Day mean to you specifically as a Veteran?** It's the day I reflect on how grateful I am to have served alongside my battle buddies in combat who undoubtedly would've taken a bullet or an IED for me in a heartbeat. It's also the day I am reminded to honor many Soldiers, who plow ahead by putting one foot in front of the other out in the frontline without ever being in the spotlight.
- (3) You appear to have worked in many legal fields from a special education attorney to having your own private practice, what advice would you give to current students about finding your legal career?** I've remained focused on specific clients and communities that I can identify with and wanted to serve - by designing my practice around to meet their needs unique to their circumstances at no cost to the clients. When I was a young girl, I was a teen runaway and a school dropout who later attended a continuation course barely receiving a high school diploma. Upon passing the bar exam, I started out working at a firm as a special education attorney advocating educational rights students with disabilities. During the practice, I've noticed that these students who were commonly foster youth and socio-economically disadvantaged, were often subjected to discrimination and abuse in educational settings. Accordingly, when I started my own practice, I expanded the practice areas of law beyond special education to address these issues that these students/families face. Also, in my 19 years of military career, I have often served in leadership positions as the only woman. Because of this background, I naturally desired opportunities to interact and work with women and women veterans on sexual discrimination, harassment and retaliation, rampant issues that many of them routinely experience during their employment. In short, I focused on the communities of people that I want to work with, then identify problems that they face in my effort to be part of a solution to the problems.
- (4) What do you miss most about being a UCLA Law Student?** Most definitely, I miss being in Professor Gerald "Jerry" Lopez's classes. I've learned so much about lawyering and how to make arguments through his rigorous reading/writing assignments while having so much fun sharing ideas, thoughts, and analysis with Professor Lopez and my classmates.
- (5) What was your favorite spot on-campus and why?** The lawn nearby music school or architecture school, with sculptures scattered around, a serene space nestled between the parking lot and the law school
- (6) What in law school (class, professor advice, connections, etc.) prepared you most for your career?** Hands down, in law school, again it was Professor Lopez's classes. His Legal Analyses class helped me pass the bar exam and his Rebellious Lawyering class crystalized the kind of law practice I wanted. Upon graduation, being able to be participate in the Los Angeles Incubator Consortium (LAIC) through our law school also helped me tremendously in starting my own practice by providing tangible resources, training, and networks.
- (7) Is there anything else you would like to share with the LEAD community?** For current law students, I would like to share that you can design your legal career how you would like to practice law and there are diverse ways you can explore the legal field. While staying busy studying, don't lose sight of what makes your heart tick and what first brought you to law school. For practicing attorneys, I would like to share a volunteering opportunity. LAWERS ACT (And Communities Together) works with South Bay Counseling Center (SBCC) by staffing attorneys for legal service fairs, monthly workshops on common areas of legal interest requested by the community. It is designed to encourage more community lawyers to volunteer and work all over Los Angeles County by paying the volunteering attorneys a modest-below market hourly rate for providing free consultations and create dialogues between SBCC social workers and lawyers to inform best practices in serving the SBCC community members. I would love to connect with UCLA Women LEAD attorneys by serving together!