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PERSPECTIVE

Former state Supreme Court Justice Ming Chin joining ADR Services, Inc.

By Jessica Mach

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Less than a year after retiring from the state Supreme Court, former Justice Ming W. Chin is joining ADR Services, Inc. as a mediator and arbitrator.

Chin will not focus on any particular area of law, he and firm founder Lucie Barron confirmed in interviews Thursday. Chin said he expects to handle some cases on construction and employment law, and would welcome cases that deal with scientific evidence.

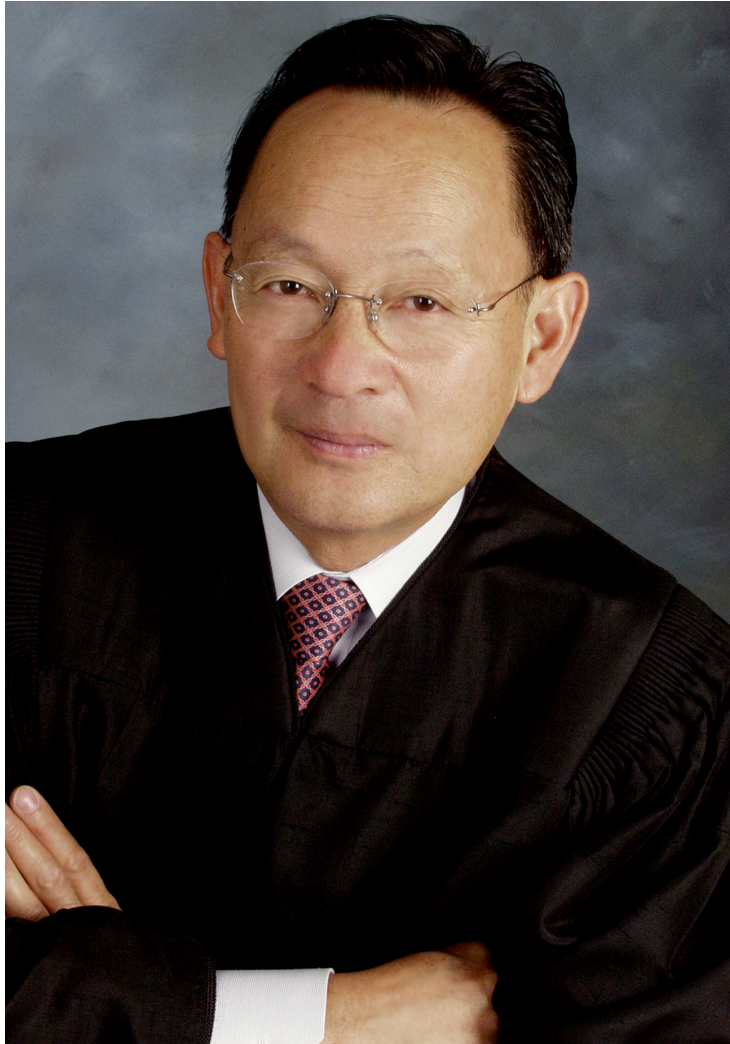
Barron said it would be hard to identify an area of specialty, given Chin's decades of experience in private practice and on the bench. "What he's done is so diverse," Barron said. "He's got such a brilliant mind. I think he'll be in great demand for mock trials and appellate consultations."

Chin said he decided to go into alternative dispute resolution with California's courts in mind.

"The courts are going to need a lot of help," he said. "The pandemic has created many backlogs, particularly on the civil side, and I think mediations and arbitrations will be an important part of keeping the legal system alive and well, and making it accessible to everyone — even under these terrible pandemic circumstances."

Chin said he also sees the move as a way to stay involved in legal matters. Since leaving the bench last August he hasn't exactly taken a break from the field, however.

"I'm an avid golfer, and my friends told me when I retired, 'Ming, you can't play golf every day,' and I said, 'Well, I want to try,'" Chin said. "When I got up to playing 13 days in a row, I said, 'This is too much.'"



CHIN

In addition to writing for the Rutter Group, Chin is working on updating its practice guide for employment litigation, teaching at the Panetta Institute for Public Policy at CalState Monterey Bay and organizing educational programs on subjects as varied as employment law and genetic engineering, he said.

In one program Chin organized for the Rutter Group, which

focused on the targeted genetic engineering tool CRISPR, he reached out to UC Berkeley biochemist Jennifer A. Doudna, who won last year's Nobel Prize in chemistry for her early work developing the tool. Doudna put Chin in touch with Fyodor D. Urnov, a director in her Innovative Genomics Institute, who presented at the program this year. Chin said the result was "one

of the best continuing education programs I'd ever been involved in."

Despite his busy agenda, Chin said he is excited about his new venture. "ADR is a terrific group," he said. He is looking forward to working with friends such as former California Court of Appeal Justices James Lambden and Maria P. Rivera and former Alameda County Superior Court Judge Bonnie Sabraw.

"They're very professional and very experienced, and that's really one thing that I missed," he said of ADR Services, Inc. "I had a terrific staff at the Supreme Court, and it was wonderful working with not just my staff but all of the other chambers."

Chin was appointed to the California Supreme Court in March 1996, making history as its first Chinese American justice and writing more than 350 majority opinions during his tenure. He served on the 1st District Court of Appeal from 1990 to 1996, after serving as an Alameda County Superior Court judge.

"Justice Chin has enjoyed a highly decorated and illustrious career," Barron said in an email. "He is deeply respected and admired among the legal community, not only for his remarkable intellect and character, which is imbued with generosity, humility, and curiosity, but for his great dedication and contributions to the court system, the evolution of California law and our nation at large."

She added, "Justice Chin has been a trailblazer throughout his entire life, and it is our great privilege to be working with him as he continues to serve the business and legal world in resolving complex and divisive matters through alternative dispute resolution." ■

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