

## **RUTHE CATOLICO ASHLEY**

**Ruthe Catolico Ashley** is the newly-appointed President/CEO of California ALL (Aspire·Learn·Lead) which focuses on building an educational pipeline by closing the achievement gap from pre-school to the profession. Formerly the Chief Diversity Officer for CalPERS (California Public Employment Retirement System), the largest public pension fund in the United States with assets of \$257 billion, Ashley was asked to lead CalPERS' efforts to lead in the area of diversity in the Financial Services arena. Prior to joining CalPERS, Ashley was the Assistant Dean for Career and Professional Development at the University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law, which focused on preparing hundreds of students for careers after law school. Her extensive rolodex assisted students in building relationships in California and across the nation.

A 1988 graduate of Pacific McGeorge School of Law, Ashley practiced law for 14 years prior to returning to her alma mater's career office. Her prior legal experience included trial work in both large and small law firms. In 1998, she was a founding partner at the first Asian-American women-owned law firm in the greater Sacramento area which specialized in healthcare law, civil rights, employment, and business litigation. Ashley was a nurse for 15 years prior to becoming a lawyer. She was a public health nurse and ended her nursing career as an Assistant Professor of Nursing.

Ashley was elected to the State Bar of California Board of Governors in 2004 and was appointed chair of a major initiative, the Diversity Pipeline Task Force. As chair of the Diversity Pipeline Task Force, Ashley led a group of 70 prominent members of the legal community including bar presidents, law firm partners, educators, deans, professors, corporate counsel and the judiciary in a project that facilitates the formation of diversity pipeline programs. This unique project put the State Bar of California in the lead in providing a resource of "Best Practices" that was continuous, sustainable, had impact and could be replicated by any legal entity. Ashley led the Board of Governors in the creation of a new Access and Fairness Council that institutionalizes the work of the task force into the State Bar structure.

In July, 2007, Ashley was appointed as the chair of the Presidential Advisory Council on Diversity which focuses on pipeline projects for the American Bar Association. In October, 2007, she was appointed as the chair of the Bench Bar Coalition with members from the California bench and bar that advocates with the California legislature on issues that affect California's courts and judiciary.

Awards include the Distinguished Community Service Award presented by the Philippine American Bar Association (2007), Heritage Award presented by the California State Legislature (2005), "Filipina's Who Could be President (2004), Lifetime Achievement Award from Pace University School of Law (2004), the Unity Award for Community Service from the Unity Bar Association (2002), Unsung Heroes Award from Sacramento's public television station KVIE and Union Bank for volunteerism and activism (2001), the "Trailblazer Award" presented by the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (1998.). She is a past president of the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association which represents the interests of 40,000 APA lawyers across the nation, a past president of Legal Services of Northern California, a past chair of the Sacramento Asian Pacific Chamber of Commerce and a past president of the Asian Bar Association of Sacramento. She was a Governor Appointee to the Developmentally Disabled Area III Board. She continues to serve on other boards and commissions including University Enterprises Inc. and the Council on Legal Education Opportunity (CLEO), she is also a dynamic and entertaining speaker who has traveled nationally as a spokesperson for diversity, the pipeline, career development and building a workforce for the future.