



## **Chris Punongbayan, Executive Director, California ChangeLawyers**

Christopher Punongbayan is the Executive Director of California ChangeLawyers, a statewide foundation whose mission is to build a better justice system for all Californians. ChangeLawyers empowers the next generation of legal changemakers through grants and scholarships totaling \$1M annually.

Over the last twenty years, Chris has gained deep experience in social justice issues. He profoundly believes in giving voice to the unheard, breaking down barriers, and creating strategic alliances to advance equity. Prior to joining the ChangeLawyers, Chris was the executive director of Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Asian Law Caucus and held positions in a number of nonprofit organizations in California and New York.

A native of Massachusetts and the son of immigrants from the Philippines, Chris graduated cum laude from Brown University with a degree in Asian American Studies and UCLA School of Law where he completed the Critical Race Studies concentration and the Epstein Program in Public Interest Law and Policy.

In 2003, Chris received a scholarship from ChangeLawyers, which first set him on his social justice path in California. Since then, his accomplishments have earned him recognition from the California Asian Pacific American Bar Association, Ford Foundation New Voices Fellowship, the Gerbode Foundation, and the Levi Strauss Foundation, which named him a Pioneer in Justice.