



Social Science  
Student Symposium

## Keynote Address

# Tani Cantil-Sakauye

President and CEO, Public Policy Institute of California

Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye is president and CEO of the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC), a nonprofit, nonpartisan think tank that works to improve public policy in California through independent, objective, nonpartisan research.

Prior to joining PPIC, she served as the Chief Justice of California for 12 years. Chief Justice Cantil-Sakauye established herself as one of the country's leading proponents of equal access to justice, civic education, and reform of court funding practices that unfairly affect the poor. When she was sworn into office in January 2011 as the 28th Chief Justice of California, she became the first person of color and the second woman to serve as the state's chief justice. Chief Justice Cantil-Sakauye raised awareness of the unfair financial impact of fines, fees, and the bail system on the poor. She improved the branch's efficiency, accountability, and transparency in how it conducts business, sets policy, and discloses information. In 2019, she was honored with the Sandra Day O'Connor Award by the National Center for State Courts for her work inspiring, promoting, and improving civics education through her Power of Democracy initiative.

Before she was elected statewide as the chief justice of California, she served more than 20 years on California appellate and trial courts and was appointed or elevated to higher office by three governors. Earlier in her career she served as a deputy district attorney for the Sacramento County District Attorney's Office and on the senior staff of Governor George Deukmejian, first as deputy legal affairs secretary and later as a deputy legislative secretary. She holds a BA and a JD from the University of California, Davis.



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