



**PLAY BALL.** Jung-ho Kang of the Pittsburgh Pirates throws out Roeman Fields of the Toronto Blue Jays during a spring training baseball game in Bradenton, Florida. Kang is a native South Korea. (AP Photo/Chris O'Meara)

# A legend's retirement kicks off a season packed with Asian talent

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back.

Outside the organization, his talent was often underrated. Mike Hargrove, then the manager of the Baltimore Orioles, opined that Ichiro's arm and speed might earn him a bench spot, but not a starting job. A former major-league infielder who had played in Japan, Randy Johnson, said, "I didn't think the Japanese style of hitting would work."

Even Ichiro's supporters were skeptical. His manager, Lou Piniella, said "It's a tough adjustment, because big-league players throw harder." Jim Colborn, who had prepared a comprehensive scouting report on Ichiro, wrote, "No one is expecting him to hit .350, which was his career average in Japan."

Ichiro hit exactly .350 in his first MLB season, becoming the second player ever to be named both Rookie of the Year and Most Valuable Player. His average would reach a league-leading .372 in 2004, the same year he broke George Sisler's record by collecting 262 hits in one season.

Sisler's total of 257 had stood for 84 years, and some thought it would never be broken, but Ichiro did a lot of things people thought nobody else could do, let alone a Japanese player. He set a new MLB record with 10 straight 200-hit seasons, and he

tied Lou Gehrig's record of eight consecutive seasons with 200 hits and 100 runs scored.

In the first ten years of the new millennium, 2000-2009, Ichiro collected 2,030 hits, the most of any player over that time, becoming the fourth player ever to top 2,000 hits over a ten-year span. And Ichiro did that in just nine seasons, having joined the Mariners in 2001.

In his career, Ichiro amassed 3,089 hits in MLB and 1,278 in Japan, giving him 4,367 hits, the most ever for a player at the top professional level and the 21st most in MLB history — again, all the more impressive because he started his MLB career at age 27.

More than this, Ichiro did it with class, style, and grace. He was thrown out of a game just once, in 2009, and he was modest and avoided the limelight, asking the Japanese reporters who trailed him everywhere to stay out of the locker room during his rookie season.

And he paved the way for Asian players who followed. Though none have reached his level of achievement, the flood of players from across Asia owe their MLB careers to the player who proved to everyone that baseball knows no nationality or birthplace — just great players.

See related story on page 13.

## A new Dumbo, but creator says themes of the classic remain

By Mike Cidoni Lennox and Sian Watson  
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES —

Director Tim Burton says he wanted to keep the spirit of the 1941 animated classic *Dumbo* intact for his

live-action remake.

Burton says the flying elephant represents so many things, like turning a disadvantage into an advantage, and he wanted to make sure those themes remained. He says while he wanted to make the film resonate with modern audiences, he wants viewers to have their own conclusions about the film's messages.

*Dumbo* is the first of three live-action films based on animated classics coming this year alone, with *Aladdin* arriving in theaters in May and *The Lion King* set for a July release.

Its stars, including Colin Farrell and Michael Keaton, say Burton has succeeded in creating a family-friendly movie and maintaining his style of filmmaking.

# California chief justice says judiciary is more diverse

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — California's chief justice has praised the racial and gender diversity of judges appointed by former governor Jerry Brown and highlighted women in leadership roles in state government.

Chief justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye noted that more than half of the roughly 600 judges appointed by Brown are women and 41 percent identify as a race other than white.

"The judiciary now is more representative of the communities we serve in every way," she said during her annual address to California lawmakers.

She also said the civil-rights movement, as evidenced by #MeToo and Black Lives Matter, has more work to do.

Two-thirds of the state bench is made up of white judges, but that percentage has fallen since 2006, according to the Judicial Council. Overall, a little more than a third of the roughly 1,900 judges in the state are women.

Cantil-Sakauye said the judiciary has to ensure that income inequality does not create a two-tiered system of justice; that court fines and fees do not fall on those least able to afford them; and that minor traffic offenses do not overburden the poor. It must also make sure its own workplaces are safe from discrimination and harassment, she said.

Last year, Cantil-Sakauye — the second

## New Jersey delays sale of music college to Chinese company

By David Porter  
The Associated Press

NEWARK, N.J. — The state attorney general's office has delayed the pending sale of a New Jersey music college to a Chinese company, echoing concerns raised in a lawsuit seeking to stop the deal.

In a letter filed in New Jersey Superior Court, the state said Rider University hasn't fully answered questions about the sale of Westminster Choir College, including the reasons for the sale, what it will do with the proceeds, and whether a foreign conglomerate is an appropriate buyer.

Lawrenceville-based Rider last year announced an agreement to sell the choir college to subsidiaries of Beijing-based Kaiwen Education for \$40 million.

Two lawsuits oppose the sale. A suit filed by faculty, alumni, and donors alleges the sale violates a 1990s merger between Westminster and Rider and could lead to Westminster's ultimately being closed or moved from its site in Princeton.

## County by county, researchers link opioid deaths to drugmakers' marketing

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The extent to which opioid marketing by pharmaceutical companies fuelled the national opioid epidemic is at the center of more than 1,500 civil lawsuits around the country. The cases have mostly been brought by local and state governments. U.S. District Judge Dan Polster, who is overseeing hundreds of the cases, has scheduled the first trials for March.

In 2018, Kaiser Health News published a cache of Purdue Pharma's marketing documents that displayed how the company marketed OxyContin to doctors beginning in 1995. Purdue Pharma announced it would stop

marketing OxyContin last February.

Priscilla VanderVeer, a spokeswoman for the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America, or PhRMA, said that doctors treating patients with opioids need education about benefits and risks. She added that it is "critically important that healthcare providers have the appropriate training to offer safer and more effective pain management."

Cerdá said it is also important to consider that the study is not saying doctors change their prescribing practices intentionally.

"Our results suggest that this finding is subtle, and might not be recognizable

to doctors that they're actually changing their behavior," said Cerdá. "It could be more of a subconscious thing after increased exposure to opioid marketing."

Kaiser Health News, a nonprofit health newsroom whose stories appear in news outlets nationwide, is an editorially independent part of the Kaiser Family Foundation.

## TALKING STORY IN ASIAN AMERICA



■ Polo

Polo's "Talking Story" column will return soon.



**INCREASED DIVERSITY.** California Supreme Court chief justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye delivers her State of the Judiciary address before a joint session of the legislature at the capitol in Sacramento, California, in this March 23, 2015 file photo. Cantil-Sakauye recently praised the racial and gender diversity of judges appointed by former governor Jerry Brown, saying he had breathed new life into the state courts. (AP Photo/Rich Pedroncelli, File)

woman and first Asian American to serve as the state's chief justice — launched a review of judicial policies on harassment, discrimination, and other inappropriate conduct in the workplace.

A task force she created was expected to come back with recommendations in the summer. She said she wants to expand training for judges aimed at overcoming unconscious bias.

The attorney general's office has the duty to represent the public's interest in charitable matters. The donation in the 1930s of the land where the choir college now sits created a charitable trust, the attorney general's office wrote.

In response to a court's request for a recommendation on the sale, the attorney general's office sent Rider officials a list of 49 questions last June but didn't receive a reply until January. That reply consisted of partial responses to two questions and confidentiality concerns about many of the inquiries, according to the letter.

"Due to Rider's six-month delay in producing documents and eventual production of documents so heavily redacted as to hamper review, the attorney general's review of the sale is incomplete as of this date and the state is not yet able to make a recommendation," assistant attorney general Jean Reilly wrote.

Rider became the trustee of the property after the 1992 merger, according to the letter. The attorney general's office is probing whether any sale of the property

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