



# The YLD Review

THE STATE BAR OF GEORGIA | LAWYERS SERVING THE PUBLIC AND THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Volume 55, Issue 2 Young Lawyers Division Winter 2013

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## YLD Summer and Fall Meetings

by *Nicole Leet*

The YLD took to Chicago for the 2013 Summer Meeting, Aug. 22-25. YLD members from across the state gathered to conduct the YLD's business and take in all that the "Windy City" had to offer. The meeting began with a stunning reception Thursday night, held on a terrace high above Lakeshore Drive, offering a fantastic view of Lake Michigan and Navy Pier.



Attendees of the 2013 Summer Meeting pose by the Chicago River.

Friday morning, YLD President **Darrell Sutton** introduced Professor **Jim Fleissner** from Mercer University Law School. Fleissner presented a topical and timely CLE on "Balancing National Security and the Free Flow of Information: The Legal Landscape for Leakers and Publishers of Classified Information." Fleissner sparked an interesting and lively discussion on current events involving security leaks during the CLE presentation. While in Chicago the young lawyers took in the sights, including the Cloud Gate "bean" sculpture in Millennium Park, Grant Park and Navy Pier, all while enjoying a Chicago hot dog or two. The weekend also included an architectural tour down the Chicago River and dinner at the famous Chicago deep dish pizza joint, Gino's East.

The YLD business meeting was held Saturday morning. Ongoing projects and initiatives such as the Signature Fundraiser, Leadership Academy, Wills Clinic and new Non-Traditional Legal Careers Committee were discussed. After the meeting, the YLD participated in a race to prepare peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for a local Chicago shelter as part of the meeting's service project. Proceeds were also donated to a shelter project from the bottled water consumed at the meeting.

Of course, no visit to Chicago would be complete without a baseball game. The YLD took over a section of Comiskey Park to watch the White Sox take on the Rangers. Bringing Georgia with them wherever they went, YLD Treasurer **Jack Long** lead the surrounding Chicagoans through a rousing chorus of the Atlanta Braves tomahawk chop, much to the surprise of the White Sox and Rangers fans. It was a game that will not be forgotten!

The YLD would like to thank SEA, Ltd., **Nicole Leet** and **Brantley Rowlen** for their generous support of the Summer Meeting.

On the heels of the successful Chicago Summer Meeting, the YLD met in Chattanooga, Tenn. for the Fall Meeting, Oct. 4-5. The meeting was

generously sponsored by ARAG, SEA, Ltd. and Nicole Leet. In Chattanooga, the YLD stayed at the historic Sheraton Read House Hotel. The business meeting was very well attended, with many first-time attendees as well as Leadership Academy Alumni. New law school fellows from Emory, John Marshall and Mercer University were also in attendance.

Sutton announced the beneficiary of this year's YLD Signature Fundraiser to be the YLD Public Interest Internship Program (PIIP). PIIP was created by YLD Past President **Amy Howell** in 2009 and funds grants for public interest internships during the summer for law school students and young lawyers. The YLD Signature Fundraiser will be held on Feb. 8, 2014, at the historic Biltmore Hotel in midtown Atlanta. The goal of this year's Signature Fundraiser is to secure permanent funding for the continuation of PIIP. YLD Signature Fundraiser Co-Chairs **Meredith Sutton** and **Jessica Sabbath** presented details on how to support the Signature Fundraiser, including becoming a sponsor or host committee member. For details, please see the ad on page 7.

**Katie Willett** then presented details at the meeting about the Wills Clinic that will allow young lawyers to create simple wills for first responders. She explained that first responders were targeted because they have a great need for such a service, and many do not have the time or opportunity to create a will. The first Wills Clinic was held on Dec. 14, in Augusta at the Marriott, Augusta Convention Center.

As part of the mission of service, the YLD collected bags and books for the Hamilton County Juvenile Court CASA Program during the meeting. The bags and books were given to children going from one home to another overnight through CASA.

On Friday night, members of the Chattanooga YLD joined the Georgia young lawyers for a cocktail reception before the YLD headed to dinner at the Boathouse Rotisserie and Raw Bar on the Tennessee River. At the group dinner,

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## From the President

# Pride (in the Name of Lawyers)

by Darrell L. Sutton

In the months since I took office, I have been asked one question more than any other: “Why do you enjoy Bar involvement as much as you do?” This same question could just as easily be posed a different way: “Why are you so proud to be a lawyer and Bar leader?” My answer to both questions is the same: “What’s not to be proud of? Look at all the good done by those in the Bar and the YLD.”

How can I not be proud to be a lawyer and Bar leader when you consider what **Amy Howell, Colin Kelly, Shiriki Cavitt, Sarah Cipperly, Kerry Nicholson and Jennifer Fleeman** have done? They are the founder, past and current chairs of the YLD’s Public Interest Internship Program (PIIP). PIIP was Amy’s brain-child and founded during her term as YLD President to help alleviate coinciding decreases in the number of legal employment opportunities for young lawyers and staffing at Georgia’s public interest legal organizations by providing law students and new lawyers with funding to pursue internships at these organizations. And because of Colin, Shiriki, Sarah and, now, Kerry and Jennifer, 24 PIIP interns have provided approximately 7,680 hours of legal services at GLSP, the Atlanta Legal Aid Society, the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development, the DeKalb County Child Advocacy Center and Gideon’s Promise, just to name a few.

How can I not be proud to be a lawyer and Bar leader when you consider what **Meredith Sutton and Jessica Sabbath** are doing? They are the co-chairs of the 2014 YLD Signature Fundraiser. The idea for the Signature Fundraiser was first hatched during **Jon Pope’s** term as YLD President as another way for the YLD to fulfill its mission of service to the profession and the public. Through the seven previous Signature Fundraisers, Georgia’s young lawyers have served their fellow Georgians by raising the funds that have resulted in the donation of approximately 185,670 meals to Kids Against Hunger; \$120,000 to GLSP; and the first 10 PIIP intern stipends. Meredith and Jessica have been tasked with leading a fundraiser whose goal is to raise enough money to endow PIIP. No small challenge by any means, yet one that they will undoubtedly meet.

How can I not be proud to be a lawyer and Bar leader when you consider what **Sharri Edenfield, Carl Varnedoe, John Jackson, Tippi Burch, Adriana Sola Capifali, Ivy Cadle, Yari Lawson and Rachel Fields** have done? They are the past and current chairs of the YLD’s Leadership Academy. Created during **Laurel Landon’s** YLD presidency, the Leadership

Academy has become the YLD’s premier program, garnering national recognition and emulation by other Bar organizations. Centered upon a mission to propel young lawyers from across the state into leadership roles in the YLD and beyond, under the guidance of Sharri, Carl, John, Tippi, Adriana, Ivy, Yari and Rachel the Leadership Academy has graduated eight of the last nine YLD presidents, members of the Georgia General Assembly, a past head of the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice, multiple members of the State Bar of Georgia Board of Governors and current candidates for several local and state government positions.

How can I not be proud to be a lawyer and Bar leader when you consider what **Katie Willett and Brandon Elijah** have done? These two answered my challenge to this year’s slate of YLD Executive Council representatives and committee chairs to develop and implement new programming and designed, from scratch, the YLD Wills Clinic to benefit law enforcement and other first response personnel. Because of their efforts, young lawyers from Augusta and beyond gathered on Dec. 14, provided simple estate planning for more than 50 of the Augusta area’s first responders and their spouses, and, in the process, gained practical estate planning experience.

How can I not be proud to be a lawyer and Bar leader when you consider what **Deepa Subramanian, Kristi Wilson, Jessica Nix, Lisa Robinson and Jonathan Poole** have done. Two years ago, Attorney General **Sam Olens** launched the Legal Food Frenzy, and challenged Georgia’s lawyers to raise 500,000 pounds of food for Georgia’s seven regional food banks. Under Deepa and Kristi’s leadership, the State Bar of Georgia, and the YLD in particular, led the effort that instead raised 612,497 pounds of food. Last year, Olens upped the ante and challenged Georgia’s lawyers to raise 750,000 pounds of food. Not to be outdone by their predecessors, Jessica and Lisa led the effort that resulted in 842,317 pounds of food raised! The goal for the 2014 Legal Food Frenzy is 1 million pounds of food, and there is no doubt that Jonathan will lead the effort that will, for the third year in a row, surpass the food-raising goal.

Why am I proud to be a lawyer and Bar leader? Consider all the available opportunities that we, simply by virtue of our chosen profession, have to better that profession and our state. Then consider all that Georgia’s lawyers – those listed above and otherwise – have done and ask yourself, “How can I not be proud to be a lawyer and Bar leader?”

## Notification: 2013-14 YLD Officer Elections

In accordance with Article VII, Section 4 (a) of the YLD Bylaws, the following shall serve as Notification of Elections for YLD Officers for the 2013-14 Bar Year. The positions of President-Elect, Treasurer and Secretary shall be filled by election by mail-out ballot.

You must be a YLD Member (as defined in the YLD Bylaws, but not an Honorary or Associate Member) at the time of the election to be eligible to serve as an Officer of the Young Lawyers Division.

There are two ways for a person to be nominated as a candidate for a YLD Officer position:

(a) The Nominating Committee (listed below) shall nominate one or more candidates for each office at its meeting on Jan. 10, 2014. You are invited to submit recommendations to members of the Nominating Committee prior to its meeting.

(b) Nominations may be made in the form of a nominating petition signed by two YLD Members submitted to the Election Committee (listed below) no later than March 14, 2014. The nominating petition must be in the form prescribed in Article VII, Section 5(b) of the YLD Bylaws, which may be found at [www.georgiayld.org](http://www.georgiayld.org).

The Election Commencement Date shall be March 28, 2014. Ballots must be cast by 11:59 p.m. on April 29, 2014. Election results will be available on the State Bar of Georgia website by May 12.

Members of these committees may be reached at their contact information found in the member directory on the Bar’s website at [www.gabar.org](http://www.gabar.org).

### Nominating Committee

V. Sharon Edenfield, *President-Elect (chair)*  
Sean Ditzel  
Jana Edmondson-Cooper  
Jacob Messee  
John T. O’Neal  
Kevin Patrick  
Amanda R. Smith

### Election Committee

V. Sharon Edenfield, *President-Elect (chair)*  
Shatorree Bates  
John C. Bush  
Valerie Cochran  
Andrew P. Copenhaver  
Benjamin Harrell  
Norbert Hummel  
Justin Jones  
Boris Milter

# Caselaw Update

## Juvenile Law

By: *Donald Lee and Stephanie Zudekoff*

*In the Interest of DLT, 2013 WL 4405331, Aug. 19, 2013*

Posture: Grandparents appeal juvenile court's placement of two children into the permanent custody of Paulding County DFCS in preparation for adoption by foster parents.

Holding and Reasoning: Under OCGA §15-11-103(a), determining a child's placement after termination of parental rights requires the court to enter findings of fact that reflect consideration of (1) The child's need for placement that offers the greatest degree of legal permanence and security; (2) The least disruptive placement alternative for the child; (3) The child's sense of attachment and need for continuity of relationship; and (4) Any other factors the court deems relevant to its determination.

The appellate court will not re-weigh evidence nor reevaluate the credibility of witnesses. Here, the juvenile court had evidence that either separating the children or placing the children with Tim and Tammy Blankenship would cause emotional harm to the children.

*Chandler v. Rohner, 2013 WL 4081699, Aug. 14, 2013*

Posture: Chandler appealed the superior court's order denying his petition for legitimation and the order denying his motion for a new trial.

Holding and Reasoning: The Court of Appeals cited OCGA § 15-11-28(a)(2)(C) and *Alexander v. Guthrie*, 216 Ga.App. 460 (1995) to support the holding that the superior court lacked jurisdiction to terminate Chandler's parental rights, stating that the "superior court has jurisdiction to consider termination of rights of a putative father only in connection with adoption proceedings." The court cited a divorce action, *Brine v. Shipp*, 291 Ga. 376 (2012), in which the superior court did not have jurisdiction to terminate the rights of the legal father "in connection with allowing the biological father to legitimate the child." The court found that because the superior court did not have jurisdiction, the judgment and denial of the motion for a new trial were reversed, citing *In the Interest of A.D. B.*, 232 Ga.App. 697 (1998). Furthermore, the court held that the superior court should have conducted an oral hearing before ruling on Chandler's motion for a new trial, as required by Uniform Superior Court Rule 6.3. The case was reversed and remanded with orders for the superior court to "comply with Rule 6.3 before ruling on the remaining issues in Chandler's motion for new trial."

*In the Interest of H.B., R.G., and D.G., 2013 WL 5364864, Sept. 23, 2013*

Posture: The mother appeals the juvenile court order finding her children deprived.

Holding and Reasoning: The Court of Appeals cited *In the Interest of H.S.*, 285 Ga.App. 839, 841, 648 S.E.2d 143 (2007) to explain that there has to be proof by clear and convincing evidence that the parent is unfit in order for a child to be found deprived and for the parent to even temporarily lose custody. The unfitness of the parent can be intentional or unintentional misconduct that results in the abuse or neglect of the child. The clear and convincing evidence standard applies to help eliminate the risk that families will be disrupted based on a few exceptional occurrences.

The court explained that the mother was the victim of one incident of domestic violence, there was no evidence of violence toward the children, and there was no evidence that the children suffered any emotional or physical harm from the one incident of domestic violence. Furthermore, there was no evidence that the children lacked adequate food, shelter, or education. The court compared the case with a similar case in which a finding of deprivation was reversed, *In the Interest of S.M.*, 321 Ga.App. 827, 743 S.E.2d 497 (2013). In *In the Interest of S.M.*, the department failed to provide any evidence of physical or emotional harm after one incident of domestic violence in which the children witnesses their mother's boyfriend pull a gun on the mother, and the children believed they heard a shot.

The department argued that the children's deprivation was the result of the mother not meeting with the department and the mother letting the boyfriend return to her home. The Court of Appeals explained that the mother was not required to sign the safety plan with the department. Furthermore, the evidence failed to show how the children were in danger when the boyfriend was in the home by himself on one occasion.

The court went on to explain that even if the children were in fact deprived, there was no proof that the mother was unfit, evidenced by the mother immediately calling the police after the incident of domestic violence.

# Judge's Chambers:

## Cogs in a Very Important Wheel

by *Hon. Sara Doyle, Court of Appeals of Georgia*



When I was 22, I graduated from college with a business degree and absolutely no idea of what I wanted to do with my life. I moved home for a brief stint while selling home security systems. One day, when I found myself at a partially constructed house sitting in a fold-out chair across from a shirtless man who had suffered a recent knife injury in a bar fight, I realized that if I got out alive, in-home sales was not for me, and I would need to figure something else out immediately. I realized that I wanted to do something that would improve not only my life but the lives of others.

So, I packed my car and drove from Dallas to Florida, stopping in Jacksonville for a Florida/Georgia football game (one of those that Florida, my alma mater, actually won), to figure out what to do with my life. I became a retail manager in Jacksonville. This was a slight improvement over selling security systems and while I was helping people to buy clothes and sweet smelling lotions and soaps, I was working long hours and holidays, and barely earning enough to survive.

On a whim, I took the LSAT exam with some friends. I did well and was accepted to Mercer University. After speaking with my father about attending law school, I decided that I would accept and begin that fall. I entered with the attitude that if it didn't work out or I didn't like it, I could simply go back and get a job in the business world. But shortly after I arrived in my first class, I quickly realized how much I loved the law.

This becomes the point of this article. I believe that the law is why we should be proud to be lawyers. Sure, we are all involved in the community and make good leaders. We generally make good money and get to help people. We can do many things with our degree, from working in business, practicing law, or teaching, among others. These are positive things about our profession and for which we should be proud. But what I do not think that many attorneys realize or think about is the fact that every day, the work you do is helping to form and clarify the law that governs our society.

The ideas that help us understand the law begin in law school where we are introduced to legal issues, taught how to think about the law and learn to research and write. We debate the issues and learn that there is often more than one side to a story, and both of them can be valid. When we graduate, these skills grow into the formulation of arguments on behalf of our clients. Those arguments, beginning with the drafting of the first complaint, the preparation of an answer and the filing of motions in court, are cogs in the wheel of justice. Without each of you moving the wheels forward, day by day, the law could not be made, clarified or confirmed.

Lawyers help people and businesses every day. But know that at the end of it, the daily work you do is important for the state of the law – not just for your client, but for all persons. So know, remember, and be proud that, while the judges on the Court of Appeals or the Supreme Court of Georgia write the opinions that become or help clarify the law, each of you, the individual lawyer who meets with a client for the first time, learns about that person's or businesses' issues, and sits down to map out a plan for how to resolve the problem, is contributing to the process of law without which would leave this society in a much worse position.

# Committee Updates

## Judicial Law Clerk

by *Margaret Head*

The Judicial Law Clerk Committee began the Bar year by working with ICJE to organize a Judicial Law Clerk Conference devoted specifically to judicial law clerks' and staff attorneys' legal education. The August 2013 conference marked the return of a former yearly ICJE instructional activity which had been dormant since 2008 due to budgetary constraints. The program was initiated, and sponsored by, the Council of State Court Judges, the Council of Superior Court Judges and the Court of Appeals of Georgia and attracted approximately 90 law clerks from around the state. The content of the conference reflected input received from current law clerks and judges and included the topics of Federal Bankruptcy Law and its Impact on State Court Cases, Judicial Ethics and Professionalism for Judicial Law Clerks, Building the Trial Court Record and updates in Criminal Procedure, Evidence, Adoption Law, and Garnishment actions. Attendees were able to get all mandatory CLE credit for the year at a cost subsidized in part for some by the aforementioned sponsoring organizations. The Committee hosted, with Huff, Bailey & Powell, LLC sponsoring, a reception for all participants at the State Bar immediately following the conclusion of the conference.

The committee will work with ICJE throughout the Bar year to develop a conference for August 2014 to include multi-track topics for the various courts. The committee will also be working on projects to serve the public and the profession this year including a bowling tournament to raise money for a designated beneficiary. For more information on the committee please contact **Elise Bush Myers** at emyers@co.henry.ga.us or **Margaret Ann Head** at mahead@forsythco.com.

## Juvenile Law

by *Donald Lee*

As we all approach the beginning of the new calendar year, we are often filled with the aspirational tasks of maintaining our respective New Year's resolutions. The juvenile courts throughout Georgia will have their own resolutions, but they will not be merely aspirational. HB242, the new Juvenile Law Code, is officially being effectuated Jan. 1, 2014. That means Title 15 has undergone a complete but necessary reorganization. There are growing pains on the near horizon, but these trials are a small price to pay for the enhancement of the future welfare of Georgia's youth. It is also especially worth noting that this great piece of legislation started as a creation of the YLD Juvenile Law Committee.

The committee has continued hosting speakers at its monthly luncheons. On Sept. 18, Fulton County Probation Officer, Ms. **Dorsey Jones**, gave a riveting autobiographical account of what can happen when a child lacks the essential parental bond. Jones presented on how she was abandoned by her mother, sexually exploited as a child and endured a countless number of foster homes, but nevertheless persevered as a college graduate. She has a recently published book entitled, "The Angels Were Crying: Stretched Beyond Measure."

On Oct. 16, Georgia State Representative **Mary Margaret Oliver**, one of the core driving forces behind the signing of HB242, held an open-ended dialogue with committee members. The discussion included the potential growing pains for the implementation of the new code as well as a behind the scenes look at how the legislation was drafted.

On Nov. 20, Hon. **John Sumner** and Hon. **Tony Baker**, of the Blue Ridge Judicial Circuit's Cherokee County Juvenile Court, presented about the preparation of juvenile court judges in implementing the new law. Sumner serves on the Council of Juvenile Court Judges' Executive Committee and has been tasked with teaching other juvenile court judges about HB242.

For more details on this committee, contact **Stephanie Mason Zudekoff** (smason@law.ga.gov) or **Donald Lee** (donald.lee@fultoncountyga.gov).

## Family Law Committee Hosts Inaugural "Meet the Cobb County Judges" Event

by *Katie Kiihnl Parker*

On Sept. 12, the YLD Family Law Committee hosted the first "Meet the Cobb County Judges" cocktail hour at Willie Rae's on the Marietta Square. The event, which is the first in a series of upcoming "Meet the Judges" events hosted by the Family Law Committee, was attended by all ten Superior Court judges and one Juvenile Court judge. The event was sponsored by **Alvaro Arauz** with 3a Law Practice Management and Thurman Holder Gibbon Financial Consultants, who regularly support family law attorneys in law practice, mediation and litigation.

Attendees had the opportunity to get to know the Cobb County judges in a more social setting and to ask the judges questions about a variety of issues. The judges provided the young lawyers with war stories, anecdotes and words of wisdom to remember while practicing in their courtrooms. Chief Judge **Adele Grubbs** encouraged attorneys to stick to the facts and give the judge the "need to know" elements of the case, rather than filling oral arguments and openings with "fluff." Hon. **Jim Bodiford** reminded all lawyers to arrive promptly to his early morning calendar calls, while Hon. **Greg Poole** cautioned young lawyers to double-check the work prepared by their assistants and paralegals, citing his most memorable and comical examples of improperly prepared, but crucial exhibits. Hon. **Reuben Green** urged all young lawyers to recognize the importance of building solid reputations in the legal field and to remember that professionalism with colleagues goes a long way. Green noted that certain litigious tactics "may make you look good to your client in that moment, but the judge will remember it in future cases." Hon. **Tain Kell** encouraged young lawyers to continue to get to know the judges in all counties in which they practice.

The Family Law Committee received wonderful feedback from the lawyers and judges in attendance. Based on the success of this event, the Family Law Committee has paired up with the YLD Litigation Committee to co-host the "Meet the Fulton County Judges" event. All Fulton County Superior Court and Family Division judges, as well as most State Court judges, have confirmed their attendance. The event is scheduled for Jan. 30, 2014, and the location will be advertised at a later date. The Family Law and Litigation Committees hope that you will join them and get to know the Fulton County judges!

## Family Law Committee Raises More Than \$20,000 for AVL F

by *Jamie Perez*



(L-R) AVL F Executive Director Marty Ellin, Family Law Committee Co-Chair Jamie Perez, Staff Attorney Liz Whipple, Family Law Committee Co-Chair Kelly Reese and YLD President Darrell Sutton at the Supreme Cork.

The YLD Family Law Committee hosted its 8th Annual "Supreme Cork" Silent Auction and Wine Tasting fundraiser on Oct. 17, at 5 Seasons Brewing Company Westside, welcoming approximately 150 guests. The event was a great success, with the committee raising more than \$20,000 for the Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation's (AVLF) Guardian ad Litem and Domestic Violence Programs.

Committee Co-Chairs **Jamie Perez** and **Kelly Reese** credit the tireless efforts of their committee members, who solicited an unprecedented amount of sponsorship funds through their firms and contacts in the legal community. The event would not be possible without the support of committee members, sponsors, and the family law community. The Committee and AVL F extend their sincere appreciation to all of this year's sponsors:

Platinum: Allison B. Hill, JD, PhD; Holland Roddenbery LLC; Shewmaker & Shewmaker, LLC; Stern & Edlin, PC; and Warner, Bates, McGough, McGinnis & Portnoy

Gold: Boyd Collar Nolen & Tuggle, LLC; Lawler Green Prinz & Gleklen, LLC; Waggoner Hastings, LLC; and White Elm Group, LLC

Silver: Dr. Andrew M. Gothard, Atlanta Psychological Services; Bennett Thrasher, PC; Bogart & Bogart, PC; Donovan Reporting, PC; Ichter Thomas, LLC; Investigative Accounting Group; Kitchens New Cleghorn, LLC; Levine Smith Snider & Wilson, LLC; Mayoue Gray Eittreim, PC; Peachtree Psychological Associates; Thurman Holder Gibbon, LLC; and Whitney D. Mauk, PC

This is the second year AVLF's family law programs have been the beneficiary of the Supreme Cork fundraiser. AVLF's Guardian ad Litem Program provides attorney volunteers, trained and supervised by AVLF, to serve as guardians ad litem for children from low-income households in contested custody cases. The Domestic Violence Program operates the Safe Families Office which provides free legal and safety planning assistance on a walk-in basis at the Fulton County Courthouse to survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking. The program also trains and places volunteer attorneys to represent survivors at 12-month TPO hearings.

If you are interested in joining the Family Law Committee, contact Kelly Reese at [kelly@stern-edlin.com](mailto:kelly@stern-edlin.com) or Jamie Perez at [jamie@hollandroddenbery.com](mailto:jamie@hollandroddenbery.com).

## Minorities in the Profession Committee

by Morgan Clemons



(L-R) Morgan Clemons, State Bar President-Elect Patrise Perkins-Hooker and Yennifer Delgado from the Minorities in the Profession Kickoff Happy Hour at Glenn's Kitchen on Sept. 19, sponsored by The Davis Bozeman Law Firm.

The Minorities in the Profession Committee (MIPC) kicked the year off with a happy hour gathering at the Glenn Hotel in September. The event offered attendees the ability to network with peers in the YLD and Bar.

On Nov. 7, the YLD MIPC organized a panel entitled "Living on a Budget: How to Make the Most Out of Your Money." The panelists focused on two topics—how to spend less and how to make more.

Atlanta Journal Constitution bargain hunter columnist **Nedra Rhone** offered tips on how to spend less on attorney-related expenses, including networking lunches and events, entertaining potential clients, and stocking your wardrobe with quality, work-appropriate attire. **Leon Staples**, a member of the National Association of African-Americans in Human Resources, discussed ways to utilize work perks to save money, including teleworking to reduce transportation costs, asking nearby

retailers, restaurants and residences whether your employer is a "preferred employer," and taking advantage of often overlooked discounts from the American Bar Association, discounts from your alma mater and professional discounts offered to lawyers or State Bar members. Staples also offered advice on how to ensure that any additional income-generating ventures do not conflict with your legal position nor cause concern for Human Resources. **Cristina Briboneria** of oXYgen Financial, a company that caters to the X and Y generations, explained various considerations for paying down debt, such as whether the debt is deductible. She also suggested options for saving or investing unexpected money such as work bonuses and tax refunds. **Jeff Patterson**, director of the Georgia State University Small Business Development Center, proposed tips for how to start your own business and what to look for if you want to invest in local businesses to increase your income. The event was co-sponsored by the Government Lawyers Section of the Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys.

## Your High School Mock Trial Competition Wants You!

by Michael Nixon

For the past 25 years, the High School Mock Trial (HSMT) Competition has been one of the largest committees of the YLD. The competition started in 1987 as a project of the Younger Lawyers Section growing out of a program from Clayton County schools. In 1988, it was made a full Committee of the YLS and has grown ever since.

For the 2014 season, 129 schools have registered and six teams are first-time competitors. All of these teams will provide approximately 1800 high school students the chance to compete in regional competitions. The students will work on the competition problem for four months with their attorney coaches whose numbers currently total over 300 volunteer attorneys donating countless hours to coach a team. Of the 300 attorney coaches, 128 are YLD members.

The HSMT Committee is made up of lawyer volunteers. Without the volunteer efforts, the Competition would not happen each year. Aside from working in a structural capacity on the committee directly, there is another very important area in which volunteer participation can make a huge impact: evaluating at competitions. Many YLD members participated in mock trial or moot court during their educational career and are aware of its valuable impact. Each level of the HSMT competition needs evaluators. For regional competitions, each round requires three scoring evaluators and one presiding judge per courtroom. With 129 participating teams, 516 judges and evaluators are required for each round. Many people return annually and evaluate more than one round, but there are always many spots to fill. This is the greatest area of need each season. A volunteer only donates three to four hours on a Saturday watching a group of high school students prosecute or defend a case in an amazing and entertaining fashion. Regional competitions occur in 16 locations around the state during the weekends of Jan. 25 and Feb. 1, 2014. Volunteers are also needed in district competitions on Feb. 22.

If interested in evaluating, please visit [www.georgiamocktrial.org](http://www.georgiamocktrial.org) to volunteer as a judge or evaluator. The HSMT Committee thanks all volunteers for many years of support and is looking forward to a great season in 2014!

A colorful graphic with a background of blue, orange, and green circles. The text is centered and reads:

**JUDGING PANEL VOLUNTEERS NEEDED IN 2014**

The members of the YLD have supported the Mock Trial program for 25 outstanding seasons.

**Three hours of your time is all we need for a successful 26th!**

**Regional Level of Competition**

No high school mock trial pre-requisite for judging panel service at the regional level and current attorney coaches are not eligible.

Albany (1/25), Athens (2/1), Atlanta (1/23, 1/26 & 2/1), Cartersville (2/1), Covington (2/1), Cumming (1/24 & 25), Dalton (1/25), Decatur (1/25), Douglasville (1/25), Jonesboro (1/31 & 2/1), Lawrenceville (1/31 & 2/1), Macon (2/1), Marietta (1/25), McDonough (2/1) and Savannah (2/1)

**District Level of Competition (NEW in 2014)**

At least one round of HSMT judging panel experience or one year of HSMT coaching experience required to serve at the district level on Feb. 22 in the following cities:

Athens, Atlanta, Cartersville, Decatur, Jonesboro, Macon, Marietta and Savannah

**State Finals Competition**

At least two rounds of HSMT judging panel experience or one year of HSMT coaching experience required to serve at the state level in Lawrenceville on March 15.

**VOLUNTEER FORMS ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE IN THE "VOLUNTEERS" SECTION OF OUR WEBSITE**

[www.georgiamocktrial.org](http://www.georgiamocktrial.org)

Contact the Mock Trial Office with questions:  
404-527-8779/800-334-6865 ext. 779  
Email: [michaeln@gabar.org](mailto:michaeln@gabar.org)

# Affiliate Updates

## Albany

by David Ballard

The Albany Area YLD has had a great year so far! On Sept. 26, the group attended an After Hours event hosted by the law firm Moore, Clarke, DuVall & Rodgers, P.C., a generous supporter of the local YLD. The event provided local young attorneys an opportunity to mix and mingle with their colleagues. In October, the YLD partnered with the Dougherty Circuit Bar Association to participate in Boo from the Bar. The Albany Area YLD is looking forward to continuing its involvement in the community in the months to come. For information on how to become involved with the Albany Area YLD, please contact **Jim Edge** at [jedge@mcdm-law.com](mailto:jedge@mcdm-law.com), **David Ballard** at [dballard@kelleylovet.com](mailto:dballard@kelleylovet.com), or **Valerie Cochran** at [vcochran.law@gmail.com](mailto:vcochran.law@gmail.com).

## Glynn County

by Melissa Cruthirds

The Glynn County YLD participated in the ribbon cutting ceremony of the new nature trail of the Humane Society of South Coastal Georgia on Sept. 27. **Amanda Jones, J.D. Blevins** and **Melissa Cruthirds** attended the Grand Opening and took some happy dogs for a much-deserved walk. The eco-friendly nature trail adorns the periphery of the Humane Society's eight acre property and is ADA-compliant so all can experience the human-animal bond in a tranquil setting.

**Casey Viggiano, Lacey Houghton** and **Jason Hodges** volunteered at the Under the Oaks Half Marathon/10K/5K on Jekyll Island on Oct. 12. The event benefitted the Jekyll Island Foundation and St. Simons Christian School. The members directed the runners through the winding, twisting and oak-covered Jekyll Island roads, and also stayed to clean up.

The monthly networking events have been wildly successful, with an increasing turnout. Local and visiting lawyers to Glynn County are invited to its YLD events. For information on joining or attending an event, please contact **Melissa Cruthirds** at [melissa@williamslg.com](mailto:melissa@williamslg.com).

## Savannah

by Lindsey Lovingood Hobbs

The Savannah YLD began the 2013-14 year on Sept. 19 with its kick-off happy hour at World of Beer, generously sponsored by ProLegal Copies. The YLD welcomed new lawyers, those awaiting Bar Exam results and those new to Savannah. On Friday, Oct. 25, the year continued with a trolley ride and ghost tour of downtown Savannah which was sponsored by McKee Court Reporting, Inc. YLD members and guests enjoyed camaraderie while hearing about some of Savannah's famous spirits, just in time for Halloween.

On Friday, Nov. 1, the 25 newest members were greeted at the annual Chatham County Swearing-In Ceremony. Hon. **Timothy R. Walmsley**, Chatham County Superior Court Judge, presided over the ceremony. Following the ceremony, the Savannah YLD held a reception for the new admittees, their families and Savannah attorneys. Congratulations to all of the new Bar members! The Savannah YLD also hosted a meet and greet with Judge **Carla Wong McMillian** of the Court of Appeals of Georgia.

For information on joining or attending an event, please contact **Lindsey Hobbs** at [lindsey@tmlawpc.com](mailto:lindsey@tmlawpc.com).

Celebrating  
the United States Constitution  
225 years



Photo credit: The Constitution of the Supreme Court of the United States



Photo credit: William B. Eerdmans



## CONSTITUTIONAL SYMPOSIUM

Please join the State Bar of Georgia in celebrating the United States Constitution 225 years after its ratification.

March 12-14, 2014  
The Westin Buckhead Atlanta  
Atlanta, Ga.

Confirmed speakers include:

U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia and David McCullough, two-time winner of the Pulitzer Prize and recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

For more information, contact the Institute of Continuing Legal Education at [constitution@iclega.org](mailto:constitution@iclega.org).



### Meetings from page 1



(L-R) Martina Palatto, Aimee Sanders, Tiffany Coleman and YLD President-Elect Sharri Edenfield displaying their Georgia Dawg Pride at the Fall Meeting tailgate.

young lawyers enjoyed great company and good conversation with their fellow meeting attendees.

Former State Bar President **Lester Tate** presented a CLE program on Friday, and joined the young lawyers as they traveled to Knoxville on Saturday to tailgate and attend the Georgia vs. Tennessee game. Dressed in their finest red and black attire, the YLD's support paid off in the end as they cheered the Bulldogs on to an overtime victory.

The YLD is looking forward to another successful meeting at the Midyear Meeting in Atlanta, Jan. 10, 2014.

# BLACK TIE & BLACK JACK

BENEFITTING  
YLD PUBLIC INTEREST  
INTERNSHIP PROGRAM  
FEBRUARY 8, 2014



Casino

Hors D'oeuvres

Open Bar

VIP Reception with  
Bourbon Tasting

Silent Auction

Please support the 8th Annual YLD  
Signature Fundraiser

Saturday, Feb. 8, 2014  
7:30 p.m.  
The Biltmore

General Admission \$125 at door  
\$100 in advance

Host Committee \$150 includes  
1-hour VIP pre-event

Have questions or need more information?  
Contact **Mary McAfee** at [marym@gabar.org](mailto:marym@gabar.org),  
**Meredith Sutton** at [meredithwilson@gmail.com](mailto:meredithwilson@gmail.com)  
or **Jessica Sabbath** at [jsabbath@kslaw.com](mailto:jsabbath@kslaw.com)

## Tips to Leverage Slow Business Periods

by *Shalamar Parham*

Attorneys are motivated, self-starting, goal-oriented individuals. Attorneys share the same traits as successful entrepreneurs so it is no surprise that so many young attorneys choose to start their own law firms. If you are a solo attorney that chose to hang your own shingle as a result of the current legal job market, it still takes a lot of courage and dedication to make this decision. That decision may be daunting at first when you realize that during law school, you were trained to think, read, write and analyze like a lawyer but not much direction was provided on how to run your own law practice like a business. Many of these business lessons for young solos are learned through trial and error.

One of the first lessons you learn when building a new law practice is that there will be peaks and valleys. Some months new business may be off the charts while during other months new client retainers may lull to almost nothing. The lull may be predictable due to lack of demand for your services during certain seasons and holidays or it may be completely unexpected due to something outside of your control. Regardless of the reasons, the quicker you master this lesson as a young solo and entrepreneur, the sooner you will leverage these slow periods and position yourself for success.

1. **Don't Hide** – When income stops flowing and the bills keep piling up, it is natural to want to hide from the world. Resist this feeling and do the opposite. Instead, leverage this time to spread the message that you are the next rising star in your practice area and are ready to accept new clients. Attend networking functions, invite colleagues and referral sources to coffee, visit old friends or search your local paper or online for upcoming events to attend. Refusing to hide and staying busy with meetings and events will keep you too occupied to stay stressed and worried for very long, gently remind your network to recommend your services to others and more importantly will bring you new clients.
2. **Do Keep Marketing** – When new client retainers slow down, this is not the time to slow down on your marketing. Sure, you may choose to skip some discretionary expenses and activities this month, but when running a business, marketing is not discretionary. You should take advantage of this time to analyze your marketing campaigns and ramp up marketing efforts on those that have provided the largest return on investment. By tracking and analyzing marketing numbers, you will begin to see a pattern of what works and what does not work for you. Brainstorm and plan more of the marketing that does work and tweak what doesn't so that you gain more bang for your marketing buck.
3. **Do Improve Your Skills** – Being the best in your practice area can be leveraged into attracting more potential clients and more business. Clients are more comfortable hiring an attorney who is confident, appears to be knowledgeable in their practice area and is well-respected by others in the legal profession. Becoming the best and gaining recognition from your colleagues takes the dedication to continue to improve yourself. Take advantage of your slow periods and read self-improvement books, articles and journals from experts in your practice area, and attend relevant seminars.
4. **Don't Skimp on Services** – When your bank account balance is low, it can be tempting to provide your clients with less and to charge ancillary and administrative fees to increase your profit margins. This short term gain may actually hurt you more in the long run. A happy client is the best referral source your business has and skimping on services will leave you with an unhappy client. Unhappy clients will be more likely to want to bad talk you and ruin your reputation to whomever will listen. Always deliver above and beyond what your clients expect. Reach out to your former and current clients and have them rate your services through a survey that can be sent to all of your clients electronically within a matter of minutes. Pay close attention to the results and comments, and implement new practices to keep your clients coming back for their future legal needs and to leave your clients wanting to refer your services to their friends, co-workers and family members.
5. **Do Finish Your Projects** – Have a continuing legal education presentation, a journal article, research on a new practice area or something similar that you have been meaning to finish, but just haven't had the time to complete? Take advantage of your time now and complete and launch your new projects. Completing your project will not only leave you with a sense of accomplishment, but also with a finished product that you can use to market your business and add on to the value that you provide your clients.

Implementing these practices into your business are a few of the ways that you can position yourself to continuously market your law firm and ultimately attract new clients even when business is slow.



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## Editor's Block

Crystal Conway

Anyone who knows me knows that I am a huge fan of the show *Scandal*. I think I was hooked from the first episode when an attorney referred to himself and the people in his firm as “gladiators in suits.” The term “gladiators in suits” has remained with me ever since as the perfect description of what an attorney truly should be.

In keeping with the gladiator theme, I am reminded of the film by the same name starring Russell Crowe. Depicting a gladiator in ancient Rome, Crowe’s character never wavered in his loyalty to the cause for which he was fighting. He also displayed a great show of ethics and professionalism even when tested to the brink of death. Now, I’m not suggesting that as attorneys we should fight to our physical deaths to do our jobs, but when we are working on a case, meeting a client, or

crafting a deal we should put so much of ourselves into the matter that there can be no question of our dedication. We should seek to solve the problem to the satisfaction of our clients and employers, but most importantly to the satisfaction to ourselves. We should, in effect, be gladiators.

In the fall edition of the newsletter, I asked for all of us to be the exemplary lawyers that we truly are. And the way that we get to that place is to take pride in what we do. There is a reason that we chose the path away from a different profession and chose to practice law. I would like to think that it is ultimately because we understood that by showing up and really participating in our daily activities we are making a difference somewhere somehow. It may be that we avert a crisis for our clients or handle a transaction that no one else could handle or understand, but whatever the issue, we have the tangible ability to change the course of things and we strive to do it for the better.

So, I urge you when you get up to get dressed in the morning for work, envision yourself as getting dressed as a “gladiator in a suit.” No, we may not have a handy dandy Superman or Superwoman costume underneath our standard lawyerly clothing, but we are armed with years of legal training and skills that we are honing sharper every day. We tirelessly serve our profession and each matter that comes across our desk. We are an inspiration to the thousands of students who enroll in law school each year. We are who little kids say they want to be when asked what they want to do when they grow up. We serve and we save. We set the standard and example. We are attorneys. We should wear that distinction with pride.

When Crystal and I decided to craft a newsletter around the idea of attorney pride, I must admit that I was perplexed by the idea of writing a column on that issue. I know that I am proud to be a lawyer, but I was puzzled by how I could put that into words for the Editor’s Block. We practice in a profession that is full of diversity in both membership and areas of practice. For example, I was lucky enough to have had the opportunity to work for the Georgia Legal Services Program as a staff attorney in Albany for three years when I began practicing. I was able to experience and learn from a top-notch staff of attorneys who were dedicated to the cause of helping clients who could not otherwise retain an attorney. At the end of the day, I was proud to leave the office after helping a client put food on the table or keep a roof over their head. These tactile “wins” were great to take home, and it felt great to be able to provide those services for my clients.

As I transitioned into private practice, I struggled with the notion of leaving a position where, by its nature, I was serving others in need and weighing that against working in a firm atmosphere. However, I quickly realized that our profession is inherently one where you are serving the needs of others regardless of practice area, and I wasn’t giving up the chance to help people simply by changing jobs. Whether you are a prosecutor, a public defender, a transactional attorney, or a family lawyer, you are helping someone in need. Clients cannot just turn to anyone for help; they have to turn to us because of our skills and abilities. In recognizing this, I realized why exactly I was proud to be a lawyer. After countless years of studying, testing, and working, I was able to see a payoff in what I was providing my clients. I am proud to see those efforts come to fruition and to be a part of a profession where helping others is not only a key to our success but also essential to maintaining positive reputations in our communities.

In being a proud lawyer, I have also become passionate about promoting and caring for our profession, and this is why I love the YLD and the State Bar. Each YLD event I have attended features a service project, and I’m surrounded and encouraged by colleagues and leaders who are proud of what we do in serving others. As young lawyers, we owe it to ourselves to take pride in our work and to promote that to our clients and others that we serve. Please take time to volunteer in your community, take a pro bono case through GLSP or ALAS, or join a YLD committee. Collectively, we, as a YLD, can make great changes in the lives of our clients and others, and I am proud to be part of a profession which encourages such service.



## Editor's Block

Will Davis