



# The YLD Review

The State Bar of Georgia — Lawyers Serving the Public and the Justice System

Volume 47, Issue 4

Young Lawyers Division

Summer 2006

## Georgia's Young Lawyers Shine in Las Vegas at the 2006 YLD Spring Meeting

The Young Lawyers Division met at the MGM Grand Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, Nev., the weekend of April 20-22 for their annual spring meeting.

A CLE program, now a fixture at all YLD meetings, took place on April 21.

More than 50 young lawyers attended the program, which was chaired by Sherry Neal and Scott Masterson. The concept was simple: exceptional lawyers and judges sharing their experience; a mentoring program for a day. Judges Gino Brogdon and John Ellington both shared lessons learned from the bench and in private practice.

Elizabeth Price, president of the Atlanta Bar Association, and Damon Elmore shared experiences from their tenures as bar presidents and offered advice to those with similar aspirations. Terri Gordon and Monica Hanrahan offered perspective on entering the practice of law and the importance of reputation. Al Parnell, of Hawkins & Parnell and Frank Burns, who practices in Atlanta, presented about the business side of the practice of law. The CLE concluded with a presentation on jury selection and jury attitudes from Susan Fillichio of DecisionQuest, a national trial and jury consulting firm.

At the black tie Gala on April 22 YLD President Damon Elmore was surprised with a "roast," where his friends and colleagues (or former friends as the case may be), shared special anecdotes and stories about him.

**Top:** David Gruskin, YLD Director Deidra Sanderson, Frank Burns, Damon Elmore, Terri Gordon, Doug Kertscher and Josh Bell

**Bottom:** Andrew Rothschild, John and Mandy Johnson

**Right:** The MGM Grand served as the host hotel for the 2006 Spring Meeting.



All Photos by Johanna Merrill

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from the  
President

## YLD Tackled Year's Ambitious Goals

By Damon Elmore

The dreaded final column - you know the one you see each year at this time, thanking so and so for this and so and so for that. "It's been a great ride..." I've always read those columns and wondered if everyone used the same template, but just changed the names and dates.

Apparently, it is my turn to pull out that McCall's pattern and reflect on the good work we have accomplished. At the 2005 Annual Meeting, we kicked off the year looking forward to a number of lofty and ambitious goals. The outcome: we tackled each one, head on, perfectly.

We looked forward to offering an assortment of quality, substantive, well-rounded and enjoyable business meetings. From Charleston to Athens, to Atlanta and Las Vegas, we accomplished the business of the YLD while furthering the goal of becoming "the best lawyers we can be" by including a CLE component at each meeting. To do what we did at these meeting we had to rely on the support of a large group of sponsors and friends of the YLD. They came through in an unprecedented fashion and we are grateful to them and should, in turn, support them. Fun? We had a little of that too.

We launched our inaugural Leadership Academy. It has been a comprehensive leadership development program designed as an intensive "next step" to follow the Transition into Law Practice Program. Through the hard work of Laurel Landon, Tonya Boga and Leigh May, we combined a mentor relationship with organized workshops examining appropriate areas such as professionalism, lawyers as elected officials, and service on non-profit boards.

In what can only be described as the most fertile YLD administration of all time, we saw no less than 10 officers and directors become fathers, mothers or expectant parents

this past year. This falls under the "take time to smell the roses" category. We are proud of them, happy for each and wish them all the best.

I look forward to watching the momentum continue and to the good work Jon and his new team - Josh, Elena and Amy - will undoubtedly do. I look forward to spending a little more time with my wife and daughters. I love them dearly and am grateful that they have grown to understand and allow time for the development of my passion and vision.

The outline says I have to offer thanks. It is the easiest, yet most difficult, part. Hundreds of young lawyers are responsible for the YLD's strength. Some are nameless and faceless lawyers who attended meetings in Atlanta, Augusta, Bainbridge, Carrollton, Covington, Macon, Marietta, and Savannah. In the words of the poet Kayne West, "I wanna scream so loud for you, cause I'm so proud of you!" My good friend David Gruskin is to be thanked as well. Without his unselfish gesture that allowed me to cap off a nine-year track that was slightly derailed, I would not have had this opportunity.

Of course, the greater YLD and I are personally thankful, and eternally indebted to our director, Deidra Sanderson. She has displayed a Porsche-like drive and enthusiasm for her work this year, that has allowed our committees to operate flawlessly, our meetings to move smoothly, and our work to shine brightly.

Most importantly, I have been flattered by the opportunity to serve the Bar. It was not a position to take lightly. In the near future, it won't serve any professional gain. However, I have enjoyed every minute of it and thank you for allowing me to serve. ✎

## University of Georgia Wins Georgia Intrastate Moot Court Competition

The Georgia Intrastate Moot Court Competition sponsored by the Young Lawyers Division of the State Bar of Georgia was completed on March 24 and 25, 2006 at the University of Georgia School of Law. Students from the University of Georgia Team B won the competition, having the overall best combined brief and oral argument scores. The winning team was comprised of Tedra Hobson, Glenn Singleton and Dean Taylor. Also advancing to the final round was Georgia State University Team A comprised of Christopher Henderson, Douglas Rosenbloom and Monika Vyas.

The University of Georgia also took home the Best Brief and Best Oralist honors. The Best Oralist award went to Tedra Hobson of University of Georgia Team B. University of Georgia Team B composed of Tedra Hobson, Glenn Singleton and Dean Taylor also received the Best Brief award.

More than 50 practitioners from around the state contributed to the competition by grading briefs and judging oral argument rounds. Additionally, the competitors had the benefit of a top-notch final round oral argument bench led by the Honorable Debra Bernes of the Georgia Court of Appeals. Also serving as final round judges were Gerald Weber, Legal Director of the ACLU of Georgia; former Georgia Attorney General and Balch & Bingham partner Mike Bowers; Christopher Kellner, counsel for Emory University; Allen F. Wallace, law clerk to the Honorable Robert L. Vining Jr., U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia; and R. Brent Hatcher Jr., of Smith, Gilliam, William & Miles, P.A. in Gainesville.

The competition was organized and planned by the Georgia Intrastate Moot Court Competition committee chaired by S. Derek Bauer, Powell Goldstein LLP. The problem, written by Chris Kellner, involved the constitutionality of a state statute placing residency requirements on convicted sex offenders. The



**Left to Right:** Christopher Kellner, Hon. Debra Bernes, Tedra Hobson, Dean Taylor, Glenn Singleton, Allen Wallace, R. Brent Hatcher Jr., Gerald Weber, Mike Bowers

competitors argued whether the statute's residency restriction violated the Ex Post Facto Clause of the U.S. Constitution; whether the restriction violated the 14th Amendment by impermissibly restricting personal choices regarding family matters and the right to inter- or intrastate travel; and whether the "exceptions" clause of the statute deprived the plaintiff, a convicted sex offender, of a protected liberty interest without due process.



# Career Corner

By Stacy Silverstone  
Cambridge Partners

**I'm a second-year associate at a big firm and I realize that I hate my practice area. Is it too late to switch?**

I am so sorry to hear that you don't like your practice area. As a former big firm associate myself, trust me when I say that I feel your pain. Also, you are not alone. Many associates find themselves in the same position. If you think about it, this is not at all surprising since associates at many large law firms essentially choose their practice area during their tenure as summer associates—before they even graduate law school. Now, after practicing for a few years, they learned that a particular practice area isn't all that it is cracked up to be.

Switching practice areas is not easy, but there is hope.

First, you need to do some fairly extensive soul-searching. Make sure that the reason for your unhappiness is your practice area rather than your law firm. If you determine it is your practice group, think about why you hate your practice area and what you want out of a new practice area. After you have thought of some possible new practice areas, talk to everyone you know who practices in that area. You don't need to tell them why you are asking. Most lawyers love to talk about their jobs. Not to state the obvious, but the more closely aligned your desired practice area is to your current practice area, the easier the transition.

Once you have figured out the right practice group for you, you basically have two options. You can try to switch practice groups within your firm or you can seek out a new firm. There are pros and cons to both of these options. Regardless of which path you choose, when you switch practice groups, be prepared to discount your partnership track years to accommodate your change.

In my opinion, if you can switch practice areas within your firm, this is the easier road. Whether this is an option depends on several factors, including whether your desired practice area is busy enough to accommodate another associate, how well liked and respected you are within the firm and firm politics. One con to switching practice groups within your firm is that you may have to be prepared to handle some bruised feelings or egos within the group you left behind. As I mentioned, switching practice groups is not easy, but because your firm has

already invested in training you and determined that you are a good fit with their culture, your present firm may be more willing to re-train you in another area of the law.

There are circumstances where switching practice groups within your firm may not be feasible because of something you have done or because of the firm's politics. If you think that this is the case, switching firms may be the better option. If you decide to go this route, the best place to start looking for the right opportunity is within your legal network. Ask associates who practice in your desired practice area to lunch—everyone likes a free lunch—and talk to them about the needs at their firms. Also, try to attend CLE seminars in your desired practice area. These are great networking opportunities.

Additionally, talk to a legal recruiter. When making a practice group switch, nine times out of 10, a legal recruiter may counsel you that it would be better to pursue opportunities on your own. This is because typically law firms pay legal recruiters to find them an experienced attorney. While an associate who is making a practice group switch is an experienced attorney, she is not experienced in the field in which she hopes to practice. However, a legal recruiter may be able to submit your resume to a potential employer if your desired practice area is closely related to your present practice area or if your desired practice area is particularly hot. Nevertheless, for any associate who wants to make a practice group change, a recruiter can be an invaluable resource because many legal recruiters have counseled others through this transition (or made it themselves). Also, in the circumstances where a legal recruiter thinks that you should pursue opportunities on your own, the recruiter may be happy to share leads she has and give you the benefit of her knowledge about the opportunities.

I know that you do not have an easy task in front of you, but if you find the right practice group and enjoy your career more, the time you invest now will be well worth it. Good luck!

Stacy Silverstone is a former big law firm associate turned legal recruiter with Cambridge Partners. You may e-mail her in strict confidence at [ssilverstone@cambridgepg.com](mailto:ssilverstone@cambridgepg.com).



Scott Masterson, Mahaley Paulk, Steven Lynch, Terri Gordon and Stacy Silverstone at the Litigation Committee's St. Patrick's Day Happy Hour.

## Update From the Litigation Committee

By Scott Masterson  
Committee Co-Chair

### St. Patrick's Day Social

The YLD Litigation Committee held its March social at McDuff's Irish Pub in Buckhead on March 16, 2006. The event was sponsored by our friends at Merrill Corporation. More than 50 committee members and guests attended and all had a good time. On information and belief, no green beer was consumed by any member of the Bar.

### March of Dimes

On April 22, the Litigation Committee joined Calanit Hayes in the March of Dimes Walk to raise funds for research associated with premature births. Though the weather was not the best, nearly 60 people joined Calanit and the Litigation Committee for the walk. Fundraising efforts yielded a total of more than \$2,000 to be donated to the March of Dimes. Hala Carey raised \$1,000 on her own for the March of Dimes! Thank you to everyone for the support, contributions and encouragement.

You are cordially invited to attend the

# CELEBRATION OF EXCELLENCE

**Celebrating**  
The Educational Achievements of Georgia's Youth in Foster Care

**Wednesday, June 14, 2006 at 6:00 pm**  
The Fox Theatre Egyptian Ballroom  
660 Peachtree Street, Atlanta, Georgia

**Event Highlights**  
Inspirational speakers, special presentations, scholarship awards and reception to follow ceremony

For more information and for graduate registration  
[www.celebrationofexcellence.org](http://www.celebrationofexcellence.org)  
Georgia Association of Homes and Services for Children Foundation  
404 572 6170  
email: [susan@gahsc.org](mailto:susan@gahsc.org)

Open to the public - no RSVP necessary.  
See reverse for directions.

**DIRECTIONS TO THE FABULOUS FOX THEATRE:**  
660 Peachtree Street NE  
Atlanta, Georgia 30308  
(404) 881-2100

From I-75/I-85 South  
Exit at North Avenue and go left at the end of the ramp. Turn left at the third traffic light (Peachtree Street). The Fox Theatre is 1 block down on the left.

From I-75/I-85 North and I-20  
Exit at W. Peachtree/Spring Street. Go two blocks to Peachtree Street and turn left. The Fox Theatre is two blocks down on the left.

**MARTA**  
Ride MARTA to the North Avenue station and walk two blocks east to the theatre. North Avenue station is also the transfer point for several bus routes.

**Parking**  
Several paid lots surround the Fox Theatre. The cost is usually \$4-\$10. Please avoid parking in unattended lots.

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# MIPC Presents an Evening with the Justices

By Holly Geerdes  
Committee Co-Chair

**O**n April 6 the Minorities in the Profession Committee (MIPC) hosted a panel discussion and cocktail reception for Georgia Supreme Court Justices Robert Benham and Harold D. Melton.

This event was held for the specific purpose of giving young minority law students and lawyers the opportunity network and to personally meet and learn about Justices Benham and Melton. The historic event was held at Troutman Sanders LLP in Midtown Atlanta from 5:30 p.m. into the evening. More than 100 law students and lawyers requested an invitation to meet the Justices. The attendees ranged from law students from various Georgia law schools, MIPC members, Gate City bar members, and attorneys from the Georgia Association of Women Lawyers.

Kamla Alexander from Troutman Sanders LLP moderated the panel discussion with the Justices. During the moderated discussion the Justices Benham and Melton discussed everything from their personal hobbies, current event issues, most memorable experiences and cases, and of course, professional career advice.

The moderated discussion was followed by a cocktail reception where the Justices personally met the law students and lawyers over wine and hors d'oeuvres. The evening was truly a memorable event for law students and MIPC members.



Justice Harold D. Melton, Shiriki Cavitt, Holly Geerdes, Kamla Alexander, Justice Robert Benham and Mawuli Davis

## Lawyers' Challenge for Children: Spotlighting The Sí Project

By Ari Mathé  
Juvenile Law Committee

**T**he issue of immigrants' rights floods daily headlines and nearly tops the list of Americans' current political concerns. While the state of current law remains in flux regarding the status and rights of new entries to the United States, one aspect of immigration law has been clear, if not well known, for the past 16 years. In 1990, Congress created a special visa category called "Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS)" to allow certain children in foster care to petition for "permanent residence status" (a green card). SIJS permits eligible children to obtain various government benefits and assistance that is not available to undocumented individuals.

A child is eligible to petition for SIJS if the child is: (1) in foster care, (2) under the age of 21, (3) unmarried, (4) in the legal custody of a state or local agency due to abuse, abandonment or neglect, and (5) neither family reunification nor returning the child to her country of origin is in the child's best interest. Although the petitioning process is relatively simple, the child and her custodian (usually the Department of Family and Children's Services or DFCS) need the assistance of an attorney to navigate the paperwork and other requirements set forth by the Immigration and Naturalization Service—enter The Sí Project.

Through the creativity of Juvenile Court Judge Mary Carden and the organizational leadership of Georgia Legal Services Managing Attorney Wendy Glasbrenner, the Northeastern Judicial Circuit has developed The Sí Project ("sí," meaning "yes" but also standing for "special immigrants"), which recruits and trains volunteer attorneys to assist eligible children in petitioning the federal government for SIJS. The Sí Project kicked off in spring of 2006 with its initial training of several volunteer attorneys and has plans to conduct a second training this summer. The trained volunteer attorneys receive referrals from an eligible child's Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) or DFCS case manager, and then spring into action to complete and process the child's SIJS petition and other documentation.

Within just a month of her training, Stephanie Woodard, an attorney practicing in Gainesville, assisted one eligible child in obtaining much-needed gov-

ernment services by petitioning INS for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status. The child is a profoundly mentally retarded teen, who has been in the care and custody of the Department of Family and Children's Services since 1999, when his mother turned over his care to DFCS. He now has no family to care for him and, due to his illness, will never be able to care for himself. Without Ms. Woodard's efforts to secure SIJS for him, his DFCS case manager would be left with no choice but to drive him to the Mexican border and release him with no person or agency to care for him, as his eligibility for a group home placement and other services through DFCS was set to expire soon.

Chuck Kuck, an attorney with Kuck Casablanca LLC and the Vice President of the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA), provided the group's training and regularly teaches attorneys nationwide about Special Immigrant Juvenile Status and how attorneys can petition for SIJS on behalf of their clients. Mr. Kuck states that, at present, there are no other SIJS programs similar to The Sí Project in Georgia and so many more are needed. If attorneys, circuits, or local juvenile courts are interested in developing a similar project in their area, Chuck is willing to provide training free of charge and can be contacted at 404-816-8611 or at [ckuck@immigration.net](mailto:ckuck@immigration.net). Interested volunteers can also access resources on the AILA website at [www.aila.org](http://www.aila.org), the INS website at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov) as well as "The Immigrant Legal Resource Center Special Immigrant Juvenile Handbook" at [www.ilrc.org/resources/sijs/2005%20SIJS%20manual%20complete.pdf](http://www.ilrc.org/resources/sijs/2005%20SIJS%20manual%20complete.pdf).

This is the third in a continuing series dedicated to raising awareness of, and pro bono support for, critical legal services programs for children and youth. The Lawyers' Challenge for Children Campaign, an initiative of the YLD and its Juvenile Law Committee, has been created to highlight innovative programs that serve Georgia's most vulnerable populations. The need for appropriate legal representation is particularly profound for children. Please look for ways to offer your support throughout the year. For more information about the Lawyers' Challenge for Children Campaign, please e-mail Lea Thompson at [lea@childwelfare.net](mailto:lea@childwelfare.net).



# Viva Las Vegas!

**Right:**  
Judge Gino Brogdon, Damon Elmore, Terri Gordon and Mawuli Davis



**Below:** Liz Price speaks at the CLE on April 21.



David Gruskin, Frank Burns and Carlyce Burns at the Gala Dinner



**Far Left:** Damon Elmore and Jamie Scaringi-Cherry  
**Middle:** District 44 State Representative Candidate Ashley Harris and Stephanie Kirijan  
**Left:** District 58 State Representative Candidate Elena Kaplan and Curtis Romig

**Right:** Tara and Michael Geoffrey  
**Center:** Stephanie Mathews, Crystal Morris, Terri Gordon, Hugh Morris, Phyllis Douglas and Michelle Thomas  
**Far Right:** Erik Manning and Cindy Spindler



Stephanie Mathews, Terri Gordon and Ashley Gruskin



Judge Gino Brogdon



Damon Elmore, Shiriki Cavitt, Jeff and Stacy Daxe



# How to Fail as a Young Lawyer

By Brandon Ansley

Upon the newly minted attorney's first step through the doors of their first law firm, the landscape of reality drastically changes as that dreaded devil-of-a-word they call "work" begins. Before the ink has completely dried on the new Juris Doctorate diploma and with the hangover from the bar still lingering, young attorneys entering law firms are forced to shed the lifestyle that is student and sport that of professional.

From law student to attorney; it is a fascinating metamorphosis. To many it is a long-time-coming, to some it is as dreaded as being left alone in the dark. To all, it is quite the transition. The niceties of student life evaporate quickly. No more three-week holiday breaks, chess tournaments or leisurely afternoons at yoga. Daunting, yes. Impossible, no.

At some point during law school, it seems as though someone tells you that when you start this really far off thing they refer to as "practicing law," you will know all the answers and you will know exactly what's going on when it comes. What many often fail to realize is that on the first day of work we are exactly the same person who walked into the first day of CP with no clue.

Some swear that 90 percent of life is attitude, so my inference is that with the right one, the transition from student to attorney can be manageable, if not borderline enjoyable. However, no matter how prepared you think you are for life in a law firm, it takes getting adjusted to, as with anything else in life.

To help in the transition, I've compiled some useful tips for surviving this unique experience.

However, my approach is somewhat different than most. A student who sticks with it long enough to earn a doctorate degree has likely read enough "how to survive [insert word]" books and pamphlets to deliver a baby in an elevator. So, instead, use this list of tips on "How You Can Fail During the Transition From Law Student Life to First-year Attorney."

First and foremost, remember what it was like to be a summer associate. Go into your first day of work and expect to be treated the same way. Ask for many things, and wonder aloud why lunch is no longer free. Pretend the firm is still trying to court you, as opposed to the other way around. This is your first free ticket to failure, since your disappointment will only be outweighed by your disappointment.

While the beauty pageant that is law firm recruiting has many positive aspects, the similarities between being an attorney and a summer associate are few and far between. As an attorney, people walk by your office and keep walking. The positive attention factor approaches one as you realize that the firm is not going to throw you a three month long party just because you are there. So, expect to be pampered, coddled and showered with free things throughout your career and you're on your way to certain failure.

The second key to limitless failure is to immediately let your secretary know who's boss. Tell him/her on your first day of work that you do not care how long he/she has been with the firm or how old he/she is, that you are now his/her boss because you are an attorney and he/she now works for you. It is important to get in with the right people early, and if he or she does not know you're a big important attorney now, he/she might not be as helpful as you wish. This will cause resentment. Although he/she probably knows more about the practice of law than every first-year attorney in the state put together, he/she will not help you. There is no better way to successfully fail than by getting sabotaged by people you work with.

Your secretary can be the most helpful resource you have. It was not long ago I was asking mine, "Um, how do I fax something?" If you respect them and treat them with kindness and dignity, they will help you in ways you thought impossible. If you act pompous, arrogant and overly important, your greatest resource will quickly evaporate and you will be left asking other attorneys how to properly address a letter.

The third tip to a grand failure at your transition into the legal practice is to act like you know everything. Let everyone know how smart you are, resist criticism and adopt a superior attitude to your colleagues - and sneak in your LSAT score if you can. This way you will fail brilliantly.

I can't say it enough: attitude will make you or break you. Act like a smug know-it-all and you can succeed at failing. Forget the fact that compared to the paralegals at your firm, you are as clueless as a newborn and that you can learn vast amounts of practical knowledge from those around you. Forget the fact

that sometimes you can learn more about practicing law by simply listening to an experienced attorney talk than you ever learned in law school. And most of all, forget the fact that the people you work with will likely not enjoy pompous ego-maniacs and would rather work with enjoyable individuals willing to admit they are intellectually inferior to those with more years of legal practice under their belt.

And that leads me to my fourth tip for failure - ask absolutely no questions. You would not have made it this far if you did not know elementary nuances of the law, correct? It matters naught that the person in the office next to you might be able to help you find the answer you're looking for, do not stoop down to the level of asking for help! This would show weakness and intellectual ineptitude. You're an attorney now, you should know this stuff.

Every attorney at your firm has been in your shoes. Each one has stared at a piece of paper, then at the computer, then back at the paper and then quietly muttered expletives to themselves because they have no earthly idea how to do what they have been asked to do. There are resources all around you, use your tools. Ask nothing, receive nothing, fail.

Fifth, refuse a mentor. A helpful, diligent and resourceful mentor will only perpetuate success, not failure. Thus, do not get one. If you choose a person in your law firm (one whom you do not work directly for if at all possible), who you get along with and respect to offer you guidance on even the smallest things, you will be edging ever-closer to the road of success. Questions you never thought you would ever have to ask often come up, and with no one to

ask that you can trust, you will be lost.

My last, and certainly most important key, to a failed career is to lose all perspective on life. Forget about the things you used to enjoy and bring thoughts of your work with you to your home. Think about work in the shower, in the car, and at all other possible times. Rearrange your priorities where work is at the top; who cares about hobbies, your family or loved ones - you're an attorney now and you must bill.

Let those who want to succeed in life worry about setting aside time in the day to do something they enjoy. The successful ones will remind themselves regularly that work is not everything in life, and although it is something you cannot do without, that there are far greater things in this world that sometimes must take a priority. The successful ones will remind themselves what it is they truly care about, and laugh at themselves when they get the chance. They will take their career and their work for what it is, and seek happiness in those things that bring it to them. We, the failures, will immerse ourselves in our billable hours and forget about the life around us, this way we will lose all perspective and fail masterfully at both work and life.

Follow these simple keys, and you can be the quickest and surest failure to set foot in your law firm. Disregard them, and you just might find yourself relatively successful in your job.

Beginning as an associate at a law firm is not as easy as it may first seem. Students nearing the end of their scholastic careers have spent roughly 20 years in educational institutions - all the way through the 19th grade. This kind of experience breeds a short-term goal oriented mindset. Our career goals have constantly been based on what we will do after we graduate from high school, then college, then law school. We have finally reached what we have worked for all these years, and there is inevitably a type of, what I would call, buyer's remorse that forces us to ask, "O.K., so this is it? What next?"

After the first few weeks, the fact that your assistant puts esquire behind your name becomes less funny, and the newness of being an attorney slowly fades away. Without some sort of perspective it is easy to become overwhelmed with the notion that you may in fact be walking through the doors of this building until you are dead or retired. This perspective requires a significant adjustment in the way we think, and sometimes a shift in focus to remind ourselves what we really value in our lives. Do not sacrifice your life for your work, as it is oft easy to do. Work hard, but don't forget other things that make you happy. I am convinced that with the proper perspective you can see the world more clearly, have fun and excel as an attorney. This, my friend, is why my keys to failure can bring you much success.

Brandon Ansley is an associate with Womble Carlyle Sandridge & Rice, PLLC, practicing in their business litigation group. He joined the State Bar in 2005.

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**Do not sacrifice your life for your work, as it is oft easy to do. Work hard, but don't forget other things that make you happy besides your job. I am convinced that with the proper perspective you can see the world more clearly, have fun and excel as an attorney.**

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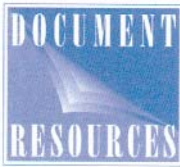
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The YLD Litigation Committee

## Community Service Committee Update

By Terri Gordon  
Committee Co-Chair

### Hawks Night

This year's Hawks' Night project took place on Feb. 3 and was a great success for all volunteers and participants. With generous donations from Kutak Rock, the children from Fulton County DFACS enjoyed an exciting, buzzer-beater game between the Hawks and the Orlando Magic.

### Food Bank

Several members of the Community Service Projects Committee volunteered on Feb. 18 to help inspect, sort and pack assorted donations of non-perishable food, paper goods, medicines and cleaning products for distribution to those in the Atlanta community who are in need. Those who attended found this project to be rewarding and a chance to be sociable with committee members.

### Project Open Hand

March 18 was a day to assist the elderly by providing home-delivered meals as part of the Meals on Wheels program for senior citizens. Through this project, Community Service Projects Committee members were

able to help our "older" neighbors in need and provide them with a quality meal.

### Committee Happy Hour

On April 26, approximately 20 young lawyers came together at Piedmont Park's Park Tavern Restaurant in Midtown Atlanta for a Charity Happy Hour organized by the Community Service Projects Committee of the YLD. All in attendance agreed that the cool drinks and great company combined to make the event a big success.

Keep an eye out for details on the next Charity Happy Hour where the Community Service Committee will give you all the information you need to participate in this year's Community Service Projects.

### Upcoming Events

In the upcoming months, the Community Service Projects Committee is scheduled to take children from the Fulton County DFACS program to the Zoo. In addition, the Committee plans to do a children's book drive in conjunction with the State Bar's Annual Meeting.



**Top:** Wanda Parker, James Freeman and Jeff Ingram.

**Left:** District 137 State Representative Candidate Stebin Horne and Carl Varnedoe

## Macon YLD Hosts Social Event

The Macon YLD hosted a social on March 8 at the historic 1842 Inn on College Street. It was the largest turnout ever for a MYLD function.

With this event, the MYLD kicked off its new program of inviting third years from Mercer Law School to all MYLD events. There were several students in attendance and everyone enjoyed getting to opportunity to meet them. We, of course, could not have had this fabulous event without the sponsorship of Jeff Ingram from Brown Reporting and Amy Howell, who sponsored the event in her successful campaign for YLD secretary. Thanks again to them for helping us make this event a success!

## Join the YLD at our Summer Meeting!

August 24-27, 2006

New York, NY



YLD Rate: \$239 per night

Group Activities will include a Welcome Cocktail Reception, a Friday night Mets vs. Phillies baseball game, Saturday morning business meeting and Saturday night dinner and Broadway show. CLE to be offered.

Please contact YLD Director Deidra Sanderson at 404-527-8778 or [deidra@gabar.org](mailto:deidra@gabar.org) for more information or to register.

[www.hilton.com/en/hi/groups/personalized/nycwahn\\_yld/index.html](http://www.hilton.com/en/hi/groups/personalized/nycwahn_yld/index.html)

Registration deadline is July 24.







from the  
Editor

# Good is Greatest Enemy of Best

By Bryan D. Scott

As my term as editor comes to an end, I have the opportunity to impart some final thoughts regarding good being the greatest enemy of best.

The good is the greatest enemy of the best. Think about that for a minute. What does that mean? It means that my contentedness with being just good in a certain area of my life can prevent me from being the best I can be in that same area of my life. In other words, because I am satisfied with being good, I never seek or strive to become the best I can be. Because, after all, I'm good, and that's sufficient. Make sense?

As attorneys, we risk falling into the same trap. We may get content in our practice. Because the work, procedures, level of knowledge, etc. in our practice is good enough, or acceptable enough, or sufficient enough we may not seek to elevate them to the best they can be. As a result, we may never change the way we practice, refuse to make a bold move out of the comfort zone we are in, or continually refrain from treading new horizons. (Be it a different practice area, a new location, a more challenging career, etc.).

Herds of sheep constantly have to be moved into different pastures because they contaminate the field they feed in if they remain in it too long. Is our firm, or is our practice, "contaminated" because we refuse to move into greener fields? Remember, the final words of a dying law firm are, "We've always done it this way."

How can we be not just good attorneys, but the best attorneys we can be? One practical tip would be to take CLEs or do some self-study to advance our knowledge in our particular field(s) of practice. Another would be to ask a more experienced attorney to lunch and pick his or her brain on his or her successes, accomplishments, mistakes and outright failures. (An attorney I used to practice with told me once that he'd learned more from his mistakes than he had his successes. I agree!) Wouldn't it be nice to pull from the experience of older, wiser attorneys so that we can avoid the same pitfalls they did?

Readers are leaders. Ever read a book or materials on how to run a law office, how to be more client-centered,

or how to present effective opening arguments? If we're content with being good, we probably have no inclination to do that. But if we want to be the best lawyers we can be, we may profit (and I don't necessarily mean financially) from these resources. The Law Practice Management program of the State Bar of Georgia has a wealth of practical, informative advice to help us in the practice of law, from effective billing to computer presentations at trial.

As often is the case, principles of application in our practice of law also have very real applicability for the rest of life as well. For example, do I want to be a good husband to my bride, or do I want to be the best husband I can be? What did my bride bargain for when she married me? As a father, am I content with being above average, so long as I'm not "slack?" What do my children deserve - a good dad or the best dad? In my faith, do I seek to honor God in some areas of my life or in all areas of my life?

Goodness in these and other areas will prevent me from being the best I can be if I allow myself to be content with where I am and quit seeking to better myself in these areas.

Is there an area of your life or practice where you are content with just being good? Has that prevented you from being the best you can be? I challenge you to look at your life and practice, re-evaluate your roles and feelings, and make the changes necessary not just to be good, but also to be the best you can be in those areas.

Finally, I would like to thank Andrew Jones, Laurel Landon, and Damon Elmore for allowing me the opportunity to serve the YLD as newsletter editor for the last three years. I have enjoyed serving in this capacity, and I wish the best to the future editor and to the YLD. Furthermore, the newsletter could not have been what it was without the hard work and dedication of Deidra Sanderson, Johanna Merrill, and Tyler Jones. I have also enjoyed working with my co-editor, Amy Howell, who will do an excellent job in her new position on the Executive Committee. I look forward to the continued accomplishments of the YLD. ✎

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