

American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division *The Affiliate*

What the Affiliate Assistance Team Can Do for You and Your Affiliate

By Jaime Ackerman

The American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division consists of over 300 affiliates: local, state, national, international, and specialty bar associations. The Affiliate Assistance Team (AAT) supports each of these organizations. Affiliates can draw on the AAT's collective wisdom and experience. And who wouldn't want to: the AAT is actively involved in both state/local bars and the ABA. The AAT acts as a conduit to provide affiliates with ABA resources. These ABA resources can help with member service projects, public service projects, bar governance, and membership ideas. Affiliates can contact the AAT on a wide variety of issues affecting their organizations. The AAT also can provide assistance in the form of written materials, contacting other agencies or the senior bar, participating in conference calls, or, in some instances, sending representatives to attend affiliate meetings.

Affiliate Assistance Team Programming

Last year, the AAT hosted programs at three of the ABA YLD's four yearly conferences: Fall, Midyear, and Spring.

At the Fall Conference, the Team hosted an affiliate roundtable for young lawyer association chairs and chair-elects. The program was by invitation and facilitated by ABA YLD district representatives. Two main topics were covered: membership and diversity.

At the Midyear Meeting, the AAT held a program allowing young lawyers the opportunity to mix and mingle with senior bar members. The program included presentations on how the senior bar can use its young lawyers and how to bridge the gap between the older and younger members of the profession.

At the Spring Conference the AAT held an affiliate showcase. Approximately fifteen past affiliate Awards of Achievement winners had booths in the conference hall for their award-winning programs. Affiliate leaders were invited to come and peruse the projects. The showcase provided an amazing opportunity to see successful programs and discuss ways these programs could be implemented by affiliates in other states.

The AAT plans to hold a similar showcase at the Spring Conference in Las Vegas and hopes to double attendance and participation. The AAT also intends to hold more roundtable programming for affiliate leaders at the Fall, Midyear, and Spring meetings.

Affiliate Assistance Team Online

The Affiliate Assistance Team webpage (www.abanet.org/yld/affiliate.shtml) provides valuable resources to affiliates. Each ABA YLD publication, *The Affiliate*, *The Young Lawyer*, and the *e-Affiliate*, is linked to this page. The AAT also has made the ABA YLD Bar Leader Toolkit available online. The Toolkit gives important insights into developing a successful young lawyer's organization, including strategic planning, leadership, governance, fundraising, diversity, and communications. (See accompanying article on page 4.)

The Team's webpage provides key dates, information on awards, subgrants, scholarships, and details on how to become an ABA YLD affiliate. This year, the AAT created the Affiliate Guide, which highlights how to make the most of your affiliation and affiliate benefits. The Guide is available at <http://new.abanet.org/divisions/YoungLawyers/PublicDocuments/AffiliatesBrochure09.pdf>.

The AAT now also has a Facebook page, the ABA Young Lawyers Division Affiliates. The Facebook page is used to post deadlines, publications, events, and other noteworthy information. This marks the Team's first step in using social media to reach affiliates and promote various programs and events.

The AAT is currently working on developing an online project repository. When complete, the repository will act as a database for successful program ideas, compiled from affiliates across the country. The project repository will have programs organized by category and will provide, among other things, a summary of the project, program materials, and contact information of someone to talk to about the project. Affiliates will have the ability to comment on and rate the programs. The Affiliate Assistance Team hopes that this program database will provide added value to affiliates, energize

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more involvement, and encourage affiliates to work together. Past Awards of Achievement recipients have been asked to contribute their winning programs to this database.

Awards, Scholarships and Other Financial Assistance

The Affiliate Assistance Team provides numerous opportunities for affiliates to recognize the successes of their organizations and of their members. In addition, subgrants provide financial assistance to affiliates so they can develop and carry out successful programming. Scholarships offer young lawyers who may not otherwise have the financial means to participate in meetings and conferences the ability to become more involved in the ABA. Below is a summary of the various awards and financial assistance available to affiliates and their members.

ABA YLD Awards of Achievement

The Awards of Achievement (AoA) program allows affiliates to submit their best, most successful projects for recognition. Affiliates may submit one entry in each of the following categories: single project/service to the public, single project/service to the bar, single project/minority, newsletter, and comprehensive. Judges consider numerous facts in deciding the AoA winners, including originality, degree of member participation, and whether the program achieved its desired goal or impact.

The deadline for the 2009–2010 AoA was June 15. Awards were presented on August 10 at the ABA YLD Assembly at the Annual Meeting in San Francisco. The AoA program for 2010–2011 year will open on April 1, 2011.

Available on the AAT webpage is a forty-two minute podcast entitled “Implementing National Award-Winning Public and Member Service Projects in Your Affiliate.” The podcast provides general information about the AoA program, including eligibility for awards, the application process, project overviews, and setting project goals. Representatives from two prior winners (the “Leaders Summit,” presented by the Washington Young Bar, and the “Families Forever” project, developed by the South Carolina Bar Association Young Lawyers Section) describe their programs. Information is given on everything from logistics, resources, program materials, budgeting, and the impact of the projects.

ABA YLD Subgrant Program

The subgrant program is designed to encourage quality programming and provides funding to affiliates so that they can perform activities that benefit local communities, leaders, or affiliate members. Subgrants are awarded each year by the ABA Young Lawyers Division, with support from the ABA Fund for Justice and Education. Funding can be received for public service or bar leadership/member service projects.

For the 2010 year, thirty-eight projects received funding through this program. The subgrant program has a yearly deadline of March 1. The application for 2011 subgrants will be available online by October 1, 2010.

Child Advocacy Award Program

Together with the Center on Children and the Law, each year the ABA YLD recognizes attorneys who act as child advocates for their notable service on behalf of children. Anyone involved in child advocacy is eligible to receive this award. Each year, one young lawyer and one non-young lawyer are recognized for their achievements and commitment to child advocacy.

The deadline for submitting nominations for the Child Advocacy Award is April 30. This year’s winners were selected on May 21. Awards were presented during the Annual Meeting on Saturday, August 7.

National Outstanding Young Lawyer Award

The National Outstanding Young Lawyer Award honors one young attorney who exemplifies professional excellence, service to the community, service to the profession and the bar, and who has a reputation for advancing legal ethics and professional responsibility. Affiliates may nominate no more than one candidate for this award each year. The deadline to submit nominations for the National Outstanding Young Lawyer Award was August 31, 2010. The winner and two finalists will be announced on February 12, 2011, at the ABA Midyear Meeting in Atlanta, Georgia.

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Outstanding Young Military Service Lawyer Award

The Outstanding Young Military Service Leader Award recognizes one young military lawyer in each branch of the armed forces for their excellence and dedication. Nominees must be on active duty and are evaluated based on their service to the community, their ability to lead and develop subordinates, and their professional accomplishments.

Nominations are due in April each year. Winners are announced in June and awards are presented at the Annual Meeting in August.

ABA YLD Scholarships

The scholarship program assists young lawyers who want to become more involved in the ABA YLD but require financial assistance to do so. Scholarships are offered in three categories: minorities in the profession; government, public sector, and military lawyers; and general practice, solo, and small firm practitioners. Financial assistance is based on an applicant's professional achievements, commitment to the bar, and the ABA YLD's missions/goals, as well as financial need.

Scholarships provide partial funding to the Fall Conference, Midyear Meeting, and Spring Conference. This program also includes an appointment to one ABA YLD committee and mentoring. Scholarship recipients are expected to attend and participate in programming at each of the three conferences for which they receive funding. The deadline to submit applications for ABA YLD Scholarships is April 15. Winners of the 2010–2011 Scholarships will be announced by August 1, 2010.

The Affiliate Assistance Team is available to provide a wide range of resources to your organization. The AAT is dynamic and able to respond flexibly to the needs of each individual affiliate. To receive the benefit of the Team's collective experiences and resources, affiliates only need to reach out and ask.

For more information about services available from the ABA YLD Affiliate Assistance Team, contact Kimber Gallo, Affiliates Director, 973/232-2962, kgallo@skoloffwolfe.com.

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