

American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division
The Affiliate

NM Supreme Court Justice Captivates Audience at Santa Fe Fall Conference

By Keya Koul

Approximately 200 attendees at the 2010 ABA YLD Fall Conference in Santa Fe, New Mexico, enjoyed the lovely fall weather with sunny days and cool evenings. The conference kicked off with a morning plenary session during which Chief Justice Charles W. Daniels of the New Mexico Supreme Court gave participants an entertaining overview of the history of the New Mexico judiciary. Chief Justice Daniels shared many interesting excerpts from judicial opinions throughout the history of New Mexico.

Professional Development

The conference included many topical CLEs, including “The 101 Basics of Native American Law: An Introduction,” “Drafting and Using Written Discovery Effectively: Strategies to Winning Your Case Outside the Courtroom,” “E3—Ethics, Election Law, and the Elected Official,” “Legal Ramifications of the Gulf Oil Spill,” and “Deal or No Deal—Ethical Dilemmas in ADR.” Non-CLE workshops included “Real Life Financial Strategies for Young Lawyers: Building Your ‘Financial House’ Strategy in Tough Economic Times,” “Financial Planning: One-on-One Sessions,” “Valuing Diversity in the Legal Profession,” “The Lawyer’s Role in Disaster Response,” “Developing Your Practice Through Speaking and Writing,” and “Traditional Legal Tactics of a Nontraditional Legal Practice.”

The Friday Luncheon Program featured author Grover E. Cleveland who shared advice based on his latest book, *Swimming Lessons for Baby Sharks: The Essential Guide to Thriving as a New Lawyer*.

Division Business Meetings

The ABA YLD Council met on Thursday, October 14, 2010, to discuss the business of the organization. The highlights of the Council meeting included an update on this year’s initiatives—*Serving Our Seniors* (www.abanet.org/yld/sos), the Law Day Video Contest (www.abanet.org/yld/lawday), and the New Partner and In-House Counsel Conference (www.abanet.org/yld/newpartner), which will be held February 25–26, 2011, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The Council also voted to create an Air and Space Law Committee.

The “Affiliate Presidents and Presidents-Elect Roundtable” was a great program at which affiliate leaders discussed challenges facing their young lawyer groups, including developing membership, promoting diversity, and implementing public and member service projects.

“We were thrilled by the turnout of our fellow young lawyers from around the country, and our international guests. Many thanks to David Wolfe, the ABA staff and leadership, the Host Committee, and our generous sponsors. Without their hard work and contributions, this conference would not have been such a success. It was an honor to share a piece of Santa Fe—we hope that people will come back to visit us soon!” said Martha Chicoski, Chair of the New Mexico YLD and the Host Committee.

Serving Our Seniors

Roxanna Chacon, a member of the ABA YLD’s *Serving Our Seniors* Team and the immediate past District Representative for ABA YLD District 23 (representing New Mexico and Arizona), organized a *Serving Our Seniors* clinic at the Mary Esther Gonzales Senior Center (a nonresidential center), the largest senior center in Santa Fe. Ten attorney volunteers with the assistance of five paralegal volunteers provided free basic estate planning to a total of fourteen low-income seniors. Roxanna commented, “I couldn’t be more pleased with the interest in the *Serving Our Seniors* public service project. The participants and volunteers made the event memorable and successful.”

Networking

As always, there were great networking events throughout the conference, including a Thursday evening “First Timer’s Orientation” and a “Welcome Reception.” The highlight was the “Friday Night Gala” at the Bonanza Creek Movie Ranch, which is a famous location for filming movies in New Mexico. These networking events gave conference participants an opportunity to talk to fellow ABA YLD members about their experiences and to share advice with one another.

All in all, the 2010 ABA YLD Fall Conference in Santa Fe, New Mexico, was a huge success. Attendees learned a lot about various topics through CLEs, public service projects, general programming and meetings, and networking events. The conference closed with participants looking forward to the 2011 ABA Midyear Meeting in Atlanta, Georgia, which will take place February 10–12, 2011.

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