

American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division *The Affiliate*

Around the Country . . .

Compiled by Blake R. Laurence

As spring approaches and winter draws to a close, ABA YLD affiliates have been busy giving back to their communities and developing future bar leaders and members.

Giving Back to the Community

The **South Carolina Bar Young Lawyers Division** "Fourth Annual Justice Jam" is slated to take place on April 30, 2010, with proceeds to benefit a local charity. The Justice Jam will be used as a kickoff event leading into Community Law Week, which will take place the week of May 3.

The **Austin (Texas) Young Lawyers Association** has begun planning the AYLA Women's Resource Fair, to be held on March 27, 2010. The Women's Resource Fair is a comprehensive all-day event that will provide homeless and battered women a variety of free resources and services, including legal assistance, medical and dental services, job skills and educational counseling, social services and veteran's assistance, shelter referrals, mental health counseling, spiritual care, child care, haircuts, breakfast, lunch, transportation, and more.

The **Oklahoma County Bar Association Young Lawyers Division** finished up its annual Harvest Food Drive, which collects money for the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma. This is a yearly project the OCBA YLD undertakes and each year the goal is \$20,000. For 2009, OCBA YLD raised over \$21,000 with money still coming in everyday! Beyond that, OCBA YLD donated \$2,000 of its own funds to a local foster children's Christmas gift drive and OCBA YLD members donated their time to the Salvation Army Toy Drive.

On December 19, 2009, the **State Bar of Arizona's Young Lawyers Division** threw a holiday party for about fifty foster children. The YLD raised approximately \$1,900 for the youngsters to play games and eat pizza at Peter Piper Pizza in Peoria. The Young Lawyers also used some of the donations to purchase movie vouchers as gifts for the foster children. Melissa Lin, 2009 holiday party chair, explained: "It's a good opportunity for young lawyers to interact and give back to the community and makes the holidays better for children who have been through so much already."

On December 14, 2009, the **Monroe County (Pennsylvania) Bar Association Young Lawyers Section** sponsored the "15th Annual Red Cross Community Blood Drive" in memory of Philip V. Mattes. Phillip Mattes was a Scranton-born attorney and a frequent blood donor who died in 1995 at the age of forty-three. Mattes helped launch the Young Lawyers Division of Lackawanna County.

On December 12, 2009, the **Delaware County (Pennsylvania) Young Lawyers Section** hosted its annual "Children's Christmas Party," the purpose of which is to benefit underprivileged youth while bringing joy to those less fortunate. The party included lunch, entertainment, and activities, including face painting, crafts, and, of course, a visit from Santa Claus, who arrived bearing gifts for the children!

On November 27, the **South Carolina Young Lawyers Division** hosted a fundraiser to benefit Children's Chance, an organization that assists pediatric cancer patients' families with nonmedical needs. The catered event featured a band and a silent auction. The current estimate is that ten times more people attended the event this year than the number of people that attended the same event last year. Autographed sports memorabilia went for top dollar and increased the funding the YLD was able to provide Children's Chance.

On October 3, 2009, the **Philadelphia (Pennsylvania) Bar Association YLD** held a "Family Fall Festival" at the Philadelphia Zoo. Forty-nine "Kidcare Kits" were distributed to parents, guardians, and adults in attendance. The Kidcare Kits include inserts for fingerprints, photo ID, and medical/dental record information for parents to record in the event of an emergency and to aid police in identifying missing children. The children enjoyed face painting, Halloween candy goodie bags, music, Zoo on Wheels, and Decorate Your Own Cupcake activities.

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On September 12, 2009, the **Washington State Bar Association Young Lawyers Division** hosted the "Washington First Responder Will Clinic." This event was offered free of charge to Seattle police officers and their spouses or registered domestic partners. This clinic represents a special landmark for the program, as it will be the tenth clinic sponsored by the WYLD, and the first time that registered domestic partners will be eligible for the program. At the Washington Will Clinic, volunteer attorneys provide free estate-planning advice and documents, such as wills, powers of attorney, and health-care directives, to first responders who risk their lives every day protecting our local communities. To date, nearly 500 officers and their spouses have been assisted by the Washington Will Clinic.

Leaders of Tomorrow

The **State Bar of Georgia Young Lawyers Division** launched its "Public Interest Internship Program" (PIIP). The program's goal is to provide law school students and recent graduates with summer employment in public interest, government, and nonprofit organizations throughout the state of Georgia. In early 2010, interested law students and recent graduates will be asked to complete an application and describe their commitment to public service. The program's first group of interns will be selected from these applicants by early spring 2010. The YLD aims to provide at least one internship in each of Georgia's three federal judicial districts by pairing each intern with a pre-selected participating public interest, governmental, or nonprofit organization. For their service, the interns will receive a living stipend funded from the proceeds of the YLD signature fundraiser, "Black Tie & Blackjack," held on January 9, 2010.

The **Houston (Texas) Young Lawyers Association** is preparing young attorneys for leadership roles in the HYLA and other organizations through its leadership program, which runs from November through June. Young lawyers admitted to the program will learn from community leaders and experts in the fields of communication, negotiation, and other areas critical to developing leadership skills. During the tenure of the program, members will have the chance to use their leadership skills and work together to make meaningful contributions to their communities. Ultimately, the class will develop and execute its own project, which is designed to have a lasting impact on both the class and the community.

On November 12, 2009, the **Texas Young Lawyers Association's** Minority Involvement Committee held the first "El Paso Minority Pre-Law Student Symposium for High School Students" in conjunction with the El Paso Young Lawyers Association and the University of Texas at El Paso. The main goal of the symposium was to inspire and encourage minority students to attend law school. State Bar President Roland K. Johnson and Texas Young Lawyers Association President Cori A. Harbour delivered the keynote address to approximately 180 students.

On October 22, the **Houston (Texas) Young Lawyers Association's** Tomorrow's Attorneys Pipeline Project Committee hosted "Mocktail" for young lawyers and law students. Mocktail is an instructional cocktail reception designed to teach networking skills and the art of conversation as well as helping with professional development.

Member Outreach and Programming

On January 22, 2010, the **Chicago (Illinois) Bar Association Young Lawyers Section** hosted its "Fourth Annual Texas Hold'em Tournament" for the benefit of The Chicago Bar Foundation.

In January 2010, the **North Dakota Young Lawyers Section** implemented a monthly statewide happy hour called "TGIT." TGITs will occur in several cities throughout North Dakota on the second Tuesday of every month to provide an opportunity for lawyers to socialize and network with one another.

In January 2010, the **Vermont Bar Association Young Lawyers Division** had its "Mid-Winter Thaw" conference in Montreal, Canada. The VBA YLD set up a special panel to discuss judicial reform proposals that will soon be winding their way through the Vermont legislature. The Speaker of the Vermont House of Representatives, the Chair of the House Judicial Committee, and the Chief Justice of the Vermont Supreme Court were part of this exciting panel. Because the proposals contain some fairly radical changes to probate courts and the overall court structure, there has been a great deal of discussion and debate about them. The VBA YLD wanted to offer another forum for such debate at its conference.

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The **South Carolina Bar Young Lawyers Division** recently welcomed about 400 new admittees in October. To celebrate and welcome the new lawyers, three events were held throughout the state. Upstate, a judge and his wife hosted a cocktail reception in their home. In the Midlands, they celebrated with a BBQ. And in the Lowcountry, new admittees were welcomed with a gathering at a popular downtown pub. It is estimated that over 400 lawyers attended the events statewide.

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To highlight the achievements and successes of your affiliate, please send updates of member service or public service projects and related pictures to our editor at jmkastner@gmail.com. We look forward to recognizing your projects in future editions of *The Affiliate* and may even use them to lay the foundation for national outreach!

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