

American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division *The Affiliate*

Around the Country

Compiled by Blake R. Laurence

As warmer weather approaches, we can look back on many exciting events and look forward to many more. Young lawyers around the nation continue to make a difference while learning, helping others, and having fun.

Giving Back to the Community

In spring 2010, the **Mobile (Alabama) Bar Association Young Lawyers Section** will host “FunFest,” an event at a local orphanage. Giant inflatables, sno-cone machines, popcorn machines, and more are provided for the kids to enjoy and have fun. Members of the MYLS also make a financial contribution to the orphanage.

On January 27, 2010, the **State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section** partnered with Oakland County Youth Assistance Mentors Plus and nine other local mentoring programs (including Jewish Family Services, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Winning Futures, and Child Help, among others) to provide an opportunity for each participating group to announce their own “Mentor of the Year” at a Detroit Pistons–Memphis Grizzlies basketball game at the Palace of Auburn Hills. The mentors were personally recognized on the basketball court at halftime and provided information about the program they are involved in. The partnership between the YLS and Oakland County Youth Assistance continues to benefit both groups, but specifically, it allows young lawyers the opportunity to get involved with one of nine mentoring groups in Oakland County.

The **Mecklenburg County (North Carolina) Bar Association Young Lawyers Division** concluded its “Read to Me, Charlotte!” book drive in December 2009. Read to Me, Charlotte! is a community-wide initiative coordinated by the Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County that seeks to encourage childhood reading by providing free books to low-income families. The YLD was happy to help this great cause and helped coordinate the donation of over 300 books.

On December 5, 2009, the **DeKalb (Georgia) Bar Association Young Lawyers Section**, in conjunction with the DeKalb Bar held an “Education and Leadership Day” for the community. The purpose of the event was to promote education and leadership among all ages while showcasing the DeKalb County agencies that protect the community such as the DeKalb District Attorney’s Office, the DeKalb County Solicitor General’s Office, the DeKalb Fire Department, and the DeKalb County Police Department. Community leaders made inspirational speeches and business professionals helped answer questions from the public about careers in the law, health care, business, education, and writing. The professionals educated and encouraged members of the public to pursue their interests and assisted them in developing plans for success in the future. It was a great success for the DeKalb County community.

The **Wake County (North Carolina) Bar Association Young Lawyers Division** held its tenth annual clothing drive, which was a huge success. Numerous young lawyers from various law firms and state agencies conducted a clothing drive from November 23 through December 11. Each young lawyer collected clothes from his or her office during the two-week period. On Friday December 11, and Saturday, December 12, a group of very dedicated volunteers met at the collection site to sort, bag, and deliver the clothes. The YLD collected and sorted a staggering 400+ large bags of clothing and distributed these items to a number of organizations serving the needy in their community, including Haven House, Abigail’s Closet, Catholic Parish Outreach, Durham Rescue Mission, First Baptist Church, The Healing Place, Pregnancy Life Care Center, Wake Family Entry, Raleigh Rescue Mission, Helping Hand, Brooks Avenue Church of Christ, Vidas De Esperanza, and Passage Home.

The **Oakland County (Michigan) Bar Association’s New Lawyer Committee** has been hard at work fundraising for its charity of the year, the Oak Park Business and Education Alliance. On November 18, the committee held its annual “Novemberfest” social event at Loving Touch in Ferndale to raise funds for the organization. The event proved to be quite successful as \$600 was raised from the numerous attendees at the event. This brings the annual total to almost \$1,500 raised, and the total keeps climbing!

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The **Alaska Bar Association New Lawyers Section** (NLS) teamed up with the **Anchorage (Alaska) Bar Association Young Lawyers Section** to create “awareness kits,” which included numerous resource guides regarding domestic violence and provided contact information for legal aid and pro bono service providers. It also included the ABA YLD *Voices Against Violence* video targeting teen domestic violence. The goal was to get people within the community to have home screenings and discussions about what they could do to help fight this epidemic. Alaska Governor Sean Parnell and Chief Justice Walter Carpenetti of the Alaska Supreme Court both attended and spoke at the huge launch event in October, Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The joint groups distributed their kits that night and then launched a mail campaign to school districts across Alaska, to reach remote Alaskan villages that tend to have a higher percentage of individuals suffering from some form of domestic violence but who have no one to turn to for aid. The governor has in turn continued the efforts started by the NLS and YLD and has made eradication of domestic violence from local communities one of his top priorities.

Member Outreach and Programming

In the summer of 2010, the **San Antonio (Texas) Young Lawyer’s Association** is planning a mock-trial tournament for its members. The mock-trial tournament will offer an opportunity to practice and develop trial skills. Local judges and seasoned trial attorneys will be solicited to help judge the mock-trial tournament. In addition, SAYLA will offer training opportunities to members at monthly luncheons leading up to the tournament.

On February 26, 2010, the **San Antonio (Texas) Young Lawyer’s Association** hosted a night with the San Antonio Rampage hockey team. It was an evening for meeting new friends, seeing old friends, and cheering on the Rampage to a victory over the Manitoba Moose.

On January 8, 2010, the **Macomb County (Michigan) Bar Association Young Lawyers Section** held a “Legal Skills Seminar Series” with topics focused on family and juvenile law, including friend of the courts/custody/parenting time, property issues, judgments and neglect/abuse, and delinquency. The seminar also included probate and mental health seminar topics including guardianships/conservatorships, mental health appointments, decedent estates, and probate resources.

The **Topeka (Kansas) Bar Association Young Lawyers Division** recently wrapped up a successful 2009 year that ended with a CLE fundraiser, entitled “FDIC Update: Part 2” with the proceeds being used for adopting a family for Christmas and to provide donations to the Topeka Rescue Mission. In November, the YLD collected canned goods at the TBA annual “Turkey Shoot” (turkeys were not actually shot), which were then donated to the Topeka Rescue Mission. In addition, the YLD was excited to adopt two families for the Christmas holiday this year.

On October 28, 2009, the **Utah Young Lawyers Division** held an innovative networking and CLE event with the Utah Association of Certified Public Accountants. The topic of the CLE was “The Top 10 Things Attorneys and Accountants Wish the Other Profession Knew.” Attendance at the event was fairly evenly split between lawyers and accountants, and the attendees enjoyed the opportunity to expand their professional network in a relaxed, fun setting. The Utah YLD is currently working with several other organizations, including the United Way Young Leaders Group and the Big Brothers Big Sisters program, to plan similar networking, educational, and service opportunities for young professionals to join together.

In February, the **Grand Rapids (Michigan) Bar Association Young Lawyers Section** held a “progressive dinner” that allowed members of the Young Lawyers Section and their significant others to travel to different host houses for appetizers, dinner, and dessert.

Future of the Profession

The **Kalamazoo County (Michigan) Bar Association Young Lawyers Section** is working with a local attorney to restart the “Law Explorers” program, in which attorney volunteers help high school students “explore” various law careers. This is done by putting on regular events, such as mock trials and scheduling meetings with public officials. Kalamazoo had a long history of providing these opportunities up until a few years ago, and the YLS hopes to get the program going again in 2010.

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Now in its fourth year, the **Detroit (Michigan) Metropolitan Bar Association Barristers** “School Partnership” program has adopted Denby Tech/Preparatory High School and Cass Technical High School. The program provides opportunities for eleventh and twelfth grade students interested in pursuing a career in law. The program brings DMBA lawyers together with Denby and Cass Tech students through an annual essay contest and writing workshop, a career day at an area law school, and mock trial activities on Law Day. The Barristers also provide mentorship to high school students to improve their understanding of the law and to encourage participants to pursue careers in the law, or to at least spark their pursuit of a career. In addition, the Barristers Board of Directors has begun a fundraising campaign to support the continued operation and growth of the program. Individual donations are being solicited, and grant applications have been submitted to ensure the long-term continuity of the program.

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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 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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