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*State Bar of Georgia Young Lawyers Division*

# THE YLD REVIEW

Volume 62, Issue 2, March 2021

*Working for the Profession and the Public*



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## From the President

# YLD Raises the Bar for Public Service During COVID Crisis



**Bert Hummel**

The COVID-19 pandemic and its devastating impact on the global economy have touched most—if not all—segments of society. This includes an intensified and expanded need for pro bono legal services right here in Georgia.

Before the pandemic hit last year, Georgia had an unemployment rate of 3.1 percent for February 2020, with 161,147 members of the state's labor force of more than 5.1 million out of work. By April—with a large part of Georgia's economy shut down—the jobless rate had skyrocketed to 12.6 percent, with 614,472 unemployed.

Thankfully, the number of Georgians returning to work increased month by month until the unemployment rate was back down to 4.5 percent in October. The most recent numbers available, preliminary statistics for December show a 5.6 percent unemployment rate with 293,533 Georgians out of work. While this is a huge improvement over the low point early in the pandemic, it still means more than 130,000 of our state's residents who were working 10 months ago have not been rehired. To summarize, our communities need assistance and, perhaps most importantly, they need leadership.

When I ran for secretary of the YLD, my hashtag and motto was #StandTall. I believe that moniker is more important now than it was when I ran for secretary. As lawyers, we swear an oath to serve our communities and the public. The opportunity to serve our fellow citizens has never been greater and I am encouraged by the outpouring of support in YLD programming. While I continue to encourage our members to #StandTall, I also challenge our members to continue to find #PurposeThroughService as we navigate these difficult, novel and fluid times.

The YLD has responded to several of the challenges our fellow Georgians are facing during the pandemic. Starting last fall and continuing into the winter, we have initiated a number of new programs aimed at helping soften the blow for those in need.

## Poll Worker Program

The COVID-19 pandemic and an increase in voter turnout caused a serious need for poll workers for the 2020 General Election. Immediately after the primary election ended, the YLD went to work on a program to meet the demand for poll workers across Georgia. On Nov. 3, 2020, the State Bar of Georgia had several hundred attorneys serving as poll workers across Georgia.

The increased voter turnout resulted in runoffs for three elections and a renewed need for more poll workers. Again, the YLD answered the call by recruiting attorneys to serve as poll workers and establishing a new position at the polls in Fulton County known as a deputy registrar. Deputy registrars were tasked with canceling absentee status for registered voters who voted in person due to complications with their absentee ballots. The new position resulted in a more efficient voting process at the polls, where Georgians saw shorter lines and a decrease in wait times.

Overall, the Poll Worker Program drew praise from all corners of the state, and similar programs popped up across the country. This is another example of the YLD's leadership on the national stage and a testament to the commitment to community service by our members.

Not only did the Poll Worker Program fill a need at the polls, it also resulted in the expansion of grants by the Public Interest Internship Program (PIIP). In that regard, YLD poll workers donated their stipend from their election day service to PIIP toward an increase in grants to law students

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From the Editors

# A Letter From the Co-Editors



**Ashley  
Akins**

*Zoom fatigue and pandemic burnout.* It has been nearly one year since COVID-19 has been part of our everyday reality. In that time, we've become experts at Zoom meetings, hearing and trials and have regularly worn yoga pants. For many young lawyers, this pandemic has resulted in longer work hours as we work tirelessly for our clients. We have all had to take creative approaches to mentoring, business development and client relations. If you're over it—and struggling to cope with the array of challenges the pandemic has created—you're not alone. All lawyers, both the young and not-so-young, are at risk of burning out from mental and emotional exhaustion after this unpredictable year.

In 2019, the World Health Organization (WHO) added burnout in its International Classification of Diseases, describing it as “a syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed.” Notably, this language shows that burnout is more than just an employee problem; it's an organizational problem that requires a systematic solution. “It is characterized by three dimensions: (1) feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion; (2) increased mental distance from one's job, or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one's job; and (3) reduced professional efficacy.”



**LaKeisha R.  
Randall**

Similarly, WHO has defined “pandemic fatigue” as “feeling demotivated about following recommended behaviors to protect ourselves and others from the virus.” For those approaching the “pandemic wall,” here are a few tips for fighting burnout:

## Use Your 6

The State Bar of Georgia offers all lawyers six free counseling sessions per year. If you are struggling in your personal or professional life, please call the Lawyers Assistance Program hotline at 800-327-9631.

## Give Yourself Grace

Adjust your expectations of your “extra time.” Don't succumb to the pressures of starting a business or fostering a new skill. If you simply need more rest, listen to your mind and body.

## Take Breaks During Your Work Day

Rest your eyes after extended periods of screen-time. And, pause your work every two hours for a quick walk around your home or office.

## Move Your Body

Engage in physical exercise weekly. Even one session of moderate exercise reduces anxiety. This could include joining a run-

ning club, yoga and meditation classes, cycling on your Peloton, or walking the Atlanta Beltline with a friend.

## Eat Healthy

Fueling your body ultimately fuels your mind. We all enjoy a Girl Scout cookie binge after a rough day, but don't forget to eat your fruits and vegetables and drink lots of water daily.

## Carve Out Time for Non-Work-Related Activities

It's OK to take time away from your never-ending work emails and focus on yourself. Make time in your busy work schedule for your personal life. Social interaction is more important than ever. This could mean Zoom hangouts with friends, art projects with your kiddos, visiting with family or a self-care mani-pedi night.

## Be Kind

Don't forget that the lawyer on the other side of the “v” is a person too. We have all experienced an unprecedented year, and we could all use some kindness and grace. Treat others the way that you would like to be treated. *YLD*

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# The State of Legal Incubator Programs Amid the Pandemic



**Nyonnohweah  
Seekie**

Approximately a year and a half ago, like many of you, I could not have anticipated that I would be practicing law in the middle of a world-wide pandemic. This experience has been chaotic and perplexing; yet, the pivots that the legal community has made to safely cope with the COVID-19 virus and address legal necessities has been promising. It has also created practical and technological accommodations that were adopted by the Georgia courts, prosecutors, and civil and defense attorneys to socially distance and practice safely. These include more accessible telephonic and video conferencing for clients in jail, virtual depositions, hearings and mediations; more negotiated bond agreements; and expedient dismissals of insufficient cases to reduce the growing backlog, among other innovative enhancements which will hopefully remain.

Despite these developments, it goes without saying the panic and vulnerability that the virus has revealed as safety precautions vary across courtrooms, and custodial staff, bailiffs, clients, courthouse staff and judges have been exposed, suffered and even died as a result of the coronavirus. Incarcerated clients, especially those with pre-existing conditions fearfully await postponed jury trials, in often insalubrious close quarters, as we are unable to safely gather. Frankly, I remain at a deficit for words to adequately describe the experience of practicing during this time, as it is ongoing, but I remain hopeful. What I can relay is how my experience as a young lawyer entering private practice was aided by my participation in an incubator program and that those entering the field or wanting to begin their own practice could benefit from the same, even during these uncertain times.



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## Resources and Training

Following various years of interning and employment with the Public Defender's Office, I decided to explore private practice and open a firm focused on criminal and immigration law. I spoke with several senior and peer practitioners, and mentors, in addition to my family and close friends, before making the leap. Among those, I also had the benefit of speaking with Prof. Tim Floyd of Mercer University School of Law. Prof. Floyd greeted the idea of me joining Middle Georgia Access to Justice with his staple positivity, provided additional information about the program and put me in contact with Judge Bill Adams, the president of the nonprofit organization. Prior to applying, I also discussed the program experience with participants to gain their insight and help set my expectations.

The application process was standard, including requirements to provide a resume, respond to a questionnaire and com-

plete an in-person interview. The program is geared toward entrepreneurs who seek to develop a socially conscious law practice—one that promotes social responsibility often by protecting the environment through use of co-working spaces, promoting social equality, accessible legal representation and aiding the community by connecting with local initiatives such as re-entry services. It allows attorneys to complement their standard rate representation by dedicating 30 hours per month to either reduced rate or pro bono matters. Each program differs in requirements. Programs offer several resources such as affordable office space with incremental rent, office equipment, technology, furniture, client referrals and more. In addition to a two-week training program focused on law office management, one of the best resources is the team of board members, directors and staff who serve as mentors in various areas of law and office management—many of whom own and op-

erate their own effective private law firms. During my tenure, I was able to reach out to several board members and discuss their areas of expertise and nuanced issues in the law. Relationships developed with the advisors have ultimately proved priceless for me as with other participants in this and similar programs.

### Giving Back to the Under-Represented Population

The concept of an incubator program is certainly not new. The “alpha legal incubator” began in 2007 in New York. Since then, the programs have grown to include more than 60 nationwide.<sup>1</sup> In Georgia, Lawyers for Equal Justice, Inc., began in 2016 in Atlanta, and in 2018, Middle Georgia Access to Justice, a legal referral service, began its incubator program in Macon, Georgia. The growth and decline of incubators have varied over the years in each location. The programs are dual focused: first, on ensuring that new private attorneys have the often-lacking support; and second, providing affordable representation to individuals in need who are not guaranteed representation. Having completed the program, the experience was incomparable, allowing me to sustain a profitable practice, represent clients from a variety of backgrounds with differing needs, avoid some pitfalls and receive expressions of clients’ unparalleled gratitude. During a time when many have lost wages or their employment due to COVID-19, and new legal issues of the times continue to arise, applying for an incubator program, in which you can specify your practice or include a socially conscious aspect to your current practice, can benefit attorneys and members of the community. YLD

*Nyonnohweah Seekie is the managing attorney of The Seekie Law Firm in Macon. She also serves as a Middle District representative on the YLD Representative Council.*

### Endnote

1. Legal Incubators, American Bar Association, [https://www.americanbar.org/groups/delivery\\_legal\\_services/initiatives\\_awards/program\\_main/](https://www.americanbar.org/groups/delivery_legal_services/initiatives_awards/program_main/).



*The YLD Speakers Bureau presents*

## PERSEVERING THE PANDEMIC: YOUNG LAWYERS’ EXPERIENCES DURING COVID-19

**Thursday, March 11 | 6 p.m. via Zoom**

Hear from multiple attorneys about their personal experiences during the past year of COVID-19, the election, social and racial injustice, and quarantine followed by small group break out rooms to foster further discussion. All of us are dealing with different scenarios caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and have had our own experiences over the past year. Whether your experience is a working parent with children, dealing with loss during COVID, being single during this year-long quarantine, the stress of losing a job, people of color’s experience with further instances of racial injustice, and new changes such as health issues, job changes, relocation, engagements, partnership and weddings, this has been a difficult, challenging and trying year.

Join our discussion for an engaging look at how we all are dealing with these difficult times. Participants are invited to join in the discussion or choose to listen to the experiences of fellow young lawyers who will offer ways to not only cope with the pressures of the pandemic, but how to persevere during these challenging times.

This is the first in a monthly series of programs put on by the YLD Speaker’s Bureau. Visit [www.georgiayld.org](http://www.georgiayld.org) to register.



► **PRESIDENT, FROM PAGE 2**

who commit to an unpaid public interest summer internship. Thus the YLD was able to amplify its impact on service to the public through these volunteer efforts.

Finally, attorneys who volunteered through the Poll Worker Program and as deputy registrars were able to earn CLE credit for their service. For more information on the CLE credit hours, please visit the YLD website. Based on the recognition and success of the Poll Worker Program, I anticipate that the program will be a cornerstone of future YLD programming.

**Wills Clinic**

The YLD Women in the Profession Committee, chaired by Jena Emory and Lindsey Macon, hosted a Wills Clinic for teachers, nurses, first responders and other frontline workers. As a way of helping those leading the fight against COVID, the committee teamed with Atlanta Legal Aid to prepare estate-planning documents for these professionals.

In an effort to keep safe distances and practice protocols, all YLD volunteers met virtually with their clients, who had signed up for the program through Atlanta Legal Aid. More than 80 volunteer attorneys drafted and executed estate-planning documents, each for at least one client who is working in a frontline role. The program was such a success that a second event is planned for this spring to serve even more of our bravest citizens.

**Saturday Lawyers Program**

The YLD sponsored the Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation's Saturday Lawyer Program in December 2020. YLD members were recruited to assist low-income tenants facing eviction, poor housing conditions and other landlord-tenant issues via video or teleconference. Volunteers signed up for multiple clients during the program hours and were able to provide impactful results for a number of Georgians during their time of need.

**Record Removal Program**

The YLD Community Service Projects Committee recruited attorneys to provide low bono services at the Record Restitution Clinic. During the clinic, attorneys assisted clients with criminal records in the Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit to expunge their records. The clinic was a partnership between Access to Justice, Georgia Justice Project, Georgia Legal Services Program and the State Bar. The impact of this program cannot be overstated, despite the minimal time commitment. This program has wide support among the leaders of our State Bar, and the effect on the public is immense since it removes obstacles for housing, loans, employment and access to a better future.

**Landlord-Tenant Law Week**

The YLD Real Estate Law Committee observed Landlord-Tenant Law Week by hosting two virtual events. Erin Willoughby of Atlanta Legal Aid and Michael Dunham of Dunham Legal spoke about landlord-tenant law, landlord and tenant representation and the CDC-ordered continuance of evictions in Georgia. As we continue to navigate through the COVID-19 pandemic, we will continue to see strained relationships between landlords and tenants as Georgians struggle to pay rent due to tense economic conditions. The YLD is committed to ensuring that the process is fair for both landlords and tenants as novel legal issues arise in the midst and aftermath of this pandemic.

My sincere appreciation goes out to everyone who has participated in these worthy efforts. For the duration of the pandemic, we will continue these programs and look for other ways to provide pro bono opportunities for YLD members to assist our fellow citizens. Be on the lookout for your chance to get involved.

How will you work to serve your community in the coming months? *YLD*

*Bert Hummel is a partner at Lewis Brisbois in Atlanta and president of the Young Lawyers Division of the State Bar of Georgia.*

**EVALUATORS NEEDED**

The YLD Public Interest Internship Program (PIIP) Committee provides \$5,000 grants to fund unpaid, full-time summer internships in public interest law.

Grant applications are due April 2, and the committee needs your help evaluating the completed applications. The evaluations are not time intensive, and you can help a law student or recent law school graduate pursue a career in public interest.

If you are interested in evaluating applications, please email YLD PIIP Committee Co-Chair Jamie Rush at [jrush@glsp.org](mailto:jrush@glsp.org).

# Preserving Our Democracy



**Ashley M.  
Lee**

Whew! We survived the 2020 election cycle.

We witnessed record voter participation during the 2020 election cycle as nearly 160 million Americans participated in the Nov. 3, 2020, election and more than 4 million Georgians voted in the Jan. 5, 2021, runoff election. This historical turnout was the result of the countless hours of work from community organizers, political party machines and lawyers. Young lawyers from nonpartisan legal organizations, such as the National Bar Association and its divisions and affiliate chapters, ACLU and the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, stood on the frontlines to ensure eligible voters actively participated in the electoral process. History was made across the country including in Georgia as Rev. Raphael Warnock became Georgia's first Black U.S. senator.

Although the campaign ads have stopped, our cell phones are no longer inundated with texts and phone calls from the various campaigns and organizers, our mailboxes are no longer filled to capacity with mailers and postcards (and yes I'm guilty of mailing around 1,000 nonpartisan postcards to Georgia voters), the 2020 election cycle demonstrated that we, as young lawyers, cannot become complacent. Our democracy is fragile. We are living in unprecedented times and our democracy is under unprecedented attacks. We witnessed our democracy in crisis as insurrectionists stormed the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021. Fortunately, our democracy survived this assault. We can and should let out a collective sigh of relief. But the lesson remains evident that our work as members of the State Bar of Georgia, officers of the court, and defenders of both the U.S. Constitution and Constitution of the State of Georgia must continue. Lawyers are the gatekeepers of the rule of law. We must civilly act to preserve our democracy for future generations.



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Our democracy is a type of government firmly rooted in the power and potency of the electorate's right to vote. The collective participation of all voters is truly the heartbeat of our democracy. It is a pulse that we must continuously monitor for irregularities during both the election season and post-election season. Democracy is preserved when all eligible electors have a voice and are equally able to exercise such voice without unnecessary barriers.

Here are four ways to remain civically engaged in the post-election season:

1. Stay informed regarding proposed voting rights legislation on both the national and local levels.
2. Utilize your skills to educate the electorate about their voting rights.
3. Contact your elected officials.
4. Vote in every election.

We cannot take our democracy for granted. As the late Congressman John Lewis once stated, "Ours is not the struggle of one day, one week, or one year. Ours is not the struggle of one judicial appointment or presidential term. Ours is the struggle of a lifetime, or maybe even many lifetimes,



Ashley Lee sporting her sweatshirt that reads "And Still I Vote."

and each one of us in every generation must do our part."

Young lawyers, let's do our part! YLD

Ashley Lee is associate general counsel for the Coca-Cola Bottlers' Sales & Services Company LLC in Atlanta.

## Judicial Spotlight

# Behind the Bench: The Historic Election of Judge Le'Joi Williamson, Richmond County Magistrate Court



**LaKeisha R.  
Randall**

The Honorable Le'Joi Williamson is a fellow young lawyer and trailblazer. She made history as the first Black woman elected as civil and magistrate court judge in Richmond County. The court has jurisdiction up to \$45,000 for civil cases and is authorized to issue both felony and misdemeanor warrants. At only 36, Williamson unseated a judge that held the position for more than 25 years.

Admitted to the State Bar of Georgia in 2009, Williamson graduated from Albany State University and University of Arkansas School of Law. This Augusta native and HBCU graduate greatly attributes her success to the power of mentorship, intentional creation of relationships and focus.

Vice President Kamala Harris has been quoted saying, "you may be the first to do many things, but make sure you're not the last." Elected during the same election cycle as her soror, Vice President Harris, Williamson similarly acknowledged the power of representation to her community and girls. Inspired to run by her young daughter, when asked what she's found most rewarding, through a smile, she discussed the power of imagery. And, how her daughter will grow up seeing a Black woman as a judge, something that Williamson was not afforded growing up in Augusta.

Williamson was a career prosecutor before ascending to the bench. She served as assistant solicitor general in Henry County and both assistant solicitor general and chief assistant solicitor general in Richmond County.

As a young prosecutor, Williamson was told that "the fastest way to the bench is

through the prosecutor," and she agrees. She explained how prosecutors have to balance more than what's apparent to the eye. Having spent the last 11 years representing the state of Georgia, she sought *justice*—although she represented the state, she did not view this responsibility myopically. She saw her role as one who also protected the interest of the defendant "...by ensuring his/her/their rights were not infringed upon. And, at times, this included protecting the defendant if the defense attorney was deficient." So, in essence, Williamson sees her role as a fair and impartial jurist akin to being a fair prosecutor.

***What attributes do you think are critical for every young lawyer? Did you receive any pivotal advice as a young lawyer that has carried you throughout your career?***

Make sure you operate with integrity—one bad judgment call can ruin your reputation. Operating with honesty and integrity will stand the test of time. Pick and choose your battles, know when it is prudent to concede. Do not jeopardize your reputation for anyone, even your client.

***Have any mentors or role models been particularly helpful to your career?***

My first role models were my parents; they taught me to put my trust in God and operate with faith. In college, I met Dr. Walter Kimbrough and his wife, attorney Adria Kimbrough—they picked up where my parents left off. As a student in Dr. Kimbrough's honors course, they saw something in me that I didn't see in myself and helped



Judge Le'Joi Williamson, Richmond County Magistrate Court

me nurture my dreams. After sharing that I wanted to attend law school, they arranged for me to visit the law school that I later attended. As others invest in you, do the same.

***What advice would you give young lawyers that want to establish mentor relationships in this COVID environment?***

Know that this pandemic is only temporary. Even in the COVID world, just reach out. Send an email to whomever you admire. Introduce yourself.

Also, create relationships with all people, not just those who you'd normally befriend. Some of my legal mentors are Judge Holly Veal of the Superior Court of Henry



County and John A. “Trea” Pipkin III, of the Court of Appeals of Georgia. Over the years, they have both helped me navigate the profession by offering neutral advice. I knew my own weaknesses and inadequacies as a young lawyer—with each of them, I just raised my hand and asked for help.

***Are you involved in any bar associations?***

Yes, the Augusta Bar Association and Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys.

***The Judicial Council has issued guidelines for the judiciary to follow on wellness. Are there any particular wellness activities that you incorporate into your life?***

Yes, I work out regularly. To be my best self, I must take care of myself no matter what. I wake up at 4:45 every morning; it’s my stress reliever. Getting up and working out and gives me that extra boost and keeps me sane. I want to incorporate massages, too.

***Thanks to the pandemic, there has been a shift in terms of technology use in our practice. Young lawyers seem very excited about these changes and are thrilled to see remote depositions, calendar calls and things of that nature. Do you think these technology changes are here to stay?***

Yes, I think some of the changes will stay. The pandemic has forced us [legal community] to think outside the box. And, I do not think that will change. It has allowed us to be more flexible; thus, providing more access to justice.

Le’Joi Williamson made history as the first Black woman elected as civil and magistrate court judge in Richmond County. Congratulations, Judge Williamson! YLD

LaKeisha R. Randall is managing partner of The Randall Firm, LLC, in Atlanta and is co-editor of The YLD Review.

# 2021 Commitment to Equality *Awards*

## CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

The State Bar of Georgia Committee to Promote Inclusion in the Profession invites nominations for the 2021 Commitment to Equality Awards.

The Commitment to Equality Awards, which include The One to Watch Award (for a young lawyer) and the Randolph Thrower Lifetime Achievement Award, recognize the efforts of lawyers and legal employers that are, and have long been, deeply committed to providing opportunities that foster a more diverse legal profession and clientele for members of underrepresented groups in Georgia.

The awards are presented annually to lawyers that have, throughout their career, demonstrated an outstanding commitment to promoting diversity in the legal profession and have taken great efforts to service clients from underrepresented groups. The awards are open to Georgia attorneys who meet the criteria. You may nominate an individual or organization.

The deadline for submitting a nomination is March 26, 2021.

Visit [www.gabar.org](http://www.gabar.org) to download the nomination form or for more information.



State Bar  
of Georgia

# Why My Law Degree is Ancillary to My Purpose



**Shavontana "Starr" Davis**

Becoming an attorney was not my lifelong dream. In fact, I had my sights set on a career in broadcast journalism. But, as life would have it, I met a prominent Atlanta attorney who opened my eyes to the power of the law and the need for women like me in the courtroom. I attended North Carolina Central University School of Law and served as a staff attorney with The Office of the Public Defender, Atlanta Judicial Circuit for more than five years. My decision to serve as a public defender was deliberate. Having survived a tumultuous upbringing experiencing sexual abuse and a drug addicted parent, I developed resilience. And, collectively, it fed my passion for the care and treatment of individuals, especially youth, within the justice system and beyond.

As a child, I vowed that when I became an adult, I would help girls like me. As a public defender, I represented adult and minor survivors of sexual abuse and exploitation. As many know, due to the perils marginalized communities face, many are more susceptible to economic need, unstable living conditions, mental health conditions, substance abuse and other vulnerabilities.

After I represented a 15-year-old girl with an almost identical story to mine, this was my cue to change course in my career and focus on my purpose. Armed with my life experiences, my personal connection representing survivors and the strong arm of the law, I left traditional practice and founded The Starr Institute, Inc, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization for survivors.

At The Starr Institute, we educate, engage and empower youth through awareness and prevention resources. We offer transformative skills in a safe space designed to positively develop and instill the confidence necessary for survivors to thrive. According to the Child Molestation Research and Prevention Institute, 95 percent of child maltreatment is



Starr Davis speaks to a group of students at Benjamin Banneker High School in College Park, Georgia.

preventable through education and therefore is our first line of defense. We invite youth ages 12-17 to actively take ownership of their safety. First, we provide the tools and knowledge for them to recognize, respond to and disclose sexual exploitation. We normalize using the proper terms of body parts. We identify healthy relationships, set boundaries and discuss the importance of goal setting and internet safety. Secondly, we meet youth where they are. We foster an environment that is fun, culturally relevant and age appropriate. And lastly, we are a safe space. Teens need to feel a sense of belonging to feel good about who they are. The Starr Institute invites youth to provide insight, share their stories and educate their peers about topics that are meaningful to them.

The Starr Institute is my way of helping youth in ways that my grandmother helped me—she was my safe haven. Like grandma, I am committed to developing lifelong relationships with the youth we serve. My story is my mother's story too, and my mom is one of our biggest supporters. My triumph over sexual abuse is intertwined with mom's journey to overcoming substance abuse.

What I loved most about litigation was the ability to help someone during one of



Starr Davis talks to students at Booker T. Washington High School in Atlanta, Georgia.

the darkest times in their lives. To show up for them, to see them, hear them and acknowledge their worth. Now I do it every day minus the back-and forth banter with the prosecutor or trying to convince a jury or judge of my client's humanity. The great thing about working in the anti-trafficking space means that you can use your talents, skills and gifts to help victims and survivors. As attorneys, young lawyers are able to offer legal services, provide a job, an internship or skills training. Or, simply train to learn more about the trafficking indicators and become a mentor to a youth in need.

I often hear, "Starr, you went to school all those years, accumulated massive student loan debt and don't practice full time?" I smile and tell them what Steve Jobs said, "[t]he only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven't found it yet, keep looking. Don't settle." I married my knowledge of the law with my love for helping youth. That's not work, that is purpose. If you don't love what you do, embrace the power of the pivot. *YLD*

*Shavontana "Starr" Davis is the founder and executive director of The Starr Institute, Inc.*



# Greetings From the Gate City Bar Association



**Candis  
Jones Smith**

Greetings! My name is Candis Jones Smith, and I am so grateful and appreciative to be sworn in as Gate City's president for 2021.

Though I recently aged out of the YLD in traditional terms of age or years of practice, I still consider myself "young at heart" and can recognize and appreciate the concerns and anxieties of being a law school student or young lawyer during these times.

With a mission focused on mentoring and developing law school students and young lawyers, it is my goal to ensure that our Gate City YLD members are engaged, enriched and empowered with this year's programming.

This year, we are declaring that we have already W.O.N. 2021! In doing so, Gate City will work, organize and nurture.

*Work* to provide meaningful CLEs, programs and seminars for our members through our Excellence in Education Series and other tailored programs.

*Organize* with our membership and Gate City supporters to continue our community and social justice efforts through our community law clinic, voter initiatives and AVL Saturday.

*Nurture* our law school students and young lawyers to become engaged in the Gate City Bar Association to fuel our pipeline for future leaders through our law school scholarships, YLD programming and networking opportunities.

A few of our core YLD programs include:

- Mock Interview & Resume Workshop, hosted with GABWA;
- Brother to Brother Event, for male law school students and young lawyers;
- A Summer Associate Program;
- YLD Brunchin' With a Cause;
- Black Law Students Retreat, hosted with GABWA; and
- Scholarship opportunities, awarded at the Gate City Hall of Fame Ceremony.



Attendees of the Gate City Bar's YLD Brunchin' With a Cause event pose for a group picture.



Attendees check in at a Gate City Bar Association YLD event.

Though we anticipate most of our YLD events will be hosted via Zoom (at least for part of the year), we will continue to find ways to engage, enrich and empower our YLD members. That said, I encourage you to attend an event, volunteer your time, and invite those in your network to become members.

I look forward to working with and serving alongside you. *YLD*

*Candis Jones Smith is a partner at Lewis Brisbois Bisgaard & Smith LLP in Atlanta. She is also the 2021 president of the Gate City Bar Association.*



**April 19 - 30, 2021**

## **Fight hunger by going head-to-head with Georgia's lawyers outside the courtroom.**

*Join the Attorney General, the State Bar, and the YLD in the 10th Annual Georgia Legal Food Frenzy fund drive competition, which has raised over 12.2 million meals for Georgia's food banks since 2012. Everything you raise stays LOCAL and benefits the regional food bank that serves your community.*

**Register your law firm or legal organization beginning March 1**

**[www.galegalfoodfrenzy.org/sign-up](http://www.galegalfoodfrenzy.org/sign-up)**

### **WHO**

Open to EVERYONE in the legal community. All law firms (solos, small, medium, and large), legal organizations (bar associations, vendors, etc.) corporate/in-house counsel, and clerks & judges can compete with special awards for each.

### **RULES & AWARDS**

Between April 19-30, every \$1 raised earns your team 4 points in the competition. Awards are given in the different categories based on the most points earned per employee and the most points overall. The Attorney General's Cup and the Bar President's Award are given to the grand prize winners.

### **THE NEED**

1 in 5 children in Georgia was at risk for hunger before the pandemic, and food banks are working around the clock to meet an overall 50% increased need. The Legal Food Frenzy helps keep the food banks stocked so they can feed more families. With every \$1 you donate, food banks can distribute over 4 meals to our neighbors in need.





# YLD Winter Virtual Wills Clinic With Atlanta Legal Aid



**Jena G.  
Emory**

The YLD Women in the Profession Committee was proud to sponsor the YLD Winter Virtual Wills Clinic with Atlanta Legal Aid! When the pandemic started, Atlanta Legal Aid began planning projects to meet the needs of the Atlanta community. They determined that the COVID-19 pandemic would cause an increased need for estate planning for teachers, school staff, first responders and medical staff. Once the committee learned of this increased need, it began planning a clinic using YLD members as volunteer attorneys.

## Marketing for Clients and Volunteers

When the scope of the project was established, Atlanta Legal Aid and the YLD began marketing. Throughout the fall, Atlanta Legal Aid contacted hospitals and schools with flyers advertising the clinic. The marketing materials invited interested clients to complete a questionnaire online to participate. At the same time, the YLD began marketing the clinic to the YLD at large through social media posts and a call for volunteers in the bi-monthly "What's Up with the YLD" email blast. We are proud to report that, once asked, the YLD lived up to its designation as the service arm of the Bar. Even after we closed volunteer registration, members of the YLD continued to email the committee co-chairs directly asking to be included as a volunteer in the clinic. We were humbled and encouraged by the generosity of the YLD.

## Training for Clinic

In preparation for the clinic, the YLD Women in the Profession Committee sponsored a training for all volunteers with Atlanta Legal Aid for 3 hours of CLE credit. Cari King and John Warchol of Atlanta Legal Aid taught the YLD volunteers how to draft wills, advance directives and powers of attorney.



**Lindsey S.  
Macon**

## Scope of Clinic

Because of the large number of volunteers for this clinic, we were able to expand the scope of our project. The clinic, of course, provided attorneys to draft wills, powers of attorney and advance directives for teachers, school staff, first responders and medical staff. The YLD was also able to assist Atlanta Legal Aid with finalizing wills drafted by Georgia State University College of Law students.

## Procedures of Clinic

The virtual clinic ran from Nov. 1–Dec.15, 2020. When the clinic began, Atlanta Legal Aid contacted the YLD volunteers directly and assigned them a client. The YLD volunteers then ran a conflicts check. If they were assigned a teacher, school staff, first responder or medical staff, they received a completed questionnaire from the client. The volunteer then contacted the client to discuss their needs and drafted the legal documents. The volunteer also assisted the client with executing the documents. If the YLD volunteer was assigned a client with a will already drafted by a Georgia State student, the volunteer reviewed the will and contacted the client to make sure the will met their needs. Then the volunteer assisted their client with executing the documents. Throughout the clinic, Cari King and John Warchol of Atlanta Legal Aid were available to the YLD volunteers to answer their legal questions and provide assistance with client communication. The clinic would not have been possible without their efforts.

## Results of Clinic

We are so appreciative of all of the members of the YLD who volunteered to participate in this wills clinic! *Eighty-four* members of the YLD volunteered to draft estate docu-

**"The YLD Winter Virtual Wills Clinic with Atlanta Legal Aid provided a great opportunity to show appreciation for the efforts and sacrifices of first responders and frontline workers. My client was a delight to work with, and I hope having his affairs in order gives him some degree of peace of mind. Legal Aid did an excellent job educating those of us who haven't thought about wills since the bar exam and made the project pleasant and approachable."**

*—Caroline Sims, associate,  
Copeland, Stair, Kingma  
& Lovell, LLP*

ments, and several additional members expressed an interest in participating in a future wills clinic. The number of volunteers exceeded the expectations of Atlanta Legal Aid, and we were able to completely clear Atlanta Legal Aid's backlog of clients awaiting the preparation of estate documents. Eighty-five cases were placed with volunteers, including 23 cases for essential workers who serve as educators or in a school setting, and 10 cases involving medical workers. Due to the overwhelming interest in this wills clinic, in large part due to its focus on helping those deemed essential workers during the COVID-19 pandemic, the YLD intends to offer another wills clinic with a similar mission this spring. YLD

*Jena Emory is an associate at Copeland, Stair Kingma & Lovell, LLP, in Atlanta. She is co-chair of the YLD Women in the Profession Committee.*

*Lindsey Macon is an associate at the McArthur Law Firm in Atlanta. She is co-chair of the YLD Women in the Profession Committee.*

# Georgia Young Lawyers Serve as Delegates for the American Bar Association's 2021 YLD Midyear Assembly



**LaKeisha R. Randall**

The State Bar of Georgia was represented by a full delegation at the 2021 ABA YLD's Midyear Meeting. YLD President Bert Hummel, YLD Newsletter Co-Editor LaKeisha Randall, YLD Immediate Past President Will Davis, YLD President-Elect Elissa Haynes and Hon. Amanda Heath, who is a member of the YLD Board of Directors, voted in the interest of Georgia attorneys.

The ABA YLD Assembly is the principal policy-making body of the ABA YLD. The Assembly consists of:

- The Council; Delegates representing the affiliates in each state, each of whom keeps his or her principal office or principal residence in that state;
- Two delegates representing each national affiliate, who are members of that affiliate;
- One delegate appointed by, and representing the chief legal officer of, each of the U.S. armed forces;
- Young lawyer delegates in the House of Delegates from each state; and
- YLD scholars.

All debates are conducted according to the Rules of Parliamentary Procedure with time given to both pro and con speakers. Once approved, they become the official position of the Division, but they *do not* become policy of the Association unless considered and adopted by the House of Delegates at a future meeting. The 2021 Assembly considered the resolutions below at the Midyear Meeting:

## **21-9YL (Passed)**

Establishes a "National Young Lawyers Week," an annual coordinated effort led by the American Bar Association Young

The American Bar Association's Young Lawyers Division continues to be a trailblazing organization with a focus on national legal trends and current issues facing our profession and various bar associations. This year's YLD Midyear Assembly was held virtually, which has become the new norm for organizations and associations. Despite not benefiting from in-person debate, planning and preparation, the Assembly still tackled meaningful issues and provided for debate among the resolutions on the agenda. One of the resolutions concerned no-knock warrants, which have come under renewed scrutiny in light of the shooting death of Breonna Taylor in Louisville, Kentucky. The ABA YLD Assembly passed YLD Resolution 21-12YL, which urges federal, state, local, tribal and territorial governments to enact legislation that bans the use of no-knock warrants. Another Resolution, YLD Reso-

lution 21-11YL, which encourages the permanent use of online bar exams and more frequent examinations also passed.

The entire Midyear Meeting offers a number of CLE opportunities for education on some of the most pressing issues to our profession. One of the most beneficial aspects of the ABA YLD Midyear Meeting is the amount of committee meetings and other panels geared toward discussion of topical legal issues not only in the practice of law, but also in the profession as a whole. These include daily wellness discussions and activities, discussions on diversity in our profession, networking opportunities and challenges facing young lawyers. I would encourage all of my peers in Georgia, to take time to participate in an ABA conference. Especially when these meetings return to in-person conferences, which may occur later this year.

—Bert Hummel, YLD President

Lawyers Division, its affiliates, including the national affiliates and their affiliates, to celebrate the contributions, importance, diversity and leadership of the young lawyer within the legal profession and community.

## **21-11YL (Amended and Passed)**

Urges the bar admission authorities in each state and territory to permanently implement effective bar admission reform measures taken during the COVID-19 pandemic including but not limited to: (1) remote bar exams; (2) open book bar exams; and (3) more than two annual bar exams.

## **21-12YL (Passed)**

Urges federal, state, local, tribal and territorial governments to enact legislation that bans the use of no-knock warrants, which generally permit law enforcement officers to enter a premises without first identifying their authority and purpose.

## **HOD 107B (Passed)**

Urges states to adopt certain principles in administering elections for president of the United States and urges that if a dispute arises as to the proper recipient of the electoral votes for a state, Congress should give con-

trolling effect to the winner of the popular vote for that state (or, if the state allocates electoral votes by congressional district, to the winner of the popular vote in each congressional district), as provided by the law in effect before the election.

#### **HOD 111 (Passed)**

Urges federal, state, local, territorial and tribal governments to enact statutes, rules and regulations to prohibit the possession and display of firearms by civilians in and around locations critical to the functioning of the democratic process.

#### **21-2YL (Passed)**

Urges the U.S. Trustee Program to amend the procedure of the 341 Meeting of the Creditors so that they be held remotely—either by telephonic means or other virtual methods—on a permanent basis.

#### **21-3YL (Passed)**

Urges the highest court or bar admission authority of each jurisdiction to adopt rules that would allow attorneys in their jurisdiction to earn credit toward their mandatory continuing education credit obligations for service as poll or election workers.

#### **21-4YL (Passed)**

Urges elected prosecutors, or prosecutors seeking election, to not seek or accept political or financial support from law enforcement unions.

#### **21-5YL (Passed)**

Encourage law firms to provide more in-court opportunities for female, minority and younger attorneys in an attempt to provide more experience to these attorneys to counteract common objections to advancement, *i.e.*, inexperience. The resolution further encourages courts to implement procedures to encourage younger attorneys to take on speaking roles in the courtroom.

#### **21-6YL (passed)**

Urges the Section of Legal Education to the Bar consider permanent suspension of Standard 306 to allow for potential accreditation of all online law school curriculum in a post-pandemic world.

#### **21-8YL (passed)**

Urges Congress to pass the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA) (H.R. 2694).

#### **HOD 10A (Passed)**

Urges the highest court or bar admission authority of each jurisdiction that has adopted the Uniform Bar Exam (UBE) to amend its bar admissions rules to provide that the minimum number of years an applicant must have been primarily engaged in the active practice of law to be eligible for admission by motion be equal to the maximum age of a transferred UBE score that the jurisdiction has adopted for purposes of admission by UBE score transfer.

#### **HOD 10B (Passed)**

Urges all federal, state, local and territorial courts, as well as all individual judicial officers with appointment authority, to consider diversity when making appointments to court commissions, committees, boards, task forces and similar entities that serve as arms of the court.

#### **HOD 10D (passed)**

Supports an interpretation of the Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution which would preclude application of the border-search exception to travel to or from a U.S. territory as is provided for travel to and from the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

#### **HOD 10E (Passed)**

Urges that Congress enact the Daniel Anderl Judicial Security and Privacy Act of 2020, or similar legislation to prohibit the disclosure of personally identifiable information of active, senior, recalled or retired federal judges, including magistrate judges, bankruptcy judges, administrative law judges, administrative judges and immigration judges, and their immediate family who share their residence, including but not necessarily limited to home addresses or other personal contact or identifying information.

#### **HOD 10F (Passed)**

Urges federal, state, local, territorial, and tribal governments and police commissions to establish officer training and implement guidelines to be used by officers in giving

exit orders during discretionary traffic enforcement stops where the officer has safety concerns or a reasonable suspicion of criminal activity.

#### **HOD 101A (Passed)**

Urges all federal, state, local, territorial and tribal governments and foreign governments to enact laws permitting specially trained canines (known as facility dogs) to assist victims/vulnerable witnesses in their participation at any stage of the criminal justice system.

#### **HOD 101B (Passed)**

Urges federal, state, local, territorial and tribal legislative bodies and governmental agencies to enact, adopt or amend their information and data privacy laws, regulations or policies to consider the inclusion of certain privacy protections.

#### **HOD 103A (Passed)**

Urges protection for Special Immigrant Juvenile (SIJ) beneficiaries from removal from the United States while they wait for a visa to become available, and further urges the granting of employment authorization while SIJ beneficiaries wait for a visa to become available.

#### **HOD 105 (Passed)**

Urges the highest court or bar admission authority of each jurisdiction to allow bar examinees to bring menstrual products into the bar exam.

#### **HOD 106B (Passed)**

Urges Congress to enact legislation to amend the U.S. bankruptcy code to permit student loans to be discharged in bankruptcy without proving “undue hardship,” as currently required by 11 U.S.C. § 523(a)(8).

#### **HOD 106C (Passed)**

Urges Congress and the Executive Branch to develop and implement programs to assist lawyers experiencing financial hardship due to their student loan obligations.

#### **HOD 107C (Passed)**

Urges the Department of Defense to recognize that: (a) HIV status alone has no impact on service members’ ability to fully execute

their duties and is not a determinant of fitness for duty; and (b) HIV is not a medical condition that should disqualify a person from enlistment, appointment, commissioning, deployment or retention in the U.S. military.

#### **HOD 108C (passed)**

Approves the Uniform Pretrial Release and Detention Act promulgated by the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws as an appropriate Act for those states desiring to adopt the specific substantive law suggested therein.

#### **HOD 112 (Passed)**

Urges the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to void the Rule adopted on July 23, 2020, so as to reinstate the 2015 Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Rule in full force and effect.

#### **HOD 113 (Passed)**

Urges all federal, state, local, territorial and tribal legislative bodies and governmental

agencies to adopt laws and policies to use total population, including minors and non-citizens, as determined by the U.S. Census Bureau, in redrawing electoral district lines after the decennial census to achieve equality of population of districts as required by U.S. constitutional law.

#### **HOD 300A (Passed)**

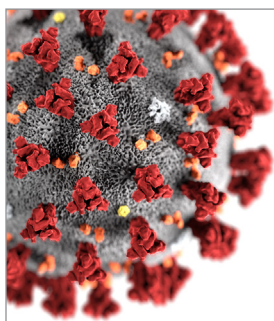
Encourages federal, state, local territorial, and tribal courts, bar associations, legal employers and law schools to develop, assemble, disseminate, promote and to collaborate to make resources accessible that advance well-being in the entire legal profession, including but not limited to, educational programming, mental health providers, screening, employee assistance programs, referrals to community support groups and state and local lawyer assistance programs; and further urges adoption of policies that encourage lawyers, judges and law students to seek out these resources, taking into account the barriers of stigma, retribution, actual or perceived confidentiality challenges,

and other negative effects on the reputation of legal professionals.

#### **HOD 300B (Passed)**

Encourages Congress and state, local, territorial, and tribal legislatures to enact legislation and appropriate adequate funding to ensure access to fair, affordable and high-quality childcare and family care; and encourages bar associations, specialty bar associations, legal employers and law schools to develop policies and best practices regarding fair and affordable access to and support for high quality childcare and family care for all individuals working in the legal profession; including but not limited to (1) off-site or onsite childcare and family care services; (2) childcare and family care vouchers and stipends; and (3) back-up tutoring and home schooling resources.

*LaKeisha R. Randall is managing partner of The Randall Firm, LLC, in Atlanta and is co-editor of The YLD Review.*



## COVID-19 UPDATES

The State Bar of Georgia and the YLD have resources available to you during the pandemic. Please visit [www.gabar.org](http://www.gabar.org) for more information or email any of the YLD officers.



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# 2021 YLD Spring Meeting Schedule



## YLD Leadership Academy Alumni Reunion

Wednesday, March 17 | 6–7:30 p.m.

Missing your fellow Leadership Academy alums? Join us for an evening of networking and fun. Reunite with your class and compete against other classes in a virtual game of trivia hosted by our fearless leader, Bert Hummel. The Trivia Reunion will benefit No Kid Hungry Georgia; participants are requested to make a suggested donation of \$25. ([Click here](#) to donate.) All attendees who donate to No Kid Hungry Georgia will receive a YLD “Thank You” package. As any reunion would be incomplete without YLD swag, prizes will be awarded to the winning class. [Click here](#) to register.



## YLD Wellness: Nutritional Cooking with Allison Sykora

Thursday, March 18 | 4:30–5:30 p.m.

Join Allison Sykora, RD, LD, clinical dietician at Emory University Hospital, as she makes Egg Muffins, a quick, high-protein and nutritious breakfast. The recipe will be provided prior to the event so that you can cook along with Allison. She will also share some ideas for post-workout and on-the-go snacks. [Click here](#) to register.



## YLD Stand-Up Social

Thursday, March 18 | 6–7 p.m.

Meet other members of the YLD in this side-splitting, get-to-know-you event. You will see five comedy videos followed by breakout sessions for a show that lasts an estimated 60 minutes. When you log in to the show, you are greeted by live comedian hosts who welcome everyone and explain the virtual comedy show experience. The hosts then show you a quick five- to six-minute stand-up comedy clip from a pre-recorded show taped in front of a live audience. The breakout rooms of three to four participants rotate each time allowing you to engage with different YLD members. The hosts also give everyone a fun conversation starter to get everyone easily talking. [Click here](#) to reserve your spot.



## YLD CLE: Bias in Judicial Proceedings

Friday, March 19 | 1–4 p.m.

Dr. Ansley Booker, director of diversity of inclusion initiatives at Mercer University, will present “Bias in Judicial Proceedings.” Dr. Booker will create a safe space for sharing thoughts, beliefs and ideas. Attendees will discuss topics that will make them feel uncomfortable in the hopes of identifying, removing and/or improving any form of bias from judicial proceedings. The YLD Inclusion in the Profession Committee will facilitate breakout sessions following the presentation to allow the discussion to continue. (This course has been approved for 2 hours of CLE credit, including 1 hour of trial credit.) [Click here](#) to register.



## YLD General Session

Friday, March 19 | 4–5:30 p.m.

The YLD General Session is open to all Bar members. YLD officers will give reports, and members of the council will provide updates about projects and events. [Click here](#) to register.

# Continuing GABWA's 40-Year Legacy of Service to Women, Children and Lawyers



**ShaMiracle J.  
Rankin**

Since 2015, I have served on the leadership team of six YLD presidents, many of whom I now call friends. Serving in various roles—which include editor of *The YLD Review*, director of CLE programming and member-at-large on the YLD Representative Council—allowed me to bring my unique and diverse perspective to the bar. Concurrently with serving in leadership roles with the State Bar, I also served in various roles with the Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys (GABWA). As an attorney, it is important to remember that involvement in bar organizations is not mutually exclusive. By participating in various bar organizations, I have gained and provided diversity of thought and leadership. Diversity of thought in bar organizations is essential, as the way each person interprets and interacts with the world is reflective of their unique identity, culture and personal experiences. In short, we all have a unique perspective, and our voices should be heard and considered when making decisions that affect lawyers and Georgians.

This year, I will continue my service to the bar and my fellow lawyers as a YLD director and as the 40th president of GABWA. GABWA was founded in 1981 by a courageous group of African-American women attorneys to nurture, support and galvanize the power of Black women attorneys, advocate for women and children, and empower our communities. For 40 years, GABWA has held true to its mission and positively impacted the lives of women, children and lawyers across our great state.

As GABWA president, I will continue to expound upon GABWA's rich history of leadership, advocacy and service. It is GABWA's 40-year legacy of being change

agents that inspired my theme for this year: *GABWA is QUEEN*. QUEEN is an acronym that stands for Quintessential, Undaunted, Empowered, Excellent and Necessary. We will celebrate GABWA and all that she has accomplished, as we continue to do the good work. This good work will include offering more than 20 hours of CLE credits to our membership, addressing the whole lawyer by focusing on mental health and wellness, leadership development and fellowship.

Our programming, this year, also focuses on areas that are unique to the younger lawyer. As a GABWA member, our lawyers have access to our award-winning Professional Development Academy that teaches young lawyers many of the intangible, yet significant soft skills of professional development. For the first time in the history of the Academy, it is being offered virtually, which will allow our members across the state to participate in this stellar program.

In addition to programming, GABWA will continue to offer leadership opportunities for young lawyers so that they can bring their unique leadership style to our organization. Many of GABWA's regions and committees are being led by young lawyers. Rian Banks and Natalya Rice, GABWA's community service chairs, are examples of two young lawyers, whose leadership perspective has greatly impacted our state. Through their leadership, in the first two months of 2021, GABWA has positively

affected the lives of more than 300 women and children.

Banks and Rice, worked with GABWA's regional vice presidents to organize our annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service. GABWA delivered 150 meals to two metro-Atlanta transitional shelters, donated 100 robes and slippers to women in need at transitional shelters in Atlanta and Albany, donated more than 200 bottles of water and Gatorade to schools in Augusta, and donated school supplies and toiletries to students in Savannah and Columbus. For 40 years, GABWA has made an impact on the lives of women and children through our service and advocacy. This year, we will continue to build on this legacy through the leadership of young and seasoned lawyers.

Service in GABWA and the YLD has been very rewarding. It has afforded me the opportunity to meet and network with lawyers across the state, sharpen my legal skillset and serve Georgians who are most in need. I encourage you to take full advantage of the programs, networking and service opportunities that are provided by the State Bar and local voluntary bar associations, like GABWA. Your diversity of thought and leadership are needed, especially now! To learn more about GABWA and to join our beloved organization, please visit [www.gabwa.org](http://www.gabwa.org). <sup>YLD</sup>

*ShaMiracle Rankin is a partner at CP Law Group in Atlanta and serves on the YLD Board of Directors.*







Top and bottom right photos: (L-R) GABWA Community Service Co-Chair Natalya Rice, GABWA President ShaMiracle Rankin and GABWA Community Service Co-Chair Rian Banks—all young lawyers—delivered more than 150 boxed lunches to two metro-Atlanta women's transitional shelters for Martin Luther King Jr. Day.



GABWA Augusta Regional Vice President and young lawyer Amber Duncan (bottom left) is joined by fellow GABWA members as they collect water and Gatorade for the Richmond County school district.



GABWA Columbus Regional Vice President and young lawyer Randi Warren led a toiletry drive for teenage girls at Young Life. GABWA Savannah Regional Vice President Denise Cooper led her region in the collection of school supplies and gift cards for "Blessings in a Book Bag."



## JOIN A YLD COMMITTEE

The YLD has more than 25 committees working to support our motto of service to the community and profession. Each committee works diligently to provide substantive programming in their respective focus areas.

Advocates for Students with Disabilities	Judicial Law Clerk
Business Law	Labor and Employment Law
Community Service Projects	Law School Outreach Program
Corporate Counsel	Leadership Academy Alumni
Criminal Law	Legal Food Frenzy
Disaster Legal Assistance	Legislative Affairs
Estate and Elder Law	Litigation
Ethics and Professionalism	National Moot Court Competition
Family Law	Public Interest Internship Program
Government Law	Real Estate Law
Health Law	Solo Practice/Small Firm
High School Mock Trial Competition	William W. Daniel National Invitational Mock Trial Competition
Inclusion in the Profession	Women in the Profession
Intellectual Property Law	Workers' Compensation
Intrastate Moot Court Competition	

To join a YLD committee, visit [www.georgiayld.org](http://www.georgiayld.org).  
Keep in mind that your committee membership ends on June 30 of each year.  
Visit the web to re-join.

THE YLD LITIGATION COMMITTEE PRESENTS

# A VIRTUAL CONVERSATION WITH SCOTT WILKINSON

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24  
@ 6 P.M.

The YLD Litigation Committee is proud to host Scott Wilkinson, executive vice president and chief legal officer of the Atlanta Hawks!

Tune in as Mr. Wilkinson discusses his career, shares legal stories and gives advice to younger attorneys looking to excel in their careers!



The YLD Workers' Compensation Committee and the  
YLD Litigation Committee present

## MEDITATION & MINDFULNESS FOR LAWYERS WITH JEENA CHO

A Virtual Workshop with the Author of  
*The Anxious Lawyer*

Friday, March 26 | 12 p.m.





## Affiliate Spotlight

# Celebrating the Holidays (From a Distance) in Houston County



**Kindall  
Browning**

This year the Houston County YLD, in conjunction with the Houston County Bar Association (HCBA), held a one-of-a-kind COVID friendly Holiday Party. On Dec. 4, 2020, members of the Houston County YLD and HCBA met at Southside Baptist Church in Warner Robins, Georgia, to celebrate the holidays as friends and colleagues.

All attendees of the party were asked to wear a mask and bring donations for Toys for Tots. In addition to the toy drive the bar association holds every year, donations of school supplies and hygiene products were also collected for homeless students in Houston County. According to the homeless prevention coordinator for the Houston County School System, there are currently more than 300 homeless students in Houston County in need of basic supplies. Per the usual, the attendees did not disappoint resulting in a donation of a huge box of toys and a hefty amount of school supplies and hygiene products. There were also a number of monetary donations made for the Houston County School System to assist with the needs of homeless students.

As this was an odd year, HCBA President LaToya Bell presented awards at this year's holiday party. This was with the knowledge that the lawyers and judges in our community have been working so hard this year to adapt to new technology and the changing needs of our clients and the community. Three awards were presented at the party this year. The Professionalism Award went to Jeff Lasseter of the Lasseter Law Firm, LLC, in Warner Robins. The Judicial Service Award went to Judge Katherine K. Lumsden of the Houston County Superior Court. Finally, the Commitment to Equality Award went to Tomieka Daniel of the Macon Office of Georgia Legal



Houston County Bar Association President LaToya Bell addresses the attendees.



Holiday partygoers stay masked up prior to dinner.

Services Program. Bell also gave two President's Awards to Phillip Potter of Westmoreland, Patterson, Moseley, & Hinson, LLP, in Warner Robins, and Andrew Bennett of Bennett Law and Mediation Services, LLC, in Warner Robins.

At the holiday party, I spoke to Ollena Bennett, the newest member of Bennett Law and Mediation Services, LLC, about how the holidays were different for her this year. She said the holidays would be very different because she could not visit with her family. Her family normally has a big gathering. Bennett, a member of the Houston County YLD and an executive board member of the HCBA, has been working hard to give back to the community during these difficult times, especially at the holi-

days. She does this by making sure everyone, bar members included, stays safe during planned bar functions, participating and giving advice and ideas on how to continue with community service. When speaking about the bar associations' continued push for community service projects during COVID-19 she said, "Community service can't really stop. Everyone still needs help. We still want to be legal representatives; we still want to represent and help folks."

In total, there were about 50 attendees at the Holiday Party. The event was coordinated, prepared and decorated by HCBA President LaToya Bell. *YLD*

*Kindall Browning is a staff attorney with Georgia Legal Services Program in Macon.*



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# 2021 SPRING MEETING | MARCH 17-19

*The Spring Meeting is all virtual!*



Check [www.gabar.org](http://www.gabar.org) for the schedule of events  
and registration information.