



The YLD Review

THE STATE BAR OF GEORGIA | LAWYERS SERVING THE PUBLIC AND THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Volume 56, Issue 1 Young Lawyers Division Fall 2014

YLD Officers

President

Sharri Edenfield, Statesboro
sharri@ecbcpc.com

President-Elect

John R. B. "Jack" Long, Augusta
jlongattorney@aol.com

Treasurer

Jennifer Campbell Mock, Statesboro
jennifer@mocklaw.com

Secretary

Nicole Leet, Atlanta
nleet@grsmb.com

Immediate Past President

Darrell Sutton, Marietta
dls@sutton-law-group.com

Newsletter Editors

Yari D. Lawson, Lawrenceville
yari@lawsonfirm.com

Rizza O'Connor, Lyons
rizzaoconnor@gmail.com

2014 Leadership Academy Recap

by Philip Catalano and ShaMiracle Johnson

This year's YLD Leadership Academy consisted of 54 participants of diverse backgrounds and practice areas from all parts of Georgia. The class met once a month for six months, with each meeting organized around essential lessons for future lawyer leaders.

The 2014 Leadership Academy kicked off on Jan. 10, at the State Bar in Atlanta. The class was introduced to the inner workings of the State Bar and the YLD, participated in a tour of the State Bar facilities and learned of the countless service opportunities the YLD offers young attorneys. Following the tour, the Leadership Academy attended the YLD Midyear Meeting and the YLD/Legislative Reception at the InterContinental Hotel in Buckhead. The following morning, the class participated in a humorous ice-breaking exercise that set the tone for an invaluable Leadership Academy experience.

During the second session on Feb. 20, the Leadership Academy spent the morning touring the State Capitol and learning about the state's legislative process. The class was recognized on the House floor to a cheering crowd. The class then attended a luncheon with state legislators where keynote speaker Gov. **Nathan Deal** discussed his political initiatives and the importance of lawyer legislators. During the afternoon, former Chief Judge **John Ellington** acquainted the class with the Court of Appeals of Georgia, and Supreme Court of Georgia Justice **David Nahmias** spoke on the importance of professional leaders in the legal community. A number of class members were then sworn in to each court.

The Leadership Academy met in Augusta on March 21-22, where they learned the local legal history and served the community by hosting a Wills Clinic. On March 21, they ate lunch at Supreme Court Justice Joseph Rucker Lamar's boyhood home. After lunch, Eric Montgomery, the director of Historic Augusta, led a tour of Woodrow Wilson's boyhood home. They then met at the federal courthouse, where members of their class were sworn in to the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Georgia. After the ceremony, they traveled to the Augusta Canal, where **Ed Tarver**, the U.S. attorney for the Southern District, spoke to them regarding ethics during a boat tour of the canal. The day came to a close with an amazing dinner and reception at the "boyhood home" of YLD President-Elect **Jack Long**. On March 22, they received extensive training from **Brandon Elijah** and **Katie Willett** regarding drafting wills. Once the training concluded, their class hosted a First Responder's Wills Clinic. They prepared wills and estate documents for Augusta's service members. The Wills Clinic was a very rewarding experience.

On April 17, the Leadership Academy met at Maggiano's in Buckhead. **Mike Monahan**, director of the State Bar's Pro Bono Program, provided an overview of the Georgia Legal Services Program. **Erica V. Mason**, a shareholder at Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz, PC, led a diversity discussion which was followed by a diversity panel moderated by **Yari Lawson**. The panel featured Chief Judge **Herbert Phipps** and Judge **Elizabeth L. Branch** from the Court of Appeals of Georgia, **Linda A. Klein**, the managing shareholder at Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz, PC, and Prof. **Avarita Hanson**, the executive director of the Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism. The law firm of Kilpatrick, Townsend & Stockton, LLP, was a key sponsor of this session through its Diversity and Inclusion Section.

Session 5 of the Leadership Academy was held in conjunction with the YLD Spring Meeting. They traveled to Charlotte, N.C., where their class learned the meaning of professionalism and the various challenges that face young attorneys. For their service project, they collected toys for animals who are housed in shelters. The Spring Meeting afforded their class an



Janene Browder accepts her plaque of completion from Court of Appeals Judge Stephen Dillard at the final session of the Leadership Academy.

opportunity to strengthen their bond. From road trips, to shopping and group dinners, they learned interesting facts about their class and new friendships were formed. The Leadership Academy concluded Session 5 at the NASCAR Sprint All-Star Race at Charlotte Motor Speedway. Seasoned and first-time race attendees had an excellent time cheering on their favorite driver.

The Leadership Academy graduation was held on Amelia Island on June 6, in conjunction with the State Bar's Annual Meeting. Judge **Stephen Dillard** of the Court of Appeals of Georgia presided over the commencement and presented each classmate with a plaque. During the commencement, incoming YLD President **Sharri Edenfield** encouraged the class to continue its involvement and remain active with the YLD. Outgoing YLD President **Darrell Sutton** highlighted the significant opportunities awaiting Leadership Academy alumni as well as his hope for future successes in the YLD and the State Bar.

The 2014 Leadership Academy class offers its gratitude to **Ivy Cadle**, **Rachel Fields** and **Yari Lawson** for organizing sessions that equipped its members with new leadership skills, strong friendships and a desire to become more involved in the YLD. If you are interested in applying for the 2015 Leadership Academy, please look for an application at www.georgiayld.org starting Oct. 1.

Inside This Issue

President's Page	2
From the State Bar President	2
Do's and Don'ts from a Judge	3
Tips for a Young Lawyer	3
Affiliate Updates	4
Committee Updates.....	5
A Lawyer's Impact Under the Gold Dome.....	5
YLD Officers, Directors & Representatives	6
The YLD at the 2014 State Bar Annual Meeting.....	7
Georgia Sends Nine Young Lawyers to Boston	7
He Said / She Said.....	8





From the President

A Chance to Be Extraordinary

by Sharri Edenfield

I recently had the privilege of traveling to the ABA YLD Annual Meeting in Boston to represent the Georgia YLD. While I spent a lot of time inside a conference center attending meetings, I made a point, as I always do when traveling, to get outside and see the city. This was my first trip to Boston since high school, so I was eager to enjoy Italian food in the North End and walk around the city to see historical sites like Paul Revere's house and Faneuil Hall; however, I also wanted to visit another historical spot that was not on any tourist map.

Marathon Sports is a sporting goods store on Boylston Street, two blocks or so from where the ABA meeting took place. The finish line for the Boston Marathon, which garners approximately 30,000 runners and 500,000 spectators annually, is right in front of Marathon Sports and is also where the first of two bombs exploded on April 15, 2013, changing the face of the marathon, and of Boston, forever. I remember watching the news coverage of the aftermath of the bombings and hearing about the bravery of the staff of Marathon Sports, which was quickly recognized as the epicenter of the bombings. When the first bomb exploded 20 feet in front of the store, the employees inside quickly shifted into action. In the blink of an eye, the store was transformed into a makeshift triage for bombing victims. The employees became first responders, tearing T-shirts and other inventory to use as tourniquets. When the store re-opened a week later, it began selling "Boston Strong" T-shirts with Marathon Sports' logo on the sleeve, a tangible reminder of the role the store played in helping Bostonians to be strong on such a horrific day. I knew I could not leave Boston without buying one of these iconic T-shirts so I visited the store, where I ended up having a conversation with the cashier. My Southern accent quickly gave me away and we ended up talking about his upcoming vacation to Savannah. I later learned that the cashier with whom I spoke was actually the store's manager and one of the heroes during that dark day.

I was also able to visit a number of other historically significant spots during the trip, like the Old North Church, the Old State House and Boston Commons. While all of the

colonial historical locations I visited were incredibly different from Marathon Sports, I realized that there is one common thread that ties each location together: each place is the setting where incredible feats were accomplished by ordinary people who, when the opportunity presented itself, these ordinary people became extraordinary leaders. Silversmith Paul Revere is remembered not for his silver but rather as one of our great Revolutionary War leaders because on his "midnight ride," he alerted the Colonial militia to the approach of British forces. While John Adams was the second president of the United States, he was an attorney first. During the build-up to the Revolutionary War, he took a stand for the rule of law by representing the most hated men in Boston, eight British soldiers accused of murdering five colonists when they fired into a volatile mob behind the Old State House. Even at Marathon Sports, the employees fearlessly led the way by running out of the store to come to the aid of people who had been horrifically injured while also shielding survivors.

It occurs to me that each of these individuals undertook their actions at great personal risk. Had the colonists lost the war, Paul Revere would have been hanged as a traitor to the crown. John Adams risked his financial livelihood and his family's personal safety when he defended unpopular clients, an act which outraged many Bostonians. Certainly the Marathon Sports employees risked their personal safety as they continued helping bombing victims without knowing if another bomb would explode in front of their store. Nevertheless, when the opportunity to make a difference presented itself, each of these ordinary people became extraordinary leaders.

In this edition of *The YLD Review*, you will read about numerous prospects for service, education and leadership through the YLD this year. These opportunities represent the chance for every Georgia young lawyer to make a difference and to be extraordinary. Former British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli once said, "The secret of success is to be ready when your opportunity comes." Georgia YLD, the opportunities are limitless, and there is no better time than the present to take advantage of them. Are you ready?

From the State Bar President

by Patrise M. Perkins-Hooker



I appreciate the invitation from YLD Newsletter Co-Editors **Yari Lawson** and **Rizza O'Connor** to communicate directly on a regular basis with YLD members about what is going on with State Bar of Georgia's projects, programs, services and resources this year. The YLD is appropriately known as the service arm of our State Bar, and I hope these columns will not only keep you informed, but also encourage you to become even more involved in Bar activities.

Featured in this first installment is our iCivics initiative, which will involve direct collaboration with YLD members as we plan to reach out to Georgia high school students to reinforce their understanding of their rights and their responsibilities as citizens of the United States. As I pointed out when I outlined my plans this year to the Board of Governors upon taking office, civics instruction in our schools has been severely cut, and in some cases eliminated.

We can do better. iCivics is an interactive computer-based civics instruction program, founded by retired U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor. It is aimed at helping social studies teachers throughout the country address the void created by reductions in civics instruction. I believe this is a very important investment in our future.

Before graduating from high school, all students should have a working knowledge about civic responsibility, the roles and duties of each of the three branches of government, our rights under the Constitution, how a bill is passed in the legislature, etc.—all of which are necessary to shape responsible citizens and plant the seeds in some of our young people to become responsible lawyers.

Our iCivics initiative is a pilot program that we are implementing in a few school systems this year. Our plan is to place a resource lawyer in every middle school and high school classroom where the teacher is using the iCivics course curriculum.

These resource lawyers will support the teachers and reinforce the concepts presented through the computer-based iCivics curriculum. The resource lawyer will be expected to visit the classes at least twice a month to help add real-world examples by sharing relevant cases, joining field trips and facilitating classroom dialogue to reinforce the subject matter being taught by the teacher.

The iCivics program was introduced to me by former Court of Appeals of Georgia Judge **Dorothy Beasley**. Supreme Court of Georgia Justice **Carol Hunstein** is the state chair. Atlanta attorneys **Evelyn Davis** and **Ashley Herd** have served as coordinators for our state and they are the co-chairs of the State Bar's iCivics Committee. **Shiriki Cavitt** is the vice chair.

We held our first training program with the Atlanta Public School System on July 29. Harris County, Liberty County, Muscogee County, Savannah-Chatham County, Tift County and Wilkinson County school systems also have agreed to be a part of the pilot program for this school year. Our objective is to get this program rolled out to more of our schools. I hope you will consider volunteering to assist with a classroom if we are working in a school system in your area. To learn more about the program, visit www.icivics.org. To become involved with our State Bar program, please contact our YLD liaison for iCivics, Shiriki Cavitt, at 678-472-0377 or shiriki8@gmail.com.

With your help, we can build a stronger citizenry, and we will be a stronger Bar as a result of our outreach.

Do's and Don'ts from a Judge

by *Hon. Kathy S. Palmer, chief judge of the Middle Judicial Circuit*



Young lawyers are always a welcome sight to judges. Judges know newly or recently minted attorneys bring a fresh perspective and a new spark of enthusiasm to the courtroom along with their proud swagger. It's the swagger that so often gains the lawyer respect by the court or gets the lawyer viewed in a less favorable light that may set the stage for trouble to come.

Judges know they each have a reputation among the Bar for some sort of specific personality on the bench and approach to doing the job. There are as many different approaches to judging as there are judges. A savvy young lawyer would be wise to check with seasoned lawyers to learn something about a judge before making that first appearance. For instance, one might want to forego the Florida Gator tie when appearing before the UGA double dawg.

Any comments offered as suggestions for being a better young lawyer would be remiss without the standard caution to be a good Boy Scout (used generically) and always be prepared. Being prepared comes in many different strengths from prepared enough to get by to being well-prepared with all the facts and law on the tip of your tongue. Don't discover your case as you do direct examination on your own client. Don't argue law you make up as you go. A strong admonition would be warranted on the dangers of quoting cases or laws that are incorrect. There is no faster way to ruin your reputation with the court than to mislead in this fashion.

Equally as important is to protect one's good name at all times. Just like in the biblical admonition, having your word believed by the court is more valuable than gold and silver. She who protects her good name will find the hard work and sacrifices were worth the effort.

A young lawyer would benefit from always remembering to treat others in the fashion you prefer to be treated yourself. In today's world, popular culture influences including the much touted drive to excel at any cost have caused many of us to be less sensitive of other's feelings. Cutting comments of a personal nature have become the norm instead of the exception. An attorney who has to be cautioned repeatedly to make objections to the court as opposed to directing an insulting comment to the opposing counsel is headed for a stay in the local detention center for contempt. State your objection and the grounds therefore to the court. Don't include a personal barb against opposing counsel's abilities or character. That might win you points with your client but not with the decision maker. I reflect often on innovative strategies to send the non-civil lawyer to jail on contempt without delaying the trial or unfairly prejudicing that lawyer's client's case. Leave the bullying behind and play nice in the sandbox.

Being cognizant of time restrictions will definitely endear you to the judge. Always check with the judge's staff before a hotly contested hearing to be certain time will allow for all the testimony you anticipate will be required to adequately present the case. Calendars are often very heavy and an unexpectedly long hearing will cause much stress on the court. Move a hearing to a more convenient time if possible if you determine it will take more time than that particular calendar will allow.

Make every effort to be sure your client understands what might happen. Many clients have never been to court before and do not know what to expect, how to dress or what the possible outcomes are. This can lead to a situation that can have a negative impact on the case, lead to an embarrassing circumstance or an inconvenience for the court. Taking a few minutes to prepare your client for the realities of court is always best. Court can be hurry up and wait so include this on your list of important court facts. Numerous lawyers insisting on preference on a busy day because they or their client need to be somewhere else may result in a short-tempered judge.

We all have a list of behaviors that we find annoying at best and personally offensive at worst. One of my particular irritants is chewing gum in court. It is not allowed in my courtroom. Like a

1950s school teacher, I find gum chewing in court or church to be at the height of bad manners. Don't do it. Don't let anyone on your side of the case do it.

Despite our neutral minds in judging facts, one might want a client who is a criminal defendant to forgo wearing the T-shirt emblazoned with a marijuana leaf, boldly stating "Bad Girl" or "outlaw" or similar slogans. Looking down from the bench at the domestic violence claimant who is wearing a very low cut top with twin tiger paw tattoos adorning her bosom, might have a negative impact on her believability as a witness. Never tell your client to wear church clothes. In today's culture, that could mean anything from cutoff jeans and flip flops to see-through lace.

An attorney who is organized is a judge's dream lawyer! A trial notebook that is tabbed and actually filled in makes judges smile to themselves and have a warm fuzzy feeling inside. Actually having direct and cross worked up makes a lawyer look like competency at its best.

Don't overdo exhibits. Judges inwardly groan when two or three assistants walk in carrying arm loads of exhibits. A picture can be worth a thousand words, but too many pictures can grow boring and irritating. Thoughtfully plan exhibits and use only those that actually promote your case.

If you have a deposition to read into the record and no one to help you, feel free to phone the judge's office beforehand. I like to give my law clerks and interns the experience (or punishment) of reading the part of a doctor or other witness in a deposition.

Always remember that the way to a judge's good graces is through the judge's staff. These are the people who are most important to the judge and are the people the judge will listen to first. If you or your staff are not courteous to the judge's staff, you can be sure that information is going to be shared with the judge. Your lot in life could suffer. As a word of extreme caution, if you think having the judge lose confidence in your word is not a good thing, just try having the judge's administrative assistant catch you in a falsehood. Woe be to you!

Now as to that swagger. Lawyers need a little swagger to do their job effectively. Without it, you would be a paralegal. Keep the ego in check and don't try to intimidate the judge. You can't win that one.

As continuing legal education, I think all lawyers should watch two movies on a yearly basis: "To Kill a Mockingbird" and "My Cousin Vinny." There are valuable lessons in each.

The law is an honorable profession. Young lawyers have a duty to keep it that way. Be honorable in all that you do. Justice depends on it.

Tips for a Young Lawyer

by *Claudia Saari, DeKalb County Public Defender's Office*



Be a consummate professional as you zealously represent your client.

Always treat everyone, including your clients, adversaries and courtroom personnel, with respect, kindness and civility. When in court, display confidence without arrogance.

Be a person of integrity.

Be honest; keep your word. Be trustworthy; do not intentionally misstate the law or facts. Not only is this right, this approach will rightly earn you credibility, which in turn permits more effective representation of your clients throughout your career.

Be the most prepared person in the courtroom or boardroom.

Always strive for excellence. Everything you do must be of the highest quality. Zealous and excellent advocacy requires hard work and preparation. Know the law and keep current with changes. Know the customs and practices of each judge and courtroom you appear before.

You can learn much by getting to know and treating with respect members of the clerk's office, sheriff's department, law clerks and judges' staff.

It is okay to ask for help.

Learn from other great lawyers by observing them in court and asking them about issues you have in your cases. Seek help from people outside your office. Get to know these people by becoming involved with your local, state and national bar associations or professional organizations.

Do what you love.

Seek a legal position that you feel passionate about. Attorneys engage in heroic work because we have the great ability every day to help people in need. It is a tremendous responsibility that requires hard work and dedication, but brings great fulfillment.

Affiliate Updates

Augusta YLD

by Alex Brown

The Young Lawyers of Augusta welcomed Hon. **John J. Ellington**, former chief judge of the Court of Appeals of Georgia, to Augusta for our annual River Boat Cruise CLE down the Savannah River in June. The group enjoyed a wonderful presentation by the former chief judge as well as local Augusta fare as we cruised down the river. The event was a great success and we hope it will continue to be an annual tradition. In July we gathered for a happy hour event at The Vineyard in Evans. We have been collecting school supplies and donations for Heritage Academy this summer and the Young Lawyers of Augusta will be presenting the donations to Heritage Academy in preparation of the beginning of the new school year. The Young Lawyers of Augusta are currently in the process of working in cooperation with the YLD Juvenile Law Committee to organize a Lunch and Learn CLE this fall. More information on the date of this Lunch and Learn event will be provided soon. We are looking forward to working with several YLD committees this year and hope to continue exploring new options to coordinate joint events.



(L-R) Garon Muller, YLA treasurer; Jordan Gillman Dinos, YLA president; Alex Brown, YLA president-elect; Former Chief Judge John J. Ellington, Court of Appeals; Aimee Pickett Sanders, YLA secretary; and Jack Long, YLA immediate past president, at the annual River Boat Cruise CLE on the Savannah River.

Cobb County YLD

by Soo Hong

The Cobb County YLD had a busy start to the 2014-15 year. They continue to hold their monthly luncheons at Willie Rae's on the Marietta Square on the third Tuesday of every month. The Cobb County YLD has been inviting speakers to discuss various volunteer programs for attorneys around the Cobb County courts. In May, they had speakers from the Cobb Juvenile Court to discuss the Judicial Citizen Review Panel and the Family Dependency Treatment Court. In August, they had a speaker from Legal Aid of Cobb County to discuss the Temporary Protective Order Project.



Cobb YLD members and guests took the Marietta Trolley to the Braves game in July.

The Cobb County YLD has also been active with various social and pro bono events. In July, the Cobb YLD hosted their annual Braves outing where they took the Marietta Trolley to the Braves game. In August, the Cobb County YLD teamed up with the Wills Clinic Committee to assist Cobb County's first responders and their spouses in preparing estate planning documents. The event, sponsored by The Legal Justice Foundation of Cobb County, the Cobb County YLD, RICOH, King & Yaklin, LLP, the Merbaum Law Group, PC, and Burroughs Elijah, LLC, helped 57 first responders and their spouses.

The Cobb YLD continues to make plans for the rest of the year including happy hour events, Cobb County judges panel and other events. For more information about the Cobb County YLD, please contact President **Soo Hong** at shong@cobbcountylaw.com.

Glynn County YLD

by Brian Corry

The Glynn County Young Lawyers Division held its annual elections in July. The following members were elected:

- **Melissa Cruthirds**, president
- **Brian Corry**, vice president
- **Lacey Houghton**, secretary

- **Madeline Mitchell**, treasurer
- **Meg Corry**, social chair
- **Emily Hancock** and **Jason Hodges**, community service chairs
- **Hadley Hayes**, membership chair

The YLD looks forward to a productive fall including a trip to the Jacksonville Jaguars game benefitting Honor Flight, and volunteering at the annual Jingle Bell Run-Walk 5K benefitting CASA Glynn. Please visit our new Glynn County YLD Facebook page for additional information on news and events.

Savannah YLD

by Bryan Schivera

The Savannah Young Lawyers continued 2014 with a full schedule of events. In May, the YLD hosted an event in Forsyth Park to coincide with the Savannah College of Art and Design's annual commencement concert. Members and their guests enjoyed an evening of beautiful weather and great music in Savannah's historic park. Also in May, members of the YLD participated in the annual Law Day, visiting local public schools and participating in classroom discussions on the importance of American democracy and civil rights.

On June 6, the ninth annual Savannah Guardian Ad Litem Charity Golf Tournament was held, with 72 players participating. The tournament raised \$7,600 for the Guardian Ad Litem Program, which Superior Court Judge **Penny Haas Freese**man gladly accepted on behalf of the program. In July, the Savannah YLD hosted its first alumni happy hour at Hang Fire Bar, an event attended by numerous Savannah attorneys of all ages.



Judge Penny Haas Freese (in green) accepts a check for \$7,600 on behalf of the Savannah Guardian Ad Litem Program. The donation was raised during the ninth annual Savannah Guardian Ad Litem Golf Tournament held on June 6.

The Savannah YLD continues to make plans for fall events, including a kickoff party to welcome all new attorneys to the area. For more information about Savannah YLD events or to become a member, please contact Membership Co-Chairs **Zach Thomas** at zthomas@aol.com or **Carson Penney** at cpenney@huntermaclean.com.

YLD Affiliates Around the State

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| » Albany | » Houtson County |
| » Augusta | » Macon |
| » Cobb County | » Rome/Northwest Georgia |
| » Columbus | » Savannah |
| » DeKalb County | » Valdosta |
| » Glynn County | » Western Circuit Bar Association |
| » Gwinnett County | |

Committee Updates

Juvenile Law

by *Araceli Jacobs and Deidré Merriman*

Each year, the Juvenile Law Committee (JLC) partners with four organizations to celebrate foster youth graduating from high school or college. The event, known as “Celebration of Excellence,” honors the achievements of about 200 foster youth from across the state. The event caters to mostly high school graduates who will do something their parents never had the opportunity to do—go to college.

This year the Juvenile Law Committee seeks to further assist with high school foster youth transitioning into college by providing care packages. Every college student remembers the point of the semester, usually October, when the food and personal supplies dry up and a desperate call to home for replenished supplies becomes necessary. Foster youth may lack the parental support to whom they can reach out during this time of need. The JLC hopes to provide support by partnering with local organizations to collect tax deductible donations for college care packages in the fall. The JLC will accept the following items for college care packages: school supplies, keepsakes and gift cards. The committee also encourages people to submit signed cards with notes of support and encouragement for students. If you would like to get involved in this effort, please contact **Araceli Jacobs** at araceli.jacobs@gmail.com.

Litigation

by *Jake Evans, Kevin Patrick and Ryals Stone*

“The life of the law has not been logic; it has been experience.”

In 1881 Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr., a former U.S. Supreme Court Justice, wrote that famous aphorism in the opening to *The Common Law*. The United States was far different in the late 19th century than it is today. Despite this passage of time, Justice Holmes’ words emphasizing the importance of experience in the practice of law has endured as is evidenced by the Litigation Committee’s “War Stories” speaker series.

For the 2013-14 speaker series, this committee was honored to listen to members of our judiciary, including Chief Justice **Hugh P. Thompson** from the Supreme Court of Georgia, Judge **Lisa Branch**, Court of Appeals of Georgia, and acclaimed trial lawyer, **Michael L. Neff**. Each of these individuals offered their unique guidance and litigation experiences to many aspiring young litigators.

In advancing the committee’s goal this year to be more geographically representative, the Litigation Committee will host parts of its “War Stories” speaker series at new locations, such as Savannah and Macon, in the spring of 2015. For more information, contact Co-Chairs **Kevin Patrick** at kpatrick@gmlj.com or **Ryals Stone** at ryalsstone@booneandstone.com.

Solo/Small Firm

by *Soo Hong*

The YLD Solo/Small Firm Committee had a great 2013-14 year. We hosted several joint happy hour networking events with various other YLD committees. We ended the 2013-14 year with a joint networking event with the YLD Non-Traditional Legal Careers Committee and the YLD Judicial Law Clerk Committee. It was a great turnout.

This coming year, the Solo/Small Firm Committee, in addition to continuing the great networking events, plans to provide informative and educational events for those members managing their own small firm or for those who are preparing to start their own firm. If you would like more information about the Solo/Small Firm Committee or would like to join, please contact Co-Chair **Soo Hong** at shong@cobbcountylaw.com.

A Lawyer’s Impact Under the Gold Dome

by *Rep. Ronnie Mabra Jr. (D-Fayetteville)*



As a state representative and an attorney, I have the unique privilege of representing Georgians at both the Capitol and in the courtroom. And whether I am fighting to obtain justice for a client or advocating for Georgians’ rights under the Gold Dome, one thing remains constant: I always act in the best interest of those whom I have the honor of representing.

I believe that the Legislature benefits greatly when lawyers hold elected office. We have years of courtroom and transactional experience resolving the issues lawmakers face. For example, last year I made it clear that the medical malpractice reform proposal was bad for Georgia. My belief was based on my experiences as a trial lawyer rather than partisan ideology. Our right to trial by jury, which is enshrined in the 7th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and reaffirmed in Paragraph XI of the Constitution of the state of Georgia, is as important to ensuring the continuance of our just society as any guarantee set forth in our founding documents. This right is, in my mind, the great equalizer—an opportunity for all individuals, regardless of their standing in society, to seek justice before an unbiased jury of their fellow citizens on a level playing field.

I passed my first piece of legislation during the 2014 legislative session, and it went into effect on July 1, 2014. HB 828 (codified as O.C.G.A. § 33-24-53) made it illegal for non-lawyer “runners” to solicit business (often car wrecks and personal injury clients) for a law firm or health care provider. You can read the full details on the Georgia General Assembly website.

The penalties defined in O.C.G.A. § 33-24-53 are specific, severe, and cover all participants in the criminal activity, including the practitioners, runners, staff, etc.:

- First offense—misdemeanor conviction, at least 30 days in jail, up to \$1,000 fine.
- Subsequent offenses—felony conviction, up to 10 years in jail, up to \$100,000 fine per violation.

Before O.C.G.A. § 33-24-53, the only recourse seemed to be the filing of a Bar complaint based on Rule 7.3(c) Direct Contact With Prospective Clients. The State Bar of Georgia would investigate, and was able to recommend punishment up through and including disbarment. The actual punishment varies widely based on violation frequency, cooperation with the State Bar of Georgia, and other aggravating and mitigating factors. Furthermore, the accused attorney typically continues to practice during the investigation. The deterrent simply did not seem significant enough, with revenue from this illegal activity often outweighing the risk or penalty.

With the passing of this legislation, consumers are better protected from this outrageous and illegal activity. The State Bar of Georgia has a better opportunity to expedite disciplinary action. District attorneys have a law with some sharp teeth as they go after violators. The legal industry (hopefully) gains credibility. Consumers, attorneys and others have a better way to fight back and report violations.

These are just two examples of issues presented to the state in which Georgia benefited by having lawyer legislators available to debate the merits based on our chosen vocation. I appreciate the support that the State Bar of Georgia and its members have shown me and the other attorneys serving in the General Assembly.

The 9th Annual Supreme Cork!



Join the Family Law Committee of the YLD for our annual fundraiser on Oct. 16, at 6:30 p.m. at 5 Seasons Brewing Westside, 1000 Marietta St. NW, Atlanta. The event includes a wine tasting and silent auction to benefit the Guardian ad Litem and Safe Families Office of the Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation.

To purchase tickets, go to www.thesupremecork.org.

YLD Officers



President: Sharri Edenfield is a partner with the law firm of Edenfield, Cox, Bruce & Classens, P.C., in Statesboro. She maintains a general practice that focuses on litigating business/contract disputes as well as product liability, personal injury, agriculture and environmental law claims. She received her J.D. from Mercer University School of Law and her B.A. from the University of Georgia. Edenfield was in the first YLD Leadership Academy class in 2006 and went on to chair the program for five additional years. She has been on the Board of Directors since 2007 and also served as YLD president-elect, treasurer, secretary and newsletter co-editor. Edenfield serves on several nonprofit boards in Statesboro and is in her eighth year as the president of her sorority's house association board at the University of Georgia. She supports Safe Haven Shelter in Statesboro through pro bono work and was honored by the YLD with the inaugural Signature Service Award in 2011.



President-Elect: Jack Long is a solo practitioner in Augusta, where he and his wife, Paige, live with their daughter, Reynolds. He maintains a general practice focused on civil and domestic relations litigation, criminal defense and appellate practice. He is also a certified mediator. He received his J.D. from Mercer University School of Law in 2006, having previously graduated with a B.S. from Georgia Tech. An alumnus of the YLD Leadership Academy, he is also a past president of the Young Lawyers of Augusta.



Treasurer: Jennifer Mock practices law with The Mock Law Firm in Statesboro. She primarily focuses on commercial and residential real estate law as well as juvenile law. She received her J.D. from the University of Georgia and a B.B.A. from Georgia Southern University. She is a YLD Leadership Academy graduate and has served

on the Board of Directors of the YLD for several years. She is an active member of Professional Women of Statesboro and serves on the Board of the Statesboro Exchange Club. Mock lives in Statesboro with her husband, Jared, and their two daughters, Kate and Ada.



Secretary: Nicole Leet practices law with Gray, Rust, St. Amand, Moffett & Brieske LLP in Atlanta. She specializes in civil tort litigation, primarily in the areas of product, construction and premises liability. Leet received her J.D. from Samford University Cumberland School of Law and her B.S. from Texas A&M University. She is actively involved in the legal community, maintaining alumni relations as co-president of the Atlanta Area Cumberland Law School Alumni and having served on the board of the Georgia Association for Women Lawyers. Leet graduated from the 2011 YLD Leadership Academy and has served on the YLD Board of Directors and as a Northern District representative. She also enjoys her work in the community with Habitat for Humanity and Hands On Atlanta, a United Way service organization.



Immediate Past President: Darrell Sutton practices law in Marietta, where he and his firm, Sutton Law Group, represent employers, insurers, self-insured companies and third-party administrators in Georgia workers' compensation claims. A native Georgian, Sutton received his J.D. from Mercer University School of Law and his B.S. from Berry College. In addition to his service as YLD immediate past-president, Sutton has served as YLD president, president-elect, treasurer, secretary and newsletter co-editor, and he is a graduate of the YLD Leadership Academy. He also is a past president of the Cobb County Bar Association YLD, has been a trustee of the Cobb County Bar Association since 2007, and is the current Cobb County Bar Association treasurer.



The YLD Review Co-Editor: Yari D. Lawson is a partner in Lawson and Raines, LLP, in Lawrenceville. A native of Eatonton, Lawson is a graduate of Morehouse College in Atlanta. He received his J.D. from the University of Arkansas School of Law. Lawson focuses his practice on criminal defense and business law for small and mid-sized companies. Before going into private practice, he served as an assistant public defender in the Macon Judicial Circuit and as assistant district

YLD Directors & Representatives

Board of Directors

Josh Bosin, Atlanta
Alex Brown, Evans
Kelly Campanella, Atlanta
Will Davis, Marietta
Sean Ditzel, Atlanta
Jana Edmondson-Cooper, Macon
Brandon Elijah, Augusta
Rachel Fields, Savannah
Elizabeth Fite, Atlanta
Bert Hummel, Marietta
Trinity Hundredmark, Duluth
Anne Kaufold-Wiggins, Atlanta
Sarah Kjellin, Albany
Tiffany Mallory, Augusta
Quentin Marlin, Savannah
John O'Neal, Stockbridge

Martina Palatto, Duluth
Ed Piasta, Atlanta
Kristie Piasta, Atlanta
Jonathan Poole, Atlanta
Patrick Powell, Brunswick
Teddy Reese, Columbus
Heather Riggs, Atlanta
Brantley Rowlen, Atlanta
Aimee Sanders, Augusta
Ryals Stone, Atlanta
Zack Tumlin, Dahlonga
Amy Walters, Columbus
Matt Wilkins, Marietta
Katie Willett, Alpharetta
Rachel Wilson, Savannah

Representatives

Northern

2013-15
Alex Barnett, Atlanta
H. Joseph Colette, Atlanta
Sean Ditzel, Atlanta
Mandy Moyer, Canton
Kevin Patrick, Atlanta

2014-16
Philip Catalano, Atlanta
Sutton Connelly, Summerville
Jake Evans, Atlanta
Will Fagan, Atlanta
ShaMiracle Johnson, Atlanta

Middle

2013-15
Valerie Cochran, Colquitt
Kimberlee Hillard, Macon
Alyssa Peters, Macon
John Weltin, Macon
Sarah White, Macon

2014-16
Terri Benton, Macon
Ryan English, Warner Robins
Elicia Hargrove, Milledgeville
Je'Nita Lane, Albany
Elizabeth Pool, Jackson

Southern

2013-15
J. Stephen Albright, Savannah
Amanda Heath, Augusta
Titus Nichols, Augusta
Daniel O'Connor, Vidalia
Aimee Pickett Sanders, Augusta

2014-16
Melissa Cruthirds, St. Simons Island
Lacey Houghton, St. Simons Island
Zach Howard, Savannah
Garon Muller, Augusta
Carson Penney, Savannah

Out-of-State

2014-15
Melissa King, Tupelo, Miss.
Shena King, Richmond, Va.

Members-at-Large

2014-15
L'Erin Barnes, Atlanta
Nicholas Bedford, Atlanta
John Boyd, Decatur
Janene Browder, Covington
Tiffany A. Coleman, Macon
Dustin Davies, Gainesville
André Dennis, Atlanta
Jennifer Fleeman, Atlanta
David Hayes, Atlanta
Sarah Madden, Atlanta
Candice McKinley, Decatur
Jessica Sabbath, Atlanta

attorney in the Fulton County District Attorney's Office. Lawson is a graduate of the Leadership Academy and has served on the YLD Executive Council and Board of Directors. He was past instructor for the Women's Economic Development Agency and is on the Board of Directors for Willie Dean Ministries, Inc.



The YLD Review Co-Editor: Rizza O'Connor is the chief magistrate judge of Toombs County. She presides over small civil claims, dispossessories, criminal warrant application hearings and the issuance of arrest and search warrants. Prior to being appointed chief magistrate judge, she was an assistant district attorney with the Middle Judicial Circuit. A native of Savannah, O'Connor is a "double bear" having received her J.D. and B.B.A. from Mercer University. She lives in Vidalia with her husband, Daniel, also a young lawyer, and their son, Judson.

The YLD at the 2014 State Bar Annual Meeting



1



2



3



4

1. YLD President Sharri Edenfield is sworn in by her uncle, U.S. District Court Judge Avant Edenfield, while surrounded by her family at the YLD Dinner and Swearing-In Ceremony sponsored by Kevin Patrick for YLD Secretary and Alex Brown for YLD Secretary. (L-R) Sharon Edenfield, mother; Sharri Edenfield; Gerald Edenfield, father; Martha Lammey, aunt; Kristie Piasta, sister; Jack Lammey, uncle; and U.S. Circuit Judge Avant Edenfield, Southern District of Georgia, uncle. 2. (L-R) Dave Baker and Court of Appeals of Georgia Judge Lisa Branch at the YLD/Pro Bono 5K Fun Run. 3. YLD past presidents attend the YLD Dinner. Back row (L-R) Darrell Sutton (2013-14), Josh Bell (2008-09), Kendall Butterworth (2001-02), Joe Dent (2000-01) and Jon Pannell (2012-13). Middle row (L-R) Amy Howell (2009-10), Stephanie Kirijan Cooper (2012-13), Laurel Landon (2004-05) and Donna Barwick (1988-89). Front row, seated (L-R) Damon Elmore (2005-06), Bill Barwick (1984-85) and Elena Kaplan (2007-08). 4. YLD Executive Council member Tiffany Mallory casts her vote at the YLD Pool Party and Meet the Candidates Reception. 5. Winners of the 2014 President's Cup Golf Tournament (L-R) Jeff Reeves, Alan Reeves, Je'Nita Lane and George Weaver.



5

Georgia Sends Nine Young Lawyers to Boston

by Mary K. McAfee

One of YLD President **Sharri Edenfield's** goals this Bar year is to increase the Georgia YLD presence on a national level. We are off to a good start as Georgia sent nine young lawyers to the American Bar Association's Annual Meeting, Aug. 7-10, in Boston, Mass. Per the ABA bylaws, Georgia is permitted to send up to seven delegates to its Midyear and Annual Meetings. In addition to our seven registered delegates, we were represented by an alternate delegate and the ABA's District 12 Representative who is also a Georgia young lawyer. Delegates participated in General Assembly meetings on Friday and Saturday where they heard lively debates and cast votes on topics such as allowing undocumented immigrants who have completed law school to sit for the Bar and practice law in their state. Another considered allowing the estate of an executed individual to bring suit on the innocence of that individual if new evidence is discovered that someone else, in fact, committed the crime. The delegates also passed a recommended Convention on Human Rights for

Children. Another resolution allowed duly licensed attorneys to practice pro bono work in a state where they are not barred. On Saturday, the ABA recognized affiliates for their hard work during the 2013-14 Bar year with their annual Awards of Achievement program. Under the leadership of **Darrell Sutton** and Newsletter Co-Editors **Crystal Conway** and **Will Davis**, *The YLD Review* received first place in the newsletter category.

If you are interested in representing Georgia as a delegate at future ABA meetings, please contact YLD Directors of ABA Involvement **Heather Riggs** at heather.riggs@meldyourmind.com or **Teddy Reese** at treese@gaappleseed.org.



YLD members representing Georgia at the ABA Annual Meeting. (L-R) Teddy Reese, Jennifer Mock, Heather Riggs, Jack Long, Darrell Sutton, Sharri Edenfield, Hope Revelle, Wick Cauthorn and Erika Robinson.



Yari Lawson, Editor
Rizza O'Connor, Editor
The YLD Review
104 Marietta St. NW
Suite 100
Atlanta, GA 30303

Presorted
Standard Mail
US Postage Paid
Atlanta, GA
Permit No. 1447



Editor's Block

He Said

by Yari D. Lawson

My career mentor, former U.S. Ambassador to The Gambia, George Haley, insisted to me that a lawyer always practiced with courage, integrity, professionalism, and above all, fidelity to the best interests of his or her client. I have constantly referred to Haley's generous wisdom in my early years in the practice of law. Undoubtedly, the demands on attorneys in the legal profession are dynamic and plenty. Beyond the enormous expectations of clients, attorneys must also balance the demands of partners, supervising attorneys, or the demands of running small and solo practices.

And then of course, there are demands imposed on attorneys by the Rules of Civil Procedure, Administrative Law, Uniform Court Rules and the Professional Rules of Conduct.

For many young lawyers, it is easy to accept that service to the Bar and to the Young Lawyers Division requires extra time that many simply are not able to find or to sacrifice. The day he swore me in to the practice of law, DeKalb County Superior Court Judge **Mark Anthony Scott** invited me to a judicial panel hosted at the State Bar of Georgia by the Gate City Bar Association. The youngest lawyer in attendance, I was immediately tapped for service when asked to write an article on the event for publication in the Gate City newsletter. I graciously accepted and my service within the legal profession began.

My participation in the YLD over the past five years has contributed to my personal growth. The relationships that I have formed with lawyers from all over Georgia, from different backgrounds, different practice areas and different ideologies, have served to strengthen my own practice and to allow me to be a source for someone in need seeking legal assistance. Also, my participation in the Young Lawyers Division is the single biggest contributor to my growth in confidence and leadership as a young lawyer.

When the YLD (formerly known as the Younger Lawyers Section) was initially created on May 31, 1947, the idea was to foster participation of young lawyers within the bar and to encourage those same young lawyers to offer service to the public in a capacity beyond their practices. As the YLD has evolved over the years, the devotion to service within the profession and to the public has been a mainstay that leaders of the organization have championed. The YLD's Signature Fundraiser, the Legal Food Frenzy in conjunction with Attorney General **Sam Olens** and the Public Interest Internship Program are just a few meaningful public service initiatives birthed from YLD leadership. This year, under the leadership of **Sharri Edenfield**, the YLD will introduce even more service-oriented efforts that will undoubtedly forge lasting impacts within the Bar and the broader community that lawyers serve.

The Georgia YLD boasts a proud legacy of promoting young lawyers into future leaders within the Bar and within the legal profession. To borrow a phrase from Immediate Past President **Darrell Sutton**, my sincerest wish would be that young lawyers "from Fort Gaines to Fort Gordon" would consider that ours is a profession greater than our own personal ambitions. Instead, ours is not only a profession entirely rooted in selfless devotion to service of the profession itself, but most humbly rooted in our devotion to service of those who need us the most.

She Said

by Rizza O'Connor

Looking back, I had no idea what it meant to be a lawyer prior to entering practice. Prior to and during law school, I heard a lot about the prestige of being a lawyer and also of the great responsibility a lawyer has to her community. While it is true that it is an honor to practice law and we do bear a great responsibility, what I have found in my few years of being a member of the Bar is that being a lawyer means being a problem solver. As an assistant district attorney in the Middle Judicial Circuit, during my first two years of practice, my job was essentially to seek a resolution on behalf of the state in response to the problem of crime.

Late last year, I became the chief magistrate judge of Toombs County, and it remains that problem solving is my job. While I no longer advocate on behalf of any party, my job is to resolve other people's problems in the context of a system of laws, regulations and ordinances which are not often understood by the parties who come before me, the vast majority of whom are pro se. My jurisdiction is limited to dispossessories, criminal warrant applications, garnishments, and small civil claims in largely rural Toombs County, which has a population of approximately 28,000. For example, a common dispute in my court is a bill from a mechanic or builder where the customer does not feel like they have been treated fairly. A large portion of our population have neither the resources nor the bargaining power to handle such matters on their own. In this way, mere nuisances for the affluent are major legal problems for many in our state. Magistrate courts are places where such "small" matters can be resolved.

In the YLD, young lawyers who work for all types of clients and seek to solve all types of problems meet and serve our state as a unified body. I believe a common denominator between all of us young attorneys is that we seek to be problem solvers in whatever field we may practice. Some work to resolve domestic issues and others disputes concerning intellectual property. Rarely, if ever, does anyone seek a legal remedy to a problem that is not important to them. Through a unified YLD and Bar, we can put together our collective knowledge of the diverse and important problems that our fellow citizens face so that we can understand and advocate for services and laws that serve to address the problems all citizens of our state face. Plus, of course, it is also fun to share war stories from different practices!

We are very fortunate to have such a thriving and active YLD. Under the leadership of President **Sharri Edenfield**, the legacy of strong service to the Bar and community will continue. There are many ways to become involved with the YLD through committees, affiliate organizations, service projects and our quarterly meetings. Through the YLD you will make lasting friendships, grow professionally, and serve the community all while having fun with your peers from across the state. I hope you will join us.



Editor's Block