

# YLD...In Brief

The Official Newsletter of the State Bar of New Mexico Young Lawyers Division

March 2014

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## YLD PROGRAM CHAIRS

VA Outreach: **Greg Gambill, Keya Koul**  
Serving Our Seniors: **Dayan Hochman, Tomas Garcia**  
Wills for Heroes: **Erin Atkins, Spencer Edelman,**  
**Greg Gambill, Joachim Marjon, Ken Stalter**  
Law Day Call-In Program: **Spencer Edelman, Ken Stalter**  
Law Day Essay Contest: **Robert Lara**  
Homeless Legal Clinics: **Donna Lynch**  
Constitution Day: **Erin Atkins, Sean FitzPatrick,**  
**Robert Lara, Joachim Marjon, Tim Scheiderer, Ken Stalter**  
YLD/UNM SOL Mentorship Program  
**Tomas Garcia, Ben Sherman**  
YLD/UNM SOL Speed Networking Program  
**Robert Lara, Ben Sherman**  
YLD/UNM SOL Mock Interview Program  
**Spencer Edelman, Tomas Garcia**  
Summer Fellowship Program  
**Tomas Garcia, Robert Lara, Ben Sherman**  
YLD In Brief: **Keya Koul**  
Judicial Brown Bag Luncheon Program, **Spencer Edelman**  
Bylaw Review Committee: **Tim Scheiderer, Ken Stalter**  
Interview Project: **Greg Gambill, Robert Lara**  
YLD CLE 2014 (Formerly Bridge the Gap)  
**Robert Lara, Ben Sherman**  
YLD CLE 2014 Annual Meeting: **Robert Lara, Ben Sherman**  
Next Steps Challenge: **Greg Gambill**  
Subgrant Proposal: **Sean FitzPatrick, Greg Gambill**

## Message from the YLD Chair...

By Benjamin I. Sherman



As any practicing attorney knows, being a young lawyer is a daunting and oftentimes overwhelming experience. From demanding hours and difficult clients (and bosses) to burnt nerves and butterflies, it is not for the faint of heart. At times, it can be an isolating experience. If you have ever spent a late night inside a lonely office with a half-written brief on the computer screen in front of you and an important deadline looming, you know exactly what I mean. It is times like these when we ask ourselves if we made the right choice, if our family and friends who are at home cooking dinner, spending time with their kids, or just enjoying a night out have figured out something that we somehow missed along the way.

Luckily for the young lawyers of New Mexico, you are not alone. In fact, there are more than 1,600 "young" lawyers practicing in this state. And all of you are connected by being members of the State Bar of New Mexico Young Lawyers Division. A "young" lawyer is defined as an attorney under the age of 36 or a lawyer in his or her first five years of practice. If you meet this criteria, congratulations! You are automatically a member of YLD without having to apply, join, or even pay dues. We know ... you need to repay those pesky student loans!

Perhaps you have already heard of YLD. Maybe you volunteered for a Wills for Heroes event, where you drafted wills and powers of attorney for first responders like police officers and firefighters. Maybe you participated in our popular UNMSOL/YLD Mentorship Program and had the chance to help a law student with his or her career goals. Or maybe you expressed your gratitude for the men and women who have served in the military by volunteering at the monthly VA clinics. Not the volunteering type? Perhaps you attended one of the many YLD social events and enjoyed networking and mingling with other young attorneys. Or perhaps you attended an interesting CLE and learned valuable practice skills. Or maybe, dare I say it, *maybe* you really don't care about the YLD and wish you would stop getting so many emails and invites. Whatever your experience with the YLD, one thing is certain: the YLD is here for YOU.

As the 2014 YLD chair, my goal is continue the strong tradition of high quality public service and membership projects that have been offered in the past, but with an eye on the future. And on top of that, I want it to be fun! If you have not yet had the chance to participate in a YLD event, I invite you to make 2014 the year you come out and give it a try. I promise you will not be disappointed. Whether you are looking for an opportunity to give back to the community, foster a new relationship, or learn a new skill, the YLD has something for you. If you are not sure what sorts of opportunities are available, you can always look in the *Bar Bulletin*, peruse your emails, ask a YLD board member, or call the State Bar. Remember, we want you to get involved!

Some of the exciting events that are planned for this year are Wills for Heroes, Serving Our Seniors, and the monthly VA clinics. As you can see, opportunities abound for young lawyers wanting to strengthen their ties to the community. If you have ever

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## Meet the Board



**Ben Sherman**  
Chair  
Director-At-Large, Position 4

**Ben Sherman** is the founder of Ben Sherman Law LLC, located in downtown Albuquerque. His practice is focused primarily on representing injured workers in workers' compensation cases and plaintiffs in personal injury cases. Prior to becoming a solo practitioner, he worked for the 2nd Judicial District Attorney's Office and for the legal department of the City of Albuquerque. He is a graduate of the University of New Mexico School of Law and has been practicing law in New Mexico for the past five years. A fluent Spanish-speaker, he enjoys representing people from all communities and truly appreciates New Mexico's diversity. In his free time, Sherman enjoys playing recreational soccer, participating in outdoor activities, listening to music, and spending time with his family and friends.



**Ken Stalter**  
Chair-elect  
Region 1 Director

**Ken Stalter** is an assistant district attorney with the 11th Judicial District Attorney's Office, Div. I, prosecuting a range of felony cases including homicides, sex crimes, and white-collar matters. As a board member of the Young Lawyers Division, he enjoys participating in the division's programming such as Law Day and Constitution Day. In particular, Stalter enjoys teaching fifth graders about the Constitution and finds their enthusiasm refreshing. In addition to his involvement with the YLD, he recently was appointed to the N.M. Supreme Court Committee on Rules of Criminal Procedure for the District Courts. In his spare time, he enjoys running, reading, and writing. He is a graduate of Cornell University and Harvard Law School.



**Spencer Edelman**  
Vice Chair  
Region 5 Director

**Spencer Edelman** is the YLD Region 5 representative and YLD Vice Chair for 2014. A 2009 graduate of the University of Arizona Law School, he currently is serving as the law clerk for U.S. Bankruptcy Judge David Thuma. After his clerkship ends, Edelman will return to his practice focusing on commercial litigation, creditors' rights, bankruptcy, and real estate at the Modrall Sperlberg Law Firm. In addition to his legal work, he remains committed to the YLD and YLD pro-bono service projects including Wills for Heroes and the Law Day Call-in Program, and is on the board of directors of Law Access New Mexico. In his spare time Edelman plays tennis regularly, cheers on the University of Arizona basketball team, and attends as many Isotopes baseball games as he can.



**Keya Koul**  
Immediate Past Chair

**Keya Koul** practices employment and civil rights law at the law firm of Brown and Gurulé. Koul received her B.A. from Smith College, her M.A. from University of California, Los Angeles, and her J.D. from Southwestern Law School. She is the 1st District Bar Commissioner on the Board of Bar Commissioners. Koul currently serves as chair of the State Bar's Committee on Diversity in the Legal Profession. She received a 2013-2014 American Bar Association Presidential Appointment to the Center for Racial and Ethnic Diversity. Koul also is a 2012-2014 ABA Real Property, Trust, and Estate Section Fellow. Koul was recently selected as a Finalist for the 2013-2014 ABA YLD National Outstanding Young Lawyer of the Year Award. In 2011, she was named the State Bar's Outstanding Young Lawyer of the Year. Koul loves learning foreign languages and traveling all around the world, especially to India, where her family is from originally.



**Sean M. FitzPatrick**  
Director-At-Large, Position 1

Born in Albuquerque but reared in upstate New York, **Sean FitzPatrick** returned to New Mexico to complete his undergraduate studies at the University of New Mexico. Fitness and nutrition are a big part of his life so while attending the UNM School of Law, he joined the Student Union Building Board and advocated for better food options and dining areas at the law school. He graduated in 2012 from law school with clinical honors and the Natural Resources Certificate. After graduating, he started work as a prosecutor for the 11th Judicial District Attorney's Office prosecuting misdemeanor and felony domestic violence cases. Outside of work, he enjoys being at Lake Powell (along the Utah/Arizona border) with family, exercising, or playing games of strategy and chance.

## Meet the Board



**Tomas J. Garcia**  
Director-At-Large, Position 2

**Tomas J. Garcia** serves as YLD Director-at-Large position 2. He is an associate at Modrall Sperling in Albuquerque and practices commercial and natural resources litigation. Garcia previously served as law clerk to Justice Charles W. Daniels of the New Mexico Supreme Court. He has participated in several YLD projects since joining the State Bar in 2011, including serving as an attorney mentor for the YLD/University of New Mexico School of Law Mentorship Program; participating in the Mock Interviews Program for students at the UNM School of Law; and drafting wills for emergency first responders and their families at Wills for Heroes events. An Albuquerque native, Garcia received his law degree from the Georgetown University Law Center, his master's degree in Public Policy from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, and his bachelor's degree in Political Science from Yale University.



**Dayan Hochman**  
Director-At-Large, Position 3

**Dayan Hochman** graduated from the University of New Mexico School of Law in 2011, where she was the recipient of the Carlos J. Vigil Award for academic excellence and commitment to the provision of legal services to indigent Latinos and other disadvantaged populations throughout the state. After law school, she worked for Judge Sarah Singleton at the 1st Judicial District Court as a law clerk and bailiff. Hochman now is an associate attorney at the Archibeque Law Firm in Albuquerque, and practices primarily in insurance defense. She is licensed to practice in federal District Court for the state and the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals. Hochman is the current president of the Women's Bar Association of New Mexico and is a member of the State Bar's Committee on Women and the Legal Profession. She also is actively involved in the N.M. Defense Lawyers Association and the ABA Young Lawyers Division.



**Robert Lara**  
Director-At-Large, Position 5

**Robert Lara** works to bring people, projects, and pesos together through the use of the law and politics. He was hired recently as counsel to the Office of Commissioner Karen L. Montoya at the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission. His legal practice focuses on administrative, regulatory, and election law. Lara originally is from El Paso, Texas, and is a 2007 graduate of the University of New Mexico School of Law, where he received the Dean's Award for Service to the Law School. He has worked on a variety of high-profile political campaigns and currently is General Counsel for the Democratic Party of New Mexico. In addition, Lara is a member of the Board of Directors of the: New Mexico Hispanic Bar Association, Phi Alpha Delta Law Fraternity International, and the State Bar Animal Law Section. He has been on the YLD Board since 2012.



**Joachim Marjon**  
Region 2 Director

**Joachim Biagi Marjon** grew up in the North Valley of Albuquerque and graduated from the University of New Mexico School of Law in 2009. After being admitted to the State Bar in September 2009, he was fortunate to practice at the Public Defender's office in Santa Fe, where he worked until he started his private practice in August 2012. Marjon focuses on civil rights, criminal defense, and personal injury cases. His office is at 311 Montezuma Ave. in Santa Fe, just a few doors west of the 1st Judicial District Court House. Marjon aims to build camaraderie among the Bar members in Northern New Mexico while providing volunteer services to our communities. He urges anyone interested in community service projects to contact him at [jmarjon@gmail.com](mailto:jmarjon@gmail.com). Marjon is an avid runner and is improving his mountain biking and snowboarding skills.



**Tim Scheiderer**  
Region 3 Director

**Tim Scheiderer** is the newly appointed Region 3 director, covering the 5th and 9th Judicial Districts. For more than a year, he has served as an Assistant District Attorney in Roswell for the 5th Judicial District, primarily prosecuting DWI and domestic violence cases. A native of Northern California, Scheiderer received his undergraduate degree in Political Science from the University of California, Los Angeles, in 2008, and his law degree from Valparaiso University School of Law in 2011. Prior to coming to the 5th Judicial District Attorney's Office, he served as an analyst for the Voters and Elections Committee and the Labor and Human Resources Committee of the New Mexico House of Representatives, where he received his first introduction to New Mexican cuisine. Food hasn't been the same since. In January, Scheiderer also began a two-year term on the board of the State Bar's Prosecutors Section.

## Meet the Board



**Erinna Marie Atkins**  
Region 4 Director

**Erinna Marie “Erin” Atkins** is an attorney in Alamogordo. She practices law with her father and mentor, S. Bert Atkins. She specializes in criminal defense and children’s law. Atkins currently maintains a busy practice serving in private, state, and city-appointed public defender and indigent defense cases while serving as the guardian ad litem for Children, Youth and Families Department cases. For the past three years, Atkins has served as treasurer of the 12th Judicial District Bar Association and recently was elected co-president. She also serves: as vice-chair of the Legal Education Committee for the Legal Studies Programs at NMSU-Alamogordo, on the New Mexico Commission for Community Volunteerism, and on the board of a non-profit organization. On weekends, she volunteers with a girls’ youth organization doing community service. Atkins is a 2009 graduate of the University of New Mexico School of Law.



**Greg Gambill**  
ABA YLD District 23  
Representative

**Greg Gambill** is an attorney in the Albuquerque office of Montgomery & Andrews, P.A. His practice is focused on healthcare, commercial, and professional liability matters. His healthcare practice is a mixture of transactional, regulatory compliance, and litigation work. Gambill is the district representative for New Mexico and Arizona in the ABA Young Lawyers Division. His community activities include participation in the Leadership New Mexico Connect Class of 2013-2014, the Albuquerque Community Foundation Future Fund, and the state’s Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners. Gambill is a native of St. Louis, and he received his law degree with honors from the University of Illinois College of Law in 2008. He received his bachelor’s degree from the University of Washington in Seattle in 2001. Prior to becoming a lawyer, Gambill was a member of the Smokey Bear Hotshot Crew in Ruidoso.

## Message from the Chair *continued from cover*

volunteered for such an event in the past you know how rewarding it is, and we thank you for your time and commitment. We realize we can’t do it without you! Unfortunately, young lawyers don’t always have the opportunity to see, first-hand, the positive results of their labor. However, volunteering with YLD can change that. The community is always extremely appreciative of the young attorneys who have volunteered their time to draft wills, explain legal rights and benefits, and offer a much-needed helping hand. If you have not yet had the opportunity to volunteer for a public service event put on by YLD, come out and see how rewarding it can be. And you don’t have to feel like you are unprepared because we provide all the tools and training you need.

YLD also has enjoyed a historically close relationship with the University of New Mexico School of Law and offers many different programs aimed at helping law students transition from the classroom to the courtroom. This past fall, YLD hosted the first “open house” at the State Bar to help law students get to know the building, network with involved lawyers, and feel comfortable using State Bar resources. We also hosted the popular annual Speed Networking event, which gave law students the opportunity to practice their networking skills with actual attorneys in a relaxed environment. A few weeks ago, many young lawyers participated in the YLD Mock Interview Program, which gave law students the chance to practice their interview skills in front of real attorneys before hitting the job market. The annual UNMSOL/YLD Mentorship Program is going strong this year, with more than 150 mentors and mentees participating. Again, the opportunities are endless. But don’t take our word for it, come out and see for yourself. Hanging out with law students is fun and they really appreciate your advice.

The young lawyers of New Mexico also are fortunate to be well-represented nationally in the American Bar Association YLD. In February, Board members Keya Koul and Day Hochman, along with young lawyer Mary Modrich-Alvarado, attended the ABA YLD midyear conference in Chicago on behalf of the N.M. YLD. The conference was a huge success and New Mexico was proud to honor and support Keya Koul as she received recognition for being a finalist for the prestigious ABA YLD National Outstanding Young Lawyer Award. We are looking forward to the ABA YLD spring conference in Pittsburgh and will be sending two more delegates. If you are interested in getting involved on a national level, please contact YLD Board members Greg Gambill or Keya Koul and they will happily explain what opportunities await.

Of course, none of this would be possible without the tireless effort and support of the entire YLD board. The current board members are Keya Koul, Greg Gambill, Ken Stalter, Spencer Edelman, Sean FitzPatrick, Tomas Garcia, Day Hochman, Robert Lara, Joachim Marjon, Tim Scheiderer, and Erin Atkins. Each one of them is committed to serving the young lawyers of New Mexico and the amount of time and energy they have spent toward this purpose is amazing. I am honored and humbled to lead this fantastic group of individuals, and I am positive that 2014 will be a great year.

Please ask questions! For more information about YLD and how to get involved, please visit the YLD website at <http://www.nmbar.org/AboutSBNM/YLD/YLD.html> or contact Ben Sherman at [ben@benshermanlaw.com](mailto:ben@benshermanlaw.com).