

# YLD...In Brief

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

December 2011

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## YLD PROGRAM CHAIRS

Bridge the Gap 2011-  
**Martha Chicoski and Samantha Hults**  
Law Day Call-in Programs 2011 -  
**Albuquerque: Keya Koul**  
**Las Cruces: David Lutz**  
**Roswell: Jared Kallunki**  
Homeless Legal Clinic-  
**Albuquerque: Laurel Nesbitt**  
**Las Cruces: Steven Almanza**  
**Santa Fe: Donna Lynch**  
*In Brief*- **Martha Chicoski**  
Junior Judges (began in 2006)-  
**Albuquerque: Martha Chicoski**  
**Santa Fe/Northern New Mexico: Tina Cruz**  
**and Hans Erickson**  
7th Judicial District: **Matt Page**  
Rio Rancho: **Cristina Adams and Tina Cruz**  
YLD/UNM Law Mock Interview Program-  
**Martha Chicoski**  
Summer Fellowship Program (began in 2005)-  
**Samantha Hults**  
UNM Law/YLD Mentorship Program-  
**Keya Koul and Ben Sherman**  
Wills for Heroes (began in 2008)-  
**Albuquerque: Samantha Hults and Ben Sherman**  
Speed Networking -**Keya Koul**  
Voices Against Violence (began in 2009)-  
**Albuquerque: Keya Koul, Matt Page,**  
**and Martha Chicoski**  
Serving our Seniors (began in 2011)-  
**Statewide: Roxanna Chacon**  
Bar Exam Preparation-  
**Cristina Adams, Ben Sherman and Tina Cruz**

## Greetings from the Chair

by *Ernestina R. Cruz*



By definition, I am no longer a young lawyer. While I will not disclose my age, I will concede that that I am over 36 years old and I, likewise, have surpassed the years of experience requirement to hold myself out as a “young lawyer”. Why then am I the Chair of the State Bar of New Mexico’s Young Lawyers Division? Pursuant to a provision of our bylaws, a board member who is voted into an officer position is allowed to remain a member of the Board and serve in a leadership position. While I initially thought I would “age out” gracefully, this organization administers many important programs that I was eager to continue my work with the group (even though I was the resident viejita).

This year the YLD has worked on numerous projects. Volunteers prepared wills for first responders through the Wills for Heroes program. In May, we organized a “Law Day Call-In” at various locations throughout the state. We also coordinated projects involving the University of New Mexico School of Law including the Mock Interview, Mentorship, Speed Networking, and Bar Preparation programs. The YLD hosted statewide Brown Bag lunches with Justice Edward Chavez as the guest speaker. Additionally, we dedicated our attention to this year’s ABA YLD public service project, Serving our Seniors. Through this program, volunteer attorneys provided legal assistance to the low-income senior citizen population in New Mexico. Finally, this past month, the YLD organized a continuing education program known as Bridge the Gap.

In an effort to map out our goals for 2012, the YLD Board attended a retreat in Las Cruces in September. The group participated

in various team building exercises that helped foster a sense of unity among our Board. More importantly, while in Las Cruces, we participated in a Serving our Seniors project. While at the Munson Senior Citizens Center, the YLD, through a strong contingent of volunteers, prepared estate planning documents for 19 senior citizens within four hours. It was an uplifting experience to have a direct impact on the lives of individuals who otherwise believed they could not have these important documents drafted because it was cost prohibitive for them.

As I end my term as the Chair of the YLD, I want to thank the Board, Program Chairs, and Section Liaisons for their diligent work on behalf of the organization. There is one Board member who deserves special recognition. Martha Chicoski, the Immediate Past Chair, has been a standout contributor to the YLD for years. Her presence on the Board will be missed! I would also like to thank the State Bar of New Mexico staff for helping make this year a success. Joe Conte and Christine Morganti, in particular, have been instrumental in ensuring that our organization was provided with the support needed to advance our programs and objectives. Finally, thank you to Jessica Perez, this year’s State Bar President, and the members of the Board of Bar Commissioners. Without the financial backing provided by the BBC it would be a virtual impossibility for the YLD to sustain its presence as one of the leading public service organizations in the New Mexico legal community.

In 2012, the YLD will be led by an amazing group of young lawyers, including Samantha Hults (Chair), Keya Koul (Chair-Elect) and Ben Sherman (Vice-Chair). These individuals are hardworking, talented, and dedicated to the cause of providing young lawyers with the support they need during the formative years of their legal career. In 2012, the public service

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# Fall Conference Recap: Sunny in Seattle

by Keya Koul

The weeks leading up to the 2011 ABA YLD Fall Conference showed rain, rain, and more rain in the Emerald City. However, just as all of the conference attendees arrived, the Seattle sun shone a bright light on the amazing city. For the first time, the CLE programming began on Thursday afternoon for those who arrived early, and included “Getting It In: Internet-Based Evidence” and “A Lesson in Ethics – A Young Lawyer’s Guide to Ethical Behavior”. Thursday evening started with the traditional First Time Attendee Orientation and continued on with the Welcome Reception at Pnk Ultra Lounge.



The Friday morning plenary session keynote address by Tammy M. Kudialis, Director of the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law’s (UDM’s) Project SALUTE, was nothing short of inspirational. The address entitled “Educating and Encouraging Young Lawyers to get Involved in Helping Veterans” informed the conference attendees about the ABA YLD and UDM partnership during the 2011-2012 bar year. The ABA YLD will implement Project Salute: Young Lawyers Serving Veterans as this year’s public service project. Volunteer attorneys will educate veterans as to their available VA benefits and will assist them in obtaining those benefits.

The launch of Project Salute: Young Lawyers Serving Veterans took place at the Pike Market Senior Center. With the help of the UDM Project SALUTE team, which included Ms. Kudialis, her parents, and several UDM law students, ABA YLD volunteer attorneys who had received both their VA accreditation and the requisite training assisted veterans with the VA benefits process. The launch gave YLD leaders from all of the country an opportunity to witness first hand how this public service project should be implemented in their own home states.

After the Friday morning CLE sessions, which included topics ranging from Diversity in the Profession to Using the Internet Ethically and Intelligently, the sold-out ticketed luncheon focused on Insights from In-House Counsel Superstars. These superstars were David Byers, Director, Corporate Counsel, Licensing & Franchising at Starbucks, Steve Crown, Vice President and Deputy General

Counsel at Microsoft Corporation, and Melissa Matthews, Assistant General Counsel of the Seattle Mariners.

The Friday night sold out Fall Gala took place at the Experience Music Project. Attendees had free range of the interactive music, science fiction, and pop culture museum. Exhibits included multimedia information and artifacts from Avatar, Jimi Hendrix, and Nirvana. Partygoers enjoyed dinner, drinks, and dancing to a live band. Nocturnal types followed the Seattle sounds to the late night karaoke after party.

Saturday morning began with a combined breakfast and affiliate showcase. The conference CLE programming continued with “The Devastating Cross Examination”, “On Camera: Tools and Techniques for an Effective Video Deposition”, and “Speed Negotiation”. Other CLEs included “Creating a Place for Diversity in the Legal Profession” and “How to Find, Meet, and Acquire New Clients”. The highly attended CLE – “Divergent Paths to the Bench: Can the Path Less-Traveled Make all the Difference?” – was a part of the YLD Career Development Initiative and brought several members of the judiciary together to share their distinct and unique career path experiences with the young lawyers in the audience.

ABA YLD Chair Michael Bergmann launched the +3 Pledge at the Fall Conference. The idea behind this initiative is to utilize leaders within the division to recruit three new members to the ABA YLD this year. He also recognized the following individuals as Stars of the Quarter: Kari Petrsek, Erica Grinde, Bobbi-Sue Doyle-Hazar, Melissa Bernheim, Dainen Penta, and Francine Bailey.

The Closing Program celebrated the success of the Fall Conference in Seattle and heralded the upcoming Midyear Meeting in New Orleans with Mardi Gras masks, beads, and music.

For those conference attendees that decided to stay Saturday night and continue to enjoy Seattle, the Seattle Host Committee organized a Dine Around Town which gave several options of local restaurants to enjoy including famed Seattle chef Tom Douglas’ Dahlia Lounge.

## Greetings From the Chair *continued from the cover*

project for the organization is the ABA YLD’s Project Salute. Through this program, YLD members will work to educate veterans on available benefits and assist them with obtaining these benefits. I invite you to participate in this program and the many others that are administered by the YLD.

On behalf of the YLD, thank you to everyone who volunteered, supported, and contributed to our organization in 2011. Have a blessed Holiday season!

# Serving Our Seniors Public Service Program

by Roxanna Chacon

On September 16, 2011, the Young Lawyers Division held the third Serving Our Seniors event in New Mexico at the City of Las Cruces' Munson Senior Center. Members of the YLD Board of Directors as well as local attorneys from Las Cruces and El Paso assisted approximately 19 seniors with their estate planning needs.



## SERVING OUR SENIORS

create basic estate plans, including powers of attorney for healthcare and property, and simple wills. The October 2010 event in Santa Fe was the official nationwide kick-off for the program. To date, the program has been implemented in a number of states across the country reaching thousands of low-income seniors.

The first Serving Our Seniors event was held in October of 2010 in Santa Fe in conjunction with the American Bar Association's Young Lawyers Division's Fall Conference. The second event was held in July in conjunction with the State Bar of New Mexico's Annual Meeting-Bench and Bar Conference.

The Serving Our Seniors program is the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division's public service project for the 2010-2011 bar year. The program was created to help protect America's senior population and provide them with peace of mind regarding future healthcare and financial decisions. Many seniors face these important decisions without the ability to hire legal counsel to

The New Mexico YLD received assistance with the estate planning forms from New Mexico Legal Aid, Senior Citizens' Law Office, the State Bar's Lawyer Referral for the Elderly program and Roswell attorney, Dustin Hunter. Without their assistance, implementation of the program in New Mexico would not have been possible. In addition, the YLD wishes to acknowledge the volunteer attorneys and paralegals who have given their time and assisted during each of the events. Without your assistance, the legal needs of one of our most vulnerable and unrepresented populations would go unmet. Look for upcoming events in your area and volunteer for this very important public service project.

## 2011 Inspire/Aspire Dinner

On December 8, 2011, YLD hosted its second annual Inspire/Aspire Dinner, which recognizes past leaders whose contributions helped shape YLD. Among the attendees at Yanni's were: Chief Justice Charles Daniels and Randi McGinn; SBNM 2012 President Hans Voss; SBNM 2012 Vice-President Erika Anderson; SBNM 2012 Secretary/Treasurer and Immediate Past Chair of YLD Martha Chicoski; SBNM Executive Director Joe Conte; and many of the YLD current and 2012-elected Board members.



(Back from L-R) David Lutz; YLD Chair Tina Cruz; Mary Alvarado; Ben Sherman; Chief Justice Charles Daniels; SBNM 2012 President Hans Voss; SBNM 2012 Vice-President Erika Anderson; Trent Howell; Christine Morganti; Matt Page and SBNM Executive Director Joe Conte; (Front from L-R) YLD 2012 Chair-Elect Keya Koul; YLD 2012 Chair Samantha Hults; YLD Immediate Past Chair and SBNM 2012 Secretary/Treasurer Martha Chicoski



YLD 2012 Chair-Elect Keya Koul; SBNM Executive Director Joe Conte; and incoming YLD Board member Robert Lara at the Inspire/Aspire Dinner





*YLD Board Members (L-R) Ben Sherman; Chair Tina Cruz; Samantha Hults; Keya Koul; Immediate Past Chair Martha Chicoski; Mary Alvarado at November reception for new admittees*



*New admittees to the NM Bar at reception*



*YLD member Jennifer Anderson and UNM SOL student at YLD/ UNM SOL Mentorship Program reception*



*YLD Board Member Matt Page; ABA/YLD Chair Michael Bergmann; NM YLD 2012 Chair Samantha Hults; NM YLD 2012 Chair-Elect Keya Koul at the ABA Annual Meeting in Toronto*

## Law Day Video Contest

The YLD invites students in grades 9-12 to participate in the 2nd Annual Law Day Video Contest sponsored by the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division, the Division for Public Education, the Standing Committee on Judicial Independence, and the State Bar of New Mexico Young Lawyers Division. This program provides a wonderful opportunity for students to learn about our legal system, get creative and win an educational trip to Washington, D.C. The theme for the 2012 Law Day Video Contest is "No Courts, No Justice, No Freedom." Students would be expected to submit a three minute video by Feb. 15, 2012.

More detail about the Law Day Video Contest can be found at the following links:  
[www.ambar.org/lawday](http://www.ambar.org/lawday) or on Facebook by searching for ABA YLD Law Day Video Contest.

If you have questions or comments, please contact  
 Matt Page, ABA Law Day Video Contest N.M. Committee,  
 at [mateopage@hotmail.com](mailto:mateopage@hotmail.com) or 505-401-3442.