YLD...In Brief

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

December 2013

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YLD CLE 2013: Greg Gambill Law Day Call-in Programs 2013: Spencer Edelman; Jared Kullunki; Mary Modrich-Alvarado; Ken Stalter Law Day Essay Contest: Robert Lara In Brief: Samantha Hults YLD/UNM SOL Outreach Programs: Spencer Edelman; Samantha Hults; Robert Lara; Mary Modrich-Alvarado; Matt Page; Ben Sherman Wills for Heroes: Greg Gambill; Spencer Edelman; Joachim Marjon; Ben Sherman; Ken Stalter Homeless Legal Clinic: Steven Almanza: **Donna Lynch; Laurel Nesbitt** Serving our Seniors: Spencer Edelman; Greg Gambill; Joachim Marjon; Matt Page Project Salute: Young Lawyers Serving Veterans: Greg Gambill; Joachim Marjon;

Mary Modrich-Alvarado

Judicial Brown Bag Luncheon Program: Ken Stalter

Message from the YLD Chair...

By Keya Koul



s the end of the year approaches, I am afforded the opportunity to reflect back on the many accomplishments of the State Bar of New Mexico Young Lawyers Division. In 2013, the YLD continued to make great strides in the areas of public service and diversity, and its efforts did not go unrecognized.

The flagship public service initiative this year was the implementation of the Veterans Civil Justice Legal Initiative, a true collaboration between YLD, the New Mexico Veterans Affairs Health Care System, and community stakeholders throughout

the state. A very heartfelt thanks to Jennifer Broomfield, a licensed social worker, lawyer, and Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist at NMVAHCS, who approached the YLD in the fall of 2012 and who, through her commitment and dedication, made this clinic a reality. Through this initiative, free monthly civil legal services clinics for veterans are held the second Tuesday of every month from 9 a.m.-12 p.m. at the VA Medical Center. The outpouring of support has been astounding. Attorney, law student, and paralegal volunteers staff the clinic each month. If the veteran's legal issue cannot be resolved through an advice and counsel session with a volunteer attorney, then our wonderful partners at the Volunteer Attorney Program take over and coordinate pro bono representation for the veteran. I am happy to report that several of our attorney volunteers have taken on pro bono representation of cases.

The unique component of this clinic is the involvement of social workers and other case managers from the VA that provide much needed assistance in effectively handling the wide range of psychosocial issues that the veterans face. Community partners such as the Department of Veterans Services and Goodwill also staff the clinics. The first clinic was in June, and since then, the clinic has served several hundred veterans. The SBNM Paralegal Division is an integral partner in this public service project. YLD would not be able to do all of the public service work that it does throughout the state without the dedicated members of the Paralegal Division that continue to volunteer in great numbers. A special thanks to this year's Paralegal Division Chair Krista Gianes and to Paralegal Division member Linda Murphy for their tireless efforts in coordinating and rallying volunteers for all of the YLD public service projects, but especially for their work at the veterans clinics. YLD received a subgrant award from the American Bar Association YLD this year for the veterans' clinics. The clinics will continue to be held monthly and are always in need of volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering, please email me at keyakoul@gmail.com.

In an effort to improve diversity in the legal profession and in the pipeline to the legal profession, the YLD held a Leadership Forum back in January. The outcome of this event is what I hope will be a long lasting collaboration between YLD, the New Mexico Hispanic Bar Association, the New Mexico Black Lawyers Association, the New Mexico Women's Bar Association, the New Mexico Indian Bar Association, and the New Mexico LGBT Bar Association. Leaders from all of these amazing organizations worked together to improve communication and collaboration between the respective groups. To that end, a signature and first of its kind event was held this year—Dancing with the Bar: A Celebration of Diversity—that provided all of the organizations and their members an opportunity to share their projects and programs and to network with other diverse attorneys. The work of this group continues.

Veterans' Civil Justice Initiative

By Greg Gambill

n the fall of 2012, Jennifer Broomfield, a licensed social worker, lawyer, and Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist at the New Mexico Veterans Affairs Health Care System, approached the State Bar of New Mexico YLD to explore how to expand the *pro bono* civil legal services available to military veterans from the bar and legal service providers from around the state, and partner with other community stakeholders to address clinical recovery and community integration when delivering legal services.

The partnering resulted in the creation of the Veterans' Civil Justice Initiative, which offers veterans a broad range of veteranspecific and non-veteran-specific civil legal services through a series of monthly clinics and periodic workshops. The VCJI holds monthly clinics on the second Tuesday of every month from 8:30 a.m. to noon at the NMVAHCS center in Albuquerque. Each

clinic is designed to be staffed by at least 12 attorneys, paralegals, law students, social workers, and other stakeholders. With this initiative, the community has expanded legal services to military



Jim Martin, volunteer attorney



Amanda Pagan, volunteer attorney



Pictured from left, Camila Lopez, NMVAHCS; Jennifer Broomfield, NMVAHCS; Felipe Quintano, NM Legal Aid; Jeff George, NM Dept. of Veterans Services; Niva Lind, volunteer attorney; Jane Zhi, NM Legal Aid and Volunteer Attorney Program; Dorielle Paul, law student, UNM School of Law; Jim Martin, volunteer attorney; Vic Carlin, volunteer attorney

veterans in a big way and improved the quality of legal services the bar provides to our nation's veterans in New Mexico.

Planning meetings have built a foundation for the clinic's long-term success. The objective of the planning meetings was to determine how to educate volunteer attorneys about the legal issues, and how to connect with and consult military veterans who also may be suffering from mental health and other psychosocial issues. The partners in this initiative have learned that one of the primary obstacles to recovery and community integration of our military veterans is a lack of justice attendant to unaddressed legal issues. Training volunteer attorneys to properly consult with military veterans is an important part of the initiative, and a number of free training resources have been developed for use by clinic volunteers to encourage participation.

The VCJI is always on the lookout for new volunteers—so what are you waiting for? The relative amount of time and effort required to make a positive impact for a veteran faced with a civil legal issue is small. For more information about the project, or to get involved, please contact:

Jennifer Broomfield: Jennifer.Broomfield3@va.gov

Keya Koul: keyakoul@gmail.com

Greg Gambill: ggambill@montand.com

Greg Gambill is a voting member of the SBNM YLD board and is also the 2012–2014 ABA YLD district representative for New Mexico and Arizona. Greg is attorney with the firm Montgomery & Andrews. His practice is oriented towards litigation of healthcare and commercial matters, and includes transactional, regulatory, and litigation work.



Jennifer Broomfield and Niva Lind

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Veterans Civil Justice Legal Initiative

Civil legal issues are a major barrier to clinical recovery and community integration of our nation's veterans.

Your help is needed!

Clinic dates: Dec. 10, Jan. 14, Feb. 11, March 11, April 8, May 13, June 10, July 8, Aug. 12, Sept. 9, Oct. 14, Nov. 11

Please contact Greg Gambill at ggambill@montand.com or Keya Koul at keyakoul@gmail.com to volunteer.





Message from the YLD Chair... Continued from cover

Early next year, the group will meet to discuss additional networking events, a diverse speaker series, and other collaboration. YLD's efforts in developing diverse leaders on a local, state, and national level were recognized by the ABA YLD when it was selected as the Runner Up of the ABA YLD Next Steps Challenge, a program that aims to increase diversity in the legal profession and in the pipeline to the legal profession.

In addition to the veterans' clinics and the diversity initiative, YLD continues to work diligently to implement public service and member service projects throughout the state. YLD coordinated Constitution Day, Wills for Heroes, and the Law Day Essay Contest. The UNM School of Law and YLD once again successfully prepared the future generations of attorneys through the Mock Interview, Mentorship, and Speed Networking programs.

My involvement with the YLD has been life-changing. It has allowed me to work on two things that I am extremely passionate about: public service and diversity. YLD offers every attorney the opportunity to volunteer in whatever way he or she can through a variety of public and member service projects. As attorneys we have the responsibility to give back to our communities. The way in which one does that can be tailored to one's availability and expertise. There is no excuse to not give back. The possibilities are endless. I am always available to discuss both long-term and microvolunteering opportunities. Diversity in the legal profession is an ongoing struggle. There is a lot of work to do. In New Mexico, we have a unique perspective and one that enriches our experience. This is something that can be developed and enhanced to improve diversity in the legal profession and in the pipeline to the legal profession. Most of all, without YLD, I would have never

met, learned from, and collaborated with some of the most amazing people, who I am so blessed to call my friends. I will continue to work on public service and diversity efforts. I want to be a resource for attorneys who are interested in getting involved on a local, state, and national level. Please do not hesitate to contact me.

I am only one person, and the work of YLD is not possible without a group effort. Thank you to all of the volunteers who made the public and member service projects possible. Thank you to SBNM staff, especially D.D. Wolohan, Julie Schwartz, Tony Horvat, and Evann Kleinschmidt, without whom YLD could not function. Thank you to the YLD Board for all of the time and energy it has put into the organization's success. Specifically, I would like to thank Jared Kallunki and Matt Page for their amazing service, and wish them both all the best in their future endeavors. Next, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Past-Chair Samantha Hults, who has provided incredible support to me this year and whose hard work and dedication for this organization over the years have made it what it is today. Also, major kudos to ABA YLD District Representative Greg Gambill for his enthusiasm, energy, and commitment to the work of YLD. Many thanks to Vice Chair Ken Stalter for his effective and dynamic involvement and leadership. Finally, special thanks to Chair-Elect Ben Sherman for all of his outstanding efforts on behalf of YLD. Ben will be chair in 2014. As a young lawyer who opened his own firm almost two years ago, Ben brings an extremely important and relevant perspective to YLD. I know that he will be enormously successful in leading this organization, and I wish him all the best.

Keya Koul is an Associate at the Brown Law Firm specializing in employment and civil rights law.

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Constitution Day and the Annual Retreat

By Ben Sherman

n Thursday, Sept. 12, 2013, board members of the Young Lawyers Division packed up hundreds of copies of the U.S. Constitution and traveled to Alamogordo and Tularosa to participate in Constitution Day and hold its annual retreat. After spending last year's Constitution Day up north teaching children in Taos and Questa, the YLD Board wanted to serve another area of New Mexico. The YLD Board selected Alamogordo and Tularosa as the destination for its service project this year to serve the southern part of the state while fostering closer ties to the young lawyers that live and work in the area.

Early Friday morning, YLD board members drove to Tularosa to teach 5th graders about the importance of the Constitution and the many rights and freedoms it contains. Each student received a pocket-sized Constitution to keep. Despite monsoon-like conditions and lack of adequate umbrellas, the volunteers were excited to begin teaching and split up into groups of one or two attorneys to reach out to 15 different classrooms. After a delicious traditional New Mexican lunch, YLD members packed up their remaining Constitutions and focused their teaching efforts in the classrooms of Alamogordo. Overall, the YLD Board was greatly impressed with the tough questions asked by the students, and everyone agreed that they thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

On Friday night, board members attended a wonderful dinner at The Lodge in Cloudcroft, where they shared ideas and reviewed future plans while enjoying each other's company. Despite the relentless rainfall, the YLD Board "roughed it out" and ventured back down the mountain into Alamogordo for

some good old-fashioned fun and networking at the German Air Force Base Oktoberfest. Despite the mud, fun was had by all, and it was a great opportunity to develop and strengthen friendships (and dance to techno music, apparently). As always, the YLD Board is committed to providing networking opportunities to young lawyers all across the state, and hopes to continue to host events outside of Albuquerque.

The next morning, members held their official board meeting. During the meeting, the Board approved the 2014 budget and elected its officers for 2014: I was selected to serve as YLD Chair, Ken Stalter was elected to serve as Chair-Elect, and Spencer Edelman was elected to serve as Vice-Chair. The Board also discussed and planned many upcoming volunteer and public service events for young lawyers, including the monthly Veteran's Free Legal Clinics, Wills for Heroes, the YLD/UNMSOL mentorship program, Serving our Seniors, Mock Interviews, and Speed Networking for law students. All in all, it was a very successful meeting, with plenty of positive energy and fresh new ideas.

Following the board meeting, everyone said their goodbyes before driving home to mark the end of another fun and productive Constitution Day and YLD retreat.

Ben Sherman is the current Chair-Elect of the Young Lawyers Division and the owner of Ben Sherman Law LLC, in Albuquerque. His practice is focused primarily on representing injured workers in workers' compensation cases and plaintiffs in personal injury cases. He looks forward to serving as Chair of the Young Lawyers Division in 2014.



Matt Page and Spencer Edelman teach Tularosa students about the Constitution.



Ben Sherman teaching about the Bill of Rights.





Ken Stalter and Jared Kallunki teach Alamogordo students about the Constitution.



Robert Lara and Erin Atkins answer students' questions in Alamogordo.



2013 Board Retreat Meeting: (top row) Spencer Edelman, Erin Atkins, Robert Lara, Jared Kallunki; (bottom row) Matt Page, Keya Koul, Ben Sherman, Joachim Marjon, and Ken Stalter.



Ben Sherman and Keya Koul at the 2013 YLD Retreat Dinner at the Lodge in Cloudcroft.

ABA YLD Fall Conference

By Mary Modrich-Alvarado and Erinna Atkins



Keya Koul, Erin Atkins, Mary Modrich-Alvarado, and Greg Gambill at the ABA/YLD Fall Conference Dinner/Dance Reception

he American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division jointly held its Fall Conference with the ABA Law Practice Division at the Arizona Biltmore in Phoenix, Oct. 10-12. The joint conference allowed for YLD members to explore and learn about the Law Practice Division. Its mission is to investigate, evaluate, develop, and disseminate information and techniques that will make the legal services delivery team more effective, competent, ethical, and responsive to the needs of clients and the public.

Attending on behalf of the State Bar of New Mexico YLD were Chair Keya Koul and Board members Mary Modrich-Alvarado, Erinna Atkins, and Greg Gambill.

The conference began Thursday morning with a meeting of the ABA YLD Council. Much of the business of the ABA YLD that comes up between the ABA's Annual Meeting in August and Midyear Meeting in February is conducted here. Gambill is a member of the Council because of his appointment as the 2012-2014 ABA YLD district representative for New Mexico and Arizona, District 23. The role of the district representative is to communicate to the council the public service and member service activities of the YLD groups, or affiliates, in his or her respective district (District 23 has four, one in New Mexico and three in Arizona), and to bring to bear resources from the ABA YLD to affiliates in need of assistance with their projects.

A reception Thursday evening for first-time attendees gave new attendees the opportunity to meet with and get to know their ABA YLD Council members. An orientation to the services provided by the ABA YLD to its members followed the reception. Atkins participated as a first-time attendee. Many CLE programs were

offered throughout the conference including a CLE on the division's 2013-2014 public service project, which is focused on ending the bullying epidemic. "Bullyproof: Young Lawyers Educating and Empowering to End Bullying" is a comprehensive initiative that provides education and resources to help empower parents, educators, students, and young lawyers to make bullying a thing of the past. Thursday night the group attended dinner with several ABA YLD members from across the U.S., and then traveled to a reception at the Wrigley mansion, where members networked and mingled.

On Friday, Modrich-Alvarado participated in the first service project for "Bullyprooof," which was informative and interactive. For more information about "Bullyproof: Young Lawyers Educating and Empowering to End Bullying" and how you may participate, visit http://www.americanbar.org/groups/young_lawyers/initiatives/anti_bullying_initiative.html.

After attending a day's worth of breakout CLEs, the SBNM YLD board members attended a cocktail reception followed by a banquet dinner on Friday night, which was a joint event with the YLD and the Law Practice Group. There was a lovely meal along with a live band and dancing.

Saturday morning offered a networking breakfast, and more CLEs including "Thinking Outside the Box: Putting Your Law Degree to Work Outside of Law Firms," "Hot Topics in Native American and Indigenous Law," "Where Worlds Collide: Ethics and Technology," and the closing session, "Making Good Choices in Tough Times." The American Bar Endowment also offered one-on-one financial planning sessions throughout the conference.

The next meeting of the ABA YLD will be Feb. 6-8, 2014, at the Swissotel, during the ABA's Mid-year Meeting in Chicago. YLD members interested in attending should contact Gambill at ggambill@montand.com.

Mary Modrich-Alvarado serves as the director-at-large, position 5, on the YLD board. She is an attorney in the Tax and Finance Unit at the Navajo Nation Department of Justice in Window Rock, Ariz., where advises and works with departments, programs, and committees on legal issues focusing on tax, finance, and litigation. She currently serves as an appointee to the ABA YLD The Affiliate Newsletter Team as an assistant editor.

Erinna M. "Erin" Atkins is an attorney in Alamogordo, where she practices law with her father, S. Bert Atkins. She specializes in criminal defense and family law and serves as a Guardian ad Litem for the 12th Judicial District in CYFD abuse and neglect cases. Atkins graduated from the UNM School of Law in May 2009.

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YLD/UNM School of Law Mentorship Program

By Ben Sherman

he kickoff event to the 2013-2014 YLD/UNM School of Law mentorship program took place on the back patio of the School of Law on Oct. 17. The event was a huge success, with more than 100 law students



and attorneys in attendance. Fun was had by all who participated, as attorneys and their assigned law students met for the first time in a casual atmosphere complete with BBQ, music, and served drinks. Thanks to a generous donation from the Criminal Law Section, drinks were flowing for the event, and mentor/mentee pairs stayed well into the evening, networking and sharing stories. In total, 150 individuals signed up for mentorship program this year, making it one of the largest in the program's history!

In today's tough legal job market, it is more crucial than ever to foster relationships between students and attorneys. The annual YLD/UNM School of Law mentorship program is an excellent opportunity for law students to be paired up with attorneys who have similar career interests. In the past, law students have greatly benefitted from the relationships (mentoring, of course!) that are created through the program, and this year is no exception. Outside of the periodic social events put on by the Young Lawyers Division, participating law students and attorneys are encouraged to grab coffee or lunch, attend depositions, attend court, exchange career ideas, and really develop a relationship in which the law student feels that he or she can approach the assigned attorney for guidance.

As we all know, law school is great, but it does not always provide reallife answers to career questions and questions about the practice of law. The YLD/UNM School of Law mentorship program creates a fun and relaxed

atmosphere for students and attorneys to get to know one another outside of the traditional office setting. In the past, attorneys have offered summer jobs to law students they met during the mentorship program, some of which have even turned into full-time associate positions following graduation.

The YLD held a social gathering for mentors and mentees on Nov. 14, at Nob Hill Bar and Grill. Free food and drinks were provided courtesy of the Criminal Law Section and Ben Sherman Law LLC. A large number of mentor and mentee pairs attended and took advantage of this great opportunity to catch up and have fun. If you are interested in participating in this program but have not yet done so, please consider volunteering your time and mentoring a law student next school year. The law student will greatly appreciate it, and so will you!

Ben Sherman is the current Chair-Elect of the Young Lawyers Division and the owner of Ben Sherman Law LLC, in Albuquerque. His practice is focused primarily on representing injured workers in workers' compensation cases and plaintiffs in personal injury cases. He looks forward to serving as Chair of the Young Lawyers Division in 2014.

National Youth Leadership Forum on Law and CSI

aisy Astorga is a junior at Atrisco Heritage Academy High School. She is a model student, holds down a part-time job, and plays on the varsity soccer team. Despite enjoying her busy time in Albuquerque, she was looking to do something more during her summer vacation. In spring 2013, she reached out to the YLD and some state bar sections seeking assistance so that she could attend the National Youth Leadership Forum on Law and CSI hosted by George Mason University in Washington, D.C. After meeting this precocious young lady, the YLD agreed to provide her a scholarship to help her cover the expense of the conference.

Over the course of six action-packed days Daisy learned about the legal process with



Daisy Astorga attending the National Youth Leadership Forum on Law and CSI, hosted by George Mason University in Washington, D.C.

a focus on forensics. The speakers were nationally renowned, the facilities were first rate, and the materials were challenging. When she returned, Daisy was inspired to continue to pursue her goal of becoming a criminal lawyer.

This story highlights the importance the YLD places on promoting diversity within the legal profession and, specifically, promoting diversity in the pipeline, not just amongst law schools. This past year the ABA Young Lawyers Division rewarded the New Mexico YLD with a grant to continue to promote the diversity of the legal profession through its Next Steps Challenge. In addition to this broad effort involving a coalition of groups, the YLD has helped further one individual's goal.

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Wills for Heroes

By Spencer Edelman

very year, tens of thousands of New Mexicans converge upon the State Fairgrounds in Albuquerque to compete, learn, play, and shop at the State Fair. And every year, members of the New Mexico State Police come from all over New Mexico to ensure that everyone at the fair has a good, safe time. This year the Young Lawyers Division and Paralegal Division combined efforts to put on a Wills for Heroes event at the fair to reach some of the members of the State Police who were in Albuquerque serving all of us.

Wills for Heroes is a program that provides wills and other estate planning documents for qualified first responders. The program originated after 9/11, when Anthony Hayes asked what lawyers could do to help in response to the terrorist attack. He quickly identified a crucial need, in that very few of the first responders who selflessly responded to the attack had any estate planning documents. Following those first efforts to provide pro bono services to New York's first responders, the program was expanded to help police, firefighters, and EMTs around the country. Wills for Heroes has been growing in New Mexico for the past several years. One of the best things about the program is that lawyers with no experience in drafting wills or

estate planning documents can guide first responders through a few simple questions, and the first responders can leave that day with a will in hand.

YLD has put on numerous Wills for Heroes events in and around Albuquerque and Santa
Fe in the past several years, but there have been very few events in rural New Mexico. YLD identified the State Fair as a great way to reach out to some of our first responders from rural areas, and it was a success! With the invaluable assistance

of Sabrina Garza at EXPO New Mexico, YLD held their first ever outdoors Wills for Heroes event. We were stationed in a large tent right next to the State Police headquarters, and the visibility brought in several walk-in clients. YLD will build on this effort and be back to draft more wills and estate planning documents next year.

Spencer Edelman is an associate at the Modrall Sperling Law Firm. His practice focuses on commercial litigation with an emphasis on representing creditors and other non-debtor parties in bankruptcy. He is vice chair of Law Access New Mexico and, in his spare time, is an avid tennis player. He also loves throwing tennis balls for his miniature dachshund to retrieve. He looks forward to serving as the Vice Chair of the YLD Board in 2014.

Upcoming YLD Events

Dec. 7: YLD Board Meeting at the State Bar Center

Dec. 13: Monthly ABA/ YLD Free Career Advice Webinar, Top Traits for Success on the Job

Dec. 14: ABA/FEMA Disaster Legal Assistance Program meeting at the State Bar Center

Dec. 14: YLD Wills for Heroes event in Artesia

Jan. 10: Monthly ABA/ YLD Free Career Advice Webinar, Motivating your Supervisors to Give It to You Straight

Feb. 6-8: 2014 ABA/ YLD Midyear Meeting in Chicago

Feb. 14: Monthly ABA/ YLD Free Career Advice Webinar, Alternative Careers: One Degree Plenty of Latitude

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