



State Bar of New Mexico
Young Lawyers Division

YLD *in brief*

SPRING
2021

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

YLD BOARD

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Jessica Perez, Vice Chair

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Director-At-Large, Position 4, **Lindsay Kyle Cutler**
Director-At-Large, Position 5, **Stephen Ralph**
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Region 3 Director, **Vacant**
Region 4 Director, **Devon Aragon Martinez**
Region 5 Director, **Jessica A. Perez**
Allison H. Block-Chavez, **Past Chair & ABA Delegate**

YLD LIAISONS

Appellate Practice: **Randy Taylor**
Bankruptcy Law: **Ashley Cook**
Cannabis Law: **Sean FitzPatrick**
Employment & Labor Law: **Laura Unklesbay**
Family Law: **Lauren Riley**
Health Law: **Alison Goodwin**
Indian Law: **Dominique Oliver**
NREEL: **Melanie McNett**
Prosecutors: **Joseph Johnson V**
RPTE: **Beverly Edelman**
Trial Practice: **Kaleb Brooks**
Contact Shasta Inman for info on liaison vacancies!

2020 PROGRAM CO-CHAIRS

Ask-A-Lawyer Call-In
Mariah Mumm, Damon Hudson
Constitution Day
Mariah Mumm
Wellness/#Fit2Practice
Lindsay Cutler
Judicial Clerkship Program
Allison Block-Chavez, Shasta Inman
Law Day Essay Contest
Stephen Ralph
Lunch with Judges
Breanna Contreras, Evan Cochnar
Networking Events
Evan Cochnar
SBNM is Hear Podcasts
Allison Block-Chavez
Membership Outreach/Social Media
Jessica Perez, Lauren Riley
Summer Fellowship Program
Stephen Ralph
Summer Law Camp
Devon Aragon Martinez
UNMSOL Mentorship & Programs
Jessica Perez
Legal Clinics (incl. Veterans)
Lindsay Cutler
Wills for Heroes
Damon Hudson
Service Project in Outlying Areas
Allison Block-Chavez
FEMA/Emergency Services
Lauren Riley
Diversity Collaboration
Jessica Perez
ABA YLD Regional Conference
Shasta Inman, Lauren Riley



Message from the YLD Chair

This message is not going to start with, “I hope you are doing well and staying safe in these unprecedented times.” However, I do sincerely hope that you are doing so, and the YLD Board is here to help. The YLD continues to be committed to implementing public service projects for the broader New Mexico community and providing programming, outreach, and support to our members—particularly during these unprecedented times.

Here’s what you can expect over the next year:

Wills for Heroes – In prior years, volunteer attorneys and paralegals have crammed into the multipurpose rooms of community libraries and department buildings to provide simple estate planning documents to dozens of first responders on a single Saturday. Our upcoming events will look a little different as we restrict the numbers of volunteers and first responders to maintain social distancing and follow other COVID-safe practices. Utilizing numerous conference rooms, personal protective equipment, plexiglass dividers and computer projectors, the YLD will be back to providing this essential service in the coming months!

Legal Clinics – the Veterans Legal Clinic is back up and running (virtually)! In partnership with the Veterans Justice Outreach Program, the YLD coordinates volunteer attorneys to provide brief legal advice on a variety of civil legal topics during free quarterly clinics. The next Veterans Legal Teleclinic is scheduled for June 1.

Ask-A-Lawyer Call-In Program – the YLD is gearing up for a repeat of its successful October 2020 distance-based call-in program event. Scheduled for May 1, Ask-A-Lawyer Call-In allows New Mexico residents from across the state to receive brief free legal advice on a variety of topics, including employment law, divorce & child support, landlord/tenant issues, personal injury, estate planning, real estate and more! Like our Wills for Heroes events, call-in program volunteers in prior years gathered together in large conference rooms set up with rows of tables and desk phones. Now, to maintain COVID-safe practices, the program is coordinated by an in-person skeleton crew sending out phone call connections to volunteer attorneys stationed in their own homes or offices. We hope to have a second program in 2021, sometime in the fall.

#Fit2Practice – Our 2021 events will focus on three main areas: physical fitness, wellness & mental health, and law school debt. Recognizing that “Zoom fatigue” is a continued struggle more than 12 months into a global pandemic, the YLD hopes to help get you out of your desk chairs by coordinating socially-distant outdoor events and “challenges,” as well as virtual (but off-camera) wellness programming. For those of you (like me), who remain gravitated to your desks, chair yoga sessions can help with relaxation, grounding, and flexibility (both mental and physical!). On the law school debt side, the YLD recognizes that student debt issues are a significant concern for most young lawyers (and law students), even with the continued COVID-related relief measures. The #Fit2Practice subcommittee has plans for educational programming to help address some of those stressors.

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Meet the Board



Shasta N. Inman

Chair

Director-at-Large, Position 2

Shasta N. Inman is in solo practice, working primarily in children's law, contested custody, and adult guardianships in counties throughout Central New Mexico. She earned her law degree and a Master of Arts in Gender & Women's Studies from the University of Arizona, James E. Rogers College of Law in December 2015, after receiving a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Nebraska – Lincoln (Go Big Red!). She is a prior board member of the Children's Law & Elder Law sections. In addition to her service on the SBNM YLD board, Shasta currently serves as a Vice Director for the ABA YLD Diversity & Inclusion Team, is a YLD Liaison to the ABA Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity Commission, and assists on a variety of other ABA teams.



Mariah Mumm

Chair-elect

Region 1 Director

Mariah Mumm serves as the chair elect and the Region 1 director of the Young Lawyers Division of the State Bar of New Mexico. She is the senior staff attorney for the Eleventh Judicial District and Magistrate Courts. Mumm graduated from American University, Washington College of Law in 2016. After graduation she moved to Farmington to pursue her legal career in the Southwest. Prior to her employment with the Eleventh Judicial District and Magistrate Courts, she worked as an assistant district attorney in San Juan County. Mumm appreciates the continued opportunities provided by the Young Lawyers Division to serve her community and the State of New Mexico.



Jessica A. Perez

Vice Chair

Region 5 Director

Jessica Perez serves as the Region 5 director and this year's vice-chair on the New Mexico Young Lawyers Division. She is a graduate of UNM School of Law and currently works as an assistant district attorney in the 13th Judicial District in the Sandoval County office. There she prosecutes a variety of felony cases, manages the review of expungement cases, handles extradition cases, as well serves as the Children's Court attorney handling a variety of juvenile delinquency cases. More than anything else, she is happy to be part of the Young Lawyers Division as the program chair for the mentorship program with UNM School of Law as she hopes to guide and inspire law students and new lawyers to get involved and give back to the legal community just as she was during her time in school. In her spare time, she enjoys playing video games and scrolling through Pinterest for crochet project ideas.



Damon Hudson

Director-At-Large, Position 1

Damon Hudson recently joined the YLD Board of Directors as a director-at-large. He is an associate attorney at The Jones Firm in Santa Fe, practicing primarily in medical malpractice, employment law and estate planning. Hudson obtained his BBA and MPA from the University of New Mexico, and his law degree from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He chairs the Wills for Heroes program and is a co-chair for the Ask-A-Lawyer Call in Day. In his free time, he enjoys woodworking, gardening, reading, hiking and eating copious amounts of green chile.



Evan Cochnar

Director-At-Large, Position 3

Evan Cochnar serves as YLD director-at-large position 3, having previously served on the YLD board as Region 1 director. He is a graduate of the University of New Mexico and Syracuse University College of Law. He currently works as a senior litigation manager at New Mexico State Risk Management Division, Legal Bureau. His experience also includes extensive work in criminal prosecution, working as an assistant district attorney in the Second Judicial District Attorney's Office, and in Farmington at the Eleventh Judicial District Attorney's Office. He has also worked at the United States Attorneys' Office for the District of New Mexico and in the United States Senate for Senator Jeff Bingaman. In his free time, Cochnar enjoys running, traveling, theater, and adventures.

Meet the Board



Lindsay Cutler

Director-At-Large, Position 4

Lindsay Cutler has been a member of the YLD Board of Directors since 2019. Cutler works for the New Mexico Center on Law & Poverty as an attorney on the Economic Equity team, where she started as a fellow in 2017. Cutler practices consumer and housing law and engages in multifaceted legal work, including litigation, administrative advocacy and policy reform.

Cutler is a graduate of the University of Mary Washington and UCLA School of Law. Following her undergraduate degree, Cutler worked for the Laguna Pueblo and Albuquerque Public Schools fostering access and increasing opportunities for families to engage in their children's education. During law school, Cutler was an editor on the UCLA Law Review and the Indigenous Peoples' Journal of Law, Culture & Resistance.



Stephen Ralph

Director-At-Large, Position 5

Stephen Ralph currently serves as director-at-large, Position 5. He is currently employed as a senior trial attorney at the Bernalillo County District Attorney's Office, in Albuquerque. Ralph has previously served as a law clerk for the New Mexico Supreme Court and an Assistant District Attorney in Clovis. He graduated from the UNM School of Law in 2015. Ralph recently completed an MBA from the University of Northern Colorado and is currently pursuing an LLM in taxation from Washington University School of Law in St. Louis. Ralph is an active member of Toastmasters International and serves as the Club Growth Director for District 23 of Toastmasters International. Ralph has earned the Distinguished Toastmaster award, the highest award in Toastmasters International. Stephen is a Life Member of the National Eagle Scout Association, and a member of the National Association of District Attorneys, the Federalist Society, and the National Association of Parliamentarians.



Breanna Contreras

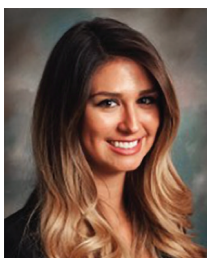
Region 2 Director

Breanna Contreras is an intellectual property, commercial litigation and employment litigation attorney with Bardacke Allison LLP in Santa Fe. In the IP arena, she represents a variety of clients in the United States and overseas in brand strategy, IP enforcement, copyright and trademark registration and maintenance, and licensing in the technology, literary, arts, music, and film industries. Contreras also regularly handles complex commercial and employment disputes on behalf of both plaintiffs and defendants. Contreras was named a Rising Star by *Super Lawyers* four years in a row-2018-2021, an accolade reserved to only the top 2.5% of attorneys in the Southwest. She is a proud graduate of UNM Anderson School of Management '10, and Notre Dame Law School '13, where she was privileged to learn from now-Justice Amy Coney Barrett.

Vacant

Region 3 Director

Apply now for Region 3 Director (covering the Fifth & Ninth Judicial Districts). *All young lawyers whose principal place of practice is in the designated region are eligible. The appointment is for a one-year term, with the opportunity to run and be re-elected during the October 2021 election cycle. Contact Shasta Inman if you are interested in serving!*



Devon Aragon Martinez

Region 4 Director

Devon Aragon Martinez serves as the Region 4 director. She is an assistant district attorney in the Third Judicial District, where she handles a wide range of felony cases. As a Mora, N.M. native and UNMSOL graduate, Martinez understands the importance of community and giving back. During her time at UNMSOL, Martinez served as the vice president of community affairs for MALSA, a student, mentor for incoming 1L students, and moot court coach for the Marshall-Brennan Project. Most recently, Martinez served as a mock trial coach for the prosecution during law camp and presented to local law enforcement about trial preparation.

Meet the Board



Allison Block-Chavez
Immediate Past Chair

Allison Block-Chavez, is a partner and attorney at Aldridge, Hammar & Wexler, PA, in Albuquerque, where her law practice focuses on fiduciary services, adult guardianships and conservatorships, estate planning, probate matters, real estate, and creditors' rights. Allison graduated from the UNM School of Law and served as the judicial law clerk for Chief Judge Michael E. Vigil of the New Mexico Court of Appeals. She currently serves as Second Judicial District Commissioner to the State Bar of New Mexico's Board of Bar Commissioners and as New Mexico's young lawyer delegate to the American Bar Association's House of Delegates.



Lauren Riley
ABA District 23 Representative

Lauren Riley practices family law at Batley Family Law, P.A. in Albuquerque. Riley earned her B.A. in Social Work from Colorado State University and is a graduate of UNM School of Law. She practices in all aspects of family law including divorce, custody, child support, kinship-guardian and divorce modification.

Riley currently serves as the American Bar Association's Young Lawyers Division district representative for New Mexico and Arizona. She also serves as a mentor to UNM law students and is actively involved with UNM School of Law. Riley is also on the board of Wesley Kids Early Education Center.

Message from the YLD Chair *continued from page 1*

ABA YLD Mountain West States Regional Summit – this regional summit was last in New Mexico in 2017, when young lawyer and law student affiliates from Mountain West states joined NM YLD in Albuquerque. Like prior meetings, the 2021 Regional Summit will be an informative conference with CLE offerings, a public service project, and opportunities for attendees to engage in social activities to strengthen the bonds between the young lawyer and law student communities in the greater Mountain West area. The 6th Annual Regional Summit, scheduled for April 2020 in Lake Tahoe, Nev. was canceled due to COVID-19, but we tentatively hope to see everyone in person in Santa Fe this November! More details forthcoming.

Law Student Support – In a regular (read: non-virtual) year, the YLD partners with the UNM School of Law for numerous law-student support programming, including a robust mentorship program and a mock interview event. But having those programs virtually this year saved costs, and the YLD was additionally privileged to be able to give money to the UNM law students' mental health services and emergency funds, and provide grocery gift cards to students in need. Law school is hard and it is stressful enough without having to do it during a global pandemic! Our UNMSOL Programming subcommittee continues to maintain connections with the law school students and staff, fielding suggestions on how we can further support our future young lawyer members.

Please feel free to reach out at any time with comments, concerns, questions or suggestions at shasta.inman@gmail.com.

Best,
Shasta N. Inman, YLD Chair