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2017 PROGRAM CHAIRS

2017 Regional ABA Conference,

Tomas Garcia and Billy Jimenez

Annual Public Service Project for Outlying Areas, **Spencer Edelman**

CLE at Annual Meeting—Bench & Bar Conference, **Robert Lara**

Constitution Day, **Kaitlyn Luck and Anna Rains**

Diversity Collaboration, **Allison Block-Chavez**

Homeless Legal Clinics, **Kaitlyn Luck**

Interview Program, **Erin Atkins**

Lunch with Judges Program, **Tomas Garcia and Billy Jimenez**

Law Camp, **Billy Jimenez and Sonia Russo**

Law Day Call-in, **Erin Atkins and Anna Rains**

Seniors Estate Planning, **Allison Block-Chavez**

State Bar Student Essay Contest,

Darin McDougall and Evan Cochnar

Summer Fellowship Program, **Robert Lara**

Veteran's Clinic, **Sean FitzPatrick and Spencer Edelman**

Wills for Heroes, **Sonia Russo and Evan Cochnar**

YLD CLE, **Tomas Garcia and Spencer Edelman**

YLD/UNM School of Law Mentorship Program, Mock Interviews

and Open House, **Sean FitzPatrick and Darin McDougall**

YLD In Brief, **Spencer Edelman**



Message from the YLD Chair

It's my honor to serve as the 2017 chair of the State Bar of New Mexico Young Lawyers Division. As the public service arm of the State Bar, the YLD provides valuable legal services to our community. Moreover, the YLD provides opportunities for our members to network, gain professional development and foster camaraderie and collegiality. 2017 promises to be an exciting year for the YLD, and I want to personally invite you to participate in a YLD program this year—whether as a volunteer at one of our public service projects, as a mentor for a student at the University of New Mexico School of Law, as a student in a CLE course or as an attendee at one of our many networking events.

All members of the State Bar who are 36 years old or younger or who have been practicing for five years or less are members of the YLD. The YLD offers members numerous ways to engage with the community. We provide services to emergency first responders statewide through our ever-growing Wills for Heroes program. For the last three years, we have provided free legal advice to veterans through the Veterans' Civil Justice Initiative, a partnership between the YLD, the Veterans' Administration, the City of Albuquerque, the New Mexico Veteran's Memorial and the Paralegal Division of the State Bar. We promote civics education in elementary, middle and high schools across New Mexico through our Constitution Day program and the State Bar Student Essay Contest. And, in conjunction with the University of New Mexico School of Law, we provide guidance and professional development opportunities to today's law students—and tomorrow's young lawyers—through our Mentorship and Mock Interview programs. We will continue to offer and expand these services in 2017 thanks to the hard work and commitment of your elected board members from across the state and your volunteer efforts.

I look forward to offering new services to our members in 2017. Among them, the YLD will offer a Lunch with Judges Program to provide young lawyers with the opportunity to meet and interact with members of the New Mexico judiciary. Additionally, March 30–April 1, we will host the third-annual American Bar Association YLD Mountain West States Regional Summit at Hotel Albuquerque with the young lawyer entities of our neighboring states. The regional summit will provide educational programming focused on issues of relevance to law practice—particularly for new lawyers—in the mountain west region (Colorado, Texas, Utah and Wyoming). Stay tuned for announcements about upcoming YLD programs in the *Bar Bulletin* and by email.

My participation in the YLD has enriched my experience as a New Mexico lawyer. I encourage your involvement in the State Bar and the YLD as a way to serve the community, provide pro bono legal services, enhance your network and have fun! You will find the rewards of your participation to be well worth your time. I look forward to a great year serving as YLD chair. If you have any questions about the YLD, our programs or simply want to know how to get involved, please don't hesitate to reach out to me by email (tomas.garcia@modrall.com) or telephone (505-848-1892).

Sincerely,
Tomas Garcia

Meet the Board



Tomas J. Garcia
Chair
Director-at-Large, Position 2

Tomas J. Garcia is the chair of the Young Lawyers Division. He is a litigation associate at Modrall Sperlring in Albuquerque, where he practices in the areas of commercial, healthcare, torts/personal injury and transportation law. Garcia was named “Young Lawyer of the Year” by the New Mexico Defense Lawyers Association in 2015 and he was chosen as one of the “40 Under Forty” top business professionals by *Albuquerque Business First* in 2016. Before joining Modrall Sperlring, Garcia clerked for Justice Charles W. Daniels of the New Mexico Supreme Court. Garcia is a fellow of the ABA Business Law Section and, as a participant in the ABA’s Diverse Leaders Academy, he serves on the ABA Litigation Section’s Diversity and Inclusion Committee. An Albuquerque native, Garcia received his law degree from Georgetown University Law Center, his master’s degree from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and his bachelor’s degree from Yale University.



Sean FitzPatrick
Chair-elect
Director-at-Large, Position 3

Sean FitzPatrick, a graduate of the University of New Mexico School of Law, practices primarily civil plaintiff litigation in Albuquerque. FitzPatrick previously worked as a prosecutor in Farmington, litigating a variety of felony and misdemeanor cases. FitzPatrick continues to serve in many of the Young Lawyer Division programs as either a member or as co-chair of the program and is the current YLD chair-elect. Outside of work, FitzPatrick can be found running, biking or participating in other Type 2 Fun activities.



Sonia Raichur Russo
Vice Chair
Director-at-Large, Position 4

Sonia Raichur Russo is an assistant district attorney in the Second Judicial District Attorney’s Office in Albuquerque prosecuting felony violent crimes. She currently serves as a vice chair of the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division Criminal Justice Committee and is on the ABA YLD’s Disaster Legal Services team. ABA President Linda Klein appointed Russo to serve on the Standing Committee on Gun Violence from 2016 to 2018. In New Mexico, Russo co-chairs the Wills for Heroes project, which provides wills to law enforcement officers and first responders, and looks forward to planning more networking events for the YLD and focusing on the YLD’s membership services. Russo earned her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Brown University and her law degree from Boston College Law School. At her law school commencement ceremony, Russo was awarded the Susan Grant Demarais Award for Excellence in Clinical Work for her work as a student attorney in the BC Law Prosecution Clinic. Her interests include travel, tennis and myriad visual and performing arts.



Allison Block-Chavez
Director-at-Large, Position 1
ABA House of Delegates Representative

Allison Block-Chavez, is an associate attorney at Aldridge, Hammar, Wexler & Bradley, PA, where her law practice focuses on real estate, business transactions, creditors’ rights, adult guardianships and conservatorships, estate planning and probate matters. Block-Chavez graduated from the University of New Mexico 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 on the board for the Elder Law Section, is the co-chair of the ABA YLD Real Property, Trust and Estate Committee and is a delegate to the ABA House of Delegates.

Meet the Board



Robert Lara Jr.

Director-at-Large, Position 5

Robert Lara is an associate attorney for Roybal-Mack & Cordova, PC. His practice focuses on family law, civil litigation, election law and property law throughout southern New Mexico. Along with his service on the YLD board, Lara is an officer for the New Mexico Statewide Alumni Chapter of Phi Alpha Delta Law Fraternity International and the Treasurer for the Democratic Party of New Mexico. Lara is a 2007 graduate of the University of New Mexico School of Law. When not in the office, he can be found advocating for the New Mexico Dachshund Rescue Association, peddling his bike in a triathlon or on the nearest dance floor.



Evan Cochnar

Region 1 Director
11th Judicial District

Evan Cochnar is originally from California. He earned his Bachelor of Arts in political science and history from the University of New Mexico and his law degree from Syracuse University College of Law. He is an assistant district attorney in the 11th Judicial District Attorney's Office prosecuting general adult felonies, including homicide and serious sexual offense cases. While attending law school, he interned at the Albuquerque City Attorney's Office as well as the U.S. Attorney's Office, District of New Mexico. As a YLD board member, he co-chairs the Wills for Heroes Program and the State Bar Student Essay Contest. His interests include travel, theater, film criticism and reading.



Kaitlyn A. Luck

Region 2 Director
First, Fourth, Eighth and 10th
judicial districts

Kaitlyn Luck is a Texas native who is now an assistant district attorney with the Eighth Judicial District Attorney in Taos where she prosecutes a variety of misdemeanor and felony crimes. She earned her Bachelor's degree from Texas State University and her law degree from Texas Tech University School of Law where she was published in and served as a comment editor on the *Texas Tech Administrative Law Journal*. Following graduation, Luck was admitted to the State Bar of New Mexico in September 2013 and began her practice with Martinez, Hart & Thompson, PC, in Albuquerque, as an associate in the area of personal injury and insurance litigation. She currently serves on the board of the State Bar Prosecutors Section and as a commissioner of the New Mexico Commission on Access to Justice. In her free time, she enjoys teaching snowboarding at Taos Ski Valley.



Anna C. Rains

Region 3 Director
Fifth and Ninth judicial districts

Anna Rains is a Hobbs native. She earned her Bachelor in Business Administration degree from New Mexico State University, her Masters of Science in Personal Financial Planning from Texas Tech University and her law degree from Texas Tech University School of Law. She is an associate at Sanders, Bruin, Coll & Worley PA in Roswell. Rains is a civil litigation attorney who primarily focuses her practice on family law and estate planning. She is also a small business owner in her local community. Rains is an active member of the Chaves County Bar Association, was the 2015 Chaves County Law Day Chair, participates in Big Brothers Big Sisters and is a 2014 Roswell Leadership graduate.

Meet the Board



Erinna "Erin" Marie Atkins
Region 4 Director
Third, Sixth and 12th judicial districts
and Sierra County

Erinna Atkins is an attorney in Alamogordo, where she practices law with her father, S. Bert Atkins. Specializing in criminal defense and children's law, she works in public defender and indigent defense cases in Otero County. She proudly serves as the Guardian ad Litem in abuse and neglect cases and mental health guardianships. Atkins is active in her local community and currently serves as the vice-chair of the Legal Education Committee for NMSU-Alamogordo, a commissioner for the NM Commission for Community Volunteerism, as a board member for the Young Lawyer's Division, the Children's Law Section, the Twelfth Judicial District Pro Bono Committee, and a state-wide non-profit service organization, as well as the substitute Adult Drug Court judge. Atkins was awarded the 2016 Young Lawyer of the Year Award for the Twelfth Judicial District and is a 2009 graduate of the University of New Mexico School of Law.



Darin Kyle McDougall
Region 5 Director
Second and 13th judicial districts and
Catron, Socorro and Torrance counties

Darin Kyle McDougall graduated from the University of New Mexico School of Law in 2015. He has worked at the Law Offices of the Public Defender in the Metro Division since August 2015. He started representing indigent clients while interning with the Felony Division of LOPD in Spring 2015 and continues to fight for clients every day. McDougall's passion is bringing legal services to underserved populations. He has been involved with the YLD since he was a law student working on the YLD Mentorship Program and attending board meetings as a temporary student liaison. McDougall is from the green Pacific Northwest, but became a permanent New Mexican because of its glorious sunshine.



Billy J. Jimenez
ABA YLD District #23 Representative
Arizona/New Mexico

Billy J. Jimenez is an associate at the Miller Stratvert law firm, where he practices in the areas of civil litigation, environmental law, OSHA, and contracts. He formally served as Director of Policy and Assistant General Counsel for the New Mexico Department. As the ABA YLD District #23 Representative, he is a board member with the State Bar of New Mexico YLD and attends the board meetings of the State Bar of Arizona YLD, Maricopa County Bar Association YLD and the Pima County Bar Association YLD. He organizes ABA-sponsored regional conferences and participates in the Wills for Heroes, Law Day Call-In, UNM Mentorship and UNM Mock Interview programs. Jimenez is also a board member with the Albuquerque Center for Hope and Recovery. He received his undergraduate and law degrees from UNM, and was recipient of the MALSA 3L of the Year Award and Clinical Legal Education Association Outstanding Student Award.



Spencer L. Edelman
Past Chair

Spencer Edelman is a Shareholder at the Modrall Sperling law firm, where his practice deals with creditors' rights and litigation with a focus on bankruptcy and real estate. Edelman's efforts with YLD include organizing Wills for Heroes events for first responders, assisting with the Veterans Civil Justice Initiative, organizing volunteers for the Law Day Call-in Program, and assisting with the NMHBA's Law Camp. In 2013-2014 he served as a law clerk for U.S. Bankruptcy Judge David Thuma. He is a graduate of the James E. Rogers College of Law at the University of Arizona and Macalester College in St. Paul, Minn. He plays tennis regularly and attends as many Isotopes games as possible.