

# YLD... In Brief

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

November 2004

## YLD Board

Morris ("Mo") Chavez, Chair  
Roxanna M. Chacon, Chair-Elect  
Erika E. Anderson, Vice Chair  
Melanie Patten, Past Chair  
Rick Tedrow, Region 1 Director  
Brent Moore, Region 2 Director  
Monica Casias, Region 3 Director  
Roxanna M. Chacon, Region 4 Director  
S. Carolyn Ramos, Region 5 Director  
Román Romero, At-Large Director  
Shawn Brown, At-Large Director  
Steven Almanza, At-Large Director  
Erika E. Anderson, At-Large Director  
Cyndi Sanchez, UNM Student Liaison  
Morris ("Mo") Chavez, ABA District Rep.

## YLD SECTION LIAISONS

Appellate Practice, Shannon Bacon  
Bankruptcy Law, Arin Berkson  
Business Law, Mariposa Sivage  
Commercial Litigation & Antitrust,  
Meghan Stanford  
Criminal Law, vacant  
Employment & Labor Law, Gregory Williams  
Health Law, Brenda Maloney  
Indian Law, Robert Gruenig  
Natural Resources, Energy &  
Environmental Law, Lisa Old  
Prosecutors, Richard Jacquez  
Public Law, David Nava  
Real Property, Probate & Trust,  
Donald Walcott  
Solo & Small Practitioners, Shelley Jock  
Taxation, Eric Burton  
Trial Practice, Monica Garcia

## YLD PROGRAM CHAIRS

Bar Exam Program, Carla Lopez  
Bridge the Gap, Morris Chavez  
Call-In Programs, Morris Chavez  
Homeless Legal Clinic, Sean Olivas  
In Brief, Melanie Patten  
Mentorship Program, Erika E. Anderson  
Mock Interview Program, Brian Colón and  
Hope Eckert

## Colón Receives Outstanding Young Lawyer of the Year Award

By Melanie Patten  
Immediate Past Chair of the Young Lawyers Division

The State Bar Awards Committee selected Brian Colón for the 2004 Outstanding Young Lawyer of the Year Award because he has in his first few years of practice demonstrated by his ethical and personal conduct the epitome of professionalism, a commitment to his clients' causes, and a commitment to public service. Colón's continued efforts in these areas have enhanced the image of the legal profession in the eyes of the public.

Colón graduated from the University of New Mexico School ("UNM") of Law in 2001 and began his law career as an associate at the **Aguilar Law Offices**. Colón concentrates his practice in the areas of Personal Injury, Product Liability, Legal Malpractice, Medical Malpractice, and Insurance Bad Faith. Colón enjoys working with Esteban A. Aguilar and owes much of what he has learned about being a good attorney from Aguilar. Colón sees his practice as a way to help people. He thrives on interaction with clients because he enjoys getting to know individuals. Colón goes beyond the typical business relationship with clients by taking interest in the person. He often keeps in touch with clients after a case is resolved.

"Brian is a lawyer who cares deeply about his clients and others, is committed to doing what is right, has incredible energy and approaches the world with compassion, optimism and hope," Karen Meyers, an associate at Aguilar Law Offices, said.



Colón said he attributes his ability to get to know clients and help resolve their legal problems to "Steve [Aguilar] and the people who work at Aguilar Law Offices provide an environment for me to learn to be a good attorney while I serve the community."

Colón serves the community by participating in public service. In September, he was inducted as Chair of the Popejoy Hall Leadership Team. Colón was immediately asked to serve on the Popejoy Hall Leadership Team as a board member upon graduation from law school. The Popejoy Hall Leadership Team raises funds to provide opportunities for the community's youth and senior citizens to attend performances at Popejoy Hall at no charge. Many of the youth have not been exposed to the theater and Colón and Popejoy's board make it a possibility for them to learn about Broadway shows. Most of the youth and senior citizens would not be able to attend and enjoy the Broadway shows performed at Popejoy Hall if it was not for the Popejoy Hall Leadership Team's dedicated spirit and hard work.

"Brian has been active for a very long time at the University. It was great to see him step up to the plate to lead the organization [Popejoy Hall Leadership Team] to meet the development work of fundraising and the advocacy

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# Young Lawyers Division Board Members

The Young Lawyers Division (“YLD”) Board consists of eleven members of the YLD and a University of New Mexico Student Liaison. The Board members hold either a Regional Director’s position or a Director at Large position. The Chair of the YLD is **Morris (“Mo”) Chavez**. He also serves as the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division District 23 Representative. **Brent Moore** represents Region 2, which includes the First, Fourth, and Tenth Judicial Districts. **Monica Casias** represents Region 3, which includes the Fifth and Ninth Judicial Districts. The District at Large positions are as follows: Director at Large #3 is **Shawn Brown**, Director at Large #4 is **Steven Almanza**. Below are highlights of YLD Board members.



**Melanie Patten** is Immediate Past Chair of the Young Lawyers Division. Melanie began participating in the YLD as chair of the Bar Exam Program in 1999. In 2000, she was elected to the YLD board as a

Director at Large. Melanie worked on the faculty of Bridge the Gap in 2001-2002. She participated in this year’s Bridge the Gap as a panelist on Dialogue on Diversity in the Legal Process. As Chair-Elect, Melanie was a member of the Commission on Professionalism. Melanie was Chair of the YLD in 2003 and, who is a member of Laguna Pueblo, was the first Native American to serve as Chair of YLD. As Chair, Melanie encouraged participation by YLD members in the many programs YLD offers. Melanie led the YLD board in a food drive to benefit the community by YLD hosting a the Leaders to Leaders Luncheon. Officers from divisions of the State Bar and voluntary bar associations were invited to attend and for each person in attendance, YLD contributed four cans of food to the Food Bank. The New Mexico Trial Lawyers presented a cash donation in support of YLD’s efforts to help the community. During the Leaders to Leaders Luncheon, officers from the different organizations and divisions shared the accomplishments and goals of their organization with those in attendance. Many YLD members were able to network with other members of the legal community. Melanie is also active in the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division. Last year, she received the Minorities in the Profession Committee’s Scholarship to attend ABA YLD meetings and conferences. Melanie was recently appointed to the Section of Litigation Young Lawyers Leadership Program. She is one out of five ABA YLD members to be in the leadership program. Melanie is currently

an associate at **Law & Resource Planning Associates, P.C.** Her practice is focused in the area of water law. Melanie encourages members of the YLD to participate in the YLD programs because it is fun, you meet other lawyers, and it is an opportunity to make a difference.



**Román R. Romero**, Director at Large (Position Two) Román R. Romero, Attorney at Law is a solo practitioner that has served as Director at Large on the YLD Board of Directors since his appointment on March 15, 2004. During his tenure on the YLD board, Roman has served on the Bridge the Gap CLE Planning Committee and has assisted YLD board member Monica Casias in the drafting of a YLD New Lawyers Survival Guide that is set for publication soon. Román is a general practitioner that concentrates his practice in the fields of criminal defense and personal injury in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

**Rick Tedrow** is the Region 1 Director. He has served on the YLD for approximately three years. Currently, Rick serves as an associate attorney for the law firm of **Fortner & Dalley, LLC**, in Farmington NM. His areas of practice are limited in no way whatsoever (the joy of being a young attorney), however, he enjoys representing clients in personal injury claims and criminal law. Rick has served as a prosecutor for the 11th Judicial District Attorneys office in San Juan County and has enjoyed teaching classes at the Police Training academy in San Juan County. Rick is a graduate of UNM with an undergraduate degree in Political Science and obtained his law degree from the UNM school of law (GO LOBOS!!!!) Rick’s main goal with the YLD in San Juan County is to create a tight group of young attorney’s who can turn to each other as they build their profession in the four corners region. We need to be there for each other to assure growth as professionals and to assure that the four corners community is represented with the best attorney’s New Mexico has to offer.

**Erika E. Anderson** lives in Santa Fe and works at the law firm of **Long, Pound & Komer**. She received her undergraduate degree from the University of Colorado in 1992, her Masters in Counseling from the University of New Mexico in 1995, and her Juris Doctorate from the University of New Mexico School of Law in 2001. She clerked for the Honorable Gene Franchini and the Honorable Richard C. Bosson on the New

Mexico Supreme Court from 2002-2003. Ms. Anderson also clerked for the Fifth Judicial District of New Mexico from 2001-2002. Ms. Anderson’s practice focuses on civil rights, employment, litigation, business and personal injury law. She is a member of the bars of the New Mexico State Bar, the District of New Mexico and the United States Court of Appeals Tenth Circuit. Ms. Anderson is currently the vice-chair of the State Bar of New Mexico Young Lawyers Division Board of Directors. She is also the chair of the Young Lawyers Division and the University of New Mexico School of Law mentorship program.



**Roxanna M. Chacon** is the Chair-Elect and the Region 4 Director of the Young Lawyers Division. She is an associate practicing with the law firm of **Miller Stratvert, P.A.** in the firm’s Las Cruces office. Roxanna

is a native of Las Cruces and graduated from New Mexico State University in 1997. She received her law degree from the University of New Mexico School of Law in 2001. In 2003, she was named the Outstanding Young Lawyer of the Year by the State Bar of New Mexico. Roxanna was recently appointed by the Chair of the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division to serve as one of 10 nationwide members of the ABA/YLD’s Affiliate Assistance Team.



**S. Carolyn Ramos** was elected to the YLD Board in 2002 and has been serving as Region V Director ever since. Region V includes the Second and Thirteenth Judicial Districts and Catron,

Socorro and Torrance Counties. Carolyn is a litigation associate with the law firm of **Butt Thornton & Baehr** in Albuquerque where she works primarily in the defense of medical malpractice, product liability, trucking and other catastrophic personal injury cases. Carolyn earned her bachelors degree from Middlebury College in 1993 and her JD from UNM in 2000. She is a past president and participant of the State Bar of New Mexico’s Lawyers Leadership Institute and was recently elected to the board of the New Mexico Defense Lawyers Association. Carolyn has a wonderful husband, Chad Cooper, and new baby Santiago who also keep her very busy. In the coming year, Carolyn hopes to facilitate

more opportunities for YLD members to not only meet our federal and state judges, but also interact with them in a way that helps alleviate the fear of courtroom practice many young lawyers have when they first enter the bar. She asks anyone with questions or ideas about the YLD or Region V to *please* contact her at [scramos@brblaw.com](mailto:scramos@brblaw.com).



**Cydni Sanchez** is a 3L at the University of New Mexico School of Law. In spring of 2004, she was elected to serve as President of the Student Bar Association (SBA). As President of SBA, she sits on the YLD Board of Directors.

Cydni is extremely excited to work with the Board of Directors to increase awareness of YLD at the law school and increase student membership. Recently, the SBA reached out to YLD members by inviting them to attend a Wine and Cheese Reception at the law school. The event allowed students, faculty,

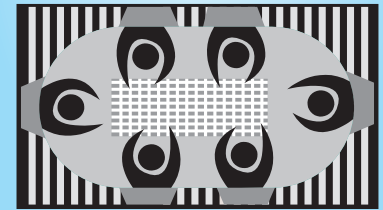
and YLD members to meet and chat. The SBA auction followed the reception and it was a great success. Cydni would like to thank all the YLD members that attended the reception and auction. Most importantly, she would like to thank those members that brought their wallets and participated in the auction! Cydni has been working with Steve Aguilar a fellow 3L who serves as the First Vice President of SBA, and YLD members Ericka Anderson, and Mo Chavez on the mentorship program. The group recently met to match 2L's and 3L's with mentors from YLD. Last year's mentorship program was a great success and as a result, student interest has grown. The first YLD/ SBA mentorship event is scheduled for November 4, 2004 from 6-8 p.m. at Brickyard Pizza located at 2216 Central Ave. SW. Cydni can be reached by email at [sanchech@law.unm.edu](mailto:sanchech@law.unm.edu).

## YLD BOARD MEETING

*Attend and see what the Division is doing.*

Saturday, Nov. 6, 2004  
8:00 a.m. - noon

Bench and Bar Conferene  
held at the Sheraton  
Old Town.



### ABA-YLD Minorities in the Profession Committee Scholarship Winner from New Mexico (2004 -2005)

By Cynthia Walsh, M.A., J.D.



The American Bar Association's Young Lawyers' Division (ABA-YLD) annually awards six *Minority in the Profession Committee Scholarships* to assist young minority lawyers to attend conferences that will enhance their

legal careers. Winners of these highly competitive scholarships are provided funding to attend three ABA-YLD conferences during the upcoming year and are assigned two mentors. I was fortunate enough to be awarded one of the scholarships for this year. Some good news is that recent additional funding has been found to award four additional scholarships for this year. I would strongly urge other minority attorneys to apply for these recently available scholarships. (For more information and an application: <http://www.abanet.org.yld/home>). Anyone wanting to apply for one of the newly funded scholarships should feel free to contact me if they have any questions about the process.

I was notified this past summer that I was awarded one of the six national ABA-YLD *Minorities in the Profession Committee Scholarships*. I am very appreciative for having been selected for this scholarship and the professional opportunities it provides me. I am a Native American attorney in private practice in Rio Rancho, New Mexico (tribal identity: Catawba). My area of practice includes Social Security, guardianships, and federal/tribal Indian law. In addition to being licensed in New Mexico, I am licensed on the Sioux Rosebud Reservation (South Dakota), and will soon be licensed on the Navajo Nation. Among my activities in the state, I have served for over two years on the New Mexico State Bar's Medical Review Commission, the State Bar's Elder Referral program, and have served on the Ethics Advisory Committee. Additionally, I am a speaker for the Victim Impact Panel through the DWI Resource Center in Albuquerque and have registered to be a speaker for the national organization, *Depression / Bipolar Support Assistance* to speak on the legal rights of those with mental health issues. My scholarship from ABA-YLD will now allow me the opportunity to meet other attorneys and to expand my professional involvement at the national level.

In October 2004, I attended my first ABA-YLD conference in Austin, Texas. The few days in Austin were filled with meeting other

attorneys and attending well planned continuing legal education courses. The courses addressed such topics as: "How to Get Published Through the ABA"; "Arbitration and Mediation"; and "Social Security — Practicing Before an Administrative Agency". As an ABA-YLD scholar, I was invited to take an active part in a mock trial on *voir dire* techniques. The conference was planned such that the attendees had ample time to also take in some of the sights of the area. Several of us who met at the conference walked to the state capitol building for a tour of the building. In the evening, we watched the famed flight of the bats leaving for their night feedings from under the Austin bridges. The atmosphere of the entire conference was one of professionals who were helpful and friendly. My first ABA-YLD conference was a very worthwhile experience. I left with new friends and more information on career development, and am looking forward to the next meeting in Salt Lake City, Utah in February.

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## Colón Receives Outstanding Young Lawyer of the Year Award

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needed to make the community aware of all the programs Popejoy provides which includes the educational programs for youth and students and the Ovation series," Tom Takach, Director of Popejoy, said.

Colón is active in the legal community. For two years, Colón and Hope Eckert have co-chaired the Mock Interview Program sponsored by the Young Lawyers Division of the State Bar. Colón and Eckert contact attorneys and arrange for each attorney to conduct mock interviews with law students. The interviewers critique the students' interview and resumes. Colón also is a board member of the New Mexico Hispanic Bar Association ("NMHBA"). He has served as a board member since graduation from law school. Last year, Colón became chair of the NMHBA's annual holiday fundraiser. The fundraiser is a reverse drawing where the last ticket drawn wins \$5,000. There is a silent auction and hors d'oeuvres. The money raised goes towards scholarships for students to attend UNM School of Law. Colón doubled the amount of money raised for scholarships. Colón led the organization to sell one hundred more tickets than the previous year. The organization sold 300 tickets and raised \$30,000, which allowed

for \$20,000 in scholarships. Colón hopes to continue the success of raising more money for scholarships with this year's annual fundraiser, which will be held on **December 3, 2004 at the Sheraton Old Town**. Colón said, "people are welcome to contact me to purchase tickets to this year's event." He continues his leadership in NMHBA. Recently, he was elected to NMHBA Board's Executive Committee.

"Brian is a doer and he gives 110%. He has increased the New Mexico Hispanic Bar Association's visibility. He gets things done," Phillip Sapien, President of the NMHB said.

Colón's leadership also carries over into politics. Colón currently serves as the 1st Congressional District's Vice-Chair of the Democratic Party of New Mexico. His past participation has been as a Delegate to the last two Democratic National Conventions in 2000 and 2004.

While in law school, Colón served two terms as President of the Graduate & Professional Student Association where he helped obtain research monies from the legislature and health insurance for graduate students. As a result, the student government associations at UNM named a service award in Colón's honor called The Brian S. Colón Exemplary Service Award.

Throughout his public service and while he is helping to resolve cases, Colón continues to have a professional attitude and respect for others. It is through his actions and service that the public has a better view of the legal profession.

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## Success in Mentoring UNM Law School Students

By Erika Anderson  
Chair of the Mentorship Program

The Young Lawyers Division of the State Bar of New Mexico (YLD) and the University of New Mexico School of Law (UNM) have developed a mentorship program for second- and third-year law students. The program has been enormously successful with matching law students with attorneys that practice in a particular area of law of interest to the student. The program provides students an opportunity to meet experienced attorneys and to learn more about the practice of law. The program also provides attorneys the opportunity to make a difference in a student's legal career by assisting with curriculum decisions and discussing employment opportunities available to young attorneys.

### The YLD/UNM Mentorship program would like to thank the following attorneys for volunteering to be a mentor for the 2003- 2004 academic year.

Alan Malott  
Alexander Crecca  
Alex Walker  
Alison Rosner  
Amanda Hartmann  
Amos Stege  
Ann DeMarais  
Brent Moore  
Valerie Reighard  
Brian Colón  
Mariposa Padilla Savage  
Bruce Thompson  
Carla Lopez  
Carolyn Ramos  
Danny Jarrett  
Dave Whitham  
Dawn Branch

Eric Biggs  
Eric Schuler  
Erika Anderson  
George Kraehe  
Gina Manfredi  
Glenna Hayes  
Jacqueline Davis  
James LaFata  
Jennifer Foote  
Jennifer Garcia  
Jessica Aberly  
Joseph Romero  
Josh Myers  
Leslie Barnhart  
Lisa Chavez  
Mark Fidel  
Matthew McQueen

Melanie Patten  
Michael Cox  
Morris Chavez  
Nicole Charlebois  
Patrick Griebel  
Paula Forney  
Ramon Carrillo  
Ranne Miller  
Repps Stanford  
Rosemary Bauman  
Shari Weistein  
Sharon Gentry  
Stephanie Kiger  
Stephen Curtis  
Steven Gonzales  
The Honorable Frank Sedillo  
Antonio Maestas