

YLD...In Brief

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

December 2005

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Message from the YLD Chair...

By: Roxanna M. Chacon, Chair



I would like to begin by stating that I have truly enjoyed and am very grateful for having had the opportunity to serve as the 2005 Chair of the New Mexico Young Lawyers Division. It is hard to believe that the year is now coming to a close and we are about to begin a new one. I leave the leadership of the Division in the very capable hands of the 2006 Chair Carolyn Ramos. Carolyn has dedication and enthusiasm that will serve the YLD well in the year to come.

This past year was a busy one for the YLD, beginning with the Ski-LE we co-sponsored in February in Ruidoso. In addition, we helped with a number of events at the University of New Mexico School of Law. We continued our tradition of holding Brown Bag Lunches with both Federal and State Court Judges. We organized a number of networking opportunities for YLD board members, which included a social with the El Paso area Texas Young Lawyers that was held in conjunction with our April Board

meeting in Las Cruces. We hosted a dinner for the officers and directors of the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division, who held their leadership retreat in New Mexico in August. We also recently held the YLD Holiday Mixer in Albuquerque on December 15, 2005. We closed this year with the implementation of a committee that is busy organizing the American Bar Association Rocky Mountain Regional Conference scheduled for March 2-5, 2006 in Santa Fe. I would like to thank the 2005 YLD board members for their hard work and dedication to ensure that these events and programs were a success. It was a pleasure and honor to work with each of you.

In closing, I think that it is important to note that the YLD is just but a segment of the State Bar membership and none of the accomplishments we have attained would be possible without the support and encouragement of the Board of Bar Commissioners and the assistance of the State Bar staff. For these reasons, I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to these individuals and of course to all of you, the members of the State Bar of New Mexico.

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SAVE THE DATE

**ABA/YLD
REGIONAL
CONFERENCE
& 2nd ANNUAL
SKI-LE**

**March 2-4, 2006
Inn & Spa at Loretto
Santa Fe, New Mexico**

YLD Summer Fellowship Program Huge Success...

By: J. Brent Moore & Mo Chavez

The Young Lawyers Division (YLD) of the State Bar started a new fellowship program during the summer of 2005. In efforts to reach out to law students here in NM, YLD created and funded the fellowship program which is designed to allow one law student the ability to work in an unpaid position in the area of public interest law or the government sector. The fellowship award was specifically intended to provide the opportunity for a law student to work in a position that might not otherwise be possible because the position was unpaid.

Dear Young Lawyers Division:

I write to thank you again for the \$3000 fellowship to support my work with Enlace Comunitario (EC) this summer. This was a remarkable opportunity for me personally, and also truly valuable for the immigrant victims of domestic violence that we serve.

Before I started with EC this summer, the organization had no legal component. Our attorney Beth Rourke, who brought great passion and many years of experience with domestic violence and family law matters, started at EC shortly after I began. In coordination with, and under the supervision of, Ms. Rourke, we were able to create a legal department that currently has an active caseload of 40, with dozens more who have been helped with consultations or other brief legal services. We are now virtually the only legal service provider in the community for indigent and Spanish-speaking immigrant victims of domestic violence, and we are currently looking for ways to allow our legal program to grow to even better satisfy the unmet needs in our area.

During the summer I learned a great deal about the process for securing a domestic order of protection, and I will be fully capable of taking on such cases when I begin practicing law next year. I also had the chance to participate in a great variety of family law actions, such as divorces and paternity, custody and child support cases. With EC I was also able to expand my legal research skills. Most meaningful to me, I was able to get significant direct client contact, and I feel I am now much better at conducting client interviews and understanding client needs.

The fellowship award of \$3,000 was awarded Tim Gardner, who is a law student at the University of New Mexico School of Law. Mr. Gardner worked during the summer 2005 with an organization called Enlace Comunitario. This organization's primary mission is to provide general assistance and legal assistance to Spanish-speaking victims of domestic violence. The YLD plans to make this summer fellowship an annual program and expand the program to multiple fellowships. Here is a letter from Mr. Gardner to the YLD regarding the fellowship:

Last week I had a conversation with a client that opened my own eyes to the importance of the work we do at Enlace Comunitario. This woman has five kids and is separated from her abusive husband, who has continued to manipulate and take advantage of her through the legal system and in other ways since he kicked her out of their house. She expressed to me that until she got involved with EC she had resigned herself to the unpleasant life she had, and only through her work with us was she able to realize that she deserves and can achieve so much better. With the help of our legal department, she has secured an order of protection for the her own safety and the safety of her children, she has begun to receive child support, and she has initiated the process of getting her divorce and claiming some much-deserved personal freedom.

Without the assistance of the Young Lawyers Division, I know that I would not have been able to take this position with Enlace Comunitario. I do not know what I would have done this summer, but I'm sure I could have found some sort of gainful employment, although without a doubt it would not have been nearly as personally or socially rewarding. This was a position that EC and I created, and I know that the organization would not have found anyone else to do what I was able to do. It is questionable whether the organization would have been able to get its legal department up and functioning at all, and the women we have served might have remained as vulnerable as they had been – as vulnerable as just about anyone in the society in which we live. I deeply thank and highly commend the Young Lawyers Division for your contributions.

*With great appreciation,
Tim Gardner*

Region V Report...

By: S. Carolyn Ramos, Chair-Elect



I am thrilled to report that the Board of Bar Commissioners (BBC) continues its fervent support of the YLD. Our 2006 budget was approved and included allocations for a second Public Interest Law Fellowship, funds for a homeless legal clinic in Las Cruces, networking, CLE, attendance at ABA/YLD meetings and conferences and other community endeavors.

New Mexico was well represented in Louisville, Kentucky, of all places, in October. We had ten young lawyers at the ABA/YLD Fall Conference. The delegation was strong and brainstormed with ABA/YLD Affiliate Assistance Teams, attended CLE's on depositions and emotional intelligence, participated in community service projects in the city and networked with fellow newbies from across the nation. It was at this meeting that ABA District 23 Rep. Mo Chavez and YLD Chair Roxanna Chacon pitched the Land of Enchantment to the powers that be and secured our first ABA/YLD Rocky Mountain Regional Conference SKI-LE to be held March 2-4 in Santa Fe.

Region V hosted its second "Demystifying Federal Court" Judicial Luncheon on December 7, 2005 in Albuquerque. Chief Judge Martha Vázquez, Senior District Judge James Parker, Judge Bruce Black and Chief Magistrate Judge Lorenzo Garcia all showed up to chat with new lawyers about their obligations to the Court, the profession and themselves. While much needed do's and don't were covered, the theme quickly became integrity, professionalism, quality of life and the intersection of the three. The Judges were down to earth, informative, funny and sincere in their commitment to the training of young lawyers. It was a huge success. We received several requests for a Las Cruces luncheon so anyone interested in organizing an event with the feds down south please contact me at scramos@btblaw.com.

New Mexico YLD well represented in Miami...

By: Román R. Romero; YLD Director-at-Large



Four New Mexico Young Lawyer's Division members participated in the American Bar Association's Young Lawyer's Division Spring 2005 Conference this year. Young Lawyer's Division Chair Roxanna

Chacon, Director-at-Large members Román R. Romero and Erika Anderson and member Marguerite Carr represented New Mexico's young lawyers during the three-day event in Miami, Florida.

The Conference provided valuable insights concerning the recent changes to the bankruptcy code, marketing small law practices, law office management, technology that facilitates the efficient practice of law, partnerships, creative client billing systems and diversity in the practice of law. Amongst the conference highlights were seminars led by a Florida Supreme Court Justice and area lawyers in a variety of practice fields.

This ABA/YLD conference provided excellent networking opportunities, at events like the Friday night dinner/dance at the Vizcaya resort in Miami Beach. The other

added benefit to the conference included seminars on bar leadership and how to implement programs that aid young lawyers in their first years of practice. Attendees had the opportunity to engage in round table discussions regarding what their state's young lawyers are doing and many of these programs have already been implemented in other areas of the country.

The next ABA/YLD conference is scheduled for February 9-12, 2006, in Chicago, Illinois.

Chief Justice Bosson Luncheon a Complete Success...

By: Erika Anderson, Director-at-Large



In mid-July, the Young Lawyers Division (YLD) hosted a brown bag luncheon with Chief Justice Richard Bosson of the New Mexico Supreme Court in Santa Fe, NM. Justice Bosson

was on the New Mexico Court of Appeals for eight years and elected to the Supreme Court in 2002. He was also named the Chief Justice for the New Mexico Supreme Court in January 2005. The luncheon was an informal setting that provided young lawyers an opportunity to ask Justice Bosson questions. Justice Bosson talked about filing an appeal with the Supreme Court, the duties of a Supreme Court Justice and the additional responsibility he has as the Chief Justice. He also talked about his own experiences as a lawyer and how to become a judge in New Mexico. The luncheon was well attended and, all in all, was a complete success.

New Mexico YLD Chosen To Host American Bar Association YLD Regional Conference & SKI-LE

By: Briana H. Zamora; Director-at-Large

The New Mexico Young Lawyers Division will be hosting the 2006 ABA/YLD Regional Conference and SKI-LE in Santa Fe. The ABA Region includes New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Wyoming, Missouri and Idaho. The conference will begin on March 2, 2006 and will be held at the Inn and Spa at Loretto. Conference attendees will receive great rates of \$106.00 plus tax per night at the Inn and Spa at Loretto.

The Conference will kick-off with a hosted reception on Thursday, March 2, 2006. The Conference will include morning CLEs covering general, ethics and professionalism courses. The afternoon will be open for participants to ski, snowmobile, shop or spend a day at the spa.

The YLD is honored to be hosting the first ever regional conference in New Mexico. "We are thrilled to be able to host this

Conference in Santa Fe. We have an exciting program planned with an emphasis on the judiciary and meaningful practice pointers from trial and appellate judges," stated YLD Chair-Elect, Carolyn Ramos. "A lot of work is going into this and I thank Mo Chavez and Roxanna Chacon, both ABA-YLD affiliates, for selling New Mexico and shephardizing us through the process and Rob Koonce for lining up a great program. It will not only be a great Conference from a CLE perspective, but also from a networking and camaraderie perspective. Participants should be prepared to work hard and play hard."

Please mark your calendars for this special event! If you have any questions about the ABA/YLD Regional Conference please contact Briana Zamora at bhzamora@btblaw.com or Mo Chavez at mo@chavezlaw.com for additional information.

YLD 2005 Election Results...

By: Mo Chavez, ABA/YLD District 23 Representative



More than 200 members of the YLD cast ballots in the recent election for the Director-at-Large (position #3) seat on the YLD Board of Directors. The razor-thin election results had Joe Sapien edging out fellow young lawyer, Martha Chicoski, by only two votes. Political pundits from around the barrio were enthusiastic about the voter turnout in the recent YLD election, indicating that increased YLD spending and outreach was a strong reason for the interest in the election.

Newly elected Board member Joe Sapien had this to say after the election, "I want to thank the members of the YLD who supported my efforts to get elected on the YLD Board. I also want to pledge to the entire YLD that I am committed to gaining your confidence and support. I am enthusiastic and devoted to the continued future success of the YLD and I will work hard to earn your support and trust. In addition, I want to congratulate Martha Chicoski on her outstanding commitment to the YLD. The election results were very close and I appreciate her efforts and hard work. On behalf of the YLD Board, we encourage Martha and the rest of our members to get involved and commit to the development and success of the YLD in our great State of New

Mexico." YLD newcomer Martha Chicoski added, "I would like to congratulate Joe on a fine campaign. I campaigned to the bitter end, but the Bernalillo contingency was too difficult to overcome."

Finally, the YLD Board is proud to announce the election of its new leadership for 2006. Those individuals include:

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| S. Carolyn Ramos | Chair (2006) |
| Ericka Anderson | Chair-Elect (2007) |
| Roman R. Romero | Vice-Chair (2006) |

YLD Spotlight on.... Equal Access to Justice

By: Hope Eckert

Equal Access to Justice ("EAJ") provides financial support to legal aid programs for low-income families throughout New Mexico. Through annual fund-raising drives, EAJ is able to provide much-needed funds to a variety of legal services throughout the state, including New Mexico Legal Aid, DNA People's Legal Services, the New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty and Law Access New Mexico. As awareness and donations to EAJ increase, we hope to provide funding for additional programs. These programs provide a variety of invaluable services, including assistance with housing and domestic violence issues, applications for disability and many others. The attorneys

at these agencies are paid well below private sector attorneys but are committed to serving those in need. Without the legal assistance these agencies and their attorneys provide, the almost 25% of New Mexico's population who qualify for their services would have no way to obtain much needed legal aid.

As YLD members, your interest in and contributions to EAJ are much needed. Whether you can afford to donate \$25.00 or \$250.00, your contribution is appreciated and will go to support these worthwhile agencies. Please consider making EAJ one of your yearly charitable contributions (which is tax-deductible as permitted by law).

For more information about EAJ, please contact Meredith McBurney at 797-6064 or mm8091@aol.com.

It is easy to make a gift to help increase access to justice for low-income New Mexicans:

- You can go to our website (www.eaj-nm.org) and click on "Donations", or
- Send your contribution with the form below.

Yes, I am pleased to support Equal Access to Justice.

Name _____ Phone _____

E-mail _____

Address _____ State _____ Zip _____

My gift of _____ is enclosed.

I pledge \$ _____ to be paid as follows _____

Equal Access to Justice • P.O. Box 8526 • Albuquerque, NM 87198-8526