

# MAKING *an* IMPACT



TEXAS YOUNG LAWYERS ASSOCIATION

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ANNUAL REPORT 2016 - 2017

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The Texas Young Lawyers Association (TYLA) consists of roughly 27,000 Texas lawyers who are 36 years old or younger or in their first five years of licensure. As the “public service arm” of the State Bar of Texas, TYLA aims to facilitate the administration of justice, foster respect for the law, and advance the role of the legal profession in serving the public. Its programs are designed to assist Texas attorneys in their practice of law and to provide public legal education services to Texans.

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[www.tyla.org](http://www.tyla.org)

# MAKING AN IMPACT



The 2016-2017 TYLA bar year was a huge success. As the public service arm of the State Bar of Texas, TYLA created new and outstanding public and member service projects that will continue to make an impact on Texas and the nation long after we are no longer young lawyers.



The TYLA Board of Directors is composed of some of the most creative and dynamic lawyers in the State of Texas. These men and women all have busy lives; they manage numerous professional and personal obligations. But they also take time to serve the public, young lawyers, and law students through their TYLA work. After reviewing this Annual Report, you should be blown away by what was accomplished this year.

The board was charged to make an impact. And they did. The board developed projects to inspire and educate young people. The *I Was the First. You Can Be a Lawyer Too!* project teaches young people that a legal career is a possibility irrespective of one's race, sex, or socioeconomic status. The board was also in schools teaching students about the importance of voting through our *Vote America!* program. Board members and local affiliate leaders hosted rollouts across the State, reaching thousands of students.



New resources were developed to educate the public about the law. Sexual assault survivors and their loved ones now have an online source to consult with respect to the legal process for bringing an alleged perpetrator to justice. Children and teens also have new resources—available both in English and Spanish—to help them through their parents' divorce.

TYLA also created a number of on-line guides to aid young lawyers on aspects of the practice of law that are not necessarily addressed in law school. The Client Resource Guide provides practical advice about managing the attorney-client relationship. The Paralegal Guide describes best practices to ensure a productive working relationship between lawyers and paralegals. Finally, there is now a resource to assist young lawyers transitioning in and out of government service.

We also took the TYLA show on the road. Thanks to an ABA YLD sub-grant, we joined young lawyers from Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, and New Mexico for a Mountain States Regional Summit. We were able to share our projects, including *I Was the First* and *Breaking the Silence*. We also partnered with other bar associations to host high quality, low cost CLEs in McAllen, El Paso, and Denton.

It was an once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to service as TYLA's president and chair. TYLA is truly the nation's preeminent young lawyer association. Although our time in our current leadership roles has expired, we remain committed to continuing our service to the profession. We cannot wait to see what the next generation produces.

Sam Houston  
President 2016-2017  
Texas Young Lawyers Association

Zeke Fortenberry  
Chair 2016-2017  
Texas Young Lawyers Association

# BOARD *of* DIRECTORS

The TYLA Board is made up of an Executive Committee, directors, and liaisons. The Executive Committee consists of the president, president-elect, chair, chair-elect, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and immediate past president. The President-elect is elected by TYLA membership while the other officers are elected by the Board of Directors; all serve one-year terms. Each member of the Executive Committee acts as an adviser to at least one TYLA committee.

The 34 Directors represent 21 districts from around the state and serve as liaisons to the local affiliates in their districts. Directors serve as chairs or co-chairs of the various TYLA committees. Directors are nominated and elected by the TYLA members in their districts and serve two-year terms.

Liaisons include a Texas Supreme Court justice, American Bar Association Young Lawyer Division representatives, a law school student, a law school dean, and a member of the Access to Justice Commission.

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# TYLA IN THE COMMUNITY

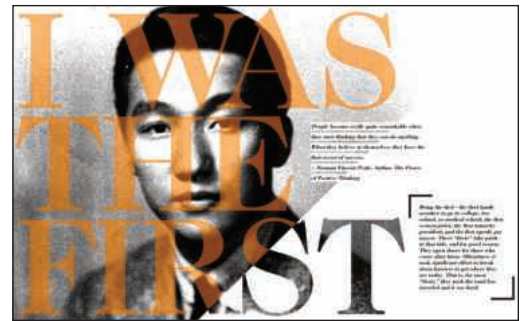
## I Was the First. You Can Be a Lawyer Too!



TYLA's signature project this year is *I Was the First. You Can Be a Lawyer Too!* This "pipeline" project was inspired by the State Bar of Texas' *I Was the First. Vote for Me!* and TYLA's *What Do Lawyers Do?* The project highlights lawyers who were the first in his or her family to get a legal education and who then went on to make significant contributions to Texas and the nation.

The goal of this project was to inspire middle and high school students to pursue a career in law, no matter their background. TYLA's hopes are that it will teach young people that becoming a lawyer is an achievable goal.

The project is centered on documentary-style videos that discuss the lawyer and his or her achievements and contributions to society. The following individuals are featured: Judge Herbert Choy, Justice Sonia Sotomayor, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, Justice Thurgood Marshall, Alexander Hamilton, Judge Alberto Gonzales, Barbara Jordan, Hillary Clinton, Justice John Marshall, Janet Reno, John Adams, Justice Marilyn Aboussie, Judge Morris Overstreet, Henry B. Gonzales, and Kay Bailey Hutchison.



TYLA hosted a Diversity Dinner to showcase *I Was the First* and to celebrate diversity and inclusion in the legal profession. The event was held in Houston on July 27, 2017. Attendees included a diverse group of lawyers, elected officials, and law students. The event introduced the audience to the several of the lawyers featured in *I Was the First*. Afterward, Houston lawyer Diana Marshall of the Marshall & Associates law firm served as the key note speaker. Ms. Marshall shared her insights as a First and provided remarks that emphasized the importance of diversity and inclusion in law. The event was underwritten by prominent law firms and Houston lawyers.





# Sexual Assault Survivor Rights Guide

A sexual assault occurs every two minutes. Many are affected by sexual assault, including the survivors, the accused, and their family and friends. TYLA created a web resource for those impacted by sexual assault, launching a new website at [notavictim.tyla.org](http://notavictim.tyla.org).

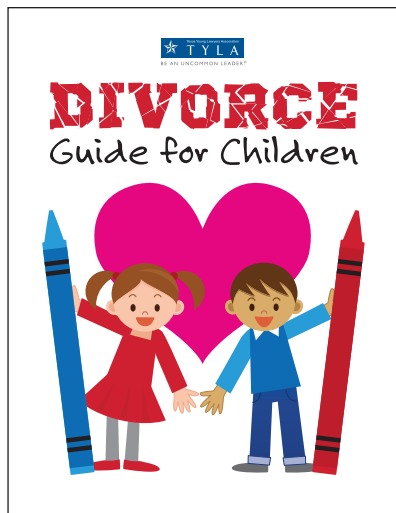
The site provides survivors information about the steps they can take after an assault to bring an alleged perpetrator to justice, including seeking medical assistance, reporting to law enforcement, and navigating the criminal justice system or the administrative disciplinary process employed on some colleges and universities. The site also provides resources and tips for friends and family members supporting a survivor, and it advises those accused of assault of their rights and obligations in judicial and university administrative proceedings.





## Divorce Guide for Children and Teens

In response to requests by numerous family law attorneys seeking resources for children whose parents are going through a divorce, TYLA produced a coloring book for elementary-aged children explaining the divorce process with special emphasis on what they may encounter in the confusing and potentially scary situation that is divorce. For teens, TYLA produced a pamphlet covering general issues that may arise while their parents are going through divorce. In addition to addressing the substantive legal issues associated with divorce, TYLA enlisted the help of mental health professionals who work with children and teens to ensure TYLA addressed issues that often cause stress for children coping with divorce. Both the coloring book and pamphlet are available in English and Spanish. Printed copies of the coloring book and pamphlet may be downloaded from the TYLA website.



**What is Child Support?**  
Generally, the parent that has "custody" will receive child support and medical support payments from the other parent. This money is generally paid through a system provided by the state of Texas. You do not receive the money directly. It goes to the parent with "custody."

**ISSUES AND STRATEGIES**

**Help, I am caught in the middle.**  
There are times when you may feel caught in the middle. For example, one parent may ask you to deliver messages to the other parent, ask you to keep secrets from the other parent or say mean things about the other parent to you. What should you do?

- Ask them to stop. They may not be aware of what they are doing and will stop.
- Let them know it makes you uncomfortable and it is unfair to involve you in their problems.
- If it is too hard for you to tell them directly, try writing them a letter. Explain you love them both and will not choose between them.
- Ask if you can see a counselor. Your counselor can work with you and your parents to minimize the conflict.

**Do I have to go for visits?**

It is important to maintain healthy relationships with both parents. However, as a teen you may become very active in extracurricular activities, and building relationships with your friends. You may get a job and have to work a certain schedule. The best thing to do is communicate with your parents. Let them know what is important to you and ask that they take your wishes into consideration. Your parents want to be involved in your life. If you have a sporting match on a weekend when you would normally visit the other parent, invite them to the match. If you are worried about both parents being there together, try inviting one parent to the first half and the other parent to the second half.

If it feels like one parent is forcing you to visit the other parent, try to remember that there is a court order in place that requires them to encourage you to spend time with the other parent. The best thing you can do is try to keep the lines of communication open with **both** parents.

**Holidays and Celebrations**

When parents first divorce, holidays and special occasions like your birthday can be difficult. Luckily, there are many ways to deal with it. If you are missing former family traditions, try creating new ones that you can share with each parent. If you do not like the idea of celebrating your birthday twice, try alternating years: celebrate with one parent in odd-numbered years and with the other parent in even-numbered years.

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Texas Young Lawyers Association  
and distributed by the State Bar of Texas

For Additional Copies Please Contact  
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State Bar of Texas  
P.O. Box 12487  
Austin, Texas 78711-2487  
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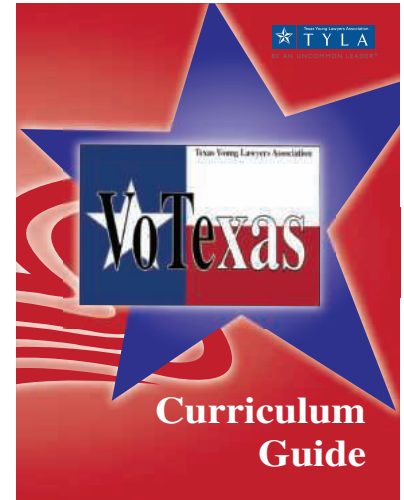


## Vote America!

The 2016 election for President of the United States of America was one of the most publicized and controversial elections in our Nation's history.

The goal of *Vote America!* is to educate students about the heroic efforts made to ensure equality and democracy in America. *Vote America!* has a video that addresses the 1965 Voting Rights Act, as well as the 15th, 19th, and 26th amendments to the U.S. Constitution. This project is also designed to encourage eligible students to register to vote. There is a rollout guide that includes a sample letter to educators, trivia questions, additional topics of discussion, and a guide to registering students to vote.

This project was presented to over 3,100 students and over 300 students were registered to vote. Young lawyers made the presentations across the state of Texas. The video for *Vote America!* is available at [www.tyla.org/voteamerica](http://www.tyla.org/voteamerica).





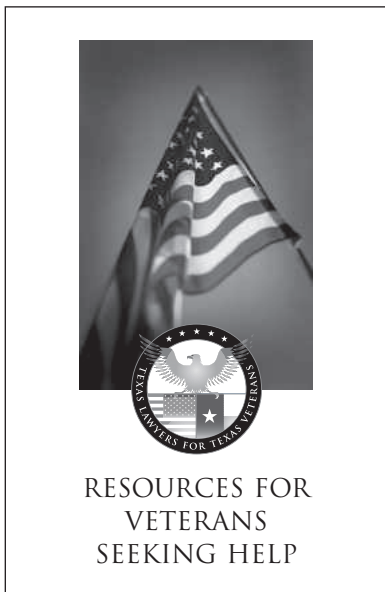
## Guardianship Guide

This guide addresses what happens after a guardianship of a person and/or an estate is established by a court. The ongoing duties and responsibilities of a guardian are addressed at length in the guide. The guide is designed to help individuals that are appointed as guardians to understand their roles and duties as guardians.



## Service Members Legal Resource Center

TYLA is committed to assisting Veterans with their legal needs. This website blossomed from a project that TYLA began last year that was initially intended to be available in a handbook. But due to nationwide interest, the project was transformed into a web-based resource.



The website currently provides information on varying family law topics across multiple states, including divorce, custody, child support, and child protective services. This website was designed with future growth in mind and will provide resources on countless additional topics. It may be accessed at [www.militaryfamilylawguide.com](http://www.militaryfamilylawguide.com).

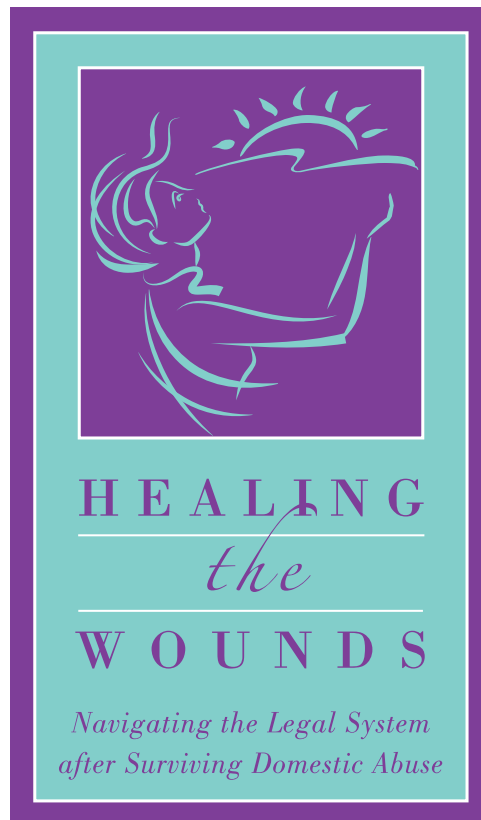




## Healing the Wounds, The Women's Home

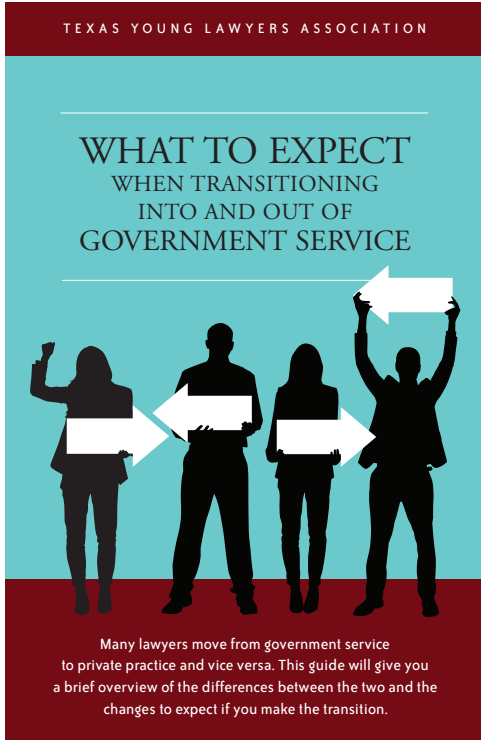
TYLA rolled out its *Healing the Wounds* program at The Women's Home in Houston, Texas to almost 30 attendees. This project is a video, available in Spanish and English, that includes details on what victims of domestic violence can expect when utilizing the courts to obtain a protective order, temporary restraining order, or divorce.

The video portrays the story of "Melinda," a domestic violence survivor, and her journey through the legal process. The goal of the program is to educate victims of family violence about their legal rights. Hopefully, after viewing this program, some of the victim's fear and confusion about the legal system will be eliminated.





# TYLA SERVING MEMBERS

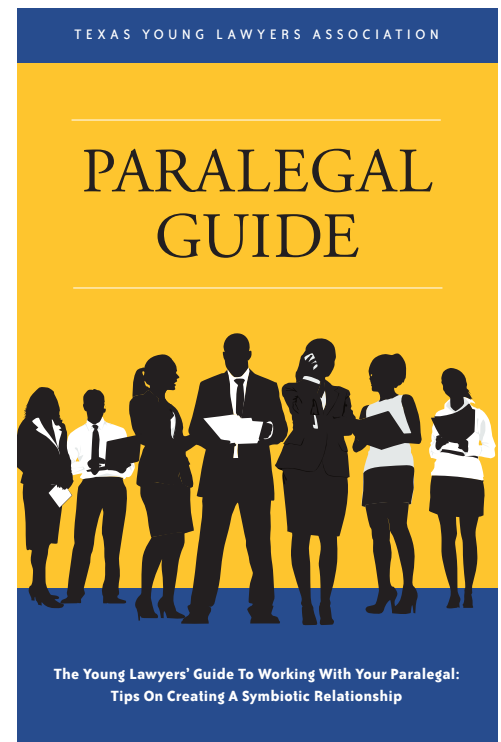


## What to Expect When Transitioning Into and Out of Government Service Guide

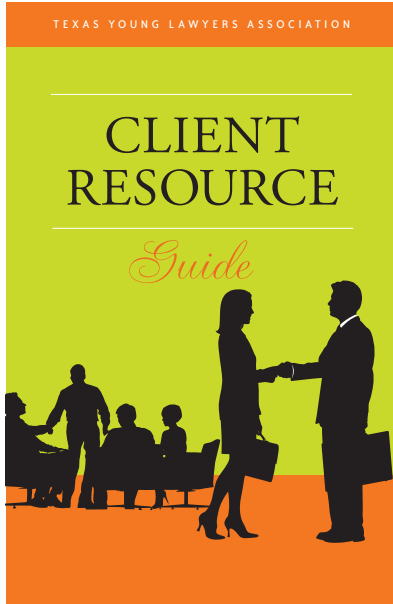
The purpose this electronic guide is to assist lawyers making the transition either into or out of government employment from private practice. The differences between the two can be vast and overwhelming, so TYLA created a guide examining the differences between government service and private practice in a effort to ease the transition. Much of the content reflects the personal experiences of TYLA board members.

## Paralegal Guide

This electronic guide educates young lawyers on how to interact with their paralegals. The guide focuses on four different areas: (1) general advice for working with your paralegal, (2) what you can expect your paralegals to do, (3) what should you not expect your paralegal to do, and (4) what can you do to avoid frustrating your paralegal. The guide discusses what young lawyers can and cannot expect from their paralegals, including what a paralegal is legally authorized to do. The content in the guide was developed from responses to a questionnaire that was circulated to young lawyers and paralegals involved in the State Bar of Texas Paralegal Division.





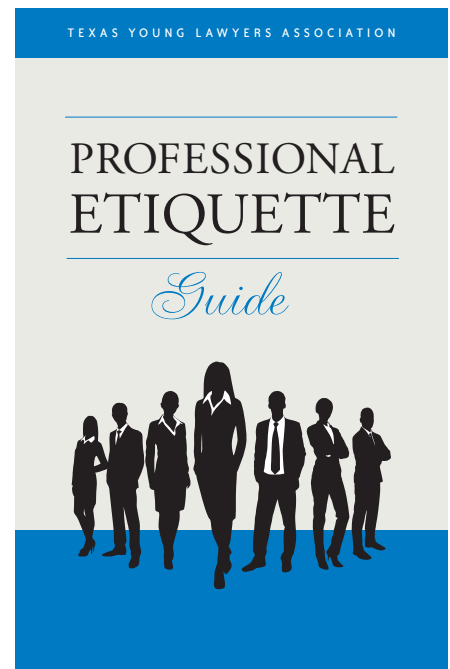


## Client Resource Guide

This guide helps young lawyers navigate issues related to client development and client management. The guide discusses strategies for growing a legal practice, identifying and managing ethical issues that arise throughout the attorney-client relationship, and maintaining health and perspective in order to better serve clients. It also identifies important Texas State Bar resources that are available to young lawyers in managing client relationships.

## Professional Etiquette Guide

This guide helps young lawyers navigate issues and develop skills related to professional etiquette. The guide addresses several sub-topics, including interacting with others at networking events, thank you notes, and interacting with lawyers of the opposite sex. Readers will also find references to additional resources on the topics addressed in the guide.

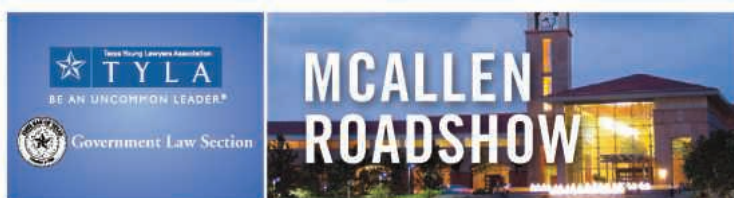




## Regional Practice Skills CLE

TYLA partnered with local bar associations and sections of the State Bar of Texas to conduct free or low cost practical skills CLEs in traditionally underserved areas of the state.

TYLA presented Regional CLEs in El Paso, McAllen, and Denton. The “El Paso Roadshow” was produced in partnership with the Government Law Section of the State Bar of Texas and the El Paso Bar Association. In Denton, TYLA partnered with the Denton Bar Association to host a “Beyond the Basics Probate Seminar.” The “McAllen Roadshow,” much like the event in El Paso, was co-sponsored by the State Bar Government Law Section. The Regional CLEs included presentations on probate law, Texas tort claims, overtime and other wage laws, interlocal agreements, government law case law updates, advice on handling your first trial/appeal, the transition in and out of government service, and ethical issues in settling employment law cases.



**First, ask questions:**

- **Who is your audience?** Your desired audience can determine your publicity methods. Are you targeting attorneys to volunteer at your event? Are you trying to get the public to attend?
- **What's your goal?** Do you want attention and promotion before your event? Could coverage during or after the event still be beneficial to your goal?
- Which media outlets and methods are more likely to reach your desired audience and accomplish your goal?
- Consider appointing one of your event organizers to spearhead publicity, but involve all members when it comes to promotion on social media.

**Keep it simple:**

- Rather than crafting lengthy press releases about your upcoming event, consider targeting area media with a short news advisory.
- Stick to the basics: Who, what, when, where, and why. Offer a primary contact phone number, and request that your news item be published among community briefs or calendars.
- Cut through the noise. Media outlets have limited resources and can't cover every event. Increase your chances of coverage by explaining how your event relates to a larger news story or trend.
- Tell the media if local community leaders or dignitaries are taking part in your event. That may influence their coverage decisions.
- Think visually. Is there anything in your event that would make for good photos or video? If so, promote it.
- Remember to take a few good photos yourself to post on social media during or after the event or to offer to any media outlet that requests them.

**Look beyond traditional media:**

- Make a Facebook page or Facebook event to gain attention. Ask friends and colleagues to share it.
- Tweet about the event. Create a unique hashtag so others can easily find your posts and share their own.
- As appropriate, target @mentions members of the media, local governments, chambers of commerce, local law firms, or area law schools that may retweet your posts.
- Share photos and web links to more information. Social media posts gain more attention when they include photos or links.

Continued on next page.

## Media Toolkit

Whether its drawing attention to a particular project or membership, all associations are challenged with getting the word out professionally and effectively. The first project this year addressed this issue through the publication of the TYLA Media toolkit. It was produced in partnership with the State Bar of Texas and covers all ranges of publicity from press releases to social media.



# TYLA LOCAL AFFILIATES



## ABA YLD Mountain West States Regional Summit

TYLA demonstrated the importance of being good neighbors by sending delegates to this regional summit. This event focused on educational programming, speakers, and social events with young lawyer divisions from New Mexico, Texas, Utah, Colorado, and Wyoming. The programming focused on issues of relevance to law practice, particularly for new and young lawyers in the region on a broad range of topics: trial skills for young lawyers, an examination of recently-enacted marijuana recreational use statutes, the perceived and actual challenges regarding the Uniform Bar Exam and implementation of reciprocal bar licensure among the participant states, diversity and inclusion in the legal profession and in bar association leadership, advancing the young lawyer mission through social media, challenges and opportunities for solo and small firm practice, and attention to mental wellness in law practice. TYLA was involved in three of the programs and presented on maximizing the use of social media as well as life in a solo or small firm. Additionally, TYLA presented *Breaking the Silence* to emphasize the importance of mental wellness in law practice.

**ABA**  
AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION  
Young Lawyers  
Division

**ABA YLD  
Mountain West States  
Regional Summit**

Colorado • New Mexico • Texas  
Utah • Wyoming

March 30–April 2  
Hotel Albuquerque, Albuquerque, N.M.

*Save the Date!*

*Join us in the Land of Enchantment for  
informative programming, networking and fun!*

Programming will address law practice and courtroom skills for young lawyers, bar service and leadership, the future of the legal profession in the Mountain West region, in-depth discussion of the Uniform Bar Exam and bar reciprocity. Programming will also include networking events and an introduction to ABA YLD leadership and affiliates for law students. Excursion activities include travel to nearby Santa Fe and a ride on the Sandia Peak Tramway, the longest aerial tram in the United States.

**Registration will open soon.**

**For more information, contact SBNM YLD Chair  
Tomas Garcia at [tomas.garcia@modrall.com](mailto:tomas.garcia@modrall.com).**

Hosted by the State Bar of New Mexico Young Lawyers Division.

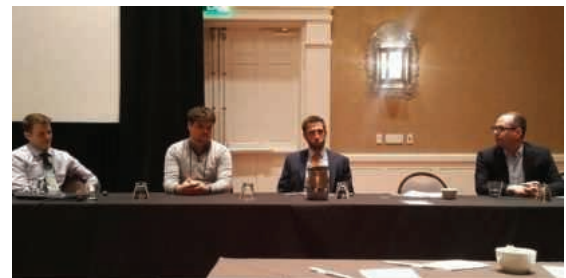
*Funded in part by the American Bar Association on behalf of the Young Lawyers Division and through the Fund for Justice and Education and in part by the partnering states.*

For hotel reservations, call 800-237-2133 and reference "Mountain West States ABA YLD Regional Summit" to receive the group rate of \$129 per night. Reservations can also be made online at <https://goo.gl/DWrzNH> using the Group Code "1703MWS."

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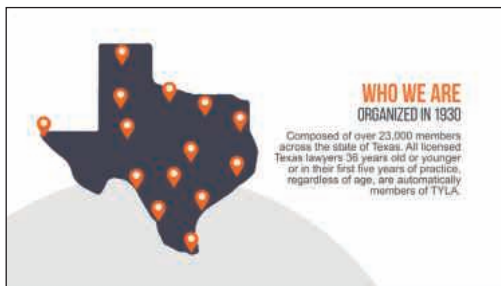
**WYOMING**  
STATE BAR





## TYLA Promotional Video

TYLA recognized the need to provide an effective and cohesive way to explain the mission of our association. This video reflects TYLA's values and will be presented during our rollouts to attorney audiences, during upcoming roadshows, and to members of the public. This introductory video demonstrates the vast resources that TYLA has to offer and promotes the overall good that our association performs as the "public service arm" of the State Bar of Texas.







## Bar Leaders Conference

The Bar Leaders Conference brings State Bar and TYLA elected leaders together with lawyers in various leadership positions with local bar organizations and young lawyer affiliates from across the State. This two-day training program inspires and engages effective leaders, addresses common concerns among bar associations, and offers valuable resources available from the State Bar of Texas.

The 2016 conference was held at the Westin Galleria in Houston and was attended by more than 80 young lawyers from local affiliates across Texas. The highlight for TYLA's portion of the conference was *Projects, Projects, Projects*, during which representatives from TYLA highlighted recent projects and local affiliates presented their award-winning projects to attendees. *And Justice For All, Strength in Unity*, the TYLA Media Toolkit, and *Vote America!* were featured. Local affiliates presented information about the Dallas Association of Young Lawyers' *Crawfest: Claws for a Cause*, Hidalgo County Young Lawyers Association's *The Young Adult DWI Intervention Project*, Austin Young Lawyers Association's Ethics CLE Bus, and Amarillo Area Young Lawyers Association's 14th Biennial Las Vegas CLE.

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**JUSTICE FOR ALL**

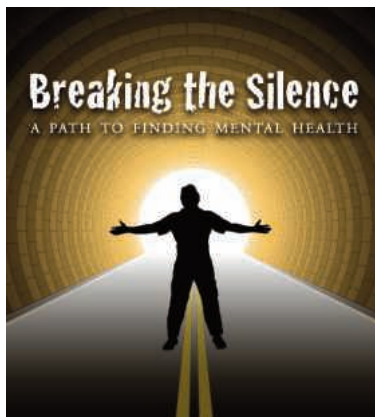
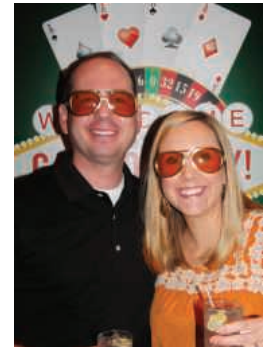
THE MICHAEL MORTON ACT

**NO ONE** has had a more direct impact on the way criminal cases are prosecuted in Texas **THAN MICHAEL MORTON.**

For many years he has been in the headlines for his work on the Michael Morton Act. In 2007, he became the first Texas lawyer to be named a national champion for his work on the Michael Morton Act. He has been named a national champion for his work on the Michael Morton Act. He has been named a national champion for his work on the Michael Morton Act.

For the past several years, he has been in the headlines for his work on the Michael Morton Act. He has been named a national champion for his work on the Michael Morton Act. He has been named a national champion for his work on the Michael Morton Act.

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Texas Young Lawyers Association

**VoTexas**

Curriculum Guide





## Grants

TYLA supports its affiliated young lawyer associations by providing funding to support local programs and projects. The Local Affiliates Committee awarded 25 grants totaling \$21,000 to fifteen different local affiliates. The grants provide assistance for service projects that benefit the community, as well as the members of the bar. In awarding these grants, TYLA seeks to provide seed money to get a new project off the ground or expand the scope of an existing project.

### Local Affiliate Grantees

Amarillo Area Young Lawyers Association  
Arlington Young Lawyers Association  
Austin Young Lawyers Association  
Cameron County Young Lawyers Association  
Corpus Christi Young Lawyers Association  
Dallas Association of Young Lawyers  
El Paso Young Lawyers Association  
Hidalgo County Young Lawyers Association  
Houston Young Lawyers Association  
Laredo Young Lawyers Association  
Lubbock County Young Lawyers Association  
San Antonio Young Lawyers Association  
Smith County Young Lawyers Association  
Tom Green County Young Lawyers Association



## Local Affiliate Awards of Achievement Winners

The Awards of Achievement Program provides TYLA affiliates the opportunity to submit their best projects for evaluation and recognition. The awards are designed to encourage project development by recognizing the time, effort, and skills expended by these affiliates in implementing public and professional service in their communities. This year, TYLA recognized the following young lawyer organizations for their impactful projects and programs:

### LARGE CITY

#### Comprehensive

- 1st: Dallas Association of Young Lawyers
- 2nd: San Antonio Young Lawyers Association
- 3rd: Houston Young Lawyers Association

#### Single Project – Service to the Bar

- 1st: San Antonio Young Lawyers Association:  
*War Story Wednesdays*
- 2nd: Dallas Association of Young Lawyers:  
*Women's Mentoring Circles*
- 3rd: Austin Young Lawyers Association:  
*Speed Networking*

#### Single Project – Service to the Public

- 1st: Dallas Association of Young Lawyers:  
*Bridge Bash*
- 2nd: Houston Young Lawyers Association:  
*Helping Immigrant Children*
- 3rd: Austin Young Lawyers Association:  
*LawTube*

#### Diversity Project

- 1st: Houston Young Lawyers Association:  
*Tomorrow's Attorney Pipeline Program*
- 2nd: Dallas Association of Young Lawyers:  
*Dinner & Dialogue*
- 3rd: Austin Young Lawyers Association:  
*Diversity Career Panel at University of Texas Law School*

#### Newsletter

- 1st: Dallas Association of Young Lawyers

### SMALL CITY

#### Comprehensive

- 1st: Corpus Christi Young Lawyers Association
- 2nd: El Paso Young Lawyers Association
- 3rd: Hidalgo County Young Lawyers Association

#### Single Project – Service to the Bar

- 1st: Corpus Christi Young Lawyers Association:  
*Burgers with the Bench*
- 2nd: Amarillo Area Young Lawyers Association:  
*Not Quite Vegas CLE*

#### Single Project – Service to the Public

- 1st: Waco-McLennan County Young Lawyers Association:  
*Pro Bono Challenge*
- 2nd: Tom Green County Young Lawyers Association:  
*Ladies Night – San Angelo Family Shelter*
- 3rd: Corpus Christi Young Lawyers Association:  
*Puppy Love 5k Run*



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# TYLA SERVING LAW SCHOOLS

## Law School Orientations

TYLA representatives and TYLA law student liaisons attended orientations at Texas law schools. TYLA provided information about the resources TYLA offers students during law school and after graduation when they start their law practices. Students were encouraged to take advantage of the benefits of a membership in the Law Student Division of the State Bar.



## Legal Professionalism Award

This award promotes legal professionalism among Law Student Division members by rewarding participation in activities that further the administration of justice, enhance professional responsibility, and provide service to the public. Each recipient receives a \$1,000 scholarship from the State Bar of Texas Law Student Division.



## Essay Contest

The annual Law Student Division Essay Contest provides an opportunity to help law students to reflect on this nation's legal heritage. Two scholarship recipients are chosen from among the Law Student Division applicants (Texas and out-of-state law student members may apply). Each recipient receives a \$1,000 scholarship.

## State Moot Court Competition

The 2016 Moot Court Competition was hosted by Texas Young Lawyers Association at the Omni hotel in Fort Worth, Texas. The competition was held in conjunction with annual State Bar of Texas meeting in June 2016.





*2016 State Moot Court Competition*



*Omni Fort Worth Hotel  
Fort Worth, Texas  
June 14-16, 2016*

**CHAMPION TEAM** — Texas Tech University School of Law  
C.J. Baker, Shelby Hall, and Kristen Vander-Plas  
Coach: Robert T. Sherwin

**FINALIST TEAMS** — South Texas College of Law Houston and Texas Tech University School of Law

**SEMIFINALIST TEAMS** — Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law  
South Texas College of Law Houston  
St. Mary's University School of Law  
Texas Tech University School of Law

**BEST BRIEF** — South Texas College of Law Houston

**BEST ORAL ADVOCATE** — Kristen Vander-Plas  
Texas Tech University School of Law







## National Trial Competition

In 2017, the Texas Young Lawyers Association, in partnership with the American College of Trial Lawyers, hosted the National Trial Competition in Fort Worth, Texas.

Hailed as one of the oldest and most prestigious competitions in the United States, the NTC includes 28 of the best law school mock trial teams from around the nation. Established in 1975, the NTC's purpose is to advance future lawyers' advocacy through competition amongst peers and interaction with the bench and bar.

This year's competition constitutes the 42nd year, and the champions hailed from Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law.

### 2017 National Champion Team

Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law  
Douglas Bates, Garrett Fields, and Stacy Kapustina

### National Finalist Team

Georgetown University Law Center

### Semifinalist Team

University of California Berkeley School of Law  
University of Alabama School of Law


### Quarterfinalist Teams

Chicago-Kent College of Law  
South Texas College of Law Houston  
University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law  
University of San Diego School of Law

### Best Oral Advocate Award



Amarto Bhattacharyya  
Georgetown University Law Center

42nd Annual  
*National Trial  
Competition*



Fort Worth, Texas  
March 22 – March 26, 2017

Hosted by:  
The Texas Young Lawyers Association and the  
American College of Trial Lawyers



## TYLA Diversity Scholarship

The TYLA Diversity Scholarship Program promotes diversity in the legal profession by assisting members of minority populations within the state to enter the legal profession and participate in the programs and activities of TYLA and the State Bar of Texas. The TYLA Diversity Committee awarded nine \$1,000 scholarships to minority students enrolled in Texas law schools who demonstrated a commitment to diversity.

### TYLA Diversity Scholarship Winners



**Ashley Yen**  
*Southern Methodist University  
Dedman School of Law*



**Cherika Edwards**  
*Texas Southern University  
Thurgood Marshall School of Law*



**Daniel Avila**  
*University of Houston Law Center*



**Jayelle Lozoya**  
*South Texas College of Law Houston*



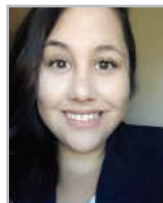
**Ronisha Kelly-Johnson**  
*Texas Southern University  
Thurgood Marshall School of Law*



**Jaqueline Del Vilar**  
*University of Houston Law Center*



**Gregory Franklin**  
*Texas A&M University School of Law*



**Mariah Ortiz**  
*Texas Southern University  
Thurgood Marshall School of Law*



**Clariss Medrano**  
*University of Houston Law Center*

# HONOREES



## Outstanding Young Lawyer of Texas Award Recipient Julie Pettit, Dallas

Each year, the Texas Young Lawyers Association presents the Outstanding Young Lawyer of Texas Award to one attorney who has exemplified professional proficiency, service to the profession, and service to the community.



Julie Pettit runs her own practice, the Pettit Law Firm, where she focuses on civil litigation and real estate law. In her less than 10 years as an attorney, Pettit is well-respected by judges she appears before and opposing counsel alike, earning a reputation as a skilled advocate for her clients and being among “the best and brightest young litigators in Dallas.” As a Dallas Women Lawyers Association board member, she has been a leader on the committee spearheading the Mentoring Circles project, which connects young women lawyers with more experienced women lawyers. Pettit has also helped organize the Dallas Association of Young Lawyers Trial Skills Boot Camp, a day-long program where young lawyers can observe seasoned practitioners. While still a new member of the William “Mac” Taylor Inn of Court in Dallas, she has already become involved with the organization’s mentoring committee—a testament to how Pettit sets her sights on making an impact. In addition to her law practice and contributions to the legal community, Pettit founded Project Mom, a website providing resources and events for local moms, and devotes some of her free time volunteering as a mentor for students through Mercy Street, a West Dallas nonprofit whose goal is to bring hope and healing to the community

## Liberty Bell Award Recipient Gregorio “Greg” Casar, Austin

The Texas Young Lawyers Association presents this annual award to one outstanding nonlawyer who has made the most selfless contribution to his or her community to strengthen the effectiveness of the American system of justice. The Liberty Bell Award recognizes categories of community service that: (1) promote a better understanding of our government, especially the Bill of Rights; (2) encourage a greater respect for the law and the courts; (3) stimulate a deeper sense of individual responsibility of citizens’ rights and duties; (4) contribute to the effective functioning of our institutions of government; and (5) instill a better understanding and appreciation of the law.



Gregorio “Greg” Casar represents District 4 on the Austin City Council and was the youngest council member in the city’s history when he was elected in 2014. Casar authored the city’s fair chance hiring ordinance, passed in March 2016, making Austin the first city in the South to adopt practices that require private employers to delay asking about a job candidate’s criminal history until a conditional offer of employment. He attracted national attention over the past year for his work on behalf of families affected by recent immigration enforcement actions. During his tenure, Casar helped organize the first two tenant associations at mobile home parks in the city and championed civil rights and economic opportunity for residents, sponsoring over a dozen initiatives aimed at keeping working- and middle-class families in Austin. His office has led watchdog efforts on criminal justice issues, including efforts to have an independent investigation into problems at the police crime lab, funds for police-worn body cameras, and changes to the manner in which sexual assault victims’ evidence is processed to ensure that it is done so in a timely manner.



## Outstanding Mentor Award Recipient Justice Harvey Brown, Houston

The Texas Young Lawyers Association presents the Outstanding Mentor Award to the attorney who has consistently demonstrated a commitment to mentoring young lawyers in his or her legal community.



Hon. Harvey G. Brown is a justice on the 1st Court of Appeals who is known for his deep-seated commitment to young attorneys, serving as a role model and encouraging their personal and professional growth. Justice Brown gives back by contributing to the community and legal profession. In addition to membership in law-focused organizations such as the Texas Supreme Court Advisory Committee and the Houston Bar Foundation, he serves on the board of directors of the KSBJ radio station in Houston, is the secretary of the Spring Branch Family Development Center Board of Directors, and is a Sunday school teacher for a newlywed class at Houston's First Baptist Church. Justice Brown was formerly the vice president of Houston Habitat for Humanity during the Carter Work Project, when 100 homes were built. Through his work on the bench and involvement in various organizations, Justice Brown has met and counseled young attorneys at different steps in their careers and has inspired new lawyers through mentorship.

## Texas Young Lawyers Association President's Award Recipients Victor A. Flores Courtney Barksdale Perez

The President's Award is given at the discretion of the Texas Young Lawyers Association's President based on outstanding service to TYLA by TYLA directors, committee chairs, committee members, or other individuals who have played a vital role in furthering the objectives of the association.



Victor A. Flores is an Assistant City Attorney at the City of McAllen. As a member of the City Attorney's Office, Victor serves as counsel to a number of different departments and city boards. Although his official role on the TYLA board is as a representative to the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division, Victor did so much more during the 2016-2017 bar year. As part of our push to educate students about the importance of voting through our *Vote America!* project, Victor organized several rollouts that reached hundreds of students. One such roll out enabled high school students to hear from federal judges and prominent attorneys about the importance of voting. Victor was able to execute on another initiative for this bar year: bringing high quality, low cost to traditionally underserved areas. Through his leadership, we were able to bring half-day CLE programming to McAllen and El Paso. Finally, Victor translated our Divorce Guide for Children into Spanish, which will expand the reach of this valuable resource. These significant contributions demonstrate why he is honored with a President's Award.



Courtney Barksdale Perez is a partner in Carter Scholer, PLLC in Dallas and practices in the areas of labor and employment and business litigation. Courtney has completed her second year as a TYLA Director and has solidified her position as a dedicated, hardworking, and dependable board member. She played an integral role in the production of the *I Was the First. You Can Be a Lawyer Too!* project. This online program profiles first-generation lawyers to show young people that a legal career is possible irrespective of a person's race, sex, or socioeconomic background. Without her efforts, the project would never have gotten off the ground. She also has continued to work to ensure the success of our nationally

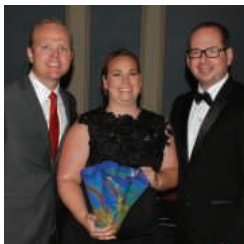




recognized National Trial Competition, which is hosted in conjunction with the American College of Trial Lawyers, through her service as the committee's co-chair. Anyone who knows anything about the National Trial Competition knows just how much work and dedication it takes to run a successful tournament. And, obviously, we could not have done it without Courtney.

## **Joseph M. Pritchard Inn Outstanding Director Award Recipient Sara Anne Giddings**

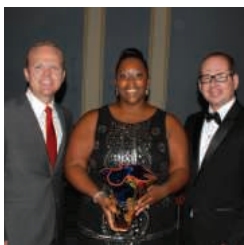
The Joseph M. Pritchard Inn of former and current officers and directors of the Texas Young Lawyers Association was established in 1979 in honor of the late Joseph M. Pritchard, a former TYLA director and active civic leader. The Inn is pledged to support the programs and objectives of TYLA and annually presents the Joseph M. Pritchard Inn Outstanding Director Award to the TYLA director who has shown outstanding leadership and exemplary efforts to further the projects and purposes of the Texas Young Lawyers Association.



Sara Anne Giddings is an attorney with the Giddings Firm in San Angelo where she practices in the areas of tax, estate planning, and business law. Sara served as a co-chair of the Law Focused Education Committee, but her contributions did not stop with this committee. She worked countless hours to bring the *I Was the First. You Can Be a Lawyer Too!* project to completion, and it would not have happened without her. Sara has continued to highlight the importance of mental health through the *Breaking the Silence* project. She bravely shared her own struggles by participating as a panelist during the ABA YLD Regional Summit in Albuquerque, New Mexico. She also assisted in the creation of the Guardianship Guide, which provides important information about the obligations and responsibilities imposed upon a court-appointed guardian. Sara's contributions are also present in the publications created by the Member Outreach Committee, including the Paralegal Guide and the Client Resource Guide. Finally, Sara also sought out opportunities and shared the Sexual Assault Survivor Rights Guide and the *Vote America!* project with her San Angelo community.

## **Texas Young Lawyers Association Keith L. Krueger Award Recipients Britney Harrison Dieng Matthew L. Harris**

The Keith L. Krueger Leadership Award is named in honor of the late Keith L. Krueger, a former Secretary of the Texas Young Lawyers Association, who passed away on July 14, 2012. During his tenure on the TYLA board, Keith selflessly and tirelessly worked to further the objectives of the association. This award is given at the discretion of the Texas Young Lawyer Association's President and Director of Administration to a TYLA Board member who exhibits the same leadership skills as Keith: (1) leads by example; (2) exhibits the highest integrity; (3) demonstrates a commitment and passion for public service; and (4) earns the respect and trust of the Board through hard work and fun.



Britney Harrison Dieng is an attorney with Goranson Bain, PLLC in Dallas focusing her practice on family law. Although Britney is a first-year director, she did not shy away from work. She could always be counted on to volunteer. More importantly, however, she was able to deliver outstanding work product. Her contributions to the Sexual Assault Survivor Rights Guide and the Divorce Guide for Children were so significant that neither project could have completed without her. Many also may not know that she was always (quietly) seeking out opportunities to serve. Thanks to her help, we were able to host *Vote America!* rollouts in Austin. She has a bright future in TYLA.



Matthew L. Harris is a partner in Matthew Harris Law, PLLC in Lubbock. He practices across a number of substantive legal areas that include criminal law, probate, family law, and civil litigation. After being appointed chair of the Marketing and Technology Committee, Matthew made it his mission to bring TYLA into the digital age, and he succeeded. TYLA's presence in social media has increased exponentially. The results Matthew was able to achieve made him a sought-out speaker on strategies for increasing digital impact. Matthew was first invited to address the New Mexico Young Lawyers Division and then later presented to young lawyer delegations from Texas, New Mexico, Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming at the ABA YLD Regional Summit Albuquerque, New Mexico. Ever the quiet worker, Matthew led his committee to debug the TYLA website and almost single-handedly compiled the 2016-2017 Annual Report. Finally, Matthew was always willing to represent TYLA at events hosted in West Texas.

## **Texas Young Lawyers Association Outstanding First Year Director Award Timothy Newman**

The Outstanding First Year Director Award is given at the discretion of the President of the Texas Young Lawyers Association based on outstanding service by a director during his or her first year on the TYLA board.



Timothy Newman is a litigation associate with Haynes and Boone, LLP in Dallas who represents clients in government enforcement actions, cybersecurity matters, and complex litigation. Tim was involved in just about every project during the 2016-2017 bar year. Tim played a significant leadership role with respect to the Sexual Assault Survivor Rights Guide. He was also instrumental in bringing the Client Resource Guide to life. Similar to other award recipients, Tim's contributions went beyond committees to which he was formally assigned. He secured speakers for *I Was the First. You Can Be a Lawyer Too!* and provided in-person support to the National Trial Competition. He was instrumental in recruiting volunteer attorneys to judge the competition along with serving on the scoring committee and securing sponsors. Finally, Tim contributed to TYLA's monthly electronic newsletter, eNews.

## **Texas Young Lawyers Association President's Award of Merit Recipients**

The President's Award of Merit is given at the discretion of the Texas Young Lawyers Association's President to recognize individuals who have made a significant contribution to the furtherance of the goals and objectives of TYLA, or who have performed above and beyond the call of duty while conducting the business of the Texas Young Lawyers Association. This year's awards are presented to individuals who put forth exceptional efforts on behalf of TYLA through their committee service. This year's recipients are:

Christopher S. Bloom, *Los Angeles*  
Donald Delgado, *College Station*  
Hon. Andrew Dornburg, *Richmond*  
Zachary Hall, *Austin*  
C. Brantley Jones, *Amarillo*  
Ryan E. Scharar, *Fort Worth*

Jenny Smith, *Austin*  
Joel T. Towner, *Houston*  
Shannon Steel White, *Corpus Christi*  
Louis W. Williams, *Corpus Christi*  
Tim Williams, *Amarillo*

# TYLA ONLINE



## Lawyers Who Lunch Blog

The Lawyers Who Lunch Blog is a place for attorneys to share their strategies for success as they seek a balance in their professional and personal lives. The areas of practice may be different and stories are certainly varied, but young lawyers have much to learn from one another. This blog provides insight for all lawyers on topics ranging from what to wear to work to how to handle maternity leave. This project is a welcome forum for young lawyers to hear fresh viewpoints.



## TYLA Social Media

This year TYLA made a concerted effort to increase its presence on various social media platforms. This committed involvement shifted the focus from only highlighting prior events to engaging young lawyers and young lawyer local affiliates to encourage active participation.

TYLA significantly increased its social media presence this year and even launched an Instagram account in August 2016. As a result, TYLA reached segments of the legal community that we would have otherwise missed through other forms of media. Additionally, social media enabled TYLA to strengthen its ties with the young lawyer divisions, state bars, and specialty bars of other states.



Published	Post	Type	Targeting	Reach	Engagement
01/26/2017	CONGRATULATIONS are in order! We are proud to announce...	Image	US	6,716	162
01/26/2017	From the Young Lawyers Division...	Image	US	6,716	162
01/26/2017	EVERYONE is excited about the new program that we are preparing to launch...	Image	US	6,716	162
01/26/2017	I had with me TYLA's new 1st and 2nd degree Membership...	Image	US	2,136	453
01/26/2017	SAL SAL FEVER! Making me Super Happy! Thanks a lot of the...	Image	US	2,136	453
02/22/2017	It was a pleasure to meet with the Young Lawyers Division...	Image	US	36	292
11/22/2016	ROCKAWAY Custom cover and more things. TYLA Division 1	Image	US	36	216
11/22/2016	It was a pleasure to meet with the Young Lawyers Division...	Image	US	36	216





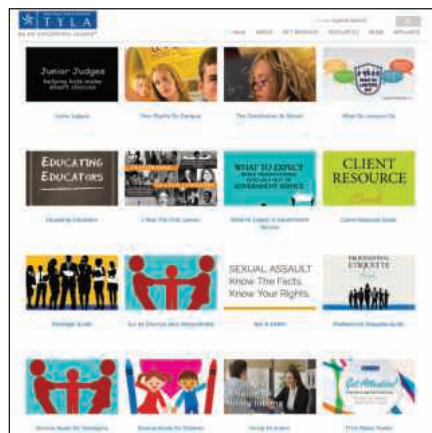
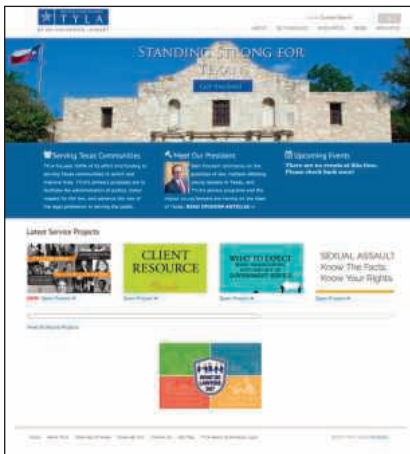
## eNews

eNews is a monthly newsletter that is emailed to the entire Texas Young Lawyer Association. It features several regular columns, including a top story, TYLA Project Spotlight, Local Affiliate Spotlight, Young Lawyer Spotlight, Ten Minute Mentor feature, Tips for Young Lawyers, and an editor's column. eNews helps keep young lawyers up to date on local and state wide projects, highlights, new legal topics, and features local affiliate accomplishments.



## TYLA.ORG

The tyla.org website disseminates TYLA projects and materials worldwide.







## Ten Minute Mentor

Ten Minute Mentor ([www.tenminutementor.com](http://www.tenminutementor.com)) is an online collection of video presentations from leading lawyers in their areas of expertise. Each video presentation is educational and full of practical advice on a wide range of topics relevant to young lawyers. All Ten Minute Mentor videos may be viewed on [tyla.org](http://tyla.org) and includes topics such as:

*Preparing and Proving (or Opposing) Claims for Attorneys' Fees*  
*Enforcing and Avoiding Arbitration Clauses*  
*Preparing Witnesses*  
*Pointers for the Courtroom*  
*Things Every Texas Attorney Should Know about Franchise Law*  
*Top Ten Evidence Issues at Trial (Civil)*  
*Using Technology in the Courtroom*  
*Challenges of Protecting Expert Witnesses Under Daubert/Robinson*  
*Jury Arguments*  
*Jury Selection*  
*Objectives for Conducting an Effective Voir Dire*  
*Tips on Making a Closing Argument*  
*What to do when a Witness Takes the 5th*  
*Resources Available to Serve Veterans, Servicemembers, and their Families*  
*Drug Court Process*  
*Punishment Evidence*  
*Panel Discussion on Pregnancy in the Workplace*  
*AFV Victim's FAQs*



# TEN MINUTE MENTOR



**TYLA**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**2016-2017**

# IGNITE AND UNITE



“Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, ‘What are you doing for others?’” – *Martin Luther King, Jr.*

Texas Young Lawyers Association is the public service arm of the State Bar of Texas. Each year, TYLA works to develop projects that benefit lawyers, law students, and the general public, and make those projects available for use and distribution across the state of Texas. In the 2017-2018 bar year, TYLA will continue to share existing TYLA programs, and introduce a number of new projects including:

- **Teach Safe. Learn Safe. Be Safe.** Parents and teachers alike face many questions regarding the laws applicable to the school setting. TYLA will create a project to provide information to educators, parents, and students about their legal rights and responsibilities. Additionally, the site will serve as a platform to incorporate other TYLA projects that relate to issues of school safety. A special thank you to the Texas Bar Foundation, which has provided a generous grant to fund this project.
- **Employer Handbooks:** TYLA will create a series of handbooks to address relevant employment law issues, including FLSA, FMLA, Affordable Care Act, HIPPA, other discrimination laws and statutes, and the ADA.
- **Preserving the Right to Trial by Jury and Explaining its Importance to the American System of Justice:** TYLA will create and distribute a project that addresses the importance of protecting the civil right to the jury trial.
- **Spanish CLE/ Guide:** TYLA will develop a guide/ CLE for attorneys to use in communicating with Spanish speaking clients and witnesses. The guide will identify key terms and phrases related to legal interactions.
- **Domestic Abuse:** TYLA will create a web based project as well as guides discussing the legal avenues available to those who have suffered from domestic violence. This project is intended to serve both victims of domestic violence, and elder abuse.

My goal for TYLA this year is that we ignite and unite. By creating new, and sharing existing TYLA projects, I hope a passion for service is ignited in young lawyers across the state. We are most effective when we can bring our unique experiences and perspectives together to impact those around us, united in service to our communities. I invite each one of you to join TYLA in this commitment. We will all be better practitioners of law and members of our community if we devote time to the service of others. To learn more about TYLA, and how you can get involved, please visit our website at [tyla.org](http://tyla.org).

Sincerely,

Baili B. Rhodes  
Texas Young Lawyers Association President 2017-2018





BE AN UNCOMMON LEADER.®

Texas Young Lawyers Association

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Austin, TX 78711-2487

(800) 204-2222, ext. 1529

[www.tyla.org](http://www.tyla.org)