

# Young Lawyers

BY JEFF CONNOR, ESQ., YOUNG LAWYERS CHAIR



## THE YOUNG LAWYERS SECTION: WHY GET INVOLVED?

I vividly recall sitting in my office in Department Seven at the Washoe County Courthouse on a cool October day, constantly refreshing the web browser on my computer to see if the Supreme Court had posted results from the July bar exam, when the phone on my desk rang.

It was my boss, Judge Patrick Flanagan, who I had just seen leaving chambers, and he wanted to know if I was sitting down. I told him that I was, and then I felt the weight of the world lift from my shoulders and I sank back into my seat in complete relief, when I heard him say, “Welcome to the bar, Counselor.”

With bar exam results released and admission ceremonies having taken place last month, I want to take this opportunity to say the same to the newest members of the State Bar of Nevada. Congratulations! The agonizing wait for results to be released is over, and you never have to take another bar exam again. Well, unless you decide to practice somewhere other than Nevada, that is...

So, what now? One suggestion I have for any newly-minted lawyer is to join and get involved with the Young Lawyers Section. Unlike in many other states, membership in the YLS is not mandatory. However, the benefits of joining the YLS and getting involved with section activities are many.

First, the YLS provides a number of service opportunities for young lawyers to obtain pro bono hours under the Nevada Rules of Professional Conduct. In particular, lawyers interested in community outreach and law-related education can volunteer with the Goldilocks program, where they show elementary school students a video of Goldilocks on trial and then have a discussion with the class about the legal system, using the video as a jumping-off point. Lawyers interested in providing pro bono legal services to senior citizens should be on the lookout for our Serving Seniors program, for which the YLS pairs up with Nevada Legal Services to provide a free CLE seminar in exchange for volunteering at one of our walk-in Serving Seniors clinics. Perhaps the program I am most proud of as a member of the YLS is Project Salute. After going through a brief certification and instruction process with the Veteran’s Administration, lawyers interested in providing pro bono legal services to veterans of our Armed Services can volunteer at walk-in clinics conducted by the YLS—clinics designed to assist Nevada’s veterans in securing all the benefits to which they are entitled for their service to our country.

Second, beyond the CLE opportunities that are available through Serving Seniors and Project Salute, the YLS conducts a couple of CLE seminars in both the north and the south throughout the year. While membership in the YLS is not required in order to attend CLEs conducted by the YLS, YLS members do receive a discounted rate for on the CLE. Some of our most popularly attended CLEs in prior years have been courtroom etiquette presentations made by various federal and state court judges; we are hoping to produce similar CLEs again this year.

Additionally, the YLS holds social events throughout the year that provide great opportunities for young lawyers to relax outside of the office, connect with old friends and make new friends. Having balance in our lives is important, and being able to maintain friendly relationships with our colleagues is essential to the wellbeing of our profession.

Finally, and most importantly, getting involved with the YLS provides great opportunities for young lawyers to develop themselves professionally. Each activity or event I have mentioned in this article is produced through the efforts of hard-working young lawyers who volunteer their time as committee chairs and members of our executive council. And many members of our executive committee started as committee chairs, while the best path to becoming a committee chair is to start by volunteering for one of the many service opportunities provided by the YLS. So be on the lookout for emails coming from the YLS listserve about opportunities to attend and get involved with YLS activities! **NL**