

Inter Alia

Among Other Things

Winter 2015

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Letter from the Chair



Andrea Irons

38770 Garfield Rd Ste 100
Clinton Township, MI 48038
P: (586) 933-3525
F: (586) 469-1236
E: andreairens@gmail.com

Are you all enjoying the cold weather yet? I know I can't wait for this freezing weather to be over. I'll take 90 degrees any day over these single digit temperatures we are dealing with. Before the weather was too cold, we had some great events that I hope you were able to attend. We had the Think Fast Bootcamp, Homeless Youth Seminar, ICLE Breakfast Basics, and Preliminary Exam Seminar. SBM Section Connect was launched where you can post questions on a message board to other young lawyers. There was also a group that went to Washington, D.C. to be sworn in at the United States Supreme Court. All of these events were very successful and we have more events coming up.

Now that the holidays are over we are working diligently on planning the 8th Annual Summit. I am pleased to announce that we will be returning to Greektown Hotel & Casino in the great city of Detroit on May 29-30, 2015, so save the date. The Summit will have some great substantive programs as well as networking opportunities for a minimal cost. Keep an eye on your email and future editions of *Inter Alia* for more information regarding the Summit as well as other upcoming events.

I encourage each of you to get involved with the section. I have met some of my best friends from being involved. I have also gained a network of people that I can turn to when I have questions in my practice. If you have any questions or ideas for future events, please feel free to contact anyone on the council.

Very truly yours,

Andrea C. Irons
YLS Chair

Project Street Youth Initiative

By Donald Rencher

This fall during the American Bar Association's Young Lawyers Division (ABA YLD) conference held in Portland, Oregon, the ABA YLD announced its Project Street Youth initiative. The purpose of this initiative is to create programs nationwide that provide homeless youth access to justice. To accomplish its goal, ABA YLD listed three components that must be addressed:

Educating and Raising Awareness of the Issue.

Young lawyers will be armed with information and materials that will help educate other lawyers and members of their community about the severity of the homeless youth problem in this country, as well as the laws and policies enacted to combat youth homelessness.

Legislation. Encourage young lawyers to lobby for laws and policies to address the issue of youth homelessness, and provide those model laws and policies.

Legal Clinic. Provide a toolkit for young lawyers to partner with existing community organizations and set up legal clinics to help homeless youth with credit and consumer issues; public assistance and government benefits; and tickets, warrants, and minor criminal matters.

The Young Lawyers Section (YLS) of the State Bar of Michigan also supports this initiative. Therefore, the YLS decided to hold a legal clinic/seminar during a holiday meal for homeless youth.

Gateway Community Services is a non-profit organization based in Lansing, Michigan that serves homeless youth by providing essential services to minors so they can become stable, self-sustaining members of the Lansing community. One of the many services that Gateway provides is a program called Crossroads. Crossroads is a transitional living program for homeless youth between the ages of 14 and 21. Many of the homeless youths suffer from mental, sexual, and/or physical abuse from family members.

On November 23, 2014, YLS hosted a Thanksgiving meal for all youth and staff currently residing at Crossroads. The Thanksgiving meal was catered and held at the Lansing Radisson Hotel. The youth were served and were able to select a large holiday dinner of their choice.

This Thanksgiving meal served two purposes: First, the YLS believed that a Thanksgiving meal

would have a powerful impact on these young individuals' lives. Many children who find themselves in difficult conditions need to know that there are people in the world that care about them. This is especially important during the holidays. The homeless youth residing at Crossroads have no family to visit during the holiday, which results in negative feelings.

Second, each Crossroads youth resident was asked to provide the YLS with a legal question of his/her choice. During the Thanksgiving meal, YLS volunteers took turns discussing each of the youths' legal questions. The following is a list of questions from the Crossroads youth:

- I was convicted of breaking and entering at the age of 18. Is there any way to get this expunged, and if so, what are the steps of this process?
- What does expungement mean? Does it mean nothing shows up on a background check? If the record is expunged, does the arrest still show up? If the arrest still appears, how do I get that cleared off my record too?
- If I get a charge as a minor, would this charge be sealed, or when a background check is run will it be seen?
- If I can't afford an attorney, how do I obtain one?
- How do people get their owed child support or current child support arrangements reduced?
- What is emancipation? And how does one qualify and obtain this and how long does the process take?
- Should I be honest on my job applications when asked about prior offenses or criminal charges?

The Thanksgiving dinner was a success. The questions YLS responded to prompted additional questions from the youth. The Legal Seminar was engaging and enjoyable. This project was truly gratifying for all involved. YLS plans to continue the relationship with Crossroads and this project on an annual basis. Discussions have also included how to expand the project in the future to include more youth.

YLS Hosts Fourth Annual Improv Bootcamp for New Litigators

By Syeda F. Davidson

Many new lawyers take acting classes in the hopes that they can become better litigators. This is certainly beneficial to improve confidence and one's presence when he or she appears in court. However, there are other "non-lawyer" skills that are immensely helpful for a new litigator to hone. While confidence is important in court, so is effective listening, as is the ability to react to unanticipated information. Train the staff at Go! Comedy Improv Theater in Ferndale, Michigan.

On November 22, 2014, council members Ryan Plecha and Syeda Davidson hosted an improvisational workshop for new lawyers at Go! Comedy for the fourth year in a row. The workshop was titled "ThinkFast! Improv Workshop for New Lawyers." It was held at Go!Comedy's informal atmosphere, and was taught by one of the theater's experienced actors.

The workshop introduced a networking component as well, as one of the beginning exercises consists of two participants sitting back-to-back while they attempt to have a conversation. This exercise forces participants to listen to their partners, as they cannot rely on facial cues to determine what is being said. Each participant then gives a small presentation

about his or her partner based on the conversation. There are many exercises that focus on building this skill.

Any litigator is familiar with that moment when you appear in front of a judge who asks you a question that you do not have a readily-available answer for, or that moment when you are in trial and a witness says something that you were less than prepared for him to say. This workshop also assists with that. Several exercises focus on telling a story as a team, with no knowledge of what the other team members are going to say. For example, nine people are placed on stage and two of them, independent of each other, provide the beginning and ending sentences of a story. The remaining members must come up with other sentences to complete the story in a way that connects the beginning to the end, no matter how unrelated they seem.

In addition to assisting with these skills, the workshop is always well-attended. Participants are encouraged to be themselves and have fun. They are further encouraged to stay for one of the shows at the theater later in the evening. Watch for dates when this workshop will run in 2015!

SBM YLS Hosts U.S. Supreme Court Group Admission Ceremony

By Hope V. Shovein

On December 10, 2014, the Young Lawyers Section sponsored a group admission ceremony at the United States Supreme Court in Washington, D.C. Hope Shovein, immediate past chair of the YLS, was the delegation coordinator for the admission ceremony. The admission ceremony took place in a packed courtroom before oral arguments in *United States v. Wong* (Docket No. 131074) and *United States v. June* (Docket No. 131075). Both cases addressed whether filing limits under the Federal Tort Claims Act (FTCA) are jurisdictional or subject to equitable tolling.

To be eligible for United States Supreme Court Bar membership, applicants must have been members of the bar of the



highest court of their jurisdiction for the past three years, present a certificate of good standing from that court, be sponsored by two current members of the U.S. Supreme Court Bar, pay a fee, and present a completed application. For further admission information and forms, visit the U.S. Supreme Court Bar Admission website at <http://www.supremecourt.gov/bar/baradmissions.aspx>.

Attendees were also treated to breakfast and a lecture about the Court. A good time was had by all! Keep an eye out for future YLS trips to the Supreme Court.

SBM YLS Hosts Seminar on Preliminary Examinations

By Ryan Zemke



With the passage of 2014 Public Acts 123 and 124, many of the rules and procedures governing preliminary exams have changed effective January 1, 2015. The State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section hosted an event in conjunction with the Macomb County Bar Association Criminal Law Section on January 12, 2015, to help outline and discuss these changes. Over 100 attorneys were in attendance to become apprised of these new changes.

Defense attorney Mitch Foster highlighted the major changes involved and outlined how to approach the new probable cause conferences and preliminary exams from the viewpoint of a defense attorney. He highlighted new methods that prosecuting attorneys may use as well as rules that may be favorable to the defense.

38th District Court Judge Carl Gerds III outlined the new authority that has been given to the magistrates and provided insight into how members of the bench in both circuit courts and district courts are approaching these changes. He discussed issues that may arise with these new procedures and addressed how the court administration is adapting to the new rules.

Attendees left with an understanding of how the new law will affect their practice as well as what new techniques they may encounter as these new rules play out in future cases. This event was recorded and will be available to watch online by contacting the Macomb County Bar Association.

The State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section is Now Accepting Nominations for the 2015 Regeana Myrick Outstanding Young Lawyer Award

In 1997, the State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section (“YLS”) renamed its “Outstanding Young Lawyer Award” in honor of Regeana Myrick, an executive council member of the YLS, who passed away in August of that year. In addition to serving on the YLS Executive Council, Regeana was a dedicated member of many bar associations. Regeana was committed to education and public service. She is remembered by her family, friends, and colleagues as a bright and charitable woman with many talents who was always mindful of those less fortunate than herself.

Please join the YLS in remembering Regeana Myrick this year at the 8th Annual Young Lawyers Summit on May 29-30, 2015, at Greektown Casino Hotel, where the “Regeana Myrick Outstanding Young Lawyer Award” will be presented to a young lawyer who embodies Regeana’s selflessness and scholarly legacy.

Nominations must be received by **Friday, April 24, 2015**. The nomination form is included on the next page. For more information, please contact Mark Jane at mark@skalaw.com.

Past Award Recipients Include:

2014 – Marilena David-Martin

2013 – Ronda L. Tate

2012 – Michelle A. Carter

2011 – Michael St. John

2010 – David L. Campbell

2009 – Jade Edwards

2008 – Jonathan N. Jilek

2007 – Bridgette Sparkman

2006 – Marla Linderman

2005 – Erika S. Julien

2004 – Richard Bernstein

2003 – Erika Butler-Akinyemi

**2015 REGEANA MYRICK
OUTSTANDING YOUNG LAWYER APPLICATION**

NOMINEE BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Name of Nominee

Date of Birth, Month/Year admitted to State
Bar of Michigan and P number

Preferred Mailing Address and Contact Number

Business/Employer's Address and Contact Number

Preferred E-mail Address

Law School and Date of Graduation

NOMINATED BY

Name, Preferred Mailing Address and Contact Number

Business/Employer's Address and Contact Number

Preferred E-mail Address

Relationship to Nominee

In 100 words or fewer, what qualities/characteristics does the nominee possess that makes him/her stand out in the legal community and beyond?

