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Among Other Things

Winter II 2017

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Letter from the Chair



Syeda Davidson

Burgess Sharp & Golden PLLC
43260 Garfield Rd Ste 280
Silverstone Officentre
Clinton Twp. 48038-7415
P:(586) 226-2627
E: syeda@bsglawfirm.com

My fellow young lawyers,

I am honored to enter this bar year as chair of the Young Lawyers Section of the State Bar of Michigan. However, I suppose I should not refer to you as fellow young lawyers.

Actually, I'm in that in-between phase in my career. I would have aged out of the Young Lawyers Section some time ago had I not been elected to the section's leadership track. All Michigan lawyers under 36 years of age or have been practicing for five years or less are automatically members of the SBM-YLS. I am almost 38 and have been practicing for nine years.

During my years on council and as a newly minted attorney, I have learned a few things and intend to focus on those during this bar year so you can learn from my experiences (and, of course, my mistakes.) As chair, my hope is to help each of you learn to be yourself in your practice. I'll explain by way of example.

Do you ever watch *The Good Wife*? If you do, you know the lead character is a lawyer named Alicia Florrick, played by Julianna Margulies. Alicia is a bit of a unicorn. After her also-lawyer husband resigns following a scandal, she must return to work. Of course, she lands at a prestigious firm right out of the gate after a hiatus of many years during which she raised her two children. Of course, she continues to raise her children despite her long hours at work, makes partner almost immediately, and is in trial pretty much all the time. Further, she is always beautifully and perfectly put together.

The way Alicia Florrick's role was written is just realistic enough to make new lawyers, or mom lawyers, or any *real lawyers* feel like they are not good enough.

Enter Elsbeth Tascioni, another lawyer on the show. She's a bit of a bumbling character and frequently makes statements at inappropriate times. She is obviously intended to be comic relief. However, as awkward as she may be, on the few occasions the audience gets to see her in court, she is well prepared and usually wins. She doesn't always win with Alicia's poise and grace. She wins while being her awkward self.

Continued on next page

I watched Elsbeth on my TV and squirmed in my seat, remembering all of the cringe-worthy things I've stated on the record, the times I stumbled through motions, or the times I've made awkward introductions. One day, I realized I didn't have to try to be Alicia. I could be a successful lawyer and still embrace my inner Elsbeth. That is my hope for all of you this year—that I can help you to practice law in a way that allows you to embrace who you are.

Feel free to contact me if you are interested in being more active with the SBM-YLS or if I can help you in any way.

Very truly yours,

Syeda Davidson

Cross-Examination

By James A. Johnson © 2017

Dean Wigmore stated that cross-examination is beyond doubt “the greatest legal engine ever invented for the discovery of the truth.” But, truth is rarely what a skillful trial lawyer seeks to accomplish on cross-examination. Cross-examination is not only a truth seeking process but is also an opportunity to persuade the fact finder to your position in the case.

Goals

For the consummate trial lawyer persuasion is an art practiced in its most subtle form on cross-examination. If no harm has been done to your case on direct examination and this particular witness cannot advance your theory of the case, announce: ***no questions your honor and sit down!*** Sometimes, the best cross is no cross at all. But, when you should ask questions, two major components must be considered: the method of questioning and the purpose in the questioning. The purpose is either to further your case or to point out weaknesses in the opponent's case. The method of cross-examination relates to the manner in which the questions are put to the witness. First, ask leading questions. A leading question is one that suggests the desired answer to the witness:

Q. You work at General Motors?

A. Yes.

Q. On Jefferson Ave?

A. Yes.

Q. At approximately 6:00 pm you were leaving the General Motors Building?

A. Yes.

Q. You were waiting for a cab?

A. Yes.

Q. You saw two cars collide?

A. Yes.

Second, get one fact at a time, using short questions and plain words asking for facts---not information or evaluations. The form of the question can give the jury the impression that the witness is free to answer the question as he chooses, yet still limit the witness:

Q. Did you see one of the cars hit the curb after the collision?

A. Yes, I saw that.

Q. Did you see the policeman investigate the collision?

A. Yes, I saw that too.

Third, control of both content and direction is the key to successful cross-examination. ***Again, cross-examination is not for the witness, it is for you.*** It is your opportunity to present ***your side*** of the witness's story. Out of the mouth of an adverse witness, responding that everything you ask is true! ***The object is to get the answer you want and not one word more.*** But, what do you do when you get an evasive or unresponsive answer? For example:

Q. You are married, aren't you?

A. I guess, you could say that.

Don't ask the judge to instruct the witness to answer the question. You control the witness by simply, repeating the question.

Q. Are you married?

A. Yes.

Or, better still, tell the witness you are repeating the question.

Q. Dr. Ruben, my question was, you examined the plaintiff only once?

A. Yes, that's correct.

Traps

You must have a purpose when you cross-examine a witness. Cross-examination that does not attain a specific purpose is a waste of time and a trap. You can damage your case. If no harm has been done to your case and there is nothing to be gained, half rise in your seat and say: no questions your honor. The mark of the masterful cross-examiner is to be able to make these decisions quickly by listening to



the answers. And what about the responses? You should already know the answers, keeping in mind to never ask a question without first knowing the answer. A cardinal rule adhered to by seasoned trial lawyers. And, listen closely to the response, because sometimes you will get a spectacularly favorable answer. And when you do **S-T-O- P!** Don't ask the witness to repeat it or explain it. **Save it for summation!** Leave the jury in suspense, unsatisfied or a little curious---and then **Y-O-U** satisfy them on summation. Remember, one of the purposes of cross-examination is to secure the information you need to support your theory of the case.

Probing

Even with formal and informal discovery and meticulous preparation, you cannot know all the answers. Moreover, you may face a surprise witness or new testimony may come up in areas that were overlooked. The deft advocate develops the art of probing. A tool of advocacy that should be in every trial lawyer's kit. Probing involves testing the witness's knowledge, with care. Just like a professional boxer who uses his left hand jab, to set up his thundering right hand. The boxer is looking for an opening and so are you. How do you probe in the courtroom? By listening carefully to the witness's answers. And you may have to ask an open-ended question. But, just like the boxer, very carefully. Sometimes he will throw a right hand punch without a clear opening. But a professional boxer is experienced and probing without knowing the answer is for the experienced trial lawyer. This technique requires immediate mental gymnastics. Like every phase of advocacy it's a learned skill

that comes with practice. Probing involves asking an open-ended question on collateral matters, to test the witness's knowledge, gently, by using short questions. To get the information you need to make your point. And, it is enough that the answers to your probing questions are vague, hesitant or un-informed responses.

Conclusion

The most effective cross is strategically planned in advance.

Focus on topics that by their nature allow for control of the witness. Now counsel can easily depart from the conventional guidelines for cross-examination. By using a mix of open and leading questions, it permits the witness to provide a reasonable explanation of his answers uninhibited and in his own words. The trick is that counsel gets to pick the topic for the witness's testimony on key trial themes that will cause jurors to decide the case in your favor. Your ability to effectively cross-examine is the product of thorough preparation and experience. How does the young lawyer get experience? One way is to take the advice of the proverbial drunk, wrapped around a street light post who responded to an inquiry by neatly dressed young gentlemen carrying a cello. How do I get to Carnegie Hall? -----**Practice! Practice! Practice!**

If you do not have time to do everything suggested in this article, do as much as you can. The more you do the better your cross-examination will be. You will have persuasive ammunition to argue on summation and in a few cases possibly discover the truth.

About the Author

James A. Johnson of James A. Johnson, Esq. in Southfield, Michigan is an accomplished Trial Lawyer. He concentrates on serious Personal Injury, Insurance Coverages under the CGL Policy and Sports & Entertainment Law. Jim is an active member of the Michigan, Massachusetts, Texas and Federal Court Bars. He can be reached through his website www.JamesAJohnsonEsq.com

What Can the Hit TV Show “Empire” Teach Us About the First Amendment and Trademark Law?

By Michael J. Serra

Trademarks are more than the elective you skipped as a 3L. A federal trademark registration grants its owner presumed exclusive rights to use a word, slogan, logo, sound, or other device throughout the entire country for the identified goods or services. In theory, owners of registered trademarks can block anyone from using a confusingly similar mark for similar goods or services. In practice, things can get complicated. First Amendment rights are always lurking behind claims for exclusive rights in forms of expression.

Twentieth Century Fox Television v. Empire Distribution, Inc. shows some of the interplay between the First Amendment and trademark law. Empire Distribution is a well-known hip-hop music label that began operation in 2010. In 2015, Fox premiered the television show, “Empire,” which portrays a fictional hip-hop music label called Empire Enterprises. Empire Distribution asserted Fox was infringing its rights in the trademark because consumers are likely confused as to Empire Distribution’s sponsorship or endorsement of Fox’s TV show. The court, however, never reached that issue. Instead, it found that the First Amendment protected Fox.

To decide this case, the court had to balance the public interest in preventing consumer confusion and the public interest in freedom of expression. Freedom of expression won because the name “Empire” is artistically relevant to the TV show and less likely to confuse consumers. Specifically, the court found Fox’s use of “Empire” relates to the show’s location—New York, the Empire State—and its plot, which involves a battle to control an entertainment empire.

If Fox’s choice to call the show “Empire” was unrelated to what is portrayed on the show, Empire Distribution may have



had a claim. The argument is that Fox would have had no reason to select that title except to confuse consumers of its relationship to Empire Distribution.

The court cited two cases about familiar artistic works to demonstrate how the First Amendment protected Fox. The first was a case about the song “Barbie Girl” by Aqua. There, the First Amendment protected the band because the song was actually about Barbie dolls. In contrast, the First Amendment did not protect OutKast and its song “Rosa Parks” because its lyrics were unrelated to the civil rights icon. The court in “Rosa Parks” found that the trademark claims could proceed because arbitrarily choosing “Rosa Parks” as a title “unquestionably enhanced the song’s potential sale to the consuming public.”

The lesson here is both simple and complex. It is relatively simple to understand trademark rights cannot trump the First Amendment. But things get complicated when assessing when the First Amendment applies. As seen with “Empire,” “Barbie Girl,” and “Rosa Parks,” the First Amendment may apply when trademark use is artistically relevant to the underlying work.

About the Author

Mike Serra is a senior associate attorney at Bodman PLC. His practice focuses on intellectual property and commercial litigation. From the inception of an idea, he collaborates with clients to develop assets protectable by trademark such as product design, product packaging, and product/company names. He also counsels on product claims substantiation and false advertising, trademark concurrent use agreements, and trademark licensing. This includes dispute resolution through negotiation, mediation, or litigation.

National Trial Competition

By Chris Wickman

The State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section (SBM-YLS) hosted the annual National Trial Competition at the Oakland County Circuit Court October 20-22. Competitors represented eleven schools—the University of Akron, Duquesne University, the University of Houston, the University of Illinois, John Marshall Law School, the University of Maryland, Samford University, St. Mary’s University, Southern Methodist University, and Wayne State University.

This year’s problem centered on the arrest of an off-duty police officer by two on-duty police officers from another department. The off-duty police officer brought an action primarily under 42 USC 1983 and alleged he was stopped due to his race; the defendants alleged there was an appropriate and nondiscriminatory purpose to the stop. Among the evidence argued by the parties was testimony of experts on racial discrimination, social media and public record evidence, the applicability of particular criminal statutes to the civil case, and impeachment by deposition and other prior statements.

Competitors benefit by practicing trial preparation, oral advocacy skills including courtroom presence and placement of themselves and displays, use of exhibits, and adjusting trial strategy and advocacy to different opponents. They benefit not only from the prep, but also from the detailed feedback from volunteer presiding judges and evaluators.

After a long day of advocacy, teams and coaches socialized at an Auburn Hills restaurant with food and beverages provided by the SBM-YLS. At the end of the reception, the semifinalists were announced: the University of Maryland, the University of Illinois, Samford University, and John Marshall Law School.

On the final day of the competition, Samford University and John Marshall advanced to the championship. In the final, Samford topped John Marshall by four points to win the 2017 title.

Individual award winners were Samford’s Candace Towns for best direct examination in the preliminary rounds; Duquesne’s Amber McGee and Hattie Parent for best opening statement and best cross examination, respectively; Houston’s Sammi Almasri for best closing argument; and Kheana Pollard of the University of Illinois for overall best advocate.

SBM-YLS congratulates all competitors on an outstanding competition and thanks the volunteer presiding judges and evaluators. Without our dedicated volunteers, we could not host this competition and help shape the future generation of attorneys.

We cannot wait until the 2018 competition—look for an announcement of the dates and location soon!



Illinois and Samford



Maryland and John Marshall



ABA Fall Conference

By Choi Portis

The American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division held its 2017 fall conference in Denver October 5-7. Highlights included the Diversity and Inclusion/Public Service collaborative outreach implementation of *Home Safe Home*; one-on-one executive coaching sessions with the renowned Deborah Forman; a discussion regarding gun violence in America featuring Tom Mauser; and #Fit2Practice 5k run.

Thursday: The conference began with the ABA YLD council meeting. Highlights included discussion and acceptance of restricting the Leadership Advisory Board; an informative video regarding membership; membership director Christopher Brown asking that young lawyers ask other young lawyers why they are not ABA members; a conversation regarding the law student division's new website at www.abaforlawstudents.com; and a request for volunteers for the resume review program.

Also on the agenda was the redistricting task force, which has been restructured and will issue several draft reports regarding redistricting. They will take into consideration input from current and former district representatives as well as any other suggestions. One major issue the task force faces is incorporating Puerto Rico, a pressing issue because Puerto Rico does not have district representation and YLD district representatives assist with disaster legal services in the areas they represent. During the council meeting, Deputy City Attorney Cristal Torres DeHerrera spoke to the group regarding her path and government careers.

For non-council members arriving early, the ABA YLD offered two continuing legal education sessions: *Combatting Voter Suppression with Automatic Voter Registration: A Reflection on the Current Fight for Voting Rights* and *Put A Plug in the Jug: Ethical and Criminal Consequence of Alcohol Abuse in the Legal Profession*.

Friday: Friday began with a thought-provoking conversation about gun violence with Tom Mauser, author of *Walking in Daniel's Shoes*. Mauser's son was a victim of the Columbine High School shooting. The session revolved around Mauser's experiences and a round table discussion regarding how young lawyers can address these issues and make a difference at home and on the national stage. Other programs included dealing with the millennial label as a young professional; delivering high-quality service projects for young lawyer affiliates; marijuana and the law; an interactive approach to aiding domestic violence survivors; and avoiding malpractice with fee agreements.

The programming also included a luncheon entitled: *Diversity and the Bench: Perspectives from the Colorado District*



Court, Court of Appeals, and Supreme Court. Attendees were engaged in a discussion regarding diversity on the bench and in the profession as a whole by Colorado Supreme Court Judge Monica M. Marquez, Colorado Court of Appeals Judge Terry Fox, and Colorado 21st District Judge Lance Timbreza.

The Public Service and Diversity team took part in the first *Home Safe Home* outreach project, partnering with the Rocky Mountain Children's Law Center to work on its Dandelion Project. The Rocky Mountain Children's Law Center has provided legal and clinical services to families for 35 years, and its mission is transforming the lives of abused, neglected, and at-risk children through compassionate legal advocacy, clinical services, education, and public policy reform. The Dandelion Project is a therapeutic gardening opportunity promoting healing and health for children and youth who have experienced abuse, neglect, or other trauma.

Friday's events concluded with a dinner dance at the History Colorado Center.



Saturday: Saturday's began with the affiliate showcase, during which the State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section presented some of its signature programs. Programs included *Bloom Where You Are Planted*, an engaging conversa-

tion regarding leadership principles that inspired and motivated changes necessary to go from dying on the vine to a season of full bloom within your career, *Community Alliances: Advancing LGBTQ Rights, Lessons from Harvey and Irma: How to Effectively Implement Disaster Legal Services when a Disaster Strikes, Finding Financial Balance*, and practical ethics training.

The conference's closing session featured Mark Bolton, senior deputy legal counsel to Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper, who discussed professional development, his shift into politics, and advice for those attracted to public interest work.



New Lawyer + Refined Soft Skills = A Pathway to Success

By Aaron Sohaski

Practicing law is a business. If you are just starting your career as a lawyer, you are constantly looking to increase the number of clients you have. It is not an easy challenge to overcome. That is because you will have to pay attention towards a variety of factors in order to become a successful lawyer. Out of those factors, soft skills hold a prominent place. Here are some soft skills that you need to possess in order to achieve success.

Leadership. A recent study conducted by the Law School at University of Chicago identified that leadership is one of the most prominent factors that a lawyer should have to become successful. People who come to get your assistance expect you to play a dominant role when handling the case. In other words, you should become a leader and guide your client in the right path. If you fail to play such a dominant role, you will not be able to impress your clients. Hence, it is important for you to be equipped with leadership qualities.

Effective communications. Communicating with your clients is a key responsibility. To impress the clients, you need to have effective interpersonal communication capabilities. You can think about using the benefits of technology in order to implement effective communications to your practice. For example, you can get client management tools and track all the communications that take place along with the clients. You will have to take necessary steps in order to maintain off the clock contacts as well.

Accountability. As a lawyer, you should be an accountable individual. It delivers peace of mind to your clients. Be open and honest with your clients, as this will help establish long-standing relationship.

Risk management. Lawyers have to deal with a variety of risks on a daily basis. Therefore, you must have effective risk management capabilities as well. In other words, identify risk and take necessary steps in order to get rid of it. The risk can be for you, your clients, or your business. You need to use your senses to figure out a risk beforehand. Then you would have enough time to work accordingly and mitigate the risk while minimizing the negative impact created.

Financial literacy. Most of the new lawyers believe that they do not need to be equipped with financial literacy. However, if you want to become a successful lawyer, you must possess this soft skill. When you have a clear understanding on how businesses work, you will get the opportunity to add more value to your clients, employers, and colleagues. Therefore, the time you spend to improve your financial literacy can be considered as an excellent investment done towards future success.

Project management. Good lawyers need to be good project managers as well. You should take every single case as a project. Upon accepting, you undertake the responsibility to manage it and deliver a positive outcome for the clients. You will have to manage all the details and work according to a timeline when helping the clients. That is where your project management skills would come into play.

Resilience. Resilience is another personal characteristic that you will not learn at the law school. It is important for you to be equipped with this personal characteristic to become a successful lawyer. You need to stay strong at all times while bouncing back. Then you will be able to provide a better service for all your clients.

Meet your 2017-2018 Young Lawyer's Section Executive Council

Chair: Syeda F. Davidson (Clinton Township)

Syeda Davidson is an associate attorney at Burgess Sharp & Golden, PLLC, where her practice is concentrated on employment and civil rights matters. Prior to that, she was a staff attorney at Lakeshore Legal Aid, where she represented low-income survivors of domestic violence in civil proceedings. Syeda received her juris doctor from Thomas M. Cooley Law School in 2008. She has since held numerous leadership positions with the Oakland County Bar Association, where she chaired the Law-Related Education and the Providing Access to Legal Services committees. Nationally, Syeda has served as managing editor for the American Bar Association publication, *TYL*.



Syeda is active in organizations outside of the practice of law. She serves on the board of directors for Affirmations, a community center focused on LGBT education and advocacy in Ferndale, and Detroit Together Men's Chorus. She is also active with the American Civil Liberties Union. Her hobbies include aerial acrobatics and playing the bass guitar. She resides in Oak Park with her husband, Mark, their son, Linus, and their cat, Kitty Cat.

Chair Elect: Kara R. Hart-Negrich (Lansing)

Kara Hart-Negrich is a staff attorney for the Michigan State Housing Development Authority and the State Historic Preservation Office, where she primarily practices affordable housing, real estate, and cultural property law. She previously served as counsel for the Michigan Land Bank. Kara volunteers for the Michigan Immigrant Rights Center, where she has secured U-visas for women in domestic violence cases.



Kara has served on the State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers' Section executive council since 2011. She is also a member of the State Bar of Michigan Real Property Law Section. Nationally, Kara is an active member of the American Bar Association Forum on Affordable Housing and Community Development Law. She received her undergraduate degree from the University of Michigan–Dearborn and her law degree from Wayne State University Law School.

Secretary: Ryan Zemke (Utica)

Now in his third year on the State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section Executive Council, Ryan Zemke is a solo practitioner in Macomb County focusing primarily on criminal defense. He currently serves as defense counsel for the 41B Drug and Sobriety Court in Clinton Township. He is also president of HEAL—a non-profit charity providing support to drug and sobriety courts.



Zemke is on the board of directors of Families Against Narcotics and was appointed to a three-year term on the Macomb County Substance Use Disorder Board. He was recently elected to the State Bar of Michigan Criminal Law Section council, and has been involved with the Macomb County Bar Association Young Lawyers Section and serves as chair-elect of the MCBA YLS Board of Directors.

Zemke completed his undergraduate studies at Michigan State University, where he received a degree in political theory and constitutional democracy. He continued his studies at Thomas M. Cooley Law School where he graduated as part of the Clark J. Adams Class of 2008.

Treasurer: Samantha J. Orvis (Grand Blanc)

Newly elected treasurer Samantha Orvis has served on the YLS Executive Council for five years. She is an associate attorney in Garan Lucow Miller P.C.'s Grand Blanc office, where she practices insurance defense litigation.



Orvis is actively involved with the Women's Bar Association, serving her fifth year on the executive board as vice president. She is a director at large for the Women Lawyers Association of Michigan, and sits on the board of directors for the Genesee County Bar Association as its women lawyers' delegate.

She is a member of the board of directors for New Gateways, Inc., a non-profit organization that enriches life for adults with mild to severe multiple developmental disabilities. She also sits on the board of directors for the Great Lakes Environmental Law Center, which was founded to protect the world's greatest freshwater resource and the communities that depend upon it.

Orvis earned her law degree from Wayne State University

Law School in 2011, where she served as a member of the school's Student Board of Governors and was on the Student Trial Advocacy Team. She earned her Bachelor of Arts from the University of Michigan-Flint in 2008. She is particularly passionate about environmental justice and animal rescue.

Immediate Past Chair: Shenique A. Moss (Detroit)

Shenique A. Moss is assistant counsel at the Wayne County Commission in Detroit. In her current position, she focuses on municipal law, contract law, and real estate law. Prior to this role, she served an assistant attorney general at the Michigan Department of Attorney General for more than eight years.



District 1 (Macomb and Wayne Counties)

Elisha M. Oakes (Saint Clair Shores)

Elisha Oakes is principal and managing attorney at The Law Office of Elisha M. Oakes, PLLC, located in Saint Clair Shores. She primarily practices in criminal defense, family law, probate, and business law.



Oakes is a recent addition to the State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section Executive Council. She also serves as a regional representative for the Women Lawyers Association of Michigan.

Oakes received her B.S. from The University of Virginia's College at Wise; and her J.D. and masters of law degrees from Western Michigan University Thomas M. Cooley Law School. She is admitted to the State Bar of Michigan and the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan.

Choi T. Portis (Detroit)

Choi T. Portis, a Detroit native, is associate general counsel for the City of Detroit Water and Sewerage Department. In her current position, she handles litigation, claims, and contract review, and serves as counsel to the department director regarding various legal issues. Choi is admitted to practice in the state of Michigan and the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan.



She attended Eastern Michigan University and Western Michigan University Thomas M. Cooley Law School.

Coleman L. Potts (Detroit)

Coleman Potts is an associate attorney at the Detroit Law Group, PLLC, where he has a litigation practice. He received his bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Georgia State University and his J.D. from Western Michigan University



Thomas M. Cooley Law School. While in law school, Potts interned with the Michigan Unemployment Insurance Project and clerked for a state court judge in Atlanta. In his spare time, he enjoys traveling.

Aaron Sohaski (Detroit)

Aaron P. Sohaski is a licensed attorney who handles compliance and regulatory issues at Henry Ford Health System in Detroit. He focuses on Medicare, Medicaid, and commercial payer contracts. He attended Grand Valley State for his bachelor's degree, Johns Hopkins University for his master's degree, and Western Michigan University Cooley Law School for his J.D.



Currently, Sohaski serves on the National Conferences Team for the ABA Young Lawyers Division, is district representative on the SBM Young Lawyers Section Council, and has committee appointments from ABA President Hilarie Bass and SBM President Donald Rockwell. Throughout law school, he served in leadership roles at state and national levels. Within the ABA Law Student Division, he served as Sixth Circuit governor and chair. Within the SBM Law Student Section, Aaron served as secretary and chair. He received an appointment from past SBM President Thomas Rombach to the 21st Century Law Practice Task Force.

District 2 (Oakland County)

Angela Baldwin (Farmington Hills)

Angela Baldwin is assistant general counsel for the City of Detroit. Prior to that, Baldwin served as law clerk for the Hon. Edward Ewell. Baldwin also brings more than eight years of business experience to her role, including supply chain and project management for Gatorade, Tropicana, and Propel. Baldwin has been added to the Detroit Recreation Advisory Board, which provides information on public interest, policies, and costs delegated for leisure services and facilities.



She is an executive council member for the State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section, co-chair for the Federal Bar Association Eastern District Chapter's RISE Committee, a participant on the Endorsement Policy Committee of the Hispanic Bar Association of Michigan, and the Detroit Bar Association Inns of Court. Baldwin earned her law degree from Michigan State College of Law.

Kristina A. Bilowus (Royal Oak)

Kristina Bilowus is a family law practitioner with Findling Law, P.L.C. in Royal Oak. Her practice focuses on all aspects of domestic relations including divorce, custody, paternity,

support, benefits, and an assortment of post-judgment issues. Prior to her current practice, Kristina had significant work experience with the Michigan judicial system in positions in Oakland, Washtenaw, and Wayne counties.



She received her J.D. and LL.M. in criminal law and advocacy from Western Michigan University Thomas Cooley Law School, where she now serves as an adjunct professor at the school's Auburn Hills campus.

Belowus is board member for both the Women's Bar Association and Women Lawyers Association of Michigan. She is active in the Oakland County Inns of Court, Michigan Center for Civic Education, and the American Bar Association Law Student Outreach Team, and is an Oakland County Bar Association member.

Matthew P. Breuer (Royal Oak)

Matthew Breuer is an associate at Howard & Howard in Royal Oak. Matthew received his bachelor's degree from Michigan State University and his law degree from Wayne State University Law School. Admitted to the State Bar of Michigan in November 2012, he holds memberships to the Oakland County Bar Association and the American Bar Association Business Law Section.



Breuer has been an active member of the Young Lawyers Section Executive Council since 2013, serving as a District 2 representative. He has authored articles appearing in publications including the *Michigan Defense Quarterly*, *Chicago Law Bulletin*, *Smart Business Chicago*, the *Value Examiner*. In addition, he was a contributor to several Wiley publications including *Cloud Computing and Electronic Discovery*; *Private Equity: History, Governance and Operations*; and *The Handbook of Fraud Deterrence*.

Jerome Crawford (Troy)

Jerome Crawford is associate legal director of Horizon Global Corporation, a publicly traded company and world leader in custom towing, trailering, and cargo management products. In this position, he handles an array of issues spanning compliance, mergers and acquisitions, intellectual property, product liability, employment, and corporate law.



As part of service to the bar, Crawford is president-elect of the Wolverine Bar Association and Foundation and an executive council member of both the SBM Young Lawyers and ACES sections. A native Detroit, he attended Michigan State University for both undergrad and law school. During law school, he was vice president of the Black Law Students Association for two years, director of entertainment for the

Sports and Entertainment Law Society, and executive director of the trial side of Moot Court and Trial Advocacy Board.

Tanya N. Cripps (Auburn Hills)

Tanya Cripps is a transaction manager at Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA) and oversees real estate transactions for FCA's NAFTA and international properties. She negotiates leases, easements, acquisitions, dispositions, and other matters for FCA's corporate real estate.



In addition to YLS, she is a director for the Oakland County Bar Association New Lawyers Committee and a member of the State Bar of Michigan Real Property Law Section. With an underlying background in business, she received her bachelor's degree from Grand Valley State University and law degree from Western Michigan University Thomas M. Cooley Law School.

In her spare time, she enjoys skiing, spending time with her golden retriever, and renovating houses with her husband.

Silvia Mansoor

Silvia Mansoor is an attorney at Dean & Fulkerson, P.C. in Troy, which specializes in corporate, real estate, transportation, and labor & employment practice areas. She obtained her marketing degree from Wayne State University and her law degree from Michigan State University College of Law. She is currently pursuing a master's of science in information at the University of Michigan.



In addition to the State Bar, Mansoor is actively involved in the Oakland County legal community and the Detroit startup community. She has previously served as co-chair of the technology track with Detroit Startup Week and has coached at Startup Weekend-Detroit.

Her interests include bicycling, keeping up on technology trends, and trying out new restaurants.

Words that she tries to live by: "If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader." – John Quincy Adams

Aristidi Papaioannou (Farmington)

Aris Papaioannou, received his bachelor of arts in philosophy from the University of Michigan-Dearborn and his juris doctor from Wayne State University Law School. While in law school, Aris was active in the moot court program, serving on its executive board. He is a member of the State Bar of Michigan and the Detroit Metropolitan Bar Association. He specializes in personal injury, traffic offenses, contract disputes, and civil rights violations.

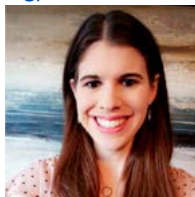


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District 3 (All Other Counties)

Katherine Jean Bennett (Lansing)

Katherine J. Bennett graduated with a bachelor of arts degree in political science and Spanish from Hillsdale College in 2008. Following graduation, she served as deputy campaign manager for U.S. Congressman Tim Walberg's reelection campaign. In 2012, she graduated from Western Michigan University Thomas M. Cooley Law School. In May 2012, she was admitted to the State Bar of Michigan. She is also admitted to the United States District Court for the Eastern District and Western District of Michigan as well as the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit.



Bennett currently serves as an assistant attorney general at the Michigan Department of Attorney General Corporate Oversight Division.

Aside from serving on the SBM-YLS Council, she is president-elect of the Ingham County Bar Association Young Lawyers Section and vice president of the Women Lawyers Association of Michigan mid-Michigan chapter. She has also served on the SBM Character & Fitness and Law-Related Education & Public Outreach committees.

Bennett and her husband, Cale, live in Grand Ledge. She is a member of Shepherd of the Hills Evangelical Lutheran Church in Delta Township and Capital Area Mustangs.

Bobby A. Ficklin Jr. (Lansing)

Bobby A. Ficklin Jr. is the principal and managing attorney at The Ficklin Law Firm, PLLC, located in Lansing. He primarily practices in social security disability appeals, criminal defense, probate, and small business and nonprofit startup.



Ficklin is a recent addition to the State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section Executive Council, which he joined in March 2017. He also serves as District XII president of Phi Alpha Delta Law Fraternity and is a member of the Ingham County Bar Association Young Lawyers Section and the Davis-Dunnings Bar Association.

Ficklin is active in the greater Lansing area as a volunteer mentor for The Turning Point of Lansing youth mentor group, president of the Lansing graduate chapter of Iota Phi Theta Fraternity, a praise team member of Union Missionary Baptist Church, and other community service efforts.

He received his bachelor of arts and master of public administration degrees from Valdosta State University; an MBA from the University of Phoenix Western Michigan Campus; and his J.D. from Michigan State University College of Law. He is admitted to the State Bar of Michigan and the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Michigan.

Amy Krieg (East Lansing)

Amy Krieg grew up in Michigan and obtained her bachelor's degree from Albion College. She attended law school at California Western School of Law in San Diego and practiced insurance defense for a short time in Las Vegas. She then worked at a general practice firm, Burchfield, Park & Pollesch, P.C., in Brighton.

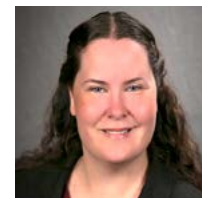


Currently, Krieg works at Michigan State University College of Law, advising students and alumni in pursuit of their dream jobs, which often includes intellectual property, in-house, and non-traditional positions, as well as careers in Canada. She currently serves as the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division district representative for Michigan.

In her spare time, Krieg does home renovation projects with her husband, entertains her miniature schnauzer, practices yoga, dabbles in photography and social media, and is always planning her next international trip.

Laura Marie Kubit (Caro)

Based out of Caro, Laura Kubit is a civil legal aid attorney with Lakeshore Legal Aid. In this role, she serves the low-income and senior populations of Tuscola, Bay, Midland, Gladwin, Clare, Isabella, Gratiot, and Saginaw counties, handling a wide variety of legal issues from preventing the loss of safe and affordable housing to securing protection from abuse and removing barriers to basic needs.

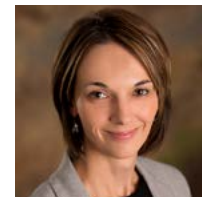


Kubit's prior legal experience includes working with Lakeshore's statewide legal hotline in Southfield, internships with federal court in Detroit and the Macomb County Prosecutor's Office, and consumer protection work with The Googasian Firm in Bloomfield Hills.

In 2014, Kubit was appointed to the State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section's Executive Council. She received her bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan and J.D. from Wayne State University Law School. She also spent two years as a Peace Corps volunteer in Thailand.

Erica N. Payne (Marquette)

Erica N. Payne is a shareholder with the law firm of Kendricks, Bordeau, Adamini, Greenlee & Keefe, P.C. in Marquette. She graduated from Finlandia University and earned her law degree from Western Michigan University Thomas M. Cooley Law School. She has a general practice with a diverse background in the law that includes real estate and probate and trust administration with an emphasis on civil litigation in these areas. She is also trained as a general civil mediator and domestic relations mediator.



Payne is an active member of the Marquette County Bar Association, and has held every office in that organization. She has served on the State Bar of Michigan Executive Council for the Young Lawyers Section and SBM Representative Assembly since 2016.

Christopher B. Wickman (Okemos)

Christopher B. Wickman is the sole practitioner of Equal Footing Law, P.C. based in Ingham County. He is a 2008 graduate of Michigan State University and a 2011 graduate of

Temple University Beasley School of Law.

Since passing the bar exam in 2011, Wickman has practiced criminal defense supplemented by civil litigation. He is an active member of the Ingham County Bar Association, having previously served on multiple committees and as president of its Young Lawyers Section. In 2016, he was named one of the Top 5 Under 35 by the Ingham County Bar Association.



Happy Holidays from the
YLS *Executive Council*