



# WSBA

## WASHINGTON YOUNG LAWYERS DIVISION

To: WSBA Board of Governors  
From: Jaime Hawk, WYLD President  
Re: WYLD Quarterly Report (March 2009)  
Date: March 1, 2009

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Thank you for the opportunity to report on the current work and achievements of the Washington Young Lawyers Division (WYLD). The theme for this year is the “changing face of the legal profession,” with a focus on greater collaboration between WYLD and the sections, committees and other entities of WSBA, as well as all minority bar associations. We remain the transition point for thousands of newer and younger attorneys who are looking for guidance on how to best participate in bar activities. The Board of Trustees is committed to representing all of our members and building partnerships.

The WYLD has been busy during this second quarter of FY 2009. We have sponsored several events and programs and continue to make plans for the remainder of the year as summarized below. During the past few months, we have worked tirelessly in an effort to support the BOG, our members, and the larger Association on issues unique to young lawyers. The Division has organized several events and programs this fall and continues to make plans for the remainder of the year as discussed in this report.

The Board of Trustees is committed to strengthening our ties within the profession and communities we represent, as well as to providing public service and professional development opportunities and membership benefits to young and new lawyers. We plan to focus on coordinating joint projects with county and minority bar associations and ensuring that our WYLD Committees work together to benefit young lawyers and law students from every corner of the state. The BOT is looking forward to the Young Bar Leaders Summit later this month which will provide a forum to achieve these goals.

### **WYLD Program Review**

The WSBA Program Review Committee is scheduled to review the WYLD on March 18, 2009. In an effort to assist the Committee and engage in the program review process, the WYLD has initiated an internal program review process by forming a taskforce with three substantive subcommittees: 1) Transition into the Practice; 2) Public Service and Pro Bono; and 3) Young and New Lawyer Advocacy and Representation. The WYLD BOT targeted these three categories as the primary focal points of the Division’s work

and has tasked each subcommittee with reviewing our current and future programming to determine how we can best serve our members in the coming years.

We look forward to working with the committee and participating in the programmatic review process.

## **BOARD OF TRUSTEE MEETINGS**

### *December 6, 2008, BOT Meeting*

The second BOT meeting of FY 2009 was held on December 6<sup>th</sup> in Bellingham in coordination with the BOG meeting that same weekend. The BOG/BOT dinner that was organized that weekend was a wonderful gathering. Many Governors and Trustees commented on what an enjoyable evening it was. As President-Elect Mungia expressed, the WYLD also hopes this joint BOG/BOT dinner will become an annual gathering. The Trustees are committed to supporting the work of the Board of Governors and hope to serve as a resource to their respective governors by reaching out to and providing feedback from the young lawyers in their districts, as well as continuing to serve the unique needs and challenges faced by young lawyers.

At the BOT meeting in Bellingham, a detailed discussion on WYLD program review took place. Executive Director Littlewood participated in the discussion and provided helpful guidance. Through this discussion, the above mentioned three target areas were identified: 1) Transition into the Practice; 2) Public Service and Pro Bono; and 3) Young and New Lawyer Advocacy and Representation. Additionally, the BOT discussed the WYLD membership criteria and voted unanimously, as part of WYLD program review, to re-visit and review any prior positions taken regarding changes to WYLD membership criteria.

Prior to the Board of Trustees meeting, the WYLD Public Service Committee organized a Pre-law Conference for Bellingham high school students. The keynote speaker was federal Judge Ricardo Martinez who was followed by a panel discussion of young lawyers and other special guests, including Cesar Torres, Executive Director of Northwest Justice Project. The WYLD greatly appreciates the many lawyers, judges, and teachers from Whatcom County who volunteered their time to make this event a great success.

### *February 7, 2009, BOT Meeting*

The third BOT meeting of FY 2009 was held in Seattle on February 7, 2009. The BOT continued its program review discussion and decided to create a program review committee with 3 subcommittees. The BOT also discussed the proposed WYLD Diversity Plan and it was noted that it will be marked as an action item on the agenda for the March BOT meeting. The WYLD Diversity Plan provides a framework and basic plan for the Division to be mindful and take steps to support and maintain diversity within the Division. The BOT also looks forward to supporting the work of WSBA staff

in their efforts to develop a diversity plan that serves all aspects of the Association, as well as working with the large amount of young lawyers in the minority bar associations who want to increase involvement in the WSBA.

In recognition of the “National Teen Dating Violence Prevention and Awareness Week”, February 2-6, 2009, the BOT and WYLD Public Service Committee organized a community forum on the unmet legal needs of teen victims of dating violence at the Asian Referral and Counseling Service in Seattle. This project was launched in partnership with the ABA YLD national public service project, *Voices Against Violence*. To continue this important project and develop written materials on the legal rights of teen victims of dating violence, the WYLD has applied for an ABA YLD subgrant to fund this initiative, and has reached out to the WLI and Washington Women Lawyers in an effort to collaborate and expand efforts around the state.

### **Next Board meeting**

The fourth Board of Trustees meeting will be held Saturday, March 21, in Seattle, in conjunction with the **Young Bar Leaders Summit**. The BOT will be gathering with young lawyer board representatives from most of the minority bar associations, the leaders of the county YLDs, and past fellows of the WLI for the first statewide WYLD summit of this kind. A dialogue regarding the issues discussed and action plans developed from this summit will be continued during a panel scheduled at the ATJ/Bar Leaders Conference in Yakima in May.

### **WYLD PUBLIC SERVICE PROGRAMS:**

#### **YMCA Youth and Government Mock Trial Competition (Olympia)**

The WYLD is continuing its annual sponsorship of the **YMCA Youth and Government Mock Trial Championships**, March 27-29, in Olympia. Several WYLD Trustees, former WYLD officers, and local young lawyers will be volunteering their time as attorney raters for the final rounds of the state mock trial championships. The YMCA Youth & Government Mock Trial program allows high school students to participate in a “true-to-life” courtroom drama. Teams of attorneys and witnesses prepare their cases for trial before a real judge in an actual courtroom. A “jury” of attorneys rates teams on their presentations while the presiding judge rules on the motions, objections, and ultimately the merits. Participants develop critical thinking and analytical skills, learn the art of oral advocacy, and gain a respect for the role of law and the judiciary. The WYLD handles the recruitment of judges and attorneys, and WYLD members comprise a large percentage of the volunteers. WYLD gets recognition as a sponsor through many schools, courtrooms, and on TVW when the championship round is broadcast.

#### **Youth and Law Forum (Seattle)**

The WYLD is again sponsoring the **Youth and Law Forum** on April 18 in Seattle. The WYLD offers partial funding and assists with planning for the Forum, which provides elementary through high school students the opportunity to participate in workshops

where they debate and analyze case studies with the guidance of volunteer attorneys and judges. The Seattle program is targeted towards at-risk youth and minority students. Students who attend are encouraged to pursue a legal career and to take active leadership roles in their communities and student governments. This program emphasizes the importance of staying in school and being an active member of society. The event also offers youth the opportunity to meet city, county and Washington state law enforcement officials. Event sponsors include the Loren Miller Bar Association, the Black Law Enforcement Association, King County Sheriff's office, and many local churches and groups.

### **Pre-Law Student Leadership Conference (Yakima)**

Trustees and the WYLD Public Service Committee are currently planning the annual **Pre-Law Student Leadership Conference in Yakima**. The event will take place on May 16 at the Convention Center in Yakima. Students from Eastern Washington will be invited to attend.

The Yakima program is in its 19<sup>th</sup> year and is targeted towards at-risk youth and minority students. Students who attend are encouraged to pursue a legal career and to take active leadership roles in their communities and student governments. This program emphasizes the importance of staying in school and being an active member of society. Students participate in interactive workshops and discuss case studies usually relating to criminal and family law issues. Workshops have also covered immigration law, civil rights, first amendment free speech issues, and intellectual property. Students also discuss issues that currently impact youth, and in some years have worked to develop an action plan they can implement. Between 15 and 20 attorneys, judges and community leaders volunteer time as mentors.

### **WYLD COMMITTEES AND ADDITIONAL PROGRAMMING:**

#### **WYLD Pro Bono/Public Service Committee**

The WYLD is focused on providing pro bono and public service opportunities for lawyers around the state. The WYLD Public Service Committee is planning to sponsor three pro bono wills clinics in FY 2009 through the **WYLD First Responder Wills Clinic**. The clinic provides free estate planning for first responders, including fire fighters and police. The program was started in response to the hundreds of first responders who died intestate on September 11, 2001, and was started in Washington by WYLD members Jenni Frere Volk and Ford Clary. Seven clinics have been held to date with over 400 hundred clients served, and there are plans to expand the clinics around the state.

This committee is also working to implement the ABA YLD national **domestic violence public service project** for 2008-2009, *Voices Against Violence*. This project has a focus on addressing the unmet legal needs of domestic violence victims, specifically victims of teen dating violence, through pro bono clinics and community outreach. In addition to the

program that was held in Seattle at ACRS on February 7<sup>th</sup>, a similar program is being planned in Spokane. The committee is also collaborating with TeamChild and the Northwest Justice Project to provide pro bono **juvenile records sealing clinics** around the state. The first sealing clinic is scheduled for March 25 in Snohomish County, and future clinics are being planned in Spokane and Tacoma. The unique perspective of young lawyers on issues facing teens allow us to effectively serve and communicate with this vulnerable generation on behalf of WSBA.

### **The Greater Access and Assistance Project (GAAP)/Access to Justice Committee**

As budgetary challenges continue to face the legal services community, young lawyers have encouraged greater involvement by our members in promoting access to justice. As a result, the WYLD GAAP Committee and the Board of Trustees are working hard toward statewide expansion of GAAP, as well as the development of an online in-take and referral system. The committee has also received a generous grant from the WSBA Family Law Section and is planning free family law CLE programs in Kitsap, Snohomish and Spokane Counties in an effort to provide training and recruit local attorneys for the local GAAP referral lists who will agree to take a GAAP case in the upcoming months. A free family law CLE is scheduled in Kitsap County this month. The committee hopes to have a formal written proposal regarding GAAP expansion and the online system for consideration by the BOG at the July meeting.

### **WYLD CLE Committee**

Young lawyers continue to desire unique CLEs that best serve their educational needs. These needs are often more broad and specialized than otherwise available CLEs. The CLE Committee addresses this particular programming need throughout the year by planning a number of targeted, low cost programs for young lawyers on both sides of the state. The Committee has organized an *ex parte* **hearings training** in Seattle on April 23<sup>rd</sup> and an **ethics CLE** regarding “the Ethical and Professional Dimensions of Your Career Choices” on March 19<sup>th</sup>.

The CLE Committee also plans to collaborate and co-sponsor the next Young Lawyer Express in Spokane on April 3-4 that is being planned by the Membership Committee, as well as the Young Business Lawyers CLE being held by the WSBA Business Law Section on March 6<sup>th</sup> in Seattle. The Committee is also working to plan an Oregon reciprocity CLE in Portland, OR, on October 16-17.

## **WYLD Membership Committee**

The Membership Committee provides both member benefits to our WYLD members and provides social opportunities to encourage camaraderie among young legal professionals. This month the Committee completed its **four part election law program series**. Part I focused on how young lawyers can get involved in the electoral process. Part II was a CLE focused on governing law. Part III focused on the “Ins and Outs of Running For Public Office”. Part IV was a CLE at SU Law School, in conjunction with the Diversity Week at the law school, focusing on Minority Voting Rights in February 2009. All programs were well received and attended.

Planning has also begun for the **Young Lawyer Express No. 11**, a free CLE and networking event, which will be taking place in Spokane on April 3-4, 2009. With the assistance of various WYLD trustees, the Young Lawyer Express is taken around the State to provide free CLEs to our members.

The committee’s annual holiday party and networking event was held in Seattle on December 9<sup>th</sup>. The Membership Committee also continues to host other **weekly social and professional networking events** in the Puget Sound Area and Spokane for young lawyers to connect with each other and local young lawyer bar associations.

## **Bridging the Gap Conference Committee**

The Bridging the Gap Conference Committee focuses on serving the unique transitional needs of new lawyers as they first become attorneys. The WYLD works to prepare these new lawyers in those matters not taught in law school, while then allowing for their professional growth in the years after this initial transition. The Committee has held regular meetings and is planning to hold the event on **April 10, 2009 in Seattle**. The mission of the Bridging the Gap Conference is to provide education on a wide variety of low-cost practical skills to help better prepare new lawyers to be successful in their legal careers, regardless of practice area. The WYLD partners with the King County Bar Association Young Lawyers Division to sponsor this conference.

## **OUTREACH EFFORTS**

The Division remains committed to improving connections with those within and outside of WSBA in an effort to continue to promote those services and opportunities unique to young lawyers.

### *Law School Outreach*

Maintaining a seamless transition between law school and the WYLD is important. WYLD is focused on this transitional period. In addition to supporting and promoting law school events, WYLD continues its commitment to law student outreach by plans to visit all three law schools this year. The three law student trustees on the Board of

Trustees are working hard to make WYLD more visible in the law schools and plan to organize programs and receptions with WYLD to promote how law students can get involved with WYLD and bar activities and connected to professional mentors. We are grateful for the WSBA's support of our efforts to reach out to the law schools and their assistance in providing opportunities for students to participate in WYLD activities.

#### *WSBA section outreach*

The WYLD can be seen as a portal entity in that each year young lawyers are transitioning into and out of the WYLD and looking to get more involved in WSBA Sections. In an effort to get more young lawyers active in WSBA Sections, the WYLD has proposed a WYLD liaison program to all WSBA sections. If a section is interested, the WYLD will appoint a young lawyer liaison who will provide increased communication between the Section and the WYLD and will seek opportunities to collaborate and provide more targeted programming and outreach to young lawyers. At this time, at least 7 sections have expressed their interest and have been assigned a WYLD liaison. WYLD looks forward to working together with the Sections to help young lawyers be successful in their practice and to expose young lawyers to the benefits, resources and leadership opportunities available in all WSBA Sections.

#### **CONCLUSION**

The WYLD greatly appreciates the continued support of the Board of Governors and WSBA staff as we volunteer many hours in an effort to serve our fellow young lawyers and our unique needs within the profession. We welcome your feedback. You are welcome and encouraged to join us at a future WYLD meeting or event, and we hope to see you at the **Welcome Reception of the Young Bar Leaders Summit on Friday, March 20<sup>th</sup>, from 6-8pm** at Seattle University School of Law.