

WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

Washington Young Lawyers Committee

Washington Young Lawyers Committee Meeting | Virtual
Wednesday, August 14, 2024 | 2:00 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.

[Via Microsoft Teams](#) | Meeting ID: 296 193 343 733 | Passcode gSvfv9 | Call In 469-206-8517 | Passcode 613 242 108#

AGENDA:

- 1) **Welcome & Introductions** – Aaron
- 2) **Review of Public Service Leadership Nominations** – Alex/Chelle
- 3) **Adjournment** – Aaron

2023 - 2024 WYLC Meeting Schedule

November 18, 2023	Meeting: 10:00 am – 2:00 pm	Hybrid/WSBA Offices, Seattle
January 20, 2024	Meeting: 10:00 am – 12:30 pm	Virtual
March 16, 2024	Meeting: 10:00 am – 12:30 pm	Hybrid
April 20, 2024	Meeting: 10:00 am – 2:00 pm	Hybrid/WSBA Office, Seattle
July 13, 2024	Meeting: 10:00 am – 12:30 pm	Hybrid/Bellingham
September 14, 2024	Meeting: 10:00 am – 2:00 pm	Hybrid/Seattle

Nominee #1

Nominator: Paralegal

Describe the nominee's leadership in his or her local community:

██████ is an amazing attorney and all-around human being. They care deeply about their clients and their community. They volunteer weekly on the pro se family law dockets, assisting the judicial officers with drafting orders. They are also the current president of the Family Law Section here in Clark County.

How has the nominee promoted and/or contributed to the legal profession and community?

██████ volunteers for the Clark County Volunteer Lawyers Program. They not only assist community members with their legal issues through their free legal clinic, they also sponsor fundraising events.

Describe a situation in which the nominee has "gone above and beyond"?

██████ goes above and beyond on a regular basis. They guide their clients through the most difficult times in their lives with empathy and often works into the night to ensure they are getting the best possible representation. They treat their staff with the utmost respect and has created a warm and welcoming work environment.

Additional information:

██████ works harder than anyone I have ever met and deserves to be recognized for all their contributions to their community and to their clients.

Nominee #2

Nominator: Attorney in the same town, friend

Describe the nominee's leadership in his or her local community:

██████ has served as the President for the Clark County Bar Association Family Law Section. They kept the group organized and on track - they were responsible to make sure the FLS had CLEs and social events. As President they made sure 9 CLEs were provided to the section.

How has the nominee promoted and/or contributed to the legal profession and community?

██████ and I did the Case Law update - this is a time intensive research project, and they took time out of their busy schedule - soon after opening their practice to work on this and present.

Describe a situation in which the nominee has "gone above and beyond"?

██████ already volunteers through the CCVLP and their previous practice's legal clinic. Now that they are running their own practice, they continue to represent clients pro bono. Recently they shared about a very challenging, complicated case -this case took many hours and they then explained this was all pro bono. I am very impressed with their dedication to help and provide pro bono services.

Additional information:

██████ also is always willing to offer advice and be someone I can explore legal puzzles with – they are thoughtful, knows the law and is willing to help other attorneys solve issues. I am very impressed with their work ethic and ability to practice. All this for someone who practiced only two years.

Nominee #3

Nominator: Colleague and friend

Describe the nominee's leadership in his or her local community:

■■■■ has been a change-maker in North Central Washington since they moved to the community a few years ago. They graduated law school from Boston University and working in mental health and civil rights advocacy in Boston until they decided their efforts would be better spent in a more rural and conservative community. ■■■■ has worked as a "kitchen sink" lawyer at the Northwest Justice Project's Wenatchee field office ever since, taking any case that comes through the door, focusing on forging new relationships with community partners, and ensuring that client's needs are holistically met. They trained local organizations on public benefits, done outreach in even more rural communities in Grant, Adams, and Okanogan County, and helped innumerable clients navigate the complicated justice system. And that's while they're on the clock! Off the clock, they volunteer with Wenatchee Pride, the Chelan Douglas County Volunteer Attorney Services, and much more. They are dedicated to the wellbeing and sustainability of North Central Washington.

How has the nominee promoted and/or contributed to the legal profession and community?

In addition to everything above, they have contributed so much passion and dedication to the legal profession and community in their role with the Northwest Justice Project. They stepped up to provide some of the first ever youth and special education legal assistance to families in local school districts, rewrite the systems that NJP uses to get low-income clients through the door, and participated in statewide advocacy (including writing amicus briefs to the Washington Supreme Court) to ensure rural voices are heard.

Describe a situation in which the nominee has "gone above and beyond"?

■■■■ and I co-counseled an eviction and public utilities case in 2022. The tenant was hundreds of dollars in debt to the city for utilities and had subsequently received an eviction notice. Instead of just focusing on the legal issues at hand, they dove deeper and ensured they understood the full picture of the client's needs. As it turns out, the client didn't even want the water turned back on because they were alleging that the small town's mayor was not adhering to local water standards and providing the community with unsafe water. ■■■■'s immediate response was to request all public records from the town, contact all water quality related entities, drive out to the town themselves and do an environmental water quality test. This was all while they were fighting the utility debt and eviction and helping the client apply to financial assistance for the debt. They went above and beyond to help this client and invested more time in this client's case than I've seen any other attorney invest.

Additional information:

N/A

Nominee #4

Nominator: Opposing Counsel

Describe the nominee's leadership in his or her local community:

██████████ has been the lead Assistant Attorney General on child welfare cases in Mason County, Washington for the last four years. In their role, they have set a tone of thoroughly, but expeditiously moving dependency cases forward. They favor family reunification and works with all parties to achieve reunification for families if that can be done safely. That work requires them to go above and beyond the demands of a normal forty-hour work week. Their commitment is evidenced by the amount of work they put in to each case; they routinely work overtime; and is always available to answer questions and collaborate on cases. They do this every week on behalf of families involved in child welfare cases.

How has the nominee promoted and/or contributed to the legal profession and community?

Beyond their ethical requirements to represent their client, the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF), ██████████ participates in workgroups and leadership roles aimed at improving the child welfare system in Mason County and beyond. They actively participate in the jurisdiction's family treatment court, and they actively organize Reunification Day where we celebrate all the families that have been reunified each year. They propose policy changes that the court implements to increase efficiencies and assist families in reunification.

Describe a situation in which the nominee has "gone above and beyond"?

██████████ regularly sacrifices their personal life to represent their client and works towards family reunification. Their commitment to the work is evident to the other legal parties, parents, children, and the court. They volunteer to participate in meetings, trainings, workgroups, etc. that are focused on system improvement.

Additional information:

██████████ started their legal career at the outset of the Covid-19 pandemic. All their initial court appearances were via Zoom. They had very little regular oversight or guidance, but they jumped right into the work. Those limitations did not stop them from establishing their self as a leader in the child welfare community in the South Sound. They deserve to be recognized for their work and commitment, I cannot think of a more deserving attorney for the Public Service and Leadership Award than ██████████. Please contact me if you would like additional information.

Nominee #5

Nominator: Co-Board Member, volunteer attorneys for CWLA

Describe the nominee's leadership in his or her local community:

■■■■ has taken on leadership roles in the community. They campaigned to join city council and lost by a small margin but has continued to be active and engaged with council to help better the community. They have taken on a leadership role at the local rotary club. And, they have been the most energetic board member of the CWBA and has planned the majority of events over the last two years. Not every attempt at leadership roles has worked out (yet), but they are always ready to get back in the game and try again.

How has the nominee promoted and/or contributed to the legal profession and community?

■■■■ has given their heart and soul to volunteering and helping the community thrive. They have spent countless hours volunteering for various Cowlitz Wahkiakum Legal Aid clinics and partnering with them on various events. They have singlehandedly revived the local bar association by devoting a lot of time to organizing, advertising, and recruiting members.

Describe a situation in which the nominee has "gone above and beyond"?

■■■■ has gone above and beyond when it comes to coordinating CLEs. They have worked really hard to recruit speakers to talk about the issues our community is facing. One specific example was when they organized a CLE regarding the new landlord-tenant laws and brought in someone from up north to speak to our community members and lawyers. And, ■■■■ stepped in as the Interim Legal Aid director briefly while they searched for someone permanent. ■■■■ did that because they desperately needed the help and no one else was stepping up.

Additional information:

■■■■ is an amazing person, attorney, and advocate. They have a heart of gold. For someone as young as they are, they have tried hard to make a difference, and they will keep doing it!

Nominee #6

Nominator: Former work colleague, current board colleague

Describe the nominee's leadership in his or her local community:

█ was instrumental in organizing, and now leading as president, the Association of Washington Assistant Attorneys General, the union that represents over 500 attorneys. They are an active member of their local church, and numerous boards, as described below.

How has the nominee promoted and/or contributed to the legal profession and community?

█ serves on numerous boards in our legal community including Lawyers Helping Hungry children, Q-law, and the Northwest Justice Project. They have recently assumed the chair of the MLK luncheon for the King County Bar Association.

Describe a situation in which the nominee has "gone above and beyond"?

By creating a new union, we had to draft a constitution. █ created a committee to get diverse perspectives on what should be included in that formative document. For example, they made sure the constitution included a diversity equity and inclusion chair as part of the union's executive board. Their work on this was tedious and time consuming but extremely important.

Additional information:

N/A

Nominee #7

Nominator: Colleague

Describe the nominee's leadership in his or her local community:

██████ has demonstrated exceptional leadership in their local community through their dedication to advocacy and public service. They are an active attorney for the FIRST Legal Clinic, working diligently to prevent unnecessary CPS removals and to support pregnant individuals and parents of newborns at risk. Additionally, they serve as a board member for Sound Pathways, providing critical services such as harm reduction and case management in Snohomish County. ██████'s commitment extends beyond their professional duties as they regularly volunteer their time for various causes, including serving as a neutral observer at First Amendment demonstrations. Their leadership is characterized by their relentless pursuit of justice and their unwavering support for those in need.

How has the nominee promoted and/or contributed to the legal profession and community?

██████ has significantly contributed to the legal profession and their community through their tireless advocacy for families and their dedication to public interest law. They are known for their willingness to tackle challenging cases and push new issues in the court, especially those involving family reunification and due process. Their work with the FIRST Legal Clinic and their role on the board of Sound Pathways highlight their commitment to providing legal assistance and essential services to vulnerable populations. ██████'s extensive pro bono work and their involvement in community initiatives underscore their dedication to promoting justice and supporting the well-being of her community.

Describe a situation in which the nominee has "gone above and beyond"?

██████'s commitment to their clients and their community is best exemplified by a specific case they handled, which showcases their going above and beyond in their role. This case not only highlights their exceptional public service but also underscores their dedication to their work without seeking accolades.

The case began with ██████'s involvement through the FIRST Legal Clinic, where they helped prevent the removal of children from a family. For context, the case started with the birth of the client's child in 2021. There was also an older child, born in 2013. The client was not the biological father of the older child, but he was the "fictive" father and essentially her stepfather, acting as her father figure.

After working closely with CPS, they decided to remove the children ex parte, obtaining an order and bringing law enforcement to the home to remove the newborn and the older child without any opportunity to respond. At the subsequent hearing, ██████ fought vigorously for their client, resulting in the children being returned home within days, avoiding a long-term

removal. This dependency case was eventually dismissed due to the client's hard work and [REDACTED]'s tireless advocacy.

The client was a dedicated worker, striving to stay clean despite his imperfections. He cared deeply about the mother of his baby and his unofficial stepdaughter. Unfortunately, the case re-entered the dependency system, and a new case was filed. CPS attempted multiple hearings—possibly three or four times—to remove the children from the home. [REDACTED]'s steadfast advocacy kept the family together through all these attempts. However, one request resulted in a removal: while their client was at work, the child—now almost two years old—was found wandering outside the apartment complex. The toddler was removed, leaving the client heartbroken. He immediately went to inpatient care, came out, and quickly regained custody of his daughter. Despite the mother's struggles, he also succeeded in having the older "stepdaughter" placed with him, a massive feat given his lack of familial rights. His resilience, combined with [REDACTED]'s incredible hard work, kept the family together.

If the story ended here, it would already warrant recognition. However, it continues, illustrating why [REDACTED] deserves this award. The mother was pregnant with a new child, who was born at the beginning of 2024. The client had his daughter and stepdaughter in his care while the mother completed inpatient treatment. Tragically, he passed away while caring for both children, and the older child found him. This occurred days before the birth of the new baby. CPS determined that the mother was not ready to parent alone due to her substance use disorder. With community support, she arranged for family members to help while she waited to enter a six-month inpatient program with her baby. During a period when the mother couldn't care for the baby due to her stability, [REDACTED] stepped up. Despite no longer having a client, they agreed to have the newborn stay with them in a respite situation. [REDACTED] was incredibly supportive of the mother and the family of her deceased client. Once the mother was ready to have the baby back in inpatient care, [REDACTED] supportively and readily returned the baby. On other occasions when respite care was needed for the baby, [REDACTED] again stepped up. They cared for the baby for several weeks at a time multiple times. Moreover, they formed a friendship with the oldest child, recently taking her to a concert.

Because of [REDACTED], there has never been a removal. While there has been respite care, the mother has retained her constitutional rights to care, custody, and control of her child. This situation exemplifies how families come together to make things work. The client deserves accolades for his efforts to keep his family together, and [REDACTED] deserves recognition for their tireless advocacy and hard work on this case. Most importantly, they deserve to be honored.

[Additional information:](#)

N/A

Nominee #8

Nominator: Supervisor

Describe the nominee's leadership in his or her local community:

■■■■ has made a huge impact in their community; after working as a social worker in their home county, Whatcom County, and seeing the problems faced by regular people dealing with the institutions of power in society, they went to law school with the mission to return to their community and assist others with their education. They did just that, and now serves individuals and municipal governments in navigating the justice system. But, as always, they go beyond- they are a leading voice on the board of Sun Community Services, which provides transitional housing to people in Whatcom County facing mental health and criminal issues to prevent homelessness; and they have taken a leading role with the Whatcom County Chapter of the Washington Women Lawyers, getting engaged as a board officer and representing the chapter as their delegate to the State Board, where they are now at the state level the Vice President of Public Service. They have a passion for organizing people together and moving them forward with service at the core of their motives.

How has the nominee promoted and/or contributed to the legal profession and community?

■■■■ is a very active member of the Whatcom County Bar Association and has taken a leading role with the Whatcom County Chapter of the Washington Women Lawyers (WWL). Early on, ■■■■ got engaged with WWL as a board officer and representing the chapter as their delegate to the State Board. Now at the state level, they are the Vice President of Public Service for WWL. They are also involved with the American Bar Association and QLAW, as well as having been recognized as a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation, which is committed to advancing justice and understanding of the law.

Describe a situation in which the nominee has "gone above and beyond"?

It is hard to pick a single situation - every day, ■■■■ is working hard for their clients engaging in complex litigation, but yet they make time to help their co-workers, their family, and often stays late to go to board meetings. They are so dedicated to helping others they dream about it and then rushes into the office early to work on what needs to be done. When another lawyer has to be absent unexpectedly, ■■■■ goes above and beyond to cover their work, and is humble, not above covering the phones for paralegals or helping with the administration of the office. If every attorney carried themselves daily as ■■■■ does, the world would be a most wonderful and kind place.

Additional information:

N/A

Nominee #9

Nominator: Peer in the legal profession

Describe the nominee's leadership in his or her local community:

██████'s leadership is marked by their early and ongoing involvement in community service, their dedication to justice, and their commitment to improving the lives of those around them.

Prior to law school and while working as an engineer, they volunteered to support King County legal aid, and advocated in court as a Child Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) to ensure that justice is accessible to all.

In law school, ██████ was president of the Black Law Students Association (BLSA), advocating for their peers and promoting diversity and inclusion within the legal field.

As they progressed into their legal career, they have consistently demonstrated a commitment to justice through their volunteer work with multiple legal aid organizations, especially in their black immigrant community. They regularly draw from their technical background and help business owners from marginalized communities protect their intellectual properties through their non-profit.

██████ has received multiple accolades before and during law school that attest of their leadership ability. They received the Jack Macdonald Merit Award from the University of Washington and is a recipient of former Governor Christine Gregoire fellowship awards.

How has the nominee promoted and/or contributed to the legal profession and community?

██████ has made significant contributions to the legal profession and their community through a combination of leadership, advocacy, and service:

Prior to law school they volunteered to support King County legal aid and advocated in court as a Child Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) to ensure that justice is accessible to all.

In law school, they advocated for their peers and promoted diversity and inclusion within the legal field. They organized events, provided mentorship, and advocated for policies that fostered a supportive and equitable environment.

As a practicing attorney, they worked as a prosecutor, advocating for justice and ensuring that the law was applied fairly and equitably.

In her current role, they can influence policies and help shape the legal landscape in ways that benefit the community at large.

Describe a situation in which the nominee has "gone above and beyond"?

I had the opportunity to volunteer with [REDACTED] on multiple occasions. The situation that stands out occurred when we were on the Judicial Evaluation Committee. The team struggled to give a rating to a particular candidate. [REDACTED] was convinced that the candidate deserved a better rating and asked the team to allow them to conduct further background checks on the candidate. They spent a few days, reaching out to over 10 references to inquire about this candidate. They then reported their findings to the team. Because of their work, the evaluation team was able to reach a consensus and give a more informed rating that was fair to the candidate and more accurately represented our belief in their ability to be a strong judge for all in the community.

Additional information:

An immigrant, [REDACTED] brings a unique perspective to their work and their community involvement. They understand the challenges that immigrants, women, and people of color face and is passionate about giving back to the community that welcomed them. This drive is reflected in their career trajectory: leaving a successful career as an engineer to go to law school and work in government so they can be of service for the betterment of society.