Never Forget the ‘Business of Law’

By Catelyn McDonough, Esq.

As I neared the end of my first year as a licensed attorney, I took a few moments to sit back and reflect on the last eight months. It feels like just yesterday that I saw my name on that list of successful applicants, as the feelings of relief and excitement are still palpable. For graduating law students, passing the proverbial “bar” marks the beginning of the rest of your life. It more importantly signifies the end of a grueling three to four years of late nights, copious amounts of caffeine, stress, anxiety and all the other perks that come with law school. But does it?

As a first-year associate at a mid-sized law firm, I know as well as the rest of us how consuming the work can become. We all strive to make names for ourselves and “stand out” among a sea of recently licensed attorneys. We want to be the first ones in the office and the last to leave, taking on heaps of work to prove to everyone that we are not only capable but ambitious and hungry for success. As important as those attributes are in a young lawyer, I am beginning to realize how easy it can be to lose sight of our real goals. Twenty years from now, no matter how successful we have all become, will we look back and ask ourselves why we became lawyers in the first place?

I think we all have a tendency to lose sight of the “forest among the trees,” causing us to overlook the “business of law” and its importance to our own professional development. During our entire careers, but especially as young lawyers, it is crucial that we focus on growing our professional networks by joining organizations, getting involved politically and giving back to the communities in which we live. We need to channel the energy that is so quickly burnt by excessively long nights in the office into an active, well-rounded life.

Let’s face it — the law can be a very isolating career. Remembering to make time for cocktails, community service events, book clubs, whatever it may be, will significantly help us to slowly evolve our practices into what we want them to be — as well as the sincere, well-rounded professional individuals we want to be 20 years from now.

I was recently elected to the executive committee of the Young Lawyers Division, about which I could not be more thrilled. I want to use this opportunity as a chance to help shape the environment to which new, incoming attorneys are introduced. I want our legal community to be a comfortable one, where we can ask questions, develop networks and help each other succeed in life and in the court room.

I, of course, had a moment of anxiety once elected, thinking how can I handle my workload and the responsibilities of leading our young lawyers. I

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How Much Do Courts ‘Like’ Social Media Evidence?

By Veronica Schad

During my summer legal internship, I found myself in Family Court at 15th and Arch Streets in Philadelphia, observing a hearing for Expedited Relief for a custody matter. The defendant mother was not present in the court room, as she and the children in question were in Chicago for the school year. As per normal procedure, the judge called the mother on the court’s phone and put her on speaker. Before the trial could fully get underway, the judge went through some routine questions, established that the mother was who she said she was, and that she knew why there was a hearing today, and then ...

“And you received service, yes?”

The mother then asked what service was, and the judge provided her a brief explanation.

The mother replied, “Oh, no, I didn’t get a letter.”

The judge paused. Then she asked the mother if she had not received a letter, a phone call or any other form of service how she knew that the hearing was happening today. The mother answered, “Oh, he posted it all over my Facebook page. So I knew I had court today and that the phone call would be coming.”

The judge considered this for a few moments, then pronounced, “Well, this is not typically how service works. However, since the mother is here and everyone else is here and ready to proceed, we are going to go ahead with the hearing.”

And so the hearing went forward with me (and likely the judge) pondering the same question: In today’s technologically infused world, how important is social media evidence?

Courts have been admitting this type of evidence for some time, as long as it satisfies all the appropriate Federal Rules of Evidence. With Facebook, a recurring issue that appears is authenticity. The relevance of the Facebook post often hinges on authenticity, which usually requires additional evidence to prove that the defendant and plaintiff did indeed author the original posts.

US v. Browne, 834 F.3d 403, 410 (3rd Cir. 2016). This is due to the fact that social media accounts may be falsified or accessed by an imposter with relative ease, and, as a result, courts are on their guard. Id at 412. That being said, social media evidence does come in — and comes in for most types of legislation — from personal injury to trademark infringement. Romano v. Steelcase, Inc., 907 N.Y.S.2d 650 (N.Y. Supp. 2010);
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If social media evidence is admitted, as long as it is relevant and properly authenticated, the question then becomes: How often does it actually come in? While there are no current statistics on this topic, I decided to once again journey to Family Court and conduct a “flash study” of social media evidence. For my study, I sat in on Protection From Abuse (PFA) hearings in Judge Christopher Mallios’ courtroom.

For some background information, to obtain a PFA in Philadelphia, a party files a PFA petition on the 8th floor of the Family Court building. That same day, the party is seen by a judge for an ex parte hearing, which usually lasts anywhere from two to five minutes. Within 10 days, the party and the opposing party come back for a full PFA trial. While it is extremely uncommon for parties to have lawyers at the ex parte phase of litigation, more parties will have lawyers by the time the PFA petition goes to trial.

That day I heard six hearings for PFA petitions for a final order of protection. Of those six, there were two agreements and four went ahead to trial. Of the four trials I heard, three of the trials admitted some sort of social media evidence. These pieces of evidence were Facebook and Instagram posts, and each time the authenticity of the post was disputed by the other party (“I didn’t post that,” etc.).

I also observed 10 ex parte hearings for Protection From Abuse petitions. These were all conducted quickly, and very little evidence was presented. Still, two of the ex parte cases presented social media evidence (on the party’s phone) to give some credence to their claims. While this evidence was not formally admitted, it was allowed to be presented to Judge Mallios. It is unclear how many of the cases would have ended up admitting social media evidence at their final trial.

While this was admittedly a “flash study,” the results are indicative of just how important and pervasive social media evidence is in the courtroom, especially at a level of litigation where most parties are representing themselves pro se. With 75 percent of PFA hearings and 20 percent of ex parte PFA hearings involving social media evidence, the importance and reliance that most parties have on this type of evidence seems well, evident. Since courts appear to “like” social media evidence well enough, perhaps as lawyers we should ask to see our clients’ phones more often.

Veronica Schad is a 2L at Temple Law School.

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had to stop for a minute and think about the words I have written in this article. Because when a freshly-graduated law student asks me for one piece of advice to survive the first year of being a lawyer, I will tell him/her this: MAKE time for things other than work. No matter how daunting it may be, it is an absolutely necessary, therapeutic, vital component to the practice and the business of law, which is too easily neglected. Make friends, form communities and get involved. Try to stay energetic and do not ever forget the feeling of excitement you had when you saw your name on that list.

Catelyn M. McDonough is an associate at Anapol Weiss. She advocates for the rights of injured victims in a variety of complex matters. Catelyn earned her J.D. from Widener University Delaware Law School, cum laude, graduating in the 10 ten percent of her class. Catelyn is admitted to practice in Pennsylvania and New Jersey.
When I get home from work, my wife and I like to recap the highlights. I usually tell her the funny stories, like how I spilled coffee on my new tie or the time I slipped and fell in the lobby. She enjoys a good laugh, especially one at my expense. On occasion, we actually discuss what I do for real “work.” My wife comes from a marketing and public relations background, so most of my incredibly interesting tales are met with a blank stare. She literally has no idea what I do or what I am talking about.

You see ... I am a “recovering” attorney who now works as a trust officer for a community bank. My wife is not an outlier; most people only have a vague idea regarding the function of a bank trust department and its employees. They are often located in the back corner and don’t make loans or open deposit accounts, so you can’t blame anyone for being a little fuzzy.

One of the primary tasks of a trust department is to serve as a professional trustee to various types of trusts. A trustee is the person or entity selected by its creator (settlor) to manage a trust’s day-to-day affairs, including investing its assets, distributing funds to beneficiaries, paying taxes, etc. By law, a trustee must be a “fiduciary,” meaning that it must always act in the best interest of the trust and its respective beneficiary(s).

Trusts are flexible. Financial companies have become adept at convincing attorneys that structured settlements are the best payment option available to disabled persons or minors. Structured settlements are essentially annuities that pay the recipient the settlement or adjudication amount over time on an agreed schedule instead of a lump sum. While structured settlements can be beneficial and easy to implement, they are by their nature a fixed investment following a set payment schedule. A trust could be a better alternative. If, for example, due to unforeseen circumstances, like a hospital stay or a family emergency, the beneficiary requires more from the annuity over its given payout rate due, he or she may not be able to access the funds without penalty. A trust would not have this issue. At the discretion of the trustee, the proceeds of the trust will be available penalty-free to pay for the costs. This ability to pick and choose when and how to pay the beneficiary comes in handy in a time of necessity.

In addition to flexibility, trusts provide extra protection against malfeasance. A trustee is disinterested. It is not concerned with family discord or other turmoil. The trustee’s sole mission is to serve the best interests of the beneficiary. A professional trustee will also understand trust investment procedures and when and how trust distributions can be made. Although a professional trustee will charge a fee for its service to the trust, his/her additional know-how is invaluable.

Trusts are particularly useful in cases where the beneficiary is receiving public benefits. If the litigation proceeds are placed in a so-called “special needs trust,” they are not countable for Medicaid or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) purposes. This means the trust’s assets will not disqualify the beneficiary from getting or continuing to receive public assistance. Special-needs trusts are a creation of federal law and, as such, they must contain strict provisions as to how the funds can be utilized.

Over the past several years, the complexity and cost of adequate trust administration have forced a number of large banks to forego managing trusts under certain monetary thresholds. Small trusts are unfortunately not profitable because the fee a corporate trustee charges is usually based upon the value of the trust’s assets and when such value is low, the bank is not going to make any fee income. It is a business decision. Accordingly, it is...
The ABCs of Trusts

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recommended, when considering a trust as part of a settlement or adjudication, that the attorney consults the local banks to determine whether or not they will take on the case. It could take phone calls to several different institutions. If a bank is unwilling or not preferred, there are certain regional organizations in Pennsylvania, like ACHIEVA, that may be able to assist. Finally, before making a final choice, review and analyze the fees charged by each potential trustee because higher expenses will eat into the value of the trust and reduce the beneficiary’s share.

As a trust officer, I admit I have a self-interest in seeing trusts as part of a personal injury case. Yet, I truly believe that trusts are an essential part of a good personal injury attorney’s arsenal. A trust does not have to be the only option. A combination of a structured settlement and a trust could be best. Each client’s situation is different and requires a thorough analysis of the facts and circumstances.

If you require further assistance in determining whether a trust is right for your client, contact a trust officer in your area.

Charlie Curtin is the trust officer for The Honesdale National Bank in Honesdale, Pennsylvania. Charlie is a 2004 graduate of the University Pittsburgh School of Law. In 2006, he received his LLM in taxation from the University of Washington School of Law. After spending several years on the West Coast, Charlie returned home to Northeastern Pennsylvania to raise a family. He lives in Clarks Summit with his wife and two young sons.

Going Solo – My Top 5 Fears

By Abigail A. Gross, Esq.

2013 was a big year for me. It was the year I celebrated my first wedding anniversary, the year I had my first child and the year I opened my solo law practice. Believe it or not – the decision to go solo was just as intimidating as the decision to get married or have a baby.

I am now three years into the solo game and I am happy to report that things are still going well. I have managed to keep the electricity on and, to the best of my knowledge, I am not swimming in debt (unless you consider my student loans and mortgage). Although I have managed to stay afloat in the business sense, I distinctly remember the fears that I had before I hung that proverbial shingle. In no particular order, these were my top five fears:

1 Will I go broke? What if I don’t make any money?

The biggest concern that I had before opening my practice centered on the question of whether I would actually make money. For most attorneys, the decision to go solo comes after years of working for someone else. And when you work for someone else, you usually get a paycheck. So how does one go from a consistent biweekly paycheck to the fear of landing on your creditors’ speed dial?

In my case, I convinced myself that in the first year, I would make no money. As in ... zero. I believe it was Vince Vaughn, in ”Dodgeball: A True Underdog Story,” who said, “I found that if you have a goal, that you might not reach it. But if you don’t have one, then you are never disappointed.”

In all seriousness, I decided that my family would have to subside off of my husband’s income alone. Fortunately, I fall into a category where there are two household incomes. Regardless of your circumstances, you absolutely need to come up with a budget that makes sense for your lifestyle. Most practitioners think about the idea of opening a practice long before they actually do it. Make sure you are spending a portion of that time analyzing your expenses and figuring out how much you need to save before you will be secure enough to take the plunge. (Hint: Savings is key. I found it very difficult to even get a credit card my first year of business as most creditors wanted to see a history of business income. So build up that nest egg!)

2 Will anyone actually hire me?

No matter your practice area, the one thing that we all have in common is the need for clients. No clients equals no work, which equals no income. Of course, it is ideal to have some book of business when you inaugurate your practice. But more than likely, you will have to get out there and find work.

I was enthused by all of my friends and family who were encouraging to my endeavor. If I am honest, I thought that between word-of-mouth, a Facebook page and a website, the clients would just come. Unfortunately, this topic only reignites memories of sitting in a hol-

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Going Solo – My Top 5 Fears
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low office, refreshing my e-mail for the millionth time and praying that the phone would ring – only to be disappointed when it turned out to be a sales call. (On the positive side, if a telemarketer had my number, there was hope that potential clients could find it as well.)

It did not take long for me to realize that marketing and networking are integral to a successful practice. It also did not take me long to learn how expensive mainstream advertising can be. I am referring to radio, billboards and almost anything in print. And although tchotchkes are fun, putting your name on a stress ball or chip clip, in my humble opinion, is a complete waste of money. I recommend a strong web presence. Put together a good website and make sure that you have someone helping with frequent updates, embedded keywords and search engine optimization. (Hint – If you do not know what search engine optimization is, all the more reason to retain an outside vendor to take care of the “techy” work.) Remember, a great website is worthless unless people are actually looking at it.

3 Yes, I have a law degree, but do I know how to run a business?

Opening a law firm means that you know how to be a lawyer. But what about the business end of things? After all, a law firm is a business.

I must admit, I had zero background in business administration. I freaked out when trying to determine if I needed to register for a fictitious name, or prepare an operating agreement or request a tax ID number. Looking back, I think it’s safe to say that I really had no true business plan. Furthermore, I just wanted to succeed.

My best advice in this arena would be to talk to other solo practitioners. Ask questions to find out what works and does not work for them. There are a lot of decisions to make at the outset, like whether to rent office space or work from home, or whether to purchase certain software and technology. Before you spend any of your precious money, figure out what you need and what makes sense for your business. (Hint: The Fujitsu ScanSnap is the best scanner in the world and was hands-down my best initial investment!)

I also feel compelled to remind you that tracking all of your spending and income is critical. I have always been diligent with QuickBooks and make an effort to keep all of my financial records current. Along those lines, make sure you have a good accountant who will closely monitor your profits and losses throughout the first couple years. Around April, you will realize that your tax planning is arguably more important than your business planning.

4 Will I be lonely?

My practice area happens to be workers’ compensation. Even though I had a strong background in that area of law, I certainly did not know everything.

Regardless of your experience, it is impossible to know the answer to every question. For this reason, I strongly encourage you to pair up with another attorney or somehow find an attorney willing to act as a mentor. Over the past few years, I have developed a very symbiotic relationship with another solo attorney. He and I rely upon each other for calendar conflicts and to bounce ideas and develop legal arguments. I may be a “solo” practitioner, but because of this relationship, I have never felt alone.

5 What if I fail?

I don’t have an answer to this question. However, I do know that fear is temporary, whereas regret can last forever.

About a year after I opened my practice, a partner from a larger firm approached me to make an offer of employment. In the same conversation, he commended me for having the courage to open my practice, and I specifically recall him telling me that I had “gumption.” I was flattered by his compliments, but politely declined the offer. However, that conversation reminded me that even if my solo practice failed to thrive, I was developing an entirely new set of skills to add to my resume.

There are no guarantees for success. But failure, in this context, still demonstrates characteristics that any future employer would admire. Do not let fear control your decision.

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PBA YLD Seeks Nominations for Awards

Nominations are being accepted for the PBA Young Lawyers Division’s Michael K. Smith Award and Liberty Bell Award. Both awards will be presented at the YLD Awards Luncheon at the PBA Annual Meeting in May.

The Michael K. Smith Excellence in Service Award is presented to a Pennsylvania young lawyer who reminds lawyers of their professional responsibilities through his or her exemplary personal and professional conduct. The Liberty Bell Award is given to a non-lawyer for his/her outstanding community service and for promoting the “blessing of liberty” guaranteed by our Constitution.

Nominations are due March 31, 2017. For nomination forms and additional information, go to http://www.pabar.org/site/Public/YLD/Awards.aspx or contact Maria Engles, YLD coordinator, at maria.engles@pabar.org.
A question to which we are all too familiar goes: “So, tell me a little bit about yourself?” It is a straightforward way to elicit a response in order to get a better understanding of someone’s past, present and future. It is a standard question to ask when it comes to interviewing and certainly one that most of us feel can be easily answered without much practiced thought. But, as anyone who has ever been asked this simple question can attest, it is easy for the mind to freeze and become caught off guard as we stumble to utter a coherent response. Our perfect answer (on a favorite topic no less – ourselves!) is rattling around the brain somewhere, but it just won’t come out.

As the old joke goes, “How do you get to Carnegie Hall?” The answer is simply, “Practice, practice, practice.” The same holds true for landing a job at that desired company or law firm. Often, the final gatekeeper is the interview process and for that, practice does make perfect.

In a sense, we are forever practicing and sharpening our interview skills. Interviews are all around us everyday. While not all appear in the traditional form, interviews are the foundation of relationship building. Just think about it – when the plumber comes to your house to give an estimate on a leaky faucet – that is a type of interview.

When you tour colleges in order to pick which one is the best fit – that too is an interview. Ever go on a date? Guess what – definitely an interview. While these examples lack the formal attire and office settings we typically think of for interviews, they all have something in common. Through them all, we are engaged in the process of asking, answering and listening in order to best gauge compatibility and fit.

Whether formal or not, the interview process is both exciting and daunting. As we all know, first impressions are key. The following are some tips, tricks and advice to overcome interview hurdles, make your first impression count and land that next big role.

**Sartorial Success**

An old saying, reiterated by British GQ Style Director Robert Johnston goes, “Dress for the next job, not the one you have.” This still holds very true. If you are a newly graduated law student used to wearing overly casual clothes to meet with people, now would be the time to dust off that suit or dress for the next role you want to have. On the other hand, an experienced attorney who has been wearing business attire everyday at a Wall Street firm may want to opt for less formal attire for an interview with a new tech start-up.

The important thing is to become one of the “fashion herd.” If the office fashion is suit and tie, be sure to wear that to the interview. Any opportunity you have to show the interviewer that you already fit in with current employees, the closer you will be to getting on board. If the office fashion rules are ambiguous, as a young attorney going for the first job, it is best to go with something a little more formal (proper suit and tie). While it should go without saying, have your outfit picked out the day before. This helps cut down on morning-of scrambling and gives you the opportunity to make sure all pieces are accounted for, clean and ironed. Most importantly, wear something that makes you feel confident and comfortable throughout the interview.

**Be a Prepper**

Preparation is the key to success. An interview is no different. Position yourself with an easy advantage by preparing a few days to a week ahead of time. A good practice is to create a script of typical interview questions (these can be found through a quick Google search) and write down your model answers. Doing this in advance gives you time to think thoughtfully about how you want to answer a given question. After full answers are created, bullet point the main themes in the answers. These bullet point lists will provide a nice working “road map” of how to approach the questions. This technique helps to cut down on interview anxiety and boosts confidence. While it may sound counterintuitive, it is better to not memorize your model answers, as this can come off as sounding too scripted. Take this practice up a notch by having a friend or family member act as the interviewer and ask you the questions in a more realistic setting and fashion.

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Weakness?

What’s Your Biggest

questions. Just as you would take notes in

Listen Closely

something to sip as you speak throughout

comfortable speaking and are able to
gather our thoughts much more easily. An
important (albeit seemingly silly) trick to
remember is to always accept a beverage,
if offered. Alternatively, you can always
bring one along. When we get anxious or
nervous, our mouths become dry. Having
something to sip as you speak throughout
the interview will help keep the mouth
from going to dry and allow you to speak
more fluidly (no pun intended).

Quiet Confidence

When you walk into an interview, in
your mind, pretend that they have already
hired you. Instead of walking into an in-
terview, you are meeting with someone to
be a consultant. This helps to turn the ta-
bles in your mind. You want to have a qui-
et confidence in yourself and your abilities
— not boastful or braggadocious, but firm
in the abilities and knowledge you possess.
It helps to think of an interview as more
of a presentation. The goal is to meet with
the interviewer and present yourself, your
skills, abilities and knowledge in the most
favorable and confident way possible.

When we are confident, we feel more

Research

This goes hand-in-hand with being a
prepper. Google is a wonderful tool. Use it
to your advantage! Research the company
or firm with which you are interviewing,
along with its key people and those con-
ducting the actual interview. Keep some
notes written down on a tablet of interest-
ing facts you came across or questions you
thought of during this research process.
Research very often leads to unbeknownst
commonalities – being alums of the same
school as the interviewer, attending the
same religious institution, having similar
hobbies – all are valuable talking points
and “interview ammunition.”

Organization

Some of us are natural organizers. For
others, this task may be more of a struggle.
No matter on which side you fall, going
into an interview well organized demon-
strates to the interviewer a well-qualified
candidate. Bring a briefcase or bag with
extra copies of your resume, letters of rec-
ommendation, transcripts, business cards,
notepad, pens, etc. While it may sound
like overkill, it is best to have on hand and
not need than need and not have. With
current technology, almost everything is
transmitted electronically, but often times
there are situations when paper couldn’t
be printed. Perhaps the interviewer is
running late, printers may be down or
an extra interviewer is sitting in unan-
nounced – just to name a few. Whatever
the situation may be, it is always good to
have backups on hand.

Ask Questions

These questions should originate from
three pieces: 1) the list you made on the
notepad while listening throughout the pro-
cess; 2) the research you did ahead of time
that should have produced some questions in
advance for the interviewer; 3) any addition-
al questions which arise prompted by the
interviewer’s interaction, which may not have
been jotted down on the notepad. All inter-
viewers expect interviewees to ask questions.
You should have at least one or two ready to
go by the end of the interview – even if one
of them is simply asking what the next steps
are in the process (always a good question to
ask).

Thank You and Thank You

The impression you leave as you exit
the interview is just as important as the
impression you make upon your arrival.
There are two ways of saying thanks: the
first is the in-person thank you, and the
second is the follow-up thank you. Always
remember to thank the interviewer in
person, shake hands, smile and look the
interviewer in the eye in the process.
Regardless of how the interview went, you
never want to leave people with a bad taste
in their mouths. Don’t forget to thank any
receptionist, assistant or any other staff
member who assisted for your interview.
These people should not go unnoticed.

The follow-up thank you was tradi-
tionally done with a handwritten thank
you note sent to the interviewer or the
primary point of contact. While handwrit-
ten notes, especially in this day and age
where technology has taken over, still have
a lasting effect, some may see it as behind
the times or too formal. It is becoming
more and more appropriate these days to
send a quick follow-up thank you email.
Regardless of which method you choose,
remember to extend thanks to those with
whom you met, any support staff and the
company as a whole. Also, don’t overlook
spelling and grammar. This tends to be
more of a land mine with the handwritten
approach, as spell check does most of the
correction for us in an email. If you have
been communicating by way of a profes-
sional recruiter, don’t forget to also thank
that person for all of his or her hard work.

These tips and tricks are sure to put
any candidate in a position of success for
his or her next interview experience.

Maxwell Briskman
Stanfield is a trans-
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The Legal Incubator: Training Attorneys and Increasing Access to Justice

By Ryan E. Hamilton, Esq.

There are an increasing number of under or unemployed recent law school graduates interested in serving modest means clients and traditional legal aid providers are not meeting modest means clients’ need for legal services.

This is the idea that inspired Emily Collins to launch Fair Shake Environmental Legal Services, a nonprofit law firm incubating the growth of environmental legal services for modest means clients in Pennsylvania and Ohio. Fair Shake is currently one of many legal incubators, or attorney residency programs, springing up across the United States. These programs generally all share the twin goals of training attorneys through practice and increasing access to legal services for moderate or low-income individuals. It is yet to be seen how these programs will force the larger legal marketplace to evolve, but the potential for significant change is just over the horizon.

In August of this year, the American Bar Association (ABA) published its first-ever “Report on the Future of Legal Services in the United States.” The report found significant unmet need for access to legal services despite legal aid programs in every state, 80 percent of attorneys reporting an average of 70 hours of pro bono service per year, and national efforts to develop creative new models for delivering legal services to moderate income clients. Yet, many lawyers are underemployed and many recent law grads find it difficult to obtain the types of practical experience required to enter practice effectively. Enter a new model for meeting these needs: the legal incubator.

Pennsylvania is host to three different incubator programs. The first, Fair Shake Environmental Legal Services incorporated in 2013 and holds the honor of being the nation’s first environmental legal services residency program. Resident attorneys are employed for two years, during which time they practice under the supervision of the firm’s senior attorneys and also prepare to launch their own for-profit practices. Collins’s goal is to graduate residents whose practices provide at least half of their services to the modest-means sector. The trick is to develop a practice focused enough to gain expertise but also diverse enough to be sustainable. Collins says the ultimate goal is to fill the need for environmental legal services with resident graduates spread across the entire United States.

The ABA’s “2016 Comprehensive Survey of Lawyer Incubators” attributes the launch of the original lawyer incubator to the City University of New York’s Incubator for Justice, which opened in 2007. As of August 2016, however, “there are over 60 existing or planned programs spanning 33 states and four countries” across the globe. The specific model, though, varies between programs. The survey found a majority of incubators are operated by law schools, but several are operated by independent nonprofits or bar associations. At least two are operated by private firms. The survey identified 357 lawyers participating in the 46 incubators surveyed, with an average of eight participants per program.

The other two programs here in Pennsylvania are both alumni residency programs. Pittsburgh School of Law alumni who aspire to develop a practice targeting the needs of underserved client communities are eligible to participate in the Pitt Legal Services Incubator (PLSI). Throughout the two-year program, participants are provided with office space, mentoring, and seminars on business development in exchange for a modest fee. The first cohort of attorneys at PLSI started in January of 2016. According to Program Director Paula Hopkins, PLSI encourages residents to explore alternative structures and niche practice areas. During their tenure, PLSI participants are able to obtain support through Pitt’s Institute for Entrepreneurial Excellence. PLSI encourages its attorneys to cater to underserved communities, but the participants are encouraged to follow their own visions. Hopkins says there has been tremendous support from the legal community to mentor PLSI lawyers. The question the program is ultimately trying to answer is how to make legal services affordable for clients and also profitable for attorneys.

Marco Attisano, a 2013 graduate, joined PLSI in January. Attisano partnered with 2014 graduate Robert Stasa to open Attisano & Stasa. Their firm focuses on two main areas of practice: criminal defense and professional ethics/disciplinary law. Just eight months into the program, they are already looking for office space to grow their firm. Kord Killian, a 2014 grad of Pitt Law, is practicing criminal defense law but also has a niche practice in firearms law. He recently provided an educational presentation to a local sportsmen’s club about gun ownership issues in Pennsylvania.

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The Legal Incubator
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In Harrisburg, the Widener Law Commonwealth and Dauphin County Bar Association Incubator Program provides space, training and mentoring for recent graduates of Widener Law Commonwealth. Attorneys participating in the program are provided office space and mentoring without charge in exchange for agreeing to provide 100 hours of pro bono services to low-income residents of Dauphin County. The final goal is for graduates of the one-year program to build successful private practices.

The ABA’s 2016 Incubator Survey found that 20 programs across the United States had not yet produced graduates. Nationwide, though, 221 lawyers had graduated, with nearly three-quarters of these attorneys going into solo or small firm practices and more than half actually operating their own firms. To put this in context, in 2015 only 688 recent law school graduates started new practices nine months after graduation and therefore “the number of lawyers participating in incubators is an appreciable level of recently-admitted lawyers who open solo practices soon after law school graduation.”

The statistics collected by the ABA survey demonstrate that Attisano, Killian and the attorneys at Fair Shake are joining a small but dedicated group of attorney-entrepreneurs. The legal incubator movement is clearly growing in Pennsylvania and across the region. In the near future, Collins plans to expand Fair Shake’s service area to cover the entire Appalachian Basin, from New York to Georgia. There is a good chance that the ABA’s 2017 Survey of Lawyer Incubators will show this model being replicated in dramatic fashion. With the growth in legal incubators and residency programs nationwide, there is little doubt that training attorneys through practice and increasing access to legal services for modest-means clients will fundamentally impact the future of the legal marketplace.

Ryan Hamilton is a resident attorney at Fair Shake Environmental Legal Services in Pittsburgh. Ryan’s practice focuses on providing legal tools to build sustainable communities. He works with individuals, community groups and nonprofits to protect environmental and human health, move past fossil fuels, pursue community development goals, and stimulate local economies. He is particularly interested in renewable energy development, municipal land use and zoning, small business/nonprofit counseling, civil and environmental litigation, and local ordinance drafting. Ryan graduated from Lewis and Clark Law School in 2014 with a certificate in environmental and natural resources law. rhamilton@fairshake-els.org

Save the date:
2017 Young Lawyer Summer Summit
July 26-28, 2017

The Penn Stater Hotel and Conference Center
State College, PA
I was thinking of a way to help young attorneys in the daunting task of preparing for and overcoming the fear and anxiety of trying their first case. Coming up on my 10-year anniversary in the field of trial law and criminal defense, I looked back to April 2009, when I tried my first case.

It was a drug case. I was working at the Lackawanna County Public Defenders Office. To be honest, the case was difficult to win. The Commonwealth had 310 bags of heroin, about 12 Xanax pills and $7,500 cash found in the bedroom in the apartment of the client and his fiancé. A search warrant had been issued because he was on state parole supervision at the time.

The client, from outside the area, wanted me to blame the whole thing on his then-pregnant wife, who was soon to deliver her baby. She was also charged in the incident and had the unenviable position of either taking the blame for her baby’s father in order to protect him from doing a lengthy state prison sentence, or cooperating against him to assure her newborn was not delivered within the walls of the Lackawanna County Prison. She chose the latter.

It is important to remember your role in the case and your place in the wheel of justice as an attorney. It is your job to seek out the truth through the evidence, no matter how hard it is to find, and sometimes that truth is not necessarily something you want to know or hear. But in the face of the truth is the only way to serve the best interests of your client. As long as your client knows the full consequence of his actions and the alternatives available to him, you perform your duty to the best of your ability. For criminal defense attorneys, it is best to put this legal counsel and advice in writing, either through a letter to your client or a memorandum kept in the file for later use and reference.

The reality for trial lawyers in the area of criminal defense is this: If you win, you didn't necessarily do anything special because your client was obviously not guilty from the start; but if you lose, well then, it was your fault because you didn't do your job well enough.

The key to good trial work is preparation. You need to know the case better than anyone else. Early in my career, Judge Vito Geroulo, someone I respect and who did criminal defense work, told me that for every hour in the courtroom, there should be two hours of preparation. I have found that preparation time for me is three hours for every hour spent in the courtroom.

In retrospect, maybe I reviewed the material in this case so much that I started to “lose the forest for the trees,” as I became so invested in the case that I started to lose the necessary logical objectivity of my role as legal counsel.

Leading up to the big day, I asked a colleague, Matthew Comerford, to review my theory of the case in an attempt to get an independent opinion. I was also looking for any last-minute tips and wanted to make sure I didn't miss anything. He said I had a good grasp on the legal challenges and evidence, and my theory was solid and competent.

So I asked him, “Matt, what do you think? Can I win?”

He replied, “Absolutely not.” This was a hard pill to swallow, but it was the truth. However, he said this was the best type of case to begin with because the evidence is so overwhelming that the attorney has an opportunity to work on the mechanics and skills necessary to present an effective and competent defense.

The evidence, in fact, was so overwhelming that it was highly unlikely that I was going to get an acquittal, where my client would walk out of the courtroom a free man. But it did provide me a chance to get over the nerves of standing in front of a real jury and presenting an impassioned argument on my client’s behalf to the best of my ability. It also allowed me to develop a style — the way I want to present my case to the jury. All of this benefited me in a case that lacked the gravity and pressure of a doubtful result.

It is exhilarating to try the BIG CASE and WIN all the time, but it is not the reality of the profession. Rather, it is important to focus on the process. Every case teaches you something and provides you an opportunity to look at your strengths and weaknesses — areas to improve your
My First Trial
Continued from page 11

skills as a trial attorney.

The focal point of this trial for me was the closing. Delivering an impassioned closing argument addressing the areas of reasonable doubt in the evidence in the case — and hopefully giving my client a chance going into the deliberations — is not as easy as the movies and TV shows make it look. The most important thing in the closing is to deliver it without holding onto notes or papers like Linus with his security blanket.

If you prepare for the case properly, you should know what you are going to say, have an outline of the important points and areas to address and the evidence you are going to attack. The argument should have a theme and come from the heart or gut. No one ever has given a GREAT closing or speech reading word-for-word from a piece of paper.

Also, do not pace. You want to be comfortable and confident. If you walk back and forth, you risk tiring out the jurors or causing them to become dizzy. Every attorney is nervous in closing, whether or not they like to admit it, but you don't want attentive jurors to notice.

The case went as expected. The assistant district attorney laid out every one of the heroin packets, pills and the money for the jury to see. The jury was out a little over an hour and came back GUILTY for the highest charge but acquitted my client of the two lesser offenses, which was rewarding.

Bernard J. Brown is a sole practitioner in Northeastern Pennsylvania. His firm was started by his grandfather, former U.S. attorney Bernard J. Brown. His practice is focused on criminal defense, handling primarily high-profile cases in Northeastern and Central Pennsylvania.

2017 PBA Statewide Mock Trial Competition Begins

Beginning in January, 303 teams from 255 high schools across Pennsylvania will be competing in district and regional levels of the Statewide Mock Trial Competition sponsored by the Pennsylvania Bar Association Young Lawyers Division.

Pennsylvania’s mock trial program, now in its 34th year, is one of the largest in the nation.

“Although it is called a competition, we view the mock trial program as a great academic opportunity for high school students, even those who do not plan future careers in the law,” said Joel C. Seelye of Altoona, chair of the association’s Young Lawyers Division. “Critical thinking, effective presentation skills and dispute resolution tactics are just some of the ingredients needed to be successful in the mock trial program, and these are skills that will be helpful in many workplaces.”

During the competition, eight-member student teams are given the opportunity to argue both sides of the case in an actual courtroom before a judge. The students, who play the roles of lawyers, witnesses, plaintiffs and defendants, are assisted by teacher coaches and lawyer advisors in preparing for competition. Lawyers and community leaders serve as jurors for the mock trials. The juries determine the winners in each trial based on the teams’ abilities to prepare their cases, present arguments and follow court rules.

The district and regional levels of the competition will continue throughout February and March. At the conclusion of the local competitions, 14 high school mock trial teams will advance to the Pennsylvania Bar Association Statewide Mock Trial Championships, March 24 and 25, in Harrisburg.

The winning team of the state championship will represent Pennsylvania in the national mock trial finals to be held May 11 – 13 in Hartford, Connecticut.

The Pennsylvania Bar Foundation, the charitable affiliate of the Pennsylvania Bar Association, is providing funding support for the statewide competition.

The co-chairs of the Mock Trial Executive Committee are Jonathan D. Koltash of Harrisburg and Jennifer Menichini of Scranton.

This year’s hypothetical case is a criminal trial to determine whether the defendant is guilty of committing an act of arson that destroyed an advanced automotive plant. The case was written by Jonathan A. Grode of Philadelphia, Paul W. Kaufman of Philadelphia, Koltash and Stanford University student Talia Charme-Zane, an alumna of the Pennsylvania mock trial program and former captain of the Central High School team in Philadelphia.

For more information about the 2017 Pennsylvania Bar Association Statewide Mock Trial Championships and to read this year’s case, go to the Mock Trial page of Young Lawyers Division’s section of the PBA website. To volunteer for the judging panel, complete the volunteer form or contact Maria Engles of the Pennsylvania Bar Association at 800-932-0311, extension 2223.
Get On Board (the Leadership Train) at the PBA 2017 Conference of County Bar Leaders

By William L. J. Burke, Esq., CCBL President

“Get on Board (the Leadership Train)” is the theme of the 51st annual Conference of County Bar Leaders, Feb. 23 – 25, 2017, in State College. We are excited to welcome back Dr. Terry Madonna for another informative keynote presentation at lunch. The CCBL executive committee has developed timely and relevant CLE programming. Most importantly, there will be plenty of fun and opportunities to network. Whether you are a current county bar president, other officer, board member, young lawyer chair, section chair, executive director, or hope to be a future leader, you will not want to miss this CCBL!

You may wish to arrive early Thursday afternoon to attend the Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network (PLAN) Inc. reception, which will be held at the Penn State Law Lewis Katz Building. The PLAN reception is a great way to connect with other bar leaders who support PLAN’s mission and work. Then, gather with friends, new and old, back at the Nittany Lion Inn for a welcome social.

Friday morning, I invite you to “Get on the Leadership Train” with me when we will kick off a full day of CLE programming beginning with the Hon. Matt Cartwright, as he shares examples of his use of advocacy and leadership skills transcended from a trial practice onto the legislative process in the United States House of Representatives. Check out the schedule of events to see the full listing of CLE program options. Friday night will again offer a casual and relaxed night of fun and comradery that includes trivia, the return of the popular photo booth, dancing and other games! On Saturday morning, you will be able to network over a hot breakfast, as well as earn two additional CLE credits before heading home.

Your registration fee includes all meals and Friday night’s entertainment, as well as up to 8 CLE credits. County bar presidents and executive directors who are PBA unit counties, please remember you are entitled to a special benefit of a $50 discount on up to three registrations.

Make your reservations today! The registration deadline is Feb. 3, 2017. Be sure to book your room at the Nittany Lion Inn before Jan. 23, 2017 in order to get our group rate. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Susan Etter at the PBA at 800.932.0311, ext. 2256.

I look forward to seeing you in State College!
What’s Going on in our Counties

ZONE 1 (Philadelphia)
Zone Chairs – Philip Yoon – philip.yoon@pacourts.us & Andre Webb andre.webb@libertymutual.com

The YLD held expungement clinics at six locations in November. The clinics relied on attorney volunteers to assist with potential expungement claims. Similarly, the YLD is now seeking volunteers to assist with the Youth Sentencing & Reentry Project.

The YLD held its annual holiday party and had a charity drive for Turning Points for Children, for which they collected new pajamas, books and toys.

Zone 1 will be contacting the Philadelphia-area law schools to plan networking events for the spring semester. Potential plans are for study-break happy hours and/or trivia events to introduce law students to local young attorneys.

ZONE 2 (Berks, Carbon, Lehigh, Northampton, Schuylkill)
Zone Chair – Ed Qaqish - EQ@QaqishLaw.com

SCHUYLKILL COUNTY – No report

BERKS COUNTY

The YLD continues to meet once a month. The annual baseball game against the “seasoned” lawyers within the county was held in September.

CARBON COUNTY

Carbon County Bar Association held a holiday party in December.

LEHIGH COUNTY

The YLD continues to have a monthly happy hour. The YLD had a very successful young professionals bar crawl that was co-hosted with the Young Advisor’s Team of the NAIFA (financial advisors).

NORTHAMPTON COUNTY

The YLD continues to support a monthly happy hour known as “Bar Buddies,” designed to encourage interaction between newer and more experienced members of the bar to form mentor-mentee relationships.

ZONE 3 (Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Juniata, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry, York)
Zone Chairs – Paul Edger – pedger@midpenn.org & Jacqulyn Harris – jackie@artell-law.com

ADAMS, JUNIATA, LANCASTER, LEBANON COUNTIES – No report

CUMBERLAND COUNTY

The Cumberland Bar held an annual Oktoberfest celebration. The bar also had its Annual Bench-Bar Conference. MDJ Dougherty spoke at the last meeting regarding his view of the law from the bench and his attitudes with younger attorneys.

The YLD participated in the Adopt-a-Family holiday gift drive that benefited the local domestic violence shelters.

Zone 3 had a trivia night in November.

The YLD is hosting the annual holiday dinner in early January to thank YLD members for their hard work.

FRANKLIN COUNTY

The YLD participated in the annual Mason Dixon Heart Walk to benefit American Heart Association. The YLD raised $1,000 for the Heart Walk team. A total of $11,000 has been raised by the YLD since it began participating in the Heart Walk.

The YLD did a Stepping Out-style presentation to seniors at Chambersburg Area Senior High School.

The YLD ran a canned food drive at the courthouse after Thanksgiving through early December. All of the YLD members committed to bringing in at least five cans and encouraged other members of the bar and the public to contribute.

The Franklin County Bar held its annual admission ceremony, wherein new members (often YLD members) were sworn in. YLD members served as bell ringers for the Salvation Army.

The YLD held a breakfast before the bar’s annual meeting event to allow members to socialize.

PERRY COUNTY

Perry County does not have an official YLD, but Brittany Shetter, along with Perry County’s ADA, organized a hanging of portraits of past judges at the local courthouse.

YORK COUNTY

The YLD sponsored two happy hours, one close to downtown York and one in Hanover, to be as inclusive as possible to our members living and working throughout the county.

A Wills for Heroes event was held in September at Penn State York. It was well attended and a great opportunity for our members to thank these first responders and veterans.

The YLD hosted a bus trip to Penn State for the Penn State vs. Temple game.

The final social event for the year was the annual staff appreciation happy hour, which was a way for the attorneys to show their sincere thanks to all of the paralegals, secretaries and other support staff who help make their jobs easier.

The YLD held a reception for newly admitted attorneys following a swearing-in ceremony in December, which was held at Marketview Arts in downtown York.
What’s Going on in our Counties

ZONE 4 (Lycoming, Montour, Columbia, Northumberland, Snyder, Tioga, Union)
Zone Chair – Schawnne Kilgus – schawnne.kilguslaw@gmail.com & Christopher Robinson – chris.j.robinson15@gmail.com

The Zone 4 caravan was at Knoebel’s Grove in partnership with the Lycoming Law Association and the Lycoming County Paralegal Association. Food and drinks were provided at this successful event attended by 23 attorneys and their families.

Preliminary plans for Zone 4 YLD Caravan have already been formulated. Since the Knoebel’s trip has been so successful for the last two years, another Knoebels’ trip will be planned for 2017. A date in September has been secured.

MONTOUR, COLUMBIA, NORTHUMBERLAND, SNYDER, UNION COUNTIES – No report

LYCOMING COUNTY
The YLD chapter hosted a happy hour in December.
The group also hosted the Angel Tree annual clothes and toy drive from November through December. Donation bins were located all around Lycoming County.

TIOGA COUNTY
The Tioga County Bar Association held its annual Summer Bar Party in September. The event was well attended by over 40 people, including attorneys and their families. The event was held outdoors at the home of two senior members. Live music, delicious food and drink, and good company were just a few of the highlights. More than 80 percent of Tioga County’s YLD-eligible members were present.

ZONE 5 (Bradford, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Pike, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Wayne, Wyoming)
Zone Chairs – Jennifer Menichini – jmenichini@callGLA.com & C. David Pedri – david.pedri@luzernecounty.org

BRADFORD, PIKE, SULLIVAN, SUSQUEHANNA, WAYNE, WYOMING COUNTIES – No report

LACKAWANNA COUNTY
The YLD members worked the smoothie stand at the St. Joseph’s picnic in July. Members provided a few hours of assistance before the picnic was shut down due to bad weather.
The YLD members sent two foursome teams to the LBA golf tournament in August. Afterwards, all YLD members attended a clambake provided by the LBA.
YLD members attended the LBA dinner dance in September.

In October, the YLD members attended the annual Red Mass and luncheon.
The YLD hosted the first annual Santa Station, where YLD members could bring their children to stop in the LBA for hot cocoa and treats during the Santa Parade.
The YLD provided a monetary donation to Family to Family Thanksgiving event and assisted with preparation of Thanksgiving dinner and as take-out packages.
The young lawyers participated in the LBA’s New Lawyer Induction Ceremony and a holiday party inviting on new young lawyers and their families to attend. During the holiday party, the YLD “booted” young lawyers who have graduated from the YLD.
The YLD hosted the annual Operation Dear Santa at Allied Services providing pizza, presents, backpacks, books, dental kits, crafts and Santa Claus to the children of the Friends of the Poor.

LUZERNE COUNTY
The YLD held a Wills for Heroes at Luzerne County Community College to provide essential legal documents free of charge to our nation’s first responders and veterans.
The YLD co-hosted a Zone 5 Caravan Oktoberfest event. Members of Zone 5 were invited to the Arena Bar and Grill. PBA Vice President Charles Eppolito III and Treasurer David Schwager were in attendance, along with several judges from Luzerne County.
The YLD held its annual Dinner with the Judges. Approximately 16 YLD members enjoyed a four-course dinner and socialized with several members of the Luzerne County Court of Common Pleas at Pazzo. This event helped to acquaint YLD members with the judiciary so that they could receive guidance and advice about court practice and the legal profession.
The YLD hosted the annual Brewery/Winery Bus Tour (visited Conygham Brewery in Conygham and Crossings Vineyards, Rose Bank Winery, and Triumph Brewery in Bucks County). Guests enjoyed all wine and beer tastings, lunch, snacks and a trip to New Hope, Pa.
During the month of November, the YLD held a kids’ clothing drive to benefit the Kids’ Closet at the St. John’s Care and Concern Clinic.

MONROE COUNTY
In August the YLD sponsored the annual rafting trip down the Delaware River. The event was open to all Monroe County Bar Association members and their families.
Early in November, six YLD members volunteered at a soup kitchen at Saint Luke’s Church in Main Street in Stroudsburg.
The YLD organized the annual food drive. During the holiday season, YLD members collected nonperishable food items to be donated to the local Salvation Army.
The YLD continues to host a monthly mentor lunch where local, experienced and veteran lawyers join the YLD members for an informal lunch and offer their wisdom and advice to the young lawyers and share their experiences in the legal profession.

**ZONE 6** (Fayette, Greene, Washington, Westmoreland)

Zone Chairs — Garnet Crossland — glc142@yahoo.com

**GREENE COUNTY** — Does not have an active YLD

**FAYETTE COUNTY**

The YLD and the local bar association hosted a Toys for Tots fundraiser at the Uniontown Country Club in December.

The YLD is actively involved with the newly created Professional Ethics Committee in the county.

**WASHINGTON COUNTY**

The YLD once again defeated the senior bar in the annual softball challenge while raising money for CASA, Inc.

The YLD visited a whiskey distillery where they learned about the Whiskey Rebellion and its leaders and partook in the brewing and tasting of whiskey.

Later this year, the YLD plans to have a charity event at the City Mission.

**WESTMORELAND COUNTY**

The YLD meets monthly at a happy hour to conduct committee meetings.

The young lawyers were the winners in the Young vs. Old Lawyers softball game and, by all accounts, the older lawyers were “crushed.”

**ZONE 7** (Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Forest, Jefferson, McKean, Venango, Warren)

Zone Chairs — Denise Pekelnicky — denise@nwpalaw.com

**CLARION, FOREST, JEFFERSON, MCKEAN, VENANGO, AND WARREN COUNTIES** — Do not have active YLD

**CRAWFORD COUNTY**

The Crawford County YLD took the summer off, but dove right back in to activities in September. The YLD attended the last home game of the 2016 Seawolves baseball season. The event was open to spouses, significant others and children.

YLD members played in the Black N Blue Softball Tournament with the bar association. The team made a stellar effort, but didn't make it to the playoffs this year.

In November the YLD hosted a Steelers vs. Ravens football party.

**ERIE COUNTY**

The YLD Zone 7 Caravan was a wine tour of four wineries in Pennsylvania and New York with a buffet dinner afterwards at Lakeview Winery.

The YLD hosted an event at the Erie Seawolves for the young lawyers and their families.

The YLD hosted an event for Young Lawyers and the Erie County Bar Association Board of Directors to watch the Tall Ships and the World’s Largest Rubber Duck sail into the bay. This event was extremely well attended in spite of torrential downpours.

Many young lawyers volunteered their time at the Erie County Wills for Heroes event.

The YLD held a networking happy hour for young lawyers and the Women’s Division at the Harbour House, attended by several ECBA board members.

**ZONE 8** (Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Fulton, Huntingdon, Indiana, Mifflin, Somerset)

Zone Chair - Christopher Michelone — ctmichelone@mqblaw.com & Warren Crilly III — wlcrrillyiii@gmail.com

**BEDFORD, CAMBRIA, FULTON, HUNTINGDON, INDIANA, MIFFLIN, SOMERSET COUNTIES** — No report

**BLAIR COUNTY**

The YLD staged its first Bridge the Gap CLE for new attorneys. The event was a huge success and plans are in place to hold a Bridge the Gap program each year for new lawyers in Central Pennsylvania.

The Zone 8 Caravan was held at the PNG Field in Altoona. A special thanks goes to all those who traveled from other counties to attend.

The YLD continues to sponsor Lunch & Learn CLEs. For additional information please contact Traci Naugle at tnaugle@sfsblaw.com.

Preparations are underway for the next Wills for Heroes event in Blair County for the spring of 2017.

**ZONE 9** (Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery)

Zone Chairs — Patrick Gallo Jr — pgallo@macelree.com & Colin O’Boyle — cjo@elliottgreenleaf.com

**BUCKS COUNTY** — No report
**DELAWARE COUNTY**

The YLS hosted many free CLEs for its membership that dealt with legal malpractice and financial planning.

For most of the summer, the YLS was planning the 6th annual Run for the House 5K, which raises money for the Ronald McDonald House in Philadelphia, held on Oct. 1. Records were broken on the amount of money raised and the number of participating runners. A donation of $15,000 was given to the Ronald McDonald house for its Adopt-A-Room program.

The YLS held its 2nd annual oktoBARfest at the bar association (sponsored by Gilchrist Insurance Group, Wechsler Marsico Simpson – Wealth Management Services and Woody Law Offices, P.C.) Members did a Meet and Greet of all new members, especially those who just passed the bar exam. It was a great turn out, and the YLS raised more than $400 to go to the annual Christmas party for underprivileged children held in December at the bar association building.

**CHESTER COUNTY**

The 11th Annual Federal vs. State softball game was held in July at West Chester University. After an intense game that went into extra innings, the State team won 7-6! Thank you to everyone who participated and came out in support.

The CCBA Fall Bench Bar was held at Skytop Lodge in Skytop, Pa. A great time was had by all.

The Chester County Trial Advocacy Academy also held its two-day academy in October. This year’s academy focused on bench trials.

The YLD volunteered for the Birth Certificate Clinic held in Coatesville, where individuals met with advocates to assist in procuring their birth certificates. The Birth Certificate Clinic was organized by Legal Aid of Southeastern PA in conjunction with the Chester County Bar Foundation and the Coatesville Senior Center. Without a birth certificate, access to health care, public benefits and even a driver’s license can be nearly impossible.

The YLD welcomes Basil Joy, Esq. as its new secretary/treasurer beginning in 2017. Basil was recently elected at the YLD’s November meeting and is an assistant district attorney at Chester County District Attorney’s Office.

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY**

The YLD hosted a happy hour for Villanova Law students to introduce them to the Montgomery Bar Association. As a result of this event, 10 students were added to the membership roster of the MBA.

Wills for Heroes event at the Willow Grove Fire Department was held in November. There was a one-hour training, then volunteers helped to prepare wills for members of the Willow Grove Fire Department and their families.

The YLD held a coat drive and collected new and gently used coats, which were given to Laurel House, a domestic violence shelter in Montgomery County.

The YLD used the holiday party to give back to the community by asking children from Laurel House to attend as the special guests. For the children (and adults) there was a magic show and a surprise visit from Santa.

**ZONE 10 (Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Lawrence, Mercer)**

Zone Chairs – Andrea Boyle – aboyele@andreaboylelaw.com & Melissa Merchant-Calvert – Melissa.merchant19@gmail.com

**ARMSTRONG AND LAWRENCE COUNTIES** – Do not have active YLDs

**BEAVER COUNTY**

In October, the Oktoberfest happy hour was held, and everyone brought non-perishable food items. The food was donated to the Salvation Army in Aliquippa.

**BUTLER COUNTY**

The YLD hosted a Brushes and Barstools event in October. A YLD member hosted a YLD Steelers party.

The holiday project was to gather gift cards for CYS and VOICE.

**MERCER COUNTY**

The YLD continues to hold monthly happy hours.

The YLD had a Thanksgiving food drive to benefit a local food bank and organized a toy drive for the Christmas season.

**ZONE 11 (Cameron, Centre, Clearfield, Clinton, Elk, Potter)**

Zone Chair- Daniel McKenrick – dcm230@psu.edu

**CAMERON, CLEARFIELD, CLINTON, ELK, POTTER COUNTIES** - Do not have active YLDs

**CENTRE COUNTY**

There was a CCBA Family Night at the State College Spikes baseball game at Medlar Field with a fireworks show after the game. Approximately 15 individuals attended.

A ‘Meet the Judge Night - Kayaking/canoeing’ with President Judge Thomas Kistler on Coyler Lake was held in Centre County.

Approximately 25 people enjoyed wings, drinks and fellowship at the PBA YLD Zone 11 Caravan/Tussey Mountain Wingfest. Attorneys from Clearfield and Clinton Counties also attended.
What’s Going on in our Counties

A Wills for Heroes event is expected to be held in late March or early April.

ZONE 12 (Allegheny)
Zone Chairs- Julia Wu - jw@mbm-law.net

The YLD hosted its first annual Esquire Open at the Mt. Lebanon Tennis Center with over 90 people in attendance. Tennis pros organized and led a mixed-doubles tennis tournament for players of all skill levels. Food and beverages were provided and various prizes were awarded, including a night's stay at the Hotel Monaco, a month's membership to a bar studio, tickets to the symphony and many others. The event raised over $9,000 in sponsorship dollars for the YLD.

The YLD hosted a kick-off party at Schenley Park Café. The ACBA/ACBF and the YLD Public Service Committee completed its backpack project. Volunteers pack and distribute backpacks filled with school supplies to school children in need.

The YLD Education Committee commenced its Esquires and Expressos, which is a series of programs focused on various topics for young lawyers. The first program in August was “Five Resume and Networking Do's and Don’ts.”

The YLD Book Club returned in August and continues throughout the year, featuring a different novel every month.

The YLD Education Committee commenced its “Five Things I Wish I’d Known as a Young Lawyer Series.” The first program was held in September and focused on “Five Things I Wish I’d Known in my First Five Years of Practice.” This series will continue throughout the year.

The YLD joined forces with the ACBA Arts and the Law Committee for an evening at one of Pittsburgh’s most unique venues, Engine House 25. The event featured an on-premises Roberto Clemente Museum, as well as a wine cellar. Hor d’oeuvres and wine were served.

The YLD Public Service Committee commenced its Wills for Heroes program.

The YLD Membership Outreach Committee held its happy hour in September, which continues throughout the year.

In October, the YLD Membership Outreach Committee held the annual Passing of the Bar Bash. There were approximately 60 people in attendance.

The YLD Communications Committee continues its Point of Law newsletter this year.

As part of the YLD Public Service Committee’s Military and Veterans Project, the committee invited firms to participate in Casual Friday on Veteran’s Day, Nov. 11, in exchange for donations that are to be submitted to the project.

The YLD Diversity Committee held its 7th Annual Diverse Law Student Reception. Diverse Law Students from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law, Duquesne Law School, Pennsylvania State University Dickenson School of Law and West Virginia Law School were in attendance to mix and mingle with the diverse attorneys of Allegheny County. More than 50 people were in attendance.

The YLD’s Bar Leadership Initiative Class has decided on its class project, which is Threads for Vets. Various drop-off locations will be set up for winter clothing donations for veterans and their families.

The YLD Public Service Committee hosted its Lawyers Make a Difference Day. Volunteers were sent to three locations to distribute food and sort and pack donated products for communities worldwide.

In September, the YLD began collecting gifts, wrapping supplies and other various necessities for the annual children’s holiday gift drive. The gift wrapping and gift distribution took place in December.

The YLD Member Services Committee anticipates on having a kickball event sometime during the year.

A new committee, the Membership Outreach Committee, was formed this year. The committee is responsible for recruiting, retaining and supporting the membership of the YLD. The first event was the Passing of the Bar Bash, as described above.

PBA YLD Seeks 2017-2018 Nominations

The PBA Young Lawyers Division’s Nominating Committee is accepting applications from YLD members interested in seeking nominations to run as candidates for the division’s 2017-2018 chair-elect, secretary, treasurer and division delegate positions. The terms for those elected will begin at the conclusion of the 2017 Annual Meeting (May 10-11, at the Omni William Penn Hotel, Pittsburgh.)

If you are interested in being nominated by the Nominating Committee under Article IV, Section 2, of the by-laws, please submit your qualifications and a brief biographical sketch by April 10, 2017 to Maria Engles (PBA, 100 South Street, P.O. Box 186, Harrisburg, PA 17108). Materials also may be faxed to 717-238-7182 or emailed to maria.engles@pabar.org.

If you wish to be nominated by petition under Article IV, Section 4 of the by-laws, please send your materials with a petition signed by at least 15 members of the YLD by April 25, 2017 to the above address or fax number.


Maria Engles can be reached at maria.engles@pabar.org to answer any questions you may have regarding the election process.
Upcoming Wills for Heroes Events

March 18  Widener Law Commonwealth, Dauphin County  
March 25  Lancaster County Public Safety Training Center, Lancaster County  
May 20  Community Foundation of the Endless Mountains, Susquehanna County  
June 10  PBI, Cumberland County  
June 10  Lancaster County Public Safety Training Center, Lancaster County  
Sept. 16  Lancaster County Public Safety Training Center, Lancaster County  

Check the website (http://www.pabar.org/site/Public/YLD/WillsforHeroes.aspx) throughout the year for more events or to sign up to volunteer.

Upcoming PBA Events

Jan. 13-15  Family Law Section Winter Meeting  
           Philadelphia  
Jan. 25-29  PBA 2017 Midyear Meeting  
           St. Kitts Marriott Resort & The Royal Beach Casino  
           St. Kitts, West Indies  
Feb. 23-25  2017 Conference of County Bar Leaders *  
           Nittany Lion Inn, State College  

* YLD business meeting will take place during the event.

CLICK HERE FOR UPCOMING PBA YLD EVENTS.

Calling all writers!

The YLD At Issue editor is now accepting article submissions meeting the following criteria:

• The subject matter should be relevant to young lawyers.
• Articles should be no longer than 1,200 words. Longer articles may be considered to run as a series.
• All submissions must include a short author biography and a digital photo of the author (300 dpi resolution preferred).
• Electronic submissions (MS Word) are preferred. Please submit articles to Keli Neary at kmnearyesq@yahoo.com.
• Articles for the next issue are due March 1, 2017.
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