

**STATE BAR OF MICHIGAN
YOUNG LAWYERS SECTION
ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE 2004-2005 BAR YEAR
Prepared and Submitted by
CHAIRPERSON ANGELIQUE STRONG MARKS**

**I. STATE BAR OF MICHIGAN YOUNG LAWYERS SECTION
COUNCIL MEMBERS:**

The 2004-2005 State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section Executive Council Members are as follows:

OFFICERS:

- *CHAIRPERSON: Angelique Strong Marks*
- *CHAIRPERSON-ELECT: Jeff Kirkey*
- *VICE CHAIRPERSON: JJ Conway*
- *SECRETARY/TREASURER: Robert Fergan*
- *EX OFFICIO: D. Andrew Portinga*

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

District 1 (Wayne).

- Carlos A. Escurel, Jr (Detroit)
- Chiri N. Holt (Detroit)
- Lavonda Jackson (Detroit)
- Brandy Johnson (Detroit)
- Michelle Johnson-Tidjani (Detroit):

District 2 (Oakland and Macomb).

- Ryan J. Deel (Troy)
- Dawn King (Southfield)
- Maureen M. McGinnis (Troy)
- Solon M. Phillips (Southfield)
- Jessica Simmons (Ferndale)
- Elias Xenos (Farmington Hills):

District 3 (remaining counties).

- Danielle Anderson (Kalamazoo)
- Chris Christenson, III (Flint)
- Thomas Evans (Hastings)
- Sean P. McNally (East Lansing)
- Marcel Stoetzel (Hastings)

II. STATE BAR OF MICHIGAN'S YOUNG LAWYERS SECTION EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETINGS

The State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyer's Section has conducted or will conduct the following meetings:

DATE	LOCATION	TIME
THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 30, 2004	State Bar Building Lansing, Michigan	9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon (Option lunch from 12:00 noon- 1:00 p.m.)
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2004	University Club Lansing, Michigan	6:30 P.M.
THURSDAY, JANUARY 20, 2005	University Club Lansing, Michigan	6:30 P.M.
WEDNESDAY MARCH 16, 2005	University Club Lansing, Michigan	6:30 P.M.
THURSDAY MAY 12, 2005	University Club Lansing, Michigan	6:30 P.M.
THURSDAY JULY 28, 2005	University Club Lansing, Michigan	6:30 P.M.
SEPTEMBER 22, 2005 ANNUAL MEETING	TO BE DETERMINED	TO BE DETERMINED

III. PROGRAMS

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY (Robert Fergan and Ginta McNally)

On August 21, 2004, the State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section participated in the Habitat for Humanity home build in Lansing. We had quite a turn out this year, about forty members and guests participated. We worked on two houses located side by side. This year we put up siding and trim, graded the yards, removed tree stumps, removed garbage, and painted a storage shed. Although the group accomplished a lot during the day, it seemed as though time flew by due to the good company and camaraderie.

FINANCIAL PLANNING SEMINAR (Chairperson Chris Cobb)

On September 23, 2004, the State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section hosted a Financial Planning Seminar for young lawyers. The event was held at the Troy Somerset hotel. Rick Bloom, a well-known radio personality on the topic of financial planning, presented valuable information on financial planning. Over 50 young lawyers attended.

ANNUAL MEETING AND RETREAT

On September 30, 2004, the State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section held its Annual Meeting in conjunction with the State Bar of Michigan's Annual Meeting. The Meeting was held at the State Bar of Michigan Building. The Section conducted its elections, the results of which are as follows: Chairperson: Angelique Strong Marks Chairperson Elect: Jeffery Kirkey; Vice-Chairperson: John Conway; Secretary/Treasurer: Robert Fergan. The Section also presented its Outstanding Young Lawyer Award to Richard Bernstein.

After the election, a retreat was conducted by Chairperson Angelique Strong Marks. The purpose of the retreat was to review the purpose of the Section, the goals of the Section and the responsibilities of members of the Section.

MONDAYS WITH THE SUITS (CHAIRPERSON TOM EVANS)

Through the 2004-2005 school year, the State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section hosted "Mondays with the Suits", which presents students in Kindergarten through the 4th grade an opportunity to meet with and be read to by attorneys. Each Monday one attorney visits Delton Elementary School to read to a classroom of children. Additional dialogue on the legal profession and the lawyer's field of specialization develops between the children and attorney, depending on the kids' grade level and abilities.

In addition to the positive contact between the students and the lawyer, the YLS also donated money to the school to purchase books.

AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION YOUNG LAWYERS DIVISION FALL CONFERENCE

From October 7-10, 2004, the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division hosted its Fall Conference in Austin, Texas. John Conway, the State Bar of Michigan's Young Lawyers Section Vice-Chairperson and ABA-YLD District Representative, attended the conference on behalf of the SBM YLS.

LEGAL WRITING SEMINARS (Chairperson Elias Xenos)

On October 22, 2004 and November 8, 2005, the State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section hosted legal writing seminars. Ms. Nancy Harbour, an expert on legal writing was invited to speak at two seminar sessions, Southfield and Lansing, to a group of young lawyers about legal writing. This seminar provided practical knowledge and communication tips that young attorneys could take back to their offices and apply immediately to their own legal writing. The seminar also included highlights from "A View from the Bench©," Ms. Harbour's compilation of interviews with Michigan judges about what constitutes effective writing.

Attorneys spent 90 minutes at this interactive presentation to refresh and learn about:

- Basic communication skills: A Background
- Focusing and writing clearly: A Method

- What clients want & need in writing: Economic Effectiveness

Ms. Harbour also provided a booklet of examples of legal writing for different audiences (i.e. judges as opposed to clients) and situations (i.e., motion briefs as opposed to client letters).

RACE FOR JUSTICE (Chairperson John Conway)

On October 30, 2004, the State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section sponsored the Race for Justice. The 8th Annual YLS Race for Justice was held at Belle Isle Park in Detroit, Michigan. The Race is designed to bring member of the Young Lawyers Section of the Michigan State Bar, their coworkers, and mentors together on a Saturday morning in the Fall to walk/run a 5 kilometer race around the island. The course was plotted so that virtually the entire race was run along the Detroit River.

Law firms and legal service providers acted as sponsors for the event. Approximately \$3000.00 was raised for the Access to Justice Fund, which like the ABA's Fund for Justice and Education, provides funding and legal services for the impoverished or disadvantaged.

T-shirts and refreshments were provided. Many runners ran competitively and awards were presented for the men's and women's overall and runner up categories. All participants were awarded an Access to Justice glass paperweight. Several participants made individual donations to Access to Justice above the \$25.00 entry fee.

CAN WOMEN REALLY HAVE IT ALL (Chairperson Angelique Strong Marks)

On November 4, 2004, the State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section hosted the Can Women Really Have It All? The panel discussion focused on work life balance issues and addressed the all too familiar question of whether women can really have successful careers, marriages and families and if so, how? The program began with a hors d'oeuvres reception from 6:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. followed by the panel discussion from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The program was held at the Southfield Skyline Club located in Southfield, Michigan.

The prominent panel members reflected the diversity of the legal profession and society. They were as follows:

- *Leslie Banas*, Honigman Miller Schwarz & Cohn LLP, Partner
- *Stacy Fox*, Visteon Corporation, Senior Vice President, General Counsel & Secretary
- *Judith Levy*, Assistant United States Attorney
- *Bonnie Mayfield*, Dykema Gossett PLLC, Partner
- *The Honorable Denise Page Hood*, United States District Court-Eastern District of Michigan
- Moderator: *The Honorable Victoria Roberts*, United States District Court-Eastern District of Michigan

The goals and objectives of the program were to have meaningful dialogue regarding the challenges that many young female attorneys face in the effort to balance their career goals, family commitments and other activities. The objective was for the participants to learn from senior female attorneys who have been able to find a comfortable work life balance.

MOOT COURT COMPETITION

On November 11 and 12, 2004, the State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Sections co-sponsored the University of Detroit Mercy Moot Court Competition. The SBM YLS contributed \$500.00 to co-sponsor the event.

HOLIDAY DINNERS FOR THOSE IN NEED (Chairperson Angelique Strong Marks)

On Saturday, December 4, 2005, the State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section teamed with the D. Augustus Straker Bar, the Oakland County affiliate of the National Bar Association, and served over 200 residents of the Grace Center of Hope in Pontiac, Michigan. In addition to discussions on legal issues, the residents of the shelter also enjoyed saxophone music played by a high school volunteer. On the following Saturday, December 11, 2005, the State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section served over 300 women and children at the Highland Park Rescue Mission, which is one of the state's most high crisis cities. The residents received information regarding Landlord/Tenant Rights and also fellowshipped with the lawyer volunteers.

NEW LAWYERS' SEMINAR

On December 7 and 8, 2004, the State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section co-sponsored the New Lawyers Seminar with the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan and the Federal Bar Association. There were over 100 young lawyers that attended the educational seminar. The YLS contributed \$500 and publicity as a co-sponsor of the program.

WINTERFEST (Chairpersons Carlos Escurel and Maureen McGinnis)

On January 27, 2005, the State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section hosted the Winterfest. The event raised money for the American Red Cross Tsunami Disaster fund. Through cooperation from YLS, Law Student Section and Special Counsel, funding was made available to cater the event and purchase minimal supplies needed for registration and donation taking. The event was held at Cinq, in Royal Oak, an area that is known for attracting young professionals. We had terrific attendance with approximately 115 people attending and more importantly, many of them donating to the Tsunami fund. When all of the money was calculated and turned into the Red Cross, we had raised over \$5,000.00! The Macomb County Bar Association donated \$1,000.00 alone.

TRIAL AND APPELLATE ADVOCACY SEMINAR (Chairperson Sean McNally)

On February 5, 2005, the State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section held the Trial and Appellate Advocacy Seminar. The educational seminar focused on effective appellate and trial advocacy and the use of courtroom technology. The speakers included

Chief Judge William C. Whitbeck of the Michigan Court of Appeals, John D. Pirich of Honigman, Miller, Schwartz & Cohn, LLP, and Eric J. Eggen of Honigman, Miller, Schwartz & Cohn, LLP.

AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION YOUNG LAWYERS DIVISION MID-YEAR MEETING

From February 9-18, 2005, the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division hosted its Mid-Year Meeting. The State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Division sent 7 Delegates to the meeting.

ADR PROGRAM (Chairperson Robert Fergan)

On February 16, 2005, the State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section held an Introduction to Alternative Dispute Resolutions Program. This program gave participants an opportunity to hear experienced advocates give the straight story on common mistakes attorneys make before and during an arbitration. Drafting tips and considerations regarding arbitration clauses were provided. The importance of being clear about the business objectives of your clients and understanding that arbitrators are not simply jurors or judges, were discussed. Further, the arbitrators discussed how clients can achieve the goal of expeditious, sensible, thoughtful resolution of even complex claims, through arbitration. Practical examples were provided illustrating how to get the most of any ADR process - what has worked, what needs to be accomplished, best ways to ensure that clients get the best results - win or lose.

D. AUGUSTUS STRAKER MLK ORAL ADVOCACY COMPETITION

On February 19, 2005, the D. Augustus Straker Bar Association hosted the Dr. Martin Luther King Oral Advocacy Competition. The State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section co-sponsored the event by providing \$750.00 in funds. Students of the Detroit and Oakland County school systems write essays regarding how they believe Dr. Martin Luther King would address a current event in society. The students compete for savings bonds to be used towards their college education.

ACHIEVING SUCCESS AS A YOUNG LAWYER (Chairperson Jessica Simmons)

On April 7, 2005, the State Bar of Michigan hosted Navigating Your Career as a Young Lawyer: Achieving Success. The program's speakers were Dennis Archer, former Detroit mayor and chairman of Dickinson Wright, PLLC; Nancy Diehl, President of the State Bar of Michigan; George Googasian of The Googasian Firm, PC; and Elisa Garcia of Domino's Pizza, LLC. They shared their experiences on the program topic as related to the areas of private practice, public service, corporate law, and leadership. A question-and-answer session followed the program.

IMPRINTS (Chairpersons Michelle Johnson-Tidjani, Lavonda Jackson and Marcel Stoetzel)

In April 2005, the State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section launched this year's 'Imprint' Mentoring Program, which is designed to pair young lawyers with middle to high school aged youths in high schools in Detroit and Lansing. These pairs act as pen pals over the course of a two to three month time period, reading one book and

alternating weekly letters in which they correspond with each other about the particular literary work. The program concludes with an informal luncheon held at the hosting school where attending students can meet their lawyer mentors. Past programs have cultivated relationships that are still being maintained.

One core goal of this program is to cultivate mentor/mentee relationships between attorneys and students. The program also hopes to give students and young lawyers from diverse backgrounds an opportunity to get to know each other on a personal level. The other goal is the discussion of a literary work and its social or legal themes and how they relate to daily life. The closing banquet at which the lawyers and students meet is being held on June 8, 2005.

WE THE JURY (Chairperson Chris Christenson)

In April 2005, the State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section hosted a We the Jury Program. The program is designed to introduce the legal system to children and give them an opportunity to participate in a jury selection and trial process.

Approximately 100 students from Mr. Molina's classes at Flint Southwestern Academy participated in the "We the Jury" program. The original "We the Jury" Program called for time in the classroom; however, we thought that if the students could tour the courts, it would have a greater impact. The students were instructed to pay attention to all of the various careers that they observed while on their tours, such as clerks, deputies, secretaries, attorneys, and judges. Arrangements were made to have the students tour the 67th District Court and holding cell area, as well as the 7th Circuit Court historic courtroom and the modern courtroom. While at the Circuit Court, the students reported to the jury board for the actual jury orientation.

Real lawyers from the Genesee County Prosecutor's and real defense attorneys participated. This made the voir dire process very authentic as the students were split into three jury pools from which a jury was ultimately selected. The students were sequestered during their lunch and were asked to come up with a verdict. All three jury groups returned verdicts of not guilty.

50 YEAR HONOREE PROGRAM (Chairperson Jeffery Kirkey)

On May 17, 2005, the State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section assisted the Senior Bar with the "State Bar of Michigan 50 Year Honorees Golden Celebration". This event was designed to honor attorneys in Michigan who have been practicing law for 50 years. In 2005 there were 126 honorees all of whom obtained their law licenses in 1955. The event was held at the Dearborn Inn in Dearborn, Michigan. Beginning with a "class photo," the honorees were next escorted into the dining room where they enjoyed lunch and opening remarks by the current State Bar President, Nancy Diehl, and the current State Bar Executive Director, John Berry. The entertainment began with music performed by *The Forum Shoppers*, a barbershop quartet consisting of three Michigan lawyers and a judge. Each of the 52 honorees who attended was then recognized by a council member of the Senior Lawyers Section, H. Rollin Allen. The Young Lawyers Section presented "A Golden Celebration Quiz Show" hosted by the Section's Chair-Elect, Jeff Kirkey. The

quiz show kept things lively with trivia questions about the year 1955. Each honoree will receive a copy of the group photo and facts about 1955 in a folio.

AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION YOUNG LAWYERS DIVISION SPRING CONFERENCE

The American Bar Association's Young Lawyers Division hosted its Spring Conference in Miami, Florida from May 17-22, 2005. The State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Sections sent 6 Delegates to the Conference.

INTER ALIA (Editor John Conway)

The State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section has published three of its scheduled four InterAlia Newsletters. The newsletters are distributed to over 6,000 YLS members and posted on the Section's website.

The Section still has several more programs that it is planning and will conduct, which include a Stress Management Seminar and an Oakland County We the Jury Program. The Young Lawyers Section's Bar Year does not conclude until September 2005.

I V. AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION 2005-2007 APPOINTMENTS

- AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION HOUSE OF DELEGATES : Jessica Simmons
- AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION YOUNG LAWYERS DIVISION DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE: Carlos Escural and Alternate Sean McNally