

**STATE BAR OF MICHIGAN  
YOUNG LAWYERS SECTION  
ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE 2007-2008 BAR YEAR  
Prepared and Submitted by  
CHAIRPERSON ROBERT K. FERGAN**

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

The 2007-2008 State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section Executive Council Members are as follows:

**OFFICERS:**

- *CHAIRPERSON: Robert K. Fergan*
- *CHAIRPERSON-ELECT: Bernhardt Christenson, III*
- *VICE CHAIRPERSON: Danielle Mason Anderson*
- *SECRETARY/TREASURER: Timothy Tyrone Gardner, Jr.*
- *EX OFFICIO: JJ Conway*

**COUNCIL MEMBERS:**

**District 1 (Wayne).**

- Carlos A. Escurel, Detroit
- Antoinette S. Gilbert, Detroit
- Jennifer M. Harvey, Northville
- Felicia O. Johnson, Detroit
- Solon M. Phillips, Detroit
- Brandy Y. Robinson, Detroit

**District 2 (Oakland and Macomb).**

- Lisa J. Hamameh, Bloomfield Hills
- James William Low, Southfield
- Maureen M. McGinnis, Troy
- Brent George Seitz, Troy
- Hope V. Shovein, Southfield
- Jessica Renee Simmons, Troy
- Keith A. Wuotinen, Farmington

**District 3 (remaining counties).**

- Bernhardt D. Christenson, III, Flint
- Danielle Mason Anderson, Kalamazoo
- Timothy Tyrone Gardner, Jr., Lansing
- Erika Lynn Anderson, Saint Johns
- Sean P. McNally, East Lansing
- Bonnie R. Shaw, Ann Arbor
- David R. Millar, Grand Rapids

## **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:

<b>DATE</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>TIME</b>
Thursday, September 27, 2007 Annual Meeting	Amway Grand Plaza Hotel Grand Rapids	9:00 A.M.-11:00 P.M. (Optional lunch from 12:00 P.M. - 1:00 P.M)
Wednesday, November 28, 2007	University Club Lansing	6:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.
Friday, January 18, 2008	University Club Lansing	6:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.
Wednesday, March 26, 2008	University Club Lansing	6:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.
Wednesday, May 21, 2008	TBD Ann Arbor	6:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.
Friday, July 25, 2008	University Club Lansing	6:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.
September 17-19, 2008 Annual Meeting	Dearborn Hyatt Dearborn	9:00 A.M. – 10:00 A.M.

## **III. PROGRAMS**

### **Summer Splash (Maureen McGinnis)**

On Friday, August 24, 2007, the State Bar - Young Lawyers Section and the Oakland County Bar Association's New Lawyers Committee co-sponsored their annual Summer Splash event at the Woodward Avenue Brewery in Ferndale, MI. Despite torrential rains that day, over forty new lawyers attended, and a great time was had by all. The attendees made donations to Lighthouse of Oakland County, whose primary mission is to provide safe, decent, affordable housing for low-income families.

### **Negotiation Seminar (Brandy Robinson)**

The Young Lawyers Section hosted a half-day seminar called "Negotiating Your Best Deal Ever!" at Southfield's Skyline Club on August 16, 2007. This event sought to demystify the negotiation process and arm participants with the confidence and skill needed to prevail in any negotiation setting.

The seminar featured national expert Charles B. Craver, George Washington University Law School Professor of Law and author of *Effective Legal Negotiation and Settlement*©

and *The Intelligent Negotiator* ©. Professor Craver guided participants through a series of hands-on exercises and negotiation scenarios. The more than 50 young lawyers in attendance learned about different negotiating styles, the psychology behind negotiation, and ethical dilemmas that arise with puffery, embellishment, and other forms of gamesmanship.

### **Back to School Barbecue (Felicia Johnson and Brandy Robinson)**

On Saturday, August 25, 2007, the Young Lawyers Section held its second annual “Back-to School Barbecue” at the Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries Genesis House III in Detroit. This year’s event was cosponsored by the D. Augustus Straker, Michigan, Asian-Pacific American, and Wolverine Bar Associations. The YLS believes that the best way to start the school year is with an end-of summer celebration. Imagine a picnic atmosphere, the smell of hot dogs and hamburgers grilling, children running around playing games, and a disc jockey playing music in the background. Oh – and backpacks overflowing with school supplies.

Approximately 200 kindergarten through 12th grade students and their parents participated in the barbecue. The students played indoor and outdoor group games while their parents relaxed to the smooth sounds of music. All of the participants ate a picnic style meal. Each of the 165 student participants received a sling backpack filled with notebooks, pocket folders, paper, pens, pencils, highlighters, an eraser, a ruler, a protractor, and a pencil sharpener. More than 30 volunteers devoted an afternoon to this worthy cause. Volunteers prepared food, decorated, stuffed and distributed backpacks, and organized games for the children.

### **YLS Annual Meeting**

The YLS annual meeting was held in conjunction with the State Bar Annual Meeting, in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The Section conducted its election and the results were Robert K. Fergan (Chair), Bernhardt Christenson, III (Chair-Elect), Danielle Mason Anderson (Vice-Chair), Timothy Tyrone Gardner, Jr. (Secretary/Treasurer). In addition, the outstanding young lawyer award was presented to Bridgette M. Sparkman.

### **American Bar Association Fall Young Lawyers Conference**

The ABA Fall conference was held in Charlotte, North Carolina. The conference was attended by Carlos Escurel, Danielle Anderson, Bob Fergan, and Chris Christenson.

### **Basic Michigan Real Estate Practice—Buying, Selling and Renting (Chris Christenson)**

A Continuing Legal Education Seminar in Real Property Law was hosted on November 15, 2007. This event was co-sponsored by Real Property Law Section and ICLE.

### **Novemberfest (Maureen McGinnis)**

A Young Lawyer Social and Networking Event was held on November 15, 2007. Funds were donated by attendees and provided to Lighthouse of Oakland County. The primary mission of Lighthouse is to provide safe, decent, affordable housing for low-income families.

**Business Transactions and Management of Intellectual Property (Tim Gardner)**

A Continuing Legal Education Seminar on Business Transactions and Management of Intellectual Property was hosted on November 14, 2007. This event was co-sponsored by Business Law Section of the State Bar of Michigan.

**Free Legal Education Workshop (Tim Gardner)**

The Young Lawyers Section (YLS) and Lansing Black Lawyers Association sponsored a free legal education workshop at the Foster Community Center, Lansing, Michigan on October 27, 2007. The free legal education workshop was designed to provide the public with an opportunity to learn about family law, small business law, estates/probate, and criminal law.

**Holiday Dinners (Danielle Anderson, Brandy Robinson, Felicia Johnson, Chris Christenson)**

Again this year, we had tremendous success with our holiday dinner programs. The Young Lawyers Section helped organized five holiday dinner programs this year adding Washtenaw County to our list. The dinners were held at the following locations:

Kalamazoo – December 1, 2007 (Ministry with Community)  
Detroit – December 8, 2007 (Doorsteps Shelter of Highland Park)  
Pontiac – December 15, 2007 (Grace Centers of Hope Shelter)  
Flint – December 19, 2007 (Genesee County Bar Association)  
Ann Arbor – January 3, 2008 (Alpha House)

**Skating Fund Raiser for S.K.I.P. (Solon Phillips)**

A skating party was held on December 27, 2007 at the BonaVenture Skating Rink to raise funds for S.K.I.P. S.K.I.P. is an organization committed to providing the children of incarcerated parents with positive experiences that will assist in shaping them into positive and productive citizens. S.K.I.P.'s Michigan chapter focuses on elementary age children who attend Detroit public schools. Funds from this event were used to support ongoing monthly programming.

**New Lawyers Seminar (Robert Fergan)**

The Section also continued its yearly participation in the New Layer Seminar which provides practical advise to the young lawyer community. This event was co-sponsored by the Federal Bar and United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan. It was held at the Theodore Levin United States Courthouse in Detroit on December 4-5, 2007. Robert Fergan the Chair of the Young Lawyers Section moderated and presented at the seminar.

**American Bar Association Midyear Meeting**

The ABA Midyear meeting was held in Los Angeles California. The Michigan delegation included Danielle Anderson, Carlos Escurel, Bob Fergan, Tim Gardner, James Low, Maureen McGinnis. Sean McNally, and Jessica Simmons

### **Easter Extravaganza (Maureen McGinnis)**

The State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section, along with the Eaton County Department of Human Services, sponsored our First Annual Easter Extravaganza. The event was held at the Eaton County Department of Human Services offices in Charlotte from 3:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. on Friday, March 14, 2008. Children that have been placed in foster homes throughout the county were invited for games, refreshments, and prizes.

### **Supreme Court Swearing In (John Conway)**

As usual, this was a sold out event. The participants had breakfast, were sworn into the Bar of the Supreme Court, and had first row seats for the arguments on the Exxon Valdez matter.

### **Taking Charge of Your Career (Brent Seitz)**

On February 11, 2008, "Taking Charge of Your Career" was held at the Skyline Club in Southfield. The YLS hosted an esteemed panel that discussed topics aimed at helping lawyers make the most of their career in the legal profession. The panel included the following experts in this area: Timothy Batdorf, Martha Burkett, Timothy Dinan, Thomas Fitzpatrick, and Laura Sagolla.

### **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Drum Major for Justice Advocacy Competition (Solon Phillips)**

The 16th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Drum Major for Justice Advocacy Competition was held on Saturday, March 1, 2008, Noon, at the Oakland County Courthouse Auditorium. Selected 11th and 12th grade students from local high schools presented their position on a pre-determined topic viewed through the principles of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. This momentous event is held annually in commemoration of the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and in observance of Black History Month. Savings bonds were awarded to the top advocates to be used for educational purposes.

### **Fun Run (Jennifer Harvey)**

As part of our commitment to benefit our community, YLS is co-sponsoring the Detroit Public Schools JROTC 5K Fun Run/Walk. The event will take place on Belle Isle, Saturday, April 19, 2008. Proceeds from the 5K Fun Run/Walk benefit the JROTC students by offsetting the costs of their summer camp program. The program helps students build confidence and develop leadership and teamwork. JROTC is not a recruiting tool for the military; rather, it emphasizes citizenship and strongly encourages its students to attend college. Many of these students are the first in their families to graduate high school and attend college. YLS is building a team of young lawyer participants.

### **American Bar Association Fall Young Lawyers Conference**

The ABA Fall conference was held in Charlotte, North Carolina. The conference was attended by Danielle Anderson, Chris Christenson, Tim Gardner, Felicia Johnson, James Low, and Solon Phillips

**SKIP Mock Trial (Brandy Robinson)**

This program consisted of a mock-trial for 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade students participating in Save Kids of Incarcerated Parents (SKIP). The format was modeled after “We The Jury” and a similar SKIP event held in 2006. Members of our section coached teams of students to serve as prosecutors, defense attorneys and jurors. Lunch was served afterwards, allowing the children and their attorneys to interact. The event was held Saturday, April 26, 2008, 1-5 pm at Hope United Methodist Church.

**Motor City Blight Busters (Jessica Simmons)**

The 2<sup>ND</sup> Annual Motor City Blight Busters Initiative was held Saturday, May 3, 2008 from 9:00-1:00 at 17405 Lahser, Detroit. The event was a neighborhood cleanup project where the Section provided volunteers, supplies, and lunch.

**Young Lawyer Summit (Chris Christenson, Sean McNally, Felicia Johnson, Robert Fergan)**

The First Annual Young Lawyer Summit was held May 16-17 2008. The event was attended by over 100 attendees. The summit provided substantive programming, seminars addressing young lawyer issues, and networking opportunities all in one event. We had an incredible panel of speakers including Chief Justice Taylor and Judge Whitbeck. The event was a smashing success.

**Networking Stroll Around the World (Lisa Hamameh, Keith Wuotinen)**

This event was held June 5, 2008 and included a networking event including cuisine from different countries at four different restaurants in downtown Royal Oak.

**I V. AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION 2007-2009 APPOINTMENTS**

- AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION HOUSE OF DELEGATES : Jessica Simmons
- AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION YOUNG LAWYERS DIVISION DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE: Danielle Mason Anderson.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Robert K. Fergan  
Chair, Young Lawyers Section of the State Bar of Michigan