

California Young Lawyers Association (CYLA) 2013 Year-End Assessment

BACKGROUND

In 1965, the State Bar's Board of Trustees created the State Bar's conference of Barristers. The name was changed to the California Young Lawyers Association (CYLA) in 1977-78 when CYLA's membership on the State Bar's Board of Governors was effectuated through statutory amendment.

In 2008, another significant shift occurred when the Board of Trustees voted to change CYLA Board from an elected Board to an appointed one. CYLA's purpose is to provide representation for those attorneys who are 36 years of age or under and lawyers who are in their first five years of active membership in the State Bar. At present, approximately 40% of the active members of the State Bar are young lawyers.

In 2013, CYLA was informed of a funding situation which faced the CYLA Board. In light of SB 163 and the removal of its seat from the Board of Trustees, placed into question CYLA's mandatory funding. CYLA was charged to identify a regulatory role within the State Bar in order to secure ongoing funding through mandatory dues. A regulatory role was identified and the Board of Trustees approved at its October 2013 meeting that the CYLA Board function as MCLE Auditors. This role will become effective in late 2014.

CYLA continues to also represents and advocates the interests and needs of young lawyers, promotes the State Bar and public service, assists in the creation, improvement, and coordination of local young lawyer organizations, and provides young lawyer leadership on issues of importance to the State bar.

The charge of CYLA is to:

- A. Advise the Board of Trustees on strategies to make the State Bar and CYLA continually relevant and beneficial to young lawyers in California.
- B. Promote the interests of young lawyers in California.
- C. Be responsible for programs, services, professional development and trend analysis, to assist young lawyers in becoming respected and successful members of the State Bar, keeping both CYLA and the State Bar ahead of the curve.
- D. Develop communication strategies that engage young lawyers in California.
- E. Create and continually strengthen outreach efforts to the barristers' organizations throughout the State and across the country.
- F. Assist the State Bar in the administration and implementation of its programs and responsibilities.
- G. Develop and implement regular public service projects that utilize the skills of the state's young lawyers and that would measurably benefit the public.

H. Encourage and promote pro bono work.

I. Identify and encourage young attorneys to become active participants in the administration and governance of the State Bar and make specific recommendations to the Board of Trustees for increasing their participation.

J. Comment and advise on issues of relevance and importance to young lawyers in California.

K. Screen applicants and make recommendations to the Board of Trustees for recipients of the annual Jack Berman Award of Achievement.

L. CYLA will provide regular reports to the Member Oversight Committee. There will be a permanent place on the board committee agenda for CYLA reports and updates.

2013 YEAR-END ASSESSMENT

The following is a summary of CYLA's activities in 2013 that furthered its charge:

Education

CYLA is responsible for providing programs, services, professional development and trend analysis, to assist young lawyers in becoming respected and successful members of the bar. A committee comprised of members of CYLA was created to address the education component of its charge. The focus was to inform new lawyers of current issues in the profession and provide skills based training. CYLA sought to collaborate with State Bar Sections to develop MCLE programs that would meet these goals.

CYLA successfully offered education programs which were held at the State Bar Solo Summit and Annual Meeting. CYLA endeavors to develop more electronic based MCLE programs, self-study articles and collaborate with Sections to identify a curriculum of education programs that promote practical skills training for young lawyers. An ongoing goal is to establish work plan to obtain 1 webinar from each of the 16 substantive law sections. CYLA also actively promotes the webinars currently in its CYLA catalog.

Section Liaison Program

The CYLA Section Liaison Program continues to be established. Each member of the CYLA Board serves as a Liaison to one or more of the 16 State Bar Sections. The purpose of this relationship is three fold: 1) to encourage young lawyer Section membership early in their career 2) create joint MCLE programs focused on foundational education and 3) create a leadership development track for CYLA Board members to serve on the Section Executive Committees. In 2013 CYLA furthered existing relationships with the Sections and developed new collaborations.

Outreach

CYLA's outreach efforts focused on engaging young lawyers and promoting interest in State Bar programs and activities. CYLA actively participated in the swearing-in ceremonies and attended 13 ceremonies held in December 2012 and June 2013. In addition to attending the ceremonies a member of the CYLA Board delivers a speech at the Oakland ceremony. Informational handouts are also distributed to the new admittees, introducing CYLA and the State Bar resources available to them.

CYLA continues to build a mentorship program in collaboration with the State Bar's Business Law Section to promote and support young lawyer professional development. The Business Law Section identifies mentors to match with CYLA mentees. CYLA members are encouraged to apply and the program is promoted on the CYLA website, through social media, and the eNews. This program continues to grow and provide assistance to young lawyers to develop respected and successful members of the State Bar.

CYLA actively conducts outreach campaign to law schools. The goal was to collaborate with the alumni associations to develop programming and inform new lawyers of State Bar initiatives as well as provide support and access to resources. Each member of the CYLA Board was tasked with establishing a meaningful relationship with a law school.

In addition, each member of the CYLA Board continues its charge to engage with their local Barrister association. CYLA promotes and co-sponsors joint education programs and networking events on a quarterly basis.

In 2013 CYLA began to provide standing reports to the Board of Trustees at each Board meeting. This ensures that the Board of Trustee Liaisons to CYLA and the Board as a whole are informed of CYLA's efforts to establish a regulatory role and maintain its charge to serve the State Bar membership.

Communications

The CYLA Communications Committee is focused on developing communication strategies that engage young lawyers. In 2013, the committee sought to position CYLA as a valuable information resource to new lawyers by keeping them informed of current issues in the profession. CYLA achieved this goal through its eNews and social media efforts. CYLA eNews is published twice a year and includes original content and information solicited from the State Bar Sections.

CYLA used existing social media tools to connect with its young lawyer constituents. CYLA has developed a publicity calendar and is active on Facebook and Twitter, providing continuous updates, access to information, and event announcements to its members. As a result, CYLA has a critical following on Facebook. CYLA continues to explore ways to expand its presence on the web and identify effective, cost effective methods to communicate with its members.

Pro Bono & Jack Berman

CYLA continued to actively encourage and promote pro bono work through its Pro Bono Committee. CYLA directed its members to pro bono resources through social media and eNews articles. The goal was to create interest in activities and programs designed to increase access to justice. CYLA hopes to continue to encourage pro bono work by young lawyers and support established statewide programs.

Each year, CYLA presents its Jack Berman Award of Achievement for distinguished service to the profession and the public by a young lawyer. Outreach for nominations were done through the eNews, and social media. CYLA received a number of highly qualified nominations and made its final recommendation to the Board of Trustees. CYLA presented the 2013 Award to Melissa A. Tyner at the State Bar's Annual Meeting.

Appointments

The CYLA Board conducted an aggressive outreach campaign through social media to encourage applications. This resulted in an increase in the number of appointment applicants compared with prior years. Applicants were received from each of the 6 representative districts. Members of the CYLA Appointments Committee reviewed each application and identified the top ten, each of which were interviewed via phone. The applicant pool was competitive and those who were not selected were encouraged to apply next year and remain involved in State Bar programs.