

Arkansas YLS-Committed to Diversity



Sitting in the frigid January wind at the Cotton Bowl in Dallas, I was surrounded by the diversity of the Razorback fan base. I saw fellow lawyers from Texarkana, old college friends, random church friends and new folks we did not know. I-30 was ablaze with Razorback stickers, flags and banners. The fan base is diversified with former students, teachers, high school students, retired veterans and even sometimes newcomers to Arkansas who did not even attend the University. While we may come from different walks of life, we are all united behind our love and support of the team.

In the same way, the Arkansas YLS is committed this year to reaching out to young people from different backgrounds and those from disadvantaged backgrounds who would not otherwise consider law as a profession. In this way, we will strengthen the rule of law by making it a profession for all. Likewise, the YLS is also equally committed to reaching out to the four corners of Arkansas and bringing young lawyers into our circles who have not participated in our group projects and activities before, thus making us more geographically diverse. We are especially dedicated to expanding our group in northwest Arkansas, as well as the northeast corner of the state and the southern region.

It is with great pride that I unveil to you the details of our signature, 2008 YLS project, Choose Law. In April 2008, the Arkansas Young Lawyers Section will partner with the Harold F. Flowers Law

Society and the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. Our project seeks to encourage Jefferson County students to consider higher education and specifically choosing law school as an option. By hosting the Choose Law program at UAPB, Jefferson County high school students can begin to think seriously about attending college, as well as graduate school. During the program students will visit the UAPB campus and hear speakers on ACT/SAT and college preparation, degrees offered at UAPB, and admissions and financial aid. A program on law school admission and the legal field will also be offered, including an opportunity for students to meet and greet members of the legal profession.

Also this spring, we will have our first regional meeting of the Arkansas YLS Executive Council in Fayetteville. We are planning to have a reception or cookout for third year law students so that we can get to know these new young lawyers and track them into our program. It is important to us to grow our ranks and expand by reaching out to young lawyers in the northwest corner of our state. If you are a northwest Arkansas young lawyer or third year law student at Fayetteville, I welcome you into the fold. Please let me know of your interest by e-mailing me at amyfreedman@cableone.net. We are excited to get you involved.

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to share with you the accomplishments of two of our YLS Executive Council members.

For the first time, we have awarded the distinction of “Star of the Quarter” to two outstanding individuals: Brendan Monaghan and Will Crowder. Both gentlemen are brand new to the YLS Executive Council and have already, in a very short time, shown fine leadership ability. Brendan, originally from California, is a most unique individual aside from his strong legal skills. For starters, he has floated rivers in Africa, which earns my respect! Will follows a strong family tradition in the law. His grandfather, the late Thomas Gaughan, practiced law with Senator John L. McClellan in the firm of Gaughan, McClellan & Gaughan. Both Brendan and Will showed tremendous tenacity and leadership this fall by co-chairing the YLS Host Committee for the Southern Conference of Bar Presidents in Little Rock. It was no small task to recruit and schedule some thirty (30) young lawyers to assist in this project. Both gentlemen rose to the occasion, and I assure you that they are rising stars in our YLS ranks. In short—job well done.

As I write this column, it is early January, and I look forward to the Mid-Year meeting in Memphis, TN, at the Peabody Hotel. While the Peabody alone is reason enough to come, the fellowship, insightful CLE and great BBQ at the Rendezvous make the meeting a highlight of the Bar year. I sincerely hope you can make it to Memphis. We’ll save you some dessert on the mezzanine! ■