

### OF NOTE

**December 7**

JYL/HCBA Christmas Social  
Old Capitol Inn  
5:00-7:00 pm

*We will be collecting toys to donate to the Toys for Tots, so bring an unwrapped, new-in-the-box prize that will go to a kid in the metro area. USMC Gunnery Sergeant Gerald T. Coleman will be on hand to collect the gifts.*

Don't forget that past issues of the Newsletter are available at [jacksonyounglawyers.com](http://jacksonyounglawyers.com).

Check out past interviews with Mississippi Supreme Court Justice Jess Dickinson, Hinds County Circuit Judge Swan Yerger, and catch up on past JYL activities as we continue to serve the metro area.

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## JYL and HCBA Fall Social Welcomes New Lawyers

The tradition of welcoming new members to our honorable profession was continued on October 12, 2006, when Jackson Young Lawyers Association co-hosted our annual Fall Social in conjunction with the Hinds County Bar Association. Hal & Mal's was our gracious host, with music provided by Eric Stracener & The Frustrations (featuring JYL member John Scanlon on guitar).

The Social featured free beverages and hors d'oeuvres, including Hal and Mal's famous tamales, and notable attendees included Chief Justice James Smith and Justice James Graves of the Mississippi Supreme Court.



Above: Laura Ford and Ian Jones enjoy the Fall Social. Below Left: Eric Stracener and the Frustrations entertain the crowd.

Band members are: (L to R) John Hawkins [bass]; Denny Burkes [drums]; Eric Stracener [guitar & vocals]; John Scanlon [guitar]. Below Right (L to R): Abby Brumley and Megan Conner attended along with many other new and veteran lawyers.





# Christmas Social

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AT THE OLD CAPITOL INN

DECEMBER 7 / 5:00-7:00 pm

*Please bring an unwrapped, new-in-the-box toy that will go to a kid in the metro area! USMC Gunnery Sergeant Gerald T. Coleman will be on hand to collect the gifts.*



## JYL OFFICERS & BOARD MEMBERS

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If you are 37 or younger, or have practiced law fewer than 3 years, you are eligible for membership in JYL

## MEMBERSHIP & DUES

Membership in Jackson Young Lawyers is open to any duly licensed member of the Mississippi Bar who is a resident of the greater Jackson, Mississippi metropolitan area and is either 37 years of age or younger, or has been a member of the Mississippi Bar for less than three years.

The annual membership dues for JYL are \$100 and are billed once a year to each member. (First year member-

ship dues are waived for federal, state, and local government employees.) The dues cover JYL monthly luncheons, newsletters, and various social functions during the year.

To become a member of JYL, complete the membership application, available on Page 4. Your name will be placed on the membership roster and you will receive notices informing you of upcoming JYL events.

# CPA Offers Insight at JYL Luncheon

Those in attendance at a recent Jackson Young Lawyers lunch meeting benefited from the featured speaker's words about important legal needs and services – and the speaker wasn't even a lawyer.

Stephanie Smith, CPA, a ten-year partner of Grantham Poole, Certified Public Accountants, spoke and delivered a PowerPoint presentation to the JYL at the Sept. 15, 2006, meeting at the University Club. The topic focused on services accountants provide to lawyers and law firms to meet both their common and complex needs.

Smith, who has been an accountant with her CPA firm for seventeen years, said the services accountants can offer attorneys vary from the everyday financial management tasks to the necessary assistance in complex litigation. Though she said it was difficult to estimate exactly what percentage of the firm's clients are attorneys, she estimates that more than 70 percent of her personal clients are lawyers, including those who use her firm's services for personal and family planning and those who use the firm's litigation support services.

The most common CPA services utilized by lawyers and law firms include traditional services such as the preparation and filing of tax returns, financial planning, and retirement for individuals. However, doing other business work for a firm is also frequent, such as helping with payroll issues, preparing financial statements, making forecasts and projections, and assisting in 1099 reporting. They can even assist in coming up different ways to set billing rates.

"We start with the income of the firm, and how that income is allocated, and effective ways we can save them money," Smith said. "We help them with the budget, and we help them with internal office flow."

Accounting firms such as Smith's can also assist lawyers and law firms with internal control, maintaining cash receipts for disbursements, insurance, medical savings accounts, large items on business income statements, and compensation planning.

"We suggest ways for partners to split the pie, basically," Smith said.

With a client base that includes more than 200 attorneys and firms, Smith's CPA firm in particular serves a large

segment of the legal market. Grantham Poole even publishes a special newsletter six times a year exclusively for its attorney clients.

Even more specifically helpful to lawyers, Smith and her firm do specialized work in litigation. This includes helping with contract disputes, wrongful death claims, business interruption claims, damage calculations such as lost profits, business valuations, property disputes, marital dissolutions, and estate planning.

"We do that type of thing for mediation, arbitration, and actually for trial," Smith said. "That's a pretty specialized skill." Smith's firm boasts three CPAs who can offer litigation support, including expert testimony. "That's a specialty and we have a large percentage of work in that area," she said.

Also unique to Smith's firm is the coordination of "The Economic and Technology Survey" published bi-annually in The Mississippi Lawyer magazine. The Mississippi Bar puts together a bank of questions concerning office management issues such as salaries, benefits, billable requirements of work from associates, and the average billable hour rate. Smith and her firm gathers data and charts the trends in these areas of law office management, and then publishes the results in the bi-annual survey through the magazine.

While this information would be helpful to any attorney in Mississippi, it usually offers the most help to those in the metro-Jackson area, Smith said, based on the location of those attorneys who participate in the survey. For example, Smith said, a solo practitioner in Natchez would simply not have the same numbers as a lawyer working in a Jackson firm.

"We break down the state between counties," she said. "Probably, we get more responses from the tri-county area – Rankin, Madison, Hinds. And we're able to look at the responses with a geographic bias. It really helps the Jackson area in particular which is where the bulk of our response comes from."

**BY JOHN P. SCANLON**

*Mr. Scanlon is an associate at Baria, Hawkins & Stracener*

## JYL Works with Gateway to Make Big Changes

In August JYL partnered with a longtime friend for a big makeover. The Gateway Rescue Mission has been serving those in need since 1948, and JYL has worked often in recent years to support that honorable task. Recently Gateway Volunteer Coordinator Hope Staples came to JYL with a request: the Mission needed its cafeteria and lobby painted--could JYL help?

The response was overwhelming, as 17 ½ members descended on Gallatin Street to sling a little paint (the extra little bit of help came from Austin Bourn, son of JYL President Trey Bourn). At the end of their efforts, the paint-splattered JYL members were graciously provided lunch by the Gateway staff, sitting down to eat the very first meal in the newly-redecorated cafeteria.

Hope reported that "some of the

men in the shelter were talking about how much better they felt just being in a cleaner, brighter space."

Then in late October JYL returned to help Gateway again. Nearly 60% of the funding for the Rescue Mission flows from the Gateway Thrift Store in Pearl, which sells clothing and other items donated by people in the metro area. Before the merchandise makes its way to the shelves of the store, though, it has to be sorted.

The JYL Community Service team tackled that task, and were amazed at seeing the tons and tons of unsorted donations. Even after hours of work sorting slightly stained stuffed animals, bent silverware, and the odd treasure (like a cache of vintage tennis rackets, complete with wooden frame presses), the JYLers barely made a dent in the huge pile, although the results were immediate

for the store, as the newly-sorted merchandise was immediately rushed to the floor and sold.

Recent JYL member LaToya Redd offered that she "was surprised at how much I enjoyed sorting through clothes at the thrift store. It was great to help others while interacting with other young lawyers, and I left inspired knowing that young attorneys are willing to take time out of their busy schedules to assist a good cause."

**BY DAVID McCARTY**

*Mr. McCarty is the law clerk to the Honorable Oliver E. Diaz, Jr.*

*For more information regarding upcoming Community Service activities, please go to the JYL website at [jacksonyounglawyer.com](http://jacksonyounglawyer.com). If you are interested in joining the Committee or have comments or suggestions, please contact David McCarty, chair of the committee, at [davidmccarty@gmail.com](mailto:davidmccarty@gmail.com) for more information.*

## JYL Membership Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Method of Payment \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Employer \_\_\_\_\_

Committees or Activities of Interest \_\_\_\_\_

Law School \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Graduation \_\_\_\_\_

Check, made payable to Jackson Young Lawyers

Please bill me for the total amount

# May It Please the Court

With The Honorable Patricia D. Wise

**J**udge Patricia D. Wise is a chancellor of the Fifth Chancery Court District of Hinds County. She has served in that position for seventeen years and was recently re-elected to the bench. A native of Oxford, Mississippi, Judge Wise received a bachelor of science in special education, a master's degree in communicative disorders, and her juris doctor all from the University of Mississippi. An adjunct professor at the Mississippi College School of Law, she is also past president and the first female president of the Magnolia Bar Association. Over the years, Judge Wise has received innumerable awards and honors from organizations all across America.

JYL member David McCarty sat down with Judge Wise and asked her for guidance for young lawyers.

## On learning the mysteries of chancery court:

One of the first thing that young attorneys can do is to come over and observe the chancery court proceeding that they anticipate trying in the future--for example, a custody case or a divorce case. Every chancellor is different, but the general overall rules remain the same. Get a copy of the local rules, and then contact the court administrator and inquire as to any particular procedures that the judge might have or any particular manner in which the judge would like the case presented. There are sometimes informal methods in which each judge likes to have things done. Simply do as much research as possible in terms of the procedural part of it, but also come over and observe.

## On why a lawyer's conduct in the chancery court is so important:

In chancery we're dealing with individuals' lives and their future. I take that seriously as my responsibility as a chancellor and likewise I will make sure in my mind that the lawyers have made the proper preparations, because these proceedings have such a long range impact on the lives of people.

## On the way a young lawyer appears:

The respect of the Court comes with the manner with which you carry yourself in the courtroom by your appearance. The interesting thing is it's not so much the male lawyers' appearance I am concerned with--it's the female lawyers, because we're tending to want to dress down. We should still maintain a professional level: we're lawyers, we're representing clients, and we're professionals, and just as if you were a physician and you were going into surgery, you must be attired correctly. I think that women need to be very mindful that what are we contributing to that perception, if any, by our appearance.

## On courtroom stress:

We are often in the heat of battle in chancery. Emotions run very high with domestic relations issues--not only from the litigants, but from the attorneys as well, because they feel passionate about the issues. However, when you get a little bit too passionate it takes you out of the realm of being able to represent your client. It's okay to ask the judge for a recess just to recollect your thoughts and to just bring it the emotions down a couple of notches. Often times just taking that recess brings everything back into perspective. I've learned that just the common rules of courtesy are still valuable in the courtroom.

**BY DAVID McCARTY**

*Mr. McCarty is the law clerk to the Honorable Oliver E. Diaz, Jr.*

*May It Please the Court is an opportunity for the members of JYL to learn directly from learned members of the Bench. If you've got a suggestion for a future focus, or have a question you'd like answered by a particular judge, send an e-mail to David McCarty at davidmccarty@gmail.com. Our next feature will likely be on practice in the federal courts.*

# Pro Bono Holds Key to Our Legal System

Equal access to legal services and legal representation is crucial to the integrity and continuity of our legal and judicial system. To achieve these ends it is critical that attorneys offer pro bono legal representation to those in need, regardless of their ability to pay. This endeavor is more important than ever and has resulted in the Mississippi Supreme Court recently creating the Mississippi Access to Justice Commission to address civil legal representation of the poor, as well as the ABA House of Delegates recently passing a resolution calling for the establishment of a civil right to civil legal counsel.

Young lawyers are essential in providing pro bono legal services to the poor and indigent. The mission of the JYL Pro Bono Committee is to encour-

age and facilitate pro bono legal services among members of JYL and all young lawyers. The Pro Bono Committee works in partnership with the Mississippi Volunteer Lawyers Project to promote and encourage young attorneys to do pro bono work. Additionally, the Pro Bono Committee hopes to encourage pro bono service in other new and exciting ways from the Mississippi College School of Law's new Mission First Legal Clinic to the Stewpot Homeless Legal Clinic. In light of the new pro bono reporting requirement under Rule 6.1, the Pro Bono Committee hopes to serve as an information source for all JYL members seeking pro bono opportunities. Ultimately, young lawyers not only provide invaluable assistance to those otherwise unable

to afford legal representation, but they also gain great practical experience and have the opportunity to contribute to our profession and society when they provide pro bono legal services.

**BY COREY HINSHAW**

*Mr. Hinshaw is an associate at  
Watkins & Eager*

*For more information regarding current pro bono opportunities, please go to the JYL website at [jacksonyounglawyer.com](http://jacksonyounglawyer.com). If you are interested in joining the JYL Pro Bono Committee or have comments or suggestions, please contact Corey D. Hinshaw, Chair of the JYL Pro Bono Committee, at [chinshaw@watkinseager.com](mailto:chinshaw@watkinseager.com) for more information.*

## ON THE MOVE

JYL Community Service Committee member **Danny Ruhl** has become associated with the law firm of Copeland, Cook, Taylor & Bush. Danny graduated from Mississippi College School of Law ('04, summa cum laude)

where he was the Executive Editor of the Law Review. At Copeland Cook he will practice primarily in the areas of bankruptcy, creditor's rights, and consumer financial services.



*Made a change, made partner, or just made good? Tell us, and we can spread the news your fellow JYL members. E-mail "On the Move" at [davidmccarty@gmail.com](mailto:davidmccarty@gmail.com).*

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NEWS, VISIT OUR WEBSITE:

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lawyers  
.COM

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