

JYL News

JACKSON YOUNG LAWYERS

May 2016



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JYL President's Corner — May 2016



Lane Williamson Staines
President,
Jackson Young Lawyers

As June 1, 2016 approaches, the time has come for me to write my farewell column. It has been a joy to serve as your JYL President over the past twelve months, and I'm proud of the things we've accomplished over the year. As your incoming

President John Dollarhide put it, it's been a year of "fiscal responsibility." The Executive Committee and I take very seriously the job of not only providing a meaningful experience for our members but also managing our non-profit organization's funds in a way that allows us to provide the maximum benefit to the community we serve as well. As I say goodbye, I hope you'll provide a warm welcome to John and your new President-Elect, Alicia Hall, as well as incoming "EC" members, Sam Gregory, La'Toyia Slay, Andrew Harris, and Haley Gregory. I also want to thank Wesley Mockbee, Sabrina Ruffin, Kaytie Pickett, and Lindsay Dowdle for their year(s) of service to JYL as they rotate off the

Board. We look forward to having directors Roslyn Griffin and Betsy Turley continue with us for another year. We also celebrate a great first year with our new Executive Director, Heather Graves, who has been such an asset to JYL.

This spring has been BUSY! We held our annual Legal Beagle 5k walk/run on March 12th, and in spite of the rain, we had a great turnout. JYL raised \$9,000 to benefit the Mississippi Volunteer Lawyers Project. I am thankful for our Athletic Committee Co-Chairs, Sam Gregory and Abram Orlansky, and the numerous sponsors and volunteers, including Leigh Vernon, who make our race possible year after year. With these funds, MVLP will continue its mission of providing legal services not just in the Jackson area, but statewide, to those in need.

Under the direction of our Outreach Project Committee Co-Chairs, Allyson Winter and Adrienne Aikens, together with the Outreach Project Committee members, JYL awarded a \$2,000 grant to Red Door's Apples for

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JYL President's Corner continued

Academics project. The Committee raised additional funds to donate, along with a refurbished lawnmower, to Joyce's Hope Home for Girls. Bravo to this Committee for its exceptional work!

In April, JYL recognized its annual award winners at the Evening Honoring the Judiciary. Congratulations to Allyson Winter, 2015-2016 Outstanding Service Award winner, and Hunter Aikens, 2015-2016 Pro Bono Award winner! We also welcomed new admittees to the Mississippi Bar at the spring swearing-in ceremony in late April and then hosted a joint social with CABA at River Hills Club. That same day, we co-hosted a Resume Writing/Mock Interview workshop at Mississippi College School of Law with the Magnolia Bar Association. Thank you, Roslyn Griffin, for your leadership in overseeing that event on JYL's behalf. Whew! I told you it had been a busy spring!

By the time you read this, I hope I've had the opportunity to visit with you at our crawfish boil before we part for a summer break. JYL's Executive Committee will get to work this summer on planning the year ahead. We hope you've been inspired to get involved on one or more of our committees and that you'll continue to serve in a leadership role for 2016-2017.

John, you take it from here!

With gratitude,
Lane W. Staines
2015-2016 JYL President

2016 Spring Admissions Ceremony

JYL Welcomes the Newly-Admitted Attorneys!



Philanthropy

First Annual JYL and Magnolia Bar Association Career Building Workshop

On Thursday, April 28, 2016, JYL, in partnership with the Magnolia Bar Association, hosted a Career Building Workshop at Mississippi College School of Law. Attorney Charli Searcy served as the guest speaker for the event. A graduate of the University of Mississippi School Of Law, Searcy is a Jackson native and is the sole proprietor of the Searcy Law Office, PLLC, where she practices family law. Searcy also is the Owner/Editor of Skillfully Written, an editing, proofreading, and writing service.

Searcy provided a thirty-minute resume writing primer to the law students. Her presentation included professional resume writing tips the students could use when drafting their resumes in anticipation of obtaining permanent or summer jobs. Some of the tips included: 1)

tailoring the resume to the position; 2) using action words to describe relevant experience; 3) consistency with language and formatting; and 4) proofreading. Following Searcy's presentation, the students participated in one-on-one sessions with attorney volunteers from JYL and the Magnolia Bar. The volunteers reviewed the students' resumes and provided advice regarding interview preparation. Some students continued to network with the volunteer attorneys after the program concluded.

The event was a huge success thanks to the hard work of our volunteers, Lilli Bass, Alexander Martin, Katrina Brown, Christina Seanor, Charli Searcy, Nakimuli Davis-Primer, La'Toyia Slay and Roslyn Griffin. Special thanks to Tiffany Paige, JYL's Diversity Chair, for securing the location.



Philanthropy

JYL Outreach Committee Grants and Donations

Each year JYL awards a monetary grant to an eligible non-profit in the greater Jackson-Metro area. This year, the Outreach Grant selected the Red Door Jackson's Apples for Academics Program as the recipient of a \$2,000 grant. Apples for Academics is a small group computer programming training for children grades 6-12. The students participating are introduced to a high-demand, cutting-edge career field, while increasing their computer literacy and developing their problem solving and higher order thinking skills. The grant money will be used to purchase two MacBook computers to be used exclusively by the children in the program for the training.

In addition, the JYL members on the Outreach Committee personally solicited donations from their respective firms/co-workers to benefit a second non-profit, the Mississippi Police and Sheriffs Associations' Hope Home for Girls. The Committee members were able to raise a substantial amount of money to be donated to Hope Home, as well as secure a refurbished lawn mower to give to the home.

Special thanks to the law firms of Adams and Reese and Butler Snow for their substantial contributions to Hope Home, as well as Andrew Hitchcock of Fondren Small Engine Repair for repairing the lawn mower free of charge. You can find more information about Fondren Small Engine Repair at www.facebook.com/FondrenSmallEngineRepair.



Philanthropy

Legal Beagle 5K Walk/Run Recap

More than 330 racers turned out for the 16th Annual Legal Beagle 5K Walk/Run on Saturday, March 12, 2016. Despite rain predictions, the rain held off, and the overcast skies and cool temperature made for ideal running conditions.

After the race, participants and loyal supporters had an opportunity to mingle and enjoy post-race food while the trophy presentation was made. Awards were given to the overall top male and female finisher and the top 3 male and female finishers in each age group. The top 3 run and walk teams, which could be co-ed, also received awards.

The overall winners in the 5K Run men's and women's categories were Peter Kazery, with a time of 16:11, and Shannon Steele, with a time of 20:28. Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell, & Berkowitz, PC took home the Firm Participation

Award with more than 30 registered participants.

The Legal Beagle gives JYL an opportunity to join forces with the local bar and community to raise money for the Mississippi Volunteer Lawyers Project (MVLV), a nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide legal services to needy citizens of Mississippi. Thanks to the support of our generous sponsors and race participants, the race raised \$9,000 for the MVLV.

This year's event was organized by JYL Athletic Committee Co-Chairs, Samuel Gregory and Abram Orlansky, and Leigh Vernon—the race's founder. Although no longer a JYL member, Mr. Vernon has assisted with organizing the race every year since the race's inception in 2000. JYL would like to extend a special thanks to Mr. Vernon for his contributions to the race and its cause.

- Thank you to our Sponsors!*
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Feature

1 in 3 or 4; How Do You Like Those Odds?

As an astute young attorney, you'd probably like a little more information before answering, like on what those odds are laid. After all, a 1 in 3 shot at the lottery, a dream home, or a great job would be phenomenal. On the other hand, a 1 in 3 chance on bankruptcy, or cancer, not so much. Fair enough. These 1 in 3 odds represent the likelihood that you, as a young attorney, drink problematically, and 1 in 4 that you will suffer with symptoms (possibly at a clinical level) of depression or other mental/emotional issues. How do you like the odds now?

According to a new study released in the February 2016 Journal of Addiction Medicine, nearly 29% of attorneys in their first ten years of practice, and more than 32% of lawyers under age 30, drink problematically. This study, a collaboration between the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation and the American Bar Association, is the first of its kind. For more than 25 years, Lawyers Assistance Programs' professionals have been sharing similar numbers, but were consistently frustrated that they were dated and based on a very small sample. Researchers surveyed nearly 13,000 attorneys nationwide and found/confirmed that attorneys' rates of substance abuse and depression are twice those of the general population and are, in fact, greater than other professionals.

This newest data does indicate a significant shift in our understanding of the prevalence of problems among young lawyers, which obviously is a concern for this group of readers. Previous data had indicated that prevalence in the legal field grew proportionally with time in practice, i.e. older attorneys were more likely to be struggling with substance abuse and addiction. These results indicate that young lawyers are at a greater risk than their more seasoned counterparts.

As attorneys and Lawyer Assistance Professionals, we are the "Why?" of the issue. Why are lawyers, especially young lawyers, suffering at such an alarming rate. Many factors seem to be in play and need to be addressed: law school debt, job market, a "work hard/play hard" attitude, and unreasonable

by Chip Glaze

Chip Glaze, JD, LMFT, is the Director of The Mississippi Bar Lawyers and Judges Assistance Program. He previously served as Clinical Director of the Program for four years. He received his Master's Degree in Marriage and Family Therapy in 1994 from Mississippi College and his Juris Doctorate from the Mississippi College School of Law in 2002.



expectations regarding billing and work load all readily come to mind. That said, for our purposes, however, let's not focus so much on possible causation as on the solution. Thankfully, regardless of the "whys", or even the specific "what's" of the problem (addiction, depression, etc.), the bulk of the solution lies in one simple two-step process. Those steps are: 1) acknowledgment that something isn't right; and 2) asking for assistance.

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As lawyers, we are familiar with “something isn’t right.” It’s why clients come seeking our services. Like many professionals, however, we are less likely to acknowledge such in our own personal and professional lives. Things move quickly. There are deadlines to meet, payroll to make, motions to file, discovery responses due... the list can seem unending. Who has time to notice if one’s mood is a little off today? Moreover, who is more deserving of an after-hours drink, or several, than the lawyer after a hard day at the office?

As an isolated incident, the odd afternoon of “less than productive” activity in the office, “one too many” in a professional setting, or tardiness to or absence from Court are not matters about which one must be extremely concerned. When they become repetitive, when “no-shows” are frequent or the norm, when calls, messages, and emails go unanswered for an extended period, “something isn’t right.” Acknowledging this is the first and most vital step.

For many of us, it takes someone else to bring things like this to our attention. We are living and perceiving our daily experience subjectively, and changes, even significant ones, may be difficult to detect. This is especially true when stress, depression, substance use disorders, process

addictions, or other issues begin to hijack our brains. These are, after all, brain issues. More often than not, as impairment increases, perception is skewed, and the ability to detect shifts in one’s own conduct may be limited or nonexistent. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the entire profession to be vigilant regarding the welfare of our colleagues. When we observe that something is amiss, we need to speak up. We may need to speak directly to the colleague to express concern and offer assistance. In other instances, we may need to reach out to others who can be trusted to hold the information in confidence and possibly help provide assistance for the struggling colleague.

“Asking for help.’ I don’t recall that class from law school, and I assume you don’t either. It’s not something for which lawyers are readily recognized.”

“Asking for help.” I don’t recall that class from law school, and I assume you don’t either. It’s not something for which lawyers are readily recognized. Our profession can often be one where perceived signs of weakness are closely guarded. It is often very hard for lawyers to admit that they may have a problem they cannot out-work, out-think, or otherwise conquer. Lawyer impairment is such a problem. As a rule, it cannot be handled without assistance. Despite what we may have taken from our training, at least in this circumstance, it is okay to ask for help. In fact, it is necessary.

Because the “asking” may be difficult, as with acknowledgement, it may be necessary for

someone else to ask for help on behalf of a struggling colleague. Certainly, at some point, the impaired attorney must “buy-in” to this process, but the initial call for help must sometimes come from another. Maybe from you.

The stories of significantly impaired attorneys are numerous. They vary as to facts and circumstances, but are generally present with chaos and looming disaster. How do they end? Well, that depends. How’s that for a “lawyer answer?” If our friends and colleagues cannot or will not acknowledge that “something isn’t right” and reach out for help, or if someone doesn’t reach out on their behalf, the prognosis can be quite grim. Left unchecked, untreated mental illness and addiction can, and generally does, ruin careers, relationships, and health. However, if they will reach out for help, it will be there. In most cases, especially when lawyers seek or otherwise receive assistance “early,” the likelihood of healthy personal and professional recovery is high.

If one or both of these scenarios describes you or someone you know, please know that help is available. Please make that first call. Call LJAP. It may well be the most important call you ever make. Remember, the stakes are high, and without assistance people may lose everything, even their lives. But also remember that recovery is possible. Let it start today. Let it start with you. If you have concerns about yourself or someone you know, please make the confidential call to LJAP today.

Event Recap

April Membership Meeting

Speaker: Kishia Powell

JYL had the privilege of hosting City of Jackson Public Works Director, Kishia Powell, at its membership meeting on April 29, 2016.

Director Powell discussed the valuable experience she has gained in civil engineering and sustainable infrastructure management in her sixteen-year career, including her recent experience working in business development for an international firm in London, England. Director Powell discussed some of the issues on which the Public Works Department is focused and shared valuable insight into both short and long-term solutions for those issues.

She discussed the issues facing cities with aging infrastructures, what some cities have done to address those issues, and how those solutions could adapt to improve the City of Jackson.



Event Recap

Spring Social

JYL, along with CABA and the Mississippi Bar's Litigation Section, hosted its annual Spring Social on April 28 at the River Hills Club. Attorneys enjoyed an evening of socializing and networking, as well as welcoming the newly-admitted members of the Bar!



Event Recap

2016 Evening Honoring the Judiciary

JYL was honored to co-host the annual Evening Honoring the Judiciary with CABA on April 14th. Congratulations to JYL's Pro Bono Award Winner, Hunter Aikens, and to JYL's Outstanding Service Award Winner, Allyson Lambert!

