

YLC Seeks Burnette Award Nominees



Tracy A. Giles 2000–2001 Young Lawyers Conference President

In every community there are young lawyers who devote time and energy, beyond the duties of their normal law practice, to helping others in their community. Among these attorneys there is one who stands out—in and beyond his or her own community. The Virginia State Bar needs your help in finding that individual.

The VSB honors the most outstanding young lawyer of the year at its annual meeting with the R. Edwin Burnette, Jr., Young Lawyer of the Year Award. Established in 1994, the award recognizes exemplary service to the legal profession and to the public by a young lawyer who far exceeds the normal range of volunteer service.

The winner promotes, upholds and elevates the standards of honor, integrity and competence in the legal profession through pro bono and leadership activities. Additionally, the honoree's activities and programs improved the legal system and the responsiveness of the profession to the public. The nominee must be a young lawyer—under the age of 36 or in practice less than three years.

The award is named after Lynchburg attorney R. Edwin (Ed) Burnette, Jr., chair of the VSB Young Lawyers Conference from 1985–86. Burnette exemplifies the qualities and attributes the YLC encourages. He was president of the VSB from 1993–94, and president of the Lynchburg Bar Association from 1991–92. He received the Virginia Legal Aid Society's Pro Bono Award in 1992.

While it is impossible to mention all the recipients and their good deeds, some of the most recent are great examples of the kind of person we try to honor.

The most recent honoree was Shawn A. Copeland, an associate at Hunton & Williams in Richmond, who won the award in 2000. Copeland chaired the YLC Emergency Legal Services Committee when it was activated in September 1999. Within two weeks, Copeland organized more than 100 attorneys to assist victims of floods caused by Hurricane Floyd. Working with his Virginia Bar Association counterpart, Copeland organized volunteers, monitored weather reports, conferred with

state and federal officials, publicized the availability of the legal assistance, and led training programs to get attorneys up to speed on the critical issues.

Barry Logsdon, a young lawyer in Newport News, was honored with the award in 1998 for his work in arranging for former gang members to have free plastic surgery to remove the tattoos and scars of their former loyalties. Logsdon also helped create child-friendly waiting rooms in courthouses across the state. In these rooms, children who are victims and witnesses have a safe and separate place with toys to wait, without being in the same room with their alleged perpetrators. Logsdon handles mostly child advocacy and bankruptcy cases with the firm of Mitchell & Logsdon, PC.

Maya M. Eckstein was honored with the award in 1999 for her work in implementing the YLC's Domestic Violence Safety Project. The project educated domestic violence victims on how to protect themselves physically and legally, and trained attorneys to provide services to those victims. Eckstein also coordinated workshops for non-profit groups on Y2K issues, and worked with the Virginia League for Planned Parenthood, the VBA's Young Lawyers Division and her synagogue. Eckstein is also an associate with Hunton & Williams.

If you know of someone deserving of the award, let us know. Send a written summary of the nominee's qualifications to J. Tracy Walker, IV, Chair, YLC Nominations Committee at McGuireWoods, One James Center, 901 East Cary Street, Richmond, VA 23219-4030, or e-mail Walker the information at twalker@mcguirewoods.com.

It won't take much of your time to make certain that recognition goes to someone who deserves it. So, look in your firm, among your friends, and in your community. Judges, look around your courtrooms. When you see that special young lawyer whose actions exemplify a commitment to public service, tell us. We need your help. 🙏