

YOUNG LAWYERS CONFERENCE

Savalle C. Sims, president

Voter Education Initiative: Under the leadership of Jennifer L. McClellan, the Young Lawyers Conference worked with the Virginia Board of Elections to distribute a “Know Your Rights and Responsibilities” brochure to citizens across the commonwealth. The Young Lawyers Conference distributed approximately one hundred thousand brochures to the American Association of Retired Persons, the Richmond Crusade for Voters, the Richmond Junior League, several churches in Richmond and Alexandria, and civic organizations.

Diversity Tolerance Initiative: In late November and early December, the Young Lawyers Conference implemented the “Welcome to School: Helping Kids Belong” project to approximately one hundred third graders at Varina Elementary in Henrico County.

Students’ Day at the Capitol: This fall, the Young Lawyers Conference implemented the Students’ Day at the Capitol program in Richmond under the leadership of Christy E. Kiely. More than six hundred students and teachers participated over a two-day period in programs at the State Capitol of Virginia, the Supreme Court of Virginia and the Governor’s residence.

Emergency Legal Services: In collaboration with The Virginia Bar Association Young Lawyers Division, the Young Lawyers Conference Emergency Legal Services Committee activated and undertook the following efforts:

- Tropical Depression Gaston—The Virginia Lawyer Referral Service provided referrals related to Tropical Depression Gaston in September 2004. The Young Lawyers Conference assisted thirty-five to forty persons.
- Hurricanes Frances and Ivan Remnants—Virginia State Bar Emergency Legal Services cochairs Jeffrey H. Geiger and J. Barrett Lucy monitored the rain/flood activity from these storms.
- Training of Volunteers—In conjunction with The Virginia Bar Association, the VSB Young Lawyers Conference ELS Committee conducted a telephone continuing legal education volunteer training session for twenty persons on October 7, 2004.

Oliver Hill/Samuel Tucker Prelaw Institute: The Oliver Hill Pre-Law Institute was held July 18–23, 2004, at Virginia Union University. Twenty-five students from Richmond, Newport News and Stafford County attended. Also present were former Virginia Justice John Charles Thomas, U.S. Court of Appeals Judge Roger L. Gregory, Virginia State Bar President David P. Bobzien and VSB Executive Director Thomas A. Edmonds.

2005 Professional Development Conference: The fourth annual Professional Development Conference was held March 18-19, 2005, at the University of Virginia Darden School of Business. This year’s PDC offered training in transactions, in-house counsel, and litigation. Fifty persons attended.

One of the highlights of the session was the first of the Young Lawyers Conference’s jury-based initiatives: “A View from the Box: A Panel Discussion of Judges, Trial Lawyers and Former Jurors.” Craig S. Cooley and Julia B. Judkins served on the panel with several jurors. U.S. District Judge James P. Jones of the Western District of Virginia served as moderator.

Celebration Bench-Bar Dinner: This year’s Celebration Bench-Bar Dinner was held in Richmond on February 28, 2005, at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. American Bar Association President Robert J. Grey Jr. was the keynote speaker. Women and minority judges were honored at the event.

Community Law Week: In May and June, the Young Lawyers Conference implemented two programs:

- No Bills Night—No Bills Night was held in Richmond and Danville. In Roanoke, the event was offered on May 4, 2005, over NBC affiliate Channel 12’s “Call 12.” Five Young Lawyers Conference volunteers handled eighty-five calls concerning medical malpractice, collections, personal injury, contract and tenant-landlord disputes. In Danville, the event was held on May 12, 2005. Danville volunteers fielded fifty calls.

REPORTS OF THE SECTIONS

- “We the Jury”—The “We the Jury” program was implemented in four schools in the commonwealth. On May 16 and 17, 2005, under the leadership of Theodore W. Atkinson, the program was presented to two hundred students at Stonewall Jackson High School in Manassas. On May 25 and 26, Young Lawyers Conference volunteers conducted the program at Patrick Henry High School in Roanoke before twenty students. Conference volunteers presented the program to approximately 350 students at West Potomac High School in Alexandria on June 1 and 2. And on June 6 and 7, two hundred students participated in the program at First Colonial High School in Virginia Beach.

Minority Pre Law Conference: The Minority PreLaw Conference was held on April 23, 2005, at the University of Richmond’s T.C. Williams School of Law. The goal of the program was to show students how to start a legal career, from the law school admissions process to the selection of career opportunities. David P. Bobzien made opening remarks at the conference, which hosted fifty-one participants. Eight law schools participated.

“Wills For Heroes”: “Wills for Heroes” was successfully implemented in Williamsburg. A continuing legal education program to train volunteers was held on April 20, 2005. A client education session was held on May 14, 2005. At the will signing session, Young Lawyers Conference volunteers prepared wills, powers of attorney and advance medical directives for two dozen first responders.

Annual Meeting: The Young Lawyers Conference sponsored a debate between the Democratic and Republican candidates for attorney general of Virginia. Rebecca J. Cooper, a reporter for ABC’s Washington, D.C., affiliate WJLA-TV, moderated the debate.

Admission and Orientation Ceremony: The Young Lawyers Conference welcomed 353 Virginia attorneys at the June 2005 Admission and Orientation Ceremony and 939 admittees at our fall Admission and Orientation Ceremony held in October 2004. After each program, the Supreme Court of Virginia convened in the Richmond Convention Center and bestowed the duties and responsibilities of our profession upon Virginia’s newest lawyers.

Docket Call: The Young Lawyers Conference published three editions of our *Docket Call* newsletter over the course of the past bar year, keeping our membership informed about our activities and providing helpful practice tips and other information. The *Docket Call* again garnered national recognition from the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division, receiving first place for newsletters distributed to conferences of similar size.

