

## Volunteer Opportunities

### Where will you make your mark?

- Will it be on the mind of a child who decides to pursue law after attending the Oliver Hill/Samuel Tucker Law Institute?
- Will it be on the heart of a family who gains some peace of mind from Wills for Heroes?
- Will it be on the comfort of a cancer survivor facing legal difficulties?

**Through the Young Lawyers Conference, you have the opportunity to make a difference in your profession and community, but chances are, the difference you will feel will be within yourself.**

**Young lawyers are making a difference. It's rewarding; it's a great way to get to know people; and it's fun. Join your fellow young lawyers today and make your mark.**

### HELP WANTED:

We need your help! The Virginia State Bar Young Lawyers Conference (YLC) needs Circuit Representatives, Program and Commission Chairs, and committee members and volunteers for many of its programs in the 2011–2012 bar year.

Becoming a Circuit Representative, Program or Commission Chair, or committee member / volunteer is an excellent way to get involved in the YLC and to serve the profession and the public. If you are interested in any of the leadership positions or volunteer opportunities listed below, please contact Nathan Olson at (703) 934-1480 or [nolson@cgglawyers.com](mailto:nolson@cgglawyers.com) or Christy Kiely at (804) 788-8677 or [ckiely@hunton.com](mailto:ckiely@hunton.com). More information about each of these opportunities may be found on the YLC's website at <http://www.vayounglawyers.org/>.

### The YLC seeks Circuit Representatives for the following circuits:

THIRD CIRCUIT — City: Portsmouth

FIFTH CIRCUIT — Cities: Franklin and Suffolk; Counties: Isle of Wight and Southampton

SIXTH CIRCUIT — Cities: Emporia and Hopewell; Counties: Prince George, Surry, Sussex, Greenville, and Brunswick

SEVENTH CIRCUIT — City: Newport News

TENTH CIRCUIT — Counties: Appomattox, Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, Halifax, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, and Prince Edward

FOURTEENTH CIRCUIT — County: Henrico

FIFTEENTH CIRCUIT — City: Fredericksburg; Counties: King George, Stafford, Spotsylvania, Caroline, Hanover, Westmoreland, Richmond, Essex, Lancaster and Northumberland

SIXTEENTH CIRCUIT — City: Charlottesville; Counties: Madison, Greene, Albemarle, Fluvanna, Goochland, Louisa, Orange, and Culpeper

TWENTY-NINTH CIRCUIT — Counties: Giles, Bland, Tazewell, Buchanan, Russell, Dickenson

THIRTY-FIRST CIRCUIT — Cities: Manassas & Manassas Park; County: Prince William

### The YLC seeks Chairs for the following program and commissions:

Immigrant Outreach Committee

Mental Health Law Committee

Tidewater Minority Pre-Law Conference Chair

### The YLC seeks Regional Chairs for the No Bills Night program in the following areas:

Abingdon

Charlottesville

Fredericksburg

Lexington / Staunton

Lynchburg

Tidewater

The YLC seeks committee members and volunteers for all of its programs and commissions. A complete list of programs and commissions, and their respective chairs, is at <http://www.vsb.org/site/conferences/ylc/view/programs/>.

Find out more: View committee descriptions [http://www.vsb.org/docs/conferences/young-lawyers/Cmte\\_Descriptions.pdf](http://www.vsb.org/docs/conferences/young-lawyers/Cmte_Descriptions.pdf)

Get involved now: Mail-in volunteer form (PDF) <http://www.vsb.org/docs/conferences/young-lawyers/VolunteerForm.pdf>

# Landing at a Run: Tips for Molding Effective and Productive New Associates

by Amy Wharton

You're about to give the firm's brand-new associate her first research project. She's bright and energetic, but she'll need mentoring to ease the transition from law school to practice. In a large firm, her mentoring team might include a senior associate, a technology trainer, and a librarian. In a small firm, the team may be just you. Ideally, your associate will leave your office with all the information she needs to prepare a research plan that reflects your expectations for the project. Preparing a checklist before the meeting can save time and disappointment.

Include these elements in your list:

**The final product.** Specify the type of document you need (brief, memo, report), your preferred delivery method (paper, email, or through the firm's document management system), and the final due date. If possible, provide your associate with a sample document from an earlier project.

**Timeline and level of supervision (for longer assignments).** How much oversight do you want to provide? Establish a timeline for interim stages in the process and what should be reported at the end of each interval.

**Facts, issues, and scope of the research.** Beyond explaining the facts and issues to be researched, define the parameters. Should your associate restrict her research to direct authority, or would persuasive authority from other jurisdictions and commentary from secondary sources also be helpful?

**Resources.** What resources should your associate use, and equally importantly, avoid? She should base her choices not just on content, but also on ease of use and cost. Encourage her to seek the advice of your firm's librarians and the library's intranet pages. If you're

the sole research advisor, here are three tips:

- **Cost.** Make sure your associate knows what resources she can use for your project. If she'll be using Lexis or Westlaw, be sure that she's been trained in cost-effective research techniques and that she knows how to develop a search strategy before she logs on.<sup>i</sup> When not using Lexis and Westlaw, new researchers will tend to turn to another familiar resource, Google. While Google has its place in legal research, your associate may not be aware of its limitations. You want to steer her toward more authoritative sources that don't accrue costs for use. In addition to materials from law library print collections, direct her to your firm's in-house brief bank, if one exists, and to any relevant specialized databases to which your firm subscribes. Advise her to learn about what these resources contain and the power searching techniques they support. When she does go to the free Web, rather than keyword-searching Google, suggest that she search for topical legal research guides prepared by law librarians. Many of the resources described in these guides are free. The George Mason University,<sup>ii</sup> William and Mary,<sup>iii</sup> and University of Richmond<sup>4</sup> law libraries maintain a number of guides on their websites. You'll find an excellent guide to Virginia legal resources in Paul Hellyer's article on page 42.
- **Content.** Though her impulse may be to dive directly into codes and cases, encourage your associate to consult treatises and legal encyclopedias early in the research process. Point out that doing some background research will help her to identify optimal research

paths and build the vocabulary she needs to construct effective searches. If you don't have a favorite treatise to recommend, she can find one through the library catalog or a free Web guide.<sup>5</sup> Remind her to verify that all of her primary sources are still good law.

- **Keeping track of sources.** Advise your associate to keep a detailed log of resources consulted and where they were found, full citations, key passages with page citations, and descriptions of how the issues are treated. Like every researcher, she'll develop her own organizational system over time, but sharing your own techniques may be beneficial. Even if you never choose to examine her research log, she'll be better prepared to describe her research if she documents her process well. A log will also help her avoid



**Amy A. Wharton** is research and emerging technologies librarian at the Arthur J. Morris Law Library at the University of Virginia School of Law where she co-teaches advanced legal research. Previously, she was a law firm librarian in Washington, D.C. She received her law degree from George Mason University and her master of library and information studies degree from the University of Oklahoma. She is secretary for the Virginia Association of Law Libraries and manages the VALL Wiki ([vall.pbworks.com](http://vall.pbworks.com)).