

The New Lawyer Forum



The Association of Trial Lawyers of America

Supplement to TRIAL

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Message from the Chair

Jeffrey M. Padwa, Providence, RI

Get Involved and Make It Happen

The New Lawyers Division will be receiving plenty of attention from ATLA this year. The January issue of TRIAL magazine will be focusing on New Lawyers. Our Division is being asked for our input with regard to how ATLA can better serve New Lawyers and there is a concerted effort going on to provide programs, services and materials that are geared especially for New Lawyers. We need your feedback and want to hear from you. I invite you to get involved and make a difference.

The Division is already off to a great start with our committees underway.

- The Fundraising Committee adopted two candidates for the U.S. Senate, Tom Strickland, (D-CO), and Jean Carnahan, (D-MO), and is getting ready to kick off a fundraising effort on their behalf. Strickland and Carnahan possess our values and support the constitutional right to trial by jury. They are in tight political races and need our help. Kirk Wagar (FL), Gerri Colton (CA) and Vince Browne (IL) acted proactively by contacting Strickland and Carnahan and offered our assistance. Our efforts can make a difference not only in their races, but also in the final balance of power in the U.S. Senate where every seat is crucial. Please support this project!

- Our Exchange Committee chaired by Barry Walker (AL) is working with ATLA to increase New Lawyers' awareness of the materials available through the Exchange and to encourage regular contributions of depositions and documents. The Exchange is a valuable resource that can be used by more New Lawyers.

- The Web site Committee chaired by Melissa Smith (TX) is planning our new Web space, which will include substantive materials such as jury instructions, motions in limine, deposition outlines and more. It will also include public service reports of projects

Message From the Chair, (Continued on page 4)

New Lawyers Division Officers

Jeffrey Padwa, Chair of the New Lawyers Division, has practiced for the past seven years with the firm of Mandell, Schwartz & Boisclair in Providence, Rhode Island. Jeffrey has obtained numerous noteworthy verdicts and settlements on behalf of individuals and families who have been injured as a result of medical negligence, defective products, and motor vehicle collisions. Jeffrey and his wife, Jill, live with their two sons, Joshua (age 11) and David (age 9) on the East side of Providence.



Jeffrey Padwa



Vincent Browne

Vincent "Vince" B. Browne, Chair-Elect of the New Lawyers Division, is a trial attorney with the firm of Harrington, Thompson, Acker & Harrington, Ltd. in Chicago, IL. He has tried a multitude of cases to verdict and focuses his practice on the representation of railroad workers under the Federal Employers Liability Act, victims of medical malpractice, and other individuals and families who have sustained personal injury or lost a loved one as a result of wrongful or negligent conduct. He is married to Margo, has an 18-month old daughter, Edie, and resides in Wilmette, IL.

Melissa Smith, Treasurer of the New Lawyers Division, is in her sixth year of practice at the firm of Baldwin and Baldwin, L.L.P. in Marshall, Texas. She received her first verdict in excess of \$1 million in her second year of practice and has enjoyed numerous substantial verdicts and settlements since that time. Her practice includes the representation of injured persons as well as business torts including the law of intellectual property and class action work.



Melissa Smith

Officers, (Continued on page 4)

Atlanta Convention Report, 2002

The New Lawyers Division experienced unprecedented attendance at our events during the Annual Convention in Atlanta this past July. More New Lawyers than ever before attended our education program, business meeting and the M Club luncheon. In addition to the usual activities, the NLD held a pre-convention happy hour, a Habitat for Humanity project and a Youth Mock Trial Program.

NLD Business Meeting

More than 50 New Lawyers attended our Business Meeting in Atlanta making it the most well attended in the history of the Division. NLD Chairperson Jeffrey Padwa reviewed the accomplishments of the past year and outlined the agenda for the coming year. Jeff introduced this year's theme of "Get Involved and Make It Happen." The excitement for the upcoming year was palpable. It was apparent that the Division's plans were well underway with committees already formed and beginning their activities. The Director of ATLA's Exchange, Frank Chube, announced a campaign to work with the NLD to increase New Lawyers' awareness of the materials available through the Exchange and to encourage regular contributions of depositions and documents to the Exchange.



Mary Alexander and David Casey addressing the NLD Business Meeting.

Almost all of ATLA's officers attended the meeting and addressed the Division. Incoming ATLA President, Mary Alexander, commended the New Lawyers Division for the past year's incredible efforts, and reminded us all that we are the future of ATLA. Outgoing President Leo

Boyle spoke about the essential role New Lawyers play in strengthening people's rights—from the courtroom to Congress. We heard also from David Casey, Todd Smith, and the newest ATLA officer, Kathleen Flynn Peterson.

All in attendance were invited to join a committee and get involved.



New Lawyers and supporters at NLD Party.

The NLD Party

The New Lawyers Division offered excitement and fun at The Tabernacle, or as the locals call it, "The Tabby." The traditional Sunday night party started at 9:00 p.m. and lasted until well after 2:00 a.m. There was a main stage on which two different bands played throughout the night. One of the bands was the talented Brotherhood of Groove, lead by Brandon Tarricone, the son of ATLA stalwart, Anthony Tarricone from Boston, MA. The Tabby offered many different rooms and areas away from the stage, levels with plenty of bars, and wonderful decorations.

All ATLA members were invited and judging by the crowd, most of those at the convention attended.



Panel Discussion at the New Lawyers Educational Program in Atlanta.

The NLD offers a special "Thank You" to Anthony Tarricone and the law firm of Sarrouf, Tarricone & Fleming in Boston for sponsoring the band, Brotherhood of Groove, that played at the NLD Party. Anthony's son, Brandon, is the talented lead guitarist of this group.

NLD Education Program

The attendance at the day-long NLD Education Program was also unprecedented. The audience was addressed by ATLA stalwarts Kathleen Flynn Peterson, Herman Russomanno, Charles Mathis and Robert Cartwright, as well as past NLD Chairpersons Jack Baldwin, Robert Bonsignore and Robert Fiore, and New Lawyers Courtney French and Jay Urban. A panel of leading litigators offered priceless advice on beginning one's practice as trial lawyers. Special thanks goes to outgoing NLD Chairperson Kirk Wagar for putting together a fantastic program.



Ken Spiegelman and Sadie Gardner volunteering for Habitat for Humanity.

Habitat for Humanity

We each demonstrate kindness and humanity each day in our representational capacity. Members of the New Lawyers Division furthered this concept with yet another Habit for Humanity project. New Lawyers Division Treasurer, Melissa Smith organized a team of twenty New Lawyers to install siding, windows and roofing on a house in Atlanta. This project was the highlight of the convention for those who participated. ATLA President Mary Alexander has asked the Division to hold an-

other Habitat for Humanity Project next summer at the San Francisco Convention. To be involved, contact Vince Browne at vbrowne@harringtonlaw.com or call him at (312) 922-8833. Information on the Habit for Humanity program may be found on www.habitatforhumanity.com.

Awards Reception

The New Lawyers Division held its annual awards reception on Monday, July 22nd. The division honored many of its members and officers for the hard work that had been done over the past year. Special recognition was given to several ATLA members. The F. Scott Baldwin Award for Most Outstanding Young Trial Lawyer was awarded to two outstanding New Lawyers: Kenneth Spiegelman, Miami, FL, and Jay Urban, Milwaukee, WI. The Baldwin Award honors individuals who have made a significant contribution to the New Lawyers Division and who have had one or more outstanding trial verdicts.



Kirk W. B. Wagar along with Robert Bonsignore at the Awards Ceremony.

In addition, the New Lawyers Division honored three ATLA members with the Joe Tonahill Award: Tom Hentretta, OH, John F. Romano, FL, and

Todd A. Smith, IL. This award is given in recognition of outstanding and dedicated service to and support of consumers and the trial bar. It is given in the spirit of Joe Tonahill, a highly dignified and ethical defendant of the civil justice system, a peerless stalwart and exemplary trial lawyer.



Jeff Padwa and Annie B. Williams at the M Club Luncheon

The ATLA PAC M Club Luncheon

Members of ATLA who contribute at least one thousand dollars per year to the ATLA PAC become members of the M Club. The New Lawyers Division held a phonathon earlier this year and recruited a number of New Lawyers to the M Club level. As a result, more New Lawyers attended the M Club Luncheon than ever before. The Luncheon was topped off by a compelling speech given by Senator John Edwards about the state of politics and the upcoming elections. Many other politicians were on hand to greet M Club members and discuss issues.

Law Student Mentor Program

At each convention, the New Lawyers Division is called upon to provide support to law students attending the convention. New Lawyers are part-

nered with law students and offer them the opportunity of a mentoring relationship. Various speakers, including ATLA Chief Executive Officer Thomas Henderson, Jr., and ATLA President, Mary Alexander as well as others, described the convention activities and the spirit of ATLA. An award was presented to Rebecca Branch, (NM), for her commitment to the national Student Trial Advocacy Competition (STAC).

Pre-Convention NLD Happy Hour – Sponsored, James Street Group

The New Lawyers Division held a happy hour on Friday evening at Sweet Melissa's on historic Decatur Square. Over 60 New Lawyers mixed and mingled in a casual setting before the convention activities began. Many New Lawyers attending the annual convention for the first time came to the party and found the room filled with new friends. This great event was only possible through the generosity of Randy Gassman and The James Street Group, a structured settlement company.

NLD Mock Youth Trial

New Lawyers' and the ATLA Auxiliary organized and hosted the second annual Youth Mock Trial. Over 30 children attending the convention with their ATLA parents participated. Stan Helinski, (MA), and Deryl Edwards, Jr., (MO), presented the fact pattern and explained the importance of advocacy. The participants chose the facts they thought to be most persuasive, and presented them to the jury. Those serving on the jury found for the plaintiff and awarded full damages (what else would it be at an ATLA convention). The third annual Mock Trial program will be held next summer in San Francisco.

NLD Online Litigation Support

The ATLA Exchange is an online, searchable database available exclusively for ATLA members and is an invaluable resource for the new lawyer. It should be used in every products liability case and to check out expert witnesses.

An ATLA member may search the ATLA Exchange databases at no charge for deposition transcripts, trial briefs, to research members with similar cases, ATLA CLE information, and other materials essential to equaling the playing field. Once your search is completed,

documents and other information can be obtained for a nominal fee. The ATLA Exchange has generously offered significant incentives to encourage New Lawyers to use the Exchange and to contribute documents to the Exchange!

To contribute documents to the Exchange, simply email your deposition transcripts and court documents to nld.doc@atlahq.org. Disks and paper documents can also be mailed to: The ATLA Exchange; 1050 31st Street, NW;

Washington, D.C. 20007. Please remember to include your name, business address, and member number on all documents donated to receive credit. For further information, log on to the New Lawyers Division Web site at www.atla.org/members/newlaw.htm or contact NLD Exchange Committee Chair Barry Walker at bwalkerf_f@bellsouth.net or (205) 871-7878. The ATLA Exchange database may be reached by typing <http://exchange.atla.org> into your Web browser.

Chris Gilreath, Secretary of the New Lawyers Division, graduated from the Cumberland School of Law in 1997 and practices with Gilreath & Associates in Knoxville, TN, in the areas of products liability, motor vehicle litigation, workers' compensation, long term disability/ERISA, and class actions. Chris is the Chair of the New Lawyers Division Membership Committee, an ATLA PAC contributor, and serves on the Board of Governors of the Tennessee Trial Lawyers Association. Chris is married to Crystal with one son, Andrew.



Chris Gilreath

Developing a Client Base and Referral Network For New Lawyers

Jill Webb, Chicago, IL

Now that you are a plaintiff's attorney, one side of the business is working on great cases and getting great results—settlements or verdicts. The other side of the business is getting cases or referrals. The great results gives you name recognition and experience to get other attorneys and people in your community to refer you cases.

However, what do you do to get cases and referrals when you do not have such a record? What do you do when you are not getting paid enough to pay dues for lots of associations that you can network in? What do you do when you do not have enough money to advertise?

You can teach! As strange as it sounds, local community colleges, two-year colleges, and business schools are desperate for teachers in paralegal programs, as well as general education classes, like composition.

I got involved with a local business college teaching paralegal classes. This has turned out to be a great referral source for me. The other instructors are either not actively practicing law or are

practicing in other areas, such as criminal law. They need a civil attorney to send cases or clients.

Additionally, the students often need help in legal matters. Because you are a great teacher, they call you.

Lastly, teaching has made me a better lawyer. The students ask you questions you never thought about. Also, I have been forced to refresh myself on the law of business organizations and contracts. I keep up to date on recent rule changes and cases because I use them in my teaching.

The best part of this referral network is that you are getting paid for teaching, while developing your referral sources.

You can also get involved with the local college that has a paralegal program and volunteer to be on the school's advisory board, or volunteer to have externs from the school do their externship at your office. You will get to know many faculty members and students, all of whom are potential referral sources. It costs you nothing to do, and you could get free help around your office.

Message From the Chair, (Continued from page 1) in which New Lawyers have been involved. Many New Lawyers contribute generously of their time and talents to public service activities in their communities. Our Web site will provide a place for those good deeds to be recognized and for an exchange of ideas for others to replicate. *Your contributions and reports to our Web site are essential.* Please email them to Jill Webb (IL) at jillmwebb@lycos.com or Stan Helinski (MA) at shelinski@hugoandpollack.com.

And, more is happening. You can learn more about our Division's activities through announcements on our list server and, soon, from our Web site, which is being updated and made over.

I am writing this message only a few days after returning from our Annual Convention in Atlanta. ATLA's con-

ventions are a highlight of my year — friends, education, motivation, inspiration. I return to my office after every convention re-charged and eager to apply my new found knowledge. For those who have never been to an ATLA convention, I invite you to come to San Francisco next July. I promise that a convention experience will elevate your practice to a level beyond your current vision. It's worth every penny!

Finally, last year was an outstanding year for the New Lawyers Division. We had unprecedented participation in the Division's activities. Under the leadership of Kirk Wagar, and with significant contributions from Vince Browne, Chris Gilreath, Melissa Smith, Gerri Colton and many others, we recruited more than 100 new ATLA members, increased our Board of Governors from 45 to over 150 members, exceeded our

goals in three fundraising efforts and experienced record attendance at our programs and meetings. Thanks go out to everyone who took part in our activities last year.

Please take the initiative to contact me, an NLD officer, or an ATLA staff person whenever you have an idea, suggestion, comment or critique. ATLA and the NLD are here to serve you and to provide you with whatever you need to be successful. Get involved and make it happen.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jill Webb". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.