

**TYLA in Action**



*I Was the First, You Can Be a Lawyer Too!* is an interactive project that will introduce students to first-generation lawyers who made significant contributions to Texas and the nation, including Thurgood Marshall, Herbert Choy, and Barbara Jordan.

TYLA and the State Bar of Texas Government Law Section hosted the McAllen Roadshow, an afternoon of programming focused on government law, on February 17 at the McAllen Convention Center. Topics included understanding overtime and other wage rights issues, contracting with other governmental entities, and handling your first trial or appeal.



Above: Associate Judge Andrew Dornburg of Fort Bend County Courts of Law presented on transitioning in and out of government law.



Above: Mike Shaunessy of McGinnis Lochridge in Austin, presented on the basics of the Texas Tort Claims Act.

# Ignite and Unite

I first ran for the Texas Young Lawyers Association Board of Directors in 2012 at the encouragement of my co-worker, Keith L. Krueger, who had just finished his second term on the board and been elected secretary. Although I knew of his work ethic, I had never worked with him outside the office. What I soon learned was that Keith was deeply committed to service in all aspects of life. For those of you who didn't have the privilege of knowing him personally, he embodied the persona of a servant leader. When Keith died, it became my goal to not just build my own legacy within TYLA, but to continue his as well.

Five years later, I have the privilege of preparing to lead the organization, and with Keith's legacy in mind I have two goals for us in the next year: to ignite and unite. It is easy to become bogged down in the day-to-day stresses of life as a lawyer and forget that our skills are suited to serving those around us. By creating new and sharing existing TYLA projects, I want to ignite a passion for service in young lawyers across the state. We will all be better practitioners of law and members of our communities if we devote time to the service of others.

Each year, the TYLA board is composed of individuals who are different in every way possible. And every year, we unite with a common goal: service. When planning projects for my term, I worked to develop several that could be used as the basis of partnerships between TYLA and other sections and committees of the bar. I challenge others to forge similar partnerships. We are stronger and more effective when we can bring our individual experiences and perspectives together to impact those around us.

In the coming year, TYLA will continue its dedication to serving the public, lawyers, and law students by developing impactful—to borrow a term from current TYLA President Sam Houston—projects that can be distributed across the state. We will help educators, parents, and students



with *Teach Safe. Learn Safe. Be Safe.*, a web-based tool that focuses on legal issues related to the education system. This project will address school safety, the implications of criminal activity affecting or between students, laws related to records release and disclosure, and internet safety. We will also develop a program intended to help lawyers learn key words and phrases in the Spanish language. TYLA will also draft employment law guidebooks to educate small-business owners about legal issues they face. Additionally, TYLA will develop a toolkit for new local affiliates and those that are trying to grow. We will also continue to share the excellent projects developed by TYLA over past years. This is just a glimpse of what we have in store. I look forward to the launch of these and other initiatives during the 2017-2018 bar year.

I challenge every lawyer to consider this quote from Martin Luther King Jr.: "Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'" If you don't know how to begin, then I invite you to join us. Remember, young lawyers, if you are 36 or younger or have been practicing for five years or less, you are a member of TYLA! Help with a project, join a committee, or present one of our completed programs in your community. Let's *ignite* and *unite*.

If you have questions, ideas, or want to serve, please don't hesitate to contact me at [baili.rhodes@westwebblaw.com](mailto:baili.rhodes@westwebblaw.com).

**BAILI B. RHODES**

President-elect,  
Texas Young Lawyers Association