

**TYLA in Action**



TYLA and Baylor Law School co-sponsored the Ultimate Writer Regional Writing Competition, which is designed to recognize the importance of quality writing in the legal profession.



TYLA President-elect Sally Pretorius (left), President Baili Rhodes (center), and Immediate Past President Sam Houston present *Making an Impact: Creating and Delivering High Quality Service Projects* at the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division meeting in October in Denver, Colorado.



Casa Padre



Casa Norma Linda

In November, TYLA President Baili Rhodes and President-elect Sally Pretorius toured shelters in the Lower Rio Grande Valley for unaccompanied minor immigrants with the ABA Commission on Immigration to learn about the immigration process.



# Serving Law Students

As law students, we all heard that our practices were unlikely to resemble a John Grisham novel or an episode of *Law & Order*. But these days, law schools also have to prepare would-be litigators with the statistics regarding the relatively small number of cases that actually make it to trial before a jury. Despite being told these stats, I think few young attorneys are truly prepared for the amount of writing they will do in their careers. Between drafting pleadings, letters, emails, memos, briefs, and discovery responses, a young attorney is likely to spend significantly more time typing at his or her computer than actually arguing in the courtroom. The skills learned in oral advocacy programs are still incredibly beneficial to lawyers learning to advocate with a pen. However, now more than ever, it is essential to strengthen lawyers' writing skills—starting in law school.

As the service arm of the State Bar of Texas, the Texas Young Lawyers Association is dedicated to serving the general public, lawyers, and law students. In developing programs for law students, TYLA examines ways that it can help them prepare for success in law school and in their future careers. For that reason, TYLA worked with Baylor Law School to co-sponsor the first Ultimate Writer Regional Legal Writing Competition, designed to recognize the importance of quality writing in the legal profession. The competition, which kicked off in October, asked all the law schools in Texas—except Baylor Law School—to join in the contest. Each of the participating schools—SMU Dedman School of Law, South Texas College of Law Houston, Texas A&M University School of Law, Texas Tech University School of Law, University of Houston Law Center, University of Texas School of Law, and UNT Dallas College of Law—submitted a problem to its own student entrants who were asked to draft a persuasive brief pursuant to a number of detailed guidelines. The schools submitted their top three entries to the regional competition and those 21 entries were reviewed by members of the TYLA Board of Directors and Baylor Law's writing faculty. The first place winner received \$3,000, second place received \$1,500, and third received \$500. Five honorable mentions were also recognized.

I am excited to announce the winners of the first Ultimate Writer Regional Legal Writing Competition: first place—Michael Davis, of the University of Texas School of Law; second place—Alex Chern, of the University of Texas School of Law; and third place—Tyler Hubert, of the University of Houston Law Center. Honorable Mention winners include William Peterson, of Texas Tech University School of Law; Robert Ehrlich, of Texas Tech University School of Law; Anna Eady, of South Texas College of Law Houston; Megan Cloud, of Texas A&M University School of Law; and Taryn Ourso, of UNT Dallas College of Law. Our judges were impressed with each of you. Congratulations!

In addition to the Ultimate Writer Regional Legal Writing Competition, TYLA hosts two other competitions each year—the National Trial Competition, which is co-sponsored by the American College of Trial Lawyers, and the State Moot Competition, held each year at the State Bar Annual Meeting. For more information or to help with any of these competitions, go to [tyla.org](http://tyla.org).

**BAILI B. RHODES**

President,  
Texas Young Lawyers Association