



# Join Our Committee and Succeed!

By Michael J. Dennin

Membership in the Young Lawyer Committee (YLC) of the Camden County Bar Association is a must for young and new lawyers. Our group is open to lawyers under 35 years old

or lawyers practicing less than 5 years. The group provides opportunities for attorneys to use their enthusiasm and drive to affect real change. Our group provides a mechanism for everyday attorneys to have a positive impact on the people in our County.

We focus on social events, continuing education, and charitable services. These three areas are intertwined. Our social calendar is based around monthly lunch meetings at the Association headquarters. In those meetings we plan, review and talk about upcoming Bar events, discuss issues within the YLC, field questions, organize sub-groups, host guest speakers, and eat a well balanced lunch all within the span of 30-45 minutes. Social events include group Phillies games, joint happy hours with the Philadelphia Bar Association and the South Jersey Young Professionals Association, dinner at Casona, the Bench Bar social, monthly get-togethers after CLE on tap, and of course the Lobster Bake. We discuss job opportunities and welcome input from all members on anything they wish to discuss. Our meetings are rather informal and we encourage openness.

Our continuing legal education arm is highlighted by CLE on Tap. This program is for newly admitted attorneys who are required to obtain their initial education requirements. We meet after the program at the Taproom to unwind and connect with one another. This is a nice networking event in addition to providing needed education. Additionally, we plan seminars throughout the year and members present topics for seminars, moderate, and offer ideas of what they would like to learn. Members can offer their advice and recommendations as to how they like their positions and what it takes to be effective in that particular area of law. We have guest speakers on educational issues and jobs can be found through this membership.

In all the things we do we focus on service and charity. Highlights include our Easter and Halloween holiday parties at the Anna Sample House. Members volunteer their time for a few hours on a Saturday and we hold parties at the homeless shelter in Camden. The shelter is geared toward homeless families and we provide all you can eat pizza, seasonal candy, and of course our go-to magician, Lorenzo. Our Lobster Bake, while being a "social" event, benefits the LARC school. We tour LARC every year and last year provided them with a \$8,000 check to help the school in its' capacity as a mostly self-funded non-profit. LARC is a special needs school serving children and young adults, ages 3-21 with moderate to severe disabilities at no cost to the families. We supported and assisted with the Wills for Heroes program, in conjunction with Rutgers Law, focusing on free estate matters for First Responders. We participate closely with the main Bar Association for the children's holiday gift drives as well as the children's picnic, and serve food to the homeless at the Cathedral Kitchen in Camden.

New lawyers should be well-rounded. Continuing education is now a requirement. Networking and being around our peers outside the

office promotes self confidence. Conversations that take place in that arena help us with cases and give us life lessons. Charity instantaneously benefits people who we do not know and would never know but for our involvement. In our group every member is an equal and we all are available to help one another.

New attorneys face many challenges. Questions arise as to whether we are doing the right thing, saying the right thing, arguing perfectly, and being proper and professional. These questions are justifiable. As a part of our group, we understand that we are in this together and all go through the same struggles. Knowing that we all face the same thoughts and experiences, we can move toward growing as attorneys outside the practice of law. Only then do we realize that being a real person, being involved, is the way to succeed in law and life.

Service is where our profession starts. Being appointed Young Lawyer Committee Chair for the coming year brings with it a responsibility to continue the strong leadership of my predecessors and requires a focus on being genuine. We are all human before we are attorneys. We will continue to be human after our practice has ended. We have signed an oath to be professional in all we do and devote ourselves to service. As a young attorney, the slate is clean. Opportunity is in front of you. We ask that you join the organization this year. You will learn that being able to have a positive influence on the lives of the less fortunate exemplifies our mission and takes us far beyond being a "lawyer."

