

Lawyers Leading the Way

Spend a few minutes watching the news and you'll hear about threats and divisions not only from outside our borders but also from within. We face mountainous concerns in the areas of financial solvency, racial and socioeconomic tensions, education, crime, and immigration, to name a few. Yet, it is precisely when I hear about the number and gravity of these problems that I become most excited to be a Texas young lawyer.

From William Travis to Sam Houston, Abraham Lincoln to Thurgood Marshall, Mahatma Gandhi to Nelson Mandela—lawyers have led the way through some of our world's toughest "trials." Lawyers do this in the courtroom, on the legislative floor, on the battlefield, and in too many other

forums to mention here. It historically has been lawyers who find that elusive road to justice, peace, and inclusion, and I am confident we will be the ones to find that path again. We, the members of the Texas Young Lawyers Association, are the next generation of trained scholars, counselors, educators, negotiators, and problem solvers. Our skills have been forged through tireless nights in law school libraries and tested in courtrooms full of conflict and division. Our resolve to fight for what is true, right, and just is rooted in a deep understanding of the price that others have paid to achieve order and civility through the rule of law and the knowledge that peaceful resolution is always available in every conflict if it is sought with zealous determination.

I am excited to say we are once again preparing to lead on multiple fronts. We will not passively enjoy the many blessings our profession bestows on us while ignoring the hardships of so many in our communities. Rather, we will confront each issue head-on as a team of almost 37,000 dedicated, prepared, and unified professionals.

In the coming year we will work to assist lawyers dealing with mental health issues by updating and relaunching an existing TYLA project *Breaking the Silence*. We will aid our state's educators by giving them the opportunity to shadow and participate in the legal process through a teacher externship program. We will attempt to bring new perspective to law enforcement and minority communities by planning and hosting town hall meetings between local police and minority and civil rights leaders. We will strive to provide a voice for some of the most marginalized members of our communities. With an emphasis on homeless youth, we will develop and implement a project to alleviate some of the underlying legal problems that keep them from getting their feet back on the ground. Finally, we will publish an educational video to teach new prosecutors and defense attorneys ways that they can reduce their chances of contributing to a wrongful conviction.

These are just a few of the many plans for the 2015-2016 bar year, so we desperately need your support. If you would like to help with any of the projects or issues mentioned, please email me or your local TYLA director. We want to know your thoughts and use your talents to achieve all that we can. We may fall short of our lofty goals; however, we will ultimately achieve greatness because we are Texas attorneys, fully prepared and wholly motivated to serve those who are less fortunate.



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