

Be Impactful!

This simple phrase is the theme for the year in which I will serve as TYLA's president. TYLA obviously effects positive change across the state as the public service arm of the State Bar of Texas. Through this theme, I am challenging our members to continue to find ways to positively impact our profession and our communities.

Being impactful is easy. What one person considers an insignificant act can be transformative to others, especially young people. Nearly 20 years after graduating from high school, I bumped into New Mexico attorney Mary Torres at an American Bar Association meeting in Houston. Mary had assisted my high

school mock trial team with advice about evidentiary objections and cross-examination. Understandably, Mary had no idea who I was when I approached her. But I was able to thank her for her help back then, noting that while she might have considered her assistance to be a small act, it made an impact on me and my teammates. Indeed, my interest in the law can be traced back to that team.

In line with the theme and with the goal of increasing the diversity of our profession, TYLA will build on prior TYLA and State Bar of Texas pipeline projects—programs designed to increase the flow of diverse students

into law school. TYLA will marry the goals of its *What Do Lawyers Do?*, which educates students about the path to a legal career, and the State Bar's *I was the first, Vote for Me!*, which introduces students to trailblazers in history, including the project's visionary, Lisa M. Tatum, the first African-American president of the State Bar. TYLA will produce *I was the First, You Can Be a Lawyer Too*, which will introduce students to first-generation lawyers who made significant contributions to Texas and the nation.

TYLA will continue its efforts to address issues affecting the public. In particular, given the recent press regarding sexual assaults on college campuses, we will develop a *Sexual Assault Victim Rights Guide*. The goal is to educate students about the systems of administrative and criminal justice so that the victim can understand the entire process by which an alleged perpetrator may be brought to justice. The guide will also identify resources available to assist victims of sexual assault.

Finally, because the bulk of Texas lawyers maintain solo practices or practice in small firms, TYLA will augment our current law practice management offerings through a *Client Resource Guide* that will offer practice advice about managing client expectations, dealing with attorney fee disputes, and other ethical and practical issues. It will complement transition-to-practice programs produced by local bar associations and law schools, as well as TYLA's substantive tools such as the *Ten Minute Mentor* series.

This is an abbreviated preview of our plans for TYLA in the 2016-2017 bar year. I encourage our members to reach out to me at sam@hdappeals.com if you have identified a need that TYLA can address. Together, we can all make an impact.



SAM HOUSTON
TYLA President-elect