



Bar Activities

Meetings

While the activities of The Missouri Bar are carried on throughout the year by dedicated men and women across the state, all of this work comes in sharp focus at the various gatherings of the state bar. From the presentation of educational programs and remarks by prominent speakers to committee meetings and time for valuable networking, these statewide meetings offer a microcosm of bar work in general.

There is no denying the productivity that results from each of the four major meetings conducted annually by The Missouri Bar. At these events, lawyers can take advantage of practical, timely educational opportunities and enjoy the camaraderie of colleagues – guaranteeing both professional and personal enrichment.

This proven formula for success – blending relevant educational programming with ample social opportunities – can perhaps best be illustrated by reviewing the successful Missouri Bar gatherings of the past year.

Spring Committee Meetings

The 2011 Missouri Bar Spring Committee Meetings took place May 13 at the Capitol Plaza Hotel in Jefferson City. Along with meetings of the Board of Governors and most bar committees, 17 committees took the opportunity to host educational programs for their members and other interested lawyers.

In addition, those attending a complimentary luncheon that day heard remarks from Missouri State Auditor Thomas A. Schweich.



Missouri State Auditor Thomas A. Schweich speaks at the 2011 Spring Committee Meetings.

Solo and Small Firm Conference

The 16th annual Solo and Small Firm Conference was held June 7-9, 2011 at Tan-Tar-A Resort at Osage Beach, with 1,050 in attendance. As in past years, the conference featured a variety of high-quality educational programs, recreational activi-



The annual Solo and Small Firm Conference draws large crowds of enthusiastic lawyers for three days of programs, social events and family-oriented fun.

ties, lots of camaraderie and fun for all for a bargain price at this family-friendly event. The theme of the conference was “Spotlight on Solo and Small Firm Lawyers: Looking Back, Moving Forward.”

Highlights of the 2011 conference included:

- Nearly 90 different educational programs in general and specific substantive, practice management, technology, ethics, and quality of life tracks as well as computer labs and discussion groups. The event included a trial college/litigation track with a trial expert that was very popular with attendees.
- Forty law students from all four of Missouri’s law schools attended and participated fully in the events. Each student was assigned a volunteer conference companion to make them feel welcome and to make sure the student reaped all the benefits from the event.
- A number of conference scholarships were offered by The Missouri Bar Foundation as well as private donors.
- A first-time attendees’ lunch was held for those attending the conference for the first time that included a program on how to get the most from their conference experience.
- A boot camp on starting a law practice was conducted for those considering launching a new practice or looking to improve a new or existing practice.
- An exhibit hall with a wide variety of vendors was available to attendees to explore needed products

and services for their practices.

- An inspirational plenary session on the Innocence Project was presented that included exonerees who told their stories.
- Other expert speakers provided valuable information on legal technology, practice management and ethics.
- The MoBarCLE Garage Sale offered educational materials at bargain prices.
- On Thursday evening, attendees enjoyed a picnic dinner on Tan-Tar-A's deck overlooking the Lake of the Ozarks.
- On Friday evening, attendees enjoyed the sounds of a Las Vegas entertainer followed by a Club Party.
- Lawyer-humorist Sean Carter delivered an entertaining talk at the Saturday plenary session.
- Golf and a cruise on the Lake of the Ozarks rounded out some of the social and recreational events.
- A variety of receptions were offered for socializing and talking shop, including a reception hosted by the Board of Governors.
- Thousands of dollars in prizes were given away during the event, including a Harley Davidson motorcycle and a vacation trip to the Atlantis Resort in the Bahamas.

Annual Meeting

This event, the most prominent meeting of the state bar, took place September 21-23 in Kansas City. Lawyers from around the state responded with enthusiasm, pushing registration numbers to more than 800. Once again, members of the Missouri Judicial Conference joined Missouri Bar members at this gathering, allowing both formal and informal interaction among members of the bench and bar.

The 2011 Annual Meeting again featured a multitude of interactive educational sessions – both plenary presentations and track programming – mixed with multiple opportunities for social and professional interaction.

Highlights of the 2011 Annual Meeting included:

- A plenary session featuring an outstanding panel of lawyers, judges and visionaries discussing the impact of global, national and state trends on the future of the legal profession.
- Another plenary program – again with a stellar group of presenters – addressing the funding challenges facing courts, judges, lawyers, clients and communities.
- A poignant plenary session in which lawyers who survived the devastating Joplin tornado told their stories and offered insight on ways in which lawyers can prepare for disaster – in whatever form it may take;



Top practitioners, all experts in their fields, willingly share their knowledge at every Missouri Bar Annual Meeting.

- A variety of other educational programs organized into concurrent tracks focusing on emerging issues, family law, business/corporate/employment law, probate/trust/elder law, and trial practice skills;
- The “Opening Luncheon,” featuring the annual address to members of the bar by Chief Justice Richard B. Teitelman of the Supreme Court of Missouri;
- An opening night “President’s and Chief Justice’s Reception,” offering an early opportunity for socializing and networking;
- The popular “Best of Missouri” Reception at the Liberty Memorial and World War I Museum, featuring delicious food and beverages overlooking the downtown Kansas City skyline;
- A Young Lawyers’ Section-sponsored event at 2000 Grand, a popular gathering spot located above “The Cashew” nightclub; and
- The Missouri Bar Awards Banquet, at which deserving members of the bench, bar, and legislature were recognized for their service to The Missouri Bar, the legal profession and the people of Missouri.

Fall Committee Meetings

The final Missouri Bar gathering of 2011, the Fall Committee Meetings, took place November 18 in Jefferson City. This meeting represents the first gathering of bar committees during the “bar year” that began at the conclusion of the Annual Meeting, offering the chance to assess progress and map out plans for the year ahead.

As with its spring counterpart, the Fall Committee Meetings featured a number of educational programs sponsored by bar committees, along with the normal business meetings of those committees and the Board of Governors.

Missouri Attorney General Chris Koster was the featured speaker at a mid-day complimentary luncheon for all attendees.



Attendees at the Fall Committee Meetings heard remarks from Missouri Attorney General Chris Koster.

Committees

The more than 60 committees and sections of The Missouri Bar are largely responsible for the enormous number of programs and services the state bar regularly provides to its members and to the public. This committee structure is supported by the donation of valuable time and talent by individual members of the bar.

All Missouri Bar members are encouraged to become involved in committee or section activities. Prior to the start of each new bar year, The Missouri Bar sends each of its members a committee registration card.

By simply completing and returning this form, lawyers may indicate their interest in serving on one or more open enrollment committees addressing substantive areas of the law. Missouri Bar members may also join an open enrollment committee at any time via The Missouri Bar's website at www.mobar.org.

In addition to the open enrollment committees, several other committees feature memberships appointed by the president of The Missouri Bar. In addition, special committees are occasionally authorized by the Board of Governors to address specific issues of concern.

Regardless of their origins, it is clear that Missouri Bar committees and sections are largely responsible for the majority of the bar's activities during the course of the year. These include: the drafting of legislation for pos-



Missouri Bar committee-staged educational programs draw large crowds of lawyers interested in maintaining their skills.

sible introduction before the Missouri General Assembly; the development of continuing legal education programs and publications; efforts to increase public understanding of the law; helping educators teach their students about the justice system; coordinating a variety of programs designed to help lawyers improve the efficiency of their practices; and countless more.

Most Missouri Bar committees and sections meet twice annually – once at the Fall Committee Meetings and again at the Spring Committee Meetings. Held in Jefferson City, these gatherings are traditionally accompanied by educational programs offered by several committees.

Many of the state bar's substantive law committees also organize and present educational programs during The Missouri Bar Annual Meeting each fall.

The establishment of listservs for each committee has greatly facilitated committee work and improved communication among lawyers across the state. Using this resource, members can exchange information, offer assistance to one another, provide moral support, and refer cases outside their geographic area. One of the most popular listservs is the SFIG (Small Firm Internet Group) of the Solo & Small Firm Committee. Solo and small firm lawyers regularly participate in discussions on this listserv.

Young Lawyers' Section

The Young Lawyers' Section (YLS) of The Missouri Bar was created in 1967 to stimulate the interest of recently admitted lawyers in the objectives of The Missouri Bar, and to encourage participation in its substantive and procedural committees. All members of The Missouri Bar who are 36 years old or younger, or who have been admitted for less than five years, are members of the YLS. Section members elect representatives from 14 geographic districts to form the governing YLS Council.

Through public service projects and educational activities aimed at both the public and recently-admitted lawyers, the YLS builds strong relationships among young and newly-admitted attorneys, and develops the future leaders of The Missouri Bar. The YLS also provides a forum for young lawyer associations within local bars to share their public service project successes and ideas.

The YLS is the primary public service arm of The Missouri Bar, carrying out public service projects and educational activities throughout the state. Many of these projects have become annual activities. Public service projects include programs designed to reduce youth violence, educate students about the Constitution, and explain voting and the electoral process. Public information brochures include topics such as young people's obligations and rights as they enter the adult world, domestic violence, adoption, and small claims court procedures.



Upon joining The Missouri Bar, lawyers automatically become members of the Young Lawyers' Section.

Missouri Bar Committee Involvement

Many members of the Young Lawyers' Section have been active in The Missouri Bar's substantive law committees over the years. This year, the YLS Council has continued its direct involvement in the committees by appointing Council liaisons to nearly every substantive law committee of The Missouri Bar. The committee liaisons attended and participated in the Missouri Bar's Spring and Fall Committee Meetings in Jefferson City, and look forward to continued participation in these committees in the future.

Pro Bono Involvement

The YLS Council has continued its involvement with Missouri Bar pro bono activities this year. Council members have attended the Delivery of Legal Services committee meetings, and the Council has dedicated itself to promoting pro bono work in the legal profession and assisting the committee in achieving its goal of improving the delivery of legal services to the public, including matters related to disabled, elderly, and low-income persons. The YLS continued its sponsorship of awards for young lawyers engaged in pro bono service this year. The YLS Pro Bono Publico awards were presented at The Missouri Bar Annual Meeting in Kansas City to Stacey Meyer Bowman, Jennifer McAdam, and The Association for Women Lawyers of Greater Kansas City.

Disaster Legal Services

The YLS Council, in conjunction with the lawyers of The Missouri Bar, the American Bar Association and FEMA, provided free legal services to victims of several disasters that occurred in Missouri in 2011, including the St. Louis tornado, major flooding in both southeast and northwest Missouri, and the Joplin tornado. In addition to a toll-free legal helpline that was made available to all disaster victims, some members of the YLS Council provided on-site legal assistance to victims of the Joplin

tornado. Hundreds of Missouri attorneys volunteered to assist hotline callers with disaster-related legal issues ranging from landlord-tenant issues to questions about insurance and FEMA assistance.

Educational Activities

"We the People. . . The Citizen and the Constitution" is a national constitutional study program for students in grades 4 through 12 that promotes an understanding of the history and philosophy of the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights, as well as an understanding of democracy and its institutions. It is directed by the Center for Civic Education and funded by the U.S. Department of Education through an act of Congress. In the culminating activity for this event, members participate by volunteering to judge mock congressional hearings where students demonstrate their skills and knowledge of past and present constitutional issues. The Missouri State Finals are held each January, and the winning school represents Missouri in the National Finals held in Washington, D.C. The YLS Council also donates \$10,000 annually to help send the winning team to the National Finals.

The Law Day Essay Contest, in its 15th year, is co-sponsored by the Missouri National Education Association, the Missouri Press Association, and the YLS. The contest invites students in three age categories (grades 4-5, 6-8 and 9-12) to participate in a law-related essay contest, with U.S. savings bonds awarded to the top three essays in each age group. The winners are invited to come to Jefferson City for recognition. In 2011, the theme was: "*Through the legacy of John Adams, our country's first lawyer-president, citizens learn the importance of individual rights. Explain the lesson behind his legacy and how it is critical to democracy.*"

The YLS will also be sponsoring the Liberty Day Project, which aims to teach a fifth grade lesson plan on constitutional issues and laws at their local area schools.

In celebration of Dr. Seuss' birthday each March, the



Sponsorship of the annual Law Day Essay Contest is just one of the educational efforts of the Young Lawyers' Section.

YLS participates in the Missouri National Education Association's "Read Across America" activity. For this event, YLS members across the state visit classrooms to read Dr. Seuss books to students in an effort to promote youth literacy and show the joy of reading.

Public Information

The YLS also provides authorship and financial support to a number of public service publications available through The Missouri Bar. In 2011, the YLS provided an update to the Missouri Bar's *Small Claims Handbook* as well as a major revision of the Missouri Bar's domestic violence survivor's guide – *Domestic Violence and the Law: a Practical Guide for Survivors*. The YLS continues its work to update many of these publications, and is also working to make many of them available in other languages, including Spanish, Vietnamese and Bosnian. Other YLS publications include:

- *Turning 18: Some Things About the Law You Need to Know*
- *Adoption Guide*
- *New Lawyer Survival Guide*
- *Senior Citizens Handbook* (the YLS and The Missouri Bar Foundation both provide funding for the printing of the handbook).

YLS Awards

Each year, the YLS presents the Tom Cochran Community Service Award to a member of the bar whose community service and professionalism have significantly enhanced his or her community. The award is named after Thomas D. Cochran (1934-1981). Mr. Cochran was long active in the work of the organized bar at the local, state and national level, and his commitment and contributions to the practice of law, his community and his church is an inspiration to all lawyers. The 2011 recipient of this award was Arimeta DuPree.

The second YLS award is the Liberty Bell Award, presented to a non-lawyer or non-legal organization engaged in public service activities that enhance the legal community or are dedicated to the advancement of justice. The 2011 recipient of this award was Connections to Success of Kansas City.

Nominations for either of these awards should be sent to Eric Wilson, Legislative Counsel, The Missouri Bar, P.O. Box 119, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0119. The nomination should include the name and contact information of the nominee, the award for which the nominee should be considered, and a brief description of the nominee's public service activities.

New YLS Website and Social Media

In 2011, the YLS launched its new website at <http://www.mobaryls.org>, which provides a variety of resources

for members of The Missouri Bar Young Lawyers' Section. The new website includes a statewide calendar of young lawyer events, information about how young lawyers can get involved in YLS activities, information about Missouri Bar resources for young lawyers, and access to YLS publications. The YLS has also created a Facebook page to improve communication with, and outreach to, its members.

Member Services

Finally, the YLS provides various services to members of The Missouri Bar, including continuing legal education programs, a quarterly newsletter sent to all young lawyers in the state, social events at regional and annual meetings, other activities designed to build relationships among new attorneys, and encouraging young lawyers to interact with members of the judiciary and the leadership of The Missouri Bar.

Leadership Academy

For more than a decade, the Leadership Academy has fostered the development of future bar leaders. In that time, 116 lawyers have participated in the Academy. The Leadership Academy began in 2000 as a program of the Committee on Minority Issues to promote diversity among the leadership of The Missouri Bar. The Academy seeks diversity in gender, race, area of practice, and locality of practice. Academy participants are nominated by their local bars, law firms, colleagues, judges, and other members of The Missouri Bar. Eligible candidates are under the age of 40 or have been in practice for 10 years or less, and have demonstrated leadership skills in their communities.

The eleventh year of the Leadership Academy was a success. The 13 attorneys in the 2010-2011 class collaborated to develop a manual for new Missouri lawyers. The class members designed the manual to provide practical tips and guidance on handling issues and navigating situations frequently encountered by those new to the practice of law.

The 12 members of the 2011-2012 Leadership Academy class were selected in August 2011. These rising leaders have already accomplished much in their local bars and communities, and bring diverse and innovative perspectives. After orientation to the work of The Missouri Bar and its leadership, the 2011-2012 Leadership Academy class will design and execute a group service project. Additionally, in July 2012, each member will commit to at least two years of future service with the bar.

Leadership Academy alumni are currently serving the bar in leadership positions on the Board of Governors, bar committees, and the Young Lawyers' Section Council. Alumni frequently serve the bar in other roles, including volunteering as MoBarCLE presenters, authors, moderators, commentators, and reviewers.