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Young Lawyers of the Year share passion and dedication to law and community

Driven, dedicated, and passionate. These are just some of the words used to describe Sutania A. Fuller and Teckla S. Henderson. Though Fuller and Henderson come from different backgrounds, they are both public servants who embrace the legal profession while working to better their communities. Fuller and Henderson now have something else in common, as they jointly received the YLD Young Lawyer of the Year award for 2021.

Sutania Fuller: Living a life of service

At the 11th Circuit Solicitor's Office, Sutania Fuller works as an assistant solicitor dedicated to prosecuting some of the most violent criminals in the area while supporting and giving back to her community. Her commitment to public service and leadership are just part of the reason she is being honored. Her selflessness has benefited those around her said Eleventh Circuit Solicitor S.R. "Rick" Hubbard, III in a letter of support for Fuller's nomination.

"It was obvious to many of her colleagues that she would not only become an outstanding prosecutor but that she genuinely cared about giving back and being a positive role model for the community she served," Hubbard said. "Sutania has exceeded even our expectations of the quality and amount of selfless giving that she has provided not only for our local citizens but for citizens across South Carolina."

Fuller's record of service and dedication to YLD and Bar leadership is extensive, with involvement in the SC Bar Diversity Committee and serving as co-chair of the Leadership Academy as well as YLD's Make-A-Wish Committee, Color of Justice Committee, Protecting Our Youth Committee, and serving as the Membership Events co-chair.

Some of Fuller's recent notable work was the planning and execution of the Diversity Committee's programming for the



2021 SC Bar Convention and planning a new series, "Virtual Fireside Chats: Beyond the Robe," on behalf of the Diversity Committee.

"Sutania and four other lawyers organized and led a lawyer protest to stand against racial injustice in our community in the summer of 2020. Her work galvanized almost one hundred lawyers from across the state to attend and participate in the protest and inspired similar protests in other parts of the state," said nominator Johanna C. Valenzuela. "In late 2020, Sutania put her passion into action, organizing and hosting an incredibly popular webinar series named 'Virtual Fireside Chats: Beyond the Robe,' where diverse members of the judiciary shared their experience and knowledge in a virtual platform. Sutania truly sets the standard for a young lawyer; she serves her community selflessly while also succeeding in her profession. Our Bar is better for her service and leadership."

Teckla Henderson: "Superhero among us"

Teckla Henderson is no stranger to public service. As the director of executive affairs with the South Carolina Department of Public Safety and the former city prosecutor for the City of Columbia, she displays impressive work that benefits the



A REPORT TO MEMBERS OF
THE SOUTH CAROLINA BAR
YOUNG LAWYERS DIVISION

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community. However, she is also being honored for the lives and communities she has helped outside of the office and courtroom.

Her work has prepared her for the excellence she exhibits, Judge Clifton Newman said.

“Ten years ago, Teckla served admirably as my judicial law clerk. These clerkships helped nurture Teckla in the law and prepared her for the excellence she exhibited as city attorney and now demonstrates as director of executive affairs for the SC Department of Public Safety,” Newman said in his letter of support. “Noteworthy is the contribution Teckla is making to the Midlands community and the SC Bar through her leadership in YLD activities, including her stellar performance as the current Diversity Committee chair.”

Henderson’s work as chair of the SC Bar Diversity Committee increased engagement among members through her ability to address important topics and showcase the contributions of diverse members to the legal profession. In addition to serving on the YLD Diversity Committee, Color of Justice Committee, SC Bar Nominating Committee and the Continuing Legal Education Committee, Henderson also serves as co-chair of YLD Voices Against Violence committee.

“If there were a superhero among us, it is Teckla. Her contributions to the legal profession and community are endless,” nominator and 2018 YLD Young Lawyer of the Year Lyndey Bryant said in her nomination. “She has a seemingly infinite source of energy and enthusiasm. Her time and schedule are constantly in order and seem to have room for anyone and anything.”

She was also lauded for her exceptional efforts to help South Carolinians in need during a most difficult year through her work leading the Voices Against Violence Committee.

“During the pandemic, Ms. Henderson reached out to help ensure that the SC Bar was informed of the capacity limitations of our various shelters and supportive services,” said Patricia Ravenhorst, general counsel for the SC Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. “The committee’s efforts to have the entire SC Bar support our member program was such an uplifting moment during a challenging time.”



Wellness for the Young Lawyer

By La’Jessica Stringfellow

2020 was a doozy for all of us. We grappled with working during a pandemic, working from home for extended periods of time, and practicing law virtually. As we segue back into working in the office, it is essential that young lawyers manage their stress appropriately. As the new season gets underway, it is essential that young lawyers manage their stress appropriately. Whether it is stress caused by the practice of law or stress induced by the never-ending pandemic, every young lawyer should have healthy mechanisms to combat stress. Here are seven ways you can practice wellness in your life.

1. **Exercise** – Make sure to get at least 30 minutes of exercise in at least four to five times a week. While exercising, try not to think about your to-do list or the work that needs to be completed for the day.
2. **Meditate** – Devote at least 10 minutes a day to refocus your focus on positive reinforcements.
3. **Catch up with friends and family** – One of the hardest challenges of the pandemic has been the isolation. As young lawyers, most of us are accustomed to social events and in-person court time. Don’t forget to check-in and reconnect with your family and friends. Even while social distancing, you can use zoom and other creative ways to stay connected with those closest to you.
4. **Read for pleasure** – As lawyers, we spend an inordinate amount of time reading. We read case law, we read statutes, and legal documents on a daily basis. Take time to read for fun and escape into your favorite fiction novel.
5. **Find a hobby** – Now is the perfect time to try that new hobby you’ve been thinking about or learn a new skillset.
6. **Counseling** – South Carolina Lawyers Helping Lawyers is an invaluable resource to the SC Bar community. If you or someone you know needs to speak with someone on how to manage stress or even your work/life balance, do not hesitate to reach out. As a SC Bar member, you receive up to **five free counselling sessions** per year. Call 1-855-321-4384, 24 hours a day/seven days a week to be referred to a counselor in your area.
7. **Practice self-care** – Make sure to practice self-care! Self-care can be any of the items listed above. Self-care can also include pampering yourself, unplugging from social media, or enjoying your favorite pastime.

Tips for Staying Organized + Connecting in 2021



As a newly admitted or “young” lawyer are you overwhelmed with your case load and the amount of work you have to do?

As a young lawyer myself with an urge to remain as organized as possible, at all times, I would love to share some key tips. The first key to organization as a young associate is to utilize a calendar. Maybe even multiple calendars! No one ever wants to miss a deadline, therefore it is imperative to utilize your calendar to make sure you know when assignments are due, when documents need to be filed, when you need to be in court for a hearing, and most importantly when the statute of limitations for cases are drawing near. You can utilize the calendar on your work email, your phone calendar, and or a desk calendar. I personally use all three to make sure I have multiple reminders, including reminders to follow up with opposing counsel regarding upcoming meetings and deadlines. Organization has become even more important during this time of us all attempting to maneuver and adjust during the pandemic. For example, the South Carolina Supreme Court has issued orders regarding new deadlines that have altered the normal time frames allotted for the litigation process. Thus, it is important to use calendars to ensure that you are not only keeping up with the aforementioned deadlines but also any new deadlines or extensions granted due to the pandemic.

Furthermore, time management is very important. Daily, take the time to create a “to-do” list to map out what tasks need to be completed. My advice is to tackle the toughest assignment first to get it out of the way and relieve yourself of any stress. Tackling the

toughest assignment first frees your mind for the remainder of the day for the other tasks you need to complete. You have to prioritize! For example, organize your tasks by whether or not they have a due date. No due date means that the assignments can be completed at a later time. Also, be sure to limit your distractions. Not all calls are urgent. Be sure to designate which calls require your attention immediately. Utilize your law clerk and/or paralegal to screen the calls and only interrupt you when there are urgent issues that need to be addressed.

Overall, staying organized as a young lawyer can be important to your success and quality of work. Hopefully the above tips and practical to-dos lead you towards a more organized, enthused, and joyful practice of law.

- **Victoria L. Hurse**



My suggestion for young lawyers for a successful 2021 is to set realistic and achievable personal and professional goals that you can track throughout the year. As an example, I recommend that you make it a point to read the monthly or quarterly magazine or journal publications you receive in the mail, such as the SC Young Lawyer, the ABA Journal, and SC Lawyer (just to name a few). Thus, if you are reading this, congratulations! Every time I pick up one of these publications, I either learn something new or get a much-needed refresher. This is especially true if you subscribe to any publications relevant to your area of practice.

Another goal you can add to your list is not only joining, but actively participating in one or two organizations or committees this year. For example, you can volunteer to serve

on a committee for the Young Lawyers Division or your local bar association. In addition to filling a need, you will be meeting and networking with great colleagues.

In addition, if you are working from home and do not have a home office, I would suggest that you designate a space in your home for work and only do work in that space during your normal working hours. When you are not working, try not to be in that workspace. This helps keep some semblance of boundaries between your personal and professional lives.

Lastly, I would encourage you to pick up the phone more often when needing to discuss an issue or idea with opposing counsel, co-counsel or your clients. Even if it is easier to send a quick email, I would still suggest picking up the phone when possible. Often times walking through the issue/idea over the phone will help better serve you and your client and may develop a better relationship. You can always follow up the call with an email if something needs to be reduced to writing.

- **Jeff Hopkins**

President Awards

Katherine A. Orville,

U.S. Attorney's Office, Charleston

Teckla S. Henderson,

S.C. Department of Public Safety,
Blythewood

Jeffrey K. Gurney,

Nelson Mullins Riley &
Scarborough, LLP, Greenville

Blair E. Streitenberger,

Lowcountry Legal Solutions, LLC,
Beaufort

Mary Catherine Harbin,

Harbin & Burnett, LLP, Anderson

Paul “Mike” Burch,

Sixth Circuit Solicitor's Office, Pageland

Chelsea R. Rikard,

A Business Law Firm, Spartanburg

Gregory R. Steele,

Greg Steele Law, LLC, Anderson

Sauna Gibson,

Richardson Plowden & Robinson, PA,
Myrtle Beach

Keys to a Productive 2021



By Vordman Carlisle
Traywick, III

Marketing, business development, and professional development have certainly taken on a different form in the pandemic. In some instances, they have fallen by the wayside altogether. But while most of us have some level of Zoom fatigue, we cannot miss out on the opportunity to continue improving our craft. With that in mind, below are some tips for growing professionally as well as creating, cultivating, and maintaining a book of business in the age of COVID-19.

First, **write something**. Publishing an article, or even a blogpost, yields a host of tangible benefits. For one thing, you will learn a great deal more about a specific area of the law. This could be an area in which you currently practice or one in which you would like to practice. More importantly, though, publishing allows you to showcase that knowledge to clients, lawyers, and judges. The *SC Young Lawyer* newsletter, *SC Lawyer*, defense or plaintiffs' bar publications, and regional magazines—just to name a few—are always looking for content. Publishing in one of these will only help to elevate your profile. Or simply write a blogpost on a timely topic and then share that information with existing clients and prospective clients. Either way, publishing content is a wise use of time and resources in this predominately virtual environment.

Second, on a related note, take the

Stars of the Quarter

Cherlyn Borjes

Zachary Fry

Caitlin Lee

Victoria Hurse

Olivia Hassler



opportunity to **remind people of your practice areas**. Although social media may not be for everyone, it is somewhat of a necessary evil these days. That said, be strategic in selecting certain platforms. At least from my experience, Facebook tends to focus more on social activities and—for some of the more opinionated folks—politics. You probably won't get too much bang for your buck there. Twitter and LinkedIn, on the other hand, offer great stages to showcase your talent and professional accomplishments, and they create space to interact with other lawyers in your practice area. Also, consider whether Instagram can help you softly reach potential clients. I've seen lawyers effectively use that platform too. And, of course, just pick up the phone and call referral contacts, or potential referral sources, and make sure you maintain those relationships.

Third, attend as many relevant webinars and virtual CLEs as you can afford—both financially and from a time standpoint—to perfect your craft. If business is a little slower than usual, spend the extra time learning more about your practice area. Further, when you attend these events, let people know how great and informative they were. Or better yet, do some homework on what legal issues may begin to surface once the pandemic recedes. This will give you an upper hand when trying to get clients in the door.

Last, but certainly not least, put out the **best possible work product**. I've always felt that the most effective way for lawyers to market themselves is to do excellent work. That sounds obvious and perhaps unoriginal, but it's true.

After all, building a good reputation is everything in the practice of law. When people see the attention to detail you dedicate to briefing and arguing issues, for example, they are more likely to entrust you with handling their problems. So spend more time perfecting your writing, take stock of whether your standard language in agreements could use updating, and continue to sharpen your knowledge of the rules. And always bring your "A game," even when it may seem tougher in this unusual environment.

With vaccinations ramping up, we are starting to see a glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel. But it is going to take time for things to return to normalcy. While we are still operating in a virtual environment, we need to take advantage of the opportunities available to grow professionally and better serve our clients. Hopefully, these simple tips will give you a good start.

Lisle Traywick is an attorney at Robinson Gray Stepp & Laffitte, LLC in Columbia, South Carolina, where he focuses his practice on appellate advocacy, civil litigation, election law, and government defense.

Get Involved

Your committee sign up brochure has been mailed. Make sure to sign up today and get involved in the new Bar year. Mail in your card or visit www.sctbar.org/yld to sign up and learn more.

YLD Pro Bono Spotlight



By Elizabeth Crane

During the YLD's inaugural pro bono competition, SC young lawyers reported a total of 1,351.85 hours of pro bono service in 2020. **Laura Musselman** (200.1 hours), of K&L Gates, and **Amber Hendrick** (198.7 hours), of Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough, not only led the competition but also made a profound impact on our community through their work and serve as inspiration for other young lawyers.



Musselman jumped into pro bono work as soon as she entered the legal profession, volunteering for the University of Virginia School of Law's migrant farmworker project. After moving to South Carolina, she sought other ways to serve. Last year, Musselman arranged for attorneys in her firm's Charleston office to support the Election Protection hotline during the firm's Global Day of Service, and, separately represented a woman in connection to her late husband's estate, a case referred by Charleston Pro Bono Legal Services. She enjoys pro bono work for the opportunity it provides to experience other practice areas, stating, "[i]t's a good reminder of the breadth of legal needs in the community."

Hendrick also began volunteering at an early age, explaining that her family and faith instilled in her a deep personal desire to help others. Hendrick is most passionate about work related to criminal justice.

By working within her firm's parole program, she has, among other achievements, successfully appealed

a denial of parole and worked with others in her firm to prepare an amicus brief in a case before the South Carolina Supreme Court addressing the unconstitutionality of lifetime sex offender registration. Hendrick explains that in each of the cases she worked on, no matter the difficulty or time commitment, she was glad to be able to make a difference and provide her clients relief in some aspect of their life. She has found that "sometimes people just want someone to listen to their stories and to feel like they have someone in their corner to advocate for them."

Both Hendrick and Musselman encourage young lawyers to consider the causes they are passionate about and find ways to use their legal expertise to offer support. Musselman suggests taking on smaller assignments to get a feel for the type of work you enjoy before committing to a larger case. Hendrick's recommendation is similar: start by volunteering with organizations seeking lawyers on a short-term or one-time basis. Even if an opportunity is outside of your primary practice area, organizations may offer training or support from their in-house staff and counsel.



"There are ways for you to make a difference with your pro bono work regardless of how many years you have practiced," states Musselman. "It is immensely rewarding to help out clients who would otherwise not have access to legal services and would have to brave the legal system alone."

The YLD Pro Bono Committee is always looking for pro bono opportunities for young lawyers. Please reach out to us for more information on how you can get involved.

What's Been Happening?

The YLD held its Leadership Retreat for 2021-22 on May 14 and 15 in Greenville. The event featured presentations by Judge Konduros, Judge Simmons, Judge Verdin, Judge Sprouse, Judge Knie, SC Bar President Mary Sharp and Executive Director David M. Ross.

Lyndey Bryant led a Pro Bono hour where young lawyers answered legal questions from people across the state via SC Free Legal Answers. Teckla Henderson organized a donation drive for victims of domestic violence. Leslie McIntosh organized a yoga wellness hour. The Young Lawyer of the Year awards and other service awards were presented.





South Carolina Bar

Young Lawyers Division

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Letter from the President



Dear Young Lawyers:

2021 is shaping up to be a monumental year. In some ways, a return to normal. I am most excited about connecting in person with young lawyers across the state at business meetings, conferences and social events. I think the value of active involvement with

bar association work largely lies in the relationships built with colleagues. The fostering of those relationships was tough in 2020, and I am excited to put that in the rearview mirror.

In other ways, however, 2020 changed our professional lives forever. The pandemic showed us that much of the practice of law – depositions, hearings, meetings, can be done virtually. The YLD hosted a virtual event this past quarter discussing how to effectively represent your clients in a virtual mediation. The court system's use of telephonic conferences to resolve routine disputes, like discovery issues, may also be here to stay.

This is a significant, and hopefully positive, development for young lawyers. This should allow young lawyers to better balance work and life. The YLD has been focusing on wellness for a long time, and the virtual yoga series this year was a huge hit. It will also create new career opportunities for enterprising young lawyers beyond traditional geographic limitations.

2020 was also a time of great social upheaval. Conversations about the rule of law, criminal justice and voting rights occupied the non-COVID news headlines. I am proud of the YLD's work in 2020 having candid, difficult conversations on these issues. Lawyers are uniquely qualified for leadership on these issues. In fact, quite a few of our own were elected to state and local political office in November 2020. Others were actively involved in peaceful protests, voting assistance efforts, and much more.

As we navigate these sometimes scary, sometimes exciting new times, please do not hesitate to reach out to the YLD executive leadership team with questions or feedback. Good luck in 2021!

Perry MacLennan,
YLD President