

MY PERSONAL INTRODUCTION TO THE YLD

by ALEXANDER W. AVERY



TRICIA HALSTEAD



ANDREW ROTHENBERGER



NICO MAMONE



SHAUN PHILLIPS



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Despite having spent my formative years in Orange County, I was new to the legal community and my first OCBA event in 2015 felt like freshmen orientation all over again—part excitement, part terror. But I *knew* that I had to get involved because I wanted mobility in the job market and because the director of career development at my law school told me that I had to. (And I am very thankful that she did.) So, I attended every OCBA and affiliate bar event I had time and money for during the spring of 2016. During some events, as a brand-new lawyer with nothing very interesting to say (e.g., “I summarized a deposition transcript today”), it was difficult to butt into conversations between lawyers who had already known each other for years. But the OCBA Young Lawyers Division (YLD) - this organization felt like home.



TERRI BUI



LUCIA VALENZUELA



COLTON ADDY



C. RYAN FISHER

At my first YLD event, I was delighted to find dozens of new lawyers who were aiming to make new friends. The YLD leaders made the rounds and introduced themselves to nearly every guest. I owe my YLD Chair position to Kelly Galligan, who encouraged me at that first event to join the Social Committee. By my second year of practice, I regularly ran into fellow YLD members at the courts and at greater OCBA events. In addition to making some of my closest friends in YLD, I found my current position as an associate at Brown Wegner LLP thanks to former YLD Education Chair Lily Li, a privacy and cybersecurity lawyer at Metaverse Law.

The Chair-Elect and the seven appointed Committee Chairs have been very active YLD members since being admitted to the Bar and/or moving to Orange County, and they feel similarly about their membership in the YLD—it is where they learned about the profession as it exists beyond the office and courtroom, where they made friends, and where they felt they belonged. Together, we very much hope that the YLD will be the same for today's new lawyers.

The 2020 YLD Committee Chairs

The appointed Chairs have always worked as a team, but this year, they have had to be especially flexible due to COVID-19. For their flexibility and willingness to take on tasks they had not signed up for, I am extraordinarily grateful. Each of them has been efficient, reliable, and truly owned their responsibilities.

My right hand and sounding board this year, Tricia Halstead, started on the YLD's softball team in early 2017 and quickly made the YLD calendar her own personal calendar. Tricia knew she wanted to be a prosecutor long before attending law school at the University of Illinois, and after a few years of practicing municipal law in Irvine, she accepted her dream job as a Deputy District Attorney. Despite that position being in Los Angeles, Tricia remains dedicated to the OCBA, where she made some of her best friends (me) in the YLD, and acts as the unofficial welcoming committee to newly-qualified lawyers.

Andrew Rothenberger, co-chair of the Health and Wellness Committee, is a fifth-year products liability litigator at Buchalter. A native Oregonian, Drew moved to Orange County to attend UC Irvine School of Law after five years in the U.S. Air Force, where he was a Mandarin Cryptologic Linguist and then spent three years training military as a

Field Service Engineer. He joined the Bar in 2015 to develop lifelong relationships with his contemporaries and to continue learning about the law. In addition to the YLD softball team and indoor soccer nights, it's possible that he has attended more YLD events than I have.

Health & Wellness Co-Chair Nico Mamone arrived in Orange County after accepting an offer as a trial attorney at Bentley & More LLP, where he focuses on personal injury and product liability. He joined the OCBA to broaden his legal knowledge and meet attorneys from other practice areas, and immediately became an integral member of the YLD's Health & Wellness Committee. Nico played on the softball team, played indoor soccer, organized Ducks and Angels outings, and has served as a YLD Chair for two years. He is also a member of OCT1A and CAOC.

Born and raised in Tustin, Affiliates & Sections Liaison Shaun Phillips always aimed to return to Orange County. However, after four years at UCLA and law school in Arizona, Shaun—like many YLD members—knew very few people in the OCBA. He first learned about the YLD from seeing the then-YLD chairs on the cover of this very magazine, and it became his “home” within the OCBA. From the YLD, Shaun developed strong friendships and became more involved in the OCBA. At Roberts|Jeandron, Shaun is a trial lawyer who takes great satisfaction in forcing defendants to take responsibility for personal injuries.

Terri Bui was a natural choice for Community Outreach Chair—I believe she has attended every YLD community service event since she was admitted to the Bar (as well as playing on the YLD softball team). Terri grew up in San Diego, graduated from UCSB, and first moved to Orange County to attend law school at Chapman. Terri joined the OCBA and the OCWLA to expand her professional circle, advance her career, and give back to her community, and the YLD has enabled her to do just that. During the pandemic, Terri has been organizing fundraising for local food banks. At Kahana & Feld, Terri litigates complex construction defect and real estate matters.

Before attending law school in San Diego, Diversity & Inclusion Chair Lucia Valenzuela had a successful career where she traveled nationwide as an outside sales representative in the telecommunications industry. Her natural business instincts translated to a successful practice at Hall & Company, where

she is the Senior Manager of Specialty Tax Consulting and advises clients on federal and state R&D tax credits. Lucy escaped Los Angeles for Orange County in 2018 in search of a tight-knit legal community and immediately joined the OCBA and OCWLA. Originally from Oregon, Lucy says: “the YLD has connected me with some of the most amazing humans that I now call friends.”

Colton Addy, Chair of the Business Development Committee, grew up in south county before spending nearly a decade in exile (San Diego), where he attended college and law school and worked in construction finance. Upon his return to Orange County, Colton felt like a newcomer and joined the OCBA and the YLD to meet like-minded and similarly driven young lawyers. He was quick to give back to the community by providing pro-bono services to P.I.C., joining the Business Development and Education Committees, and setting up last month's Virtual Mentorship Café. As an associate at Snell & Wilmer LLP, Colton focuses on real estate transactions and corporate governance.

Education Chair C. Ryan Fisher hails from Omaha, Nebraska, where he ran his own business. He always anticipated relocating to southern California, and after graduating from UC Irvine School of Law, he cannot imagine practicing anywhere except Orange County. Ryan owes his introduction to the Bar to partners at his first job, who emphasized the importance of networking in our legal community. Now, Ryan is a trial attorney at Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, LLP, where he focuses on white collar fraud, internal investigations, and health care litigation. He is excited to put together educational events and networking opportunities for YLD's members.

YLD: An Exploratory Division

As some of the Chairs prepare to age out from the YLD, we and OCBA President Scott Garner planned more events that would help YLD members explore what the greater OCBA has to offer. The YLD was always intended to be a pipeline program to the OCBA, and we aim to strengthen that mission by having joint events with any Section or Affiliate that will have us. Of course, those plans were necessarily backburnered in early March with the COVID-19 shelter-in-place orders.

Since quarantine:

- The YLD hosted Congressman Correa, who talked about his path from law school to Congress: