

Young Lawyers

BY JEFF CONNOR, ESQ., YOUNG LAWYERS CHAIR



BE THE ONE IN 2017

With the arrival of December, you have undoubtedly started to think optimistically about your plans for 2017 and what lies ahead for you in the coming year. That's right, it is time to start making those New Year's resolutions, and I have a challenge for all you Young Lawyers out there: one client, one attorney, one promise! Be part of the Access to Justice Commission's ONE Campaign!

The least time-consuming way to do that is to simply donate money to one of our local non-profit legal service providers such as Nevada Legal Services, Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada, Southern Nevada Senior Law Program, Volunteer Attorneys for Rural Nevadans and Washoe Legal Services. However, providing actual service through pro bono hours is much more fulfilling and rewarding than simply providing financial support to our legal

service providers. So, while I am not discouraging you from providing said financial support to those organizations, I really encourage you to find a way to individually serve your community while earning pro bono hours under Rule 6.1 of the Nevada Rules of Professional Conduct.

There are so many opportunities for attorneys to reach out to underserved areas of our communities. Volunteer at a self-help clinic/ask-a-lawyer program with a legal service provider. Take a case through the Nevada Supreme Court's pro bono program, which is also a great opportunity to obtain some incredible professional experience, because you are guaranteed an opportunity to argue before the Nevada Supreme Court. Or come volunteer at one of the Young Lawyers Section pro bono projects, like Serving Seniors or Project Salute.

And if meeting with clients to provide legal services is too far out of your comfort zone, there are also many opportunities to engage in public outreach through Law Related Education programs. Engaging our public to better inform them of how the legal system works is one of our most important obligations as attorneys. Participating in the Young Lawyers Section's Goldilocks program is a great way for young lawyers to reach out to children in our community and help them learn about our court system. And, as someone that has volunteered as a coach for the Nevada Supreme Court's

Law Day Live moot court arguments in prior years, I know first-hand that there are many other opportunities for young lawyers to engage high school students in our communities through programs like Mock Trial and We the People.

"Certainly, life as a lawyer is a bit more complex today than it was a century ago. The ever-increasing pressures of the legal marketplace, the need to bill hours, to market to clients, and to attend to the bottom line, have made fulfilling the responsibilities of community service quite difficult. But public service marks the difference between a business and a profession. While a business can afford to focus solely on profits, a profession cannot. It must devote itself first to the community it is responsible to serve. I can imagine no greater duty than fulfilling this obligation. And I can imagine no greater pleasure."

– Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, *Professionalism*, 78 Or. L. Rev. 385, 391 (1999). **NL**