

MONDAY, JUNE 19, 2017

# DAILY REPORT

A SMART READ FOR SMART READERS

An ALM Publication

## New YLD President Urges More Pro Bono

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NICOLE LEET broke with tradition when she became President of the State Bar of Georgia Young Lawyers Division last weekend.

Leet, a partner with the civil defense firm Gray, Rust, St. Amand, Moffett & Brieske in Atlanta, was installed as the 71st president of the YLD during the bar's annual meeting at the Jekyll Island Convention Center. She immediately proposed abandoning the group's long tradition of organizing a black tie charity fundraiser—a well-attended event that brings in roughly \$30,000 a year for deserving groups such as Court Appointed Special Advocates or wounded veterans.



JOHN DISNEY/ALM

Nicole C. Leet challenged young lawyers to pledge 50 hours of pro bono service.

Instead of putting on tuxes, she suggested the bar's youth roll up their sleeves and go to work. For free.

“I am going to challenge all the young lawyers to pledge

50 hours of pro bono service,” Leet said in an interview Thursday. She plans to partner with the bar's Access to Justice Committee—including an initiative called Due Justice Do

50—to pair young lawyers with meaningful opportunities to do pro bono work.

The idea, she said, is to remove obstacles.

“Often, new lawyers feel they have to choose between a real job and pro bono service,” she said. “That shouldn’t be a choice. You should be able to do both.”

For example, one option that will be offered is the chance to answer questions online.

“You can log in and choose which ones to answer,” she said. “You can do that in five minutes in your pajamas. You never know when you might be giving someone peace of mind to sleep or starting them on the way to getting their problems resolved.”

The youth plan to kick off the program at their summer meeting in Austin, Texas.

Other new YLD officers include:

- President-Elect Rizza O’Connor, Toombs County Magistrate Court chief judge, Vidalia;
- Treasurer William Davis of Kitchens New Cleghorn, Atlanta;



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—Nicole Leet, President,  
State Bar of Georgia  
Young Lawyers Division

- Secretary Norbert “Bert” Hummel IV of Lewis Brisbois, Bisgaard & Smith, Atlanta;
- Newsletter Co-Editor ShaMiracle Johnson of the Law Office of James C. McLaughlin, Atlanta;
- Newsletter Co-Editor Heather Riggs of MindMeld Marketing, Atlanta; and

- Immediate Past President Jennifer C. Mock of the Mock Law Firm, Statesboro.

The group includes approximately 10,000 lawyers—all bar members who are 36 or younger or who have been admitted to their first bar no more than five years.

Leet said the pro bono initiative was well received by the elders—who see it as a way to address their own concerns about providing lawyers to those who might not be able to afford one or live in a rural county without lawyers.

“I’m hoping this will become a lifestyle change in their practice and their profession when they see that they can do it,” Leet said.

When all is said and done before the next year is over, there will be a party, she promised. “It’ll just be more low-key.”

And it won’t be black tie. A small circular logo with the letters 'DR' inside.