

WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

Washington Young Lawyers Committee

Washington Young Lawyers Committee Meeting | Virtual via Zoom

Monday, December 16, 2024, | 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

[Via Zoom](#) | Meeting ID: 873 7434 2637 | Passcode 096954 | Call In 888-788-0099

AGENDA:

- 1) **Welcome & Introductions; Approval of November Meeting Minutes** – Mason
- 2) **WSBA Updates** –Chelle, Jordan
 - a) BOG Meeting Updates
 - b) WSBA Updates
- 3) **Swag and Logo Discussion** – All
- 4) **Bar Exam Social Updates** – Chelle
- 5) **Project Team Updates and Regional Reports** – All
- 6) **WYLC Bylaw Amendments** – Mason
- 7) **New ideas for Next Meeting** – All
- 8) **Adjournment** – Mason

2024 - 2025 WYLC Meeting Schedule

November 16, 2024	Meeting: 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.	WSBA Office, Seattle Wa & Hybrid
December 16, 2024	Meeting: 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.	Virtual via Zoom
January 13, 2025	Meeting: 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.	Virtual via Zoom



WYLC Meeting Recap

November 16, 2024

General Updates

- **BOG Liaison Update:**
 - Bar dues to increase by \$10 in 2026 due to financial losses.
 - Efforts underway to create alternative pathways to licensure by 2027.
 - Amendments passed on WSBA Standards for Indigent Defense Services; funding sought for implementation.
 - WYLC members encouraged to attend annual meetings with law school deans.
- **Committee Membership:**
 - Two regional representative positions (Greater Spokane Region and North Central Region) are being finalized.
 - Olympia Region position remains open.

Events and Outreach

- **Summer Bar Exam Social Recap:**
 - The July event was the most attended in five years.
 - The February event will remain at Seven Seas Brewery; this venue was unanimously approved.
- **County Bar Holiday Parties:**
 - Members encouraged to attend local bar events.
 - Budget allocated for this; a roster for event attendance will be coordinated.

Projects and Initiatives

- **Public Service Leadership Award:**
 - Highest number of nominations in recent years.
 - Proposal to create a dedicated page for award winners to increase visibility.
- **STAR Council:**
 - Planning for the second annual STAR Summit is underway.
 - Discussion about revising grant criteria to make them more inclusive.

- **CLE Events:**
 - Financial Focus CLE scheduled for September 2025.
 - Legal Lunchbox CLE slotted for July 2025, with planning to begin in May.

Policy and Administrative Discussions

- **Bylaw Amendments:**
 - Discussion to update the definition of "young lawyer" to include legal-adjacent professionals.
 - Additional proposals to address quorum challenges and unexcused absences.
- **Swag and Branding:**
 - Committee approved \$3,000 for swag, including branded items like hoodies and wireless chargers.
- **Law School Engagement:**
 - Suggested creation of a law student position on the committee.
 - Planned campus visits to University of Washington, Seattle University, and Gonzaga University.

Affirmative and/or Potential Action Items

1. **Committee Recruitment:**
 - Fill the Olympia Region representative position.
2. **Upcoming Events:**
 - Coordinate attendance for county bar holiday parties via a roster.
 - Plan February's Post-Bar Social and summer STAR Summit.
3. **Policy Updates:**
 - Draft bylaw revisions and present to the Board of Governors in July 2025.
4. **Outreach Improvements:**
 - Create a dedicated page for Public Service Leadership Award winners.
 - Enhance law student engagement by inviting representatives to WYLC meetings.
5. **CLE Development:**
 - Begin topic brainstorming for Legal Lunchbox CLE and Financial Focus CLE.
6. **Swag Orders:**
 - Finalize designs and proceed with bulk orders for committee branding.
7. **Engagement Analysis:**
 - Use demographic data to improve outreach to new and young lawyers.

WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

Washington Young Lawyers Committee

**Washington Young Lawyers Committee Meeting I Hybrid
WSBA Office & Zoom
Saturday, November 16, 2024, | 10:03 a.m. – 1:35 p.m.
Meeting Minutes**

WYLC Members Present In-Person or Phone: Mason Ji, Aaron Haynes, Alexander Reaganson, Bethany Nolan, Chawisa Laicharoenwat, Matthew Rommelmann, Stephan Yhann, Steven Brown, Thomas Garvey, Janta Steele, Makenzie Spinks, Mackenzie Lloyd

WYLC Members Absent: Adin Johnson (unexcused), Sydney Sherman (unexcused), Michelle Mendoza (excused)

Board of Governors Liaisons: Jordan Couch (departed 10:38 a.m.)

WSBA Staff: Chelle Gegax – WSBA Member Services and Engagement Specialist, Vanessa Sweeney – WSBA Member Services and Engagement Program Coordinator

Welcome & Introductions; Approval of April & August Special Meeting Minutes – Mason

WYLC Chair, Mason Ji, opened the meeting at 10:13 a.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance, both remote and in-person. Introductions were made by all in attendance. On motion by WYLC Member Alexander Reaganson, seconded by WYLC Member Aaron Haynes, the WYLC unanimously (10-0-0) to approve both the April WYLC meeting minutes and August Special Meeting minutes.

WSBA Updates – Chelle, Jordan

BOG Meeting Updates

WYLC Board of Governor Liaison Jordan Couch provided recent BOG updates.

Ongoing: The Board voted to raise the 2026 bar dues by \$10 due to projected financial losses for this year and beyond. There are efforts to create additional pathways to licensure, with the goal of people have pathways available to them by 2027. Jordan stated there is less than a year to get the work done, and to let him know if anyone wants to get involved, the subcommittee will meet in January.

Public defense caseloads: the BOG passed amendments to the WSBA Standards for Indigent Defense Services Re Family Defense Services and Appellate Caseloads because they're too high. There is an effort to get it funded as it is currently an unfunded mandate.

Annual meeting with law school deans: the BOG is looking for ways to assist law schools, there were ideas put forth from Seattle University Law School Dean Anthony Varona and Jordan hopes to gain more insight around these. Jordan also raised the idea of allowing unaccredited law students to practice, noting challenges with ABA accreditation and online programs, which can be limiting to

graduates. However, law school deans are opposed. Additionally, alternative passages to licensure were discussed, with only Seattle University prepared to move forward with this. Jordan recommended at least one WYLC member to attend this annual meeting and can help facilitate this in the future.

Court rules: Jordan shared that there is a renewed effort for court rules. With e-filing, local court rules stop being a thing. Mason asked if the WYLC can get involved. Jordan replied, yes. WYLC Member Stephan Yhann shared that Yakima County has adopted this and it's been a game changer.

Lastly, Jordan noted an upcoming proposal pertaining to extending the hardship exemption for bar dues, which could be impactful for young lawyers. Stephan asked whether the intent would be city-specific, since, for example, Yakima, salaries and cost of living are different. Jordan confirmed that it would be the same rate across the state, which is where the 2.7% flat rate comes from. Stephan noted this will reduce barriers for lawyers serving rural communities. Alex asked whether attorneys employed by QLSPs would qualify. Jordan indicated that eligibility depends solely on meeting the income requirement, regardless of employment type.

Jordan stated to please reach out to him with any questions related to the BOG.

Jordan departed meeting at 10:38 a.m.

WYLC Position Update: Vacant position moving into FY25.

WSBA Member Services and Engagement Specialist Chelle Gegax, shared an update on WYLC positions as we head into FY25. The Greater Spokane Region representative position nomination for Hanna Harrison is being finalized with the nominations committee, as well as the North Central Region representative position for Michelle Hesse. The Olympia Region representative is the remaining open position.

WYLC Orientation – Chelle

WYLC Orientation presentation. The slide deck can be found in meeting materials.

Break for lunch/ return from lunch 12:21 p.m.

Summer Bar Exam Social Updates – Chelle, Stephan

Chelle shared a recap from the successful summer bar social that was held in July in partnership with the King County Bar Association and the Tacoma Bar Association at Seven Seas Brewery in Tacoma. Approximately 100 exam takers attended which made it the highest attended social within the past 5 years. Looking ahead, there is interest to host another social event after February's Bar Exam, which will again take place in Tacoma at the convention center. One suggestion for the next event is to consider utilizing a room within the convention center rather than an offsite location like

the brewery. The committee discussed whether to host a February event at Seven Seas Brewery or another location. Mason questioned why some might oppose the brewery, noting there is mixed feedback: while some appreciate leaving the exam building, others, including feedback from KCBA, focused on the inconvenience for attendees traveling from across the state having to make their way to another venue. Event details were shared via the admissions portal, WSBA website, email, listservs, and announced at the end of the exam. Mason suggested sticking to the previous playbooks, as February's exam is smaller, and if successful, the same approach could be repeated in July. Chelle noted that the space was \$300 to reserve, and catering was approximately \$1000. The consensus is to host the event at Seven Seas Brewery again. Alex moved to approve Seven Seas Brewery as next Post-Bar Social venue. Motion passed unanimously.

Project Team Presentation and Regional Reports – All

Public Service Leadership Award – Alex

WYLC Member, Alexander Reaganson provided an update on the FY24 Public Service Leadership Awards, which saw the highest number of nominations in recent rounds with a total of nine nominations, and four awardees. The winner profiles are featured in the Bar News. Action items for award winners include encouragement to use their CLE credit. Alex shared the effective outreach methods included leveraging public service side listservs such as family law and economic support, which Alex recommends continuing for future nominations. Chelle noted that currently, winners are only recognized on the Bar News website. Chelle would like to boost winner recognition by creating a dedicated page, similar to the Apex Award website, which showcases profiles of each winner. If anyone would like to get involved in the PSLA, reach out to Alex or Mason.

STAR Committee Updates – Chelle

Chelle shared the update that the STAR Committee has transitioned to the STAR Council, the change is to allow a position to be open for someone outside of Washington. The Council is kicking off planning for the second annual STAR Summit, tentatively scheduled for the first or last weekend in June at either Central Washington University or Heritage University. Former STAR Committee Gonzaga representative Laurie Powers, who was heavily involved during her time at Gonzaga, has left, but a virtual job fair she organized at Gonzaga will be held again in March. Updates from their next meeting on the November 27th to come. Stephen asked about law student grants, Chelle noted that four \$5,000 grants were awarded, though some applicants did not qualify. Chelle shared plans to revise the criteria and application materials to make them more inclusive and definitive. The STAR Council is seeking a WYLC representative to sit in on STAR Council meetings – WYLC Member Mackenzie Lloyd has expressed interest in participating. Chelle will follow up.

Recruitment and Outreach – Zach

Previously, recruitment and outreach updates have been provided by former WYLC Member Zach Davison. Moving forward, Stephan and WYLC Member Bethany Nolan will take this on together.

Financial Focus CLE - Chawisa

WYLC Member Chawisa Laicharoenwat provided an update on the Financial Focus CLE held in September, which attracted a few hundred participants, including 129 non-new lawyers. The event was free for new lawyers. Chawisa will chair the next Financial Focus CLE in 2025, scheduled for September, WYLC Member Makenzie Spinks volunteered to work with Chawisa on this. Topic brainstorming is starting now, but the biggest challenge is securing volunteer speakers, as many prefer paid opportunities. Mason shared that he may have a potential speaker willing to volunteer.

WYLC Bylaw Amendments – Mason

Mason shared an update on the WYLC bylaw amendment, focusing on the definition of ‘young lawyer’ being updated. Looking to revise the definition to be more inclusive, aiming to include a broader range of legal-adjacent professionals and expand its reach. Mason plans to gather feedback and circulate a draft with the plan to present the updated definition to the BOG at their meeting on July 17-18. Mason will reach out to Bethany who volunteered to participate, and Stephan expressed he is happy to help. There is a copy in the meeting minutes.

Potential CLE Collaborations – Chelle

Trial Advocacy Program

Legal Lunchbox

Professional Development CLE

Chelle presented an update on TAP and Legal Lunchbox. There were potential speakers from Jordan from Ellensburg, wanted to do CLE on client interactions. The Trial Advocacy Program (TAP) has struggled recruiting for chairs. The position offers 17 CLE credits; however the biggest challenge is the commitment. Alex noted that he and WYLC member Adin Johnson plan to be participants, and Stephen added he is interested, too. The chair is identified for this year, but more participants are needed as there will three courtrooms running, there are remote jury opportunities available, too. Let Chelle know if you are interested in participating.

Chelle shared Legal Lunchbox is slotted for July, with planning beginning in May. Chelle requested committee members start brainstorming topics for new and young lawyers. There is a need for a volunteer to lead the effort. Benefits to this role include obtaining all CLE requirements completed in one year, and they’re free. Mason volunteered to lead this effort. Chelle added a note about the MentorLink Mixers, indicating we are flexible with topics and to please reach out if you have ideas.

WYLC Outgoing Member Awards – Aaron

WYLC Member, Aaron Haynes shared that the awards for the outgoing committee chairs were mailed.

New Ideas for Next Meeting – All

Bethany posed a question; do we want to make it easier to make quorum? Chelle confirmed that quorum is defined as half of the committee members plus one. As the year goes on, it appears to become difficult to reach quorum consistently. It was considered to add a contingency for limited meetings, but is this a bylaw change or is it a committee decision? Chelle clarified that quorum is necessary for WSBA related topics, but informal meetings among committee members do not require quorum. The bylaws state that quorum is required for WSBA related decisions.

The discussion continued with addressing contingency planning. Unexcused and excused absences could be taken into consideration, with the possibility of two or more unexcused absences risking removal from the committee. Chelle remarked that this has not been enforced in the past due to reduced committee size. Stephan suggested a bylaws meeting to cover possibilities around at-large positions and proxy contingencies. Mason suggested consolidating requests to update bylaws for BOG review in July, and Alex volunteered to join a bylaws committee.

WYLC Swag: Brainstorm of items for giveaways and/or committee members include: hoodie or sweatshirt for committee members, baseball hats, hand sanitizer, bottle openers, lip balm, stickers, branded name tags with magnet backing, wireless chargers, phone banks. Chelle advised it will be best to do one large order soon to last for the entire year. Chelle will obtain some mockups, and then present for voting and approval at a later date over email. Bethany moved to cap swag spend at \$3000. Motion passed unanimously. Aaron moved to have WSBA design services produce logo design options. Motion passed unanimously.

FY25 meeting dates: Chelle will gather responses on individual availability from the chat and will send out meeting information based on schedules.

County bar holiday parties: Stephan shared that county bars are hosting holiday parties, which is a good opportunity for committee members to attend bar events. Chelle confirmed that there is a budget line item for this and requested to inform her of events and associated costs. Alex noted that this aligns with volunteer responsibilities. Stephan suggested creating a roster to identify who is attending which events, Chelle recommended using the WYLC listserv to coordinate. Chelle also offered to create a sign-up roster to put on the WYLC website for reference. Stephan will connect with Chelle on next steps.

Law school representation and engagement: Alex noted that over the past couple of years, the importance of including law students in panels and making sure their voices are heard, naming Pathways to Licensure as an example. Alex continued that it would be good to explore collaboration efforts with the WYLC. Chelle stated that each law school has a representative and that WSBA has been working to strengthen these relationships. Chelle continued that UW and Seattle University would like to find an opportunity for a campus visit between now and the end of year to talk about what WSBA has to offer, and that it would be great for a WYLC member to be involved. Alex mentioned each law school had a representative, and the DEI council had a separate law student representative, encompassing all law student volunteers would be what he wants to look at. Mason noted that KCBA has a representative for each. The discussion turned to the possibility of creating a law student position on the committee, which may require a change to the bylaws. The discussion continued around law student engagement and visits to the University of Washington, Seattle University, and Gonzaga University law schools. Mason suggested forming a committee and Chelle agreed this could be a good idea. There was a motion to table the discussion until the next WYLC

meeting. Motion passed unanimously. 'Law student involvement' will be added to the agenda for the next meeting. Everyone agreed to invite law student representatives, including DEI reps, to the next WYLC meeting. Chelle will gather a list of representatives for all existing committees and follow up, along with obtaining demographic information for new and young lawyers.

Adjournment – Mason

Mason adjourned the meeting at 1:35 p.m.

WSBA FONTS + GEORGE
OPTIONS FOR WYLC

A



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COMMITTEE

B



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C



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D



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