

# ALA Region 2 Newsletter



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*Association of Legal Administrators, Region 2*

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## Region 2 Chapters in Action

### Jacksonville Chapter, Business Partner Event

On May 18, 2010, the Jacksonville Chapter of the Legal Administrators Association held its annual Business Partner Event. A good time was had by all who attend this event. Many new faces including business partners and members attended. The event was held at the St. Joe Building which overlooks the St. John's River in Jacksonville, Florida.

Approximately twelve Business Partners attended this event. It is an opportunity for the vendors to show their particular business venues—such as courier service, publishing, stationery, business equipment and temporary office help, etc. A tradition was started last year where

type of bingo game is played regarding the business partners. Each member must visit each table of the vendor but must know something of the vendor in order for the vendor to sign off on their card. This is an ice breaker for the members to learn and interact with each vendor. It is quite popular between the vendors and the members.

Our Business Partner event is where we award our scholarships to Regional and National. This year, unfortunately, we were not able to award a scholarship from our sponsors. However, we did win a scholarship from ALA at the National Conference and this was awarded on this special evening. The lucky winner will be traveling to Miami for the Regional Conference. Several other gift certificates

were awarded to our members, which were donated by our generous sponsors. They included a gift certificates to the Bass Pro Shop, Barnes & Noble, Home Depot, Cracker Barrel, Longhorn, Star Buck, Best Buy and a Peterbrooke gift basket (these are really good chocolates for those of you not familiar with Peterbrooke) and a gift certificate from Biscotti's donated by Today's Office Professionals and a gift certificate from Ruth Chris donated by Specialty Freight.

As I mentioned, anyone who attended had a great time by eating shrimp, enjoying cocktails and good friendship with friends and business partners. We all can't wait until next year since we had such as good time!

## Region 2 Members Pass Certified Legal Manager (CLM)<sup>SM</sup> Exam

**Congratulations are in order for the following Region 2 members who earned the Certified Legal Manager (CLM)<sup>SM</sup> designation upon passing the exam in May:**

**Robert Cluxton, CLM  
West Palm Beach, Florida**

**Alice Robison, CLM  
Jacksonville, Florida**

**Congratulations to both on their extraordinary achievement!**

**To learn about the CLM program, visit [www.alanet.org/clm](http://www.alanet.org/clm).**

Leading through Adversity – Member Profile for Melissa McCray-Dukes

Melissa McCray-Dukes is a leader whose persistence, faith and acceptance has and continues to inspire not just her Knoxville ALA members but her family, friends and co-workers alike. Three years ago at age 39 Melissa was diagnosed with breast cancer. From the start she committed to not let this terrible disease define who she is or how she lives her life-- a life full of activity and people and all the challenges that come with balancing a career while raising a family. Melissa serves as the Marketing Director for Lewis King, a 60 attorney law firm, where she has worked since graduation from the University of Tennessee.



Basketball teams.

But Melissa's gifts are not just about persistence, drive and hard work. Faith and acceptance are critical to understanding why she is able to inspire those she touches. Her faith extends beyond her deeply religious commitment to her church to a core belief that people are good and if you treat them with respect and care they will respond.

On the home front Melissa juggles her responsibilities as the wife of a pastor with the challenges of training and guiding two wonderful teenagers. As if her career and family commitments were not enough, Melissa finds time to give back to the community through her active participation in several organizations, including serving as the president in 2009 of the Knoxville Chapter of the ALA. Early in her

presidency Melissa received a second diagnosis that the breast cancer that had been treated and believed to be in remission had spread to her lungs and brain. This news of course meant new treatments, more disgusting medication and drips, but Melissa's persistence to not letting this disease control her life allowed her to fulfill her year as our chapter president, not alone but with the help of her fellow Directors. Leading others through team work is nothing new for Melissa. She is, after all, the former captain of two University of Tennessee Lady Vols National Championship

And her experience is they do. But as important as persistence and faith are, they are not the whole story. You see, Melissa accepts that persistence in pursuit of good, coupled with faith in others, are values that are critical to success. In addition to the above, Melissa maintains an active role in the following:

- Knoxville Tourism & Sports Corporation Board - Vice Chair
- Knoxville Hall of Fame (SMI Board) - Chair
- University of Tennessee Women's Athletics - Hall of Fame Board Member

**SOUTH CAROLINA CHAPTER NEWS**

The South Carolina Chapter installed its new board members on April 14, 2010, as follows:

- President Jane Todd
- President-Elect Clara Godshall
- Treasurer Heather Niemi
- Secretary Julie Tuzzolino

Directors-At-Large:

- Brenda Stewart,
- Rhonda Amick and
- Larry Mack

Chapter members are looking forward to the June 10 meeting, "Conference in Review," when attendees from the annual meeting share their favorite topics from the

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conference.

The annual Vendor Fair, along with an educational session, will be held on August 19, 2010, at the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center.

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Sunday School Teacher  
(Adult Class)

President/Director of  
Women's Department  
(New Life West Church  
and Faith Temple  
Church)

Choir Director (New Life  
West Church and Faith  
Temple Church)

Youth Director (New Life  
West Church)

Melissa provides a living example to faith, commitment and excellence in the face of adversity. The Knoxville Chapter is proud to have Melissa in our leadership team and to count her as a friend and peer. She continues to be an inspiration to us all.

*This article was written and adapted by a combination of Melissa's CFO, Bill Kunkel, and the Board of the Knoxville Chapter*

**NEWS FROM FLORIDA**

The Florida Bar's Law Office Management Assistance Service was established in 1979, making the program one of the oldest member services programs among state bars. The LOMAS Advisory Board (LAB), comprised of bar members and a certain number of public members, is the standing bar committee that offers LOMAS advice and feedback so that the program's services continue to meet the needs of Florida's 90,000 bar members. So, I was very excited to learn that the Florida Bar President Elect appointed ALA members to all four of the public-at-large seats on the LOMAS Advisory Board. They will serve a two-year term beginning July 1, 2010. These ALA members are:



Farrell Buzbee, Administrator for the Bush Ross law firm in Tampa, FL



Patricia M. Chin, CLM Administrator/Controller for the Pennington, Moore, Wilkinson, Bell & Dunbar, P.A. law firm in Tallahassee, FL;



Richard G. (Dick) Howard, Executive Director for the Bryant Miller Olive law firm in Tallahassee, FL; and



Todd E. Rains, Administrator for the Sarasota office of Shumaker Loop & Kendrick, LLP.

*This article was submitted by Judith D. Equels Director, The Florida Bar's Law Office Management Assistance Service (LOMAS)*

**ALA CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

**June 2010**

**16 Webinar—The Keys to Develop and Implement the Firm's Dreaded Strategic Plan**

**14-16 Essential Competencies for Legal Administrators, Grand Hyatt, Denver, CO**

**25-27 Chapter Leadership Institute, Caesars Palace, Las Vegas, NV**

**July 2010**

**21 Webinar—Legal Risks to Assessing Candidates by Social Networking Sites**

**August 2010**

**13-14 ALA Board of Directors Meeting, Marriott Portland Downtown Waterfront, Portland OR**

**18 Webinar—Law Firm Profitability Enhancement**

**September 2010**

**15 Webinar—Electronic Records Management: How to Manage your ESI in the 21st Century**

**15 ALA Large Firm Administrators Retreat, Barton Creek Resort & Spa, Austin TX**



## Richmond Chapter

The Richmond Chapter has been working harder than ever to grow our Chapter while reaching several milestones in Chapter history. Michael Keatts, Sherri Sledd, Ann Caudle, Jennifer Doyle and Judy Tiller worked tirelessly on Chapter management over the past year and were rewarded in May when the Chapter achieved Gold Level status in the Presidents' Award of Excellence! Michael Keatts, Sherri Sledd, Ann Caudle, Don Osborne, Laura Osborne, and Bob Rideout attended the Annual Conference in Boston to accept the award. While at the conference, the chapter won a Regional scholarship to the Region 2 conference in Miami in October.

The Richmond and Hampton Roads Chapters co-hosted an Administrators' Educational Retreat at the Tides Inn Resort in Irvington, Virginia that was attended by 40 legal administrators and over 40

business partners from the Richmond and Tidewater areas. Barron K. Henley, Esq., an attorney and "legal technologist" with Affinity Group Consulting, was one of the featured speakers.

More than 25 law firms from our Chapter participated in the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Virginia Legal Food Frenzy – a statewide food drive conducted by members of the legal community who joined forces to raise 1.7 million pounds of food for Virginia's hungry. The following members and their law firms won awards for their efforts in the food drive: Sherri Sledd with Parcell and Webb, PC placed second and Diana White and Jill Wood with Taylor & Walker placed third in the small firm category; Bob Rideout with Christian and Barton, LLP won first place, Mary Ellen Cleveland with Thompson McMullan placed second, and Tracy Puritz with Allen, Allen & Allen placed third in the medium firm category; and Christina Smith with McGuire Woods, LLP won first

place, Kim King, Barry Koval, Priscilla Rennie and John Wilson with Hunton and Williams placed second and Laura Osborne and Ellen Purcell with Hirschler Fleischer, PC placed third in the large firm category.

In April, the Chapter held a successful business sponsor event at the Diamond, home to our new AA baseball team, the Flying Squirrels, where members and sponsors alike enjoyed watching America's favorite pastime. In addition to the accomplishments and awards above, the Board continues to work on growing the Chapter and successfully recruited six new members in 2009, and two additional members in 2010 despite the economic hardships faced at most law firms. The Chapter would like to congratulate its members for achieving these accomplishments and winning these awards—many of which were a first in Chapter history!

## Mississippi Chapter



Nikki Fletcher (right), Vice-President of the Mississippi Chapter, presents the Presidents Award of Excellence—Silver Level to Melanie Ainsworth (left), President of the Mississippi Chapter during 2009. The award was received at the 2010 annual conference in

Boston for work done by the Mississippi Chapter under her leadership in 2009.

## Atlanta Chapter



very loyal Business Partners who continue to support the chapter, even in these uncertain times. We were pleased to have been designated a "Platinum" chapter again and our website was

It's been a busy spring for AALA. The Atlanta Chapter swore in it's new Board of Directors and, under the leadership of our new President, Dina Wolfe of Slutzky Wolfe and Bailey, we expect to have a productive year. Sabine Curto, outgoing Region 2 Director spoke to the chapter at the March Meeting after the new Board was installed. Tommy Stephens presented his "Excel: Tips and Tricks for Legal Administrators" in April. Our May meeting was a joint meeting with the Atlanta Chapter of the Legal Marketing Association and Ross Fishman presented "Marketing and Differentiation in a Recession". We are looking forward to June's annual ½ day seminar where Matt Weinstein will present "Managing to Have Fun: The Power of Humor in Business."

AALA was well represented in Boston with 27 chapter members attending. Nine of the attendees were able to attend using scholarships funded by the chapter's Business Partner Program. We are extremely fortunate to have



awarded First Place in the large chapter category.

We are busy planning upcoming events. We will have our Summer Social in July which will include both members and Business Partners. Our 22<sup>nd</sup> annual Business Partner Luncheon and Exhibition is planned for August. We are also looking forward to the Managing Partner luncheon in September. We are extremely pleased to have former Chief Justice of the Georgia Supreme Court, Leah Ward Sears as our guest speaker. Ms. Sears is a dynamic speaker and is frequently mentioned as a potential U.S. Supreme Court nominee.



## Central Florida Chapter

Congratulations to new officers sworn in on March 31<sup>st</sup>. **Kim Novak**, President; **Sue Ruberti**, Vice President; **Caroline Nicholaou**, Treasurer; **Marlene Simonson**, Secretary have each served the Chapter well in previous leadership roles. Over 40 members and guests attended the Business Partner Appreciation Reception held at *Tastings* in downtown Orlando on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. On April 28<sup>th</sup>, the Chapter held its annual spring retreat -- a full-day of *free* educational sessions, including stress/time management, HR, accounting and public speaking topics. Our summer "Best Practices Series" began in May with Finance and continues with HR in June and Technology in

July. Each session is moderated by a panel of three "experts" from member firms. Our scholarship committee met in April to determine that this year's Educational Scholarship will be awarded in June to high school senior **Blake Hament**. With the approaching annual conference, focus shifted to Boston and Orlando's hospitality booth. Eight members in sporty tropical shirts gave away Florida-themed gifts and talked "fun in the sun" with potential 2011 attendees at the "surf shack"/hospitality booth. If anyone wants more information about local sites and attractions in and around Central Florida, email your questions/suggestions to us at [orlando2011@cfcala.org](mailto:orlando2011@cfcala.org).

*See you in Orlando 2011!*

**Design Your Pathway  
to Success**



## ALA Region 2 Conference & Expo

*Save the Dates!* October 22-23, 2010  
Miami Beach, Florida

*Design your pathway to success in Miami Beach this fall — It's your best investment this year! A cost-effective, two-day Conference close to your home with professional legal industry speakers, more than 20 educational sessions and a legal industry business Expo.*

[www.alanet.org/region2](http://www.alanet.org/region2)

*Your connection  
to knowledge, resources and networking*