

ANCHORAGE YOUTH COURT DEFENDER



Member Newsletter

August / September 2018

Summer is the season of fun activities here at AYC. We kicked off this summer with food and games at the annual AYC picnic at Balto Seppela Park. Then we learned about forensic investigation on the tour of the Alaska crime lab. We also learned what happens to defendants who don't go through AYC on the tour of the McLaughlin Youth Center.

A major highlight of the summer was the University of Wyoming Summer Trial Institute at UAA. The program is taught by Professor Steven Easton from the University of Wyoming College of Law. Second-year law school students conduct mock trials and learn about the trial process. AYC members were invited to attend the program and learn along with the law school students. AYC members were also invited to act as witnesses or jury members in the mock trials. It was great introduction to the trial process, and it happens every summer, so if you didn't participate this year, don't worry. You can always sign up next year.

Coming up on August 15, there is the Intro to the Courtroom Training. AYC's legal advisor, Denise Wike, will teach about courtroom behavior. This training is great for new members or those who would like to brush up on their courtroom skills. Also coming up is AYC's open house on September 6 from 6-7:30 pm. There will be a mock hearing presented by AYC members, as well as registration for the fall new member class.

We just finished our summer new member class. If your friends or family members are interested in joining AYC, encourage them to sign up for one of the fall classes. They begin September 17 and continue for seven weeks.

The first AYC Bar Association meeting is Tuesday, September 11. Meetings will be held the second Tuesday of each month. A guest speaker will be at each meeting to talk about law-related topics. AYC Executive Board members will also give presentations on different aspects of being an AYC attorney or judge.

If you have any questions or would like to volunteer for a case, call Jessen Cao, the AYC case coordinator at (907) 274-5991.

We look forward to seeing you around,
Claire Wilkerson, AYC Executive Board Publicity Liaison

UPCOMING EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Activity / Event	Location / Time	Date
Board of Directors' Meeting	BP Energy Center 900 E. Benson Blvd. 4:15 - 5:30 pm	Thursday, August 16 Thursday, September 20 Thursday, October 18
AYC Open House <i>Family & Friends Welcome!</i>	Boney Courthouse 303 K Street 6 - 7:30 pm	Thursday, September 6
Intro to the Courtroom Training <i>Registration Required.</i>	Boney Courthouse 303 K Street 4 - 5:30 pm	Wednesday, August 15
Ugly Sweater Decorating <i>Save the Date! More details to come!</i>	Location: TBD 6 - 7:30 pm	Wednesday, November 28
AYC Volunteer Appreciation Holiday Party <i>Save the Date!</i>	Begich Middle School 7440 Creekside Center Dr.	Friday, December 7

AYC Bar Association Meetings

Meetings are held at the BP Energy Center located south of the main BP building next to the daycare center. They are held the second Tuesday of each month (with the exception of March & December meetings).

Mark your calendar for this year's meetings:

September 11
October 9
November 13
December 7*
January 8
February 12
March 5
April 9

Meetings are from 6 - 7 pm.

Bar association meetings are open to all AYC members. Learn about different law related topics and stay up to date with AYC happenings.

**Holiday party will take place at Begich Middle School multi-purpose room.*

Reminder: Fall office hours begin August 20!

*Office Hours:
Monday - Thursday
10 am - 6 pm*

Law and Leadership Summer Program

By Claire Wilkerson

Have you ever looked around Courtroom 38, the room AYC uses for their sentencing hearings, and wondered what judge it belongs to? I certainly did. That is, until last week, when I got to meet him. The reason I met Judge Hanley, the “owner” of Courtroom 38, was because the AYC Law and Leadership Summer Program took a field trip to the Boney Courthouse. We visited his courtroom, where he told us about being a district court judge. He also showed us the secrets of Courtroom 38, namely the tiny jail cell outside the room where prisoners are kept before their proceedings, and also the hidden door behind the judge’s bench that opens into a hallway.

The Law and Leadership Summer Program is a four-week camp organized by AYC, staffed by volunteers, and open to AYC members and non-members alike. It is even free for people who are zoned for certain middle schools. The only requirement is that you must be an incoming 9th grader to enroll in the camp. It takes place at East High School.

A field trip to Courtroom 38 was only one of the fun activities of Law and Leadership camp. We start each day of camp by listening to a speaker. Many different kinds of people have talked to us, including an Alaska legislator, the mayor of Anchorage, and an immigration lawyer. What all our speakers have in common, however, is a commitment to taking action in their communities, and an understanding of the importance of the law.

We spend the rest of the morning in legal studies class learning about just that: how important the law is. We spent the first two weeks learning about the Bill of Rights and the landmark court cases that have changed how those rights are interpreted. We also learned about how those rights have been denied to certain groups of people and their struggles in court to be recognized as equal under the law.

Having learned the basics, we are now looking at more complex subjects, such as mass incarceration, international law, and the UN. The main message of our legal studies class is that the law is a powerful tool that can be used to oppress people, or to make society fairer.

In the afternoon, we listen to another speaker, and then work on our Alaska Youth Law Guide projects. The AYLG is a handbook that explains Alaska statutes that are relevant to young adults. For our first project, we made short films that explained a certain topic in the guide. Our second project is making a spoken word piece about a topic in the guide.

The highlight of the camp was the mock trial. We prepared for it for three weeks, learning how to examine witnesses, how to write opening and closing statements, and how to make objections. The preparation was sometimes frustrating, since we had to learn everything about how to conduct a trial in such a short time. However, it was also fun learning how to ask just the right question to get the witness to say what you wanted, and how to fit the evidence into your side’s argument.

I was extremely nervous by the day of the trial. My team was the prosecution, and we had much less evidence than the defense. In addition, we got to conduct the trial in a courtroom of the Boney Courthouse, so it felt very real. However, my side ended up doing well, and I learned a lot about how to conduct a trial. Now I wish we could have another mock trial because I know I could do even better.

Law and Leadership camp is a great way to dive deep into the law for four weeks. You will leave being able to know whether someone is violating your Constitutional rights. In addition, you will know that if you see injustice anywhere, you will be able to change it through advocacy and dedication. All that and a tour of Courtroom 38? Sign me up!





Welcome New Members!

Last Thursday, 14 new youth members were sworn into Anchorage Youth Court. Special thanks to Judge Pamela Washington for teaching the class and presiding over the ceremony and Bea Barth for assisting Judge Washington.

Intro to the Courtroom Training

Are you new to AYC or haven't been in the courtroom in awhile? If so, this is the training for you! Denise Wike, AYC's legal advisor will go over the ins and outs of a courtroom and practice a mock hearing with attendees.

Wed., August 15
4:30 - 6 pm

Boney Courthouse
303 K Street

For more information and to sign up, please call AYC at 274-5986.



A group of eight members toured the Anchorage Crime Lab and learned about finger prints, DNA, ballistics, and what forensic analysts do.

AYC Members participated in the University of Wyoming College of Law Summer Trial Institute. Special thanks to Professor Steven Easton for inviting AYC members to attend.



AYC Members visited McLaughlin Youth Center on July 17. They toured the facility and spoke with probation officers.

Summer Picnic



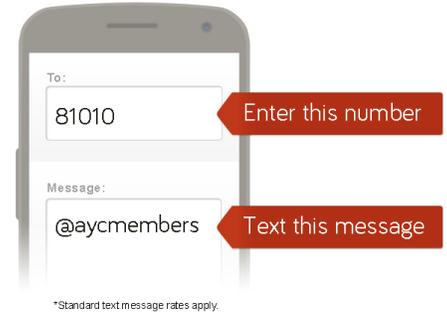
AYC Remind

Main Contact: Molly Estes, AYC Executive Board Vice President

Sign up today for AYC Remind! Get up-to-date information about upcoming AYC events, bar meetings, and more. Text the message @aycmembers to 810-10. If that doesn't work please text @aycmembers to (907) 341-4251. If you would like to get a reminder via email please email aycmembers@mail.remind.com. Parents are welcome to sign up for Remind, please respond with whose parent you are and name. Members please respond with just your name.

To receive messages via text, text @aycmembers to 81010. You can opt-out of messages at anytime by replying, 'unsubscribe @aycmembers'.

Trouble using 81010? Try texting @aycmembers to (907) 341-4251 instead.



Or to receive messages via email, send an email to aycmembers@mail.remind.com. To unsubscribe, reply with 'unsubscribe' in the subject line.



President's Column - Panama City Teen Court

Two weeks ago I watched the court proceedings of Panama City Teen Court (PCTC) in Florida. The attorneys may be recognized by blue robes, and the jurors have matching uniforms. The cases are judged by volunteer attorneys from around town. Each case follows a similar structure. The judge asks for opening statements from each side, and the prosecution presents something comparable to the probable cause statement in Anchorage Youth Court (AYC). The defense attorney provides a short introduction. The case testimony consists of putting the defendant on the stand, the prosecution confirms the probable cause statement, and the defense attorney conducts the equivalent of the defense interview. Next comes closing arguments which is each side's opportunity to recommend a sentence. The jury leaves the room to deliberate, and the next case starts. Once the jury has reached a verdict, they return and the bailiff reads it out loud to the court. The most distinct part of every sentence is the open court apology to the parent(s). Defendants explain that they are sorry and why, and what changes they will make so that they will not be in court again. The parents and defendant approach the bench to hear closing

comments from the judge, and the next case appears before the court.

In PCTC, they do not have young judges telling the defendant that the criminal behavior is unacceptable. The open court questioning by the attorneys and the apology both help the defendants realize that their behavior is wrong. In AYC, defendants do not have to apologize or explain the circumstances surrounding the offense, although they have the right to talk right before the judges decide their sentence. AYC does not compel a statement because the defendants are not required to testify against themselves. However, when a defendant chooses to speak right before the judges decide the defendant's sentence, they remind everyone in courtroom how life changing each case is to the defendant. As a defense attorney, the most important focus is effectively representing the client in court; however, helping the defendant with the rehabilitation process is also important. Sometimes making a statement in court will help the defendant acknowledge that they do not want to appear in front of judges again.

Written by: Brynn Morse, AYC Executive Board President

Judge's Column

*By Emily Tedrick,
Assistant Chief Judge*

Each position in the courtroom has its own unique responsibilities, judges being among those with the largest roles. When it comes down to it, at the end of the case, the judge has the final say in the sentencing. It is the judges' responsibility to know the law, apply it to the specific case, and keep in mind all of the factors that make the crimes more or less severe in order to give a fair sentence. If an attorney makes a mistake, it's on the judge to correct it. While judges are AYC's more senior and experienced members, it is easy for anyone to fall into habits of how to run the courtroom.

For that reason, as well as training new judges, AYC will be holding judges trainings more regularly. Keeping our speech up to date and proper, hearing other ideas for closing comments, and discussing how other members dealt with tight situations are all highly beneficial. Recently some of our judges did meet, and all members present agree that holding those meetings more often would be a good idea to keep everyone on the same page, and to generate new ideas. It is important for our judges to review the Chaney Rules as well, the basis of much of our sentencing structure. In the end our judges are the ones who determine the sentence in a case, so we should make sure that role is always filled by qualified, informed members.

ANCHORAGE YOUTH COURT'S OPEN HOUSE

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 6
6 - 7:30 PM
BONEY COURTHOUSE**

MOCK HEARING @ 6:30 PM

**Come and see the innerworkings of AYC!
Youth members will present a mock hearing
followed by a question and answer session.**

FALL CLASS REGISTRATION

Want to join Anchorage Youth Court? Sign up for a class beginning the week of Sept. 17 and learn even more about AYC and how you can help your community. Classes are open to youth entering grades 7 - 12 residing in the Municipality of Anchorage. Register at the Open House.

**907-274-5986
838 WEST 4TH AVENUE
WWW.ANCHORAGEYOUTH COURT.ORG**

Join us!

2018 Fall New Member Classes

Do you have a friend or have a family member interested in joining Anchorage Youth Court? If so, fall classes begin the week of September 17 and continue for seven weeks.

Location: Various Schools in Anchorage / Eagle River

Registration Fee: \$35

Registration Begins: August 20, 2018

Call 274-5986 for more information and to register.

Meet the 2018-19 Executive Board



President

Brynn M

Duties include: representing AYC in the community; making presentations in the community; chairing AYC Bar Association meetings and AYC Executive Board meetings; assisting the Executive Director with AYC business as needed.



Chief Judge

Bernice L

Duties include: assigning judges for court every other week and ensuring that the Assistant Chief Judge assigns judges the other weeks; notifying the office by the Thursday preceding court of courtroom judges for the next week; regularly presiding in court; regularly scheduling, planning and leading judges' meetings and trainings; training new judges; training associate judges to preside; assigning judges for appeals as necessary; representing AYC in the community; making a court report at each meeting of the AYC Bar Association and the Board of Directors; and attending and actively participating in AYC Executive Board meetings, AYC Bar Association meetings and Board of Directors meetings.



Vice President

Molly E

Duties include: representing AYC in the community; making presentations in the community; serving as President in the absence of, or at the request of, the President; and attending and actively participating in AYC Executive Board meetings and AYC Bar Association meetings.



Asst. Chief Judge

Emily T

Duties include: assigning judges for court every other week; regularly presiding in court; serving in place of the Chief Judge when the Chief Judge is unavailable; assisting the Chief Judge as needed; attending and actively participating in AYC Executive Board meetings and AYC Bar Association meetings.



Chief Clerk

Erica S

Duties include: assisting in training new clerks and bailiffs; assigning clerks and bailiffs for court; and attending and actively participating in all AYC Executive Board meetings.

Executive Board Openings:

Currently, two positions on the Executive Board are filled temporarily: the Secretary and Fundraising Liaison positions. At the September AYC bar meeting we will nominate members for these positions, followed by an election at the October bar meeting. If you are interested in getting more involved with AYC and would like to run for one of the two positions, please contact the AYC office at 274-5986.



Secretary

Sarah P

Duties include: attending, participating in and taking minutes at all AYC Executive Board meetings and AYC Bar Association meetings.



Treasurer

Scott S

Duties include: providing a report of student funds at AYC Bar Association meetings; and attending and actively participating in AYC Executive Board meetings.



Publicity Liaison

Claire W

Duties include: assisting with recruitment of new AYC members; working with AYC staff on publicity matters; assisting with the Defender newsletter; making a report at AYC Bar Association meetings; and attending and actively participating in all AYC Executive Board meetings.

Executive Board Makes Changes

Respect is something that every AYC member has in mind in the courtroom, but we rarely stop to think about the individual words we use. Our scripts are designed to be efficient and respectful, and those have cut out much of the need for thought over that area. However, until recently our scripts were designed to incorporate gender in a way that didn't allow defendants the freedom to determine that for themselves. Our use of pronouns makes a huge difference to many teens, which is why revisions to so many of our scripts has been necessary.

That has been one of the goals of the Executive board for this coming year: to revise AYC scripts that have a needless use of gendered language. Accomplishing this had been done many ways: using a singular 'they' pronoun, directly addressing the defendant by their name, or simply reworking a sentence. While changing the scripts has not been an extremely difficult task, there are many of our documents that still inherently include gender.

In the meantime, we encourage members to be sensitive and aware of the preferred pronouns and titles of not only defendants, but also other members. Something as simple as asking the pronouns of the defendant, or the new member clerking or acting as bailiff could make a huge difference.

The judges script has already been changed, and the others are being revised as well. In the end, a single pronoun can be used to show respect, which then can be returned in kind.



Fundraising Liaison

Griffin B

Duties include: leading and actively participating in AYC student fundraising activities; working with AYC staff on fundraising activities; working with the Board of Directors' fundraising committee; making a report at AYC Bar Association meetings; and attending and actively participating in AYC Executive Board meetings.

Anchorage Youth Court
PO Box 100359
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

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**SAVE
THE DATE!**



Ugly Sweater Decorating
Wednesday, November 28

AYC's Annual Holiday Party
Friday, December 7

Contact Us

Anchorage Youth Court
838 West 4th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

(907) 274-5986

info@anchorageyouthcourt.org

Visit us on the web at
www.anchorageyouthcourt.org

Summer Office Hours:
Monday - Thursday: 10 am - 5 pm

Fall Office Hours Begin Aug. 20:

Monday - Thursday: 10 am - 6 pm

Please Note: AYC follows Anchorage School District closure guidelines. If school or after school activities are canceled, AYC activities are also canceled.