

Association of Legal Administrators LEADING THE BUSINESS OF LAW

ConnectR4 *Your Region 4 News*

It Was My Own Personal Rocky Mountain High

*By DeAnna Lyons Lopez, CLM, SPHR, SHRM-SCP
Office Administrator – DLA Piper (US)*

ALA Region 4 Representative and Vice President of the Houston Chapter

I am always so excited to attend ALA's Annual Educational Conference & Expo each year. This year's conference started on Sunday, April 2 and ended on Wednesday, April 5 and was held in the Mile High City – Denver, Colorado. From my perspective and others I have spoken to, it was an incredible conference from beginning to end. Having been the Chair of the Annual Conference Committee (ACC) last year in Los Angeles, I think that attending ALA's Annual Conference will forever hold a very special place in my heart.



*2017 Annual Conference Chair Shelley Strong and 2016
Annual Conference Chair DeAnna Lyons Lopez*

Sunday started off with Idea Exchanges, a well-attended Newcomer's Reception as well as a Welcome Reception for all attendees. At the Newcomer's Reception, my memory was refreshed about how I felt when I attended an Annual Conference for the first time. I was both excited and a little overwhelmed by the number of people who were there. It was wonderful to see the first-time attendees interact with the ACC, ALA Board members and Regional teams. Our hope is that they walk out of that door feeling welcomed, relaxed and energized for the conference days ahead of them. The Tailgate Welcome Reception featured a sports theme, so we were able to wear our favorite sports jerseys to the event. There was a "little" dancing going on that evening, and games were set up around the room for us to play that were representative of tailgating games. (Almost) too much fun ...



Look, Mom – I found my name on the CLM list! With former At-Large Director for Region 4, Mark Bridgeman, CLM, CRM

Monday morning featured a CLM breakfast and a motivating opening speech by Archie Manning titled "The Manning Playbook for Leadership." Stimulating

educational sessions were held for the remainder of the day, which ended with a dessert break in the Exhibit Hall.



Archie is such a cool guy!

On Tuesday, additional education sessions were wrapped around the Association Luncheon, where the gavel was officially handed over to ALA's new President, Gary Swisher. We also had the pleasure of hearing an incredible presentation made by Ellie Krug – "Gray Area Thinking: Understanding Diverse Humans and Welcoming Transgender Attorneys, Coworkers and Clients." I will definitely plan to attend any further sessions offered by Ellie. The Brezina Memorial Session featured speaker Mary C. Gentile, PhD who spoke on "Giving Voice to Values." There was also a Networking Reception in the Exhibit Hall at the end of the day that featured games representative of those played by the ACC's selected charitable organization for the conference – The National Sports Center for the Disabled (NCSC).



I always wanted to be Cher for a day!

If you have a few minutes, [take a little look at the video](#) that was shown during the Association luncheon, or you can search online for "ALA Carpool Karaoke." It was a blast making this video with ALA's Executive Director, Oliver Yandle.

You know how they say to save the best for last? Well ... Wednesday (the last day of conference) featured our Region 4 Council Meeting, the Association Awards Gala and the Club 5280 Finale, Featuring DJ ROONIE G. The finale was a red carpet event (including black tie optional attire) that began with the ACC and the ALA Board lining the red carpet to greet attendees as they arrived and was followed by a formal dinner and lots of dancing. Thank you again to our VIP business partners who sponsored the finale event.

We also learned that the Silent Auction brought in \$30,000 in donations for the Foundation – the charitable affiliate of ALA. Through grant making, Annual Conference speaker sponsorships, scholarship programs and outreach to nonprofit legal service organizations, the Foundation supports efforts both within the Association and our communities to improve the profession of legal management.



So make plans now to attend the 2018 ALA Annual Conference & Expo in National Harbor, Maryland from May-6, 2018 ... there's a huge Peep's store right outside the Gaylord Resort that is amazing (to me)! See you there!

Region 4 Council Meeting at Annual Conference

Q1 What one word would you use to describe ALA?

Answered: 123 Skipped: 0

College Invaluable Leadership Friends Support
Expensive Community Diversified
Resource Connections Networking
Enlightening Education Expertise Knowledge
Integral Necessary Collaborative



From left to right – DeAnna Lopez, CLM, SPHR, SHRM-SCP and James Cornell III



Region 4 takes flight



From left to right – Outgoing Region 4 Representatives Karie Rivkin and Stephen Wolf, CLM, CPA, and Outgoing At-Large Director Mark Bridgeman, CLM, CRM



From left to right – Greg Madden and Stacie Hedrick

Why Attend Chapter Leadership Institute (CLI)?

***By Tim McKay, CPA
Harris, Finley & Bogle, P.C.
Fort Worth, Texas
ALA Region 4 Representative***

I wasn't in ALA long before I attended my first CLI. I had just joined my board as Treasurer. My chapter is pretty small and my fellow board members were doing a good job mentoring me. I wasn't really sure what to expect, and truthfully, it was kind of a whirlwind.

While at the conference I made some new friends who have turned into great resources that I can reach out to with questions and leverage their experience. The opportunity to expand my network is always one of the main benefits of any ALA conference. But I also started to get a glimpse into ALA and began to understand how committed ALA is to our (chapter leaders' and members') success. I have been involved with various boards and volunteer positions in the past, but this was something new. For the first time, I was affiliated with an organization that was very clear about wanting my help, was very concerned about me being successful in my volunteer role, and had a very deliberate approach for making that happen.

The core of the Association is our members and our individual chapters. All of us have likely experienced the dread that comes with being in a situation where you don't have much support or guidance. That is the antithesis of ALA. As the name

implies, CLI will teach you more about being a board member of an ALA chapter. You'll hear about the roles and responsibilities of your board. Bylaws and President's Points will be discussed. You'll gain a better understanding of the expectations of the chapter boards. Business Partner relationships – their importance and how to strengthen them – will be covered as well. You will hear about the ALA Board and the Foundation. All of these will occur in formal sessions and informally as you hear from peers from across the country. You'll hear success stories and you learn about pitfalls to avoid.

But I believe something more beneficial than that occurs at CLI ... Something more intangible that I struggle to put into words as I write this.

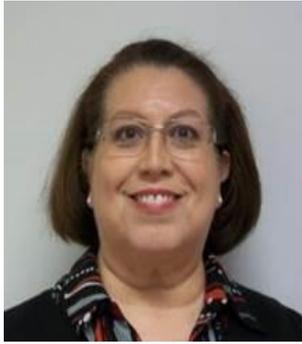
Leadership is something that we don't get taught often. We sometimes hear that someone is a "Natural Leader." Maybe some folks have a personality that others are drawn to, and maybe some are inclined to take on roles in the spotlight quicker than others. But being an effective leader in your chapter takes some actual skills.

This is the greatest benefit that I believe you will gain from participating in CLI. You will improve your leadership skills. By taking on a role in your chapter's leadership you have shown interest and demonstrated your drive to help your chapter succeed. CLI will give you the tools to continue to improve as a chapter leader.

As I pointed out earlier, ALA is very deliberate in their approach to supporting us. I have never been with another volunteer organization that takes the time and care to teach you how to be successful in your role. Usually you show up with whatever skills you have and you let 'em fly. But ALA does more. At CLI you will be exposed to leaders within our organization who are passionate about their roles. They are professional and experienced. They are skillful but more importantly, passionate about you succeeding. At CLI you will have the opportunity to learn in classroom settings. But you will also have the opportunity to be mentored and guided by peers who have walked in your shoes. Everyone who attends is a leader at some level. There is a tremendous critical mass of leadership in attendance and the energy and enthusiasm that is on display makes CLI a can't miss event. If you have wondered why so many ALA leaders seem to have "drank the Kool-Aid" (as I used to!), come to CLI – I think you will understand by the time it ends. CLI is a fantastic opportunity to elevate your chapter, yourself, and as a result, your firm!

Region 4 Highlights Our Current 2017-2018 Chapter Presidents:

Alamo	Nancy McClaran Human Resources Director Dykema Cox Smith
-------	----------------------------------------------------------------



Arkansas



Jeannie Billingsley is the Director, Human Resources for Friday, Eldredge & Clark, LLP. She earned her bachelor's degree in psychology from Rhodes College in 1990 and her master's degree in industrial/organization psychology from the University of Arkansas in 1995.

Jeannie has more than 26 years' experience in human resources management in various industries, including information technology (international), banking/financial services, healthcare and legal. Her broad and varied background runs the gamut of HR disciplines: organizational design and development; compensation and benefits; recruitment and staffing; training and development; performance management; employee relations; and employment law. Jeannie joined the Friday firm in early 2013 and became a member of the Arkansas Chapter of ALA at that time. She has served as newsletter editor, vice president, president-elect and now president.

Austin

Summer Jurells has been in the Austin area for more than 30 years and has a strong track record of



success in human resources, facilities management and continuing education. For 10 years, she has served as an adjunct professor of communications at several institutions of higher learning, including Austin Community College and Texas State University. She has more than a decade of experience working in the legal field. She is currently the Director of Human Resources for the Austin-area law firm Bickerstaff, Heath, Delgado, Acosta LLP while overseeing divisional budgets and facilities operations. Summer is heavily involved with the Austin chapter of the Association of Legal Administrators and serves on the Board of Directors as President.

Additionally, Summer was named the Quest Award winner at the national ALA conference in 2015. Summer earned her bachelor's in speech communication studies from Texas A&M-Corpus Christi and her master's in instructional communication studies from Texas State University. Summer has been married for 15 years and has two amazing boys that keep her very busy!

Dallas



Brooks Gould, CLM, is the Director of Business Support for McKool Smith, PC. Gould stumbled into the legal management profession and has been a member of the Dallas Chapter for nearly two decades. At McKool Smith, he handles a variety of responsibilities including case budgeting, case staffing, attorney recruiting, financial planning, contract negotiation and whatever else needs to be done.

Fort Worth



Kelli Kennedy, CPA, is the Firm Administrator for Taylor, Olson, Adkins, Sralla, & Elam, LLP. She earned her bachelor's degree in accounting from the University of Georgia in 1990 and her master's degree in tax accounting from the University of Texas in 1993. Kelli worked for more than 20 years in corporate tax for multiple fortune 500 companies and in public accounting before doing a career pivot three years ago in becoming a Legal Administrator. Kelli joined her current firm in 2014 and became involved in the Fort Worth Chapter of ALA at that time. She has served as treasurer, president-elect and now president.

Houston



Valerie Hayes, PHR, SHRM-CP, is the Office and Human Resources Manager – Houston and Dallas at McDermott Will & Emery LLP. Valerie joined McDermott in September of 2014. Prior to her current role, Valerie was the Office Manager at Locke Lord LLP for a little over a year and the Human Resources Supervisor at Thompson & Knight LLP for almost six years. Valerie also previously worked for Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP, initially starting out as a Practice Assistant and then moving into Human Resources/Recruiting Coordinator.

She received her BA in Corporate/Organizational Communications with a minor in Business Administration from The University of Houston in 2006. Valerie has been a member of ALA since 2007. She has served as Director, Chair and Co-chair of the Business Partnering Committee, Chair of the Job Bank Committee,

Co-Chair of the HR Section Meetings Committee and as a member of the Retreat Committee. Valerie is currently serving on the board as President.

Mexico



David Guerrero holds a degree in Industrial Engineering from Universidad de Lima in Peru and a Master degree in Management from SUNY Stony Brook. He has more than 25 years of working experience in international companies – mainly in the FMCG sector, technology sector, and during the last eight years in the legal sector. David has worked for well-recognized multinational companies such as Coca-Cola, Warner Lambert and Oracle, where he held a wide range of leading positions in local, regional and global roles in Finance.

Since 2014, David has acted as a Business Director for Greenberg Traurig's Mexico City office, supporting senior leadership to sharpen their local operation to develop business strategies for revenue growth and leadership development. David has been based in Lima and Mexico City in Latin America and Tampa and Atlanta in the United States, which provided him with a vast living experience on how to run large companies in different business cultures. David brings an effective combination of management experience and strategic thinking to the legal sector. Born in Lima Peru in 1959, David lives in Mexico City and is the father of two daughters who live in Boston. He is passionate about reading and progressive rock music of the '70s.

Mile High



Tami Lawley is currently the Area Office Manager of the Denver, Las Vegas, Nogales and Tucson Offices of Fennemore Craig, P.C. and is responsible for the day-to-day operations of those offices. Fennemore Craig is a regional firm with more than 200 attorneys and offices in Phoenix, Nogales, Tucson, Las Vegas and Reno. Tami was in human resources and was the Marketing Manager of Fennemore Craig's Phoenix office before moving to Denver in 2003. She has worked in the legal industry for more than 20 years.

Tami has been an active member of the Mile High Chapter of the Association of Legal Administrators since 2009. She is the current President. She has served as President-Elect, Vice President, Secretary, Chair and Co-Chair of Business Partner Committee, Chair and Co-Chair of Expo Committee, Chair of Nominating Committee, Chair of David Award Committee, Co-Chair and Chair of Education, as a member of the Professional Development Committee and the Charitable Giving Committee. In her spare time, Tami enjoys traveling, running, skiing, hiking, reading, and spending time with her fiancé, their kids and grandkids.

New Mexico

Nina Patel Sukhyani is the Firm Administrator for Walther Family Law PC in Albuquerque, New Mexico. A graduate of the University of New Mexico, and a New Mexico Scholar recipient, Nina earned her bachelor's of Business Administration from Anderson School of Management with a minor Political Science. Nina has more



than 12 years of experience in office management. Having worked with several different attorney's with varying practice areas, her knowledge of law firm management is extensive.

She joined the New Mexico Chapter of Legal Administrators in 2011 and quickly became an active volunteer on the community events committee. Not soon after, she was recruited to serve of the chapter's board and has now served in all board positions. In her spare time, Nina enjoys travelling the world, working on DIY projects and swimming.

New Orleans



Linda Soileau, SHRM-SCP, President of the New Orleans Chapter 2017-2018, has been the Director of Human Resources at Adams and Reese LLP for the past 16 years. Adams and Reese LLP is a regional law firm with 18 offices in the Southeast U.S. Linda studied Business Administration with a concentration in Human Resources at Louisiana Tech University and the University of New Orleans, and received her SHRM-SCP certification (Society for Human Resources Management, Senior Certified Professional) in January, 2016. She is currently studying for the CLM exam.

Linda has been a member of ALA since 2010 and has served as President-Elect, Director at Large and Co-Chair of the Community Connections Committee prior to her current role as President. Linda is actively involved in corporate volunteerism at Adams and Reese, heading up the HUGS Program (Hope, Understanding, Giving and

Support) with the founding Partner, Mark Surprenant. Together they foster hands-on involvement in various charitable organizations among the 18 cities where they have offices. Linda enjoys her membership in ALA for its educational opportunities, networking and helping those in need in her community.

Oklahoma City



Rebecca Adams
Office Administrator
Durbin, Larimore & Bialick, P.C.

Tulsa



Charlene Reid is the Legal Administrator of the law firm of Best & Sharp, an insurance defense firm in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Charlene started her career as a paralegal in Tulsa in 1987 and worked at several law firms before landing a job at Best & Sharp in 1995. She worked at the firm as a trial litigation paralegal for 11 years before taking on the duties of the legal administrator in 2006.

Charlene joined ALA in 2007 and has served on the board of the Tulsa Chapter in many capacities. She is serving her second term as Chapter President. "ALA is such a great organization and there are so many opportunities for education and growth. I'm so glad that I was

	<p>encouraged by my mentor to join. The members of the Tulsa Chapter are like family, and I enjoy helping to provide others with the same opportunities for education, networking and growth that I have received from ALA."</p>
<p>Utah</p> 	<p>Paul Walker Controller Snow, Christensen & Martineau</p>

FAQ for Defining Our Identity:

During the Region 4 Council Meeting at Annual Conference in April, the Region 4 Team discussed ALA's current Strategic Plan for 2017-2020. An integral component of the plan is defining ALA's identity and the team discussed the 29-month process that is being undertaken to fully consider exactly how we define our Association. Below is a Frequently Asked Questions Q & A on why this process is so important and the possible outcomes. Please take a moment to review this information and do not hesitate to contact any member of the Region 4 Team if you have questions about this or our Strategic Plan.

Q: How much of the ALA name itself is a part of our members' view of our identity? Does that mean a name change is back in consideration?

A: Before we determine any action steps and strategic direction, we are first focusing on defining our identity. While a name change is one possible outcome, there are many other outcomes that could result from our defined identity.

Q: Why do we need to define the ALA identity?

A: A defined identity will provide the Association leadership and staff with a lens with which to focus existing programs and new initiatives.

- What needs to address
- How members view the association
- How ALA compares to and competes with other associations
- Clearly understand and articulate brand attributes, focus (membership, benefits, products, services, etc.), values and desired positioning.
- Align with current and future needs of the industry
- Ensure that ALA still connects with our audience
- Determine views of the words/concepts "administrator" and "association"
- Define what ALA is – and is not

Q: What are the possible outcomes from defining the ALA identity?

A: As a result of defining a new identity, the organization and the organization's stakeholders may experience many, if not all, of the following potential outcomes:

- Realigned chapter/HQ relationship/strategies/structure
- Realigned program strategy
- Realigned membership structure/categories/pricing
- New organization name and logo
- Realigned volunteer structure
- Realigned communications strategies
- Realigned education/professional development program
- Redefined member/nonmember benefits and resources portfolio
- Identity strengthened as expert/leader in legal management industry

Q: How will more members, and nonmembers, get the chance to give their thoughts and input?

A: There will be many, many opportunities for people to engage with and provide input to, including:

- "Brainwriting cubes" located in the Exhibit Halls at conferences, where anyone can write down the words they feel best captures ALA
 - Chapter visits and workshops
 - Online collaboration activities
 - Direct mail surveys
 - Online surveys
 - And anyone can send an email directly to the Executive Committee, at identity@alanet.org
-

2017 ALA EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

Elevate Your Mind at ALA's 2017 Chapter Leadership Institute

By DeAnna Lopez, CLM, SPHR, SHRM-SCP

This year, ALA's 2017 Chapter Leadership Institute (CLI) is being held at the Hyatt Regency in Minneapolis, Minnesota from July 20-22, 2017.

Anyone who has attended CLI can share with you how valuable this leadership training can be for Chapter Board members as well as chapter members who are interested in chapter leadership positions. This unique event offers orientation, training, and network opportunities to leaders from 93 unique ALA Chapters and CLI-sponsoring business partners. Lifetime friendships often result from attending CLI.

If individual funding is an issue, please consider applying for a Susan French Emerging Leader Scholarship by emailing foundation@alanet.org. ALA also sets aside funds to assist Chapters who need assistance sending their primary representative to CLI. For further information about CLI, please email chapters@alanet.org.

We hope to see you there!

Large Firm Principal Administrators Retreat

(Leaders from law firms of 100 or more attorneys)

Thursday to Saturday, August 3-5 in Boston, Massachusetts

Regional Legal Management Conferences

(Broad-Based Legal Management Education and Networking)

West Regions (4, 5, 6) – Las Vegas, Nevada

Thursday to Saturday, September 7-9, Venetian Las Vegas

East Regions (1, 2, 3) – Nashville, Tennessee

Thursday to Saturday, October 12-14, Renaissance Nashville

Fall Specialty Conferences

(Education and Networking for Niche Audiences Within ALA – All Under One Roof)

Human Resources Conference for Legal Professionals

Thursday to Saturday, October 5-7 in Chicago, Illinois

[Finance and Law Practice Management Conference for Legal Professionals](#)

Thursday to Saturday, October 5-7 in Chicago, Illinois

[Intellectual Property Conference for Legal Professionals](#)

Thursday to Saturday, October 5-7 in Chicago, Illinois

Region 4 Outstanding Volunteer Award

One of the most valuable benefits in ALA is our members; we even say it in our tagline: "Your connection to knowledge, resources and networking." Those members that volunteer their time and efforts in service to our ALA chapters are the strength and backbone of our organization. In recognition of this effort, the Region 4 Management Team will continue the tradition of recognizing a member with the Region 4 Outstanding Volunteer Award, named for Susan French. The Region 4 Susan French Memorial Outstanding Volunteer Award will be presented in the fall.

If you have a member of your chapter who you believe has performed above and beyond the call of duty, please nominate that person for this award. Any Region 4 member in good standing is eligible with the exception of current Region 4 Management Team members or a former team member who completed their service on the team within in the last 12 months.

A nominee should meet the following criteria:

- A person who has a record of volunteer service to ALA (at any level) and who has been an example and inspiration to other members.
- One who demonstrates a commitment to professionalism through personal behavior and a record of fairness, equality and courage in dealing with employees, attorneys and other legal management professionals.
- A person who promotes ALA and the legal management profession in the legal community and in the community at large through civic and community service, writing, teaching or public speaking.
- One who has demonstrated successful leadership and service over an extended period, in a number of different positions and a variety of projects.

Reach out to your board members, committee chairs, and committee members to help identify nominees. Submit your nominee to James Cornell at JCornell@gdhm.com with as much information about this person as possible, including a list of their volunteer activities and your reasons for nominating this person for this prestigious award. Please try to limit references to your chapter by

name and use nominee instead of the person's name. All nominations will be kept confidential.

Please email nominations no later than **July 31, 2017**.

Past Recipients of this award include Tom Ivey, CLM, and DeAnna Lopez, CLM, SPHR, SHRM-SCP, both of the Houston Chapter.

YOUR REGION 4 LEADERSHIP TEAM

[James Cornell, III](#)

Graves Dougherty Hearon & Moody, PC
Austin, TX
Region 4 Director



[Michael T. Bumgarner, CPA, CLM, CGMA](#)

Flaherty Sensabaugh Bonasso PLLC
Charleston, WV
At-Large Director



[Candace Kate Childress](#)

Blank Rome LLP
Houston, TX
Regional Representative



[DeAnna Lyons Lopez](#)
DLA Piper (US)
Houston, TX
Regional Representative



[Timothy C. McKay, CPA](#)
Harris, Finley & Bogle, P.C.
Fort Worth, TX
Regional Representative



REGION 4 PHOTO GALLERY

New Orleans Expo





Sandra Sanchez (Member) and Linda Soileau, SHRM-SCP (Chapter President) at the New Orleans at the 10th Annual Louisiana State Bar Association Diversity Conclave. Three New Orleans Chapter members volunteered their time to register attendees at the conference in exchange for attending the Diversity Conference and educational sessions for free. The New Orleans Chapter has partnered with the Louisiana State Bar Association for this event for the last few years as part of our diversity initiatives.



Shanon Chehardy's (Community Connections Co-Chair) van filled with non-perishable food items that our Chapter members donated to the Second Harvest Food Bank for the families that were affected by the New Orleans East tornadoes in February.

New Orleans Installation of Officers



New Orleans at Annual Conference





New Mexico Roundtable Meeting



Arkansas Chapter Meeting



The Arkansas Chapter conducted a meeting via video conference so our northwest AR



and northeast AR members could participate. We want our non-Little Rock members to feel more connected to and involved in ALA, and we hope to use this as a vehicle to grow membership in other parts of the state. The meeting was a great success, and we hope it's the start of something big for the Arkansas chapter!

Arkansas Chapter Changing of the Guard: Connie Straw (secretary), Jeannie Billingsley (president), Michelle Tyree (past president), Michelle Stewart (president-elect)

Fort Worth Chapter Meeting



Mile High Business Partner Speed Dating



Connect with ALA

