



CITY BAR REPORT

News from the Bar Association of Baltimore City

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A Remarkable Start and a Meaningful Year Ahead



Natalie Foster,
Executive Director

By Natalie Foster, Executive Director, Bar Association of Baltimore City

When I stepped into the role of Executive Director this past October, I could not have anticipated just how rewarding the experience would be. Under the leadership of Judge Cusson, President of the Bar Association of Baltimore City, I have had the privilege of engaging with a vibrant and dedicated legal community that continues to make a meaningful impact across Baltimore City.

My tenure in October began with an exceptional introduction to the Bar's

traditions and camaraderie, starting with our annual Supreme Court trip and the swearing-in of attorneys—an inspiring reminder of the profession's purpose and promise. That momentum carried into a memorable Past Presidents' Luncheon in November, where we honored the legacy and leadership that continue to shape our organization.

The close of the calendar year brought even more opportunities for connection and service. Our Holiday Party in December offered a chance to celebrate together, while the Young Lawyers Division's Children's Holiday Party for Families in Shelters highlighted the compassion and commitment of our members in supporting vulnerable communities.

This spring has been equally dynamic, with a robust lineup of continuing legal education programs,

volunteer initiatives, and special events. From unique gatherings like the Spaghetti Opera in March to engaging CLEs like the Trial Advocacy Series held in April, our members have embraced every opportunity to learn, connect, and give back. We are also looking forward to our upcoming Baltimore Bar Foundation Golf Outing on May 26, which promises to be another highlight of the season.

One of the aspects of this role that I find most fulfilling is supporting the work of our Senior Legal Services program. This vital initiative provides personalized legal assistance to Baltimore City residents aged 60 and older, ensuring access to justice for those who need it most. I am incredibly proud of the impact this program continues to make in our community with an upcoming estate planning clinic in June.

As we approach the close of the Bar year, I invite you to join us for several exciting upcoming events. On May 28, we will host a CLE program, AI in the Courtroom, exploring the evolving role of technology in legal practice. On June 4, we will gather for our Annual Meeting to reflect on the year's accomplishments and announce the incoming Executive Council. Finally, we will celebrate together at the End-of-Year President's Reception and Welcome Executive Director event on June 26 at Guilford Hall Brewery.

These past seven months have affirmed for me that the Bar Association of Baltimore City is more than a professional organization—it is a community grounded in service, excellence, and connection. I am grateful to be part of it and look forward to all that lies ahead.

Making Baltimore Your Legal Home



Derek Van De Walle,
YLD Chair

Law school teaches doctrine, and, if you are fortunate, a clinic may offer a glimpse of practice. But the profession itself teaches everything else. Suddenly there are time entries to keep, pleadings to draft, discovery disputes to manage, clients to answer, supervisors to satisfy, judges to appear before, and deadlines that seem to multiply exponentially throughout the week. The learning curve is steep, and for a while, it does not appear interested in leveling out.

In those early years, it is easy to believe that the profession lives only at your desk. But a legal career is not built by work alone. It is also built through community, and that is especially true in Baltimore City.

Baltimore's legal community has a rare quality. It is large enough to offer nearly every kind of practice, but small enough that relationships still matter. The lawyer you meet at a bar event may later become opposing counsel, a mentor, a colleague, a referral source, or a friend. The judge you hear speak at a program may one day preside over your case, and, after the matter concludes, may even take the time to offer advice. In Baltimore, we are fortunate that many judges remain active in our bar associations, and that many firms and public offices take seriously their role in the life of the local bar.

That closeness is one of the great strengths of practicing here. A young lawyer in Baltimore City does not have to build a career in isolation. There is a community waiting. But, like most worthwhile things, it does require showing up.

The Bar Association of Baltimore City gives young lawyers a place to do just that. Through committees,

mentorship, pro bono opportunities, CLEs, social events, and programs with the bench, the bar helps turn a profession into a community. It gives young lawyers a chance to meet people outside their office, outside their practice area, and outside the ordinary pressures of litigation, transactions, and billable hours.

Those relationships matter because they make practice better. They make difficult days less lonely. They teach us how to advocate with professionalism, disagree without losing civility, and build reputations based not only on ability, but on trust.

Baltimore City also gives young lawyers something else: a deep and personal legal history. We practice in a City whose courthouses, law libraries, legal institutions, and bar associations carry generations of stories. We stand on the shoulders of lawyers and judges who built the institutions we now rely upon. They argued the cases, shaped the law, preserved the profession through

uncertain times, and, when necessary, changed it for the better.

Young lawyers should not think of themselves as merely passing through. We are inheriting a profession, and we have some responsibility to leave it healthier than we found it.

That responsibility can begin simply by attending an event, joining a committee, or volunteering for a program. Say "yes" when there is an opportunity to help. Over time, those small choices become something larger: they become friendships, mentors, leadership opportunities, and a deeper connection to the City where we practice.

Baltimore City should not only be the place where young lawyers work. It should be the place where they become lawyers in the fullest sense: advocates, colleagues, mentors, neighbors, and stewards of the profession. That is how Baltimore City becomes more than a place to practice. That is how it becomes a legal home.

RAISE THE BAR BY ATTENDING BAR EVENTS

Find and register for events at
www.baltimorebar.org/ecalendar

BALTIMORE BAR FOUNDATION

GOLF OUTING

TUESDAY, MAY 26, 2026

EAGLE'S NEST COUNTRY CLUB

12801 STONE HILL RD PHOENIX, MD 21131

\$200/PLAYER

REGISTRATION - 11 A.M.

SHOTGUN START - 1 P.M.

LUNCH, DINNER, DRINKS,

AWARDS, RAFFLE

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ECALENDAR

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BABC Presents:

APPELLATE BRIEFING 101

May 27th, 12:30-1:30pm

Free to members, \$40 to nonmembers

This practicum will provide concrete examples of effective writing, taking you through some of the essentials like sentence structure, brief organization, and rule compliance along with some tips on oral arguments

SPEAKER:

Jenny Hovermill

10-year OAG Criminal Appeals Division veteran

Clarence M. Mitchell Courthouse

101 N. Calvert st. Room #504

Register at www.baltimorebar.org/ecalendar

BABC Presents:

AI IN THE COURTROOM:

PROMISE, PERIL AND

PRACTICAL GUARDRAILS

Strategies to use Artificial Intelligence effectively and discreetly while navigating trial.

Thursday, May 28

12:30-1:30 p.m.

Clarence M. Mitchell
Courthouse
100 N. Calvert St Baltimore
Room 504

Speaker:

James Gentry,
Esq.

Members & Nonmembers \$40

Register www.baltimorebar.org/ecalendar

Lunch will be served

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If you are interested in becoming a Sustaining Member, please contact Natalie Foster at nfoster@baltimorebar.org.

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WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS WHO HAVE JOINED

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 ASSOCIATION OF BALTIMORE LAWYERS
 JAGI UNIVERSITY

BAR ASSOCIATION OF
 BALTIMORE CITY

146TH
 ANNUAL
 MEETING

JUNE 4, 2026
 5:30-7:30 P.M.

THE MARYLAND CLUB

1 Eager St
 Baltimore, MD 21202

REGISTER AT WWW.BALTIMOREBAR.ORG/ECALENDAR

Tickets

YLDMembers - \$70
 Members - \$80
 Nonmembers - \$90

BABC End of Year President's Reception



Welcoming Executive Director Natalie Foster
and celebrating President Evelyn Lombardo Cusson
and the 2025-2026 Executive Council for their
outstanding year of service to the BABC



Natalie Foster, Executive Director

JUNE
FRIDAY **26** 2026
5-7:30 PM

Guilford Hall Brewery
1611 Guilford Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21202

Register at www.baltimorebar.org/ecalendar
This event is free to 50 participants and will have a cash bar