

Opportunities for Young Lawyers' Participation in AHLA

By Jennifer C. Hutchens, Robinson Bradshaw & Hinson PA, Charlotte, NC Member, Young Professionals Council and Publications Work Group

As a younger lawyer, I have found that there are many exciting opportunities to contribute to AHLA initiatives.

In addition to being involved with or serving on the Young Professionals Council, (YPC) AHLA offers various ways for younger lawyers to take an active role in the different AHLA practice groups. For example, since 2009, the Hospitals and Health Systems Practice Group has had a Leadership Development Program (HHS LDP), which develops participants' skills through involvement in the HHS Practice Group's projects with its current leaders. The HHS LDP participants also receive information and education on the workings of the practice groups and other areas of AHLA.

I am a participant in the 2012 – 2013 HHS LDP, and my experience so far has been incredibly rewarding. My specific focus is working with the Education Vice Chair, Mary Beth Fortugno, on the Practice Group's numerous educational opportunities (e.g., helping to plan webinars, developing and selecting learning topics, etc.). I also periodically write Practice Group alerts, including on subject matters relevant to my own practice of law (which is a great way to gain writing experience). I have really appreciated the chance to continue to develop my network of healthcare colleagues, and I look forward to the remainder of my term with the HHS LDP. You can find more information about the HHS LDP and all the activities of the Hospitals and Health Systems Practice Group at www.healthlawyers.org/Members/PracticeGroups/HHS.

AHLA also offers an organization-wide Mentoring Program that I'd very much encourage younger lawyers to join. I signed up to join the Program soon after attending the AHLA's "Fundamentals of Health Law" program in November 2011. My assigned mentor, Peter Pavarini, a partner with Squire Sanders, has been a phenomenal mentor. In addition to identifying ways for a younger lawyer like me to get involved with AHLA, we also focus on other professional development opportunities, such as suggested areas for healthcare reading and career development. Peter and I have monthly mentor calls, and I am so grateful for his dedication to our mentorship, which has played an instrumental role in its success. You can find more information about the Mentoring Program or sign up to join the Program by visiting www.healthlawyers.org/mentoring.



Jennifer Csik Hutchens (jhutchens@rbh.com) is an associate with the law firm of Robinson Bradshaw & Hinson PA in Char-

lotte, NC. Ms. Hutchens practices in the area of corporate and commercial law, with an emphasis on joint ventures and mergers and acquisitions. As a member of the firm's health law practice group, she consults with healthcare clients on regulatory and compliance matters at both the federal and state level, including the federal Anti-Kickback and Stark laws and HIPAA privacy and security.

Get Involved!

1. **Subscribe to the Young Professionals Discussion List** at www.healthlawyers.org/lists.
2. **Update your AHLA Member Profile** at www.healthlawyers.org so we can connect with you more effectively.
3. **Join a Practice Group** at www.healthlawyers.org/pg. With sixteen Practice Groups from which to choose, there is sure to be one that meets your professional interests. PGs give you a great opportunity to meet other AHLA members and volunteer leaders.
4. **Sign up for the AHLA Mentoring Program** at www.healthlawyers.org/mentoring. You can become a Mentor for a student member or request a longtime AHLA member to become your Mentor.
5. **Create or edit an entry in the AHLA Health Law Wiki** at www.healthlawyers.org/wiki.
6. **Write something!** Check out www.healthlawyers.org/volunteer to see the latest "Call for Authors" topics. You can also submit an article for the Member Forum column in *AHLA Connections* or submit a book review of a recently-released AHLA publication.
7. **Meet up with your fellow health lawyers at an in-person event.** In-person programs are great places to learn and network; see our schedule at www.healthlawyers.org/programs. Get started by attending the Fundamentals of Health Law program in Chicago Oct. 28-30. If you are unable to attend the program but will be in Chicago, you can also join other AHLA Young Professionals at informal networking dinners on October 29. Email rtaflinger@healthlawyers.org for details.