Commitment, Passion, & Service

As Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once stated, “Not everybody can be famous, but everybody can be great. Because greatness is determined by service.” And that is exactly what motivates us as an organization—to be great through our service.

Academic Achievement

Scholarships, Workshops, and Competitions. In the 2012-2013 academic year, the Black Law Students Association (BLSA) strove to foster an environment of academic excellence within our organization. Our efforts paid off! In October, the Las Vegas Chapter of the National Bar Association recognized nine of our members for their academic achievement and community service. BLSA also held a Finals Workshop and a Law Review Write-On Workshop targeted at minority students. Both were well attended and successful. BLSA’s mock trial team participated in the Western Region Thurgood Marshall Mock Trial Competition and won two awards. BLSA’s mock trial team placed second, winning the award for First Runner-up and advancing to compete in the National Thurgood Marshall Mock Trial Competition in Atlanta, Georgia this past March. Our team also won an award for Best Oral Advocate in the regional competition.
Civic Engagement

**Voter Registration and Election Events.** During the election cycle of 2012, BLSA sponsored four Presidential Debate Watch Events. Following each Debate Watch event was a faculty member moderated open forum for discussion. Our goal in holding each event was to give the student body a forum to engage in the pertinent issues of the election cycle and to create a space to challenge some of our pre-conceived political assumptions. The series was a great success. Not only were Boyd students tremendously civil and gracious in their interaction with one another, everyone contributed a level of commentary that was particularly constructive and thought provoking.

Volunteerism

**Community service.** BLSA members volunteered at HELP’s Food Bank program during the Thanksgiving holiday. In conjunction with Boyd’s Career Development Office, several of our members dedicated their time to assemble food care packages for less fortunate families around the valley.

Community Involvement

**Youth Safety Workshop.** BLSA partnered with the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, the Las Vegas Chapter of the National Bar Association and other notable community members, such as Justice Michael L. Douglas of the Nevada Supreme Court, Assemblywomen Dina Neal, and Boyd School of Law Professor Rachel Anderson, to help teach the Youth Safety Workshop. The impetus of the program was to ensure that the youth of Las Vegas were equipped with the knowledge and the proper attitude to stay safe when they encounter difficult situations. We thought this program was especially needed in the wake of the Trayvon Martin tragedy. During the event, BLSA members served as mentors and facilitators, teaching strategies to students from ages 12 to 18 on how to effectively engage with the authorities. Ultimately, the program was an overwhelming success, with nearly one hundred participants in attendance.

Educating Youth

**Mentoring and law-related classes for kids of all ages.** BLSA members mentored elementary, middle, and high school students at the National Bar Association’s Youth Mock Trial Competition as well as participated in the participating in the Third Annual Adopt-A-School program, in which we teach middle and high school students about the realities of law school and the practice of law. BLSA members also participated as Street Law Instructors and assisted with a Street Law Mock Trial. Working with the Alpha Men & Divas of Tomorrow Youth Organization, BLSA members taught youth rights to Las Vegas inner city youth at the the “Pitch Black Lock-In” from 10:00 p.m. - 3:00 a.m. at the Pearson Community Center.