

Young Lawyers Division: Get to Know Your Leadership

Chair Angela Lennon

In October, the OBA Young Lawyers Division elected a new leadership team, headed by chairperson Angela Lennon, of the Koenig|Dunne divorce law firm.



Lennon, 29, is a 2012 graduate of Creighton University School of Law, and will serve as President of the Women's Bar Association in 2016.

Originally from Rapid City, S. D., Lennon went to college in New York at Vassar College.

What brought you to Omaha? I took the LSAT the fall of my senior year of college and began applying for law schools. My then boyfriend, now husband (Dan Lennon), was in his first year of law school at Creighton University, so after I graduated I moved to Omaha. I had already applied to law schools, including Creighton and UNL. However, I deferred acceptance for one year. I wanted to obtain experience in a law firm to confirm I was making the right choice before committing to law school.

What do I think of Omaha? Growing up in South Dakota and then attending college in New York, I've lived in both big cities and small towns, and Omaha is the best of both worlds. We have all the entertainment, food, social options as a big city without all of the draw backs. The level of community engagement in Omaha also helps it feel like a smaller town because everyone is connected.

What do I think about the Omaha legal community? The legal community is hands down one of the things I love most about being a lawyer here. The people in our profession are talented, driven, and generous. Connecting with members in the Omaha legal community makes practice that much more rewarding.

What do you enjoy most about the practice of law? In general, when people need a lawyer, usually they are in crisis.

That is especially true as a divorce lawyer. I especially love connecting with people when they come into our office for their first consultation. Many times people have been suffering for years and struggling with the decision to get a divorce before finally making the appointment to see me. So, making that connection with our clients and helping them through one of the most difficult times of their lives is rewarding.

Why are you so involved in community organizations and legal groups? Being a contribution to others and my community is one of my values and is an integral part of how I define success in terms of my career. My drive comes from my desire to make my greatest contribution in my career. If I'm not contributing, I don't feel fulfilled.

What drew you to Chair the Young Lawyers Division? As our legal profession evolves, the challenges that young lawyers face today are different than those faced by young lawyers in the past. Not only do you need to be a good lawyer, you also need to be a great business person and rainmaker at all levels of your career. The culture in our firms is also shifting. The millennial generation is concerned and focused on issues such as firm culture, work life balance, billable hour expectations, flexible work arrangements, and how to utilize technology to maximize productivity and serve our clients. As chair of the YLD, I hope to create the opportunities for meaningful dialogue about the actual issues young lawyers face to develop tools and strategies to address them. Being involved with the YLD not only allows a space for young lawyers to address these types of challenges, but also allows us develop relationships with our colleagues.

Tell us about this new Gala event the OBA is doing in February. The YLD is interested in developing an event that is focused on the OBA as an organization. The OBA does such great work with so much programming throughout the year, but all of the events are focused on serving lawyers and our members. We

want an event that focused on the OBA as an organization to allow the OBA to inform members about the theme/events, etc. for the upcoming year and get people excited and engaged. We also want an opportunity to honor and thank those in our community for serving the OBA and its mission. We believe an event like this will fostered engagement with our members and rages participation.

The gala programming will be meaningful and inspiring. It will be a great night to celebrate our Omaha legal community. And there will be dancing!

Outside of lawyering and the OBA, what are your hobbies and interests? I'm the 2016 President of the Nebraska Women's Bar Association and am a member of the Women's Fund of Omaha Circles Group. I'm passionate about the success of women in our profession and in our community. Besides social justice issues, I love spending time with my husband and our puggle, Bella, exploring wineries with friends, cheering for the Jays at Creighton basketball games, reading and baking.

What advice do you have for law students and new attorneys? Being a law student and a new graduate is intimidating, not only in terms of developing the skills to actually practice law, but also to find out where you fit in our profession. My number one piece of advice for students and new graduates is to focus on relationship building with others in our profession. Not only will the relationships you create make your practice meaningful, they will also propel your career and your opportunities. That might mean awkwardly asking a lawyer to go to lunch so you can pick their brain about their practice area or showing up at an event where you don't know any of the other attendees. Be willing to be uncomfortable and take risks. The short term's "uncomfortableness" will be outweighed by the long term results.