



Top Ten Things Young Lawyers Are Grateful For

by Cole Riddell

After a wonderful Thanksgiving surrounded by friends and family, and in anticipation of the winter holiday season, it is important to take a step back and appreciate all for which we have to be grateful. Below are the top ten things for which young lawyers across the State of Texas appreciate and are grateful!

- 1 Colleagues.** Since I have begun working as a young lawyer, my colleagues have been a constant source of wisdom and have helped me learn tricks of the profession that they themselves learned as they were growing in their careers. They also serve as comrades to help when handling the more difficult cases with which we are faced. Most importantly, we all work together to deal with the stressors of our profession. I am grateful that they have become a large reason of why I love this profession so much. —*Vanessa Vice; Grayson County Young Lawyers Association; Grayson County Criminal District Attorney's Officer, Sherman, TX.*

2 Judges Who Provide Special Opportunities For Young Lawyers. Generally, young lawyers struggle to gain experience in the courtroom, and you rarely see an associate presenting oral argument on a motion. However, more and more judges across the State of Texas are granting motions for hearings to allow young lawyers the opportunity to present oral argument and gain invaluable courtroom experience. I am grateful for those judges who are taking affirmative steps to ensure that younger lawyers are active participants in the courtroom. —*Randy Roeser; Texarkana Young Lawyers Association; Haltom & Doan, Texarkana, TX.*

3 Referrals. I operate my own law firm, and my former clients are my advertising. I am able to stay busy without having to spend a lot of my money to drive in business and I don't have to go to "networking" events. I just retained a client that the referral goes back seven clients, and have a couple that I am handling a third matter for. Definitely referrals! —*Jane Fowler; Arlington Young Lawyers Association; Jane Fowler Law, PLLC, Fort Worth, TX.*

4 Westlaw. Westlaw is a wonderful research tool that saves me countless hours and headaches on a daily basis. Whether I am looking for a case, statute, or secondary source to support my argument, Westlaw seems to have everything I need at the click of a button. I am grateful the days of going to the library and manually scanning books are (mostly) gone. —*Cole A. Riddell; Texarkana Young Lawyers Association; Haltom & Doan, Texarkana, TX.*

5 Air Conditioning. I can't imagine living and working in Texas during the summer without air conditioning. Imagine how tough our ancestors must have been to live, work, and sleep through the Texas summer heat. —*Nolan Smith; Smith County Young Lawyers Association; Smith Legal, PLLC, Tyler, TX.*

6 Amazing Coworkers. The practice of law can be a constant struggle. Just remember those dramatic law school days and what happens when you have too many Type A personalities together. Thankfully, my coworkers make it easy and fun to step into practice every day. They are always there to lend a helping hand, and never shy away from a big fight. We are united against our opposing counsels, and we even like spending time together outside of the office. I am so lucky to have them by my side. —*Alyson A. Martinez; Laredo Young Lawyers Association; Webb County Public Defender's Officer, Laredo, TX.* Being a young attorney, I often encounter situations that I have not dealt with previously. Having co-workers that are willing and able to offer advice on how to handle these situations has been a life-saver. Being able to pop into an office and have a quick conversation about a unique situation is a great time saver for me, as well as a money saver for the client, and also enables me to gain valuable experience, knowledge, and broaden my legal horizons. —*Patrick Lindley; Houston Young Lawyers Association; Kearney, McWilliams & Davis, PLLC, Houston, TX.*

7 The Young Lawyers Community. I frequently find myself needing the advice and counsel of a fellow young lawyer – whether it be for a novel (to me, anyway) issue of law, a case referral, or simply with personal matters. My first instinct is to call upon my colleagues in the local young lawyers’ bar for their help, and I have never been disappointed. I am grateful for the opportunity to be friends and colleagues with these incredibly talented individuals. However, I know that the McLennan County young lawyers’ community is not unique. Across the state of Texas, I know that young lawyer bars are vibrant and thriving, providing resources and community for those who are in the early stages of their careers. I look forward to seeing those careers flourish and helping the next generation of young lawyers. —*Stephen Rispoli; Waco-McLennan County Young Lawyers Association; Baylor Law School, Asst. Dean, Waco, TX.*

8 Family. My wife and my extended family were supportive of me during all the ups and downs of law school. They put up with me when I spent an entire summer studying for the Texas Bar Exam and have continued to be a constant in my life as I venture out into my career. The legal profession, and the preparation for the legal profession, can be very taxing and it goes a long way to have people who are there to remind you why you are doing it. —*Paul Cotton; Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Company, Fort Worth, TX.*

9 Mentors. The breadth of our chosen field can be overwhelming at times, especially when first entering into the practice. Mentors ranging from coworkers, retired practitioners, partners and paralegals to judges, clerks and even opposing counsel have immensely helped shape at least the first five years (if not more) of my practice. I am grateful to learn best practices and skills from some incredible folks and plan to pay it forward. —*Whitney Watson Wood; Tom Green County Young Lawyers Association; Carter, Boyd, Lisson & Hohensee, PC, San Angelo, TX.* When I need life advice, career advice, help networking, or if I am even in need of an introduction - my mentors have always been there for me. —*Colleen Migl; Fort Bend Young Lawyers Association; Migl Law Firm PLLC, Sugar Land, TX.*

10 Clients. I am grateful for the people who have the courage to fight for right, even when it seems impossibly difficult against opponents who have more power, money and resources. I'm grateful that they show me every day that the human spirit truly is an indomitable force, by finding joy and focusing on love despite devastating circumstances. —*SaraNeil Stribling; Tom Green County Young Lawyers Association; Webb, Stokes & Sparks, San Angelo, TX.*

