

## FACE OF THE YOUNG LAWYER

## New YLD President is Born Leader

By Mary Petrinjak

**L**yndy Michelle Greenway Sellers was born in ... Okay, to be honest, I am not sure where Michelle was born. I do know that she grew up in Kennett, Mo., attended the University of Mississippi as an undergraduate and earned her law degree from the University of Tennessee College of Law. Michelle is married to Andrew Sellers who is also an attorney. They live in Jackson, Tenn., with their five-year-old daughter Sydney and two-year-old son Aubrey.

I am certain that no one who knows Michelle would be surprised to learn that our new president was head cheerleader in her younger days, as well an avid athlete. Michelle is a natural leader. Quite simply, Michelle gets involved and gets things done.

During law school, Michelle served as vice president of the Student Bar Association, was a member of Phi Alpha Delta and received the Distinguished Student Attorney Service Award from the UT College of Law Legal Clinic. After law school, she joined the law firm of Rainey, Kizer, Reviere & Bell PLC and has maintained a successful practice with the firm as a medical malpractice defense attorney. In 2002, she was awarded the annual Pro Bono Award from West Tennessee Legal Services for her volunteer work as a pro bono attorney. She serves on her law firm's marketing committee and has been selected to oversee the firm's summer associate clerkship program for the last

several years.

Michelle is a member of the Jackson-Madison County Bar Association where she has served on the Board of Directors and held the offices of treasurer, vice president and president. Additionally, she has been an active member of the American Bar Association, the Tennessee Bar Association and the TBA Young Lawyers Division. In that group, she served as a district representative and held the position of West Tennessee Governor before being elected vice president in 2006. This June, Michelle took office as president of the division.

I first met Michelle when I started working at Rainey Kizer. From the beginning I realized she was a living, breathing Wonder Woman. When we met, she was just returning to work after having her first baby, Sydney. In addition to easily transitioning back to her full-time law practice, instead of slowing down her community involvement, she seemed to speed things up. She was president of the Jackson-Madison County Young Lawyers that year, and I remember being impressed that she attended our service projects with Sydney in tow. The following year, she was elected vice president of the Jackson-Madison County Bar Association and assumed the office of president several months early when the then-current president was called to active military duty. True to form, she took over with ease. Shortly thereafter she was elected vice president of the Tennessee Bar Association Young Lawyers Division. Believe it or not, while all of this was going on, she and Andrew had their second child, Aubrey.

In addition to being Wonder Woman, Michelle is highly principled. For example, I recall one time that she held fast to her principles when we were dining with a group at a local Japanese restaurant



Sellers

(which shall remain nameless). The restaurant charges tax on the tip when gratuity is added to parties of six or more. I assume this is due to some inadvertent glitch in their computer system. Anyway, Michelle spent more than 10 minutes arguing with the staff over \$1.50 tax on the tip. That's right, one dollar and fifty cents. As the staff was calling the manager at home, I tried to talk Michelle into just paying the \$1.50 and leaving. She calmly explained to me that she would not — it was the principle of the matter, and I greatly admire her principles.

I have often wondered if Michelle ever sleeps. Between her full-time law practice, billable hours, children's doctors' appointments and soccer games, she still finds time for bar activities and pro bono work. Michelle has the rare ability to balance family, work, and community. She is a giving, caring woman who has managed to maintain a successful career as a lawyer while raising two beautiful, well-adjusted children — and never missing a school function. She has earned the respect not only of her family, friends, and professional colleagues, but also of the community at large. ■



The Sellers family (l to r): Andrew, Sydney, Michelle and Aubrey

Mary is an associate attorney at Rainey, Kizer, Reviere & Bell PLC in Jackson. She can be reached at [mpetrinjak@raineykizer.com](mailto:mpetrinjak@raineykizer.com).