



A REPORT TO MEMBERS OF
THE SOUTH CAROLINA BAR
YOUNG LAWYERS DIVISION

Blockchain Isn't Just Technology, it's a Legal Revolution



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Imagine a world where contracts execute themselves, fraud is nearly impossible, and public records are im-

mune from tampering. That's not sci-fi, it's blockchain. At its core, blockchain is a digital ledger where transactions are written in "permanent ink," visible to all, and nearly impossible to alter. It powers everything from cryptocurrencies to smart contracts, but its implications stretch far beyond.

Why Blockchain Matters for Lawyers and Clients Alike

Blockchain's real promise lies in trustless automation. Financial and contractual obligations can be encoded into "smart contracts" that self-execute when agreed-upon conditions are met. This could eliminate reliance on intermediaries in deals, reduce litigation risk, and increase efficiency in areas like real estate, licensing, and intellectual property.

Legal Challenges in a Decentralized World

This kind of innovation brings legal complexity. As blockchain-based tools gain traction, the law is playing catch-up. Some of the most pressing questions include:

- **Jurisdiction:** If a transaction takes place on a decentralized network with global participants, which court has the authority to resolve a dispute?
- **Smart Contract Enforcement:** Are smart contracts valid under existing contract law? What happens if code conflicts with written agreements?
- **Privacy and Compliance:** How do immutable records square with evolving privacy laws like GDPR or state statutes that grant rights to delete or modify personal data?



- **Intellectual Property:** Who owns code written by decentralized autonomous organizations (DAOs) or auto-generated by AI with blockchain ecosystems?

The Role of AI and Real-World Use Cases

Artificial intelligence is now accelerating blockchain's reach. AI systems can analyze data on the blockchain to automatically trigger smart contracts, detect fraud in real-time, or even manage DAOs. Together, AI and blockchain are laying the groundwork for more intelligent, autonomous systems and raising novel questions about liability, intent, and authorship in digital transactions. It's important to understand that blockchain isn't confined to cryptocurrencies; it's quietly reshaping a wide range of industries. Here are just a few:

- **Supply Chain & Logistics:** Walmart uses blockchain to trace food from farm to shelf, ensuring safety and accountability so when, for example, there is a recall scare, Walmart can trace exactly where the product came from and cut its lifeline to prevent the spread. Maersk uses the same to track shipments and prevent counterfeiting by logging each stage of a product's journey on a tamper-proof ledger.
- **Healthcare:** Providers are piloting blockchain to securely store patient records

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Blockchain

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and streamline data sharing across systems.

- **Finance & Capital Markets:** Financial giants like JPMorgan, Goldman Sachs, and Fidelity are leveraging blockchain for asset tokenization, internal settlement systems, and pilot programs for digital currencies.
- **Government Services:** Estonia's e-residency and digital ID program runs on blockchain architecture, and Dubai's blockchain city initiative is proving blockchain's utility in streamlining government records, identity systems, and business registries.
- **Entertainment & IP:** Platforms like Royal.io and Sound.xyz are giving artists direct control over royalties and proof of digital ownership through NFTs and blockchain licensing.
- **Real Estate:** Countries like Sweden and companies like Propy are using blockchain to digitize property records, execute smart contract closings, and reduce fraud in title transfers by offering faster, more secure real estate transactions using blockchain.

The Bottom Line

Lawyers are no longer on the sidelines. Blockchain presents both a significant change to traditional workflows and a huge opportunity to modernize how we practice law in the areas of smart contract drafting and auditing, compliance and risk advising, dispute resolution, DAOs and governance design, and so much more.

Blockchain isn't just a passing trend. It's a challenge to the status quo, transforming how business is conducted, how rights are tracked, and how trust is built without centralized authorities. Whether you're a legal professional, client, businessowner, developer, or a curious individual, now is the time to start thinking critically about how decentralized tools affect your rights, responsibilities, and regulatory obligations. The next wave of legal practice won't just involve adapting to change, it will require proactively shaping it by learning to work with code, interpret digital assets, and think across borders. Law isn't going away, but the way we practice it is changing *block by block*.

Letter from the YLD President



Hey there, YLD members!

As the weather cools a bit and football season gets underway (Go Carolina!), we're also wrapping up the "first quarter" of our Bar year. And boy, have we been busy! Thank you to everyone who has participated in our events so far. And a SPECIAL THANK YOU to the YLD leaders who have worked hard to provide quality events and programming.

I'm excited to share highlights of what we've accomplished together and the opportunities ahead. Guided by our theme, "Owning the Moment: Through Community, Education, and Service," our division continues to grow stronger because of your energy, creativity, and commitment.

Recent highlights:

- You guys knocked it out of the park with baseball networking events in the 4th, 5th, 9th, and 12th Circuits. Not only did you guys touch base (see what I did there?!) with your fellow young lawyers across different practice areas, you also shared those connections with your family and friends.
- We learned more about South Carolina legal history while touring the International African American Museum.
- 10th Circuit young lawyers had an opportunity to learn from and interact with accomplished federal judges and attorneys during a "courthouse keys" event at the Anderson Federal Courthouse.
- 13th and 16th Circuit members found their zen during wellness events which highlighted the importance of work/life balance as young attorneys.
- The Special Projects Committee welcomed University of South Carolina law students back to school with coffee, doughnuts, and words of encouragement.

A special thank you to all of you who took part in Constitution Day this year. YLD members visited 26 schools, approximately 88 classes, and engaged with over 6,000 students across the state to bring the Constitution to life through interactive presentations and

discussions. Your dedication to sharing your legal knowledge shows the powerful role lawyers play in strengthening our democracy and educating our communities. You never know...your small contribution may have ignited the spark that will result in a future South Carolina Supreme Court Justice!

As we move into the next quarter, we'll continue to build on our momentum with even more opportunities for community, education, and service. Keep an eye out for the YLD Announcements in your inbox. There you will find details about upcoming events and opportunities. I guarantee there's something for everyone, whether you're looking to sharpen your skills, build your network, or just recharge with colleagues.

Thank you for your continued energy and commitment. Together, we are truly owning the moment for our profession.

Warmest regards,

La'Jessica Stringfellow

If you have any questions or would like to discuss how to get involved, please reach out!

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Stars of the Quarter

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