

## Leadership Academy Plans Exciting Year After '08 Graduation

by Sharri Edenfield

The 2008 Leadership Academy was a resounding success with nearly 200 applications for 40 seats. Due to the unanticipated demand, additional seats were created for the overwhelming number of applicants, increasing the 2008 class size from 40 to approximately 55 participants.

Founded in 2006, the Leadership Academy is a program that brings together young lawyers from across the state and from a variety of practice areas to develop them into leaders for their local bars, the YLD and the State Bar. The academy meets once a month for six months, with each session on a different topic. This year, participants were able to obtain all of their required CLE credit through their participation in the Leadership Academy, which was made possible through the cooperation of ICLE.

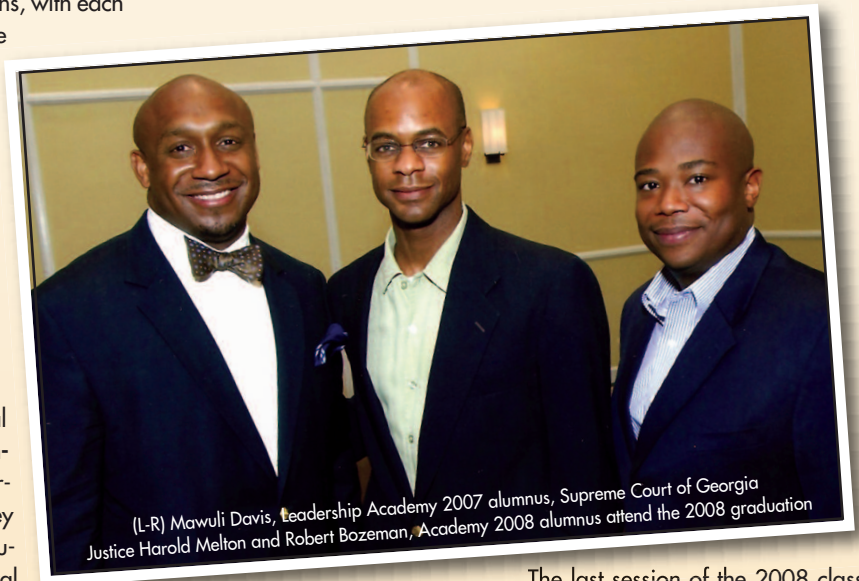
The 2008 academy kicked-off its first session during the Midyear Meeting in Atlanta. Class members participated in panel discussions with various Bar leaders and were treated to a tour of the Bar Center, which is housed in the old Federal Reserve Building. Many participants also attended the YLD signature fundraiser, Soiree de la Chance.

In February, the Leadership Academy had its first annual Day at the Capitol and was graciously hosted by Rep. **Wendell Willard**, who is also a member of the State Bar of Georgia. Gov. **Sonny Perdue** greeted the participants, and they were recognized from the floor of the House and Senate Judiciary Committees and all Georgia lawyers in the General Assembly.

In March, participants traveled to Mercer University School of Law in Macon where they heard Macon Judicial Circuit Judges **Lamar W. Sizemore** and **Tillman E. "Tripp" Self III** discuss professionalism between lawyers from their perspectives as jurists. Additionally, pro bono and community service opportunities were discussed by **Phil Bond**, who serves as the Georgia Legal Services' Macon office's managing attorney, and **June O'Neal**, who serves as the executive director of Macon-based "The Mentor's Project."

The April session took place during the YLD Spring Meeting in Destin, Fla. Transition Into Law Practice Program (TILPP) Director **Doug Ashworth** presented a thought-provoking presentation on what professionalism means in the practice of law.

In May, participants visited the Richard B. Russell Federal Building, home to the U. S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia. They toured the court and after a reception with the judges of the Northern District, listened to presentations by the clerk's office. Judge **Timothy Batten**, Magistrate Judge **Gerrilyn Brill**, and U.S. Rep. **Hank Johnson** also spoke to the group. They also had the opportunity to visit the State Judicial Building and participated in a lively discussion with Judge **John Ellington** of the Court of Appeals of Georgia, who also facilitated a tour of the court.



(L-R) Mawuli Davis, Leadership Academy 2007 alumnus, Supreme Court of Georgia Justice Harold Melton and Robert Bozeman, Academy 2008 alumnus attend the 2008 graduation

The last session of the 2008 class was a graduation ceremony that took place during the State Bar's Annual Meeting in Amelia Island, Fla. All Leadership Academy alumni were invited to attend the luncheon, resulting in record attendance. Supreme Court of Georgia Justice **Harold Melton** was the keynote speaker and gave a motivating and insightful talk on the practice of law. Afterwards, plaques were presented to all graduates from The Leadership Academy. In August, the Leadership Academy was awarded first place in the nation in the Minority Project category by the ABA YLD for its diversity efforts.

The 2009 Leadership Academy will begin in January 2009. Applications and more information regarding the program are available online at [www.gabar.org/young\\_lawyers\\_division](http://www.gabar.org/young_lawyers_division). The deadline for applying will be Nov. 7, 2008. Participants will be notified of their acceptance in early December.