

WAKE BAR FLYER

Wake County Legal Support
Center Open for Business 4

VOL. LXIII • ISSUE 1 | FIRST QUARTER 2023



INCREASING OUR IMPACT THROUGH POWER, FAITH AND JUSTICE

**JUDGE ASHLEIGH PARKER DUNSTON, WCBA &
TENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT BAR PRESIDENT**

THANK YOU FOR affording me the opportunity to serve as your Tenth Judicial District and Wake County Bar Association President. It is truly my honor to lead the best bar in the state of North Carolina! As one of my first official duties, I had the pleasure of

representing our bar at the National Conference of Bar President's Mid-Year Meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana from February 2-4. In addition to networking with other bar presidents from across the country and sharing ways to better serve our members and the community, the highlight of the trip was the second-line parade to the Louisiana Supreme Court for a reception. Imagine, hundreds of attorneys and judges with Mardi Gras beads and flags marching and dancing in the French Quarter streets to a courthouse. It was a sight to see!

Additionally, we learned from Louisiana Supreme Court Chief Justice John Weimer the meaning behind the Mardi Gras colors with green signifying faith, gold signifying power and purple signifying justice. As I reflect upon our theme of "Increasing Our Impact," I'm reminded of how our Bar is a reflection of faith, power and justice within our community.

We are powerful in that we are the gold standard throughout the state for our leadership, mentorship, collegiality and professionalism. We continue to exemplify this through our amazing committees that offer excellent and relevant CLEs, diverse networking opportunities and more access to luncheons and events. We need you to be involved by joining our committees, participating in our activities and providing insight on ways to increase our competency to continue to represent and embody the best attorneys in the state.

We represent faith through our impact on each other. We have already made changes to expand our membership committee to meet your needs, but we also know that the value within the WCBA is so great and critical that there should not be a member of the Tenth that is also not a member of the WCBA. So share the wealth! As we embark on celebrating our 100th Anniversary of the WCBA in 2025, please take the time this year to invite all of your friends and colleagues to not miss out on being a part of this amazing voluntary bar.

Lastly, we promote justice in our community through multiple ways, but most recently through the opening of the Wake County Legal Support Center on January 9. This Center serves as a resource hub for the citizens of Wake County by providing assistance with domestic and small claims packets, referrals to attorneys, local agencies and free clinics on relevant topics. In partnership with members of our bar such as Jennifer Lechner and the NC Equal Access to Justice Commission, Ashley Campbell and Legal Aid of North Carolina, Dean Leonard and Campbell Law School, Brian Oten and the NC State Bar, Matt Calabria and the Wake County Board of Commissioners and so many others, the Center has already serviced more than 525 individuals and counting in a little over a month with limited hours! These are more than just numbers – these are people who would not have received this type of assistance otherwise. If you haven't had a chance, please go to the 1st floor of the Wake County Courthouse and take a tour and meet the amazing staff who are serving every single day! Stay tuned as the Center will be seeking paralegals and attorneys to volunteer soon. We are promoting equal access to justice in Wake County and eventually across the state of NC!

Our heart for our profession, community and each other is unmatched. So as we embark on this new year for the Tenth Judicial District and WCBA, I implore you to put on your beads of power, faith and justice by increasing your participation. Let's dance and march in rhythm together to the beat of serving others within our profession and in the community so that we can make the biggest impact that Wake County has ever seen! **WBF**

UPCOMING EVENTS

YLD MARCH SOCIAL AT CLOUDS BREWING
Thursday, March 9 | 5 - 7 p.m.

BREAKFAST DISCUSSION SERIES
**EXTREME PUNISHMENT: THE TRUE STORY OF LAW
PROFESSOR DAN MARKEL'S MURDER**
Wednesday, March 15 | 7:30 - 8:30 a.m.
Campbell Law School or Zoom

RULE OF LAW
Wednesday, March 15
11 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Campbell Law School

WCBA LUNCHEON AT NC STATE UNIVERSITY CLUB
Tuesday, April 4
Lunch Begins 12:15 p.m.; Program Begins 12:45 p.m.

LEARN OVER LUNCH
MARIJUANA AND SYNTHETIC CANNABINOIDS
Thursday, April 6 | 1 - 2 p.m.
Zoom

BREAKFAST DISCUSSION SERIES
POST-COVID LANDLORD-TENANT ISSUES
Wednesday, April 19 | 7:30 - 8:30 a.m.
Campbell Law School or Zoom

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**WAKE COUNTY
BAR ASSOCIATION**

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WAKE BAR FLYER

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A NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

WHITNEY D.G. VON HAAM, WAKE COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION



IT ISN'T HARD to come up with a person who has been impactful on me, particularly in my professional life. When I walked into the NC Bar Center in September 2000, I had very little idea that my career was about to take a pretty big turn. I had just moved from Atlanta — and when I say “just,” I mean that my belongings were all still there, but I had come to Raleigh a few days early to have an in-person interview for the assistant director of communications role at the North Carolina Bar Association.

When I sat down with Allan Head, he was both kind and uniquely charismatic, and when I told him that I was fleeing the terrible traffic-laden commute I had in Atlanta, he exclaimed, “from where your new apartment is located, you couldn’t ask for an easier drive to work!” When I was offered the job the next day, as the movers were moving furniture into the apartment, I didn’t

even take time to respond — I accepted on the spot, and two days later, I attended my first NCBA committee meeting — ironically, the communications committee, where I met WCBA past president Ed Gaskins.

Allan and I had many adventures together through my decade of working at the NCBA, most of the time spent as his Director of Membership. We drove through small towns, where he’d yell hello out the window to every lawyer he knew. I received multiple tours of the Wake Forest University campus, where he shared stories of college. We completed more law school visits together than I can count, and the annual meeting drive with his wife Patti was a tradition — whether it was a year at the beach or the mountains.

Now, like all important and impactful relationships, ours wasn’t always rosy and perfect. We had times when I’d be mad at him or bring up topics that he really didn’t want to hear. I was probably a bit of a burr in his side, but I was always honest. He probably didn’t quite know what to do with such an outspoken feminist, or someone willing to push back for what she felt was the greater good. I wasn’t afraid to point out problem areas, and we continued to agree to disagree on our definitions of fairness... a heated debate we once held in front of the management staff at a retreat.

However, through good times and bad, I have always been cognizant of the fact that I wouldn’t be where I am today without Allan’s coaxing and tutelage. I hold every one of our members in the highest regard, and never lose sight that the members are the lifeblood of a bar association. I even take any chance I can to yell out to Tenth JD Bar members as they walk downtown, just like Allan would have.

Allan was a colorful man with many great sayings, and for those lucky enough to have scored one of his “Headnotes” books, I’ll do you one better: I have all three iterations — original, 2.0 and Gold. And, since this phrase was one of his cherished ideals, I hope it is one that I’ve put into place for the WCBA, having “left the campsite better than I found it.” Thank you, Allan. **WBF**

2022 BAR AWARDS CHECK PRESENTATION

THE FINAL TALLY is in and after months of anticipation, a check for more than \$87,000 was presented to representatives from Legal Aid of North Carolina on February 21. A big thanks to everyone who contributed, we can't wait to see what this year's event brings!

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Pictured L-R: WCBA President Judge Ashleigh Parker Dunston; LANC Executive Director Ashley Campbell; Pamela Thombs, LANC Raleigh Managing Attorney; 2022 Bar Awards Chair David Boaz; and WCBA Immediate Past President Yvonne Armendariz



THE WAKE COUNTY LEGAL SUPPORT CENTER IS OPEN FOR BUSINESS

**JENNIFER LECHNER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
NC EQUAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE COMMISSION**



CIVIL LEGAL PROBLEMS impact the most basic human needs: housing, health care, safety, economic stability, and family structure, among others. Legal aid providers help meet these fundamental needs through providing expert representation in the areas of domestic violence protection, divorce, child custody, housing, consumer protection, employment, veterans' benefits and health.

There is only one legal aid attorney for almost every 10,000 of those eligible to be served in North Carolina. In Wake County, 11% of residents live in poverty. More than 70% of low-income families encounter at least one civil legal issue in a given year. The ultimate result of these unmet needs is the substantial number of Wake County residents managing the judicial system without any legal representation.

The mission of the Wake County Legal Support Center ("Legal Support Center") is to increase access to justice for residents of Wake County by serving as a resource hub for self-represented litigants in civil legal matters. The Legal Support Center provides access to legal forms and information packets that address common problems like family law and housing, while partnering with community organizations to provide free legal clinics and access to other social services and community resources. The Legal Support Center serves as a resource hub for pro se litigants in civil legal matters. Self-represented litigants will access Guide and File, tutorials on basic legal matters, and meet with pro bono attorneys and law students for further assistance.

The Legal Support Center is housed on the first floor of the Wake County Courthouse and is open from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. every day. There are three staff to coordinate materials and volunteers and to provide guidance to self-represented litigants.

Staff and volunteers:

- Provide access to legal forms and informational packets that address common problems like family law and housing.
- Assist users in understanding the complicated court process and how it impacts them.
- Informational packets are available for users to reference as they file certain common case types like absolute divorce, custody, summary ejectment.
- These resources will ultimately also become available online.
- Partner with community organizations to provide free legal clinics and access to other social services and community resources.
- Additional programming will ultimately include: Attorney for the Day program, legal referrals, attorneys willing to provide limited scope services for pro bono/low bono clients in response to community need.
- Assist users as they acclimate to navigating the new eCourts and eFiling system.

The Legal Support Center tracks demographic and legal data for all visitors. At the time of this writing, there are five weeks of data and already some trends are emerging:

- More than 500 visitors have been helped in just five weeks of operation.
- The most common legal issues are child custody/visitation, child support, divorce, small claims, and eviction.
- 69% of visitors have children.
- 58% of visitors are Black/African American, 24% White/Caucasian, and 11% are Hispanic/Latino.

The Legal Support Center is supported by the Wake County Bar Foundation, Wake County, City of Raleigh, the NC Judicial Branch and the NC Equal Access to Justice Commission. To learn more about its work or to donate, please visit wakelsc.org. **WBF**



Photos courtesy of Wake County Government



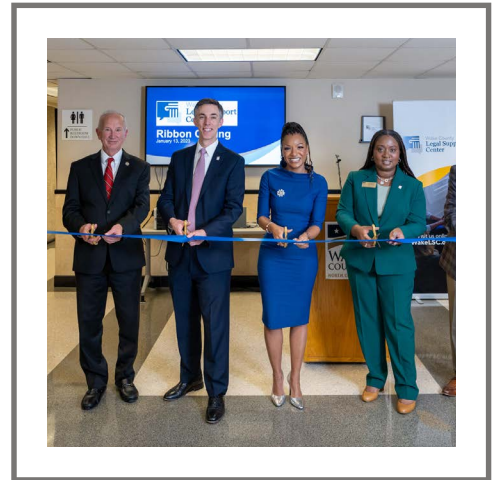
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Kendra Stark is Senior Counsel with Gordon & Rees. She is chair of the Public Service Committee and serves on the WCBA Board of Directors.

DIRECT EXAMINATION: KENDRA STARK

DIRECT EXAMINATION IS THE FIRST opportunity for the jury to meet a witness. An effective lawyer will use the opportunity to personalize the witness, making the witness appear both likeable and credible. At the end of the day, the direct examination is a party's best chance to tell his or her story.

1. When you were in elementary school, what did you want to be when you grew up?

To be honest, I think I wanted to be whatever my older sister wanted to be! In elementary school, that was probably a veterinarian. I was a classic little sister, always following her around and copying everything she did.

2. What was the most important lesson your parents taught you?

The value of hard work. My parents taught me, and showed me, that regardless of where you start out, hard work and commitment to yourself and your goals can take you where you want to go.

3. Who was your favorite teacher and why?

My favorite teacher was my second grade teacher, Mrs. Legg. Even as a child, I was intensely focused on academics. Mrs. Legg encouraged me to explore my interests and hobbies outside of the classroom, like music and sports. Those interests have stuck with me through adulthood, and they provide me with an outlet outside of work to de-stress and explore a different side of myself.

4. Did you love or hate law school?

A little bit of both! It was of course stressful at times, but I had excellent professors who helped me develop a passion for courtroom advocacy and pro bono work. I also made incredible, supportive

friends who I've stayed close with even after we graduated and moved to different places. Attending law school in North Carolina also made me fall in love with the state and decide to stay here to practice. Law school gave me much to be grateful for, but I'd be lying if I said I wasn't happy to be done with it. (Go Deacs!)

5. What was your most embarrassing courtroom experience?

There are quite a few, but my favorite is probably the time I was in a county I had never been to, wandering around the courthouse which was under construction, trying to find the right courtroom for calendar call (after security had already tried to help me several times). I tripped and twisted my ankle. I had to very conspicuously hobble into calendar call late and nearly in tears. And I lost my motion.

6. What was your best courtroom experience?

My first dispositive motion argument. I was in a very small county, where most of the lawyers there knew the judge and each another. I was shaking I was so nervous, but I got through it. After the hearing, a few of the other attorneys there shook my hand, complimented me on my argument, and reminded me that everyone was new once. I'll never forget that kindness. It made me grateful to practice in North Carolina.

7. Why did you become a lawyer?

I never planned on attending law school. I was working at a nonprofit in New York, assisting the legal team on research and advocacy. My plan at that time was to get my MSW and stay in the nonprofit world. One of the lawyers on the team saw potential in me, and encouraged me to take the LSAT. I did well, got a scholarship to law school, and decided to give it a shot. Ten years later, here I am.

8. What has been the most surprising or unexpected development in your career?

A few years ago I was given the opportunity to join my now-partner in building the Raleigh office of a national firm. I loved the firm where I was working, but it felt like a professional opportunity I couldn't pass up. We went from a team of two litigators to a dozen in under two years. It has been an incredible experience, and I've learned I really love the management side of my practice.

9. What is your favorite book?

This might be a silly answer, but I have a book my parents read to me as a child called Treasury of Virtues. It's filled with classic children's stories like The Boy Who Cried Wolf and The Emperor's New Clothes. I keep it by my desk at home. It's a nice reminder of simpler times, and I hope to pass it along to the children in my family one day.

10. What is your most marked characteristic?

Probably my competitiveness. It can be good and bad. I think it makes me fun to watch sports with, but not very fun to play board games with.

11. What is your hidden talent?

I know lawyers always joke about being bad at math, but I actually loved math growing up. I was a mathlete all through grades school, and I would travel around my region and compete. I'm sure my dad still has my trophies in the attic somewhere...

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

DIRECT EXAMINATION, CONTINUED

12. Who are your real-life heroes?

Definitely my family. My sister is an incredible mom, an ultra-successful real estate agent, and one of the kindest people you'll ever meet. My dad works harder than anyone I know. He's a veteran and worked multiple demanding jobs when I was growing up to take care of our family. And my mom is amazingly intelligent and exceptionally generous. She volunteers all the time, everywhere - from the Red Cross disaster response team to her local elections - and she gave me my love of public service. I'm so lucky to have them all in my life.

13. When and where were you happiest?

I hiked the Coast-to-Coast trail after I took the bar exam. It's a 200-mile trail from the western to the eastern coast of northern England. Celebrating completing that hike, completing law school and completing the bar exam all together was one of my happiest moments. **WBF**



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HOW A WIND-DOWN RITUAL PREPARES ME FOR SUCCESS

BY CAMILLE STELL | LAWYERS MUTUAL

ONE OF MY work habits that has had the most impact on my daily routine and my transition away from work was developed during the pandemic. I employ a wind-down routine marking the end of my workday. I heard about the concept from my writing coach, Daphne Gray-Grant. Daphne calls it a shutdown ritual, and you can read more about her process [here](#).

In the before (pandemic) times, I stepped away from my work by getting in my car for an hour commute. I thought about my day, but I also began to naturally transition away from my work mindset. I listened to music or a podcast, I ran errands, or thought about meal planning, and by the time I was home, my day was behind me. I found that during the pandemic, when my office was 13 stairs above my family room, I needed a transition time, I needed a ritual.

Working from home is wonderful in so many respects, but it is also easy for the lines to blur. For emails and Zoom calls to bleed into personal time. Research shows that we need to manage control over work-life boundaries to create a crucial buffer to manage after-hours work stress. According to ScienceDaily, "when work intrudes after hours in the form of pings and buzzes from smartphone alerts, it can cause spikes of stress that lead to a host of adverse effects for workers, including negative work rumination, poor affect and insomnia."

Here are the five steps I created for my wind-down ritual that mark the end of my workday and prepares me for a successful tomorrow. I allocate 30-40 minutes for my wind-down routine. While I may not do this every day, the days that I do I feel more ready to step away from my desk and better prepared to approach it the next morning.

1. **I wrap up my day.** I spend 10-20 minutes doing a final check of voice mail and email for the day. I make sure I haven't overlooked anything important, and if I have, I add it to my project management tool, Trello.
2. **I plan for upcoming meetings.** If I'm meeting with a client, I make sure I have my notes together, I've completed any open action items, and confirm the details of the meeting. Is this a Zoom or in-person? Am I coaching or consulting? Do I have any deliverables that are due to my clients?
3. **I plan for tomorrow.** I review my Trello board to mark projects complete as well as take stock of open projects. I prioritize tasks and create my tomorrow to-do list containing no more than 3-5 items that must be completed. I then schedule time on my calendar to complete the work. For me, time-blocking on my calendar is another one of the best disciplines I have learned from this routine. Before, I often stared at an impossibly long to-do list, with no plan for how to tackle it. That is no longer the case. For the first time, I use my calendar to not only block off time for other people, but to time block for my benefit.
4. **I create a visual tool.** Using a 4 x 6 index card and my favorite purple pen, I outline tomorrow's schedule. Yes, Trello is the electronic version of this index card, but for me, this single white card with times and tasks noted provides a visual reminder and allows me the pleasure of striking through a completed item. It also makes the day seem more manageable. Everything that "must" happen is contained on a 4 x 6 card — that is not as overwhelming as my entire Trello where a year's worth of projects are outlined.
5. **I engage in my affirmation practice.** Each year since the pandemic started, I have maintained an affirmation practice. For some people, choosing a word of the year provides focus, for others setting resolutions is key. An affirmation practice resonates with me. In 2020, I felt unmoored. Setting affirmations, reviewing them in the morning and again in the evening and speaking them out loud was a coaching conversation with myself. The words uplifted me or encouraged me to try harder. As I wrote my 2022 affirmations and compared them to my 2020 writings, I could see the progress I had made in feeling more settled in an unsettled time. Before I started my affirmation practice, I looked at the work of Louise Hay, Lori Deschene who created TinyBuddha.com, and Mastin Kipp, who was creating crisis related affirmations. From these leaders in the concept of the practice, I received insight on how to create affirmations that met my personal circumstances.

A wind-down ritual has become a sacred time for me. It settles me and prepares me to walk away from a desk that is still full of undone work without carrying that work with me into my personal time. Consider creating your own ritual that will allow you to build that crucial buffer between working hours and after-work time. **WBF**



Camille Stell is the President of Lawyers Mutual Consulting & Services and the co-author of the newly published book, *RESPECT — An Insight to Attorney Compensation Plans* available from Amazon. Continue this conversation by contacting Camille at camille@lawyersmutualconsulting.com or 800.662.8843.



Meeting the Moment

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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

WE WELCOMED THE NEWEST MEMBERS APPROVED AT THE JUNE, AUGUST, AND OCTOBER 2022 MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

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Christopher West | Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP
Shannon Williamson
Kyla Wonder | Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough LLP
April Wood | NC Court of Appeals
Louis Woodruff | Attorney Louis F. Woodruff
Katrina Worrell Ballard
Valerie Zaloom
Alexander Zupancic | PPD Inc



BarCARES®

BarCARES can make a difference for Judicial District & Local Bar Members!

BarCARES is a confidential short-term counseling, coaching and crisis intervention program created as a cost-free way of helping attorneys locate assistance to deal with the problems that might be causing stress. BarCARES is provided cost-free to members of bar groups that establish a BarCARES program. A number of judicial district and local bars, law schools and other bar related groups across the state have already chosen to offer this program.

BarCARES of North Carolina, Inc. (BCNC) is a nonprofit corporation that works to expand the program to attorneys throughout North Carolina, and it monitors the overall BarCARES program operation. BarCARES, endorsed by the North Carolina Bar Association, is made possible by funding from bar groups that establish a BarCARES program, BCNC, the North Carolina Bar Association and its Foundation, and Lawyers Insurance Agency.

BarCARES can be used for problems such as:

Personal Issues

- crisis intervention
- depression and anxiety
- substance abuse (drug or alcohol)
- financial concerns
- career counseling

Family Issues

- marriage or relationship issues
- children or adolescents
- parenting
- family conflict

Work Functions

- professional stressors
- course related stress
- conflict resolution

BarCARES provides members of established programs in judicial districts, bar associations, law schools and organizations up to three free visits each year. In some programs the visits may be available to family members. Contact the BarCARES Program Coordinator for information about which BarCARES services are available to you.

BarCARES Initiative extends a statewide program offer to any member of the NCBA who lives in an area where BarCARES is not yet available. This is a one-time benefit of three sessions under the program. You may contact the BarCARES Coordinator for information about which BarCARES services are available to you.

BarCARES sessions can be used to provide assistance in resolving problems or accessing the appropriate source of help. Sometimes three sessions will be enough to take care of a problem. If it looks like the problem may require a longer term solution, the initial visits may be used to help identify the problem, to develop goals and a plan, and to access an appropriate resource, often covered under your health insurance plan. Every effort will be made for you to see a counselor who is also an approved provider under your group insurance in the event you wish to continue after the program visits are used.

BarCARES is a confidential program, no one will know if you access the program but you and anyone you choose to tell. No personally identifiable information is shared with the BarCARES Board; the associated state, local voluntary or judicial district bar association; or any other entity without the permission of the BarCARES client/user. Additionally, any health related information included in the sessions will follow federal HIPAA Privacy & Security Rules as stated in [HRC's HIPAA Privacy & Security statement](#).

BarCARES program benefits are accessed by contacting the BarCARES Program Coordinator at HRC Behavioral Health & Psychiatry, PA, at 1.800.640.0735. You may also contact the BarCARES Program Coordinator just to ask questions about the program and the services it provides.

