



Technical Community
College

RESPONSE TO RFP - LEGAL SERVICES

June 24, 2024

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Cover Letter



This will be on Camden's letter head in final form.

Dear Legal Services Procurement Team, (or say, To Whom it May Concern)

Please accept the following materials in response to North Carolina's ("the State") Request for Proposal ("RFP"), on behalf of Technical Community College ("TCC"), for the provision of legal services. Parker Poe Adams & Bernstein LLP ("Parker Poe") would be honored to assist TCC with legal services necessary to support the ongoing business and operational needs related to investigating, advising, negotiating, drafting, reviewing documents, and litigation or representation in court, administrative hearings or alternative dispute resolution processes.

It is our intent in these materials to illustrate our experience with public and private sector clients in the higher education and governmental/municipal sectors. Included in our response are bios of a well-appointed team of attorneys with the necessary qualifications and experience to assist with the specifications and scope of work as laid out in the RFP. This team includes lead attorneys for each area of legal representation requested that reside in North Carolina and are in good standing with the North Carolina State Bar. Also included on the team, are additional key attorney advisors from other firm offices that bring exceptional skill and knowledge in particular areas of education law and policy important to TCC.

Parker Poe is a North Carolinas-based law firm, organized as a limited liability partnership, with over 275 attorneys spread across 8 offices including in NC, Raleigh and Charlotte; SC, Columbia, Greenville, Spartanburg and Charleston; Georgia, Atlanta; and Washington, DC. We trace our roots back to 1884 and over these many years, the firm has represented many of the Southeast's higher education institutions.

The principal contact for this proposed work would be:

Camden Betz, Partner

301 Fayetteville St. Suite 1400

Raleigh, NC 27601

(919) 835-4049

camdenbetz@parkerpoe.com

As the principal attorney on this submittal, I attest to the following:

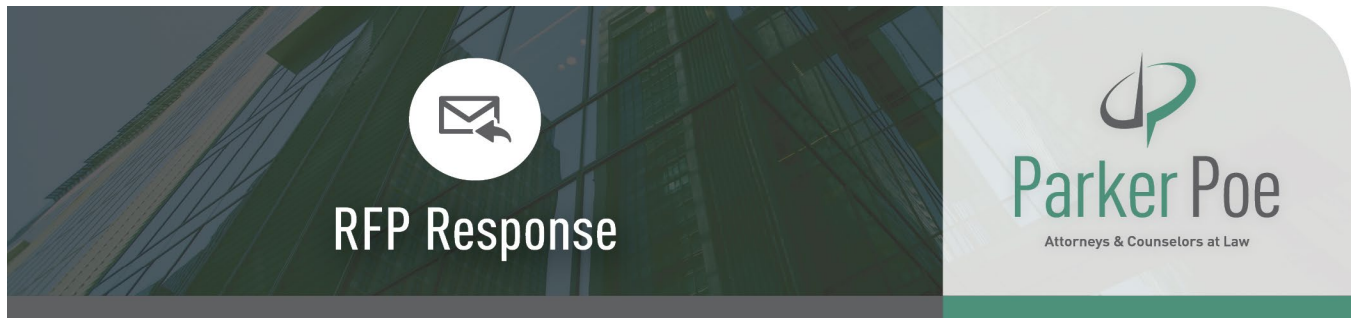
- we have read the RFP in its entirety including all links, and all addenda released in conjunction with;
- we agree to perform in accordance with the scope of work, requirements, and specifications contained herein;
- we agree to comply with all instructions, terms and conditions, and attachments.

Cover Letter



This team we've assembled for this RFP response, is excited about this opportunity to serve TCC as an important institution of higher learning, serving not only approximately 64,000 students, but employers and other key stakeholders in our State.

We sincerely appreciate your consideration of this proposal and look forward to meeting your team and learning more about the legal department's goals as they help TCC continue in excellence as North Carolinas's largest community college.



Signed and Executed Pages of the RFP

The full RFP, executed and signed, was loaded into Ariba under section 6. Vendor Response, 6.1 Return Solicitation.



RFP Response



Proposal Addressing all Specifications and Scope of Work

Parker Poe has one of the largest and most experienced education law teams in the Southeast. We have over 40 attorneys who advise public and private colleges and universities, K-12 public and private schools, and charter schools, working to advance their missions and education initiatives in their respective states. We have represented educational institutions in every type of legal need that arises. This experience working with multiple institutions and in various states, gives our team a unique perspective into the education industry as a business, and the laws and policies governing them.

Our understanding of the unique needs of schools and colleges comes from decades of experience and a cross-disciplinary practice featuring attorneys with deep knowledge of cybersecurity and data privacy, disability law, employment decisions, intellectual property, public finance, real estate, and Title IX compliance, as just a few examples of legal issues education institutions face.

We regularly serve as outside counsel, with education clients turning to us for strategic guidance on how to bring the mission and vision of their institutions to life. We have a politically savvy group that is adept at shepherding clients through sensitive issues and providing practical counsel. Our attorneys are deeply committed to education, many of them former educators themselves. Clients often consider us an extension of their team because of how we understand their culture, keep them abreast of legal and broader educational trends, and help them find a path to achieve their goals.

Our Relationship with TCC

Parker Poe has enjoyed a successful partnership with TCC over the years, as partners on projects advancing the state's economy, supporters and advocates of key landmark litigation cases affecting education at all levels, and as a client of the firm which has allowed us to learn about your business and operations. Along with previous matters over the years, the following are representative matters in the past year in which we have advised TCC:

- Study Abroad Program - We reviewed the program handbook, policies, etc.
- Eagle Advantage Program - We advised TCC on their book program in response to a student claim of anti-trust violations.
- Ill Campus - We are representing TCC on a new campus development and redevelopment plan involving a partnership between public and private stakeholders. Our advice and counsel to date has included assisting with land use & zoning, entitlements and other matters of due diligence, and drafting, reviewing and negotiating real estate transactions including acquisition, transfer of land, leasing and more.

Under the specifications and scope outlined below and as requested by TCC in this RFP, we have provided bulleted experience of our team from previous representative matters for similar institutions to TCC. Due to client confidentiality, we are not able to provide specific examples of client representations but the references we have provided in Attachment E have been approved for use and provide additional specific client experience.



RFP Response



Governance & Leadership

Appropriate governance and policy development are critical tools to avoid costly litigation and prevent legal challenges. It also permits boards and leaders to appropriately and lawfully communicate their processes and expectations to stakeholders to garner support for their strategic growth goals to support their missions. Our experience providing legal advice to governing boards, college or university presidents, and administration includes:

- Developing, implementing, and revising a broad range of policies.
- Advising on open meetings, open records, and other sunshine laws.
- Drafting and negotiating MOU's between colleges & universities and their foundations.
- Training boards on governance vs. management best practices.
- Connecting our high education client's expertise to members legislature and government agencies and building collaborative relationships with state policymakers on policies related to higher education, public safety, healthcare, employment and more.
- Identifying federal and state funding opportunities including under special government programs.
- Advising on all federal laws that govern the administration of federal higher education programs.
- Advice and counsel on first amendment/constitutional issues (including free speech and entanglement clause).

Proposed Team: Melanie Dubis is put forth to lead the firm's team of advisors in the area of governance and policy advice. As her bio states below, Melanie has experience representing public clients, including on matters related to education at all levels and work on matters in North Carolina that has positioned Melanie as an advisor understanding the positions of all governing parties from the state's legislature to executive branch, attorney general's office and State Board of Community Colleges and UNC System Board of Governors.

Melanie will be joined on the team by Scott Bayzle who has specific experience representing higher educational institutions in policy development and litigation avoidance and has recent experience representing TCC on a matter highlighted above. Bruce Thompson, state and federal lobbyist and head of the firm's Federal Strategies group is also included on this team to help with any related matters of public policy and/or requiring government relations assistance. During his past tenure with the State's Attorney General's office, Bruce represented the NC Community College System and UNC System. Melanie will also have the full resources of the firm's education industry team including, as special advisors in this area, Nina Gupta, Sherry Culves, and Suzanne Wilcox who bring combined over 50 years of experience representing higher education institutions across the southeast and have an excellent reputation of advising on governance and policy matters.

Human Resources



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We are experienced in representing education institutions in virtually every type of employment and labor issue, including litigation, employee benefits, tax, immigration, legislative representation, and structuring contracts for highly paid employees. Our experience includes but is not limited to:

- Handling faculty tenure and contract renewal/non-renewal issues, including internal administrative proceedings and constitutional issues affecting public institutions.
- Drafting and revising student, faculty, and staff handbooks.
- Defending clients against all types of federal discrimination claims, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) charges, Department of Justice investigations, Department of Education and Office of Civil Rights investigations.
- Representing universities and colleges in reductions in force.
- Helping clients investigate allegations of discrimination, misconduct and retaliation and carry out their procedural due process.
 - Conducted an extensive internal investigation regarding allegations of harassment, abuse and retaliation being made against the coaching staff of a university men's wrestling program.
 - Retained by a North Carolina university to conduct an investigation into a complaint of national origin harassment and produce a pre-litigation report to help with addressing the claim and building a defense.
 - Defended a North Carolina university against a former coach's claims of gender discrimination and retaliation. The case was particularly sensitive because it involved numerous students, parents of students and other college officials. Following intense discovery on the part of our team, the former employee dismissed her claims.
- Advising on leave management, including under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Advising colleges and universities on compliance under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and the North Carolina Wage and Hour Act (NCWHA).
- Providing counsel on executive compensation for college presidents, other members of administration and faculty as relevant, including conducting compensation studies and negotiating initial contracts and exit packages.
- Providing employee benefits representation on such matters as 403(b) and other retirement programs, 457 and non-qualified executive compensation plans, tax-exemption issues, and medical and other welfare plans.
- Handling visa and immigration matters affecting students, faculty, and staff.
- Handling workers' compensation claims from initial reporting to litigation. **Lindsay would we do this in NC? I didnt think so.**



RFP Response



Proposed Team: Tory Summey would lead the firm's efforts in advising on the scope of needs as laid out in this RFP. He would be supported by Patti Bartis, who has years of experience in both HR advising and employment litigation matters and has advised several institutions on litigation avoidance. They will also have the full resources of the greater education industry team and including: Shalana Pirtle, an experienced employment attorney with experience on internal investigations and matters related to DEI; Alexis Trumble and Nana Asante-Smith, two Senior level Associates with years of experience and dedication to the myriads of issues surrounding Title IX; and a deep bench of additional employment attorneys, **(add a link to website empl professionals page)** with education experience, available to assist as matters require.

Business and Finance

We have vast experience advising on education clients' legal needs around their institutions business operations and including related to finance, tax, intellectual property, corporate transactions, commercial contracts, procurement and more. This also includes liability defense related to claims which could cause financial exposure. Our experience in litigation defense is outlined below in the special section added to highlight litigation.

Related to business and finance, we routinely assist in-house legal departments of higher education institutions as they support the school's various internal departments, working with and between the management of business units including chief financial officers, and other members of administration, to help with any and all types of business-related transactions. We have touched on virtually every area of need as outlined in the RFP. We have picked a few key areas of need that encompass the majority of need we think under this section, to illustrate our experience.

Specific to Finance transactions, representative experience includes but is not limited to:

- Serving as bond counsel for 14 of the 16 universities in the Carolina College system as well as several private colleges, secondary schools, and charter schools. (We understand that bonds for community colleges in the state are issued by the counties, and we have experience as bond counsel for those counties as well. We include this experience as relevant to our understanding of complex public finance).
- Assisting with drafting and issuing tax anticipation notes, general obligation bonds, and qualified school construction bonds.
- Drafting and negotiating intergovernmental agreements for the contribution of educational taxes to tax allocation districts (also known as tax increment financing) in support of economic development.
- Advising on niche tax issues relevant to education and related to public finance transactions.
- Advising on construction using New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) and Qualified Active Low-Income Community Business financing
 - Counsel to a community college in a NMTC financing for transforming an abandoned high school into a satellite community college.



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- Counsel to a college as the QALICB in the financing of a real estate project.
- Working with banks and underwriters on public offerings and other finance transactions for education clients, such as serving as underwriter's counsel and lender's counsel on multiple college and university financing deals.

Specific to Intellectual Property, we have years of experience helping education clients develop, register, enforce, and commercialize their intellectual property rights. Representative experience includes:

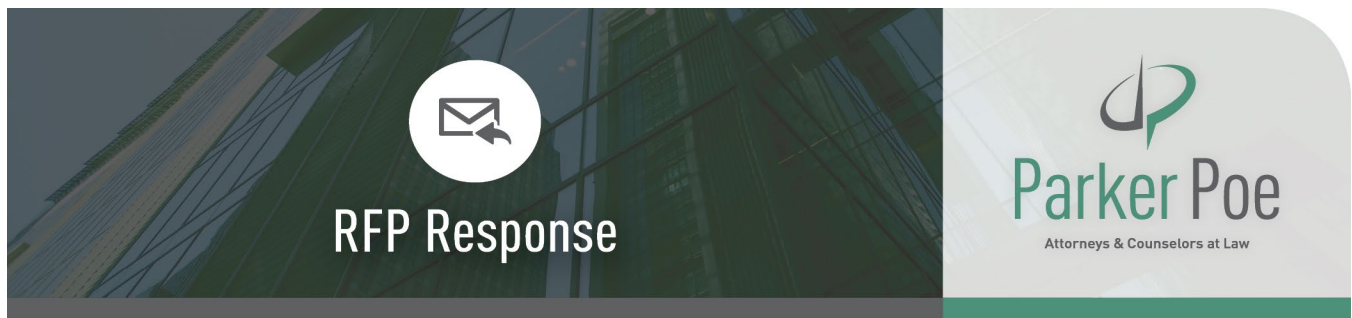
- Assisting with registration, maintenance, protection, and defense of trademarks and copyrights.
- Helping clients maximize the benefits of their intellectual property assets through licensing, donation, sale, technology transfer, and other creative methods.
- Managing the trademark portfolios of universities across North Carolina.
- Assisting with various rebranding campaigns related to individual schools, alumni groups, and other affinity groups at multiple institutions in the UNC System.
- Counseling UNC System universities on the commercialization of their inventions, including the preparation and negotiation of tech transfer license agreements monetizing proprietary patents and software.

Will Cannon will lead the firm's team of intellectual property attorneys to help TCC on related matters and he will be supported by Laura Wright and Sloane Carpenter, as well as Laura Lashley mentioned below for contracts.

Specific to Commercial Contracts, Parker Poe is currently assisting a variety of colleges and universities with their commercial contract flow work. This work includes setting up a dedicated team of attorneys that builds a working knowledge of your institutions operations and sets up best practices in handling the increasing flow of legal contracts involved in all the organization's affairs.

- Our attorneys assist with the drafting, review and negotiations of contracts and agreements supporting all departments of the College including purchasing & procurement, business affairs and development, facilities management, human resources, information technology and more. Current trends show an increase in contracts related to: vendor agreements; SaaS agreements and other technology contracts; healthcare and insurance agreements; event and use of facilities contracts and licenses; and collaboration agreements with other universities and colleges.
- Our contracts team offers value-added training on behalf of the in-house legal team, to their business team counterparts, on key contract issue spotting and best practices for consistent contract review.

Elizabeth Trenary will lead the firm's support of TCC on commercial contracts of various types. She has trained a team of attorneys on best practices in contract management, including _____, who is an associate with over three years of experience working with educational institutions on their contract flow needs. She will also have the support of Laura Lashley, who's bio is included below as an important resource to the TCC and member of our education industry team with extensive experience assisting



colleges and universities with their commercial contracts needs by working with vendors to handle contract negotiations, procurements, and program implementation.

Specific to Creditor's Rights (bankruptcy, collections and related), the firm's experience includes **Darar sending me some language**. Brian Darar will lead the firm's efforts in assisting TCC with these matters.

Specific to State and Local Tax ("SALT") advice and counsel, Parker Poe's SALT team are highly experienced in advising clients on all state and local tax laws that would come into play in the operations of the College. Our attorneys have build professional relationships with state and federal departments of revenue and related government tax offices that help us to better serve clients in this complex and changing area of law. Our clients have included both public and private organizations in North Carolina. The lead attorney put forth to advise TCC on SALT issues is Kay Hobart, former special deputy attorney general for the revenue section of the North Carolina Department of Justice. She would have the full resources of Parker Poe's tax team **INSERT LINK TO TAX PROFESSIONALS PAGE** with a deep bench of attorneys specialized in federal and state tax laws.

Proposed Team: We have listed above lead attorneys for some top areas of need under this section. They will be available to discuss any of the needs in this section and will deploy the full resources of Parker Poe's education industry team, that includes attorneys with specialized skills in all of the areas of legal services needs related to business and finance, in support of TCC.

Facilities

Our team assists educational institutions with the full cycle of real estate services and has specific experience in the mechanisms that colleges and universities often utilize, such as public-private partnerships for developing campus improvements and new development, licenses and contracts for facilities use, and more. Along with our experience highlighted above for TCC, Parker Poe has served as counsel for universities and colleges on real estate acquisitions, dispositions, land use & zoning, entitlements, leases, financings, title examinations and due diligence inspections, development and construction contracts, and title insurance needs.

Representative Real Estate Matters for Public Clients Include:

- Counseling North Carolina State University in connection with the development and redevelopment and rezoning of Centennial Campus, including negotiating public-private partnerships entered into by the university to benefit students, researchers, public agencies, and businesses.
- Advising a large private University in North Carolina in connection with multiple new construction and renovation projects, as well as related supplier disputes.
- Providing counsel to a North Carolina university in an arrangement with its foundation in the development and lease of multiple student housing projects.
- Represented a private North Carolina university in the closing of loans in an aggregate amount of over \$43 million for capital improvements including construction of a health sciences school and redevelopment of a residence hall.



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- Represented a UNC System school in the negotiation of ground lease, purchase and sale agreements, and development terms for lease, sale and development of University Endowment-owned properties adjoining University campus.
- Advising on all aspects of state and federal environmental regulations related to facilities operations and business transactions affecting new and redeveloped facilities and campuses. Our environmental team has advised on due diligence, risk allocation, permit transfers, environmental assessments, representations and warranties, indemnities, access agreements, remediation agreements, and more related to real estate development and redevelopment projects for colleges and universities.
- Advice and counsel on policies regulating the use of campus facilities.
- Drafting and negotiating facility use licenses and leases.

Proposed Team: Camden Betz, TCC relationship attorney, will lead the facilities team and has proposed a versatile team of attorneys with extensive public entity experience in land use & zoning (led by Jamie Schwedler), real estate transactions and environmental regulatory (led by Drew Hargrove).

Information Technology

Today's colleges and universities are at the center of the technological revolutions with many benefits but also the challenge of ever-changing regulations. Parker Poe's education industry team attorneys have advised on every need outlined in the scope of work in the RFP under this section. Our experience in software development and licensing is included under our intellectual property section above and would be handled by that team of attorneys along with contract attorneys named above, all with significant experience in IT contracts, agreements and licensing.

Higher education administrators and leaders must now consider data privacy and security as integral aspects of their institutional digital footprint. With U.S. federal agencies strengthening federal laws to encompass stricter regulations around privacy and security, such as the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (GLBA) and the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), and the American Data Privacy Protection Act looming in the wings, clients in the higher education community are relying on us more frequently to help shape policies and implement changes to avoid future scrutiny or incidents. Clients of our firm benefit from Parker Poe's education industry team hosting six attorneys who have earned certifications from the International Association of Privacy Professionals (IAPP). Along with continuing their legal education in data security and privacy laws, they have been tracking data security and privacy cases in the education industry and have worked on matters across the country for colleges and universities finding themselves under the scrutiny of governmental agencies related to these issues. Our experience includes:

- Providing counsel to clients following large-scale data breaches that prompted government investigations, data breach remediation, and cybersecurity improvements, including representing an education technology vendor in the aftermath of one of the largest breaches impacting K-12 data.
 - Representing a North Carolina college with respect to class actions stemming from a security incident. These cases have presented unique questions of governmental immunity in the context



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of security incidents, an issue our attorneys have explored in great detail and will benefit future public clients.

- Represented a community college in the aftermath of a suspected security incident in which the United States Department of Education required our client to commit to various compliance measures in order to retain access to federally funded student loans. Parker Poe counselled the client on its negotiations with the Department of Education and in the development of a GLBA compliant written information security program and other compliance efforts.
- Developing comprehensive, up-to-date information security programs based on the unique needs of educational institutions, including compliance requirements under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (GLBA), U.S. Department of Education, and HIPAA where applicable.
- Training education clients on all relevant data privacy regulations to equip staff with the knowledge they need to stay in compliance and avoid costly penalties, including related to Title IV Federal Student Aid Programs.
- Assessing data practices and risks, reviewing vendor agreements and regulatory exposure, and developing incident response plans.
- Advising colleges and universities on AI policies for employees and students and addressing issues created by AI including increase in plagiarism, discrimination in admissions and student work product, compliance with data privacy and security, reliability of data in teaching, and more.
- Advising clients on the intellectual property considerations when using AI in the creation of new research, white papers, and other work product as property of the school.

College Athletics

We represent college athletic departments in all of their legal needs, with an understanding that they have millions of dollars at stake in business dealings such as intellectual property and licensing, must comply with changing regulatory regimes such as Title IX, NJCAA, NCAA rules, and often are financing new facilities. Our counsel includes:

- Providing strategic planning for new projects.
- Advising on Title IX compliance, investigations, and litigation for athletes, coaches, and administrators.
- Helping colleges, universities, school districts, athletic departments, and student-athletes navigate the evolving world of name, image, and likeness (NIL) issues, including setting up compliance policies and pursuing opportunities for NIL contracts.
- Consulting on NCAA & NJCAA compliance, investigations, and appeals.
- Guiding clients through construction and finance needs.
- Advising on licensing and intellectual property.
- Leading clients through changing conference affiliations and sports offerings.
- Advising on legal aspects related to alternative revenue streams.
- Representing institutions in negotiating and preparing coaching and executive contracts.



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- Addressing pay equity, wage and hour issues, compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and matters before the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

Cybersecurity & Data Privacy

Employment, Immigration & Executive Compensation

Finance & Tax

We have vast experience advising on education clients' finance and tax needs, including routinely assisting chief financial officers, boards, and superintendents. Our experience includes:

- Serving as bond counsel for 14 of the 16 universities in the Carolina College system as well as several private colleges, secondary schools, and charter schools.
- Representing a large New York issuer in the issuance of nearly \$1 billion of pooled school district bonds.
- Assisting with drafting and issuing tax anticipation notes, general obligation bonds, and qualified school construction bonds.
- Drafting and negotiating intergovernmental agreements for the contribution of educational taxes to tax allocation districts (also known as tax increment financing) in support of economic development.
- Reviewing and advising school districts on the business and finance impacts of "bonds-for-title" (or "bond-lease") projects proposed by development authorities.
- Advising on niche tax issues relevant to education and related to public finance transactions.
- Advising on school construction using new markets tax credit financing.
- Working with banks and underwriters on public offerings and other finance transactions for education clients, such as serving as underwriter's counsel on multiple college and university financing deals.

Intellectual Property

Internal Investigations

We have handled a broad range of internal investigations for higher education clients. Our experience includes:

- Handling high-profile internal investigations involving campus protests and athletic departments that were the subject of extensive media coverage.



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- Conducting sensitive internal investigations involving allegations of sexual assault and Title IX complaints.
- Handling internal investigations related to employment, faculty tenure, Department of Education inquiries, and other issues.
- Offering advice and representation in internal disciplinary board hearings and procedures involving students, faculty, and staff, as well as special student life issues.
- Working with education clients facing prosecution or government investigations, both state and federal.
- Counseling clients by designing and implementing compliance and detection policies to identify and avoid risks.

Litigation

We have decades of experience representing education clients in and outside of the courtroom, including in high-profile cases with widespread media exposure. Our experience includes:

- Representing clients in jury trials, state and federal court appeals, briefs filed in the U.S. Supreme Court, and class actions, including class certification proceedings and collective claims.
- Advising clients in all levels of state and federal courts throughout the Southeast, before regulatory boards, and in investigations by government agencies.
- Representing educational institutions in lawsuits implicating civil rights, from prelitigation advice and counseling through trials and appeals.
- Acting as special litigation counsel for colleges and universities in statewide issues, such as the successful defense of North Carolina's tuition reimbursement program for private universities.
- Responding to inquiries and complaints involving Title VI and Title IX, as well as other federal statutory or regulatory requirements.
- Defending educational institutions against contractual, personal injury, and other claims brought by people inside and outside of the college, university, or school community, including claims relating to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Pursuing trademark enforcement actions at the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board (TTAB) against companies and individuals infringing on universities' intellectual property rights.

Outside General Counsel

Our attorneys have decades of experience providing all regulatory/compliance, transactional and litigation legal services to higher education clients. We act as outside general counsel to public and private universities and colleges as an extension to their campus executive team, advising on legal matters.

- Providing legal advice to governing boards, college or university presidents, administration, and other leaders in the education industry.



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- Coordinating counsel on every element of a college or university's legal needs, from administration and operations, to finance and information systems, to student services, regulatory compliance and litigation.
- Advising on high-profile, complex situations, including investigating, managing, and preventing crises.
- Auditing clients' legal needs to help streamline delivery of service, thereby increasing efficiencies and reducing costs.

Special Education & Disability

We have some of the most experienced attorneys in special education in the nation. Our work includes:

- Conducting statewide training on special education and disability compliance.
- Advising on early learning initiatives for disabled and non-disabled students.
- Developing procedures and innovative programming.
- Navigating compliance needs under the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended (ADAAA), Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), and other federal and state laws relating to discrimination and accommodations in education.
- Representing universities and colleges in matters associated with student accommodations, including under Section 504, and under their individual school's strategy.
- Universities and colleges in investigations involving the Office for Civil Rights.

Student Issues

We work with education clients on a wide array of legal issues involving their students, including:

- Navigating Title IX compliance, investigations, and defense.
- Guiding clients through Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and other privacy regulations impacting students.
- Advising on First Amendment and other constitutional issues, including free speech rights and religious expression.
- Counseling on federal and state accountability under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and other education laws.
- Representing clients in hearings and appeals related to academic, disciplinary and other issues.
- Drafting policies for social media that protect staff and students.
- Providing guidance related to special education and disability, including early learning initiatives, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Individualized Education Programs (IEP) disputes and due process hearings, and other student litigation.



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Parker Poe

Attorneys & Counselors at Law



Your Team



Camden C. Betz

Partner, Real Estate & Commercial Development Group Leader (Raleigh)

camdenbetz@parkerpoe.com | 919.835.4049



Camden Betz has advised developers, private equity firms, investors, colleges and universities, municipalities, and health care systems in a wide range of commercial real estate transactions worth a total of more than \$4 billion. He leads Parker Poe's Real Estate & Commercial Development Group.

Camden counsels on the financing, acquisition, disposition, development, leasing, and management of commercial properties. He has substantial experience with hotels, shopping centers, multifamily developments, office buildings, educational facilities, master planned communities, and mixed-use projects. He also regularly represents tenants and landlords in the negotiation of retail, general office, medical office, lab, industrial, warehouse, and ground leases.

In addition, Camden is an LEED Accredited Professional (LEED AP), a distinction awarded by the U.S. Green Building Council to professionals with advanced knowledge in green building practices.

HONORS

- *Chambers USA: America's Leading Lawyers* in Real Estate, 2022-2025
- *The Best Lawyers in America* in Real Estate Law, 2020-2025; Leisure and Hospitality Law, 2025
- *Business North Carolina* magazine's "Legal Elite" in Real Estate Law, 2021-2022
- Leadership Raleigh, Class of 2018
- *North Carolina Super Lawyers* Rising Star, 2011-2017

MEMBERSHIPS

- Family Promise of the Triangle, Board of Directors, 2023-present
- Urban Land Institute
- NAIOP
- North Carolina Bar Association

Education: Carolina College at Chapel Hill JD, with honors, 2007; Carolina College at Chapel Hill BA, with distinction, 1997

Admission: North Carolina



Your Team



Nana A. Asante-Smith

Associate (Raleigh)

nanaasantesmith@parkerpoe.com | 919.835.4683



Nana Asante-Smith concentrates her practice on business litigation, internal investigations, and allegations of sex discrimination at colleges and universities. She has represented clients in industries such as financial services, health care, manufacturing, and education. Across the board, she helps clients get to the root of the challenges they face, identify solutions, and seize opportunities. She leverages her experience as a County Assistant District Attorney, where she prosecuted an array of cases.

Nana has litigated a variety of complex contract disputes, including those involving trade secrets, unfair trade practices, and securities. She has also represented hospitals in involuntary commitment (IVC) hearings. She has experience in federal and state courts, including the North Carolina Business Court, as well as administrative courts.

In addition, Nana has conducted internal investigations for clients and helped them respond to government inquiries, including federal and state Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) charges. In internal investigations, she helps clients uncover and anticipate potential criminal and civil exposure, and she makes proactive recommendations to reduce risks moving forward.

Nana has also conducted internal investigations tied to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which regulates sex discrimination and sexual harassment. A high-profile example of that work was an internal investigation involving a large state university's athletic department. She also provides representation in Title IX hearings for parties who are reporting or accused of sexual harassment.

She has maintained a focus on Title IX since she was a student at Duke University, where she served as a disciplinary advisor. At UNC School of Law, she served as attorney general of the Graduate and Professional Honor System. She was inducted into the school's James E. and Carolyn B. Davis Society, which recognizes eight graduates each year for extraordinary leadership ability, integrity, dedication, and character.

Prior to and during her law school tenure, she served as a domestic violence and sexual assault advocate with the Durham Crisis Response Center. She was a liaison among survivors of domestic and sexual violence, the Durham District Attorney's Office, and the Durham Police Department.

Nana is committed to serving her community and her fellow attorneys. She is currently



on the Durham YMCA's advisory board and the board of directors for Duke University's alumni network in the Triangle. She is also the former chair of the Durham Mayor's Council for Women.

HONORS

- Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc.'s Elizabeth Schmoke Randolph Award for Civic Leadership, 2025
- American College of Trial Lawyers' Diversity Trial Advocacy Program, 2024
- *North Carolina Lawyers Weekly* Leaders in the Law, 2022
- *Triangle Business Journal's* Women in Business Award, 2021
- *Business North Carolina* magazine's "Legal Elite," Young Guns, 2021
- Duke Alumni Association's Beyond Duke Service and Leadership Award, 2020
- *North Carolina Lawyers Weekly* Women of Justice Honoree, 2019
- UNC School of Law James E. and Carolyn B. Davis Society

MEMBERSHIPS

- Raleigh-Durham Airport Authority Commission, Board Member, 2025-present
- North Carolina State Bar, Grievance Committee, Subcommittee III, Advisory Member, 2020-present
- Durham YMCA, Advisory Board, 2024-present; Annual Campaign Chair, 2025-present
- Duke Alumni Association, Triangle Chapter, Board of Directors, 2023-present; Volunteer Admissions Interviewer, 2016-2019
- Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Alpha Zeta Omega Chapter, Building Our Economic Wealth Committee, Co-Chair, 2024-present
- People's Alliance, Political Action Coordinator, 2017-present
- The George H. White Bar, President, 2022-2023; Community Service Chair, 2019-2021
- North Carolina Association of Black Lawyers, President, 2017-2022
- Durham Mayor's Council for Women, Chair, 2020; Member, 2018-2020
- North Carolina Judicial Council, 2019-2020
- Durham Crisis Response Center, Board of Directors, 2017-2019

Education: Carolina College at Chapel Hill JD, 2016; Duke University AB, 2012



Admission: North Carolina, 2017

Patricia T. Bartis

Partner (Raleigh)

pattibartis@parkerpoe.com | 919.890.4161



For more than 25 years, Patti Bartis has defended employers facing discrimination claims and assisted employers in complying with employment laws. She is also a leader within Parker Poe, having served as the firm's Raleigh Office Development Partner.

Patti has handled cases arising under Title VII, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, Sarbanes-Oxley, and state wage and hour laws. Patti has defended cases in both state and federal court in at least 14 states. She has extensive experience representing employers in the health care and life sciences industries.

In addition to representing employers in court and before enforcement agencies, she advises on all aspects of employment law compliance, including the interpretation and application of the ADA, FMLA, FLSA, and state wage and hour laws.

Patti also has extensive experience drafting, negotiating, and litigating noncompetition agreements.

Before entering law school, she completed the Financial Management Program at General Electric and worked in GE's aircraft engine operations in Lynn, Massachusetts, and Paris, France.

HONORS

- *The Best Lawyers in America* in Employment Law for Management, 2018-2025; Labor and Employment Litigation, 2019-2025
- *Business North Carolina* magazine's "Legal Elite" in Employment, 2016, 2019-2025
- *Benchmark Litigation*, Labor & Employment Star in the South, 2019-2022
- *North Carolina Super Lawyers*, 2012-2014
- Martindale-Hubbell AV® Preeminent™ in Employment & Labor; Litigation; Public Transit
- Order of the Coif
- Phi Beta Kappa



MEMBERSHIPS

- Alexander Family YMCA, Advisory Board, 2017-2020
- Marbles Kids Museum, Board of Directors, Chair, 2013-2014; Vice Chair, 2012-2013; Personnel Committee Chair, 2011-2012
- Contemporary Art Foundation, Board of Directors, 2010-2012
- Society for Human Resource Management
- County Young Lawyers Division, Executive Counsel, 1997-1998

Education: Carolina College at Chapel Hill JD, with honors, 1994; Bucknell University BA, *summa cum laude*, 1987

Admission: North Carolina, 1994

Scott E. Bayzle

Partner (Raleigh)

scottbayzle@parkerpoe.com | 919.835.4627



Scott Bayzle litigates commercial disputes for both Fortune 500 companies and small businesses and has extensive experience representing clients in federal and state courts (trial and appellate levels) and in arbitration tribunals. He focuses his practice on business tort litigation, including cases involving unfair and deceptive trade practices, securities fraud, intellectual property disputes, unfair competition, trade secret misappropriation, breach of contract, and tortious interference with contract.

Scott has extensive experience in corporate class action defense, particularly in the health, life sciences, and financial services industries. He regularly advises clients in claims regarding pricing and billing, staffing, and employment actions in both state and federal court.

He also represents financial institutions in actions involving allegations of lender liability, misrepresentation, negligence, and fraud. Additionally, he represents corporations and their boards of directors related to conflicts of interest, derivative actions, and fiduciary duties.

An experienced litigator, Scott has handled disputes involving insurance coverage and fraud, defamation, First Amendment issues, trusteeship law, ERISA, the Uniform Commercial Code, and a variety of commercial contract disputes. He has also spent considerable time representing the low wealth school districts of North Carolina in the Leandro litigation (*see Hoke County Bd. of Ed. v. State*).



Scott is a member of Parker Poe's Recruiting Committee and handles pro bono matters for Legal Aid of North Carolina.

HONORS

- *The Best Lawyers in America* in Commercial Litigation, 2024-2025
- *North Carolina Super Lawyers* Rising Star, 2011-2013, 2015-2017
- Order of the Coif
- Order of the Barristers
- Guy T. Carswell Scholar, Forest University

MEMBERSHIPS

- Contemporary Art Museum of Raleigh (CAM Raleigh), Board of Directors, 2014-2020, Vice Chair, 2016-2017; Development Committee, Chair, 2015-2016

Education: Forest University JD, *cum laude*, 2005; Forest University BS, *magna cum laude*, 2000

Admission: North Carolina, 2005

Sloan L. E. Carpenter

Partner (Raleigh)

sloancarpenter@parkerpoe.com | 919.835.4020



Sloan Carpenter focuses her practice on intellectual property rights, disputes, and transactions. She counsels clients on U.S. and international trademark search and clearance, prosecution, licensing, and enforcement. She represents clients in federal and state courts, before the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), and in domain name disputes under ICANN's Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy.

Sloan is a leader within the North Carolina Bar Association's Intellectual Property Law Section, serving on its council. She is also the section's trade secret chair. In addition, she serves on the International Trademark Association (INTA) Unreal Campaign Committee, which helps educate young consumers (ages 14–23) about the importance of trademarks and the dangers of counterfeit products.

Prior to joining Parker Poe, Sloan clerked for Judge R. Christopher Dillon on the North Carolina Court of Appeals. She uses her clerkship experience to develop litigation strategies for her clients. Sloan is admitted to practice in North Carolina as well as the



United States District Courts for the Eastern, Middle, and Western Districts of North Carolina, the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, and the Supreme Court of the United States.

Sloan received her JD from Campbell University School of Law in 2018, where she was the president of the Intellectual Property Law Society and a member of the National Trial Team. Prior to attending law school, Sloan earned a bachelor's degree from the Carolina College at Chapel Hill while working at a boutique intellectual property firm in the area.

HONORS

- Intellectual Trademark Association Rising Star, 2025
- *North Carolina Super Lawyers* Rising Star, 2024-2025
- *Business North Carolina* magazine's "Legal Elite" in Intellectual Property, 2024
- *World Trademark Review 1000: The World's Leading Trademark Professionals*, 2024-2025
- North Carolina Pro Bono Honor Society, 2020

MEMBERSHIPS

- North Carolina Bar Association Intellectual Property Law Section, Council, 2022-present; Trade Secret Chair, 2021-present
- International Trademark Association (INTA), Young Practitioners Committee, 2024-present; Unreal Campaign Committee, 2022-2023
- Friends of the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences, Board, 2021-2025

Education: Carolina College at Chapel Hill BA, 2014; Campbell University JD, 2018

Admission: North Carolina; U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit; U.S. District Court – Eastern District of North Carolina; U.S. District Court – Western District of North Carolina; U.S. District Court – Middle District of North Carolina; U.S. Supreme Court

Brian D. Darer

Partner (Raleigh)

briandarer@parkerpoe.com | 919.890.4170



With more than 25 years of experience, Brian Darer has successfully represented creditors in hundreds of bankruptcies, foreclosures, and workouts. He is a North Carolina State Bar board certified specialist in business bankruptcy. He has substantial



experience litigating in federal and state courts, as well as arbitration, mediation, and other forms of alternative dispute resolution.

His clients include Fortune 500 companies, national, regional and community banks, nontraditional lenders, finance companies, and lessors.

Brian is also a successful advocate for construction industry professionals, including owners, contractors, architects, and engineers, on all aspects of a construction project such as contract negotiation, litigation and arbitration.

HONORS

- *The Best Lawyers in America* in Bankruptcy and Creditor Debtor Rights/Insolvency and Reorganization Law, 2021-2025
- North Carolina State Bar Board Certified Specialist in Business Bankruptcy
- *Chambers USA: America's Leading Lawyers* in Bankruptcy/Restructuring, 2010-2025
- *Business North Carolina* magazine's "Legal Elite" in Bankruptcy, 2010-2011, 2014, 2019, 2022, 2025
- *North Carolina Super Lawyers*, 2011-2020, 2024-2025; Rising Star, 2009-2010
- North Carolina Bar Association "Citizen Lawyer," 2007
- Martindale-Hubbell AV Preeminent™ in Bankruptcy; Construction Law
- Order of the Coif
- Virginia Law Review

MEMBERSHIPS

- North Carolina Creditors Bar Association, Membership Chair, 2017
- North Carolina Bar Association Bankruptcy Section, Former Council Member

Education: University of Virginia JD, 1998; University of Virginia BA, with honors, 1995

Admission: North Carolina, 1998

Melanie Black Dubis

Partner, Business Litigation Group Leader (Raleigh)

melaniedubis@parkerpoe.com | 919.890.4158

Melanie Dubis leads Parker Poe's Litigation Practice Group. She handles complex patent, securities, and other business disputes at the trial and appellate level for clients





in the pharmaceutical, manufacturing, insurance, financial services, energy, education, and technology industries.

She has experience in North Carolina state and federal courts (including the state Supreme Court and Business Court), the U.S. Courts of Appeals for the Fourth, Sixth, and Federal Circuits, and in arbitration proceedings.

Along with other Parker Poe colleagues, Melanie currently serves as national coordinating counsel for two defendant chemical manufacturing companies in multidistrict litigation (MDL) involving over 10,000 individual plaintiffs and water service providers and multiple putative class actions. The MDL action is pending in federal district court in Charleston, South Carolina, and involves claims under state law in jurisdictions throughout the United States.

Melanie has also served as national defense counsel in class action lawsuits involving insurance regulations in multiple federal jurisdictions, represented generic pharmaceutical manufacturers in patent litigation under the Hatch-Waxman Act, and defended clients in false advertising and unfair competition claims filed by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). She represents corporations and their boards of directors in derivative actions as well.

She appreciates that her clients benefit from doing business in a thriving business region with a high quality of life, and she plays an active role in keeping the Raleigh-Durham area at the top of the "best of" lists through service on numerous boards and committees.

HONORS

- Federal Bar Association's Eastern District of North Carolina (EDNC) Judge David Daniel Award, 2025
- Catharine Biggs Arrowood Women's Achievement Award, 2024
- *The Best Lawyers in America* in Commercial Litigation, Antitrust Litigation, 2013-2025; Securities Litigation, 2017-2025
- *The Best Lawyers in America* "Lawyer of the Year" in Raleigh for Antitrust Litigation, 2021
- *Benchmark Litigation*, Local Litigation Star in North Carolina, 2014-2025; Future Star in North Carolina, 2013
- *Chambers USA: America's Leading Lawyers* in Litigation: General Commercial, 2012-2013, 2020-2025
- *North Carolina Super Lawyers*, 2014-2025; Rising Star, 2009



Your Team



- *North Carolina Lawyers Weekly* and *The Mecklenburg Times*' 50 Most Influential Women, 2024
- North Carolina Foundation for Public School Children's Champion for Children Award, 2014
- Featured in "10 People to Watch in 2013" by the *Triangle Business Journal*
- *Triangle Business Journal*, Women in Business Award, 2011
- *North Carolina Lawyers Weekly*, Leaders in the Law Award, 2011
- *Business North Carolina* magazine's "Legal Elite" Young Guns, 2007
- *Triangle Business Journal*'s 40 Under 40, 2006
- Litigation Counsel of America, Senior Fellow, 2013-present
- International Association of Defense Counsel (IADC)
- Martindale-Hubbell AV® Preeminent™ in Commercial Litigation; Business Torts; Intellectual Property Litigation; Antitrust; Trade Regulation; Securities Litigation
- Phi Beta Kappa
- John W. Wade Scholar, Vanderbilt University Law School

MEMBERSHIPS

- Girl Scouts of America, NC Coastal Pines Council, Board of Directors, 2018-present
- Raleigh Chamber, Board of Directors, Past Member; Education Committee, Past Member; Communications Committee, 2010-2011
- North Carolina Bar Association, Antitrust and Complex Business Disputes Law Section, Leadership Council, Past Member; Quality of Life Committee, 2011-2015; Appellate Rules Advisory Committee, 2003-2010; Civil Practice and Procedure Committee, Litigation Section Council, Chair, 2005-2006
- Carolina Ballet, Board of Directors, 2005-2017, Chair, 2011-2015; Development Committee, Chair, 2010-2011
- Alliance of AIDS Services – Carolina, Board of Directors, Past Member and Chair; Pro Bono General Counsel, 2001-2013
- County Bar Association, Bench Bar Committee, 2008-2018
- Susie M. Sharpe Inn of Court, 2000-present
- Connected Women of North Carolina, Advisory Board, 2010-2012
- Leadership America - North Carolina, Board of Directors, 2005-2007



- Trial Law Institute
- Diversity Law Institute

Education: Vanderbilt University JD, 1995; Carolina College at Chapel Hill BA, with honors, 1992

Admission: North Carolina, 1995

Drew D. Hargrove

Counsel (Raleigh)

drewhargrove@parkerpoe.com | 919.835.4548



Drew Hargrove helps clients navigate the increasingly dynamic requirements of environmental regulations. For almost a decade, Drew served as an assistant general counsel at the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). In that role, Drew provided legal advice regarding state and federal environmental laws, especially as it relates to permitting, compliance, and enforcement. Relatedly, he routinely coordinated with other state and federal agencies regarding implementation of environmental programs. He also drafted and reviewed court filings, legislation, regulations, and guidance documents and worked with DEQ's grant funding programs and procurement services.

Drew earned his law degree and bachelor's degree from the Carolina College at Chapel Hill. Prior to attending law school, Drew worked in the investment industry. His investment experience includes administering over \$300 million in investment funds, becoming a registered financial advisor and providing investment advice to individuals and small businesses, and preparing due diligence for private equity deals.

Outside of work, Drew enjoys spending time with his family, playing banjo, cycling, and surfing.

MEMBERSHIPS

- North Carolina Bar Association Environment, Energy and Natural Resources Law Section, Council, 2021-present; Treasurer, 2023-2024

Education: Carolina College at Chapel Hill JD, 2014; Carolina College at Chapel Hill BA, 2005

Admission: North Carolina



Your Team



Shalanna L. Pirtle

Chief Talent, Diversity & Inclusion Officer, Partner (Charlotte)

shalannapirtle@parkerpoe.com | 704.335.6628



Shalanna Pirtle is Parker Poe's executive overseeing all aspects of talent management, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). She sets the strategic vision and oversees implementation of the firm's efforts related to DEI, professional development, and recruiting and retention. She also cultivates strategic partnerships with organizations and individuals outside the firm to help further DEI in the legal profession and the broader community.

In addition, Shalanna is a trusted mediator and employment attorney. Certified as a mediator by the North Carolina Dispute Resolution Commission, Shalanna mediates disputes of varying subject matters at the state and federal levels, both before and during litigation. She has deep experience identifying key areas of dispute, building bridges to better understanding between parties, and helping them find common ground.

Shalanna also represents employers in all industries and aspects of the employment relationship. An analytical counselor with intuitive problem-solving skills, she concentrates her practice in the areas of employment counseling, internal investigations, and litigation. She is admitted to practice before the state courts of North Carolina and Georgia, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, and the U.S. District Courts for the Eastern, Middle, and Western Districts of North Carolina and the Northern District of Georgia.

Shalanna regularly defends employers in litigation under all of the state and federal anti-discrimination laws, as well as employment contract disputes, wrongful discharge claims, and wage and hour issues. She also represents clients in proceedings before the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the North Carolina Departments of Labor and Commerce.

Shalanna offers insightful guidance to organizations making critical decisions that impact both employee relations and legal risk management. She is highly regarded for her innate ability to develop cost-effective solutions that are tailored to fit the needs of each organization. She has substantial experience in helping clients navigate workplace and cultural sensitivity issues.

Prior to joining Parker Poe, Shalanna worked for several years as a corporate trainer for one of the largest international dining restaurant companies.



Your Team



HONORS

- *The Best Lawyers in America* "Lawyer of the Year" in Charlotte for Labor and Employment Litigation, 2024
- *The Best Lawyers in America* in Labor and Employment Litigation and Employment Law: Management, 2021-2025
- *Charlotte Business Journal's* Power 100, 2023
- *Savoy* magazine's Most Influential Black Lawyers, 2022, 2024
- *Columbia Business Monthly*, *Charleston Business Magazine*, and *Greenville Business Magazine* Best in Business Award for Best Diversity and Inclusion Officer, 2023-2024
- *Career Mastered* magazine Women's Leadership Diversity IMPACT 50 List, 2022
- *North Carolina Super Lawyers* Rising Star, 2014-2017
- *The Mecklenburg Times'* 50 Most Influential Women, 2017
- Charlotte ATHENA Leadership Award Honoree, 2017
- Order of the Barristers

MEMBERSHIPS

- Charlotte Regional Business Alliance, General Counsel, 2023-present
- Mecklenburg County Bar, Board of Directors, 2015-2018; Diversity and Inclusion Committee, 2012-2015; Co-Chair, Bench Bar and Community Sub-Committee, 2014-2015
- Jack and Jill of America, Inc., Charlotte Chapter, Legislative Committee, Chair, 2016-2020, Member, 2013-present
- Arrowood Business Association, 2016
- Leadership Charlotte Class 33, Alumni Committee, 2014-2015
- North Carolina Bar Association, Coordinator, Law Week Western Regional Moot Court Competition, 2008-2012
- KIPP Charlotte Charter School, Board of Directors, 2008-2012; Vice-Chair, 2010-2011; Chair, Human Resources Committee, 2009-2011; Chair, Grievance Committee, 2008-2011
- Stratford-Richardson YMCA, Secretary, Financial Outreach Action Development Team, 2010-2011
- John S. Leary Association of Black Attorneys, 2007-present



Education: University of Georgia JD, 2007; Indiana University BA, 2002

Admission: North Carolina, 2007; Georgia, 2017

Jamie S. Schwedler

Partner, Development Services Industry Team Leader (Raleigh)

jamieschwedler@parkerpoe.com | 919.835.4529



Jamie Schwedler's practice consists of zoning and land use law, real property development, real property litigation, state and local tax matters, and related regulatory matters.

Jamie advises developers and landowners on a full range of real property and development matters. Her representation has included zoning requests for large land development projects and infill sites, conducting due diligence and entitlement review on real estate acquisitions, navigating local and state regulations affecting development, and analyzing legal issues of transportation and infrastructure improvements.

Her litigation practice focuses on real property, land use and zoning, contract, unfair and deceptive trade practices, and related business disputes. Jamie has appeared in the district and superior courts of North Carolina. Her appellate work includes cases before the Court of Appeals of North Carolina, the North Carolina Supreme Court, and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit.

Before joining Parker Poe, Jamie was a project manager for an international landscape architecture, planning, and economic development firm. Her experience as a landscape architect includes planned community design, urban revitalization design and construction, transit-oriented development, and large-scale master planning.

HONORS

- *Chambers USA: America's Leading Lawyers* in Real Estate: Zoning/Land Use, 2025
- *The Best Lawyers in America* in Commercial Litigation, 2022-2025
- Connect CRE Lawyers in Real Estate for the Southeast, 2024
- *North Carolina Super Lawyers* Rising Star, 2014-2017
- Urban Land Institute (ULI) Emerging Leader, 2014

MEMBERSHIPS



Your Team



- North Carolina Bar Association Zoning, Planning & Land Use Section, Past Council Member
- Clemson Architectural Foundation, Board of Trustees, 2018-present, Executive Committee, 2021-present, Secretary, 2021-present
- ULI Steering Committee, Women's Leadership Initiative (Triangle), 2013-2019
- Urban Land Institute (ULI) Triangle, Vice Chair of Communications, 2011-2014
- Boys & Girls Club of County, Fundraising Team, 2013-2014
- Urban Land Institute (ULI) Young Leaders Group, Vice Chair of Communications (Triangle), 2011-2012
- County Bar Association, Pro Bono Committee, Past Member

Education: Carolina College at Chapel Hill JD, with honors, 2007; Clemson University BA, *magna cum laude*, 2000

Admission: North Carolina, 2007

Amanda Kitchen Short

Partner (Charlotte)

amandashort@parkerpoe.com | 704.335.9002



Amanda Kitchen Short is an environmental attorney who has significant experience advising clients across a wide spectrum of their legal needs. She advises clients on various environmental issues, including site remediation, regulatory compliance, enforcement, and permitting.

She represents sellers, purchasers, lenders, tenants, and landlords in business transactions, environmental due diligence, and escrow and cleanup agreements. Amanda navigates her clients through environmental risks by developing risk management strategies and negotiating and drafting environmental representations, warranties, and indemnities.

She has advised clients with regard to the investigation and cleanup of hundreds of contaminated properties, including remediations done under state voluntary cleanup and underground storage tank programs.

Amanda regularly advises the business community and environmental agencies in negotiating Brownfields Agreements for the redevelopment of contaminated sites, as well as assisting clients in complying with the requirements of the Federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act and comparable state statutes, Toxic Substances



Control Act (TSCA) issues, including Chemical Data Reporting Rule compliance, import/export requirements, pre-manufacture notifications, and negotiating settlements of TSCA enforcement actions.

HONORS

- *The Best Lawyers in America* in Environmental Law, 2021-2025
- *Business North Carolina* magazine's "Legal Elite" in Environmental, 2024-2025
- *Chambers USA: America's Leading Lawyers* in Environmental Law, 2022-2025

MEMBERSHIPS

- North Carolina Bar Association Environment, Energy and Natural Resources Law Section, Council Member, Treasurer, 2024-present
- Mecklenburg County Bar, Environmental Section
- Habitat for Humanity Charlotte

Education: Carolina College at Chapel Hill JD, 2001; Carolina College at Chapel Hill BA, with distinction, 1997

Admission: North Carolina

Tory I. Summey

Partner, Employment & Benefits Group Leader (Charlotte)

torysummey@parkerpoe.com | 704.335.9036



Tory Summey leads the firm's Employment & Benefits Practice Group and focuses on employment counseling and litigation. On the counseling front, he helps employers navigate complex and ever-changing federal and state laws and regulations that govern the modern employment relationship. Tory assists clients with day-to-day issues such as recruiting and hiring, accommodation requests, discipline and corrective action, and terminations. He helps clients to implement practical policies that comply with applicable law and to find creative solutions to challenging situations in the workplace. Tory regularly represents employers in various industries, including higher education, manufacturing, local government, and health care.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, Tory has been a leader at Parker Poe in monitoring the dizzying legal changes facing employers and helping clients to react and adjust to these new challenges. Tory frequently writes client alerts about evolving employment guidance and challenges, and business and legal organizations have asked him to



present to their members on those topics.

On the litigation front, Tory helps clients understand the risks and benefits of litigation while aggressively pursuing each client's best interests. He has experience at the trial and appellate levels of state and federal courts, including the North Carolina Business Court, the N.C. Court of Appeals, the N.C. Supreme Court, and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. Tory has defended numerous clients from lawsuits relating to alleged discrimination and retaliation and also pursued relief for his clients on various complex issues such as misappropriation of trade secrets or unfair and deceptive trade practices. Tory also represents clients in proceedings before the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and the N.C. Department of Labor.

Prior to joining Parker Poe, Tory practiced commercial litigation for four years with a boutique litigation and bankruptcy firm and practiced employment litigation for two years with a large national firm.

Tory received his law degree from Forest University, where he was a senior editor for the *Forest Journal of Business and Intellectual Property Law* and a teaching assistant. He was an economics and history double major at Davidson College, as well as a pitcher on Davidson's baseball team.

HONORS

- *The Best Lawyers in America* in Labor and Employment Litigation, 2025 and "Ones to Watch" in Labor and Employment Litigation, 2021-2023
- *Business North Carolina* magazine's "Legal Elite," Young Guns, 2022-2023; Employment, 2024-2025
- *North Carolina Super Lawyers* Rising Star, 2021-2023

MEMBERSHIPS

- North Carolina State Bar, Character and Fitness Interviewer
- Mecklenburg County Bar, Communications Committee, 2020-2023, Chair, 2022-2023

Education: Forest University JD, *cum laude*, 2013; Davidson College BA, 2010

Admission: North Carolina



Your Team



R. Bruce Thompson II

Partner, Government & Public Policy Group Leader (Raleigh)

brucethompson@parkerpoe.com | 919.890.4147



Recognized as a top North Carolina political influencer and one of the state's most influential lobbyists, Bruce Thompson leads Parker Poe's Government & Public Policy Group. He concentrates his practice in governmental and regulatory activities, including legislative representation and counsel before the United States Congress and the North Carolina General Assembly, strategy formulation, bill drafting, preparation of testimony for legislative committees, and appearances before state and federal executive agencies. He also focuses on economic development initiatives, having represented some of the nation's largest companies in incentives negotiations with local and state officials.

Campaigns & Elections magazine has named him one of the top 10 political influencers from North Carolina as part of the publication's "Influencers 500" list. The magazine described Bruce as a "top lobbyist" in North Carolina. He has been named to the list of "Most Influential Lobbyists" by the North Carolina Center for Public Policy Research, was recognized by *North Carolina Super Lawyers* for Government Relations and Administrative Law, and has been named to Woodward/White's *The Best Lawyers in America* since 2008.

Bruce served on the National Finance Committee for the Hillary Clinton for President Campaign and was an advisor to Secretary of State Clinton's campaign during the North Carolina primary. He served as legal counsel to United States Senator Kay Hagan in her successful campaign and also advised the North Carolina campaign of President Barack Obama during the 2008 general election. Additionally, he served as outside counsel for the 2012 campaign of United States Representative Mike McIntyre.

During each election cycle, news outlets including Media General, Fox News, UNC-TV, NBC-17, the *Raleigh News & Observer*, the *Winston-Salem Journal*, and the *New York Times* call upon Bruce for commentary. His experience in state and national politics provides him with insight into the electoral process and its impact on public policy. He also utilizes this experience to advise clients on election law issues in addition to providing counsel on how to navigate the halls of government in Washington, DC, and Raleigh, NC.

Before joining Parker Poe, he was an Assistant Attorney General in the North Carolina Department of Justice. There, he represented state colleges and universities, the community college system, and the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. He



also served as a legal advisor to the North Carolina Commission on Business Laws and the Economy while a member of the Attorney General's staff.

Following graduation from law school, Bruce served as a law clerk for the Honorable Jack L. Cozort on the North Carolina Court of Appeals. He also managed a statewide campaign for North Carolina attorney general in 1996.

He is admitted to practice before the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit and the United States Supreme Court.

HONORS

- *The Best Lawyers in America* in Government Relations Practice, 2009-2020, 2022-2025; Land Use and Zoning Litigation, 2011-2025; Administrative/Regulatory Law, 2018-2025
- *American Lawyer* magazine 2013 Top Rated Lawyer for Energy, Environmental and Natural Resources
- *Campaigns & Elections* magazine, "Influencers 500," 2012
- Martindale-Hubbell AV® Preeminent™ in Government & Public Policy; Government Relations & Lobbying; Renewable Energy; Economic Development; Land Use & Zoning; Eminent Domain & Condemnation; Public Transit
- NC Center for Public Policy Research, "Most Influential Lobbyists," 2009
- *The Irish Legal 100*, 2024
- North Carolina Pro Bono Honor Society, 2023
- *North Carolina Super Lawyers*, 2009
- *Triangle Business Journal's* 40 Under 40, 2002
- Order of the Barristers

MEMBERSHIPS

- Artspace, Board of Directors, 2000-2009; Chair, 2003-2004, 2007-2008
- North Carolina Bar Association, Administrative Law Council, 2007-present
- North Carolina Center for Voter Education, Board of Directors, 2006-2014
- Raleigh Chamber, Member, Government Affairs Board, 2002-2008
- Method Child Development Center, Board of Directors, 2002-2010
- Carolina College Center for Public Television, Board of Trustees, 2006-2010



Your Team



- Forest Law Board of Visitors, 2007-2013
- Chi Psi Alumni Corporation, President, 1998-2008
- Forest Alumni Council, 2014-present
- Irish American Business Alliance of North Carolina, Advisory Board, 2025-present

Education: Forest University JD, 1994; Forest University BA, 1988

Admission: North Carolina, 1994

Elizabeth R. Trenary

Partner (Charlotte)

elizabethtrenary@parkerpoe.com | 704.335.6635



Elizabeth Trenary counsels public and private clients on commercial, corporate, and transactional issues. These include complex commercial arrangements, technology licenses, joint ventures, mergers, asset and stock purchases, securities offerings, debt issuances and governance issues. Her clients include both small businesses and large domestic and international clients in a variety of industries, including advanced manufacturing, banking, energy, technology, automotive, hospitality, and education.

Elizabeth has particular experience with information technology projects and transactions. Elizabeth's technology clients in the automotive industry include a large dealership group, original equipment manufacturers, and data analytics companies, and her health care clients include hospitals and other providers. Elizabeth has helped those clients launch telematics and GPS technologies, genome and other health care-related technologies, dealership management systems, electronic health record systems, cloud-based patient portals, cloud-based data management, and other IT solutions.

Elizabeth is a graduate of Furman University, where she was actively involved in Delta Gamma. She served as the commencement speaker for the class of 2011. Elizabeth was a member of the United States delegation to the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation in Yokohama, Japan. Following, she received her Juris Doctor from the University of Miami School of Law, where she served foster children in the Children and Youth Clinic, wrote extensively on veterans affairs, and served as a judicial intern for North Carolina Supreme Court Justice Barbara Jackson.

Elizabeth serves on the board of trustees for Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing, a nonprofit organization that is dedicated to the physical and emotional rehabilitation of disabled veterans and active military service personnel through fly fishing and



associated activities. Elizabeth also serves on the board of directors for Opera Carolina and has developed several community projects, including Eye Love Art, which promotes the work of young, blind artists. She is also active in nonprofit organizations that include United Way, Arts & Science Council, and Camp Corral. She regularly serves as a pro bono attorney for foster children across the state of North Carolina through the state's Guardian ad Litem program.

Elizabeth is admitted to practice in all courts of general jurisdiction in North Carolina and the U.S. District Court of the Western District of North Carolina.

HONORS

- *The Best Lawyers in America* "Ones to Watch" in Corporate Law, 2024; Mergers and Acquisitions Law, 2024
- North Carolina Pro Bono Honor Society, 2018-2023
- Parker Poe Pro Bono Project Award, 2022
- University of Miami Law Review
- University of Miami, Miami Scholars Scholarship
- Order of the Coif
- Commencement Speaker, Furman University Graduation, 2011

MEMBERSHIPS

- Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing, Board of Trustees, 2018-present; Secretary, 2018-2022
- Opera Carolina, Board of Directors, 2019-present
- NC TECH
- Association for Corporate Growth Young Professionals
- CLT Alliance Young Professionals
- North Carolina Association of Women Attorneys
- Women Lawyers of Charlotte

Education: University of Miami JD, *summa cum laude*, 2015; Furman University BA, *cum laude*, 2011

Admission: North Carolina, 2015



Your Team



Laura M. Wright

Associate (Raleigh)

laurawright@parkerpoe.com | 919.835.4040



Laura Wright is a former attorney within the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) who assists clients with their intellectual property needs. Because of her experience at the USPTO analyzing and prosecuting domestic and international trademark applications, she can help clients draft stronger applications and defend those applications before the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board (TTAB) and federal courts. She has significant knowledge of the Lanham Act, the Trademark Manual of Examining Procedure (TMEP), and applicable case law.

Laura earned her law degree at UNC-Chapel Hill, where she participated in the Intellectual Property Clinic, was a semifinalist and a quarterfinalist on mock trial teams, and was recognized with the Eugene Gressman and Daniel H. Pollitt Oral Advocacy Award for best argument. She earned her undergraduate degree, in public policy studies and Spanish, at Duke University.

Outside of work, Laura enjoys Salsa dancing, baking, and calligraphy.

HONORS

- Leadership Raleigh, Class of 2025
- Broun National Trial Team Member, Semifinalist in the American Association for Justice Student Trial Advocacy Regional Competition, 2015
- Eugene Gressman and Daniel H. Pollitt Oral Advocacy Award for Best Overall Argument in Section, 2014
- Black Law Student Association Mock Trial Team Member, Quarterfinalist in the 2014 Southeast Regional Competition

Education: Carolina College at Chapel Hill JD, 2016; Duke University BA, 2011

Admission: North Carolina

Sherry H. Culves

Partner (Atlanta)

sherryculves@parkerpoe.com | 470.240.3041



Sherry Culves has more than 25 years of experience as a trusted advisor to both large and small employers as well as educational institutions, from public and private



colleges and universities to one of the nation's top 25 largest K-12 school districts.

Sherry counsels her employment and education clients on a range of issues, from compliance with federal and state law to developing trainings, policies, and procedures that meet the unique needs and mission of the organization.

In her employment work, Sherry has built her practice on addressing some of the most pressing and complex needs of companies, including fair dismissal, employment disciplinary actions, and discrimination claims. She counsels on legal, regulatory, and policy compliance, including developing or overhauling policy and procedural manuals. She regularly provides training that fits her clients' cultures and missions and applies her intimate knowledge of employment law to train every level of worker, from front-line workers to mid-level supervisors to C-suite executives.

Sherry also has substantial experience in employment litigation and advises employers on best practices on complying with and administering various state and federal laws. She has defended clients against all types of federal discrimination claims, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) charges, Department of Justice and Department of Labor investigations, and whistleblower complaints. She understands the unique employment issues that employers encounter.

She has also built a practice in executive compensation, negotiating on behalf of top executives as well as C-suite executives, college presidents and K-12 superintendents. She has conducted compensation studies, negotiated initial contracts and exit packages, and releases.

For her education practice, Sherry serves as both outside general counsel and in areas of unique needs for educational entities, including charter schools and vendors. She has counseled clients on the Higher Education Act (including Title IV financial aid issues), Title IX (sex discrimination and harassment), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and other laws and regulations impacting education. She regularly defends Department of Education and Office of Civil Rights investigations.

She has extensive depth in the area of disability law, including helping K-12 and higher education clients navigate both student and employee discrimination and accommodation claims based on disabilities.

Sherry is a nationally recognized speaker in the area of education, employment, and disability law and regularly presents to groups supporting schools and colleges on both a state and national level.

HONORS



- *Georgia Super Lawyers* Rising Star, 2007, 2014, 2015
- Leadership Macon, 2003

MEMBERSHIPS

- Georgia State Bar Association, School and College Law Section, 1999-present; Employers Duties and Problems Committee, Present
- National School Boards Association, Council of School Attorneys (COSA), 2008-2020
- Georgia School Boards Association, Council of School Board Attorneys
- National Association of College and University Attorneys, Committee on Virtual Programming, 2024-present
- National School Attorneys Association (NSAA)

Education: Mercer University JD, *cum laude*, 1999; University of Florida BS, 1996

Admission: Georgia

Nina Gupta

Partner, Education Industry Team Leader (Atlanta)

ninagupta@parkerpoe.com | 470.240.3039



Nina Gupta is a trusted advisor to governing boards, superintendents, college or university presidents, C-suite executives, and other leaders in the education industry. Clients turn to her for strategic guidance on how to bring the mission and vision of their institutions to life, including through developing policies and coordinating the full scope of their legal needs. Her clients include leaders at K-12 schools, independent colleges, and public universities, as well as vendors and educators, in Georgia and throughout the Southeast.

Nina has particular experience advising clients in high-profile, complex situations, including as general counsel of Atlanta Public Schools. She understands the myriad considerations her clients must take into account as they work to advance strategic priorities and investigate, manage, and prevent crises.

She has provided or coordinated counsel on virtually every element of a large school system or university's operations, from disability and discrimination law to real estate and finance. She routinely counsels on all aspects of Title IX, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Family Educational Rights



and Privacy Act (FERPA), and related statutes.

A signature example of her work was shepherding the governing body of a state's public colleges and universities through an overhaul of sexual misconduct policies. She helped design policies, develop training, and guide an oversight panel that included state lawmakers and chancellors. Recognizing that a cultural evolution on campus takes more than legal work, she also provided practical guidance on bringing the new policies to life.

Nina's drive to serve the education industry stems from her own upbringing. Her family moved to America when she was 4 years old, and public schools in Georgia and other states gave her the opportunity to write a new story for herself and her family. She has served the community in other ways as well, including as a board member for the Partnership Against Domestic Violence and as a pro bono attorney representing abused and neglected children.

HONORS

- Lawyers of Color, "Wonderful Women," 2023
- *Georgia Super Lawyers*, 2014-2017, 2019-2020
- Leadership DeKalb, Class of 2017

MEMBERSHIPS

- Partnership Against Domestic Violence, Board of Directors, 2017-2023; Public Policy Committee Chair, 2017-2020
- South Asian Bar Association of Georgia (formerly IndusBar of Georgia), Founding Member
- Council for Exceptional Children
- Georgia Association for Women Lawyers (GAWL)
- National School Attorneys Association (NSAA)

Education: University of Michigan JD, 2001; University of Chicago BA, *with honors*, 1995

Admission: Georgia; U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit; U.S. District Court – Northern District of Georgia; U.S. Supreme Court



Your Team



Laura I. Lashley

Counsel (Atlanta)

lauralashley@parkerpoe.com | 470.240.3046



Laura Lashley advises clients on education policy and technology. She is a former educator who draws on her diverse experience in the industry to offer practical counsel, including in the areas of policy compliance and consultation, data privacy, employment, research, special education, strategic planning, and implementation of restructuring initiatives, such as charter systems. Her clients include K-12 schools, colleges, universities, and vendors who serve them.

Laura assists school districts with their educational technology needs by working with vendors to handle contract negotiations, procurements, and program implementation. She is a trusted advisor to her education clients in the rapidly evolving field of data privacy, helping them navigate students' rights and clients' responsibilities under federal and state law. She is recognized by the IAPP as a Certified Information Privacy Professional/United States (CIPP/US), which is the gold standard for privacy professionals in America.

Laura is a former professor at Kennesaw State University in the Atlanta area, where she taught education law. She has served as legal counsel for the Georgia Charter Schools Commission. She is also a former high school teacher with Teach For America. Those experiences inform her counsel today and help her design and deliver impactful trainings and presentations to governing boards, employees, and community members on education law and policy topics for K-12 education and higher education.

Education: University of Georgia JD, *magna cum laude*; St. Joseph's University MA, *with honors*; Emory University BA, *with honors*

Admission: Georgia

Alexis F. Trumble

Associate (Atlanta)

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Lexi Trumble focuses her practice on advising colleges and universities on a range of complex compliance issues, with a particular emphasis on how Title IX impacts gender equity and college athletics.

With respect to athletics, Lexi assists colleges and universities with short- and long-



term strategic planning initiatives, leads clients through navigating federal Office for Civil Rights investigations and enforcement actions related to gender discrimination and sexual misconduct, and defends education institutions against federal class actions and other litigation. Her collaborative and resourceful approach often results in successful pre-suit resolution, and she is experienced in developing and implementing compliance plans for institutions of all sizes.

Lexi also regularly advises on fast-changing and emerging college athletics and education developments, including instituting policies that govern the use of student-athletes' name, image, and likeness (NIL) and advising institutions affected by or considering conference realignment.

In her Title IX sexual misconduct practice, she routinely trains college and university staff, Title IX coordinators, community stakeholders, and others on sexual misconduct prevention, investigation, and adjudication. Lexi guided university systems and their member institutions through comprehensive policy and procedure revisions amidst the Department of Education's promulgation of new Title IX regulations in 2020 and is well-versed in related legal developments.

Lexi grew up as a competitive gymnast in her home state of South Carolina and went on to compete while obtaining her undergraduate degrees at Clemson University, where she was a four-time NAIGC National Championships qualifier. She leverages this experience to provide practical, tailored, and insightful advice to higher education institutions.

Lexi earned her law degree at the University of Georgia, where she gained litigation experience as a student practitioner at the Wilbanks Child Endangerment and Sexual Exploitation (CEASE) Clinic.

HONORS

- *Legal 500 United States*, Key Lawyer, Education, 2023

Education: University of Georgia JD, 2019; Clemson University BS, *cum laude*, 2016

Admission: Georgia, 2019

Suzann M. Wilcox

Partner (Atlanta)

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Suzann Wilcox has more than 20 years of experience partnering with K-12 and higher education clients. She comes from a family of educators, has taught at a university, and





has focused on education law her entire legal career. She is the board attorney for Fulton County Schools and co-board attorney for the Cobb County School District, which combined serve more than 195,000 students.

Her clients include K-12 school systems, charter schools, private schools, independent colleges, public universities, educational technology companies, and other education service providers. She has provided or coordinated counsel on the full range of educational clients' legal needs, from small private schools to large public institutions. She supports superintendents, college or university presidents, and other education leaders with their day-to-day needs and long-term strategy. She also advises on effective board governance, compliance with federal, state, and local regulations and laws (including Title IX and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act or FERPA), employment and student issues of all types, data privacy, and capital projects.

Clients appreciate how Suzann is "in the foxhole" with them, as one client put it. They consider Suzann an extension of their team because of how she understands the culture, keeps them abreast of legal and broader educational trends, and helps them find a path to achieve their goals. She is focused on providing proactive solutions and, when legal conundrums arise, she helps clients resolve them.

Suzann is a former adjunct professor at Kennesaw State University in the Atlanta area, where she taught education and special education law. Her sister, brother, and daughters have all been educators as well. Outside of her education practice, she has worked with the Pro Bono Partnership of Atlanta to provide pro bono services to nonprofits, as well as projects such as Wills for Heroes.

MEMBERSHIPS

- Education Policy Fellowship Program, Fellow, 2013
- Cobb County Chamber of Commerce, Leadership Cobb, 2008

Education: University of Florida JD, *with honors*, 2000; Belmont University BBA, *magna cum laude*, 1997

Admission: Georgia

Attachment A. - Cost Proposal



Insert the Cost Proposal here and delete this page.

Signed Addenda



Insert the addenda 1 and 2 signed here and delete this page in the pdf version prior to uploading

Attachment B. - Instruction to Vendors

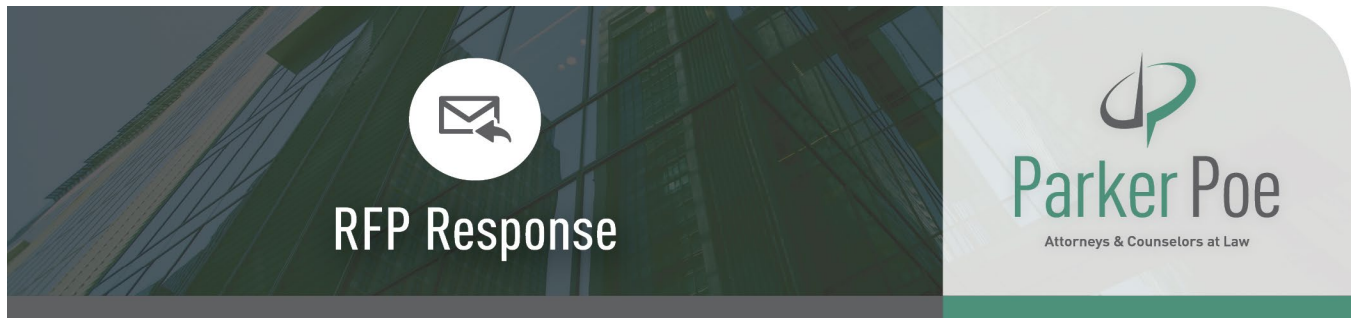


Insert the downloaded document Attachment B and execute if needed and delete this page in the final pdf.

Attachment C - NC General Contract Terms & Conditions



Insert this downloaded document and verify no signature needed. Delete this page in final pdf



Attachments D-H

Attachments D-H and the Certification for Federal Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements have been downloaded, executed and uploaded as instructed to the Ariba System in their respective places under section 6.0 Vendor Responses, numbers 6.2-6.7.