

THE GBA NEWS DOCKET

VOLUME 75, NUMBER 7; MARCH 2026



Hon. Bill Davis,
President of the
Greensboro Bar
Association

Message from the President

I am Somebody.

I am Somebody.

I may be poor, but I am Somebody.

I may be Young, but I am Somebody.

I may be on Welfare, but I am Somebody.

I may be Small, but I am Somebody.

I may make a Mistake, but I am Somebody!

*My clothes are different, my face is different, my hair is different,
but I am Somebody.*

I am black, brown, white, I speak a different language;

But I must be respected, protected, never rejected.

I am God's child.

I am Somebody!

Jesse Jackson is a civil rights hero whose legacy runs right through Greensboro, by way of North Carolina A&T University. The above poem is one of his best known oratorical calling cards. It is sometimes attributed as being written by Rev. Williams Holmes Borders, Sr., but is best known by its association with Jesse Jackson. It is a message with a two-fold power – the personal and the political.

Jackson often delivered the poem as a call-and-response. Each member of the audience responds “I am somebody,” and asserts their personhood. It is a reminder to themselves of their personal significance, that they mattered no matter their circumstances. It is a powerful tool of self-affirmation, as a crowd responds back to him “I am somebody.” Surely the privileged and powerful don’t need such tools to remind them of their importance, but for the poor, the underprivileged, or the oppressed, their sense of personhood may be ground away by the systems of the world, and this is a powerful personal reminder that they are more than their circumstances; they are a child of God and they matter.

Of course, the message is far greater than as a personal affirmation for the speaker(s). It is a powerful spiritual and political call to the hearer(s), demanding that they bear personal responsibility to recognize and defend the human dignity of everyone they encounter. In this sense of the poem, the privileged and powerful are the exact audience who needs to hear the message. They didn’t need a self-affirmation of their own worth, but an admonition of their duty to recognize the personhood – the fundamental humanity and worth of others who don’t enjoy their blessings. Any insult or degradation to the rights of any person or group is fundamentally rooted in denying their humanity. Therefore, any progress for civil or human rights must start with a powerful reminder – even a demand – to recognize their dignity, their humanity, their divine relationship to the creator.

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You can contribute news or topics
of interest to the GBA by contacting
Editor Preston Edwards:
preston@denclaw.com

CALENDAR NOTES

- March 2 YLS Service, 5:30 PM, Greensboro Urban Ministries
- March 10 GBA Board Meeting, 4:00 PM, Self-Help Building
- March 12 Annual CLE Seminar, 8:30 AM, Zoom
- March 18 YLS Board Meeting, 12:00 PM, Self-Help Building
- March 19 GBA Member Lunch, 12:30 PM, Greensboro Country Club [REGISTER HERE](#)
- March 26 YLS Service, 2:30 PM, Backpack Beginnings

- April 7 GBA Board Meeting, 4:00 PM, Self-Help Building
- April 9 Real Property Section, 5:30 PM, Tuggle Duggins
- April 11 Legal Aid Fundraiser, 5:30 PM, Boxcar Bar + Arcade
- April 15 YLS Board Meeting, 12:00 PM, Self-Help Building
- April 16 Annual Joint Meeting GBA & JD 24, 5:30 PM, Starmount Country Club

[GBA Events Online](#) [Legal Community Events](#)

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NEW MEMBERS

Approved on February 10, 2026

Alfred Lee Wilson
CR Legal Team
Category: Newly Licensed
Endorser: Elizabeth R. Robertson

Andrea Angelica Pascal
Chapman & Roberts, P.A.
Category: Newly Licensed
Endorser: Gerard M. Chapman

Morgan Faries
Garrett, Walker, Aycoth & Olson, Attorneys at Law
Category: Newly Licensed
Endorser: Casey T. Robinson



Wellness Corner

BarCARES is a confidential, short-term intervention program provided cost-free to members of the 24th Judicial District Bar and other participating judicial district bars, voluntary bar associations and law schools. If you would like additional information about the program and/or its availability in your area, please contact the BarCARES coordinator at 919.929.1227 or 1.800.640.0735 or click on the icon below.

BarCARES®

NOTICE

Submissions for consideration for the Greensboro Bar Association Newsletter should be made to Preston Edwards at preston@denclaw.com. All written submissions should be made in Word format and should be in complete and final form, and any photographs should be submitted in jpeg format. Any photographs submitted should contain a caption identifying the person or persons in the photograph and, where applicable, other information necessary to understand the context of the photograph. Submissions made in other formats, including e-mail text submissions, may not be considered for publication.



Jonathan Parisi is President of the Greensboro Bar Association's Young Lawyers Section and Attorney at [Spangler Estate Planning](#)

Young Lawyers Section: Connections

As we move further into the new year, the YLS continues to stay active and engaged. From celebrating the achievements of our members to gathering for meaningful service and social events, we are grateful for the strong participation and momentum within our section. Thank you for your continued involvement and support as we build on an exciting start to the year.



YLS Hits the Ice with the Gargoyles

The YLS had a fantastic turnout at the Greensboro Gargoyles game on February 6, enjoying a great night of hockey as the Greensboro Gargoyles took on the Reading Royals. Thanks to everyone who joined us for a fun and energetic evening out with colleagues!

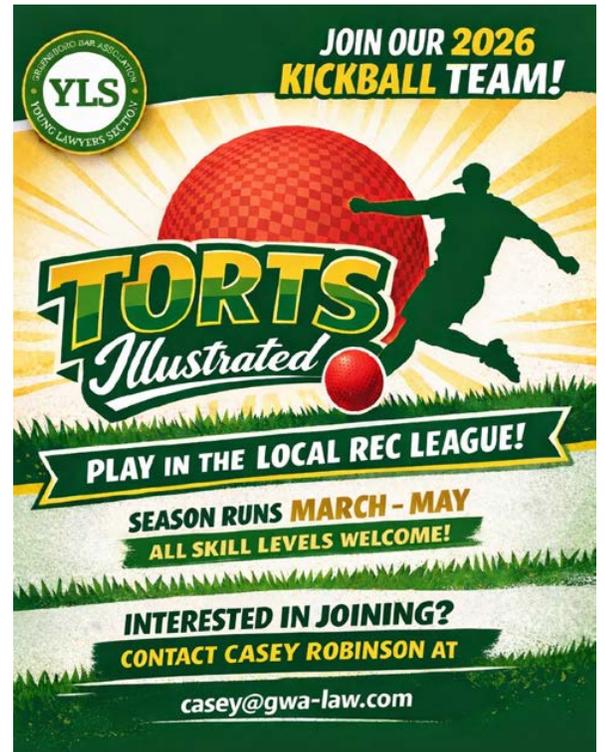


Celebrating Excellence in the YLS

At our February 19 membership meeting, the Young Lawyers Section was proud to celebrate Tyler Nullmeyer as the recipient of the GBA's Outstanding Young Lawyer Award. Tyler's leadership, professionalism, and sustained commitment to the bar made him a fitting and well-deserved honoree. Congratulations, Tyler!

Upcoming Service Events

Looking ahead, the YLS is excited to continue our commitment to service this March with two meaningful opportunities to give back. On **March 2, 2026**, we will prepare and serve a hot meal at Greensboro Urban Ministries for individuals experiencing homelessness and food insecurity, followed by a volunteer opportunity with Backpack Beginnings on **March 26, 2026**. These opportunities reflect the spirit of service at the heart of our Section, and we look forward to serving alongside one another. Registration details will be shared soon.



Continued on page 7



Camille Stell
is Vice President
of Risk & Practice
Management for
Lawyers Mutual
Liability Insurance
Co. of NC. Continue
this conversation
by contacting
Camille at [camille@
lawyersmutualinc.com](mailto:camille@lawyersmutualinc.com)
or 800.662.8843.

MANAGING YOUR FIRM'S FINANCIAL HEALTH: FEES, BILLING & COLLECTIONS THAT WORK

For most lawyers in private practice the practice of law is both a profession and a business. You may not have a CFO down the hall or a full accounting department tracking your metrics. But your firm's financial health depends on making informed, intentional business decisions.

The good news? You don't need a finance degree to run a financially healthy law firm. You need data, discipline, and clearly defined processes.

Let's walk through practical strategies you can implement in the New Year for better financial results in December.

Start with a Plan: Make Data-Driven Decisions

Every firm - no matter the size - should have a strategic business plan that includes financial goals. Those goals should not live only in your head. They should be written down, shared, and measurable.

In solo practice, that may simply mean:

- A clear annual revenue target
- A monthly billing goal
- A collections benchmark
- A plan for originating new matters

In small firms, each person should have a "number". For attorneys and paralegals, that might be billable hours. For managing partners, it may include originations and collections. Administrative staff often control operational efficiency such as intake, billing cycles, and payment follow-up.

What gets measured gets managed.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

KPIs are business metrics that help you evaluate your firm's performance. They should be measurable, specific, and aligned with your goals.

Examples include:

Productivity

- Billable hours
- Utilization rate
(billable hours divided by available work hours)
- Realization rate
(hours billed divided by hours worked)
- Collection rate
(fees collected divided by fees billed)

Financial

- Age of accounts receivable
- Fees per matter
- Profitability by client or practice area

Marketing

- Cost per client
- Website traffic and lead conversion rate
- Number of matters opened
- Referral sources

Looking at these numbers over 18–24 months can reveal patterns and opportunities. Talk through the trends with your CPA or accountant. What is your most profitable work? What drains your time but produces little return? Where does your best work come from?

Setting Fees: Are You Charging Enough?

Many lawyers struggle to set - and raise - fees.

If you Google "How much does it cost to get a divorce in Greensboro?" you'll see everything from \$1,000 in uncontested matters to hourly rates averaging \$550 in some consumer surveys. Clients are doing this research before they ever call your office.

Rather than guessing at what your clients can pay or pricing yourself at the bottom of the fees charged in your area, use available resources to do market research on fees:

- The Clio Legal Trends Report (state and regional data)
- Online salary and billing guides from recruiting firms
- Fee affidavits filed in litigation
- Feedback from trusted clients and referral sources
- Judges' insights on rates typically awarded in your practice area

Factor in Overhead

Your rates must cover:

- Rent or mortgage
- Staff compensation
- Malpractice insurance
- Technology and software
- Marketing expenses
- Your own compensation and profit

Too often, solos and small firms price based on what feels reasonable rather than what is

sustainable. If you don't know what it costs for your team to perform the work, you cannot set an appropriate fee.

Customize and Experiment

Alternative fee arrangements can differentiate your firm and improve client satisfaction. Alternative fee arrangements can look like:

- Flat fees
- Phased billing
- Subscription services
- Unbundled services
- Consulting or educational offerings

If no one is hiring you at a particular price point, that's useful data. Adjust accordingly.

And remember: many solos and small firms raise rates far less frequently than mid-size or large firms due to fear of client pushback. In reality, there is often room to increase fees, especially if you have not adjusted them in years.

Billing: Capture the Work You're Already Doing

Revenue leaks often occur not because lawyers lack work - but because they fail to capture and bill it efficiently.

Manual time entry and end-of-day reconstruction of tasks can cost you thousands of dollars per year. Instant or integrated timekeeping systems reduce lost time and improve accuracy.

Best Practices for Healthy Timekeeping

- Standardize the process across the firm.
- Track all time - even on fixed-fee matters.
- Record phone calls, meetings, travel, and administrative coordination.
- Build in weekly review time so billing is not delayed.
- Lead by example - senior lawyers should model good timekeeping.

Tracking fixed-fee matters is particularly important. Without data, you cannot determine whether your flat fee is profitable.

The Value of Good Billing Descriptions

Clients don't just review totals - they review descriptions.

Compare:

“4 hours – draft documents, client call”

with:

“Drafted motion for summary judgment addressing statute of limitations defense; telephone conference with client regarding evidentiary strategy; revised affidavit for filing.”

Specific, date-tagged entries convey value. Vague entries invite write-downs and disputes. Poor visibility and communication around billing often lead to unnecessary write-downs. Transparency builds trust - and protects revenue.

Clients Hate Billing Surprises

From their perspective, nothing annoys your client more than surprises when it comes to billing. When your response to a client asking about fees is, “it depends” - your client might say to you:

- “You're the lawyer, you should know what this will cost.”
- “Before we start, give me a worst-case scenario.”
- “If something changes, call me.”

Your clients see these statements as excuses or delaying tactics:

- “The case was more complicated than we thought,” or
- “I've already written off some time...”
- “I'll check with the managing partner and get back with you.”

These responses undermine your client's confidence in you. Instead, set expectations early. Provide cost ranges. Update clients when circumstances change. Consistent communication reduces disputes and improves collections.

Collections: Time Is Not on Your Side

Accounts receivable lose value quickly. Industry data shows expected realization drops significantly as accounts age:

- 0–60 days: ~90%
- 60–120 days: ~80%
- 120–180 days: ~50%
- 180–365 days: ~20%
- 365+ days: ~10%

In other words, waiting hurts.

Make Billing a Priority

Many firms bill 30 - 60 days after work is performed and are paid 90 days (or more) later. That creates a four - to six-month cash flow gap.

Consider:

- Billing more frequently
- Sending invoices electronically
- Including payment links
- Keeping a credit card on file (with proper engagement letter language)
- Automating friendly payment reminders

Studies show 85% of electronic invoices are paid the same week they are sent, and 57% are paid the same day. Your clients want online payment options.

SOOTHING SOUNDS FOR THE MIND

Know Thy Brainwaves

Brainwaves are the synchronized electrical impulses emitted from neurons communicating with each other. Signals from brainwaves are detectable from the cerebral surface and measured with electroencephalography (EEG). Brainwaves are defined in terms of size or amplitude (measured in microvolts) and frequency (measured in cycles per second or hertz).

Brain waves are broadly categorized by frequency as follows:

Delta Waves (0.5-4 Hz): Delta represents deep sleep or a deeply relaxed state. These are the slowest, highest-amplitude waves, occurring during deep, dreamless sleep. They are essential for restoration and tissue repair. We increase Delta waves to decrease our awareness of the physical world and access information in our unconscious mind.

Theta Waves (4-8 Hz): Theta represents a deeply relaxed, inward focus. Theta waves are slower and can induce a more relaxed, quieter mind. Theta is associated with deep meditation, REM sleep, and vivid visualization. These waves are linked to creativity and intuition. Theta is a space for accessing memories, emotions, and sensations. Theta waves are strong during internal focus, meditation, and prayer, bridging the state between wakefulness and sleep. It relates to the subconscious mind.

Alpha Waves (8-12 Hz): Alpha represents an awake yet relaxed state. Alpha waves are characterized by passive attention and occur when we inhabit a calm, relaxed state. For example, in daydreaming or light meditation. Alpha bridges conscious thinking to the subconscious mind. You can increase Alpha by closing your eyes or taking deep breaths or decrease Alpha by thinking or calculating. When Alpha predominates, most people feel at ease and calm.

Beta Waves (12-30 Hz): Beta represents an active state of focus, alertness, and heightened intellectual activity. Beta waves dominate when we engage in active thinking, conversation, and problem-solving. Beta waves are associated with fast brain activity needed for making decisions and processing information about the world around us. We operate in Beta when we have our eyes open and are listening, thinking critically, analyzing, evaluating, and using judgment. While Beta is regarded as a normal rhythm, it can predominate in those who are particularly alert or anxious.

Gamma Waves (30-100 Hz): Gamma represents a high level of concentration. Gamma waves are associated with high-level information processing, peak performance, and learning. These are the fastest waves, frequently



Photo Courtesy of Veda Spidle

representing flashes of insight. When the brain needs to process information from its different areas simultaneously, it resorts to Gamma.

Faster may not always be better. The slower our brainwaves, the calmer and more relaxed our minds are. Of course, a calm and relaxed mind may hold a greater capacity for depth of thought and resourceful decision-making.

Why Sound Healing

“Since the human body is over seventy percent water and since sound travels five times more efficiently through water than through air, sound frequency stimulation directly into the body is a highly efficient means for total body stimulation, especially at the cellular level. Direct stimulation of living cellular tissue using sound frequency vibration has shown marked cellular metabolism and therefore a possible mobilization of a cellular healing response.”

Dr. Jeffrey Thompson, Director of the Center for Neuroacoustic Research at The California Institute for Human Science.

Neuroscience has long recognized the powerful effects of music, think Mozart, and sound frequencies on brain activity and the nervous system. Sound healing—or neuroacoustic music—is a genre of sound therapy that uses particular acoustic stimuli and sound frequencies, patterns, and vibrations to influence brain function.

Continued on page 9

STEVE CRIHFIELD—A LIFE IN THE LAW



Steve Crihfield

An opportunity to help share the story of how our own Steve Crihfield answered the call to the Bar and shaped our legal profession for more than half of the GBA's history

As recently announced, longtime GBA member and past president Steve Crihfield is authoring a book about his nine decades of life, six decades of which have been spent in the practice of law in Guilford County. Author,

editor, and journalist Margaret Moffett is working with Steve and is in the process of producing a workable manuscript for publication. Thanks to friends and colleagues who have already contributed to the significant costs and expenses to be undertaken in this endeavor.

Throughout his career, Steve strived to promote and improve the legal profession and our system of justice, as well as the quality of life of those who serve in it. His career has been a well-recognized and amply-regarded example of leadership, commitment, and integrity, with good humor and dedication to being a mentor and model as well. The GBA History and Archives Committee has endorsed the project, and is affording support and assistance accordingly. Steve's story is one to be shared and spread, and equally reflects a story of our own Association and its members for well over the last half-century. As noted, those who contribute through their donations of \$100.00 or more will be honored in recognition in the book's acknowledgements, and checks may be written directly to Margaret Moffett (with "Crihfield book" indicated in the memo portion) and sent for receipt to our colleague and past GBA President Charles Younce at 4100 Well Spring Drive Unit 1301, Greensboro, NC 27410

YOUNG LAWYERS SECTION: CONNECTIONS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3



Antoinette A. Stone

YLS Member Spotlight: Antoinette Stone, of Toussaint Law, PLLC

Antoinette A. Stone was born in Kingston, Jamaica and grew up in Brooklyn, New York. She graduated from North Carolina Central University School of Law in 2023 and has been practicing since that time. Antoinette is an Associate Attorney at Toussaint Law, PLLC in Greensboro,

North Carolina, where her practice focuses on probate, guardianship, family law, and personal injury.

A fun fact about Antoinette is that she was a DJ during her undergraduate years. Despite that creative pursuit, she knew from a very young age that she wanted to become a lawyer—so much so that she attended a middle school focused on democracy and law.

As a young lawyer, Antoinette believes some of the most important skills are the ability to pivot, learn quickly, and bring a fresh perspective to the practice of law. Early in

practice, lawyers must be able to roll with the punches—mistakes and second-guessing are inevitable, but knowing when and how to pivot is essential. She also emphasizes that many lessons can only be learned through experience, making adaptability and quick learning critical.

Antoinette sees being a new lawyer as a strength, noting that fresh eyes and ideas often allow young attorneys to approach client issues creatively and think through problems in entirely new ways. One piece of advice that has stayed with her is the importance of courage—being courageous not only for clients, but also for oneself, colleagues, and the legal profession as a whole.

Connect with YLS

The Young Lawyers Section would like to celebrate the personal milestones and professional accomplishments of its members. Email YLS at younglawyerssection@greensborobar.org to share achievements that you would like celebrated on our social media platform and in the GBA's member newsletter!



OUTSTANDING YOUNG LAWYER AWARD PRESENTED TO TYLER D. NULLMEYER

At the February 19, 2026 membership meeting of the Greensboro Bar Association, Tyler D. Nullmeyer was honored with the Outstanding Young Lawyer Award. The award was presented by Jonathan M. Parisi in recognition of Tyler's professional excellence and sustained service to the GBA and the legal community.

This award recognizes an attorney with fewer than ten years of practice who demonstrates excellence in the law; service to the profession and community; and a commitment to ethics, professionalism, and responsibility. It reflects not only strong legal ability, but meaningful, long-term dedication to the organization and the people who make it work.

Tyler's contributions to the GBA and Young Lawyers Section long predate the establishment of this award. Over multiple leadership cycles—including most recently as President—he has been one of the YLS's most engaged and dependable leaders. During his presidency, the Section achieved meaningful growth in both participation and momentum, striking a thoughtful balance between service initiatives and social engagement. Tyler fostered an environment where members felt welcomed, valued, and motivated to stay involved.

He has also served as a steady institutional presence—someone who understands the history of the YLS and prioritizes its long-term success.



Jonathan Parisi (left) and Tyler Nullmeyer (right)

Beyond his bar service, Tyler is an accomplished litigator with Turning Point Litigation, representing clients in complex civil matters and advocating for injured claimants before the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program. His practice reflects the same qualities that define his leadership: preparation, integrity, and respect—qualities he likewise brings to his life outside the office as a devoted husband and father.

Tyler exemplifies the purpose of the Outstanding Young Lawyer Award, and the Greensboro Bar Association proudly congratulates him on this well-deserved honor.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

As attorneys, we engage in a profession that can sometimes tend to dehumanize people. This may include people like criminal defendants or others caught up in legal systems, but may extend further. Some of us may have known attorneys who engage in “attack-mode” at the drop of a hat, treating others with less than full human dignity. This may be opposing parties, other attorneys, perhaps occasionally our own client who is being difficult.

Of course, not everyone makes it easy. It can be tempting to lose our patience, especially with folks who themselves can be difficult, aggressive, unkind, or abusive. By now, it's well understood that many involved in our court system or in other legal issues are responding from their own history of trauma, mental illness, fundamental misconceptions, anxieties about systems they can't understand, or fears about what may happen to them. While they may be difficult to work with, our approach should be informed by a recognition of the fundamental human conditions that affect them. This doesn't mean that we give in to their worse instincts or behavior, but at least we work our best to treat them with human respect, even through difficult interactions.

This is an area where I believe that GBA and our members are doing a good job. I know that we have members who are dedicated to civility and who know how to advocate hard for their clients without debasing the others involved. We have a mentorship committee and programs where our more experienced members can share their approach to these issues. We have CLE programs that may include topics of professionalism and trauma-informed practices. As an association, let's continue to remind ourselves of the importance of this outlook. It isn't always easy, but it is always right to remember that the person on the other side is Somebody.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Davis".

Hon. Bill Davis
President, Greensboro Bar Association
and the 24th Judicial District Bar

REGISTER FOR GREENSBORO BAR ASSOCIATION VIRTUAL 2026 ANNUAL CLE SEMINAR

March 12, 2026
Zoom

Please join the GBA for our annual Greensboro Bar Foundation Fundraiser- the Annual CLE Seminar!

The Annual CLE will be held virtually (Zoom) on Thursday, March 12 from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm.

[REGISTER ONLINE](#)

Or

Register by Mail: Mail a check and the completed [Registration Form](#) to GBA office.

Cost:

- \$100 – Young Lawyers Section Member
- \$125 GBA Member (\$150 after March 4)
- \$150 Non-GBA Member (\$175 after March 4)

NC State Bar CLE Credit Pending Approval:

- 2 Hours of Technology or Professional Well-Being Credit
- 1 Hour of Ethics Credit
- 1 Hour of Ethics Credit (plus Trust Accounting Credit)
- 1 Hour of Professional Well-Being Credit
- 1 Hour of General or Professional Well-Being Credit

Topics Include:

- Mental Health, the Law and AI
- Trust Accounting: Behind the Numbers
- Trauma-Informed Law
- Tackling the To Do List: Task and Project Management
- Mindfulness in the Practice of Law
- From Burnout to Balance: Leveraging AI for Attorney Well-Being and Sustainable Practice

SOOTHING SOUNDS FOR THE MIND CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

Sound healing draws upon the therapeutic aspects of sound frequencies to establish equilibrium within the mind, body, and spirit. Curated by a sound practitioner, sounds generated with sound healing instruments help to harmonize the mind, rejuvenate the body, and elevate the spirit.

As sounds wash through the water-rich cells of our bodies, they initiate a natural healing response and encourage the release of stress and tension. By stimulating the vagus nerve and inducing a meditative state, the soothing sounds promote deep relaxation and calm the mind.

The body is designed to shift into survival mode automatically when something is perceived as threatening or frightening. Emotional trauma, stress, and grief can leave us feeling anxious and overwhelmed, often pushing us into survival mode. We do what we must to get through each day. We may become irritable, disconnected, or even apathetic, while our emotional responses—anger, sadness, or frustration—become more intense.

Sound healing can lead us from surviving to thriving. It supports the nervous system in finding a way back to calm. The healing sound waves resonate with the brainwaves and the rest of the body to encourage returning to an optimal state of balance. This sound resonance activates the parasympathetic nervous system, helping us shift from a state of fight-or-flight into deep rest and rejuvenation.

Because our brainwaves tend to synchronize with external sound frequencies, sound healing can influence our brainwave patterns. It synchronizes brainwaves to specific frequencies that correspond to different states of consciousness. It shifts the brain from active Beta into calm Alpha and Theta states, allowing for profound stress reduction and mental regeneration.

If you have tried sound healing, you may already know that the ethereal sounds of crystal bowls bring joy and ease. The deep, resonant tones from Tibetan or Himalayan metal bowls disrupt mental loops. The complex frequencies of the gong quiet the analytical mind and release tension. Sounds from tuning forks and chimes may also come into play.

A sound healing session typically involves lying comfortably on a mat in a small or large group setting and also individually. A sound practitioner plays instruments for 30–60 minutes, guiding the participants into a meditative state.

The calming effects of sound healing help lower cortisol levels and promote a sense of inner calm. This, in turn, supports the body's natural ability to heal, recover, and reconnect with its inner sense of safety and peace. The physical effects are reduced muscle tension and lowered blood pressure.

Allie Petrova
Health and Wellness Committee

Greensboro Bar Association Annual CLE Seminar

Benefiting the charitable Greensboro Bar Foundation’s community grants program

March 12, 2026, via Zoom

(TIMES OF PARTICULAR SESSIONS SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

AGENDA

Time	Topic	Presenter	Credit Hours Approved
8:55 am	Welcome	Abigail E. Peoples (President-Elect, Greensboro Bar Association)	
9:00 am	Digital Tools, Human Focus: Reducing Burnout Through Better Systems	Emily Amara Gordon, JD	1 Hour Professional Well-Being Credit
10:00 am		BREAK	
10:15 am	Trust Accounting: Behind the Numbers	Anne Parkin – Director of the Trust Account Compliance Department, NC State Bar	1 Hour Ethics Credit
11:15 am	Trauma-Informed Lawyering and Trauma-Informed Practices Among Judges	Amelia Thorn, J.D., Assistant Director, Bolch Judicial Institute	1 Hour Professional Well-Being Credit
12:15 pm		LUNCH BREAK	
1:30 pm	Tackling the To Do List: Task and Project Management	Catherine Sanders Reach, Director of the Center for Practice Management, NC Bar Association	1 Hours Ethics Credit
2:30 pm		BREAK	
2:45 pm	Brief Intro to BARCares	Brian Norris, BARCares	
2:55pm	Mindfulness in the Practice of Law	Bob Martin JD, MSW CMT – https://awiseandhappylife.com	1 Hour Professional Well-Being Credit
3:55pm	From Burnout to Balance: Leveraging AI for Attorney Well-Being and Sustainable Practice	Mark Calaguas and Alexandria Lutz	1 Hour Technology
4:55pm	Closing Remarks	Abigail E. Peoples	

REGISTER ONLINE HERE

THE GREENSBORO BAR ASSOCIATION PRESENTS

A BENEFIT FOR LEGAL AID OF NORTH CAROLINA

Saturday, April 11, 2026
5:30PM-7:30PM

Boxcar Bar + Arcade
120 W Lewis Street

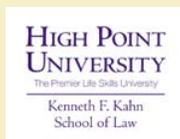
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Jewish Foundation
of Greensboro

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Elon School of Law
Garrett Walker Aycoth & Olson
Coltrane & Overfield

COPPER SPONSORS

Carruthers & Roth
Law Office of Manisha P. Patel

Admission

\$60 - Early Bird ends 3/31
\$70 - Advance before 4/11
\$75 - At the door

or mail a check payable to
GBA Foundation to:
P.O. Box 1825
Greensboro, NC 27402

[Click or Scan to Register Online!](#)



MENTORSHIP COMMITTEE HOSTS SUCCESSFUL “SPEED COUNSEL” EVENT AT ELON LAW

On January 22, 2025, the Mentorship Committee, in association with the Membership Committee and Young Lawyers Division of our local bar association hosted a “Speed Counsel” networking event at Elon University School of Law. The program brought together a diverse group of attendees, including experienced practitioners, newly licensed attorneys, and law students, for an evening of informal discussion, practical insight, and meaningful professional connection.

The event was designed to be innovative and accessible. Rather than relying on a traditional panel format, the “Speed Counsel” structure allowed participants to rotate through a series of short, focused conversations with practicing attorneys. This format created a relaxed atmosphere and encouraged candid dialogue. It also ensured that each attendee had the opportunity to meet and speak with multiple lawyers from different practice areas and levels of experience.

The evening began with welcoming remarks from our newly retired Chief District Court Judge Michelle Fletcher, who also moderated an informal discussion on the importance of civility in the practice of law and the vital role mentorship plays in shaping successful legal careers. Her opening remarks struck the perfect tone—approachable, thoughtful, and engaging. What began as a brief introduction quickly evolved into a lively, collective conversation, with attendees eager to share experiences and perspectives. The discussion generated so much participation that it ultimately had to be brought to a close, so the program could transition to the speed-counseling portion of the evening.

Once the rotations began, the energy in the room remained high. Law students and new attorneys were able to ask practical questions about career paths, professional development, and day-to-day practice. More seasoned attorneys offered candid advice, shared personal stories, and reinforced the value of professionalism, preparation, and strong professional relationships. The rotations concluded with a powerful final round in which the more experienced attorneys each shared one of their most important pieces of advice. This closing segment provided a memorable and practical takeaway for everyone in attendance.

To enhance the atmosphere, an assortment of beverages and snack options was provided throughout the evening, encouraging participants to relax, mingle, and engage in natural conversation. The environment proved so welcoming and productive that many attendees remained well after the program officially ended, continuing discussions and networking organically.



The program was fun, entertaining, and highly engaging. More importantly, it allowed all participants to recognize that we are part of a shared local legal community—one that cares about the success and well-being of its members. As poet Maya Angelou so eloquently expressed, we are often “more alike than we are unlike,” a sentiment that was clearly reflected in the spirit of the evening.

The feedback from attendees was overwhelmingly positive. Many participants noted that the informal structure made the conversations feel more genuine and less intimidating, while the rotating format allowed them to maximize their time and exposure to different perspectives within the profession.

Events like this reflect the core mission of the Mentorship Committee and the Greensboro Bar Association: to foster meaningful connections across generations of the bar, promote civility and professionalism, and create opportunities for guidance and growth. We are grateful to Elon Law for hosting the program, to Judge Fletcher for her thoughtful and engaging opening discussion, and to all the attorneys and students who participated.

We look forward to continuing to build on this momentum with future mentorship initiatives throughout the year.

Jeffrey. T. Jones, Esq.
Misha Carter, Esq.
Co-Chairs of the Mentorship Committee

BROOKS PIERCE ATTORNEYS NAMED TO BUSINESS NORTH CAROLINA'S "LEGAL ELITE"

Forty-four Brooks Pierce attorneys have been recognized by their peers for inclusion in the 2026 edition of *Business North Carolina's* "Legal Elite" and "Hall of Fame," a listing of the state's top lawyers in business-related practice areas.

Each year, *Business North Carolina* sends ballots to members of the North Carolina Bar Association who are residents of the state, asking, "Of the Tar Heel lawyers whose work you have observed firsthand, whom would you rate among the current best in these categories?" Voters are not allowed to vote for themselves and may only select members of their own firms if they also select out-of-firm lawyers in the same categories, with the out-of-firm votes weighted more heavily. Attorneys who receive the most votes in their respective categories become permanent members of the "Legal Elite Hall of Fame." For more information, visit <https://www.brookspierce.com/news-brooks-pierce-attorneys-recognized-in-business-north-carolina-2026-legal-elite-and-hall-of-fame>

The Brooks Pierce attorneys (Greensboro office) named to *Business North Carolina's* 25th edition of "Legal Elite" are:

- Daniel Adams for Criminal
- Libby Brewington for Corporate
- Sam Ervin IV for Appellate
- Jimmy Haynes for Real Estate
- Jonathan Jenkins for Business
- Beth Langley for Employment
- Jamey Lowdermilk for Bankruptcy
- Agustin Martinez for Young Guns
- Clint Pinyan for Antitrust-Complex Business Disputes
- Joey Ponzi for Environmental
- Kasi Robinson for Criminal
- Dan Smith for Appellate
- Adam Tarleton for Tax and Estate Planning
- Randy Underwood for Real Estate
- Jennifer Van Zant for Litigation

The Brooks Pierce attorneys recognized as members of the "Legal Elite Hall of Fame" are:

- Marc Bishop for Corporate ([newly chosen for Hall of Fame](#))
- Arty Bolick for Construction
- John Cross for Business and Corporate
- Mark Davidson for Business
- Kearns Davis for Criminal Law
- George House for Environmental
- Jonathan Jenkins for Corporate
- Bob King for Antitrust-Complex Business Disputes ([newly chosen for Hall of Fame](#))
- Brian McMillan for Business ([newly chosen for Hall of Fame](#))
- Clint Morse for Litigation ([newly chosen for Hall of Fame](#))
- Jeff Oleynik for Bankruptcy
- Bo Rodenbough for Real Estate ([newly chosen for Hall of Fame](#))
- David Sar for Intellectual Property
- Jennifer Van Zant for Antitrust-Complex Business Disputes
- Sara Vizithum for Tax and Estate Planning ([newly chosen for Hall of Fame](#))



MANAGING YOUR FIRM'S FINANCIAL HEALTH CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

At Lawyers Mutual, I have occasion to hire lawyers to perform work for me. I love it when I receive a bill the same day I get the work product that includes a link to pay by credit card. In those cases, I pay the bill the same day. In the rare case that I don't do pay that day, I have already signed an engagement letter agreeing to have my credit card on file charged on the 20th day following the bill.

The work I just paid for is never more valuable to me than the moment I receive it – the firm knows this and capitalizes on the ease of a credit card transaction to make life easier for both of us.

Credit Cards, Trust Accounts & Ethics

North Carolina ethics rules require careful handling of trust account funds. Merchant fees should never be deducted from your trust account, and safeguards must prevent unauthorized debit transactions.

Lawyer-specific processors such as LawPay are designed to avoid commingling of funds and protect IOLTA compliance. ACH payments can reduce processing fees.

If you are unsure about compliance, consult NC ethics opinion – 2013 Formal Ethics Opinion 13 – Disbursement Against Funds Credited to Trust Account. Catherine Reach has written blog posts for the North Carolina Bar Association on the ethics of charging processing or convenience fees to make up for the credit card processing fee. The short answer is don't do it, but read [Catherine's August 2020 blog post](#) for more information.

Document Your Core Processes

One of the most overlooked financial health tools is process and procedure documentation.

Identify:

- How a client is onboarded
- How time is captured
- How bills are reviewed
- When invoices are sent
- How follow-up occurs
- Who is responsible at each stage

Walk through the process. Test it. Adjust it.

When everyone understands the system - and leadership supports it - collections improve.

And yes, asking for money is hard. But forfeiting revenue is harder.

Be respectful. Be consistent. Follow up early. Pick up the phone when needed. Often, a conversation reveals whether the issue is dissatisfaction, confusion, or a temporary hardship that can be addressed.

A Final Thought

Financial health is not about squeezing clients. It is about aligning your fees, billing practices, and collections processes with the value you provide.

That alignment creates:

- Predictable cash flow
- Reduced stress
- Better client relationships
- The ability to invest in technology, staff, and growth
- And ultimately, a more sustainable and enjoyable practice

You worked hard to become a lawyer. Make sure your business systems work just as hard for you.

Camille Stell is Vice President of Risk & Practice Management for Lawyers Mutual and a Fellow in the College of Law Practice Management. She regularly consults with solo, small, and mid-size firms on financial health, compensation systems, and succession planning. Continue this conversation by contacting Camille at camille@lawyersmutualnc.com or 800.662.8843.

