



NORTH CAROLINA  
BAR FOUNDATION

# **Named Endowment Funds Dedication Ceremony**

Thursday, May 16, 3:00 – 5:30 p.m.  
North Carolina Bar Center, Cary

**In celebration of:**

**Honorable J. Herbert W. Small Justice Fund\***  
**Charles L. Becton Justice Fund**  
**Rosemary Gill Kenyon Justice Fund**

\*Posthumously



# NCBF Named Endowment Dedication Ceremony

## Welcome Remarks

**Jason M. Hensley**

NCBA+NCBF Executive Director

## President Remarks

**Patti Ramseur**

NCBA+NCBF President

## Justice Fund Presentations

**Honorable J. Herbert W. Small**

*Supporting Civic Education*

**John H. Small**

Brooks Pierce

**Charles L. Becton**

*Supporting Open Door Fund*

**Asa L. Bell, Jr.**

Law Offices of Asa L. Bell, Jr.

**John R. Wester**

Robinson Bradshaw

**Rosemary Gill Kenyon**

*Supporting Open Door Fund*

**Mary Pat Kenyon Sullivan**

Smith Anderson

**Catharine Biggs Arrowood**

Parker Poe – Retired of Counsel

**NCBF Open Door Fellowship  
and Fund**

**Mark Holt**

NCBF Development Committee

## Closing Remarks

**Jason M. Hensley**

NCBA+NCBF Executive Director

## Plaque Unveiling

Justice Fund Wall in Galleria

**Reception to follow in Galleria**

## The Honorable J. Herbert W. Small



J. Herbert W. Small was born in Elizabeth City, N.C., on May 26, 1925, to the Honorable Walter Lowry Small, Sr. and Elizabeth White Small. He was the third of four children in an active household, living across the street from the fire station in Elizabeth City. There he obtained his first job sweeping out the fire station at the age of five. Later, he began delivering newspapers and groceries.

His father passed away when he was fourteen years old, requiring him to become the man of the house. He was adventurous in his youth, enjoying hunting, camping, and fishing. But his true outdoor passion was sailing on the Pasquotank River.

Herbert entered the officer training program for the U.S. Navy and completed his first year of college at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Then the Navy redirected his plans and enrolled him in an accelerated civil engineering program at the University of Virginia. By the time of his graduation, World War II had ended. He was honorably discharged when his commission was completed. He returned to Chapel Hill to earn his law degree, passing the bar in 1949.

After a year in private practice in Elizabeth City, Herbert spent two years in Washington, D.C., as aide to Congressman Herbert Bonner and Special Counsel to the Congressional Committee on Intergovernmental Relations. The fond memories he had made in his youth with his family and friends led him back to his hometown for the remainder of his life. Upon his return, Herbert formed a partnership as he resumed full-time private practice. During this time, he served as attorney for Pasquotank County for eight years.

In 1966, Herbert accepted Governor Dan K. Moore's appointment to the office of State Solicitor. He served in this role for three consecutive terms. During this time, Herbert served on the Governor's Jail Study Commission, as well as Chairman of the District Attorneys Advisory Committee, President of the Solicitors Association, and President of the First District Bar Association.

In 1974, Herbert was elected a Judge of the Superior Court with his first term beginning in 1975. He served in this capacity the remainder of his 52-year law career, retiring as the Senior Resident Superior Court Judge of the First Judicial District. He continued as an emergency judge and a recall judge following retirement.

As was typical of him, Herbert was again active in state professional organizations, serving as President of the North Carolina Conference of Superior Court Judges and representing the Conference on the North Carolina Policy and Sentencing Commission. During his time on the bench, he mentored new judges in his and other districts, providing guidance, counsel, and encouragement to them.

In recognition of his long and distinguished career, the federal courthouse in Elizabeth

City is named in his honor as the “J. Herbert W. Small Federal Building and United States Courthouse.”

As a faithful member of Blackwell Memorial Baptist Church, Herbert served as Chairman of the Board of Deacons, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Sunday School teacher, and an active member of several committees. A civic-minded man, Herbert was always politically active, working for the betterment of his community. He was also a member of several community organizations, such as the Rotary Club and Jaycees which awarded him the Distinguished Service Award. He served as Chairman of the Albemarle Hospital Board of Trustees, overseeing a major expansion of the hospital. Among other honors, he received the Order of the Long Leaf Pine from the State of North Carolina for his significant contributions to the state and his community.

Herbert was married to Annette Ward for 70 years, raising four children of their own: Elizabeth, John, Fran, and Carol. Of all his various activities, Herbert enjoyed family time the most, welcoming nine grandchildren and fourteen great-grandchildren into the family.

## **Contributors to the J. Herbert W. Small Justice Fund, in support of Civic Education:**

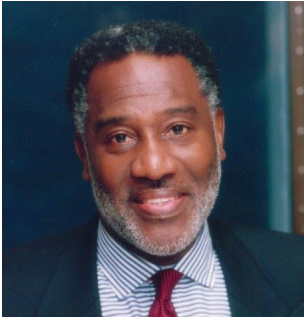
**John and Susan Small, Greensboro, NC**

**Elizabeth S. Reid, Elizabeth City, NC**

**JJ and Carol Owens, Cary, NC**

**Phil and Fran Holland, Jefferson, NC**

## Charles L. Becton



Charles L. Becton was born on May 4, 1944, in Morehead City, North Carolina. He spent his formative years in the Pitt County town of Ayden and graduated from South Ayden High School in 1962. His next stop was Howard University in Washington, D.C., where Becton was a campus leader and student-athlete. In addition to earning his bachelor's degree in 1966, Becton carried forward the Howard University motto, *Veritas et Utilitas* (Truth and Service), into virtually every aspect of his professional life. Leadership and Advocacy provided additional pillars upon which he built his career.

A pivotal moment in this journey transpired after Becton returned to North Carolina and entered Duke University School of Law, from which he graduated in 1969. It was there that he met his future bride and life partner, Brenda, a Duke undergrad who would soon share the distinction of being among the first three Black women to enter Duke Law School, from which she graduated in 1974. They met in a picket line while protesting the exclusion of a Black football player from attending his own Duke University team banquet at the all-white Hope Valley Country Club. They have been inseparable ever since. Their marriage produced three children – daughters Nicole and Michelle and son Kevin. The Hon. Brenda Becton, now retired, enjoyed a remarkable legal career in her own right which included service as an Administrative Law Judge.

Charles Becton spent the first year of his legal career with the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund in New York City. He then joined the Charlotte firm of Chambers Stein Ferguson & Lanning, which later opened a Chapel Hill office where Becton practiced prior to his appointment to the N.C. Court of Appeals in 1981. Becton served on the Court of Appeals until 1990, during which time he was named North Carolina Appellate Judge of the Year in 1985 and earned an LL.M. from the University of Virginia School of Law in 1986. He practiced law in Raleigh with Becton, Slifkin & Bell from 1990-2008, after which he continued to devote considerable attention to teaching, writing and mediation.

Becton's leadership roles include service as president of three statewide bar organizations. He served as president of the North Carolina Bar Association and Foundation in 2008-09, and was the first Black man to serve in this capacity. His installation took place in Atlantic Beach at an oceanfront hotel located footsteps away from a beach where he had been prohibited from swimming as a child because of his race. Becton also served as president of the North Carolina Association of Black Lawyers and was the first African American to serve as president of the North Carolina Academy of Trial Lawyers (now N.C. Advocates for Justice). Twice he has provided invaluable leadership to two Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), serving as interim chancellor of North Carolina Central University and Elizabeth City State University.

For 30 years, Becton was a litigator who tried scores of major Criminal and Civil Trials. He has been included in The Best Lawyers of America since 1993, and he is a Fellow in

the American College of Trial Lawyers, the American Board of Trial Attorneys, and the International Society of Barristers. He was one of ten attorneys selected to demonstrate trial advocacy skills on an ATLA/ABA/NITA video series, “Winning at Trial,” in April 1986; one of twelve attorneys selected to demonstrate cross-examination skills on an ABA/NITA video project, “Mastering the Art of Cross Examination,” in June 1986; one of eight attorneys selected to demonstrate trial advocacy skills on an ATLA Video Series “Anatomy of a Personal Injury Lawsuit” in October 1993; and one of a select number of attorneys to demonstrate trial advocacy skills at the American Folklife Festival in 1986.

During the past 35 years, Becton has taught trial advocacy skills to more than 40,000 lawyers, and he has served as the John Scott Cansler Lecturer at the University of North Carolina School of Law, and as a Senior Lecturer in Law, as well as a Professor of the Practice, at Duke University Law School. He has taught and lectured at trial advocacy skills institutes across the country, in Canada, and in the Republic of South Africa. From 2016-20, Becton served as the RJR Nabisco Endowed Chair at North Carolina Central School of Law where he taught Rhetoric and Advocacy.

Becton has received numerous awards including three national trial advocacy teaching awards. In January 1988, Becton received the William J. Brennan, Jr. Trial Advocacy Award for his work in improving the skills of trial lawyers. In June 1990, Becton was the first recipient of the Charles L. Becton Trial Advocacy Award, given annually by the North Carolina Advocates for Justice. In July 1990, Becton was a co-recipient of the Roscoe Pound Foundation’s Richard S. Jacobson Award from the Association of Trial Lawyers of America recognizing the nation’s best trial advocacy teacher.

In January 1990, he received the North Carolina Association of Educators “Excellence in Equity” Award. In May 1995, Becton received the South Carolina Trial Jury Foundation’s Distinguished Service Award. In October 1995, Becton received the Robert Keeton NITA Trial Advocacy Teaching Award. In May 2006, Becton was the first recipient of The Advocate’s Award from the NCBA Litigation Section. In October 2006, he was appointed to the N.C. Innocence Inquiry Commission, and he received the American Bar Association’s Torts and Insurance Practice Section’s Pursuit of Justice Award. And in 2013, Becton received the Elon University School of Law Leadership in the Law Award.

Truth. Service. Leadership. Advocacy. On these four pillars stands a gentle giant who has mentored generations of lawyers by example and instruction. He has assumed the mantle of leadership without hesitation or pause. He has personified the tireless advocate in the courtroom and the classroom. His devotion to the legal profession and all who assume its noble cause is indescribable, yet he himself came as close as humanly possible on the evening of June 21, 2008, when he was installed as the 114th president of the NCBA.

“Law is the vehicle through which I have sought to serve the public,” Charles Becton stated. “I love the law. I love people.”

## **Contributors to the Charles L. Becton Justice Fund, in support of the NCBF Open Door Fund:**

**Mark and Joanna Holt, Raleigh, NC**

## Rosemary Gill Kenyon



Rosemary (“Rose”) Gill Kenyon grew up in Bay City, Michigan. Rose was the third of five children born to Josephine and Harry Gill, who were devoted to their family and to serving others. Rose’s mother was a schoolteacher and her father worked in accounting. From an early age, Rose learned the importance of helping others and pulling her weight.

Rose attended local parochial schools through high school. She was always full of energy and was an active participant in all phases of school life, including student government and an award-winning

cheerleading squad (pre-Title IX).

Rose attended Saint Mary’s College (“SMC”), Notre Dame, Indiana, an all-women’s college, graduating in 1976. Coming from a long line of independent minded SMC alumnae – her mother, graduating in 1946, her grandmother in 1911, and her great grandmother in 1882 – Rose was a fourth-generation graduate. SMC’s proximity to Notre Dame allowed her to participate in the Notre Dame Rowing Club as a coxswain. Rose has since served on SMC’s national Alumnae Board and established a scholarship fund in honor of her mother, the Josephine Sullivan Gill ‘46 Family Scholarship.

After college, Rose entered the Notre Dame Law School, graduating in 1979. At Notre Dame, she participated in the student bar association, and won a position on the national Moot Court Team, which memorably presented an appellate argument before a panel of visiting jurists that included Justice John Paul Stevens of the United States Supreme Court.

In 1979, when Rose began to look for a job, many firms had few if any women lawyers. Rose embraced this challenge, becoming the first female lawyer hired by the Christian Barton law firm in Richmond, Virginia. Rose brought her energy and positive midwestern attitude – accent and all – to her work to great success. With a sense of humor and devotion to quality, she and her colleagues successfully navigated the path and remain friends today. In those days, Rose recalls that most judges were generally receptive to female lawyers. Since there were so few women lawyers who appeared in court, her uniqueness at the time meant that the judges – and court staff – tended to remember her from prior appearances and became very supportive.

Rose moved to Raleigh in late 1985. An introduction from a federal judge in Richmond led to the chance to serve as a part-time, pro bono law clerk for Judge W. Earl Britt, now a Senior United States District Court Judge for the Eastern District of North Carolina. In 1986, Rose joined the CP&L Legal Department (now part of Duke Energy), where she worked for 13 years, eventually serving as Deputy General Counsel. She became a much sought-after advisor to her clients who – because of their physical proximity – seemed to line up at her office door. Rose had always wanted to return to private practice and in 1999, she had the good fortune to join the Smith Anderson law firm, where she has



practiced employment and labor law ever since.

Through every stage of her legal career, Rose has demonstrated a devotion to service to the legal profession, to the community and to supporting other lawyers. Rose has mentored younger lawyers throughout her years of practice and is proud of the many achievements of those whom she has supported.

Rose has been a leader in organizing efforts in the private bar to provide pro bono legal services. At CP&L, Rose established the first pro bono program for in-house corporate lawyers in North Carolina and partnered with what was then known as Wake County Legal Aid to provide in-take services to potential legal aid clients. Rose also served as the Pro Bono Partner at Smith Anderson for over two decades and has chaired the SA Community Fund Committee, which to date has given away more than \$600,000 to organizations that support underprivileged individuals, children and families in need, as well as groups that address racial equality. Rose has personally provided countless hours of pro bono service through various legal services organizations over the years.

Rose's commitment to the profession has carried over to her involvement in the North Carolina Bar Association, where she has served in numerous leadership roles, including on the Board of Governors (2005-2008) and as the Chair of the Strategic Planning and Emerging Trends Committee (2008-2011). From 2001-2004, she chaired the Women in the Profession Committee, which culminated in the publication of *The Changing Face of Justice: A Look at the First 100 Women Attorneys in North Carolina*. The Committee's accomplishment was celebrated with two days of events, including a day-long seminar and a dinner attended by one of the three surviving first 100 women.

Rose's service has also extended to the nonprofit community. She has chaired the boards of Habitat for Humanity of Wake County, Community Music School, and Pines of Carolina Girl Scout Council, among others, and currently serves as a Trustee for the North Carolina Symphony Society.

Rose has three adult daughters – Mary Pat Kenyon Sullivan, Katharine Kenyon Hodinka, MD, and Sarah Kenyon. She also has four grandchildren. Rose treasures spending time with her family more than anything, but also enjoys travel, spending time with friends, and her new refuge at Lake Gaston.

## **Contributors to the Rosemary Gill Kenyon Justice Fund, in support of the NCBF Open Door Fund:**

**Smith Anderson, Raleigh, NC**



# NORTH CAROLINA BAR FOUNDATION OPEN DOOR FELLOWSHIP



## Congratulations to the 2024 Open Door Fellows!

The NCBF Open Door Fellowship is a unique, competitive opportunity for first-year North Carolina law students. Open Door Fellows gain valuable, hands-on legal experience while widening their professional networks to “open doors” and prepare them for the next steps in their legal careers.



**April Franklin** is a first-year law student at Elon University School of Law. Prior to attending law school, April worked in the healthcare industry and received a dual Master’s degree in Gerontology and Business Administration from UNC Greensboro. April is passionate about advocating for senior adults and educating their caregivers, which motivated her to start a business called Fresh Wave Care LLC and write a book titled *The Millennial’s Guide to Caregiving Brand*. Through the fellowship, she will spend her summer gaining experience at The Fresh Market under the guidance of attorney Gerald Walden.



**Darius Alexander** is a 1L law student at UNC Chapel Hill. Prior to law school, he attended East Carolina University and majored in Political Science and Philosophy. Originally from Connecticut, Darius has called North Carolina home for almost a decade and seeks to build a career in the Triad. Darius is a first-generation college graduate who hopes to begin a mentorship program for those in his community after earning his law degree. Through the fellowship, he will spend his summer gaining experience at the law firm Craige Jenkins under the guidance of attorney Rebecca Smitherman.

As the legal profession in North Carolina grows and its members become increasingly diverse, this flagship program signals a collective commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion and a desire to welcome all who want to serve the people of North Carolina through the legal profession.



Visit the NCBF Open Door Fellowship page to learn more and support this program.



NORTH CAROLINA  
BAR FOUNDATION

## Our Mission:

**Uniting the talent and generosity of our profession to be a power of greater good for the people of North Carolina.**

## Our Vision:

A vibrant North Carolina where legal services are available to all, regardless of ability to pay; where members of the legal profession provide community service and leadership that profoundly impacts the public, thereby demonstrating the value of our profession to society; and where all North Carolinians understand and have confidence in a legal system that serves them.

## Our Values:

**We value access to justice.** We believe access is an intrinsic part of justice and are committed to ensuring equal access for all by giving generously to, and using our civic influence on behalf of, organizations that provide pro bono legal services.

**We value service.** We are passionate about opportunities to use our education and experience to be of service to our fellow North Carolinians, and we are proud of our flagship pro bono and public service projects that allow volunteer lawyers, paralegals and law students to strengthen and improve their communities all across our state.

**We value education.** We embrace our role as educators and are enthusiastic about helping our fellow North Carolinians – both schoolchildren and adults – understand and have confidence in the rule of law and our justice system.

**We value professionalism.** We take to heart our professional obligations as lawyers to make a difference. We actively cultivate a culture of service, invest in training lawyer leaders, and use innovative approaches to bring North Carolina lawyers together to work alongside one another for the common good.

**We value diversity, equity, and inclusion.** We acknowledge and are committed to addressing inequities in access to legal services and participation in the legal profession experienced by historically excluded or disadvantaged individuals and communities in North Carolina.