



ANNUAL  
REPORT

2017

MOORE & VAN ALLEN  
PUBLIC SERVICE  
ANNUAL REPORT

**Moore & Van Allen**

Together  
We Can  
Do More



MVA Public Service Committee





## CHAIR'S MESSAGE: TOGETHER WE CAN DO MORE

Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of the MVA Public Service Committee, I am pleased to share our annual report. At Moore & Van Allen, we recognize and embrace our duty to impact the surrounding community for good. It is to this end that the Committee remains steadfast in providing services and programs that assist the most fragile and deserving of clients.

As a pillar in the legal community, our Firm has a responsibility to ensure the law does not become a commodity limited to those who can afford it. Our approach to service is not limited to single pro bono cases or service events. We also seek opportunities to collaborate with our community partners and clients in an effort to deepen our impact, because together we can do more – we can give more, we can serve more, we can inspire more – when we combine our efforts with those who share MVA's passion for service.

Over the last year, we have continued to deepen our relationships with our valued community partners. We have increased our veteran outreach efforts, expanded partnerships through our domestic violence pro bono project and launched a new initiative focusing pro bono representation for refugees and displaced persons. Additionally, we were thrilled to be the recipient of the 2016 Outstanding Firm Pro Bono Service Award from Legal Aid of North Carolina-Charlotte. We are proud to work alongside Legal Aid of North Carolina to serve the legal needs of low-income individuals in our community.

This year, our annual report includes vignettes on each of our esteemed projects and the volunteers who lead them – we hope you find their acts of kindness as inspiring as we do. The Public Service Committee appreciates our professionals' energy and passion for giving back and helping others. We look forward to continuing our work together as colleagues and collectively with our partners to do more.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Heslin".

Brian Heslin  
Chair, Public Service Committee





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## IN THE COMMUNITY

In addition to providing volunteer services through our pro bono and public service initiatives, Moore & Van Allen is proud to provide financial support to organizations dedicated to improving our community. Last year, MVA invested over three quarters of a million dollars into nonprofit organizations making a difference in the lives of so many.

Below are a handful of organizations that received support in 2016:

American Heart Association  
American Red Cross  
Arts for Life  
Autism Charlotte  
Boys & Girls Club of Greater Charlotte  
Capital for Children  
Care Ring  
Catawba Lands Conservancy  
Charlotte Family Housing  
Classroom Central  
Communities in Schools

Council for Children's Rights  
Crisis Assistance Ministry  
Cystic Fibrosis Foundation  
Florence Crittenton Programs  
Freedom School Partners  
Habitat for Humanity  
Hands on Charlotte  
Humane Society of Charlotte  
Junior Achievement of Central Carolinas  
Justice Initiatives  
KIPP Charlotte

Legal Aid of North Carolina  
Legal Services of Southern Piedmont  
Let Me Run  
Leukemia & Lymphoma Society  
Make-A-Wish  
Mental Health Foundation  
Progress in Education  
Pro Bono Net  
Supportive Housing Communities  
Teach for America  
Thompson Child and Family Focus

## THE IMPACT

### BY THE NUMBERS



**4,335**

Total pro bono hours donated by MVA attorneys in 2016.



**5,425**

Total public service hours donated by MVA attorneys and staff in 2016.



**132** new pro bono cases opened.

### Pro Bono Areas of Focus

- Domestic Violence
- Economic Development
- Guardianship
- Housing Rights
- Human Trafficking
- Immigration
- Pro Se Support
- Veteran Advocacy
- Wills and Estates



### SERVICE ALL STARS

#### 50+ Hours of Pro Bono:

Jennifer Braccia  
Bill Butler  
Sarah Byrne  
Cabell Clay  
Kim Cochran  
Tom Cooper  
Martha Efird  
John Fagg  
Bill Freeman  
Lindsey Frye  
John Gilson

Beth Yount Grimes  
Larry Gwaltney  
Matt Kain  
Kristen Kenley  
Bo Ketner  
Minnie Kim  
Matt Lincoln  
Gabe Mathless  
Karin McGinnis  
Jim McLoughlin  
Elena Mitchell

Ashley Nutley  
Nader Raja  
Frank Schall  
Russ Sizemore  
Brian Soja  
Taylor Stukes  
Chris Thompson  
Scott Tyler  
Sara Page Waugh





## HUNGER

### FEEDING THE FRENZY

For the fifth year in a row, Moore & Van Allen earned the title of Large Firm division winner for the 2017 Legal Feeding Frenzy. The Frenzy was conducted from March 6-31, and brought in over 300,000 pounds of food to be distributed statewide in the effort to eradicate hunger. Attorney General Josh Stein recognized all division winners during an awards ceremony hosted by the North Carolina Bar Association at the N.C. Bar Center on April 24. Research Triangle Intellectual Property Member **Tristan Fuierer** accepted the award on the Firm's behalf.

Moore & Van Allen raised 52,900 pounds of food in support of the food insecure families across the state of North Carolina! Internal campaign efforts were led by Intellectual Property Counsel **Marianne Fuierer** and Member **Tristan Fuierer** in MVA's Research Triangle office and Litigation Associate **Kristen Kenley** who rallied floor captains in Charlotte. The combined efforts of both offices helped support food insecure families assisted by the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina and the Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina.

The Legal Feeding Frenzy, launched in 2013 by the Office of the Attorney General, the Young Lawyers Division of the North Carolina Bar Association, and the North Carolina Association of Food Banks, is a month-long food and fund drive competition among the state's law firms and organizations.





## PRESERVING AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Moore & Van Allen continues to partner with Habitat for Humanity by providing pro bono legal advice in connection with the resolution of delinquent loans. The partnership, founded in 2012, assists Habitat in vacating houses where a tenant has defaulted on their mortgage. Although Habitat has a dedicated, compassionate group of professionals that work with homeowners to resolve their delinquency in an equitable manner, certain defaults necessitate the prosecution of

foreclosure proceedings. That is especially the case because the existence of too many non-performing mortgages deprives Habitat of resources that it could use to further invest in the Charlotte community. Under the direction of Bankruptcy Member **Luis Lluberás**, the MVA Habitat for Humanity Pro Bono Project has significantly reduced the amount of non-performing mortgages in its loan portfolio and, in turn, been able to provide affordable homes for families seeking permanent housing.



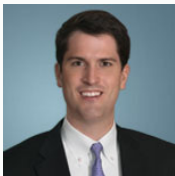
## HOUSING

### CREATING STABILITY FOR FAMILIES IN CRISIS

*"Each month, in modest apartments and houses throughout Charlotte, Housing Rights attorneys protect and redeem the basic rights of Charlotte's poorest families."*

**- Taylor Stukes**

MVA Litigation Associate and  
Co-Project Leader of the MVA  
Housing Rights Project



*"MVA has built and sustained a unique pro bono model—the Housing Rights Project—that has helped well over 200 low-income families in our community retain their housing and prevent homelessness."*

**- Isaac Sturgill**

Staff Attorney-Legal Aid of NC

For more than six years, Moore & Van Allen has dedicated resources to prevent homelessness in Mecklenburg County through a pro bono partnership with Legal Aid of North Carolina (LANC). These critical services provide pro bono representation for in-need, working families facing eviction or inhabitable living conditions.

According to the Mecklenburg County Point-In-Time Report released in 2016, children account for approximately 23% of the homeless population in Charlotte. Once homeless, the barriers preventing families' access to safe and stable housing can feel insurmountable. That is why MVA shares the city of Charlotte's goal to prevent and end family, youth and child homelessness through programs like the MVA Housing Rights Project.

Led by MVA Litigation Attorneys **John Fagg** and **Taylor Stukes**, the MVA Housing Rights Project helps minimize the disruption to family life caused by an emergency relocation. Through use of a roster of pro bono attorneys and staff, the Project provides clients with a sense of control over major life decisions and defends clients' basic right to decent housing.

"Through the work of the Housing Rights attorneys, I am reminded why we provide pro bono service," said Stukes. "Simply put, no one else can solve the types of problems and create the outcomes that lawyers can. By providing pro bono legal services we prevent the guarantee of equal protection under the law from becoming a lie for those who cannot afford our services. Each month, in modest apartments and houses throughout Charlotte, Housing Rights attorneys protect and redeem the basic rights of Charlotte's poorest families."

Moore & Van Allen's emphasis on pro bono service is a long-standing value of the Firm. As a long-standing partner of Legal Aid in North Carolina, we continue to prioritize the relationship and preserve LANC's mission of ensuring a full measure of justice for those in need.

"With the dedicated leadership of great lawyers like John Fagg and Taylor Stukes, MVA has built and sustained a unique pro bono model—the Housing Rights Project—that has helped well over 200 low-income families in our community retain their housing and prevent homelessness," said Isaac Sturgill, Staff Attorney-Legal Aid of North Carolina. "Over 40 MVA attorneys have participated in this project, and many of them have helped numerous clients over the years."

MVA continues to support the good work of LANC and its staff which works tirelessly to ensure access to adequate legal representation for the most vulnerable of clients.





## SERVING OUR NEIGHBORS

Over 25 MVA volunteers helped to make 1,200 sandwiches in support of the Urban Ministry Center (UMC) - a point of entry to services offered by a network of agencies that work closely together to provide necessary opportunities for the Charlotte homeless population. The MVA team worked together in groups to dole out the to-go bagged sandwiches in 45 minutes. All 1,200 sandwiches were delivered immediately to UMC to be served over the course of the next two days at the UMC Soup Kitchen.

UMC serves a hot, nutritious lunch 365 days a year, even in the face of terrible weather and ever-increasing demand. With a 35-year history, it remains the largest, oldest Charlotte soup kitchen. UMC welcomes anyone who is in need of a meal, regardless of the person's circumstance, with no questions asked. UMC also provides showers, laundry, mail, I.D. assistance and other essential services as a way of affirming the dignity of each homeless neighbor.



## HOUSING



### WITH HONORS

Moore & Van Allen was thrilled to receive the Legal Aid of North Carolina's (LANC) 2016 Outstanding Firm Pro Bono Award. Charlotte Litigation Associate **Taylor Stukes** accepted the award on the Firm's behalf at the fifth annual Pro Bono Awards event, which was held at the Mint Museum Uptown.

MVA was recognized specifically for its Housing Rights Project (see page 6), a pro bono initiative that enables attorney volunteers to help Charlotte-area tenants avoid homelessness and to secure safe, habitable homes. To date, the Firm's efforts have helped approximately 200 local low-income families retain housing and prevent homelessness. More than 40 MVA attorneys have participated in this project, donating 3,500 hours in total.

The fifth annual Pro Bono Awards event, hosted by Legal Services of Southern Piedmont, Legal Aid of North Carolina and the Council for Children's Rights, honored local attorneys and advocates who have donated their time and talents to local underserved children, families and individuals in legal crisis.







## CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

### EMPOWERING PRO SE LITIGANTS

For citizens navigating the legal system, the simplest procedures can be incredibly intimidating and overwhelming. That is why Moore & Van Allen remains committed to lending support to clients of the 26th Judicial District SelfServe Center in Mecklenburg County through its Judicial Pro Se Project led by Charlotte Finance Member, **Kimberly Zirkle**.

Together with the Center, MVA volunteers lend support and advice to clients who will represent themselves in divorce and custody proceedings. These efforts help to empower pro se litigants and encourage them to understand the judicial process.

Every month, MVA volunteers visit the Center to meet with pro se litigants clients, assess their legal needs, answer the questions that these clients have concerning their case and give them strategies and a plan for how they will proceed. Clients typically discuss matters related to child visitation and/or custody, domestic violence, divorce, or small claims. Together, the MVA attorney and client craft a list of necessary steps and gather resources for the client to use so that they can effectively and efficiently navigate the court system on their own behalf.

"The SelfServe Center is a valuable resource, and I think it has had a significant impact on making the legal process more accessible to those who simply cannot afford counsel or really do not need it because of the nature of their matter," says Global Services Associate and SelfServe Center volunteer **Amanda Franklin**. Franklin, who began volunteering with the project shortly after she joined MVA, is an immigration attorney by day that had little experience in family law proceedings prior to serving at the Center. Recognizing an area to do good, Franklin stepped outside of her comfort zone by committing to offering pro bono services through the SelfServe Center.

MVA is thrilled to have the opportunity to work with such deserving clients and values its partnership with the 26th Judicial District SelfServe Center.



*"The SelfServe Center is a valuable resource, and I think it has had a significant impact on making the legal process more accessible to those who simply cannot afford counsel or really do not need it because of the nature of their matter."*

**- Amanda Franklin**  
Global Services Associate and  
SelfServe Center Volunteer





# CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

## SECURING GUARDIANSHIP RIGHTS

*“The MVA Pro Bono Guardianship Program helps families prepare and file documents to petition the court to show the child needs a guardian, and serves as a guide throughout the entire process.”*

**- Tracie Solarte**  
*Financial Services Paralegal and  
 Project Leader of the MVA  
 Pro Bono Guardianship Program*

At Moore & Van Allen, we recognize that no matter the legal battle, navigating the court system as a pro se litigant is simply overwhelming. From custody to small claims and everything in between, the judicial system is a daunting establishment to navigate. That is why MVA invests in programs like the MVA Pro Bono Guardianship Program that assist clients in navigating the court system while representing themselves.

Established by MVA Finance Paralegal **Tracie Solarte**, the MVA Pro Bono Guardianship Program helps families secure uncontested guardianship arrangements for children unable to make sound decisions for themselves upon turning 18 years of age. Often times, families with special needs children are unaware that guardianship must be sought. And more concerning, families do not know where they can turn to for help. MVA serves as a point of assistance for families through an overwhelming process.

“Once a child with special needs turns 18, the parents lose their rights to make medical and life decisions for their child and formal guardianship must be sought in order to protect the child,” said Solarte. “The MVA Pro Bono Guardianship Program helps the families prepare the documents to petition the court to show the child needs a guardian, file the documents, and be their guide throughout the entire process if they have any questions.”

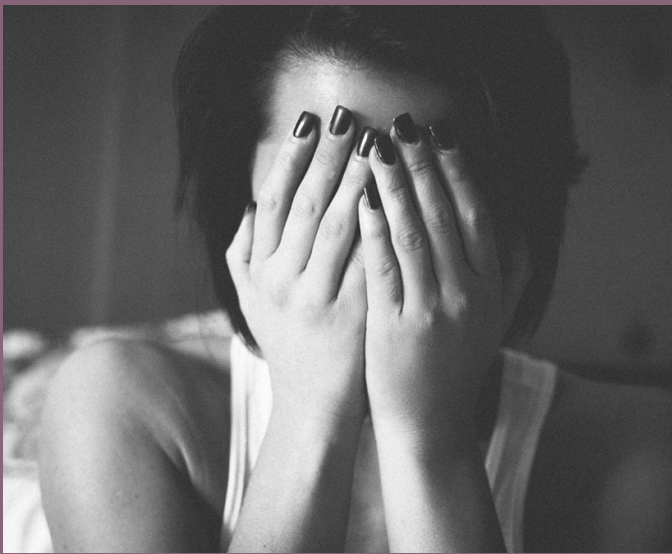


Tracie Solarte

Potential clients are referred to the Firm by way of Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools (CMS). Cases must be uncontested – meaning no other parties may be seeking custody of the child – and the applying guardian must first demonstrate to the Firm that he/she is fit to make sound decisions pertaining to the needs and desires of the child. Solarte then works with the family throughout the guardianship application and hearing processes. Though legal representation isn’t required, having an advocate to work with the family during a confusing and stressful guardianship process is appreciated.

To increase client referrals, MVA is expanding its outreach to CMS and relevant nonprofit organizations in an effort to increase case intake by word of mouth from previous clients.





## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



### SUPPORTING SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The Moore & Van Allen Public Service Committee's Domestic Violence Project continues to provide pro bono services to low-income families affected by domestic violence. The project, which works in collaboration with Safe Alliance's Legal Representation (LRP), empowers victims of domestic violence who could not otherwise afford an attorney to advocate for their rights.

"As the current leader of the firm's Domestic Violence Pro Bono Project, I see firsthand the impact of our work," said MVA Litigation Member **Mindy Vervais**. "One of the greatest hindrances in the battle against domestic violence both locally and nationally, is the limited supply of pro bono legal assistance that is available to assist victims in obtaining protection from their abusers."

LRP provides MVA with a minimum of two cases per month. Vervais manages the case placement process by soliciting volunteers from a core group of attorneys and paralegals who've volunteered their time to the project. To learn the ropes and build confidence, new volunteers are matched with a mentor who guides them through the domestic violence case management process. LRP staff members also provide additional support and training for volunteer attorneys in the courtroom.

"Safe Alliance Legal Representation Program represents close to 400 clients per year in obtaining domestic violence protective orders, with about 40% of those clients being served by pro bono attorneys," said Legal Services Staff Attorney Ryan Stage. "Moore & Van Allen and their pro bono attorneys are a vital part of this program. Without volunteers like them, many victims would have to face their abusers alone, and without another voice to help them navigate the confusing and often overwhelming legal process just to try and feel safe and move forward with their lives."

In early 2017, MVA Domestic Violence Project, in partnership with Safe Alliance, hosted a one-hour CLE program at Wells Fargo. The training outlined how to obtain a domestic violence protective order on behalf of a client and featured a mock consent negotiation and trial. Over 60 guests attended including Wells Fargo in-house counsel and MVA attorneys. With only two full-time staff attorneys, Safe Alliance depends on the critical work pro bono attorneys can provide.

Over the last several years, MVA has been recognized with the Legal Representation Project's Commitment to Justice Award for its continued dedication and commitment to the program and clients served. The Firm is grateful for its partnership with Safe Alliance and the opportunity to serve a most valuable client base.

*"Attorneys at Moore & Van Allen believe that the legal community is uniquely positioned to serve victims of domestic violence and in partnership with Safe Alliance's Legal Representation Project."*

**- Mindy Vervais**  
MVA Litigation Member

*"Moore & Van Allen and their pro bono attorneys are a vital part of the Legal Representation Project."*

**- Ryan Stage**  
Safe Alliance Staff Attorney





## HUMAN TRAFFICKING

### FIGHTING FOR VICTIMS' RIGHTS

Still recognized as the only law firm in the southeast offering comprehensive legal services to human trafficking victims, Moore & Van Allen continues to meet the high demand to support victims through the MVA Human Trafficking Pro Bono Project. Under the direction of MVA Attorneys **Sarah Byrne**, **Chris Thompson** and Global Services Paralegal **Sally Hentz**, the Project provides a variety of pro bono legal services to trafficking victims including victim-witness advocacy, expunction analysis, and other civil law matters including immigration and name change petitions.



In addition to providing direct legal representation, Project leaders are often invited to educate governmental, academic and community organizations about the work and ways to engage. Byrne and Hentz also continue to serve on the Charlotte Metropolitan Human Trafficking Task Force which is a multidisciplinary collaboration led by the U.S. Attorney for the Western District of North Carolina.

MVA's Human Trafficking Pro Bono Project thanks its 92 volunteers for their tremendous work on behalf of survivors. In the last year alone, Project volunteers assisted survivors in over 40 matters. Recent successes include:

- Dismissal of several criminal charges in various state courts for conduct related to being trafficked. Justice for these innocent victims means they can get a job, a home and an education without having a criminal record.
- Pursuit of visa status for several labor and sex trafficking clients, allowing them to stay in the country lawfully and giving them comfort during this turbulent time in immigration policy.
- Advice to non-profits that support trafficking survivors on their corporate and real estate needs.
- Collaboration with government agencies to bring down barriers to the healing process for survivors.
- Obtaining local counsel for several out-of-state victims who came to the Project seeking legal aid.

MVA continues to be a leading voice for trafficking victims' legal needs at conferences, in the press and before government bodies. Project leaders serve as a trusted resource for law enforcement and service providers across the country.

The Project's work goes beyond legal aid by hosting monthly career development programming for trafficking survivors, facilitating housing placements and supporting wrap-around service providers. Contact Human Trafficking Pro Bono Project leaders with questions.

*"MVA proved a community that values the importance of the individual. We want to express our deepest gratitude for the material and moral support we found in you great friends."*

**- MVA Pro Bono Client,  
Human Trafficking Project**



## CELEBRATING EVERYDAY HEROES

Congratulations to the MVA Charlotte office for raising over \$140,000 as part of its 2016 Strategic Choice Campaign: Be An Everyday Hero! This extremely generous outpouring of support is simply remarkable, and on behalf of each of our strategic choice organizations we thank the 195 donors who truly are everyday heroes. Funds raised throughout the annual employee giving campaign will support the following community organizations throughout 2017:

- A Child's Place
- American Cancer Society
- Arts and Science Council
- Charlotte Rescue Mission
- Council for Children's Rights
- Ronald McDonald House
- Safe Alliance
- Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina
- United Way of the Carolinas
- Urban Ministry Center



## VETERANS

### HONORING OUR MILITARY HEROES



At Moore & Van Allen, we take pride in providing for those who have served our country. That is why MVA remains committed to supplying pro bono legal services for former and current service members. Under the direction of Litigation Member and veteran **Larry Gwaltney**, MVA Veteran Pro Bono Project offers support for disability ratings and service discharge upgrades in partnership with Legal Services of Southern Piedmont (LSSP).

Through our partnership with LSSP, we strive to provide veterans with a sense of stability within their reentry to civilian life. Together, we work with the clients to secure basic needs – from access to necessary medical attention to access to employment opportunities.



With regards to disability ratings, though legal representation is not required, a veteran supported by legal counsel often results in a significant increase in the veteran's disability rating. This leads to increased dollars for the client that can be used for vital cost of living expenses. It also leads to access to adequate medical attention for service-related injuries that may be burdensome for the client.

For veterans who have served in uniform and received a less than honorable discharge, the impact on their post-service lives can be dramatic. While the process is not simple and the results not guaranteed, there is a way to appeal the discharge classification. MVA volunteer attorney's work with LSSP clients to apply to the Discharge Review Board for an upgrade of their discharge characterization or a change of the reason given for their discharge. For those who receive an upgraded status, the results are tremendous. Clients are able to pursue employment and educational opportunities that would have otherwise been prevented.

MVA is grateful to LSSP for the opportunity to serve some of our finest clients. We look forward to continuing our partnership and expanding our efforts to support those in uniform.





## BUILDING SAFE AND STABLE HOMES

A team of twelve MVA employees volunteered at a Habitat for Humanity home build to finish two houses in Durham in the fall of 2016. They helped out with projects including painting the front porches of both houses, staining wood, taping plastic to protect from moisture in the crawl space, and landscaping. Volunteers were able to work with both families that will be moving into the houses. Habitat for Humanity brings people together to build homes, communities and hope. Since its founding in 1983, Habitat has served over 1,500 families.

A special thanks to our Habitat volunteers:

Sandy Day	David Oakley
Tristan Fuierer	Kim Oakley
Arlene Hanks	Christina Quinn
Mike Johnston	Patrick Quinn
Chris Knors	Amber West
Jenna Knors	Lynn Wiemann



## VETERANS

### PARTNERING WITH LOCAL CHANGE AGENTS

With support from Moore & Van Allen, Peace of Adventure (PoA) continues to collaborate with The Bike Farm in Pisgah Forest, North Carolina for an introductory mountain bike clinic for individuals with disabilities. PoA provides healing for veterans by empowering them to lead civilians with disabilities on outdoor recreation adventures. PoA believes in the power of serving others and believes this act of serving enables a renewed sense of purpose.

PoA calls on veterans from the Charlotte area to serve as mentors for the clinic. Under the guidance of professional mountain bike guides, veteran mentors provide hands-on support to ensure participants gain the knowledge, understanding and freedom in the mountains. No previous biking experience is required, and PoA always looks forward to meeting participants where they are in their respective skill level. This event is less about riding bikes and more about coming together as a squad to support one another. By empowering veterans to serve individuals with disabilities in this capacity, PoA provides a renewed sense of purpose to transitioning service members while instilling a commitment to wellness in the Charlotte community. To date, PoA has hosted two clinics with MVA's support in October 2016 and April 2017.

MVA attorneys **Brian Heslin** and **Jay Harper** continue to work with PoA to ensure their services grow in the greater Charlotte metro region. Heslin currently serves as a member on Peace of Adventures Board of Advisors.





## THANK YOU TO THE 2016-2017 DEVONSHIRE READERS

Courtney Cavanaugh  
Kim Cochran  
Miriam Dixon  
Rob Fisher  
Suzanne Gainey  
Stephanie Gryder  
Deb Hanna  
George Hanna  
Mike Hebert  
Steve Hope

Lesley Lewis  
Palmer McArthur  
Kelly Rockecharlie  
Jared Poplin  
Kaitlin Powers  
Justina Smith  
Sara Page Waugh  
Melissa Weir  
Annie Wilson



## EDUCATION

### VOLUNTEERING IN THE CLASSROOM



Devonshire Elementary School has been a long-standing partner of Moore & Van Allen, and the Firm was thrilled to have the opportunity to continue working with the school over the past year. When first launched, the partnership focused solely on the Devonshire Reading Project, but has since expanded to the Devonshire Backpack and Box Tops programs as well.

Every week, MVA volunteer readers pay a visit to each of Devonshire's third grade classrooms. From *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* to *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, the literary options are endless once the volunteer readers step foot into the classrooms. The reading program – which is led by Corporate Associate **Lesley Lewis** - is a great way to peak the students' interest in reading, and the readers enjoy spending quality time with the petite scholars.



Last year, MVA continued to supply healthy and nutritious food options to Devonshire families by way of its Backpack Program. The program, which works in conjunction with the Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina, provides needy children with child-friendly food when other resources, such as school lunches and after-school meals or snacks, are not available at home.

MVA's Box Tops for Education program, led by Finance Paralegal **Tracie Solarte**, raises critical funds that go directly to Devonshire Elementary in support of its teachers and students. Devonshire lacks a Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and is limited in its fundraising capacities. The Box Tops for Education program supplements those funds that would otherwise be garnered from an operating PTA.



MVA is crazy about Devonshire Elementary School, and why wouldn't it be? The outstanding teachers, staff members and students continue to welcome us with open arms and good books. Keeping with tradition, the Firm also hosted a field trip for Devonshire's third grade class to the Lazy 5 Ranch in Mooresville, NC at the close of the school year. The trip is always a great way to celebrate another outstanding year with our friends at Devonshire.





## EDUCATION

### CRAFTING WITH RePURPOSE



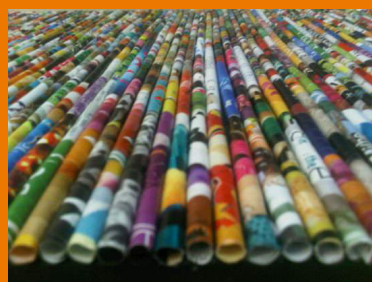
Moore & Van Allen continues to partner with UrbanPromise Charlotte – a nonprofit organization dedicated to developing youth leaders within the community. Through its partnership with UrbanPromise, MVA provides substantial volunteer and financial support of its mission of empowering children to restore their communities

Unique to the UrbanPromise model, the StreetLeader Program employs high school students as counselors, tutors and mentors for the elementary school children who attend Urban Promise's AfterSchool programs and summer camps. The heart of the StreetLeader Program is challenging teens to use their influence to make positive changes in the lives of these children, in their own lives, and throughout their communities.



In 2017, MVA launched an after-school arts program led by Paralegal/Executive Assistant **JoAnn Lett** and Paralegal **Darnise Starr**, aptly named Recyclicious: Crafting with RePurpose. The program utilizes recycled products to make innovative art pieces with participating elementary-school students. Starr and Lett worked alongside teenage StreetLeaders to produce a 10-week curriculum encouraging students to tap into their creativity by using resources right at their fingertips. The program was an instant success. Participating students were thrilled to work alongside Lett, Starr and the StreetLeaders to create, innovate and take ownership of their art projects. The program plans to host its second installation in the fall of 2017.

MVA is a proud supporter of both UrbanPromise and the Recyclicious programs and looks forward to expanding its efforts in the near future.





## CELEBRATING PRO BONO CHAMPIONS

Charlotte Litigation Member **Cabell Clay** was selected to receive the 2017 North Carolina Bar Association's Younger Lawyer Award for her incredible work coordinating the Disaster Legal Services pro bono project – an effort that provided free legal assistance to North Carolina Victims of Hurricane Matthew. Clay lent an extensive amount of time and effort standing up the project to assist qualifying clients seeking legal counsel. The service was a partnership between the North Carolina Bar Association, Legal Aid of North Carolina, the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division

and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Pro bono attorneys volunteering with the service provided an array of responses including, but not limited to, assistance with securing FEMA and other benefits available to disaster survivors, assistance with life, medical and property insurance claims and help with home repair contracts and contractors. Clay was recognized for her contributions and presented with the award at the 2017 North Carolina Bar Association Annual Meeting taking place in Asheville, NC.



## ENTREPRENEURIAL



### INVESTING IN SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS

Last summer Charlotte's most innovative and entrepreneurial minds convened in Moore & Van Allen's office to learn about the legal facets involved in starting, running and growing a business. MVA attorneys met with participants in Queen City Forward's (QCF) summer accelerator installment called ImpactU. The program, which assists collegiate entrepreneurs, is designed to teach the budding business moguls about business considerations ranging from choosing legal structure and forming strategic partnerships, to owning intellectual property and managing employees.



Queen City Forward serves as a hub for entrepreneurs who have innovative business ideas that address prominent needs within the community, and works to balance a triple-bottom-line of people, planet and profit. The organization, through its accelerator program, among other initiatives, encourages and enables such social enterprises to create a robust cluster of innovation in the Charlotte region.



"One of the greatest challenges for even the most innovative among us is the need to consider issues which aren't directly related to the innovation itself. That may include intellectual property protection, employment laws, website and marketing, insurance, regulations and permitting and the impacts of borrowing or raising money," said Corporate Member and QCF Advisory Board Member **Carolyn Meade**. "Any business intersects with the law in a thousand different ways, some of which may not be evident to a start-up. Good legal advice is essential to avoid pitfalls, but good legal advice is also expensive. The pro bono advice we provide not only saves tens of thousands of dollars now but avoids hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of conflict later."



MVA, through its Public Service Committee, provides ongoing pro bono corporate-related legal services to Queen City Forward, in the effort to foster their growth and broaden their positive impact within the Charlotte community. In addition to ImpactU, MVA also lends legal support to Queen City Forward's flagship accelerator program Impact3.



## EXTENDING A WELCOME

In 2017, MVA launched its newest pro bono program in partnership with the International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP) which organizes a base of volunteer lawyers and law students to develop and enforce a set of legal and human rights for refugees and displaced persons. Mobilizing direct legal aid and systemic policy advocacy, IRAP serves the world's most persecuted individuals and empowers the next generation of human rights leaders. The MVA effort is led by Corporate Associate **Gina Russoniello** who worked with IRAP during her time as a law student at the University Pennsylvania and in her early legal career.

IRAP partnered with MVA in March 2017 to host a CLE program to train roughly 25 volunteers. The seminar provided the basics of refugee and Special Immigrant Visa processing along with an overview of the Executive Order issued in January 2017. Given the increasing need for immigration assistance, Gina and the IRAP will staff cases with MVA volunteers in the coming months to assist at-risk refugees.



## COMMUNITY

### HELPING CLIENTS NAVIGATE DIFFICULT DECISIONS

Providing pro bono legal services is more than donated time - it is an opportunity to serve as a personal advisor. Through Moore & Van Allen's Pro Bono Wills Project, our attorneys continue to forge meaningful relationships with clients looking for some comfort with respect to their personal affairs.



Founded in early 2010, the MVA Wills Project is a partnership with Legal Aid of Southern Piedmont (LSSP) that assists elderly residents of Mecklenburg County with estate planning services. The program, which is led by Charlotte Financial Services Member **Lauren Biek**, empowers residents of Mecklenburg County who are over 60 years in age to make their own plans and decisions governing end of life issues through the completion of a will and health care power of attorney.



"Remarkably, MVA has also taken every pro bono case we have offered the Firm since the inception of this project," said Arthur Bartlett, Western North Carolina Low Income Taxpayer Clinic/Legal Services for the Elderly Attorney/Director. "The numbers certainly add up over a year's time. Staff truly appreciate having this partnership with MVA as the funding for this program is very limited and our ability to serve more clients relies heavily upon the support of pro bono attorneys."

Legal problems facing the elderly population are often more critical than those problems facing any other segment of our population. The elderly in poverty are less likely to seek the assistance of an attorney. Often, it is either because they do not have cash resources to pay for services, or they do not realize that they have a "legal problem". The Wills Project provides clients with access to the system of justice by offering advocacy, advice and quality representation in securing their estate.

MVA has endeavored to accept a minimum of three new pro bono cases per month and continues to value the relationships established through our partnership with LSSP.

*"The quality of work and service to our clients has also been outstanding. To paraphrase one former client served through the project, "I felt like I was treated like I was paying the attorney a million dollars. I can't believe they did this for me for free. I have such peace of mind."*

**- Arthur Bartlett, Western North Carolina Low Income Taxpayer Clinic/Legal Services for the Elderly Attorney/Director**



Moore & Van Allen's Charleston office recently participated in the Cynthia Graham Hurd Foundation book drive to support Reading Partners, a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing students with individualized reading support. The rich legacy of Cynthia Graham Hurd is well-known and loved throughout the Charleston community. She served as a librarian for the Charleston County Public Library for 31 years before her life and the life of eight others were taken in a senseless act of violence at the Mother Emanuel AME Church in June 2015. The Reading Partners month-long book drive yielded over 1,000 books to be used in its Take Home Reading Program that will help underserved students start to build their own libraries at home.



Moore & Van Allen Ethics and Compliance Counsel **Sarah Byrne** and Manager of Community and Diversity Initiatives **Stephanie Gryder** were featured guests on the Pro Bono Happy Hour Podcast in December 2016. Hosted by the Pro Bono Institute, the podcast highlights weekly stories on the exciting and meaningful developments in the world of law firm pro bono and access to justice. The episode highlighted MVA's pro bono efforts in the Carolinas and the creation of its Human Trafficking Pro Bono Project.



Byrne, who co-leads MVA's Human Trafficking Pro Bono Project (see page 11), described the legal services provided to trafficking survivors and the Firm's critical dependency on a network of collaborative partners throughout Charlotte. "Our community partnerships are so critical to representing victims of human trafficking," said Byrne. "Many communities, including Charlotte, do not have a singular agency that supports victims of human trafficking who can act as a referral source for law firms in terms of pro bono cases. What we do have are a number of direct service providers who support victims of trafficking. This network of providers is so vital in helping to connect MVA with potential clients. Beyond just connecting MVA with pro bono clients, these service providers ensure victims are receiving holistic care beyond just legal services."

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## SPREADING HOLIDAY JOY

Moore & Van Allen's Charlotte office hosted the Association of Corporate Counsel (ACC) Charlotte Chapter's Holiday Stocking Stuffing Event on November 15, 2016. Attendees stuffed over 150 holiday stockings for Bright Blessings, a Charlotte-based nonprofit organization benefiting local homeless children. The stockings included educational toys and treats and were distributed to homeless tweens in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools during the holiday season.

Bright Blessings is a volunteer-led, 501c3 nonprofit organization serving the greater Charlotte region. Thanks to the helping hands and hearts of volunteers and supporters, Bright Blessings' programs brought joy, care and hope to more than 8,000 homeless and impoverished children last year.



## SERVICE

### UPLIFTING OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS



Moore & Van Allen's Research Triangle office donated 36 Easter baskets to the Durham Rescue Mission. Volunteers filled each basket with a stuffed animal, sidewalk chalk, bubbles, a coloring book, crayons, a slinky, a jump rope and of course eggs filled with candy! The baskets were given to at-risk children at the Annual Easter Community Dinner in April.

A special thank you to **Rena Pappas**, **Kristin Robinett**, **Kay Mangum**, **Mary Elizabeth Zaldivar**, **Patrick Quinn** and **Rafael Zaldivar** for their part in making this event happen.

The Durham Rescue Mission is Durham's oldest and largest long-term homeless shelter. The organization provides food, clothing, permanent supportive housing, vocational training, Biblical counseling, job placement, education, accountability and much more to broken men, women and children in Durham, Chapel Hill and Raleigh.

### SERVING THE MOST FRAGILE CLIENTS



In addition to Moore & Van Allen's pro bono project with Safe Alliance (see page 10), the Firm also lends support to residents staying at the Safe Alliance domestic violence shelter. Under the direction of Finance Legal Practice Assistant **Lynn Howell Davis**, a team of 10-12 volunteers regularly packs up and heads over to the shelter to assist the Safe Alliance kitchen staff.



During each visit, the volunteers prepare and serve a healthy and substantial lunch, and at times, the volunteers are lucky enough to sit alongside the residents to share a meal together. Food is such a basic necessity and when everything in your life feels like chaos, having someone to provide you with an essential need can be an incredible relief.





THANK YOU FOR YOUR GOOD WORK

**Moore&VanAllen**

Together  
We Can  
Do **More**



**MVA** Public Service Committee