

Current Topics in Government Law

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

by order of presentation

Brad L. Love

*Haynsworth Sinkler Boyd, PA
Greenville, SC
(Course Planner)*

Brad serves as co-leader of Haynsworth Sinkler Boyd, P.A.'s public finance practice group and is the administrative shareholder for the Firm's Greenville office. He advises cities, counties, special-purpose districts, hospitals, private colleges and other nonprofits as they structure financings for their capital and operational needs through the issuance of various types of municipal bonds and other obligations.

Additionally, Brad serves as underwriter's counsel to investment banking firms that sell publicly-offered municipal obligations and as bank counsel to banks that purchase privately placed municipal bonds.

Brad received his bachelor of arts degree from Presbyterian College and his law degree from the University of Georgia School of Law.

Sarah Spruill

*Haynsworth Sinkler Boyd, P.A.
Greenville, SC*

Sarah Spruill focuses on business and commercial matters and complex litigation, including shareholder disputes and municipal litigation. Sarah represents financial institutions, utilities, manufacturers, individuals and governmental entities. She has devoted much of her practice to the defense of corporate officers and directors in connection with litigation and government investigations. She has represented corporations in various types of litigation, including securities claims, dissenters' rights actions and commercial disputes. Sarah also has extensive experience in land use and condemnation matters.

She especially enjoys appellate practice and has handled a broad array of appeals, ranging from real property and estate disputes to banking, utilities, construction, governmental litigation, personal injury and product liability actions in addition to matters stemming from contract and business litigation.

Sarah is a graduate of the University of South Carolina Honors College and earned her J.D. from the University of South Carolina School of Law. She is a member of the South Carolina Bar House of Delegates and serves on the Commission for Lawyer Conduct. Sarah also serves on the Board of Directors for the South Carolina Governor's School for Science and Mathematics Foundation.

Michael R. Burchstead

*Burr & Forman, LLP
Columbia, SC*

Michael is an experienced litigator who has represented individuals and businesses before the state and federal courts of South Carolina and administrative tribunals. He also has a diverse background, which includes experience in the areas of government ethics, political campaign finance law, lobbying compliance, election law, and health care.

As former General Counsel for the South Carolina State Ethics Commission, Michael prosecuted enforcement matters alleging violations of the South Carolina Ethics Act, provided advisory opinions to individuals and entities subject to the Ethics Act, and served as legal counsel to the Commission itself. Previous to that position, Michael served as an Assistant Attorney General for the South Carolina Attorney General's Office, prosecuting health care fraud. Since leaving government service for the private sector, Michael has focused much of his practice on representation of governmental entities, candidates for elective office, political committees, and other individuals or entities in enforcement actions under the Ethics Act and providing compliance advice to those seeking to avoid an enforcement action. Michael's experience also includes advising governmental entities on investigations and audits and representing candidates for office in both election protests and litigation.

Lisle Traywick

*Robinson Gray Stepp & Laffitte, LLC
Columbia, SC*

Lisle primarily focuses his practice on appellate advocacy and civil litigation.

He represents governmental entities and public officials, litigates constitutional and election-related issues, advises public utilities and represents them in regulatory proceedings, and defends professional negligence claims. Through his diverse practice, Lisle has gained a wealth of experience handling injunctions, extraordinary writs, class actions, complex appeals, and original jurisdiction cases. [read more]

In addition to practicing, Lisle enjoys teaching Election Law at the University of South Carolina School of Law. He serves on the Advisory Board of the Center on Professionalism and is Secretary of the South Carolina Chapter of the Federal Bar Association. Lisle is also active in the South Carolina Bar Young Lawyers Division and the South Carolina Defense Trial Attorneys' Association. In 2022, the Supreme Court of South Carolina appointed him to the Commission on Continuing Legal Education and Specialization.

A Columbia native, Lisle graduated cum laude from Wofford College, receiving his bachelor's degree in government with a concentration in political thought and a minor in economics. He then earned his Juris Doctor from the University of South Carolina School of Law, where he tutored in legal writing and served as Editor in Chief of the South Carolina Law Review.

Prior to joining Robinson Gray, Lisle clerked for the Honorable H. Bruce Williams at the South Carolina Court of Appeals and the Honorable David C. Norton at the U.S. District Court for the District of South Carolina.

John Nichols

*Bluestein Thompson Sullivan, LLC
Columbia, SC*

John Nichols received a BS in mathematics from Francis Marion College in 1978 and a JD from the USC School of Law in 1985. He first worked with Rogers & Koon focusing primarily on property litigation. In 1986, the SC Court of Appeals hired John as a staff attorney, and he became chief staff counsel in 1993. John also served at times as a law clerk for Chief Judge Alex M. Sanders, Jr., Judge Randall T. Bell, and Acting Judge C. Bruce Littlejohn. From 1996 until 2000,

John worked with Suggs & Kelly, primarily on pharmaceutical mass tort litigation around the country. In 2000, John and Marti Bluestein founded Bluestein & Nichols which is now Bluestein Thompson & Sullivan. John's primary focus was on appellate practice, general tort litigation and representing attorneys before the Office of Disciplinary Counsel. In 2017, the Supreme Court of SC appointed John to serve as Disciplinary Counsel and he took over the office in January 2018.

John is admitted to practice in South Carolina's state and federal courts as well as the United States Courts of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, the Eleventh Circuit and the Federal Circuit, the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, and the Supreme Court of the United States.

From 2003 to 2018, John served on the SC Board of Law Examiners by Supreme Court appointment. In 2012 Governor Nikki Haley appointed John to the SC Commission on Indigent Defense and was reappointed by Governor Henry McMaster. From 2013 to 2017 John served as special counsel to the SC House Ethics Committee and the SC Senate Ethics Committee.

John has spoken at seminars for a number of groups, including the SC Bar, the SC Judicial Branch, SCAJ/SCTLA, the SCIWA, the SCDTAA, the SC Public Defenders Association, and the SC Prosecution Commission. He served on the Education Committee for the ABA's Council of Appellate Staff Attorneys and assisted the SC Judicial Branch in developing orientation seminars for new members of the SC Appellate Court, Circuit Court and Family Court as well as for attorneys employed by the Judicial Branch.

John has also authored, co-authored or edited several books and other publications for the SC Bar or Thomson Reuters (West). From 1995 through 2000, John served as editor of "What's New," the case summaries prepared by law professors for the South Carolina Lawyer magazine (SC Bar). He also served on the South Carolina Lawyer magazine's Editorial Board, serving as Editor-in-Chief from 2004 through 2006. John also served as editor of "The Bulletin," the magazine for the SCAJ.

John serves on USC's "B-Ball - Coaches versus Cancer" committee and is an officer with the Columbia USC Tip-Off Club. He enjoys painting, playing guitar, traveling and hiking with his wife, Michelle, and spending time with daughter, Beth, and grandson, Max.

Rick Morgan

Burr Forman LLP

Columbia, SC

Rick Morgan is certified by the South Carolina Supreme Court as a specialist in employment and labor law. He represents employers and has tried to verdict numerous employment defamation, discrimination, harassment and retaliation cases.

Rick advises and counsels employers on all aspects of employment and labor law issues and has experience representing employers in state and federal courts and in administrative tribunals. He has defended employers in litigation involving wage and hour laws, unemployment compensation, unfair labor practices, contract disputes, wrongful termination, negligent supervision, hiring, retention, intentional infliction of emotional distress, conspiracy and enforcement of non-compete agreements. In addition, Rick has advised employers during union organizing attempts and in OSHA matters. Rick sat as a part-time Municipal Judge for the City of Columbia for eight years.