

THE RICHMOND LAWYER



THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE RICHMOND BAR ASSOCIATION
VOL. 34 | ISSUE 3

OCT
20
25

THE PRO BONO EDITION:

Richmond Bar Hosts First Pro Bono Court Watch Day
by Sarah Bennett Bures

*Pro Bono Protective Orders:
Sharpen Your Litigation Skills & Help Your Community*
by Sean M. Barrick

*Also Inside:
Spotlighting
Paralegals*

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THE CITY OF RICHMOND**

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EDITORIAL POLICY

The Richmond Lawyer, published by the Richmond Bar Association (RBA), holds the primary goal of keeping RBA members informed about the latest happenings, events, and developments within the organization. *The Richmond Lawyer's* mission is to provide timely and relevant information that supports the professional and personal growth of our members.

The Richmond Lawyer welcomes submissions of articles concerning legal topics of interest to Richmond legal professionals. Criteria for publication include the article's quality, its substantive value, its interest to Richmond lawyers, and the originality of its subject matter. Submissions that relate to cases pending before any court or agency will not be accepted.

The Richmond Lawyer maintains editorial independence to ensure unbiased reporting and to avoid conflicts of interest, with editorial decisions made without undue influence from external parties or RBA leadership. It is important to note that opinions expressed in articles do not necessarily represent the explicit opinions of the RBA. The Richmond Bar does not provide legal advice. The Richmond Bar staff does not perform independent research on submitted articles.

Any errors will be corrected promptly and transparently, with corrections clearly marked and published in the subsequent issue. The publication is committed to protecting the privacy of its members, ensuring personal information is not shared without consent and used solely for publication purposes.

By adhering to this editorial policy, *The Richmond Lawyer* aims to provide a high-quality, informative, and engaging publication that serves the needs of the Richmond Bar Association community.

Readers are encouraged to provide feedback and contribute to the publication, with feedback directed to aholland@richmondbar.org. *The Richmond Lawyer* accepts advertisements relevant to the legal profession, with all advertisements adhering to our ethical standards and subject to approval and payment.

Full Editorial Policy & Calendar available upon request

Articles for submission, feedback, and other communications regarding *The Richmond Lawyer* should be sent to Annie M. Holland, Executive Director via email at aholland@richmondbar.org or by mail sent to P.O. Box 1213, Richmond, Virginia, 23218.

When Richmond College adopted the Spiders nickname in 1894, the RBA had already woven a strong legal web of its own.



From “College Colts” to Spiders, Richmond College—now the University of Richmond—embraced a new identity in 1894.

The Richmond Bar Association. Strength in connection since 1885.

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RBA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

OCTOBER

- 1st | CLE: "Appeals 101" | 4:00-6:00 PM | Zoom
- 2nd | Board of Directors Meeting | 12:30 PM | Hunton Andrews Kurth
- 2nd | CLE: "How to Not Get Hacked" & "Difficult Clients" | 4:00-6:00 PM | Zoom
- 6th | RBA Golf Tournament | 12:00 PM | Lakeside Park Club
- 8th | CLE: "Rule 3:26 & the Changing Landscape of Injunctive Relief" | 4:00-6:00 PM | Zoom
- 9th | CLE: "Latest in Harassment, Discrimination & Retaliation" | 2:00-4:00 PM | Zoom
- 9th | Young Lawyers Section Social | 5:30-7:30 PM | Cirrus Vodka
- 13th | RBA Office Closed
- 14th | CLE: "Ethics & Artificial Intelligence" | 4:00-6:00 PM | Zoom
- 21st | Bench Bar Conference | 8:00 AM-12:30 PM | Greater Richmond Convention Center
- 21st | Bench Bar Luncheon | 12:30 - 2:00 PM | Greater Richmond Convention Center
- 23rd | Lunch & Learn: "Law School Admissions Trends" | 12:30 PM | Zoom
- 28th | Bankruptcy Section Ethics CLE: "ChatGPT" | 12:30-1:30 PM | Zoom
- 29th | Business Law & Corporate Counsel Sections Social | 5:00 PM | McGuireWoods

NOVEMBER

- 3rd | Executive Committee Meeting | 12:30 PM | Zoom
- 4th | RBA Office Closed
- 6th | Board of Directors Meeting | 12:30 PM | Hunton Andrews Kurth
- 10th | Pro Bono Committee Meeting | 12:30 PM | In Person
- 11th | RBA Office Closed
- 13th | RBA Awards Luncheon | 12:30 PM | Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens
- 19th | Sponsors Committee Meeting | 12:30 PM | Zoom
- 20th | Programs Committee Meeting | 12:30 PM | Zoom
- 26th | RBA Office Closed | Half-Day
- 27th | RBA Office Closed
- 28th | RBA Office Closed

IN THE NEWS

If you've recently landed a new job or promotion, share the good news with the Richmond Bar. Include your full name, your company's name and location, your new title and your areas of concentration in your email. Announcements can be e-mailed to aholland@richmondbar.org or mailed to Annie Holland, at P.O. Box 1213, Richmond, VA 23218.



Megan J. Holley has joined **Christian & Barton, L.L.P.** as an associate in the commercial real estate and business law departments. She holds degrees from William & Mary Law School and the University of Virginia.

Joseph J. Marino has joined **Christian & Barton, L.L.P.** as a litigation associate. Prior to joining the firm he was a judicial law clerk to the Hon. William E. Glover and the Hon. Ricardo Rigual in Spotsylvania Circuit Court. He holds degrees from the William S. Boyd School of Law, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and the University at Buffalo-SUNY.



Miles & Stockbridge is pleased to announce that veteran commercial real estate finance lawyer **Matt Murcko** joined the firm's Richmond office as a principal.

Emily Bittner and **Phoebe Brannock** also have joined as counsel and associate to support growth in the firm's real estate and environmental practices, reflecting a continuing commitment to meeting client needs in the growing Richmond market.



THE RBA PURPOSE

The purposes of the Bar Association of the City of Richmond are to:

- cultivate and advance the cause of jurisprudence;
- to facilitate and improve the administration of justice;
- to promote the delivery of legal services to the entire community;
- to promote an increased understanding by the public of the legal system and respect for the law;
- to inculcate and enhance the highest standards of ethical conduct, integrity, dignity and honor;
- to continue the legal education of its members; and
- to encourage courtesy among all members of the legal profession, including Bench and Bar.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Jennifer J. West



One of the most enduring values of our profession is service. As lawyers, we are uniquely positioned to use our skills to open doors, remove barriers, and help ensure that justice is not reserved only for those who can afford it. This month's issue of *The Richmond Lawyer* highlights that commitment through a focus on pro bono work, something that has always been at the heart of the Richmond Bar Association.

Pro bono service takes many forms. For some, it means direct representation of individuals who might otherwise face the court system alone. For others, it's offering advice in a clinic, mentoring a younger lawyer, or lending expertise to a nonprofit organization. However it is carried out, the impact is significant not only for the client, but for the integrity and credibility of our profession as a whole.

The Richmond Bar Association's Pro Bono Committee continues to lead important efforts in this area, from housing initiatives to new record-clearing projects. These programs provide both opportunities for service and models for how collaboration can amplify impact.

A significant number of the RBA's members are already engaged in pro bono service, contributing valuable time and resources to pro bono efforts around the Richmond region. Our members work closely with the Greater Richmond Bar Foundation, CVLAS, LAJC and other organizations, serving on boards, leading clinics and offering their expertise to expand the availability of legal representation to clients that would otherwise face life-changing legal issues alone. There are more ways than ever to participate in pro bono service. Every issue of the *Richmond Lawyer* includes a segment highlighting available pro bono opportunities. For those who have yet to get involved, I encourage you, regardless of practice area or years of experience, to find a way to engage. Even a small investment of time can make a lasting difference.

This issue also shines a light on paralegals, whose contributions are often less visible but no less essential. Their dedication, organization, and expertise extend the reach of every attorney they support. Most attorneys would be lost without their paralegals and other support staff. These amazing professionals make the attorneys with whom they work more efficient and effective in all aspects of their practice. As we recognize pro bono service, it is only fitting that we also recognize the professionals who make so much of that work possible.

As we move further into the Bar year, I invite you to stay connected, seek out opportunities to serve, and consider how you might share your skills in ways that benefit both our community and our profession. Together, we uphold the best of what it means to practice law: a commitment not just to clients, but to the practice of law itself.

“ Even a small investment of time can make a lasting difference. ”

- Jennifer J. West

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Annie M. Holland

When we talk about pro bono service, it's easy to focus on the numbers- how many hours you've donated, how many cases taken, how many clinics you attend. However, behind every one of those statistics is a person whose life has been changed: a tenant who keeps a roof overhead, a parent who gains stability for their family, or an individual who clears an old record that stood in the way of employment.

The Richmond Bar Association is proud to support that work through the leadership of our Pro Bono Committee. The committee brings together lawyers from across our community: Troutman Pepper Locke, Williams Mullen, Parcell Webb & Baruch, Gentry Locke, McCandlish Holton, Legal Aid Justice Center, Allen & Allen, Hirschler, and Hunton Andrews Kurth. Their perspectives are as varied as their practices, but they share a common commitment: ensuring that access to justice is available for everyone in our community, no matter what.



“ The value of the RBA lies not only in our programs but in the collegiality and shared purpose we build together. ”

Our Advisory Board strengthens this mission by linking the committee's efforts with the expertise of the Greater Richmond Bar Foundation, the University of Richmond School of Law, the Virginia Poverty Law Center, and the Central Virginia Legal Aid Society. Together, this network creates a powerful partnership—one that connects the resources of private practice with the experience of organizations serving our community every day.

This collaboration reflects the best of the profession: lawyers working not only for clients, but for the community at large. As we highlight pro bono in this issue, I hope it serves as a reminder of what is possible when we leverage our skills, our firms, and our institutions to serve those who need us most. The lives changed through pro bono are countless, and the ripple effects extend far beyond a single case or client.

At the same time, the RBA itself is on a roll this fall. From section CLEs and luncheons to our new golf tournament and the always-anticipated Bench-Bar Conference, our calendar is filled with opportunities to learn, connect, and strengthen the ties that make our legal community unique. That momentum comes from you—our members—who continue to show up, engage, and invest in this Association.

If you haven't yet renewed your membership, I encourage you to do so today. And if you're already part of this year's roster, invite a colleague or friend to join you. The value of the RBA lies not only in our programs but in the collegiality and shared purpose we build together.

Thank you to all who lead, participate in, and support our pro bono efforts, and thank you for keeping the Richmond Bar strong, active, and growing.

- Annie M. Holland

JOIN THE RICHMOND BAR ASSOCIATION

CONNECT. LEARN. LEAD.

Your community for professional growth, trusted connection, and meaningful career impact.

As the oldest bar association in Virginia, the Richmond Bar Association has been a cornerstone of the region's legal community since 1885. With more than 1,300 members, the RBA is where legal professionals at all stages of their career come to find connection, support, and community.

GROW YOUR NETWORK

Build relationships that matter. From casual socials to signature luncheons with leading legal minds, RBA events foster genuine connections across firms, courts, and practice areas.

LEAD WHERE IT COUNTS

Shape the future of the profession through opportunities to serve on committees, join sections, and support critical initiatives that advance justice, integrity, and the rule of law.

BE A PART OF SOMETHING BIGGER

Whether you're new to practice or a seasoned veteran, the RBA offers a professional home where your voice is valued and your contributions make a difference.

ENJOY EXCLUSIVE MEMBER BENEFITS

Discounted CLE rates, free events, leadership opportunities, access to The Richmond Lawyer, our updated member portal, and more.

READY TO JOIN OR RENEW?

Visit www.richmondbar.org or contact us at (804) 780-0700 to learn more.

Administration of Justice Committee

The AOJ Committee will begin interviewing Chief Justices this fall and write-ups of those interviews will be available in The Richmond Lawyer and online in the coming months.

Awards & Honors Committee

The Awards & Honors Committee is looking forward to celebrating 2025 Award recipients at this years Awards Luncheon on November 13th at Lewis Ginter Botanica Gardens. More details coming soon!

Membership Committee

The Membership Committee would like to remind members to renew their RBA membership online. If you need assistance, please contact the RBA office.

Communications Committee

The Communications Committee is hard at work sourcing and creating valuable content for The Richmond Lawyer.

Continuing Legal Education Committee

CLEs are in full swing at the Richmond Bar Association! The CLE Committee has put together a rock star lineup of seminars to help you obtain credits this year. See upcoming CLEs [here](#).



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f in i




Programs Committee

The Programs Committee is brainstorming programming venues and speakers that would be engaging and valuable to our members. They hope to see you all at events soon!

Pro Bono Committee

The Pro Bono Committee is excited for the success of this summer’s Court Watch Day and plans to host similar events throughout the bar year. The committee remains dedicated to spreading the word on pro bono opportunities and upcoming events.

Sponsors Committee

The Sponsors Committee is thankful for the Annual and individual event sponsors that they have worked with so far this bar year! The committee hopes to recruit more sponsors in 2026.



BANKRUPTCY SECTION

The Bankruptcy Section hosted their fall kickoff luncheon and CLE at Williams Mullen. The Section is hosting a virtual CLE on October 28th, you can register [here](#).

CORPORATE COUNSEL SECTION

The Corporate Counsel Section is looking forward to their fall CLE & social with the Business Law Section on October 29th! You can register for the CLE & social [here](#).

FAMILY LAW SECTION

The Family Law Section hosted their kickoff social at Crafted in September. The Section will host more social events throughout the bar year - be on the lookout for more details!



REAL ESTATE SECTION

The Real Estate Section will host a fall mixer with the Business Law Section at Brambly Park on September 30th sponsored by TowneBank.

BUSINESS LAW SECTION

The Business Law Section is focused on collaborating with other RBA Sections to bring more value to members. They will host a mixer with the Real Estate Section on September 30th at Brambly Park, and a fall [CLE & social](#) with the Corporate Counsel Section on October 29th at Williams Mullen.

ENVIRONMENTAL & ENERGY SECTION

The Environmental & Energy Section is looking forward to a great bar year. The Section leadership is in the process of planning events for the bar year.

LITIGATION SECTION

The Executive Committee of the Litigation Section has met and has a variety of events in various planning stages for the bar year.

SENIOR LAWYERS SECTION

The Senior Lawyers Section is finalizing details of a November CLE on Elder Fraud, more details will be available soon.

YOUNG LAWYERS SECTION

The Young Lawyers Section will host their fall kickoff social on October 9th at Cirrus Vodka. They hope to see you there! You can register by emailing [Sharon Potter](#) at the RBA office.

This summary of Section activities is certainly not exhaustive. Our Sections are always in the middle of planning their next meeting, social, CLE, or annual events! Keep an eye on your inbox for emails as these events are finalized. Want to get involved in a certain RBA Section? Email the [RBA office](#) to get started!

THE RICHMOND BAR ASSOCIATION PRO BONO COMMITTEE

“It shall be the duty of the Committee to undertake such activities and projects, and to support non-profit organizations, as will encourage and assist members of the Association and the public to make legal representation and services available to the underserved in the Richmond Metropolitan area.”



Sarah Bennett Bures, Chair
Troutman Pepper Locke



Max So, Chair-Elect
Williams Mullen



Taylor Fisher
Kinsale Insurance



Andy Nea
Williams Mullen



Ben Shute
Parcell Webb & Baruch



Noah Sullivan
Gentry Locke



Maisie Osteen
Legal Aid Justice Center



Gibson Wright
McCandlish Holton



Johanna Jenkins
Hunton Andrews Kurth



Tara Enix
Allen, Allen, Allen & Allen



David Tisel
Hunton Andrews Kurth



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Tara Casey
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Christie Marra
Virginia Poverty Law Center



Lisa Bennett
Central Virginia Legal Aid Society



Lauren King
Legal Aid Justice Center



Kieste Roy
Central Virginia Legal Aid Society

ADVISORY BOARD

Richmond Bar Hosts First Pro Bono Court Watch Day



IN JUNE 2025, THE RICHMOND BAR ASSOCIATION'S PRO BONO COMMITTEE SPONSORED ITS INAUGURAL COURT WATCH DAY TO PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR MEMBERS TO LEARN MORE ABOUT ONE OF THE JUSTICE GAPS FACING OUR COMMUNITY: EVICTIONS.

I would hazard a guess that most members of the Richmond Bar Association are not at risk of eviction. But if you were, your legal training—or perhaps your (vague) memories of bar prep—would provide a starting point to understand the law being used to remove you from your home and the legal system you will encounter in the process. For Virginia lawyers, that same training has perhaps normalized the use of phrases like “unlawful detainer” to the extent you have forgotten that many, if not most, around you in the community have no idea what those words mean together.[1] For the plain English speaking among us, the phrase “unlawful detainer” is used in Virginia to refer to the legal process a landlord uses to evict a tenant. This article uses the term eviction for ease of reading.

For many Richmonders served with an eviction notice, they are facing it without that built-in legal training, and they are facing it alone. Or, using the Latin-based legalese, *pro se*.

Some may remember that in April 2018 a headline of a national newspaper declared Richmond to have the second highest eviction rate among large cities in the United States.[2] Much has happened in the eviction space since then, including efforts by the City to address its eviction rate and eviction moratoria during the pandemic, to name two examples. But low-income Richmond area tenants continue to face evictions in large numbers.

And Richmond is not unique. A recently-published report from the Legal Services Corporation (LSC)—the nonprofit organization tasked with distributing federal funding to legal aid organizations



Sarah Bennett Bures
Troutman Pepper Locke

As pro bono director and counsel, Sarah leads and facilitates the pro bono practice across the firm's offices in the southern United States, including those in Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, North Carolina, Texas, and Virginia. She collaborates with firm attorneys, in-house legal departments, and community organizations to meet the legal needs of vulnerable and underrepresented clients. Sarah focuses her personal practice on addressing legal issues that affect basic human needs, such as safe and stable housing.

Sarah is a member of the Emerging Leaders Council of the Legal Services Corporation, a publicly-funded nonprofit corporation established by Congress to ensure equal access to justice under the law for all Americans by providing funding for civil legal aid to those otherwise unable to afford it. She also serves as Chair of the RBA Pro Bono Committee.

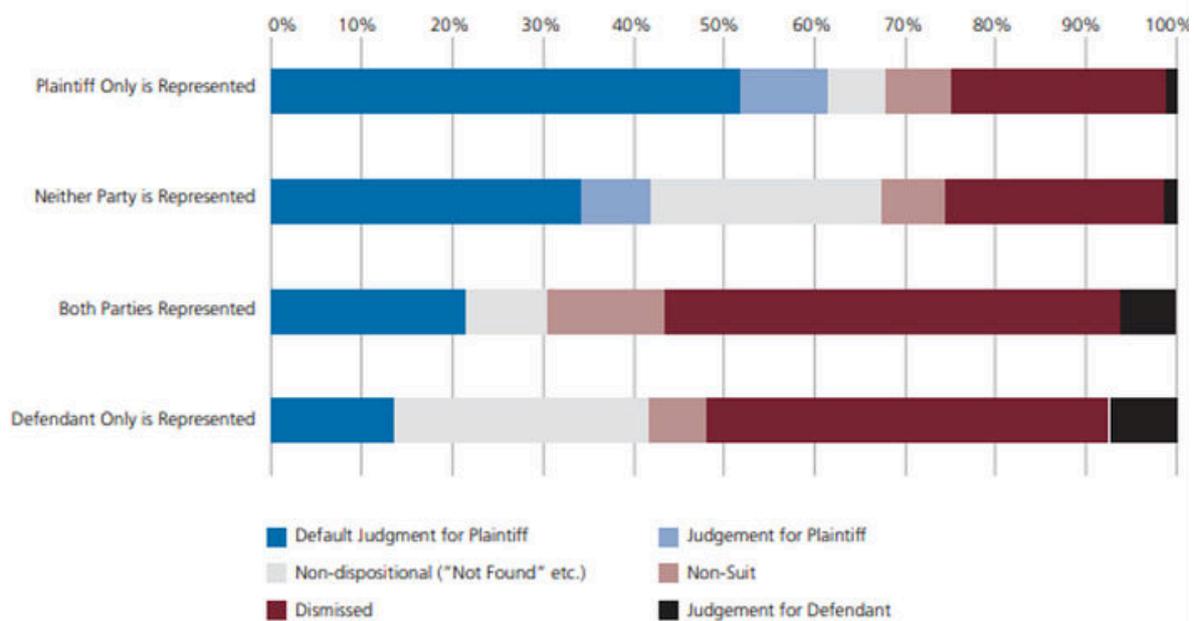


across the country—showed that housing cases, driven by evictions, were the most prevalent type of case among LSC grantees in 2024.[3]

An aside before I lose readers that represent landlords. My argument is not that evictions should not be happening. Landlords have rights, just like tenants do, along with valid reasons to remove tenants from their properties. My argument is that in a legal system that relies on the adversarial model with each side of a dispute zealously represented by a lawyer, the number of unrepresented litigants raises alarms.

A study of all 2016 civil cases in Virginia general district courts found that in situations where only the plaintiff is represented, the plaintiff was successful in over 60% of cases. By contrast, where neither party is represented, the plaintiff was successful in around 40% of cases. And where both parties are represented by a lawyer, the plaintiff was successful in around 20% of cases.[4] These results make sense—the zealous advocacy of a lawyer makes a difference in client outcome.

Case Outcomes in Virginia’s General District Courts All Civil Cases, 2016, by Representational Status



Having identified the problem, the next question becomes “what do we do?”

For courts, training court clerks to answer questions from pro se litigants and establishing processes to manage large dockets of unrepresented litigants becomes essential. For legal nonprofits, publishing self-help informational materials to support pro se litigants seeks to provide a lifeline for those in court alone.

For the members of the RBA Pro Bono Committee, our idea was to offer an experience that put real faces on the problem, while providing an opportunity for networking with fellow RBA members and members of the judiciary.

Attendees at the June 2025 Court Watch Day met a representative from the Richmond General District Court Clerk's office, observed the day's docket of eviction proceedings, and had the opportunity to discuss the docket with the presiding judge. The day would not have been a success without the willingness of the Honorable Mansi J. Shah, Chief Judge, and the Honorable Matthew T. Paulk.

Judge Paulk shared with attendees one of his attempts to address the problem—giving a short speech at the start of his docket to provide legal information to pro se litigants about the eviction process and timeline, and their rights throughout. He emphasizes that eviction proceedings do not always end in a sheriff appearing at the doorstep. For example, tenants can talk with their landlords to try to reach an agreement to avoid eviction based on the underlying issue; or tenants being evicted for non-payment of rent can “redeem” the tenancy by paying the full amount due.

During the time he spent with attendees, Judge Paulk also emphasized the importance of pro bono work, noting that attorneys can better articulate legal defenses to eviction that might not be raised effectively by pro se litigants.

Disappointed that you missed our Court Watch Day in June? You don't need to wait for an RBA program to experience the local eviction docket. Go to the Richmond General District Court Monday through Friday at 10 am and observe court for an hour.[5] To see a glut of eviction proceedings, consider attending on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, or Thursdays in the last two weeks of the month. But if you would rather experience this with others, we are planning another Court Watch Day based on the success of the June program, so be on the lookout for additional opportunities.



Housing cases, driven by evictions, were the most prevalent type of case among LSC grantees in 2024.[3]

Ready to join the effort to address this justice gap facing our community? Mark your calendar for a CLE training on December 2, 2025, to learn more about landlord-tenant law and to prepare for a variety of pro bono volunteer opportunities.

Mark your calendar for a CLE training on December 2, 2025, to learn more about landlord-tenant law and to prepare for a variety of pro bono volunteer opportunities. The training will take place late afternoon on December 2, 2025, with the option to attend either in person at Williams Mullen or virtually. More details coming soon!

[1] “Unlawful detainer” is defined as “[t]he unjustifiable retention of the possession of real property by one whose original entry was lawful, as when a tenant holds over after lease termination despite the landlord’s demand for possession.” DETAINER, Black’s Law Dictionary (12th ed. 2024). See Form DC-421.

[2] Emily Badger & Quoctrung Bui, In 83 Million Eviction Records, A Sweeping and Intimate New Look at Housing in America, New York Times (Apr. 7, 2018), available at <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/04/07/upshot/millions-of-eviction-records-a-sweeping-new-look-at-housing-in-america.html>.

[3] Legal Services Corporation, By the Numbers: The Data Underlying Legal Aid Programs (2024 edition), available at <https://www.lsc.gov/our-impact/publications/numbers>.

[4] National Center for State Courts, Virginia Self-Represented Litigant Study: Outcomes of Civil Cases in General District Court, Juvenile & Domestic Relations Court, and Circuit Court (Dec. 2017), available at <https://brls.org/the-virginia-self-represented-litigant-study/>.

[5] Similar opportunities for observation are available in Henrico and Chesterfield.



PRO BONO BULLETIN

The Central Virginia legal community's guide to Pro Bono opportunities throughout the area.

This bulletin is made possible by the RBA Pro Bono Committee & the following Pro Bono Partners:

[Central Virginia Legal Aid Society](#)

[Legal Aid Justice Center](#)

[Greater Richmond Bar Foundation](#)

[University of Richmond School of Law](#)

[Virginia Poverty Law Center](#)

Virginia Free Legal Answers

Who: Attorneys **When:** Any time **Where:** Virtual

One of the most flexible and simple ways to expand your pro bono practice. VA Free Legal Answers is a website where low-income Virginia residents can post questions seeking legal advice. Volunteer lawyers have an opportunity to read each question before deciding whether to take it from the list and answer it. If a lawyer later determines they are unable to answer the question or if their interest in the topic has changed, they can return it back to the portal. Virginia Free Legal Answers is not designed to and does not support full-fledged engagements. Rather, these are opportunities for lawyers to provide targeted guidance to specific questions on areas of the law such as landlord-tenant disputes, divorce, and disaster relief.

The Triage Project -Central VA Legal Aid Society & Greater Richmond Bar Foundation

Who: Attorneys **When:** Varies **Where:** Case dependent

This innovative Private Bar led pro bono project identifies "Triage Champions" in critical substantive law areas where CVLAS lacked the resources to provide full representation. These Triage Champions recruit and train like-minded pro bono volunteers to join their virtual law firms in their respective practice areas. Cases are managed on JusticeServer – a volunteer portal.

If you would like to volunteer for one of our Triage practice areas, please contact Lisa Bennett, CVLAS Triage Coordinator, at lisa@cvas.org or Vera Thoms at admin@grbf.org.

Community Tax Law Project

Who: Attorneys, Accountants, Enrolled Agents **When:** Ongoing **Where:** Virtual

CTLTP handles approximately 800 represented and brief advice cases each year. We have a critical need for volunteers to assist with our very large caseload. If you are interested in becoming a member of CTLTP's Pro Bono Panel, please take a moment to complete the attached Pro Bono Survey for [attorneys](#) or [accountants and enrolled agents](#). For more information, please call (804) 358-5855 or email info@ctltp.org.

CancerLINC

Who: Attorneys **When:** Varies **Where:** Varies

CancerLINC is a local non-profit that LINC's cancer patients and their families to legal resources to solve the non-medical obstacles that arise with a cancer diagnosis. Common legal issues include: wills, trusts, uncontested guardianship & custody, public benefits denials, employment, housing & landlord/tenant issues, and bankruptcy.

Pro Bono Housing Unit - Legal Aid Justice Center

Who: Attorneys **When:** Varies **Where:** Virtual

As a volunteer for the LAJC Pro Bono Housing Unit, you will provide remote legal advice to low-income Richmond tenants at risk of eviction. LAJC provides trainings, sample pleadings, and manuals for volunteers. For more information, email Lauren King, Esq. at laurenking@justice4all.org.

Looking for more Pro Bono opportunities? Check out JusticeServer.org.

JusticeServer is a tool that enables attorneys to easily volunteer their time for pro bono cases from one or more legal services providers. And more importantly, it allows them to connect with clients in need of their legal expertise where they can have the greatest impact.

EVEN MORE WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

An RBA tradition returns this December—the **annual housing law training**. Join our local legal services organization supporting low-income tenants to learn the latest on evictions and housing conditions in Virginia. And enjoy some pizza in the process. **The training will take place late afternoon on December 2, 2025, with the option to attend either in person at Williams Mullen or virtually.** Watch your inboxes for more information coming soon!

The goal of the training is to prepare pro bono volunteers to staff landlord-tenant-related pro bono clinics or to represent low-income clients throughout 2026.

No Fault Divorce Program

In partnership with the Richmond Bar Association and Central Virginia Legal Aid Society, this program connects volunteer attorneys with law students, who together represent clients seeking an uncontested divorce in the greater Richmond area and beyond. Law students who volunteer with this program are paired with volunteer attorneys to provide representation on these cases. Please contact Prof. Tara Casey at tcasey@richmond.edu for more information and instructions on how to volunteer.

Wills Clinics with the Greater Richmond Bar Foundation

Wills Clinics are held on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursdays from 1:00-4:00 PM. No Trusts & Estate experience needed! Attorneys will help grateful clients with simple wills, POAs, and AMD. Everything will be provided for attorneys and there is no follow up needed. For clinic dates and to volunteer, please contact Vera Thoms at admin@grbf.org.

Pro Se Mediation Project

In partnership with the Richmond Bar Association, the Federal Bar Association (Richmond Chapter), and the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia (Richmond Division), the Carrico Center operates the Pro Se Mediation Project, which offers unrepresented litigants the opportunity to obtain pro bono attorney representation in matters referred to the United States Magistrate Judges for a settlement conference. Pro bono attorneys and volunteer law students meet with the pro se clients, prepare for the mediation, and represent the litigant during the course of the mediation; if settlement is not reached, the pro bono attorney has no obligation to remain as counsel for the remainder of the case. Please contact Prof. Tara Casey at tcasey@richmond.edu for more information and instructions on how to volunteer.





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PRO BONO PROTECTIVE ORDERS: SHARPEN YOUR LITIGATION SKILLS & HELP YOUR COMMUNITY

According to the Virginia Bar Association, domestic abuse remains one of the top pro bono needs in Virginia. If you're asking yourself, "How can I use my legal skills to help in domestic abuse cases?" I have great news. Pro bono protective order cases not only meet a critical legal need, but they also offer valuable opportunities to sharpen your litigation skills.

The Need

Victims of domestic violence are often recovering from severe trauma. Trauma which is made worse when victims lack access to legal representation. When I speak with clients in these situations, they frequently express how isolating it feels to have no one in their corner. By becoming their advocate, we enable them to break the cycle of trauma.

I once worked with a client who had obtained a temporary protective order. Unfortunately, we were not successful in securing a permanent one. While she was understandably disappointed, she told me that simply having someone in her corner gave her the courage not to return to her abuser, a cycle she had previously struggled to break.

The Benefit

You might be thinking, "That's admirable, but I just don't have the time." The reality is, protective order cases often require a relatively low time commitment and offer a hands-on opportunity to sharpen your litigation skills.

These cases allow you to conduct direct examinations, deal with evidentiary and admissibility challenges, and present compelling cases using a range of evidence: text messages, photographs, medical records, recordings, and 911 call logs. These skills are crucial to demonstrating the need for a protective order. They also happen to be critical skills for any litigator.

The Call

Practicing law is a privilege. As attorneys, we have both the opportunity and the responsibility to give back. Pro bono protective order work is one of the most impactful ways to do so. It is an opportunity to sharpen your litigation skills while changing lives in your community.



Sean M. Barrick, Esq.
Setliff Law

Mr. Barrick is a civil defense attorney with Setliff Law concentrating on insurance coverage disputes, complex personal injury litigation, and regulatory matters. Prior to entering the legal profession, he served in the United States Army, an experience that instilled in him a lasting commitment to service and discipline.

He is a graduate of the University of Richmond School of Law, where he received the Bonner Center Collaboration Award in 2021. In 2023, he was recognized as a Presidential Management Fellowship Finalist. Outside the office, Mr. Barrick enjoys cooking elaborate meals, hiking, kayaking, and spending time with his wife and three children.

More information: [here](#)

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THE FIRM STORY

The firm was founded in 1897 by Patrick Henry Nelson II in Columbia, SC. Nelson Mullins has grown from a one-attorney practice into a national, full-service law firm with more than 1,000 attorneys, policy advisors, and professionals. We offer comprehensive legal services in corporate law, litigation, intellectual property, and government relations to clients, including Fortune 500 companies, private equity and venture capital funds, portfolio companies, emerging growth businesses, and startups.

THE MISSION OF THE FIRM →

At Nelson Mullins, we are committed to excellence—both in serving our clients and in upholding the highest standards of our profession. We prioritize our clients' interests and collaborate closely with them to achieve shared goals. Our dedication to public service is equally important. We believe in making a positive impact not only through strong advocacy for our clients but also through active involvement in our communities.

8

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WORKPLACE CULTURE

Nelson Mullins is the perfect place for attorneys to chart their own path. The firm focuses on individual contributions and accountability and offers clear pathways for professional growth, with abundant resources, mentorship, and cross-practice networking opportunities.

3

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THE BEST THING ABOUT WORKING AT NELSON MULLINS

The best thing about the Richmond office of Nelson Mullins is our exposure to a wide range of clients and cases, which keeps the work dynamic and intellectually stimulating, while enjoying the perks of a small, close-knit office. We are supportive of each other and work towards shared goals.

The McCammon Group

is pleased to announce our newest Neutral



Mark C. Nanavati, Esq.

Mediator & Arbitrator

Mark Nanavati has joined The McCammon Group to serve as a mediator and arbitrator while continuing his law practice with Sinnott, Nuckols & Logan, P.C. With three decades of experience, he has represented clients across a broad spectrum of matters, including insurance coverage disputes, large-loss tort cases, construction defect litigation, and complex commercial litigation. Mark was recognized as the 2025 “Lawyer of the Year” in Construction Law for Richmond by *Best Lawyers in America*. He is a member of the Virginia Bar Association’s Boyd-Graves Conference, the Lewis F. Powell, Jr. Inn of the American Inns of Court, and the Virginia State Bar’s Construction and Public Contracts Law Section. Mark now brings his years of experience and dedication to The McCammon Group to serve the dispute resolution needs of lawyers and litigants throughout the Commonwealth and beyond.



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THEY **JUGGLE**, THEY **ORGANIZE**, THEY **PROBLEM-SOLVE**, AND THEY DO IT ALL WITH INCREDIBLE **SKILL**. PARALEGALS ARE THE BACKBONE OF OUR LEGAL COMMUNITY, WORKING ALONGSIDE RICHMOND BAR ATTORNEYS TO DELIVER THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF SERVICE TO CLIENTS AND THE COURTS. THIS MONTH, WE'RE CELEBRATING THEM.

✦ PARALEGAL WEEK IN VIRGINIA RUNS OCTOBER 5-11 ✦

TO RECOGNIZE THEIR WORK AND HIGHLIGHT THAT IN THIS EDITION OF THE RICHMOND LAWYER, WE ASKED A FEW LOCAL PARALEGALS THE HARD-HITTING QUESTIONS.



SPECIAL THANKS TO **JESSICA GLICKMAN** FOR HELPING PUT THIS SPOTLIGHT TOGETHER.

MEET THE PROS



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“What is one thing you wish more attorneys knew about paralegal work?”



Trust us!



We paralegals get just as invested as they do. I am extremely lucky and fortunate that several of the attorneys I work with started as paralegals before becoming lawyers and so they understand our perspective. I wish more attorneys would treat their paralegals in this fashion because it not only helps us grow in the profession and serve as a team building exercise, but also lets us experience the value of our work.



Everyone’s juggling a full plate (plus a few fires), but at the end of the day, our job is to make our attorney’s job easier. So, when there’s a strong, open line of communication, we can read between the lines a little clearer, and that’s when the paralegal magic really happens. In the end, you’ll find yourself with a well-oiled team that can stand the test of time.



One of the most valuable contributions attorneys can make to our professional development is clear, constructive feedback.



That attorneys truly understand how much of a difference a strong, supportive firm culture makes.



They recognize that I am new to the role and are providing guidance and letting me try new things. They are counseling me when I could have done something different, but never with that “you’re in trouble” tone. I’m super proud to work here.

“What makes your job meaningful?”



I am proud to be part of a firm that not only prioritizes excellence, but also genuinely values diversity and inclusion.



When a case is well set up for the attorney and the client gets the best representation they can for their case - no matter if the journey was challenging or pretty standard.



Working as a team, supporting each other, and accomplishing things together are what I enjoy most. I truly love my attorneys, I take great pride in placing them in the best position for them to succeed. In the reverse, I know they support me, put me in the best positions they can, and encourage me to grow in my job.



Being able to perform my job to the best of my ability, working well with others and constantly learning new information and adapting in our changing field makes my job meaningful.



I love knowing that every day, I have the opportunity to make someone else's job a little easier. It's deeply rewarding to be someone others can rely on and trust to deliver high-quality work.



A lot of things make my job meaningful. I truly enjoy what I do and doing something different each day. Now that the first couple months are under my belt, I'm consistently busy and that's what I like! I hate being bored. I know I am helping our clients get the best result possible for them.



Knowing that I am trusted and relied upon adds a deep sense of purpose and fulfillment to what I do.

“What advice would you give to new paralegals?”



Read read read! Read every single thing in the file, and, don't be afraid to venture into something other than litigation!



Invest in yourself. Don't wait for someone to give you permission to grow. Seek out certifications, learn from experienced paralegals, and dive into emerging tools or technologies



Just keep going! I know it may seem like you are a million years away from being “good”, but you'll get there. One day things just click.



Don't limit yourself with what you think you know - try something, and if you don't enjoy it, there will always be opportunities to move around within the paralegal profession.



Network like crazy.



Learn from everyone, every day. Ralph Waldo Emerson said it best when he said “In every man there is something wherein I may learn of him, and in that I am his pupil.” This is so applicable inside or outside of work, but regarding the legal field, every person in the firm can teach you something valuable. Gain the knowledge, appreciate it, and share it.



Sometimes diving down that rabbit hole is totally worth it!



Don't be afraid to take a risk, it's never too late to make a change.



Communicate well with others, continue to educate yourself in the specific field you are working in and most importantly, always be a team player.



Find a mentor. Institutional knowledge is invaluable, there's some stuff that you just will not learn in school.

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