LIVING our motto

BY KRISTINA WOLF

Pro Iustitia: “in service of justice.”
This past year, the students of Wake Forest University School of Law demonstrated that they believe in the law school’s motto and are dedicated to serving others, donating more than 1,554 hours to serve others through various pro bono projects. Students offered legal aid in many different areas by helping the Forsyth County District Attorney’s office review homicide cases for aggravating or mitigating factors, representing the interests of children who had been placed in foster care, and aiding the Lumbee Indians in Pembroke, N.C. Others assisted in writing

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Robert ‘Hoppy’ Elliot Follows His Instincts

BY WILL JOHNSTON
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Though it may take many young people some time to decide what career path to follow, Robert “Hoppy” Elliot (’77) is the exception to the rule. The Winston-Salem employment law attorney realized at a tender age that he wanted to pursue a career in law.

“I think fairly early on, there was something inside me that said I wanted to be a lawyer and that built in knowledge, as we all start thinking about things other than girls or guys or sports or whatever motivates you in

please see HOPPY on page 7
It’s All In The Family For Citizen Lawyer Of Year

Marcia High Armstrong graduated from WFU School of Law in 1983. Armstrong is a board-certified specialist in family law and a Fellow in the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers. She practices in her hometown of Smithfield, N.C., and throughout the eastern part of the state.

Last year, the N.C. Bar Association awarded Armstrong a North Carolina Citizen Lawyer of the Year Award for her pro bono and volunteer service in the community. More recently, Armstrong was elected the State Bar Councilor for Judicial District 11B. Marcia’s son, Lamar, graduated from Wake Forest University School of Law in 2011, and sat down with her for a quick Q & A session.

Q: Tell us about yourself. What are your hobbies, interests, passions?
A: I like to play bridge, read, hang out at the beach, travel and participate in service projects. My passions are my faith, my family and serving others.

Q: You’re a true Demon Deacon fan, aren’t you? Even during this painful basketball season, you remain true to the Old Gold and Black?
A: Yes… I am a “true” Deacon fan, unlike the “wine & cheese” Tar Heel fans!

Q: Tell us about your family.
A: I have been married to my law partner, Lamar Jr., for almost 29 years. My oldest son, Lamar III (’11) is married to a very kind and lovely woman, Beth. My younger son, Hinton, recently graduated from Wake Forest University and in June, married Anna Youngblood, his best friend for over five years. My daughter, Eason, is a student at Wake Forest University and plans to attend law school. She loves to travel and recently returned from her semester study abroad in New Zealand.

Q: What aspect of your profession as a family attorney do you find most enjoyable and rewarding?
A: Helping people (and families) who are going through a very difficult time in their lives.

Q: What do you enjoy the most about practicing in a small town like Smithfield?
A: I actually practice throughout eastern North Carolina. I find the attorneys and judges are very professional and I enjoy working with them. When I venture out of Johnston County, the local lawyers and judges make me feel like I am one of their Bar.

Q: Now let’s talk some about your passion for helping those in need.
You’re very involved with Harbor, Inc., a local private non-profit that provides help, hope, and safety to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and displaced homemakers in Johnston County. What does the Harbor Shelter mean to you? How are you involved with it?
A: I was the first board president for Harbor over 25 years ago and am currently on the board. I have seen Harbor grow from a single director to an organization with six full-time employees and numerous volunteers. Harbor now has a shelter and provides numerous services to the women and children victims of domestic violence.

Q: If somebody who is reading this is interested in donating to Harbor, how can they do that?
A: We have hundreds of people participate in events that support Harbor, as well as many others that are regular contributors and volunteers. In addition to helping with these events, you can donate by going to www.harborshelter.org or by calling the Harbor office at (919)938-3566.

Q: Other than your involvement with Harbor, how else are you involved in serving the community, through pro bono work or otherwise?
A: Last year as president of the Johnston County Bar Association, I implemented an “Ask-A-Lawyer” event on a Friday afternoon. We had 30 attorneys provide assistance to almost 70 people. I am co-chair of this event for this year, we plan to make this an annual event. I enjoy “physical” labor and have worked with Habitat and our church on service projects. My daughter and I traveled to Swaziland, Africa, a few years ago as ambassadors with World Vision. As a member of the N.C. Bar Association’s Citizen Lawyers Task Force, I am working with others to encourage lawyers to serve others. As a family lawyer, I often represent people that cannot afford to pay my fees. I hope that every day I look for and am open to ways to serve those in need.

Q: Last year you were named one of the North Carolina Citizen Lawyers. How does that make you feel? Tell us about that experience.
A: It is quite an honor to be recognized by your peers especially when there are so many lawyers in North Carolina that are worthy of this recognition. It was a humbling experience. I do believe that being a “citizen lawyer” also obligates me to encourage members of the Bar to serve others in need.

Q: And I know that you were elected as a N.C. Bar Councilor for Judicial District 11B (Johnston County). That’s quite an honor.
A: I feel blessed to be given the opportunity to serve my peers in this capacity.

Q: Any last second words of wisdom about pro bono service, or as an attorney in general, you’d like to share?
A: Reaching out to others in need makes me a happier person, and, consequently, a more effective and compassionate lawyer. Pro bono service is about helping others and at the same time experiencing the joy of giving.
Building off the success of the 2010-2011 school year, the Public Interest Initiative (PII) is set for a great year. The PII has merged with the PILO Organization. Executive Director Ryan Samuel, Fundraising Director Kat Hauch, 5K Coordinator Carl Menzel, Auction Coordinator Aisha Forte, and Grants Coordinator Tiffany Chadwick will be working to ensure a smooth transition and to continue the high quality work done by PILO to provide funding for students doing unpaid public interest internships.

In addition to taking on the duties of PILO, the PII is expanding the services it offers the student body. Under the leadership of Mentor Director Andi Dorfman, the PII will be launching a mentor program for Wake Law students. The program will pair a public interest attorney with a current student interested in the mentor’s public interest field.

Those interested in being a mentor should contact Andi at dorfaj9@wfu.edu or Ryan Samuel at samurc9@wfu.edu.

Finally, PII is ready to organize another tremendous Public Interest Retreat. Last years retreat was a huge success and featured Morris Dees, co-founder of the Southern Poverty Law Center, who provided the keynote address.

The retreat brings together students, faculty, and public interest practitioners for a day of discussion and networking. Any practitioners looking to participate in this years retreat should contact Retreat Director Amanda Thompson at thoman9@wfu.edu or Executive Director Ryan Samuel at samurc9@wfu.edu.

In my first year as director of the Pro Bono program, I had the great privilege of working with talented and compassionate law students. Their energy and commitment contributed to an imminently successful program. Moreover, the students received the recognition they deserved for all of their ingenuity and hard work.

The Guardian Ad Litem program attracted scores of students, and we are particularly proud of forging into a new area, providing legal information to the Lumbee Indians in Pembroke, N.C.

The environmental student group will continue plans to assist the Yadkin Riverkeeper organization, an environmental nonprofit group dedicated to respecting, protecting, and improving the Yadkin River Basin.

Students helped to revise the employment manual of a homeless shelter, and an immigration student group met with students and administrators of the Elon University School of Law to discuss plans for a joint immigration project kicking off in October.

This fall new plans are taking shape. An expungement clinic is scheduled for late August, and participation in a new national initiative Reclaiming Futures has been set in motion. The Reclaiming Futures program helps young people in trouble due to involvement with drugs, alcohol, and crime. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has invested in juveniles through this national initiative, and law students will work directly with troubled teens.

Also, a neighborhood mediation project underwritten by the city of Winston-Salem will be implemented to alleviate the sometimes thorny issues arising between citizens and neighboring students, and we plan to work with the North Carolina Prisoner Legal Services program in Raleigh.

Members of the Hispanic and Latino Law Student Organization have been given the opportunity to assist Legal Aid with the Hispanic clientele in domestic violence cases; the Veterans group will address the problems of homeless vets, and plans are being discussed to collaborate with other law schools to provide Pro Bono services to military families.

Happily, it is expected that this will be a busy year. I look forward to working with the new board as we seek to engage the students and serve the needs of a bustling
A new student organization has been created to serve the veterans of Winston-Salem and bring veterans together at Wake Forest law school.

The Veterans Advocacy Law Organization (VALOR) is organized exclusively for charitable and educational purposes, more specifically to support Wake Forest University law school students who are veterans, family of veterans, or other students who have interest in serving in the United States military or practicing in the area of veterans’ law.

Although the organization was only created in April, VALOR has strong expectations for the upcoming school year. The main focus of the organization for the fall semester will be to undertake a week-long veteran’s awareness event in honor of Veterans Day. VALOR will also strive to establish philanthropic events to benefit local homeless veterans in Winston-Salem, as well as initiate networking events with students and prominent veterans in the area.

As Wake Forest law school has seen an influx of student veterans, it is more important than ever to promote veterans on campus. Look for upcoming meetings and events at the beginning of the fall semester.

RISING STAR

R. Michael Wells Jr. Recognized For Pro Bono Work

BY ERIC F. FRAZIER
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

seven years into his law career, R. Michael Wells Jr. (’04) has already garnered regional, state and national recognition.

The Triad Business Journal included Wells in its 2009 “Top 40 Under 40,” a list of young area business leaders. Business North Carolina magazine cited him as one of its “Legal Elite Young Guns” (Best Under 40) for 2011, and Super Lawyers magazine has listed him as a “Rising Star” for two consecutive years, in 2010 and 2011.

“A good deal of that has to do with my success as an attorney, but I think I’ve had a lot of visibility as a result of doing things in the community and through the bar association,” says Wells, who has been particularly active with the Young Lawyers Division (YLD) of the North Carolina Bar Association (NCBA). The 33-year-old lawyer is serving a two-year term as the District 9 representative to the American Bar Association.

Most recently, the NCBA gave Wells the Younger Lawyer Pro Bono Service Award, presented annually by the Young Lawyers Division, at the annual meeting of the YLD on Saturday, June 25.

A Winston-Salem native, Wells was selected in part because of his efforts with Project Grace. Created with Jocelyn Fina, Well’s co-chair on the state YLD’s Law and Aging Committee, Project Grace is a free one-day legal clinic at which volunteer lawyers draft health care powers of attorney and living wills for people who cannot afford them. Clinics are held several times per year in alternating cities. At the first two clinics in Winston-Salem and Raleigh, 29 lawyers and 30 support volunteers served 130 people and drafted more than 260 documents. Those results secured the 2010 ABA award. Last summer, Project Grace won a national first-place award from the ABA in the “Service to the Public” category.

This year, Project Grace added clinics in Durham and Greenville, and Wells hopes to continue expanding coverage statewide. A key to the project’s successful launch—the first clinic was at Winston-Salem’s Downtown Health Plaza in fall 2009—was Wells’ volunteer work with the United Way, which helped publicize the event to the target population. In addition, he serves on the Winston-Salem Recreation and Parks board, and he participated in Leadership Winston-Salem in 2010.

Since earning his law degree, he has worked at Wells, Jenkins, Lucas & Jenkins in Winston-Salem, which his father co-founded 18 years ago. He primarily handles personal injury cases, Social Security disability cases and estate planning. This article can be viewed in its entirety at http://news.law.wfu.edu/2011/07/michael-wells-jr-’04-recognized-for-pro-bono-work/.
Alfred Adams (’73) Earns Top Honor In Legal Community

BY BRUCE BUCHANAN
NORTH CAROLINA BAR ASSOCIATION

Womble Carlyle attorney Alfred Adams (’73) has been named a 2011 winner of the Citizen Lawyer Award by the North Carolina Bar Association. The Citizen Lawyer Award honors exemplary community service among members of North Carolina’s legal community.

Throughout his more than 30-year career as a commercial real estate attorney, Adams has been devoted to making Winston-Salem, particularly the city’s downtown area, a better place to live and work. Adams’ work includes numerous civic projects that have strengthened Winston-Salem’s central core.

One key project that Adams has been involved with is the Piedmont Triad Research Park in Winston-Salem. The biotech center, which is still growing, is bringing thousands of high-paying jobs to the Triad region.

Adams also served as President of the Wake Forest University Alumni Association in 2003-04 and has served in several leadership positions in the United Way of Forsyth County. He is active in Centenary United Methodist Church and is a frequent blood donor to the American Red Cross.

“It is a privilege to practice law, and the perfect way to respond to the privilege is by giving back to others,” Adams said. “When one’s life is over, the ultimate compliment is that, ‘She or he made our profession and community better.’ Life is not about what I have earned in the way of income, but what I have done for others (including my family). There is no greater reward.”

Adams is the fourth Womble Carlyle attorney to be named a Citizen Lawyer by the North Carolina Bar Association. The NCBA recognized Kim Stogner in 2009 and Sen. Pete Brunstetter in 2008. Hada de Varona Haulsee was a Citizen Lawyer Award recipient in 2007.

This article can be viewed in its entirety at http://news.law.wfu.edu/2011/06/alfred-adams-honored-as-citizen-lawyer-award-winner/.

Giving Back

BY TORY SUMMERY

Pro bono is all about helping people. On the edge of the train tracks, in a converted funeral home with creaky floors and peeling red paint, two attorneys and four paralegals work tirelessly providing the people of Robeson County with legal services that would otherwise be unavailable.

Statistically, Robeson County, N.C., is one of the most violent counties in the State. However, despite these overwhelming statistics, the dedicated group at the Pembroke office of Legal Aid of North Carolina strives to provide legal expertise to a community in dire need.

My pro bono experiences with this group showed me that the practice of law is so much more than briefing cases, writing memos, and chasing precious interviews.

The real value of a legal education is that it allows us to help others in need. Pro bono provided me the opportunity to sit down with attorneys making a real difference and simply ask, “What can I do?”
Students spend day helping seniors in Pembroke

BY KATHERINE BARBER

On May 6, Katherine Barber, Edward Johnson and Matthew Toldero, all rising 3Ls, and Jonathan Williams (‘11) traveled to Pembroke, N.C., to work in a Wills Clinic that provided essential legal assistance to under-served Robeson County seniors. The clinic was hosted by Legal Aid of North Carolina in Pembroke and supervised by David Richardson, LANC Staff Attorney.

Each student interviewed clients and prepared basic wills, financial and health care power of attorney designations, and advanced directives (also known as “living wills”) for their clients. Two of the students on the trip, Matthew and Jonathan, were familiar with this type of legal work, having participated in Wake Forest’s Elder Law Clinic. All four students were excited to begin their summer break with a trip to Pembroke to do pro bono work and enjoyed the experience.

The clinic was scheduled for the day after the last day of the 2L and 3L exam period, following up on the Pro Bono Project’s successful Spring Break Trip in March to assist LANC Pembroke and the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina. During the March trip, students made informational presentations on wills and other end-of-life arrangements at senior care facilities in Robeson County, among other activities.

Wake Forest’s Pro Bono Project coordinated this event and looks forward to sponsoring another Wills Clinic with LANC - Pembroke during the upcoming fall semester. Wake Forest School of Law’s Pro Bono Project also wishes to thank David Richardson and the staff of LANC-Pembroke for their help and for providing this opportunity to Wake Forest students.
living wills, reviewing veterans’ files to determine if the veteran was eligible for more benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs, and preparing income tax returns for low-income individuals.

Students in all three classes eagerly participated in pro bono work. Nineteen percent of the first-year class participated in work, clocking 475 hours of service. Thirteen percent of the second-year class served a total of 475 hours. Finally, 8 percent of the third-year class participated in 334 hours of pro bono service.

To celebrate the class’s dedication, the 1Ls had a barbecue cookout in the courtyard with Dean Blake D. Morant, followed by the Dean honoring all the students who had performed 25 or more hours of pro bono work during the academic year.

Most impressively, 2L Andrew Kisz participated in 132 hours of pro bono work during the course of the year. Will Peete donated 52 hours in pro bono work, the most hours for a 1L, and 3L Jessica Hollenbach worked 69 hours to help with pro bono projects.

The Pro Bono Project hopes to continue the tradition of a class competition for the greatest number of pro bono service hours this coming academic year as well. This fall, we have planned some ambitious projects through our various student interest groups.

The Veterans Group will tackle the legal needs of homeless veterans and anticipates joining forces with the YLD to assist military families; the animal rights group looks to engage in projects involving rescuing abused horses, and plans by the Outlaw Group for sexual bullying workshops are in the works for undergraduate students on the campus of Wake Forest.

As the Pro Bono Project continues to grow, we expect to have even more class participation and to serve a greater number of North Carolina’s low-income population.

HOPPY

continued from page 1

high school,” he said. “I started thinking about issues and decided that law is where I wanted to go.”

True to his feelings, Elliot has become a nationally renowned specialist in the areas of employment law, civil rights law and commercial litigation.

On Tuesday, April 12, Elliot visited the Wake Forest University School of Law as part of the “A Conversation With” series and answered questions posed by Professor Charley Rose. The series celebrated its 11th consecutive year with his visit, which was co-sponsored by The Pro Bono Project.

Named the 2008 Top Employment Lawyer in North Carolina by Business North Carolina, Elliot has perhaps become best known for his pro bono work, having accepted tomatoes and corn from his clients as compensation for his services. Also, he has received numerous awards for his pro bono work including being named Pro Bono Lawyer of the Year by both the Forsyth County Bar Association and the North Carolina Bar Association.

Elliot’s cases, including representing convicted death-row inmates, victims of ineffective assistance, and Guantanamo detainees, have proven challenging for him.

“I had done some criminal work for years, but the challenge here was that we were dealing with clients that didn’t really believe in our system, for obvious reasons, and didn’t trust our system. So much of our time was spent trying to develop rapport with our clients, and I think we succeeded somewhat over time.”

In addition to his pro bono work, Elliot maintains a private practice primarily specializing in litigation based in Winston-Salem that he helped found with two other lawyers.

Elliot is married to the law school’s Associate Dean of Academics Suzanne Reynolds, and they have three children, two of whom attended law school. Elliot is involved in many local community initiatives, such as the Crossing 52 Initiative to improve race relations in Winston-Salem. He has served on the board and as general counsel for the American Civil Liberties Union of North Carolina. Elliot continues to provide a viable presence in our community and is an inspiration to young lawyers throughout the United States.

This article can be viewed in its entirety at http://news.law.wfu.edu/2011/04/robert-‘hoppy’-elliot-’77-follows-his-instincts/.
Thank you to all of the attorneys who provided valuable support and insight last year and who suggested programs for consideration. The Wake Forest Pro Bono Project is largely a success due to the time that practitioners donated to support student projects.

If you are an attorney who would like to join this outstanding group, you can request a student to assist with your pro bono work by submitting a project at http://probono.law.wfu.edu/forms/project-request-form/ or by emailing Professor Hopkins at hopkinmn@wfu.edu.

Additionally, the Pro Bono Project is always looking for attorneys to supervise new student projects, so please email Professor Hopkins if you would like to serve as a supervising attorney during the upcoming school year.

A special congratulations to the graduating board members, Jackie Willingham (second from right), Lamar Armstrong (fourth from right), Sara Riley (fifth from right) and Michael Lennox (second from left). These graduates were instrumental in creating the Pro Bono Board and their help and support in promoting Pro Bono efforts will be greatly missed.

2010-11 PRO BONO BOARD AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE LAST SCHOOL YEAR

A WARM THANK YOU TO ATTORNEYS FOR PRO BONO ASSISTANCE