

# **NORTH CAROLINA 811**

*North Carolina* One-Call Center

Volume 2, Issue 2

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understanding the client's goals and presenting options that incorporate the risks and unknown variables of a lawsuit are even more crucial with the economic pressures organizations are facing," said Barrett. "Winning has a different meaning for each client," explained Gauffreau, a litigation partner and certified Superior Court mediator. It is our job to understand the client's perspective and to become as knowledgeable as we can about the external forces affecting their decisions in order to provide them the best opportunity for their win." Jason Buckland, litigation association and former Virginia Tech football player, adds, "clients do not want surprises. We are always looking around the next corner during a lawsuit to prepare for Plans B, C or D."

**More than Statistics -- Clients Feel the Pain.**

At the beginning of the economic downturn, Beth Langley, employment and litigation partner, worked with numerous clients to implement reductions-in-force and layoffs. "This was a highly-

emotional time for clients. In order to remain afloat, and keep the majority of their workforce employed, business leaders had to make gut-wrenching decisions about who kept their jobs, and who would be unemployed. After going through that process with so many different organizations, I have a renewed appreciation for the business ethics of organizations, large and small. Our clients' leaders are stellar. I am proud to work with them."

**A History Lesson.**

Bob Douglas, a partner in the real estate and trust/estates practice areas, joined Hagan Davis in 2008 after his

revered father, R.D. Douglas, Jr., retired from their law practice at the age of 95. Bob Douglas has practiced law through a number of recessions and tough economic times. "The key," said Douglas, "is to adjust your practice to your client's changing needs and be ready to guide them to new directions when necessary. When times improve, you will find a grateful client." This tenacity is likely in his DNA. Douglas is a direct descendant of Stephen A. Douglas, the "Little Giant," made famous both by his statesmanship and the debates he had with Abraham Lincoln in 1858 when Lincoln ran for the seat in the United States Senate then occupied by Stephen Douglas.

holidays through Salvation Army. In the fall of 2008, through a staff member's suggestion, the firm adopted a Salvation Army family for a full year, recognizing that the family's needs continued well past the holiday season.

In the fall of 2009, attorneys and staff donned their work boots and tool belts to spend a Saturday installing siding on a Habitat for Humanity house. It was a day of hard work, a lot of fun, and realization that most should stay out of construction work.

In 2008, during the firm's first year of operation, Hagan Davis received the United Way of Greater Greensboro's award for the highest percentage of participation of any law firm in

Greensboro. In 2011, United Way recognized Hagan Davis as the law firm with the highest increase percentage in giving.

In 2010, Hagan Davis sponsored a fundraiser for Carolina Adoption Services, Inc., an agency dear to the firm since both Gauffreau and

Langley adopted their children.

**Bright and Brighter.**

The firm is noticing small, but hopeful, signs of economic recovery with its clients. Merger and acquisition activity has quietly started back. Organizations are cautiously hiring, even if a lot of the positions are temporary. Companies seem to be out of lock-down mode, and working on growth, infrastructure, compliance issues and items that have been on the back shelf for the last few years. Davis noted, "As our clients continue to evolve, so will we. We're excited about the future."

Hagan Davis Mangum Barrett & Langley PLLC, a Greensboro based law firm, serves as counsel to the Board of Directors of North Carolina, 811, Inc.



Left to Right: Seated - Charles T. ("Chip") Hagan III; Beth Langley; Robert D. ("Bob") Douglas III. Standing - J. Alexander ("Alex") S. Barrett; Stuart C. Gauffreau; Jason B. Buckland; Henry B. ("Hank") Mangum Jr.

Douglas won the election, but the debates launched Lincoln to national prominence and attention, leading to Lincoln's election as President in 1860.

**The Firm's Commitment to Giving Back.**

As Hagan reminds firm members often: "We are part of our community, and we have a commitment to give back." The firm takes its commitment seriously. Hagan Davis has been a regular sponsor of The Salvation Army's Doing the Most Good breakfast to kick off the holiday season. The firm annually adopts a family during the