

**BUILDING A FOUNDATION OF STABILITY**  
for Families in Crisis

**ADDRESSING THE FINANCIAL EXPLOITATION**  
Experienced by Human Trafficking Survivors

**COLLABORATING AGAINST INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE**  
by Serving Survivors

**PARTNERING WITH ENTREPRENEURS**  
for Business Success

**OFFERING COMFORT AND SECURITY**  
through Trusted Legal Guidance

**CREATING A COLLECTIVE IMPACT**  
through Workplace Giving

**EMBRACING COLLABORATION**  
in the Community and the Impact



2023

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT

Together  
We Can  
Do More



MVA Public Service Committee

**Moore & Van Allen**

## Building a Foundation of Stability for Families in Crisis

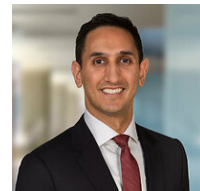
For nearly a decade, Moore & Van Allen (MVA) has dedicated resources to preventing homelessness in Mecklenburg County through a pro bono partnership with Legal Aid of North Carolina (LANC), a critical service that provides pro bono representation for in-need working families facing eviction or inhabitable living conditions.

According to the 2022 Charlotte-Mecklenburg Housing & Homelessness Data Factsheet, approximately 40% of the homeless population in Charlotte was attributed to families. The average length of stay in a shelter is 126 days in Mecklenburg County — a 17-day increase from 2020. Once homeless, families face barriers preventing access to safe and stable housing, such as rapidly rising rent and home costs, that can feel insurmountable. That is why MVA supports the city in its goal to prevent and end family, youth, and child homelessness through programs like the MVA Housing Rights Project.

Led by MVA Litigation Associate **Bill Butler**, the MVA Housing Rights Project helps minimize the disruption to family life caused by emergency relocation. Thanks to pro bono attorneys and staff, the project provides clients with a sense of control over major life decisions and defends clients' basic rights to decent housing.

As a long-standing partner of LANC, MVA continues to prioritize the relationship and preserve the organization's mission of ensuring justice for those in need. In addition to leading MVA's effort, Bill also co-chairs the Charlotte Pro Bono Triage eviction representation project. Similar to MVA's efforts, the project works to increase legal representation for people at risk of losing their homes.

MVA continues to support the important efforts of LANC and its staff, who work tirelessly to ensure access to adequate legal representation for the most vulnerable of clients.



*“Affordable housing is one issue, but safe and affordable housing is an entirely different issue. As attorneys, we all have a special obligation to do pro bono work. It’s the right thing to do, builds community ties, and helps restore people’s faith in the justice system at a time when trust is low.”*

**- Nader Raja**  
Litigation Member  
Charlotte Office

## Addressing the Financial Exploitation Experienced by Human Trafficking Survivors

For a decade, Moore & Van Allen (MVA) has been a leading law firm in the fight against human trafficking and has gone beyond meeting survivors' legal needs through its expanded financial inclusion program.

Under the leadership of MVA Senior Counsel **Sarah Byrne** and Commercial Real Estate Member **Chris Thompson**, project participants continue to provide comprehensive legal services for human trafficking survivors, including working with prosecutors and law enforcement to ensure that victim rights are protected at all stages of the criminal process and expunging criminal records that pose obstacles to employment, housing, and education.

Human trafficking survivors often experience financial exploitation in the form of identity theft or coerced debt, consequences of which last for many years. The project's financial inclusion program provides credit repair to address delinquent credit status and opportunities to build good credit with bank products through the Survivor Inclusion Initiative, which is administered by the United Nations University Centre for Policy Research. In collaboration with a corporate partnership, the project will soon launch a brand-new online financial literacy tool that will help to position survivors for continued financial wellbeing.

The credit repair area of service advanced significantly in the last year due to a new federal law. Sarah participated in forming the U.S. Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's new rule, "Prohibition on Inclusion of Adverse Information in Consumer Reporting in Cases of Human Trafficking," which resulted from the Debt Bondage Repair Act. The act prohibits consumer reporting agencies from furnishing adverse information on credit reports that resulted from human trafficking. The project regularly assists survivors in seeking this relief and provides awareness and compliance training across the country.

MVA's national presence in this work is partly due to its role in cofounding the National Survivor Law Collective (NSLC), a collaboration of U.S. organizations focused on providing free legal services to human trafficking survivors. The NSLC connects survivors to lawyers and provides trauma-informed training to attorneys nationwide. In early 2023, the NSLC co-authored the Legal Deserts Report 2.0, a successor report to the first Legal Deserts Report. The report captures the comprehensive legal needs of survivors and proposes solutions for firms, bar associations, academia, clinics, and funders.

MVA is proud to lead the charge in providing pro bono legal and financial inclusion support and legislative advocacy for survivors of human trafficking.



*"I choose to assist our trafficking clients to help them feel empowered in situations where they may feel powerless. Every person has the right to feel they are heard and in control of their circumstances. I take on matters with trafficking clients to ensure they have this right restored."*

**- Jeff White**  
Litigation Associate  
Charlotte Office

## Collaborating Against Intimate Partner Violence by Serving Survivors

In partnership with Safe Alliance, Moore & Van Allen (MVA) attorneys and staff continue to support the restoration and empowerment of domestic violence survivors. The firm collaborates with Safe Alliance in a variety of capacities to support the organization's mission of providing hope and healing to those affected by domestic violence and sexual assault.

The MVA Domestic Violence Pro Bono Project works in conjunction with the Safe Alliance Legal Representation Project (LRP), which supports victims of domestic violence who could not otherwise afford an attorney to advocate for their rights. The LRP represents roughly 400 clients a year, with 40% of those clients served by pro bono attorneys.

The project, led by MVA's Litigation Associate **Rachael Coe**, pairs volunteer attorneys to work together in supporting both one another and the client. In addition, MVA has partnered with the Wells Fargo Legal Department to provide domestic violence protective orders (DVPOs) to clients referred by Safe Alliance. Wells Fargo and MVA attorneys work in tandem to offer sound legal counsel and if needed, courtroom advocacy, as clients navigate difficult legal and emotional circumstances. Safe Alliance awarded MVA and Wells Fargo the 2023 Safe Alliance Pro Bono Award for their collaborative support of clients.

Over the past few years, the LRP has expanded its volunteer offerings for pro bono attorneys, particularly those in transactional practices. Opportunities include reviewing DVPO pleadings, drafting pro se pleadings for family court, providing custody consultations to survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, and offering a variety of pro bono counsel to clients of the Survivor Resource Center, a one-stop resource for victims seeking basic health and human services, including housing, employment, family law, healthcare, etc.

MVA is proud of its overarching support not only for Safe Alliance clients, but for the organization's broader mission. MVA Financial Services Member **Kimberly Zirkle** continues to serve on the Safe Alliance board of directors, where she provides guidance and oversight to the organization's endeavors. Throughout the past year, the firm also focused on engaging with Safe Alliance through its Walk a Mile fundraiser and the firm's annual Strategic Choice Campaign (page 7), and supporting Breakfast of Hope, the organization's annual fundraising event.



*"I participate in the Safe Alliance Walk a Mile fundraising event because everyone deserves to be in affirming relationships free of trauma and abuse. I realize that domestic violence spawns from a variety of complicated social and emotional issues, all of which require "walking in the shoes" of others so that we may first understand, then most importantly act and then eradicate intimate partner violence."*

- **Precious McLaughlin**  
Litigation Associate  
Charlotte Office



*"I choose to assist our DV clients because I find it truly beneficial to provide assistance to individuals who are choosing to empower themselves during the most difficult times of their lives."*

- **Alli Davidson**  
Litigation Associate  
Charlotte Office

# Partnering with Entrepreneurs for Business Success

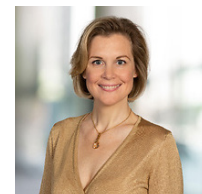
Over the past year, the Charlotte Legal Initiative to Mobilize Businesses (CLIMB) has continued its forward momentum in creating a continuum of legal solutions for small businesses. CLIMB is a collaboration of volunteer attorneys from law firms in Charlotte that provides free business legal services to diverse and under-resourced entrepreneurs. The group utilizes its collective resources and networks, and partners with other service providers and business leaders, to support entrepreneurs and small businesses in historically under-resourced communities of Charlotte, especially BIPOC, female, LGBTQ+, veteran, and disabled entrepreneurs. By helping small businesses overcome obstacles to opportunity and growth, CLIMB seeks to advance economic mobility and social justice in the Charlotte area.

Organized in the wake of George Floyd's murder, representatives of Moore & Van Allen (MVA) and Robinson Bradshaw and a group of law firms joined to create the Carolinas Social Impact Initiative. CLIMB began providing free legal services to Charlotte's entrepreneurial community in July 2021. Led in part by Financial Services Members **Kaitlin Powers** and **Kimberly Zirkle**, CLIMB operates under a set of income eligibility guidelines and an application process that relies primarily on a host of established referral partners. The collaboration is administered by a volunteer steering committee comprised of members from Bradley, McGuireWoods, MVA, and Robinson Bradshaw.

More recently, the program received the North Carolina Bar Association's (NCBA) Filling the Justice Gap Award. The annual recognition celebrates an attorney, law firm, or organization making innovative strides with providing legal services to close the legal services gap in North Carolina. CLIMB representatives accepted the award at the 2023 NCBA's annual meeting in Wilmington, NC.

To date, CLIMB has assisted more than 80 clients in a range of transactional pro bono matters. The program engages a broad range of attorneys and legal employers to join this initiative, motivated to serve those in the Charlotte community who may not have access to the legal system on their own. CLIMB has just completed the process to form a stand-alone legal services provider organization and plans to begin onboarding fulltime staff in the year ahead.

For more information, visit [www.climbnc.org](http://www.climbnc.org).



*"It is part of an attorney's contribution to society to support individuals less equipped to stand up for themselves. As a CLIMB volunteer, I can help those who want to start a business, but need assistance, by providing them with the legal advice they could otherwise not afford."*

**- Daisy Birtalan**  
Director, German Desk  
Charlotte Office

# CLIMB

CHARLOTTE LEGAL INITIATIVE TO MOBILIZE BUSINESSES

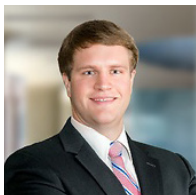
## Offering Comfort and Security through Trusted Legal Guidance

For more than a decade, the Moore & Van Allen (MVA) Wills Project has partnered with the Charlotte Center for Legal Advocacy (CCLA) to assist Mecklenburg County's elderly residents with estate planning. The program, which is led by Moore & Van Allen (MVA) Financial Services Member **Chris Fowler**, empowers county residents who are over 60 years old to make their own plans and decisions about end-of-life issues by completing a will and healthcare power of attorney.

The legal problems that today's elderly population faces are critical. The elderly in poverty are less likely to seek the assistance of an attorney because they do not have financial resources to pay for services, or they do not realize that they have an issue that warrants legal intervention. Each client found through the program is an opportunity for MVA attorneys to provide advocacy, advice, and quality representation.

This past year, MVA also partnered with the Bank of America Legal Department, Bradley, and the North Carolina Bar Foundation to support a local Wills for Heroes pro bono clinic. The program partners with local first responders to host clinics where volunteer attorneys draft simple wills and healthcare power of attorney and financial power of attorney documents for emergency personnel and their family, free of charge. The Wills for Heroes clinic will return in September 2023.

MVA aims to accept a minimum of three new pro bono cases per month from CCLA and continues to value the relationships established through this partnership.



*"The Wills Project provides direct assistance to members of our community who most need it and may otherwise be unable to access legal counsel regarding their wills and future healthcare decisions. This opportunity to connect with clients on a personal level while also providing them with some peace of mind is extremely rewarding, for both attorney and client."*

**- Chris Fowler**  
Financial Services Member  
Charlotte Office  
MVA Pro Bono Wills Project Leader



*"Although it's sometimes difficult to have discussions surrounding one's end of life wishes, it's wonderful to be able to give the members of the communities we serve and their families the peace of mind that their affairs are in order, and it is one less thing for them to worry about."*

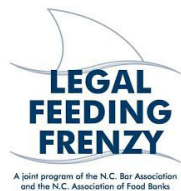
**- Emily Mann**  
Corporate Associate  
Charlotte Office

## Creating a Collective Impact through Workplace Giving

Moore & Van Allen (MVA) employees once again demonstrated their deep and unwavering commitment to giving back to our communities through the 2022–2023 Strategic Choice Campaign, in which individual employee donations support MVA’s long-standing community partners. The funds, which the firm allocates to eight beneficiary organizations based on employee selections, will assist in the areas of health and human services, the arts, legal services, homelessness, domestic violence, human trafficking, and hunger. MVA is grateful for its generous team members who share in the firm’s commitment to serving others and make it possible for the firm to have a strategic impact on community concerns.



Over the holiday season, MVA’s Charlotte office once again lent support to Thompson Child and Family Focus, a leading provider of clinical and prevention services for children and families across the Carolinas, by fulfilling the holiday wish lists of 58 children. MVA employees collectively raised over \$23,000 in support of the holiday requests, hosted an in-office wrapping party to wrap all of the gifts, and offered generous in-kind donations to the organization as well. Additionally, surplus funds were utilized to upfit on campus classrooms at Thompson’s St. Peter’s Lane residential facilities.



MVA was thrilled to once again participate in the North Carolina Legal Feeding Frenzy — an annual joint program of the NCBA Young Lawyers Division and Feeding the Carolinas food banks that aims to fight hunger across the state. MVA has been named the winner of the Legal Feeding Frenzy’s Large Law Firm Division for three consecutive years. Throughout March 2023, the MVA Charlotte office raised over \$30,000 (approximately 127,000 pounds of food) in support of Feeding the Carolinas and the Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina by way of the Frenzy. Overall, the 2023 Frenzy raised an astounding \$161,000 which will be allocated to food banks across the state of North Carolina.



After a four-year hiatus Devonshire Readers excitedly returned to the classroom in support of Devonshire Elementary School’s third grade class. This year the firm helped to facilitate reading clubs with smaller groups of children needing additional literary assistance. Each week, MVA volunteer readers met with a group of 4-5 students throughout the year to work on reading comprehension. This structure allowed for more hands-on attention and continuity for struggling students. Under the direction of Corporate Member **Lesley Lewis** the firm was able to provide readers each week for every third grade classroom. MVA has partnered with Devonshire Elementary for almost two decades and was thrilled to return to offering in-person support for teachers and students throughout the 2022-2023 school year.



MVA attorneys continue to support the Charlotte Center for Legal Advocacy and Legal Aid of North Carolina-Charlotte in their pursuit to provide access to free legal resources and representation to anyone facing issues of safety, financial security, and family stability. Over the last year, MVA attorneys have contributed over \$50,000 of pro bono services and financial gifts in support of these organizations.

# Embracing Collaboration

## Message from our Co-chairs

We are proud to share Moore & Van Allen's 2023 Public Service Report, our annual reflection on the firm's pro bono work, volunteerism, and giving in the past year. Our colleagues and partners worked diligently to provide aid and comfort to some of the most vulnerable members of our community, from securing affordable housing to providing safety for those impacted by intimate partner violence, we take pride in our commitment to serve.

We are exceedingly grateful to all of our employees and partners for continuing to work with us to make a difference. As we reflect on the many challenges that impacted our clients over the last year, we can celebrate how much work has been done. May this report help inspire us all to roll up our sleeves and tackle all the work there is still to do in our community.



With gratitude,

**Ed O'Keefe**

Member, Financial Regulatory Advice  
& Response  
Co-chair, Public Service Committee

**Kimberly Zirkle**

Member, Financial Services  
Co-chair, Public Service Committee



## By the Numbers THE IMPACT

**6,144**

MVA attorneys donated 6,144 hours of legal services to 207 pro bono clients in 2022.

**6,255**

MVA employees (attorneys and non-legal professionals) donated 6,255 hours of volunteer service to community efforts in 2022.

### Employee Donations over \$315,000

MVA works together to support organizations that are near and dear to our employees' hearts. In 2022, employees made individual financial contributions through firm-led giving campaigns totaling over \$315,000. These funds benefitted organizations such as the Arts & Science Council, the Charlotte Center for Legal Advocacy, Legal Aid of North Carolina, Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolinas, Thompson Child & Family Focus Services, and the United Way, among others.

## IN THE COMMUNITY

MVA and its employees recognize the incredible value of investing in our long-standing partners by way of hands-on pro bono and public service hours, board service, and charitable contributions. We fully embrace our responsibility to drive positive community change and prioritize pro bono and hands-on volunteer opportunities. Each of MVA's signature service efforts is built on the firm's long held belief that together, we can do more. Together, we can dream more, believe more, share more, inspire more, and serve more.

MVA's rich history of life-changing community impact would not be possible without the firm's incredible alliances with nonprofit partners, civic organizations, clients across the region and of course, our generous employees. Please scan the below QR Code to see a full list of community partners.

