



PUBLIC SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT

Together
We Can
Do **More** 
MVA Public Service Committee

Moore & Van Allen

Celebrating Progress, Embracing Change

Message from our co-chairs

We believe one of the many things that sets Moore & Van Allen (MVA) apart is our tremendous and ongoing commitment to pro bono work, access to justice, volunteerism, and giving. These themes are synonymous with our firm name and are core tenets of our nearly 80 years in business. Therefore, we are proud to present our **2024 Public Service Report**, which provides a high level look at the impact our attorneys and professional staff have had over the past year.

Many members of our team, as well as our community partners, have worked tirelessly to assist some of the most vulnerable members of our community. While we cannot share every story of life-changing service and giving, we are happy to highlight some exciting developments and our broad reach in 2024.

As we celebrate all that has been done, we look ahead with fresh perspective and a reinvigorated drive. Moore & Van Allen is proud to carry a very long history of community support into a bright future lit by recent growth, strategic planning, and innovation. Thank you to all those who have participated in community efforts this past year. We look forward to another year of generosity and impact where it matters most.

With gratitude,

Ed O’Keefe

Member

Co-chair, Public Service Committee



Sarah Byrne

Member

Co-chair, Public Service Committee



INSIDE THIS REPORT

The Impact	3
By the Numbers	
A Decade of Service	4
Combating Human Trafficking and Supporting Survivors	
Empowerment for Charlotte’s Small Business Community	6
Service in Action	8
Creating a Collective Impact	
Embracing Collaboration	11
Additional Public Service Committee News & Highlights	
In the Community	11

IMPACT

By the Numbers

9+

Cottages were supported during the **Thompson** Holiday Wishlist campaign for children ranging in age from 11-17 years old.

300+

Gifts donated to **Thompson** during their annual Holiday Campaign.

190+

Pro bono clients serviced in 2023.

\$300k+

In 2023, employee donations through the **Employee Giving Campaigns** provided support to organizations that are near and dear to our employees' hearts. Employees made individual financial contributions through firm-led giving campaigns. These funds benefitted organizations such as the Arts & Science Council, the Charlotte Center for Legal Advocacy, Legal Aid of North Carolina, Safe Alliance, Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolinas, Thompson Child & Family Focus, and the United Way, among others.

\$105k+

Throughout the month of March, the MVA Charlotte office raised over 70,476 pounds of food in support of Feeding the Carolinas and the Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina by way of the **2024 NC Legal Feeding Frenzy**. Overall, the Frenzy raised an astounding \$105,628 which will be allocated to food banks across the state of North Carolina. This incredible generosity will better the lives of so many and help eradicate hunger in our communities.

6,250+

Donated volunteer service hours to community efforts by MVA attorneys and professionals in 2023.

5,700+

Donated hours of legal services to pro bono clients by MVA attorneys in 2023.



A Decade of Service

Combatting Human Trafficking and Supporting Survivors

The year 2024 marks a decade MVA providing groundbreaking support for survivors of human trafficking, and the firm's momentum and impact is stronger than ever.

The U.S. Department of State estimates that there are 24.9 million victims of trafficking worldwide at any given time. MVA's Human Trafficking Pro Bono Project, led by firm Member **Sarah Byrne**, remains a one-of-a-kind national program providing comprehensive legal services for trafficking survivors, including working with prosecutors and law enforcement to ensure that victim rights are protected; seeking expunction of criminal records that pose obstacles to employment, housing, and education; and offering survivors financial inclusion services such as credit repair and access to safe banking.

Below are some highlights from the last year:

- ▶ MVA expanded the practice to include representation of child sexual abuse victims. Specifically, MVA represented survivors seeking restitution in hundreds of federal criminal cases against defendants who possessed abuse imagery of these clients, including securing a \$1.13 million restitution award for a sex abuse victim in a high-profile federal case in New York.
- ▶ Firm volunteer lawyers successfully cleared survivors' criminal records under a rarely applied expunction statute, repaired many survivors' credit histories damaged by trafficker financial abuse, and represented several victim-witnesses in federal sex trafficking of a minor prosecution.

(continued)



(continued)

- ▶ Project participants have personally trained hundreds of professionals on the realities of human trafficking, legal needs of victims, related financial institution obligations, victim-witness rights, and financial exploitation and consumer protection needs of survivors.
- ▶ Through ongoing collaboration with the United Nations University Centre for Policy Research's Survivor Inclusion Initiative, of which MVA is a signatory support partner, the firm advised on multiple high-profile Department of Labor cases to connect unaccompanied minor labor abuse victims to banks for services.
- ▶ MVA's Human Trafficking & Compliance practice was recognized for industry contributions and innovations in the 2023 *Financial Times* North America Innovative Lawyers Report.
- ▶ MVA and Credit.com developed and launched an online financial literacy tool for human trafficking survivors to educate, empower, and prevent re-exploitation.
- ▶ In addition to serving as a presenter at many industry events, Sarah has been published on these topics by *Law360*, *American Banker*, *Mecklenburg County Bar News*, and other top-tier publications.
- ▶ At a firm-hosted press conference with North Carolina Attorney General Josh Stein, Sarah was presented with the 2024 State of North Carolina Outstanding Service and Dedication to Ending Human Trafficking Award by the North Carolina Human Trafficking Commission.
- ▶ The Public Service Committee presented a Pro Bono Quarterly Award to MVA Litigation Associate **Jeff White** for his stellar work representing a minor victim of human trafficking in a federal criminal prosecution.



Empowerment for Charlotte's Small Business Community

The Charlotte Legal Initiative to Mobilize Businesses (CLIMB), which was launched by MVA Financial Services Member **Kaitlin Powers** and numerous other MVA representatives in partnership with several other law firms, began providing complimentary legal services to Charlotte's start-up community in July 2021.

By helping under-resourced small business owners and entrepreneurs overcome obstacles to opportunity and growth, CLIMB seeks to advance economic mobility and social justice in the Charlotte area. In CLIMB's first two years, volunteer lawyers assisted nearly 100 local entrepreneurs with their business legal needs.

The organization, started as an operation run strictly by volunteers, celebrated two major milestones last October:

- ▶ CLIMB completed the process to form a standalone legal services provider organization and was granted incorporation as an independent North Carolina 501(c)(3).
- ▶ Thanks to unprecedented growth and demand, CLIMB identified the need to hire an individual to manage the organization full-time, and Casey Burke was hired to serve as its first Executive Director.

(continued)



"The act of simply listening and helping these clients think through their concerns is tremendously meaningful. I believe it helps them to feel seen and supported as they work through the very difficult process of either starting a new business or growing a young business. The start-up community is a very complex ecosystem and I am proud of the organization we have established and impact we are having locally."

- Kaitlin Powers

MVA Member & CLIMB Board Member
Charlotte Office



(continued)

Since Casey joined CLIMB, the organization has provided ongoing, personalized legal services to approximately 50 additional clients, five of whom are currently receiving ongoing legal services from MVA attorney teams. The teams have advised about everything from commercial lease agreements to bringing on investors to registering trademarks. Of these clients, approximately 98% have identified as African-American or Latinx, and nearly 80% have been women. CLIMB has also supported nearly 150 additional small businesses through educational seminars and Q&A sessions led by volunteer attorneys.

Casey noted that, in addition to these evident successes, she is proud of CLIMB's ability to provide its clients with legal representation of the highest possible caliber. CLIMB also entered into a partnership with the City of Charlotte's Office of Economic Development, which has provided crucial funding and other means of support. Finally, Casey is proud that CLIMB offers an exciting new opportunity to engage transactional attorneys in pro bono practice, because she has seen many attorneys be deterred by the litigation-heavy nature of many pro bono opportunities.

Kaitlin, who remains a leading member of CLIMB's efforts in her capacity as a board member, is committed to making sure MVA remains involved through many different practice areas and that the firm's attorneys see and participate in the many opportunities to contribute their wide-ranging practice skills.

For more information, visit www.climbnc.org.



"We provide access to incredible legal services that may be financially out of reach for our clients. I think that means the world to entrepreneurs and small business owners who are experiencing that level of elite legal care for perhaps the first time. I hope to continue to expand services for the clients who need them most, increase and vary the opportunities for attorneys to engage in pro bono, and most importantly, increase the number of thriving, successful small businesses in our beautiful city."

- Casey Burke
CLIMB Executive Director



CLIMB

CHARLOTTE LEGAL INITIATIVE TO MOBILIZE BUSINESSES

Service in Action

Creating a Collective Impact

MVA HR Team supports Classroom Central



MVA Human Resources Team organizing school supplies and creating hygiene kits for students.



On-site at Classroom Central



MVA Business Operations Professional **Leeanna Gunthorpe** and MVA Paralegal **Lynn Holder** stocking the Classroom Central store.

Charlotte Triage



MVA Member **Sarah Byrne** presenting Credit Repair Relief for Human Trafficking Survivors.



Wills for Heroes



MVA supports Wills for Heroes pro bono clinic program which partners with local fire, police, and EMS stations/departments to host clinics where volunteer attorneys draft simple wills, health care power of attorney and financial power of attorney documents for first responders and their families, free of charge. MVA Financial Services Member **Chris Fowler** serves as head of the MVA Pro Bono Wills Project.



NORTH CAROLINA
BAR FOUNDATION

(continued)

Service in Action

Creating a Collective Impact

CLIMB and Prospera USA Pro Bono Latina Event



CLIMB

CHARLOTTE LEGAL INITIATIVE TO MOBILIZE BUSINESSES

MVA Human Resources Clerk **Daisy Ortiz** (*far left*) supporting CLIMB leadership with translation services.

Summer Associates 2024



The MVA Public Service Committee always enjoys the opportunity to welcome our Summer Associates to the firm and share opportunities with them on how they can get involved.

Public Service Volunteer Fair



MVA employees were able to meet over 10 community partners to learn more about their mission and how they can get involved.

Some of the community partners in attendance were American Cancer Society, Bright Blessings, Center for Community Transitions, Classroom Central, GenOne, Heart Math Tutoring, Safe Alliance, Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolinas, Thompson Child & Family Services, United Way, and others.



(continued)

Service in Action

Creating a Collective Impact

MVA Pro Bono Fair



MVA employees in attendance at the MVA Pro Bono fair to learn how they can provide direct legal services and support to our Charlotte community.

Thompson Holiday Gift Wrapping



MVA employees gathered during the holidays to wrap gifts for youth within our community for the Thompson Holiday Toy Drive.



Safe Alliance Pro Bono Awards Ceremony



MVA was presented the Commitment to Justice Award in recognition of continued support for survivors of domestic violence.

In the photo left to right: MVA Member **Amanda Franklin**, Financial Services Associate **Haley Sink**, Litigation Associate **Rachel LaBruyere**, former MVA Associate and Domestic Violence Project Lead **Rachel Coe**, MVA Member and Public Service Committee Co-chair **Sarah Byrne**, and Litigation Associate **Precious McLaughlin**.

Safe Alliance Walk A Mile



MVA Litigation Associates **Taylor Boyles**, **Aishaah Foster**, **Precious McLaughlin**, and **Alexis Narducci** volunteered at Safe Alliance Walk A Mile event.



Embracing Collaboration

Additional Public Service Committee 2023-2024 News & Highlights

- ▶ MVA Financial Services Member **Amy K. Johnson** was selected as the Sally & Bill Van Allen Public Service Award recipient.
- ▶ MVA Real Estate Paralegal **Alyssa McLean** was selected as the Outstanding Volunteer Staff Member Award Recipient.
- ▶ MVA Litigation Member **Bill Butler** was selected to lead the Housing Rights Pro Bono Project.
- ▶ MVA Litigation Associate **Rachel LaBruyere** was selected to lead the Domestic Violence Pro Bono Project.
- ▶ Thirty MVA attorneys were named to the 2023 North Carolina Pro Bono Society.
- ▶ MVA was shortlisted for a 2024 Women in Business Law Americas award in the Pro Bono Work North America category.
- ▶ MVA Quarterly Pro Bono Award Winners: Employment & Labor Associate **Kyle Jacob** and Litigation Associate **Jeff White**.

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 QR Code to see a full list of community partners.



2024 PUBLIC SERVICE
ANNUAL REPORT



Moore & Van Allen