



## Leadership North Carolina Class 30

Government Session

November 1-3, 2022

### Speaker Directory

#### **The Honorable Roy Cooper**

Governor

State of North Carolina

20301 Mail Service Center

Raleigh, NC 27699

(919) 814-2000

@NC\_Governor

Governor Roy Cooper is serving his second term as North Carolina's 75th Governor. The Governor is a lifelong North Carolinian, born and raised in Nash County, where he attended public schools and worked summers on the family farm before earning undergraduate and law degrees from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Throughout his career, Governor Cooper has worked to build a stronger North Carolina where everyone has an opportunity to live in safe communities and get a quality education, a good job, and access to affordable health care.

As Governor, Cooper has announced tens of thousands of new jobs, fought to boost public education, tackled the opioid crisis, revitalized rural communities, and made sure North Carolinians have the training to fill the jobs of today and tomorrow. Governor Cooper has taken strong executive and legislative action to fight climate change, make North Carolina a more inclusive place, and help families with policies like paid parental leave. Governor Cooper negotiated and signed landmark energy legislation that requires North Carolina utilities to reduce power generation carbon emissions 70% by 2030 and to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.

He has led the state with a steady hand throughout a series of unprecedented crises. After hurricanes devastated parts of North Carolina, Governor Cooper established the NC Office of Recovery and Resiliency and fought for resources to help North Carolina recover smarter and stronger. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, Governor Cooper's decisive action and steady leadership helped North Carolina endure with among the fewest COVID deaths and job losses per capita in the nation.

Governor Cooper appointed the most diverse cabinet in North Carolina history, making good on his commitment to ensure state government looks like the people it serves.

Before his election as Governor, Cooper served four terms as state Attorney General, where he oversaw a sharp decrease in crime and fought for consumers by advocating for lower utility rates and putting predatory lenders out of business.

Governor Cooper got his start in public service in the North Carolina State House and State Senate, where he served as Majority Leader. Before that, he practiced law for 18 years and managed his law firm. He and his wife Kristin raised three daughters in Rocky Mount. Cooper's mother was a public school teacher, which helped instill his deep commitment to public education.

As the state emerges from the pandemic, people and businesses are flocking to North Carolina in record numbers. Governor Cooper is focused on ensuring that our people and communities have the tools to grow and thrive and that our state's best days are ahead.

### **Ms. Kara Millonzi**

Robert W. Bradshaw Jr. Distinguished Professor of Public Law and Government  
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Kara Millonzi joined the School of Government in 2006. She specializes in local government finance law, general county law, school finance, utilities finance, development finance, and incorporation. She administers the Coates' Canons Local Government Law Blog and has authored well over 100 posts on issues related to local government law and finance. Millonzi also administers NC Finance Connect, an online community portal centered around the topic of local government finance. She has authored numerous publications, including *A Guide to Billing and Collecting Public Enterprise Utility Fees for Water, Wastewater, and Solid Waste Services*, *Introduction to Local Government Finance* (4th edition), and *The Governance and Funding Structure of North Carolina Public Schools*. She teaches several core finance courses and directs the NC County Attorneys Conference and Fundamentals Workshop and Local Government Finance Officers Conference each year.

Kara is the lead faculty for Lead for North Carolina, a fellowship program that aims to recruit, train, and place the state's most promising young leaders in paid local government fellowships as a means of strengthening our public institutions, supporting our local communities, and cultivating a new generation of public service leaders. Before joining the School, Millonzi practiced law with Testa, Hurwitz & Thibault, LLP in Boston and clerked for the Honorable Louis F. Oberdorfer, United States District Court for the District of Columbia. She is a member of the North Carolina State Bar and the Bar of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Kara earned a B.A. in economics, *summa cum laude*, Phi Beta Kappa, from the University at Buffalo and an M.A. in economics from the University of Maryland at College Park. She earned a J.D., with highest honors, Order of the Coif, from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where she served as editor in chief of the *North Carolina Law Review*.

### **Mr. John N. Davis**

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John Davis is a non-partisan political analyst whose 48-year career includes campaign work at all levels, from presidential and congressional to state executive and legislative races. From Maine to Montana, from Maryland to

New Mexico, Davis has worked with business groups in half of the states in the country establishing political research operations.

From 1986 – 2008, Davis served as President of NCFREE, providing political analysis to North Carolina business, professional and medical organizations. He is recognized as one of the state's leading authorities on evaluating legislative and congressional districts, candidates for public office, and forecasting political races.

Today, Davis continues his work as a political analyst through public speaking and as author of the [John Davis Political Report](#), now in its 15th year of publication.

A native of Graceville, FL, Davis is a graduate of William Carey University in Hattiesburg, MS. He and his wife, Kathy, live in Raleigh. They have five grown children.

**Ms. Suzanne Beasley**

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SEANC Government Relations Director Suzanne Beasley understands what it takes to face adversity head on and come out for the better on the other side.

Before her career at SEANC, Beasley was an account specialist with a major investment firm, moving money around for high profile clients. When the twin towers were destroyed in the tragic events of Sept. 11, 2001, the investment industry found itself in uncertain territory and Beasley found herself without a job. Fortunately, as doors close, windows open—Beasley discovered that SEANC needed assistance in its insurance department, and her proven track record landed her a job. Beasley spent only three short months at SEANC before other departments started to notice her hard work. At the time, Government Relations Director, Ardis Watkins was SEANC's only full-time lobbyist fighting at the General Assembly to maintain and enhance the rights of state employees and retirees. Seeing that Beasley was prepared for the next step in her SEANC career, Watkins offered her a new position in the government relations department. Beasley acted as Watkins' assistant for several months, attending committee meetings to take notes and promote public services at the General Assembly. Beasley's ambitions did not stop at assistant lobbyist. While working full time, Beasley returned to school and pursued an Associate's Degree in Paralegal Sciences at Kaplan University. Acquiring that education permitted Beasley to continue her climb in the government relations department, becoming a lobbyist in her own right for state employees across North Carolina.

Even while tirelessly fighting for employee rights and benefits, Beasley still finds time to read, listen to music, has a passion for Harley Davidsons and her greatest joy, her one-year-old granddaughter.

**Mr. Courtney Crowder**

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Courtney Crowder, a leading expert in public affairs, government relations, and political strategy, is the managing director of APCO Worldwide's Raleigh office and South Region lead.

With nearly 20 years of experience in both private and public sectors, Mr. Crowder has unrivaled knowledge and insight on a wide range of policy issues and strategic initiatives. Prior to joining APCO, Mr. Crowder founded and operated his own consultancy, Crowder Consulting.

Mr. Crowder also previously served four years as Legislative Director and senior advisor to Governor Bev Perdue. Before joining the governor's office, he counseled corporate, nonprofit, and governmental organizations at Capstrat, a North Carolina-based communications firm. He also served as the Legislative Liaison for the North Carolina Department of Insurance and Special Assistant to Commissioner James E. "Jim" Long and was on the campaign and congressional staff for Congressman Bob Etheridge from 2000 to 2003. Mr. Crowder has played an active role in a host of campaigns at every level – presidential, statewide, congressional, and local.

Mr. Crowder received his Bachelor of Arts in English Literature and French from North Carolina Central University and his Master of Arts in Liberal Studies from Duke University. He also studied at Oxford University in Oxford, England, where he completed the Program of History, Politics, and Society at Exeter College.

**James A. Harrell III**

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Jim Harrell, III resides in Raleigh with his wife Amanda and children Harper (13), Hudson (11) and Quaid (11). Jim graduated from Hampden-Sydney College in 1997 and Emory University School of Law in 2002. Upon law school graduation, he was elected to the NC House of Representatives where he served three terms representing Surry and Alleghany Counties. Jim served as the Chairman of Judiciary, Environment and Natural Resources and Ways and Means.

Jim currently practices law in Raleigh where he specializes in government affairs. He is an active member of White Memorial Presbyterian Church, a trustee of NC State University, a member of the board for the NC Legislative Black Caucus Foundation, and a vice-chair of the NC Outdoor Heritage Advisory Council.

**Mr. James White**

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James White began his career with the North Carolina House of Representatives in 2009. His journey to Principal Clerk of the House started as a House Intern and from that point progressed to increasingly complex roles within the administrative layers of the legislature—serving as House Legislative Assistant, House Committee Clerk, and then in 2012 accepting a position working within the House Principal Clerk’s office as an Administrative/Voting Clerk. He is one of the youngest Principal Clerks in the nation and stays active within the American Society of Legislative Clerks and Secretaries. An Oregon native, James has spent the majority of his life living in North Carolina. He lives in Cary with his wife Julie and son Lucas, where the three enjoy the area’s culinary adventures and active outdoor lifestyle.

**The Honorable Gale Adcock****LNC Class 20 Alumna**

House Deputy Democratic Leader  
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Gale was raised in a small town in southwestern Virginia. She understands the value of hard work and the opportunities that come from education. Her mother worked swing-shift in a local textile mill from high school graduation to retirement. Gale attended local public schools, played flute in the high school band, worked for minimum wage at the local public library, and volunteered as a Candystriper at her hometown community hospital.

Gale obtained a nursing diploma from Virginia Baptist Hospital and then worked as an RN to pay for an undergraduate degree in nursing from ECU and a Master’s of Science in Nursing from UNC-Chapel Hill. She has been a nurse practitioner since 1987 and was Chief Health Officer at SAS Institute for 26 years before retiring in October 2020.

Gale has been president of the North Carolina Nurses Association, chair of the North Carolina Center for Nursing, and a member of the North Carolina Board of Nursing. She served on the board of the Taylor Family YMCA in Cary and on the state Diabetes Advisory Council. She is an adjunct faculty member at Duke, UNC-Chapel Hill, East Carolina, and Case Western Reserve University. Prior to her 2014 election to the NC House, Gale was a gubernatorial appointee to the Legislative Study Commission on Access to Health Insurance and the Blue Ribbon Task Force on the State Health Plan for Teachers and State Employees. She is one of two legislators on the State Health Coordinating Council that submits the annual State Medical Facilities Plan.

During her terms in the NC House, Gale has proved to be a commonsense leader who works effectively with members of both parties. She has been a primary sponsor of dozens of bipartisan bills that have become law. Prior to serving in the NC General Assembly, she was a 2007-2014 member of the Cary Town Council and was elected by her Council peers to be mayor pro tem during her last 3 years. As a Council member, Gale voted for investments in infrastructure, maintenance of the town’s AAA bond rating, and passage of annual budgets that kept Cary with the lowest property tax rate in Wake County.

Gale and her family live in Cary. They are members of St. Michael's Episcopal Church.

### **The Honorable Jim Burgin**

Chairman of Senate Appropriations on Health and Human Services  
Senator, District 12  
North Carolina General Assembly  
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Senator Jim Burgin is a longtime resident of Harnett County and current President & Owner of C&D Insurance with two offices located in Harnett County. Senator Burgin also serves as Chairman of the Board to New Horizon Insurance Group and President of B.C. Property, Inc., a real estate development company. He is also a partner in John Hiester Automotive, which owns Chevrolet and Chrysler Dodge Jeep dealerships.

Jim is currently serving his second term in the North Carolina Senate. Before this, he served two terms as Harnett County Commissioner and served as Chairman three years.

Jim and his wife Ann have been married 38 years and have three children and four grandchildren.

Jim was born in Knoxville, Tennessee. He attended The University of Tennessee Knoxville and graduated with honors possessing a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration.

### **The Honorable Jay Chaudhuri**

Senate Democratic Whip  
Senator, District 15  
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Jay Chaudhuri has spent his career fighting for and working on behalf of the people of North Carolina. For over two decades, he has worked at the highest levels of all three branches in state government.

Born in Chattanooga, Jay is the son of immigrants. His father left India to come to America more than fifty years ago. His parents settled in Fayetteville, where his father worked at the Veteran Administration Hospital before entering private practice. Jay attended Fayetteville public schools. He graduated from Davidson College, Columbia University School of International and Public Affairs, and North Carolina Central University School of Law with honors.

As Special Counsel to Attorney General Roy Cooper, Jay helped lead an investigation by all 50 Attorneys General that resulted in a landmark agreement with the two leading social networking sites, MySpace and Facebook, to better protect children from Internet predators. For his efforts, the National Association of Attorneys General honored him with the Marvin Award, given to an individual who furthers that association's goals.

As General Counsel & Senior Policy Advisory to State Treasurer Janet Cowell, Jay helped recover almost \$100 million back to the pension and escheat funds. He also led the effort to establish the first ever Innovation Fund, a \$230 million fund dedicated to support and invest in businesses with significant operations in North Carolina.

As a State Senator representing District 15, he led the fight on funding class sizes from kindergarten to third grade. He has also led the fight on reducing gun violence in our schools. Finally, Jay played a lead role in recruiting a global information technology company to establish an Innovation Hub in Wake County. The recruitment was one of the largest job announcements in the state this past decade.

Jay lives in the Village District neighborhood with his wife and their two children, who both attend Wake County public schools. They also have a yellow Lab.

### **The Honorable Jason Saine**

Senior Chairman of House Appropriations

Representative, District 97

North Carolina General Assembly

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Representative Jason Saine represents the 97<sup>th</sup> North Carolina House District, which encompasses Lincoln County.

Representative Saine is serving his third full term in the North Carolina House after being appointed in 2011 to fill out the remaining term of Rep. Johnathan Rhyne. During his first full term Rep. Saine was recognized as the most effective freshman in the North Carolina House. Rep. Saine won reelection in 2012, 2014, and 2016.

Saine was appointed by Speaker of the House Tim Moore to serve as Senior Chairman for the House Finance Committee. The Finance Committee is responsible for tax policy in North Carolina, and in that role Chairman Saine has helped to shepherd through over half a billion dollars in tax decreases for North Carolina working families. In 2013 Saine was appointed by Speaker Thom Tillis to serve as the first ever House Appropriations Chairman of Information Technology. In that role, he oversees roughly \$1.6 billion in technology spending for the state of North Carolina. He was reappointed to continue in that role in by Speaker Moore in 2015.

Governor Pat McCrory made efficiency in technology one of his top priorities and Saine has worked closely with the State Chief Information Officer to implement and achieve success in IT innovation. Saine was recognized for his work in IT recently by winning the North Carolina Technology Association's Public Leadership Award. He has also led on a number of important issues during the 2015 Legislative session, including: creating a cabinet level Department of Information Technology, protecting student and employee social media privacy, changing State tax law to incentivize IT job creation, and encouraging IT innovation at colleges and universities and in State government.

In addition to his role at the North Carolina General Assembly, Rep. Saine serves as the national chair of the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), where he has made issues such as tax reform, balanced budgets, investment in energy and emerging technologies top priorities. Saine was also recently appointed to the Federal Communications Commission's Intergovernmental Advisory Committee where he will use his expertise as a state legislator and technology business owner to help create better IT and telecommunication policy in the coming years at the federal level.

Rep. Saine also serves as Vice Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, as Co-Chair of the Joint Legislative Committee on IT Oversight, Co-Chair of the Revenue Laws Study Committee, Co-Chair of the Joint

Legislative Oversight Committee on the North Carolina State Lottery, and is a member of the following committees: Alcoholic Beverage Control, Commerce and Job Development, Education - K-12, Elections, Health, Judiciary II, and Rules Calendar and Operations of the House.

### **The Honorable Michael R. Morgan**

Associate Justice  
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Michael Rivers Morgan was born in Cherry Point, NC, to Barbara and the late Leander R. Morgan and is the eldest of five children. The family resided in Washington, DC, until young Mike was six years old, when the family relocated to his mother's hometown of New Bern, NC. As an eight-year-old fifth grader in 1964, Mike was the first black student to attend all-white Trent Park Elementary School, becoming one of five black students that year to integrate the New Bern public school system city-wide. In the eleventh grade, he became the first black drum major of the marching band of New Bern Senior High School.

Upon graduating from the New Bern public school system at the age of sixteen, Mike earned his Bachelor of Arts Degree in both History and Sociology from Duke University. He went on to obtain his Juris Doctor Degree with honors from North Carolina Central University School of Law, where he served as the student body president during his final year of law school.

Justice Morgan served on the legal staff of the North Carolina Department of Justice for ten years following law school, first as a research assistant, then as an Associate Attorney General, and later as an Assistant Attorney General. In 1989, he was appointed as an Administrative Law Judge with the North Carolina Office of Administrative Hearings. While in this capacity, he administered the oath of office to his father, the first and only African American to serve as mayor of the City of New Bern. This historic event was featured nationally in an article titled "Swearing in His Dad" in the February 19, 1990, issue of Jet Magazine. In 1994, Justice Morgan was appointed as a Wake County District Court Judge by Governor James B. Hunt, Jr., and he was subsequently elected to the judgeship by the voters of Wake County in 1996 and again in 2000. He was elected to the Superior Court bench in 2004 for an eight-year term and was re-elected to the post in 2012. In his first statewide quest for elective office, Justice Morgan was elected in November 2016 to be an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of North Carolina.

Justice Morgan is married to the former Audrey Phillips of Raleigh. Between them, they have an adult daughter, an adult son, and five grandchildren. Justice Morgan and his wife are active members of Rush Metropolitan AME Zion Church in Raleigh, where he serves as Chair of the Steward Board and in several other capacities.



**Mr. Kevin Leonard****LNC Class 26 Alumnus**

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Kevin Leonard is the Executive Director of the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC), which represents all 100 North Carolina Counties. Kevin has worked with the NCACC since 2009 serving in multiple roles including: Legislative Coordinator, Director of Government Relations, and Deputy Director. Previously, Kevin was Senior Government Relations Manager at Womble Carlyle Sandridge & Rice; Director of Government Affairs for the North Carolina Department of Labor; Chief of Staff for a member of the North Carolina General Assembly; Legislative Assistant for a Member of the United States House of Representatives; and Production Assistant with C-SPAN.

**Ms. Rachel Bearman****LNC Class 28 Alumna**

Executive Director  
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For the past 5 years, Rachel has served as Executive Director of Meals on Wheels Orange County, NC. After working in the nonprofit world as a professional and volunteer for over 20 years, she could not pass up the opportunity to lead such a great organization directly serving some of the most vulnerable in her community. When not busy at work or volunteering, Rachel can often be found either out on a run, planning her next travel adventure, or wandering through independent bookstores contemplating what to add to the growing stack on her bedside table. She is the parent of three almost fully grown humans and currently resides in rural Orange County with her spouse, one remaining high schooler, two dogs, and numerous chickens.

**Mr. Schumata Brown****LNC Class 26 Alumnus**

Town Manager  
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Schumata Brown is currently Town Manager for Maysville, NC. In this role, he organizes, manages, directs, and implements the goals and objectives of the Town Board of Commissioners. His responsibilities also include the day-to-day administration of a full range of municipal law enforcement; public works utilities, fiscal, and other systems; staffing the organization; and providing budgetary direction and guidance. He previously served seven years as Mayor Pro-Tem for Maysville before transitioning to the manager's role.

Before becoming the Town Manager in 2016, Schumata worked at Hatteras Yachts for 20 years in New Bern, NC. He is a graduate of the NC Rural Economic Development Institute (REDI XIV) and a UNC School of Government

Fellow graduate. He received an honorable discharge from the Army National Guard after six years of service. Schumata is a recent graduate of Leadership NC class XXVI (best class ever) and received the Stanley Frank Class Award.

Schumata is a native of Maysville and resides there with his wife, Lateashe. They are the proud parents of three sons.

### **The Honorable Nimasheena N. Burns**

**LNC Class 22 Alumna**

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Nimasheena Burns hails from Tar Heel, North Carolina. She received her Bachelors in Communications and a minor in Political Science from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She holds a Master's in Public Affairs from North Carolina Central University. She is currently working towards her Masters in Science at Brown University. She is also a graduate of Leadership NC and the North Carolina Defense Contractors Academy. She was elected a Durham County Commissioner in 2020, after receiving the highest number of votes since 1972, for a fourth term of which she is currently serving.

Nimasheena currently serves as the Deputy Chief of External Affairs for the NC Department of Public Safety. Prior to that role, she served as the Director of Communications and Project Management for the North Carolina Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. She previously served as the Director of Public Affairs for North Carolina State Farm Service Agency. While a Public Affairs and Consumer Affairs Officer at the NC Department of Justice, Burns was asked to serve as a guest consumer analyst for various media outlets and has made over 1000 keynote, presenter, and consultative appearances, speaking on issues from Opioid Abuse to Financial Literacy to Child Internet Safety to Business Identity Theft.

Nimasheena currently serves on the North Carolina Community College Foundation Board, the NC Association of County Commissioner Executive Board, Joint City-County planning Committee, the NC Museum of Life and Science, the Library Board of Trustees, the Carolina Theatre Board, the Juvenile Crime Prevention, Memorial Stadium Authority, and the Durham Workforce Development Board, and she serves as the Secretary for the Triangle Transportation Special Tax Board. She has served on boards for the NC Women's Empowerment Conference, State Employees Combined Campaign, Health Fraud Prevention Re-victimization Project, USDA Strikeforce Taskforce, Rural Economic Development Loan Enterprise Taskforce, the NC Recidivism Taskforce, Green Rural Development, and H.A.P.E. (Helping All People Excel).

While not a public health professional, after years of watching her sister thrive, not suffer, with Lupus and kidney disease, she took note of the how broadly kidney failure was prominent in the black community. Nimasheena took a chance and applied for an Albert Schweitzer Public Health Fellowship in 2013, which she received. She used the funding to start the Don't Kid Yourself Foundation, for the early detection of kidney failure. She partnered with UNC Hospital's Kidney Bus to travel to distressed areas in the African American community

For eight years Nimasheena served as member of the Governor's Multi-Discipline Grant Review Team for the state of North Carolina. She is the winner of the following awards: the 2019 UNC Chapel Hill Harvey Beech Outstanding Young Alumni Award Winner, a 2017 40 under 40 Awardee for the *Triangle Business Journal*, the 2016 *Triangle*

*Business Journal* Woman in Public Policy Award, the 2016 Wells Fargo/Blue Cross and Blue Shield Young Executive of the Year Award, and the 2016 *Spectacular Magazine* Emerging Leader of the Year.

**Ms. Shelley Curran**

**LNC Class 26 Alumna**

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Shelley Curran is Assistant Town Manager in Cary, NC. She specifically oversees intergovernmental affairs, transportation, transit, and real estate but is involved in all town matters as a part of the Town Manager's office. Shelley was formerly General Counsel and Vice President of Strategic Partnerships at GoTriangle and managed the agency's key governmental and business relationships. In addition, Shelley served as GoTriangle's Interim CEO and was General Counsel at the North Carolina Department of Transportation. Shelley has extensive experience building partnerships among public and private stakeholders and working for public agencies. She is a graduate of UNCW and obtained her law degree at North Carolina Central University. Shelley was a member of the Leadership North Carolina Class 26 and serves on the Board as the alumni representative.

**Ms. Jamilla Hawkins**

**LNC Class 23 Alumna**

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Jamilla Hawkins serves as Chief of Staff of the North Carolina Pandemic Recovery Office, a newly created office to effectively manage the \$11 billion in federal COVID-19 pandemic dollars allocated to the State of North Carolina by Congress. In this role, she oversees the federal and state reporting functions, communications, outreach, and strategy to meet program goals set by the U.S. Treasury and the North Carolina General Assembly.

A native of southeastern NC, Ms. Hawkins most recently worked at the N.C. Rural Center to strengthen food systems state-wide by promoting and providing resources to food business entrepreneurs and community leaders. In addition to her work, Ms. Hawkins serves as a Commissioner of the N.C. Martin L. King, Jr. Commission, board member of the Wake County Community Foundation, NC Center for Non-Profits, and the past President of the Board of Directors for the Conservation Trust for North Carolina. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from UNC Greensboro and a Master of Public Administration from North Carolina Central University.

**Mr. Jonathan Kappler**

**LNC Class 23 Alumnus**

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Jonathan Kappler is the Chief of Staff at the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, serving under Secretary Kody Kinsley. In this role, he advises the Secretary on key issues, leads special initiatives, and helps coordinate strategic efforts to improve the health and well-being of all North Carolinians. Jonathan previously served as Executive Director of the North Carolina FreeEnterprise Foundation (NCFEF), a nonprofit organization that provides the state's business community with nonpartisan political research and analysis. In this role, he was widely recognized for his objective analysis and earned respect across the political spectrum.

Prior to his role at NCFEF, Kappler served as Interim Vice President of Federal Relations and Director of State Government Relations for the University of North Carolina System, where he represented the 17 institutions that comprise the University of North Carolina in business before the NC General Assembly, state agencies, the US Congress, and Federal agencies. Jonathan earned his undergraduate degrees in Political Science and Spanish, and he holds a Master of Public Policy from American University's School of Public Affairs. Jonathan is the Co-Chair of the 2022 State Employees Combined Campaign, a Past President of the Appalachian Alumni Association, a recipient of the Young Alumni Award from Appalachian State University, a Fall 2010 Fellow of the North Carolina Institute of Political Leadership, and a member of Leadership North Carolina's Class 23.

### **Ms. Paige Sayles**

**LNC Class 24 Alumna**

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Paige Sayles has served on the Franklin County Board of Education since 1998. She is on the Board of Directors for the North Carolina School Board Association and served as President.

Paige is the director of the Z.B. Collie Foundation, a non-profit organization that provides scholarships for area middle and high school students to attend summer enrichment programs. The Foundation also operates Blue Collie Coffee, a coffee shop providing employment for individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities. Paige is active in her community and was a founding member of the committee organized to open a Boys & Girls Club in Franklin County and currently serves on their Advisory Board. She is also on the Board of Directors for the United Way of Franklin County.

Paige is a graduate of Florida State University with a Master's in Social Work. She is a member of LNC class of 24 (best class ever) and a recipient of the Stanley Frank Class Award. She is also a graduate of the NC Rural Economic Development Institute. Paige and her husband, Al, a Family Practice physician, have lived in Louisburg for 35 years. They have four adult sons and one grandson.

### **The Honorable Weyling White**

**LNC Class 26 Alumnus**

Mayor, Town of Ahoskie  
Executive Director, Care Share Health Alliance  
201 West Main Street  
Ahoskie, NC 27910  
(252) 332-5011  
[wwhite@caresharehealth.org](mailto:wwhite@caresharehealth.org)  
@Mayor\_WeylingW

On December 10, 2019, Weyling was sworn in as the first African American Mayor for his hometown of Ahoskie, NC. He attended Winston-Salem State University, where he would become a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., and receive his B.S. Degree in Exercise Science. Upon graduation, Weyling returned home to Ahoskie with a mission to give back and use his education and training for the betterment of his community. He obtained his Master of Business Administration in Healthcare Management from the University of Phoenix in 2010. He is currently the Executive Director for Care Share Health Alliance and a Class 26 graduate of Leadership North Carolina.

### **Mr. Doug Bean**

Director of Government Services, Raftelis Financial Consultants, Inc.  
Adjunct Faculty, UNC School of Government  
227 West Trade Street, Suite 1400  
Charlotte, NC 28202  
(704) 373-1199  
dbean5@bellsouth.net  
@Raftelis

Doug Bean is director of government services for Raftelis Financial Consultants, Inc., a utilities financial management and consulting firm with offices in Charlotte, NC. He is also an adjunct instructor at the University of North Carolina School of Government. Prior to joining Raftelis, he was director of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utilities Department for sixteen years. He served as city manager for the City of Asheville from 1986 to 1994, city manager for the City of Morganton from 1978 to 1986, and assistant city manager for the City of Morganton from 1976 to 1978. He received the 2004 Distinguished Practitioner Award from the Southeastern Conference on Public Administration and National Achievement Awards from both the American Water Works Association Management Division and the National Association of Counties. Bean holds a BA in history from Lenoir-Rhyne College and an MPA from UNC-Chapel Hill.

### **Ms. Tracy Miles**

Adjunct Instructor  
UNC School of Government  
Campus Box 3330  
Chapel Hill, NC 27599  
(336) 708-4953  
[tsmiles@soq.unc.edu](mailto:tsmiles@soq.unc.edu)

Tracy Miles is an independent consultant in nonprofit management, operational excellence, strategy development, and human-centered continuous improvement. In a career that includes private, public, and nonprofit-sector experience, from Fortune 100 companies to grassroots nonprofits, the common thread has been connecting, developing, and managing relationships and strategies for organizational success. Tracy's work focuses on leading teams and empowering individuals of diverse backgrounds toward common goal achievement. Her facilitation efforts help organizations to develop a strategy that connects mission and priorities to outcomes, develop cross-functional and cross-sectorial relationships, analyze, and improve organizational and service performance, and increase public awareness.

Tracy's experience includes working for General Electric, John Deere, The American Heart Association, Girls on the Run, and serving as deputy director of the School of Government's Center for Public Leadership and Governance. Tracy earned a B.A. in psychology from North Carolina State University, an M.P.A. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and also a Lean Six Sigma Certification.

Tracy works across the state and enjoys serving on nonprofit boards for organizations she is passionate about, including the UNC MPA Alumni Association.

### Class 30 Government Session Planning Committee

The following members of LNC Class 29 make up the planning committee for the Class 30 Government session.

**Kathryn Bruner** *New Hanover*  
Principal Broker/President  
KBR-Kathryn Bruner Realty LLC  
[kathryn@kathrynbrunerrealty.com](mailto:kathryn@kathrynbrunerrealty.com)

Kathryn Bruner is originally from the Mt. Shasta region of Northern California. The military brought her to North Carolina in 2010, and she has called this state her home ever since. After retiring from conducting Search and Rescue for the United States Coast Guard, Kathryn started a career in real estate. She now owns her own firm, KBR - Kathryn Bruner Realty LLC.

Kathryn is actively involved with many nonprofit organizations, working closely with the military community to support veterans and their families and hosting and speaking for events such as the Coast Guard Women's Leadership Symposium, Whole Vets, MilSpo Project, the Military Influencer Conference, and Bunker Labs. Through her connections in the military and entrepreneur circles she has helped veterans and their families find work, housing, and a supportive community while transitioning to civilian life.

Kathryn's community accomplishments include The Greater Wilmington Business Journal Wilmington Business Top 100, StarNews/Wilmington Chamber of Commerce 40 under 40 recipient, and being featured in WILMA Magazine as a Women to Watch.

In addition to Kathryn's volunteerism and real estate profession, she and her husband Zach are private real estate investors. Together they have proudly repaired/flipped multiple foreclosed and distressed properties across North Carolina.

**Alex Fagg** *Wake*  
Director of Government Relations  
North Carolina Community College System  
[fagga@nccommunitycolleges.edu](mailto:fagga@nccommunitycolleges.edu)

Alex Fagg is Director of Government Relations for the North Carolina Community College System, where he leads communication, monitoring, and advocacy efforts with state legislative leaders for the 58 community colleges of North Carolina. Before taking the role of Director of Government Relations, he worked for President Pro Tempore Phil Berger, serving as Policy Advisor to the North Carolina Senate.

**Phil Feagan, Session Co-Chair** *Wake*  
General Counsel  
North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources  
[phfeagan@gmail.com](mailto:phfeagan@gmail.com)

Phil Feagan currently serves as general counsel to the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, overseeing legal matters involving the cabinet agency. Prior to joining the department, Feagan practiced education law with a firm in Raleigh and, before law school, served as a policy and communications aide to Congressman David Price (NC-04) in Washington, DC. He has also worked in government relations and for several political campaigns. A native of Polk County in the western part of the state, Feagan holds a B.A. and J.D. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

**Dr. Shakira Henderson, Program Chair Pitt**

Assistant Vice Chancellor of Clinical Research, UNC-CH  
Clinical Research Integration Officer, UNC School of Medicine  
System Vice President Research Officer, UNC Health  
[drshakirahenderson@gmail.com](mailto:drshakirahenderson@gmail.com)

Dr. Shakira Henderson wears several professional hats, including hospital-based nurse researcher, health educator, and certified neonatal nurse. Currently, she serves as the System Vice President, Research Officer for UNC Health, the Assistant Vice Chancellor Clinical Research for UNC Chapel Hill campus, and the Clinical Research Integration Officer for the UNC School of Medicine. She previously served as the founder and Senior Administrator of the Vidant Health Center for Research and Grants. She is a life-long learner and holds dual doctoral degrees, PhD and DNP, and master's degrees in public health, anatomical sciences, and advanced nursing practice with a sub-specialization in nursing education.

Dr. Henderson serves as an elected member and neonatal expert on the national board for the Association of Women's Health, Obstetric, and Neonatal Nurses and has recently been elected as the 2022-2023 President. This year she was elected to the North Carolina Board of Nursing. She also serves as Co-Chair of the North Carolina Nurses Association Nurses on Board Council. She previously served on an international board for lactation and was a fellow, mentor, and faculty advisor in Sigma's Maternal Child Health Nurse Leadership Academy. She is a faculty advisor for the new Sigma Nurse Leadership Academy for Practice. Her expertise is in the innovative application of research and nursing practice to increase the generation of research from the bedside and expedite the translation of evidence into practice. She is passionate about equitable breastfeeding and lactation opportunities for the residents of North Carolina.

Dr. Henderson is interested in global health as she is originally from the tiny Caribbean Island of Dominica. Thus, one of her hobbies is traveling. And in her spare time, she enjoys sound sleep!

**Jeff Marko Wake**

Partner  
DMJPS, PLLC  
[jeff.marko@dmjps.com](mailto:jeff.marko@dmjps.com)

Jeff Marko is a Senior Tax Manager working with DMJPS, PLLC, in their Durham, NC, office. Having worked in public accounting for over 10 years, Jeff started his career with a national firm in Raleigh before moving to DMJPS in November of 2018. At DMJPS, Jeff is able to work with a wide variety of clients including small to large S-Corporations, Partnerships, multi-state C-Corporations, Trusts, and individuals. Jeff's passion is working with privately held companies and their owners to help grow their businesses. Whether it's income tax compliance, business entity structuring, merger and acquisition advising, or just problem-solving, Jeff devotes himself to taking care of his clients' needs. Jeff also serves as a board member with Housing for New Hope where he's able to serve his community by working to end homelessness in Durham.

Jeff was born and raised in Durham before moving to Raleigh to attend school at North Carolina State University. At NC State he earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in accounting. Jeff and his wife got married in 2019 and bought their first home together in Raleigh. When Jeff's not working, he is attending NC State football and basketball games, Carolina Hurricanes hockey games, and pretty much any other sporting event where he can get his hands on tickets. He also participates in various kickball, flag football, and other intramural sporting leagues throughout the Triangle.



**Kirk Montgomery** *Alamance*  
Information Technology Director  
City of Mebane  
[kmontgomery@cityofmebane.com](mailto:kmontgomery@cityofmebane.com)

Kirk holds a master's degree in Information Systems from Keller Graduate School of Management, a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from North Carolina Central University, and an associate degree in Civil Engineering from Horry Georgetown Technical College. He is a certified CIO from the UNC Chapel Hill School of Government CGCIO Program. Kirk is a member of the North Carolina Local Government Information Systems Association (NCLGISA) as well as a member of the Triad Regional IT Leadership Association.

Kirk's passion for excellence in service extends beyond the workplace. It continues with his civic engagement with his church, various projects for children, and numerous organizations such as the North Carolina State Employees Association (SEANC), where he has been an active member since 1996.

Kirk enjoys martial arts, gaming, working out, spending time with family and friends, and contributing to the community. He believes in helping others to help themselves and encouraging people to do greater things.

**Sarah Prencipe** *Catawba*  
Governmental Affairs Analyst  
City of Hickory  
[sprencipe@hickorync.gov](mailto:sprencipe@hickorync.gov)

Sarah Prencipe currently serves as the Governmental Affairs Analyst for the City of Hickory. A native of North Carolina, she returned home after attending college in Chattanooga, TN, and beginning her government career in Washington DC, working for the United States Senate Sergeant at Arms. While she enjoys all levels of government, she has found a true passion in local government and serving her community. She has been involved with multiple non-profit groups and has assisted in various volunteer capacities. She has most recently served as Executive Board President of the Women's Resource Center of Hickory. In 2020, she was given the distinguished honor of being named one of Hickory Young Professionals' "Top 10 Under 40." She holds a Master of Arts degree in Public Policy and recently completed the Municipal and County Administration course from the UNC School of Government.

**Jeff Smith** *Forsyth*  
Litigation Paralegal (Retired), Syngenta Crop Protection, LLC  
Owner, Smitty's Notes & SmittysNotes.com  
[smitty@smittysnotes.com](mailto:smitty@smittysnotes.com)

Jeffrey L. Smith received a BA degree in Public Administration from Elon University. In 1986 he returned to Winston-Salem and worked with Womble Carlyle Sandridge and Rice, PLLC as an Environmental and Toxic Tort Litigation Paralegal. In 1996 he joined the legal department of Syngenta Crop Protection, LLC as a litigation paralegal. He retired in 2018

Jeff is owner of the grassroots e-newsletter – Smitty's Notes. This publication reaches over 15,000 people in and around the Winston-Salem community, and SmittysNotes.com, a community resource web site. Jeff wrote a weekly column about news and events in the arts and entertainment community in Relish Magazine, radio with WHTZ –FM and television and web with WXII-12.

Jeff is a graduate or past or current board member of the following: Leadership Winston-Salem Alumni Council 2022 – present, City of Winston-Salem Citizens Police Academy (Expected November 2022), Leadership North Carolina –

Class 29 (2022), City of Winston-Salem Citizens Fire Academy Graduate – 2018, City of Winston-Salem University Graduate – 2014, US Army War College National Security Seminar Participant – 2011, Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation Advisory Panel 2008 – 2011, Center for Creative Leadership - Leadership Development Program (LDP) – 2008, Piedmont Triad Partnership Leadership Institute (PTLI) – 2008, Millennium Fund Bd Member 2006 – present, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Arts Council, Trustee ~ 2000 to 2005, Leadership Winston-Salem Class of 2000, Downtown Winston-Salem Partnership, Board of Directors Member ~ 1999 to 2005.

Awards: 2018 – Trellis Supportive Care “Living Your Best Life” Award, 2011 - Duke Energy Citizenship and Service Award, 2007 - The Business Journal of the Triad – “The Most Influential People in the Triad”, 2005 The Business Journal of the Triad – “Fifty Most Influential People in the Triad.”

**Sharon Smith, Session Co-Chair** *Perquimans*

Special Projects Administrator  
Albemarle Commission COG  
[ssmith@accog.org](mailto:ssmith@accog.org)

Sharon Smith is a relative newcomer to North Carolina, having moved here full-time in 2017. She had spent many hours over the years on the beautiful Perquimans River enjoying her family’s cottage, so when the opportunity arose to become Tourism Director in Perquimans County, she jumped at the chance.

After four years in tourism and a “crash-course” in NC local government, Sharon accepted a job with the Albemarle Commission, regional Council of Government for Region R in the northeastern corner of the state. As Special Projects Administrator, she is charged with identifying available resources and connecting the 10 counties in the Albemarle region to them. Projects range from helping communities assist residents with failing roofs to coordinating the Broadband Expansion Program which will connect every household in the region to affordable, reliable internet service.

Sharon has really embraced the rural lifestyle in northeastern North Carolina. She and her husband Jim recently renovated the historic Francis Nixon farmhouse in Hertford, and when she’s not at work, Sharon loves to hang out at home on their small farm with four dairy goats, three Peking ducks, two Berkshire pigs, four Guinea fowl, and four black Labs. She has learned just enough about milking goats to make goat cheese; if she can just figure out how to grow grapes for wine – she’ll be all set!

Sharon and Jim first met at middle school in Virginia Beach. After pursuing different paths for years, they reconnected and will soon celebrate their 10th wedding anniversary. They have five children between them, ages 16-25.

**Pete VanGraafeiland** *Wake*

SVP, Member Services  
Civic Federal Credit Union / Local Government Federal Credit Union  
[pete.vangraafeiland@civicfcu.org](mailto:pete.vangraafeiland@civicfcu.org)

Pete is a born and raised North Carolinian. Growing up and living in Raleigh, he's experienced many changes that have impacted the city, region, and state. Pete graduated from Elon College, where he also played varsity tennis, in 2001. In 2005, Pete graduated from Campbell University with his MBA. Pete's entire professional career has been spent within the credit union industry between State Employees Credit Union, Coastal Federal Credit Union, and Civic Federal Credit Union. Pete is married and has 3 young boys: Bo (8), Max (6), and Miles (2). In his free time Pete enjoys playing tennis and golf and spending time with his family.

**Edna Wallace** *Durham*

Manager, Strategic Partnerships

RTI International

[ewallace@rti.org](mailto:ewallace@rti.org)

Edna Wallace manages strategic partnerships for the Education and Workforce Development Division at RTI International. Since joining RTI in 2016, she has advised school districts and policymakers on teacher preparation, college and career readiness, and school accountability. Her current area of focus is supporting school districts to implement evidence-based policies and strategies that improve teaching and learning.

Before RTI, Ms. Wallace was the senior director of policy and partnerships at NC New Schools, where she led the organization's policy, advocacy, and strategic partnerships. While at NC New Schools, Ms. Wallace established a peer learning network of superintendents and chief academic officers to foster the knowledge and skills of school district leaders needed to lead dynamic school districts. She also researched and advanced policies to improve public education in North Carolina.

Prior to NC New Schools, Ms. Wallace was a policy advisor at UNC Charlotte. There she focused on policies to increase college access to more first-generation college-going students. Ms. Wallace has a BA in Psychology from Elmhurst College.

**John White** *Guilford*

Chief NC Lobbyist / Manager - State & Local Affairs

Dominion Energy

[john.d.white@dominionenergy.com](mailto:john.d.white@dominionenergy.com)

A true Renaissance man and native North Carolinian, John D. White has been engaged in the business and politics of the state for the last 20 years. John enjoys shaping policy matters, and honing in on the nexus between policy, regionalism, and quality of life. Prior to joining Dominion Energy, John served as the Associate Regional Director of the Southeast Region for the American Petroleum Institute (API). While at API, John lobbied on behalf of member companies in many areas including oil and gas exploration, energy choice policy, transportation, and infrastructure, along with economic development.

Prior to API, John served as the Legislative Director for the North Carolina Department of Commerce under Governor Roy Cooper. Before joining the Department of Commerce, John worked in economic development and public policy at the Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce. He has also worked within the nonprofit sector, leading a civic engagement organization.

John's career began as an aide to Congresswoman Alma S. Adams, Ph. D. during her time in the North Carolina General Assembly. He credits this experience as the essential building block that provided him with the understanding of how local, state, and federal policy intertwine.

Aside from politics, John enjoys golfing, watching golf, practicing golf, and spending time with his wife, Lindsay, and their four-year-old son, Jack . . . who he's teaching to like golf.