



Thomas C. Watkins

Member

Tom Watkins' practice focuses primarily on closely held businesses and investment vehicles. He has extensive experience in representing investors, borrowers and lenders in a broad range of complex transactions, including debt and equity investments, financings, mergers and acquisitions and restructurings. Mr. Watkins spends significant time representing private equity funds and other investors in connection with their investments and related matters, including negotiating investment terms, exit transactions and private equity fund management. His private equity clients have been involved in transactions throughout the United States and internationally.

Mr. Watkins represents clients in a broad range of industries. His clients, for example, include private equity investors in the real estate, energy and technology fields and the owner of a regional portfolio of radio stations. He is frequently involved in structuring relationships among business owners and is often engaged in connection with limited liability company operating agreements and other stakeholder arrangements. He also regularly provides advice on a broad range of contractual matters.

Mr. Watkins' current practice includes the area of Name, Image and Likeness (NIL) law as it affects collegiate student athletes and related NIL organizations. This is a developing area of the law involving corporate, tax and regulatory issues.

Mr. Watkins has spent significant time over the years with the North Carolina Bar Association and is a past member of its Board of Governors. He is a past Chair of the Bar Association's Business Law Section. In 2024 he received the Business Law Section's highest honor, its Distinguished Service Award, which recognizes extraordinary service to the Business Law Section, the legal profession and the public.

Three grown daughters and five grandchildren keep Tom Watkins quite busy in his spare time. He enjoys saltwater activities and golf with his wife and friends and is an avid fan of college sports. He is also actively involved in a variety of civic and charitable activities.

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Practice Areas

General Corporate

Private Equity

Lending and Finance

Education

University of North Carolina, B.S., 1973,
Beta Gamma Sigma

University of North Carolina, J.D., with
honors, 1978, North Carolina Law Review

Bar Admissions

North Carolina, 2008

Professional Activities

North Carolina Bar Association, Board of Governors, past member

North Carolina Bar Association, Business Law Section, past Chair

Community and Civic Activities

Piedmont Triad Charitable Foundation (Wyndham Championship), member of the Board of Directors (PGA Tour Event)

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, past member of the Board of Visitors

UNC Children's Hospital and UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center, past member of Boards of Visitors.

Greensboro Country Club, President 2017-2018

Greensboro Sports Council, President and Chairman, 2011-2013

Wheels4Hope, member of the Board of Directors

Awards and Publications

Distinguished Service Award, North Carolina Bar Association Business Law Section, 2024

The Best Lawyers in America, named 2023 Piedmont Triad "Lawyer of the Year" in Corporate Law

The Best Lawyers in America, named 2013 Greensboro "Lawyer of the Year" in Banking and Finance Law

The Best Lawyers in America, listed for banking, finance and corporate law, 2001-2023, 2025

Business North Carolina, Legal Elite, business law, multiple prior listings

North Carolina Super Lawyers, business/corporate law, multiple prior listings

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