



Benji Taylor Jones

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Professional Experience

Corporate attorney Benji Taylor Jones recently joined the Raleigh office of Ward and Smith. She has been a trusted counselor to numerous private and public companies in a variety of corporate and securities law matters for nearly two decades. Most recently, she's been focusing her practice on crowdfunding and fintech financings. Benji played a critical role in the passage of North Carolina's intrastate crowdfunding exemption (NC PACES). She represented the only platform offering peer2peer real estate loans under Regulation A and the first NC company to conduct a Regulation Crowdfunding campaign under Title III of the JOBS ACT. Benji is on the forefront of crowdfunding offerings in North Carolina.

Additionally, Benji advises public and private companies on a broad spectrum of legal issues affecting businesses. She regularly represents clients in public equity and debt offerings, traditional private placements and repurchase programs, public company securities compliance, corporate formation and governance, early stage financing for start-up and growth companies, mergers and acquisitions and strategic contracting.

Benji teaches as an adjunct professor and as a guest lecturer at local area universities and law schools. She regularly speaks and writes on crowdfunding, the JOBS Act, and related matters. While in law school, Benji was on the staff and editorial board of the Columbia Law Review, externed for the Honorable Shira Schiendlin of the Southern District of New York, worked at Cleary, Gottlieb, Steen and Hamilton in New York City, and clerked for the Italian law firm of Ughi e Nunziante in Rome.

Practice Concentrations

Mergers and Acquisitions

Private Equity

Securities

Start-Ups

Venture Capital

Education

Columbia University, J.D., Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar, 1998

New York University, M.A., 1996

Southern Methodist University,
B.F.A., 1991

Admitted to Practice

North Carolina

Honors and Distinctions

Recognized with the "Editor's Choice" Award, WRAL's TechWire Annual Awards, 2017

Representative Experience

Represented first North Carolina company to launch a Title III Regulation Crowdfunding offering

Advised a real estate micro-lending crowdfunding platform in qualification with the SEC and NASAA of Tier 1 Regulation A offering

Counseled a global provider of biopharmaceutical development services and commercial outsourcing services in its \$1.1 billion initial public offering and listing on the New York Stock Exchange

Advised a global CRO business in the staged acquisition of the leading interactive response technology provider for \$75 million in value

Counseled a leading international developer of video games and game engine software in significant minority investment by a Chinese internet company

Represented a global biopharmaceutical services company with its \$525 million offering of senior notes and a related holding company reorganization and spinoff of a subsidiary to its shareholders

Represented a global solid state LED lighting and semiconductor manufacturing company with the acquisition of a privately held company (valued at approximately US \$200 million) and related fairness hearing before the Securities Division of the North Carolina Secretary of State

Counseled a global biopharmaceutical services company in connection with a private equity transaction that reconstituted the company's ownership and provided liquidity to its existing security holders

Advised a multinational manufacturer and supplier to the papermaking industry in connection with a private placement of \$240 million of senior notes and subsequent exchange offer for registered notes

Represented a major convenience store chain with a refinancing of senior credit facilities and tender offer and consent solicitation of outstanding senior secured notes

Advised a venture capital funded agricultural biotechnology company in a \$400 million sale to public company in a cash and milestone based transaction

Benji is also a regular speaker and author. Some recent articles and appearances include:

"North Carolina Forges Ahead With Intrastate Crowdfunding" (Locavesting, April 7, 2017)

"NC PACES UPDATE: Regulators Propose Groundbreaking Rules for Local Offerings by North Carolina Companies" (WRAL TechWire, March 10, 2017, Login Required)

Panelist, "Future of North Carolina Forum," NC Chamber of Commerce in Cary, December 2016

Panelist, "Learn How to Use Crowdfunding for Your Project," SEED@ECU Crowdfunding Seminar in Greenville, November

2016

Speaker, "Crowdfunding," 77th Annual NCACPA Symposium in Greensboro, November 2016

"Crowdfunding News: SEC fixes significant potholes for intrastate offerings " (WRAL TechWire, October 28, 2016, Login Required)

Speaker, "Changes in NC Crowdfunding Laws/PACES Act," Triangle Food Maker at American Underground in Durham, September 2016

Panelist, "Crowdfunding," The Muster RDU in Cary, September 2016

Speaker, "Understanding Crowdfunding - The New Option for Local Financing in N.C." HQ Charlotte, August 2016

"NC's crowdfunding law: What it means, an attorney's view" (WRAL TechWire, June 29, 2016, Login Required)

Professional and Community Affiliations

American Bar Association

North Carolina Bar Association

Wake County Bar Association

Member on the board of directors of several non-profit arts organizations