

What We Know

NEWS

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



[Thurston Debnam](#), who received his undergraduate and law degrees from Wake Forest University, is one of the founding partners of Smith Debnam and the Section Head of the Business Law practice group. He is certified as a civil Superior Court mediator. Thurston concentrates his practice in the areas of business and corporate planning and real estate law, including land use planning and zoning. For more than thirty years, Thurston has maintained a broad-based business practice, assisting clients with business and corporate planning and handling land development and real property issues and transactions.



[Frank Drake](#) has more than 30 years of legal experience, with a concentration in bankruptcy and commercial litigation. Frank represents credit unions, banking and financial institutions, consumer and commercial lenders, and student loan agencies. Frank has taught classes on bankruptcy and commercial law for

Seven Smith Debnam Lawyers Named to 2018 Best Lawyers® List

August 15, 2017 | by

Raleigh, N.C. (August 15, 2017) – Smith Debnam Narron Drake Saintsing & Myers, LLP is pleased to announce that seven lawyers have been named to the 2018 Edition of [The Best Lawyers in America](#), the oldest and one of the most respected peer-review publications in the legal profession.

[Best Lawyers](#) presents lawyers by geographic region and practice area and bases its findings on an exhaustive peer-review survey where, on average, over 50,000 leading attorneys cast more than 5.5 million votes on the legal and professional abilities of other lawyers. Lawyers are neither required nor allowed to pay a fee to be listed; therefore, inclusion in Best Lawyers is considered a singular honor.

Smith Debnam would like to congratulate the following attorneys named to the 2018 Edition of *The Best Lawyers in America*.

[Thurston Debnam, Jr.](#) – *Listed in Best Lawyers for Commercial Litigation / Corporate Law*

Debnam is one of the firm's founding partners and has more than 30 years of experience in commercial planning and business litigation.

[Franklin Drake](#) – *Listed in Best Lawyers for Bankruptcy and Creditor Debtor Rights / Insolvency and Reorganization Law*

Drake is a nationally recognized speaker on financial services regulation and compliance-related matters, with over 30 years of experience representing clients in the financial services industry.

[Alicia Journey](#) – *Listed in Best Lawyers for Family Law*

Journey is a Board-Certified Family Law Specialist by the North Carolina State Bar and serves as a collaborative attorney with the Integrated Accountability and Collaborative Transparency Program (IACT).

[John W. Narron](#) – *Listed in Best Lawyers for Family Law*

Narron is a Board-Certified Family Law Specialist by the North Carolina State Bar and

various Bankers Associations as well as the National Association of State-Chartered Credit Union Supervisors and various states' Credit Union Leagues.



[Alicia Jurney](#) is a North Carolina Board Certified Family Law Specialist in the firm's family law practice group. She represents clients in child custody, child support, domestic violence, equitable distribution, and alimony matters. Her experience with domestic actions includes handling related complex civil litigation matters, such as tortious interference with child custody, alienation of affections, criminal conversation, and interstate child abduction. Her practice encompasses all levels of jurisdiction within North Carolina, including jury trial experience and appeals to both the North Carolina Court of Appeals and Supreme Court.



[Jeff Rogers](#) is a partner in the firm and heads the firm's creditors' rights practice group. He concentrates his practice in the area of creditor representation, including collections, commercial litigation, real property litigation, foreclosure, collateral recovery, bankruptcy, and creditor defense. His clients include banks, credit unions, commercial lenders, finance companies, and businesses of all sizes.

leads the firm's Family Law section.

[Jeff D. Rogers](#) - *Listed in Best Lawyers for Real Estate Law*

Rogers has 30 years of experience representing creditors, lenders, and businesses of all sizes on matters of foreclosure, bankruptcy, and collections.

[Byron L. Saintsing](#) - *Listed in Best Lawyers for Banking and Finance Law*

Saintsing leads the firm's construction law practice group and has written and lectured on many topics about construction and equipment leasing.

[Bettie Kelley Sousa](#) - *Listed in Best Lawyers for Corporate Law*

Sousa is a Board Certified Specialist in Creditors' Rights and has over 35 years of experience representing companies and their owners in business litigation and employment law.

ABOUT SMITH DEBNAM

Founded in 1972, Smith Debnam is a leading, multi-practice law firm for institutions and private individuals who value a responsible and caring approach from an accomplished team of experienced legal professionals. Representing clients in Banking, Financial Services, Equipment Leasing, Construction, Mortgage Servicing, Manufacturing, and Professional Services industries, the firm has extensive experience in state and federal courts across a diverse list of practice areas, including Corporate and Business Law, Business Litigation, Commercial Bankruptcy and Reorganization, Foreclosures, Creditor Representation, Collections, Commercial & Residential Real Estate, Construction Law, Employment Law, Equipment Leasing & Finance, Family Law, Elder Law & Advocacy Services, Estate Planning & Administration, and Probate Litigation.

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[John Narron](#) is a Board Certified Family Law Specialist and has been practicing law in North Carolina since 1977, with a practice concentration in all manner of civil disputes that frequently involve complex equitable distribution proceedings, alimony trials, will caveats, employment disputes, personal injury trials and negotiations, and a wide variety of commercial business disputes. John has served as a mediator in more than 200 family law disputes in Wake County, Franklin County, Johnston County, Wayne County, Guilford County, Forsyth County, and Pender County.



[Byron Saintsing](#) leads a practice group focused on matters involving [construction law](#), commercial and business litigation, representation of [equipment lessors](#), charter schools, and education law, and commercial creditor bankruptcy. Byron has written and lectured on many topics pertaining to construction and equipment leasing, including editing materials on North Carolina's adoption of Article 2A of the Uniform Commercial Code.



[Bettie Kelley Sousa](#) has been practicing

law with Smith Debnam since becoming licensed in 1981. She is a Board Certified Creditors' Rights Specialist. She has a wealth of experience in state and federal courts, including bankruptcy courts, at both trial and appellate levels. She represents mostly business owners and businesses --- large and small --- in a variety of matters, including contract review, drafting and disputes.

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