

Media Mention: Highlights from Triangle Business Journal's 40 Under 40 Awards

Written By **Whitney Campbell Christensen** (wcchristensen@wardandsmith.com)

June 16, 2017



Raleigh government relations attorney Whitney Christensen received Triangle Business Journal's 40 Under 40 Leadership award during a luncheon held today at Raleigh Marriott City Center. Christensen was honored, along with 39 other recipients, for her professional achievements and community contributions. In a special print publication highlighting the honorees, each one provided a hashtag to describe themselves, and Christensen's was #findyourpassion. She also described her proudest accomplishment as being her son, Walker,

and her secret talent is to surround herself with people who are smarter and way more capable than she, and making desserts disappear. Read Triangle Business Journal's recap of the luncheon [here](#).

Christensen represents clients before the North Carolina General Assembly. She has experience advocating on behalf of large technology companies, professional associations, manufacturers, restaurants and lodging properties, environmental mitigation providers, military and education nonprofits, and local governments. She has successfully secured state budget provisions and has had legislation introduced and enacted pertaining to business liability, internet privacy and security laws, state and local pension system reforms, vehicle registration, special elections, alcoholic beverage laws, state procurement of information technology, local government purchasing requirements, and 911 dispatch center redundancy. Christensen counsels and represents clients before government bodies in economic development matters.

Christensen also is licensed to practice patent law before the United States Patent and Trademark Office and regularly assists clients with trademark searches and trademark application preparation. She has significant experience reviewing and drafting intellectual property agreements and privacy policies.

WHITNEY CAMPBELL CHRISTENSEN

Ward and Smith, P.A.

Title: Attorney

Age: 30

Company description: Law firm

Birthplace: Durham

Family members: Husband, Ross; son, Walker; mother, Terri; father, Robert; grandmother, Peggy

Education: B.A., biology, UNC-Chapel Hill; J.D., South Texas College of Law

What accomplishments are you most proud of? My son is by far my proudest accomplishment and biggest blessing. Parenthood is simultaneously the most exhausting and rewarding job I've ever had - I feel so fortunate that I get to be a parent. I am incredibly proud to be part of the Ward and Smith family - my colleagues are some of the sharpest legal minds in the state and are wonderful people. I'm also proud of the legislation I have been able to help enact on behalf of clients during my career. Favorites include: the law governing access to an individual's digital assets upon their death (with the law also applying to those with diminished capacity or who become prisoners of war or missing in action); the 2014 pension spiking legislation that now prevents abuse of North Carolina's state and local government pension systems, protecting the

IF THERE WAS A HASHTAG to describe you, what would it be?

#findyourpassion

FAVORITE SONG

Mariah Carey,
Always Be My Baby

funds' longterm viability for the government retirees that depend on them; legislation that improves access to state IT contracts for corporate vendors; legislation to prevent obesity tort claims against restaurants; removal of redundant e-verify requirements on local governments; and the law that requires all mopeds to now register with the state.

What community causes or charities have you been involved in during the past year? Habitat for Humanity of Wake County; the North Carolina General Statutes Commission's Committee on Publication of the General Statutes (member); the National Infertility Association.

What is the greatest obstacle you have overcome in your career? Every piece of legislation will encounter several obstacles on the road to enactment. For example, one year during the recession a client needed a new appropriation and corresponding state employee increase in the state budget. Budget leaders were making cuts wherever they could and there were certainly no spare funds, which made asking for a new appropriation tough. However, it was an important item for the client and the public and we had come up with a creative way to raise fee revenue to cover the cost. Lobbying for state appropriations is always difficult, but this one was especially challenging due to the economic climate and complexity of



the new fee arrangement.

Nothing makes me madder than ... unexpected traffic or sweeping generalizations about millennials.

What is your favorite Triangle restaurant? BurgerFi or Sushi Blues.

Who would make the guest list for your dream business lunch? Sheryl Sandberg, Mark Zuckerberg and Meg

Whitman. I would also invite my first professional mentor, Frank Gray, who is always too busy for lunch these days. The star power may be enough to get him there.

What is your secret talent? Surrounding myself with people who are smarter and more capable than I am. I'm also really good at making desserts disappear.