

John R. Cella, Jr. Joins Ward and Smith, P.A.

May 2, 2016

Ward and Smith, P.A. is pleased to welcome trusts and estates and employee benefits attorney John R. Cella, Jr. to the Raleigh office. His depth in ERISA, compensation, and tax increases the bench strength of the firm's growing Raleigh office. John joins Ward and Smith from Manning Fulton, and has practiced in North Carolina since 2001.

His experience is extensive. He provides clients with estate planning solutions, including wills, revocable trusts, minors trusts, irrevocable life insurance trusts, and charitable trusts. He also advises clients on various tax consequences of wealth transfers to individuals, trusts, and charitable organizations. In his business practice, John provides guidance regarding entity selection, limited liability company formation and maintenance, business succession planning, and deferred compensation compliance for employers, owners, and key employees in employment and severance agreements.

"John's understanding and judgment will be an asset to our clients," said Ken Wooten, the firm's Co-Managing Director. "His wealth of experience with tax, estate and trust administration, executive compensation, and business succession planning allows him to be in lockstep with clients facing the prospect of making complex decisions that affect the future of their company. Our firm works with many closely-held companies, and they treasure advice that protects that family as well as their business interests."

Cella's practice includes counseling employers on their tax-qualified retirement plans, health and welfare benefit plans, nonqualified deferred compensation plans, and equity compensation arrangements. His background in employee benefits and compensation is beneficial to clients considering income and estate tax aspects of distributions, rollovers, and trustee-to-trustee transfers from qualified retirement plans and/or IRAs.

Cella received his law degree from the University of South Carolina School of Law, and earned an LL.M., with honors, in Employee Benefits from the John Marshall School of Law. He is licensed to practice in North Carolina and South Carolina.

He can be reached at 919.277.9125 and jrcella@wardandsmith.com.