



THOMAS D. BLUE, JR.

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OVERVIEW

Tom Blue focuses his practice primarily in the area of commercial real estate. He also serves as the firm's chief financial officer, and partner in charge of security and technology. He was recently selected as the Raleigh "Lawyer of the Year" for Real Estate Litigation by *The Best Lawyers in America*®.

Tom is a highly-active outdoorsman who prides himself on his commitment to engaging with clients at every stage of representation. He has extensive experience handling commercial real estate transactions, including the negotiation of purchase and sale contracts, complex leases, and related agreements. He has represented a wide range of clients, including landowners, investors, brokerages, title insurance companies, and a variety of for-profit and non-profit enterprises.

Tom believes that truly successful attorneys aim to help the client achieve their goals first and foremost and must invest the time and resources necessary to fully understand those goals. He is a self-proclaimed "numbers geek" and understands the difference that can be made by paying attention to the little details. He will often drive by a location to see the property in person to get a sense of the challenges that exist in terms of government permitting, environmental assessment, surveying requirements, and other potential issues.

Tom worked as a litigator for nearly a decade before he switched the focus of his practice to transactional matters. He still routinely handles various litigation-related issues for his clients, from title and lien priority claims to commercial landlord/tenant disputes, condemnation proceedings, boundary disputes, and premises liability claims.

Tom's background as a litigator has helped to inform his work on the transactional side. As a lawyer, Tom understands that his role is to help clients identify and minimize risk. He is often able to identify those risks more easily than lawyers who have an exclusively transactional background.

Canoeing and kayaking have been a major part of Tom's life for decades. Tom runs a non-profit organization that organizes and sponsors canoeing and kayaking races. He served as the race chair for the American Canoe Association's National Championships in 2008 and 2012 and the United States Team Trials for a marathon, canoe and kayak in 2011 held in the Triangle. He was also the race chair for the United States Canoe Association's Stock Aluminum Canoe Marathon Championships in 2014.

Tom's lifelong interest in kayaking, rafting, and canoeing is complementary to his work in the legal field. He has been assessing risk and choosing appropriate outcomes at the highest level for his entire life, as a whitewater rafting guide and as a real estate lawyer.

Tom obtained his B.A. from the University of North Carolina at Asheville (*summa cum laude*, 1989) and his J.D. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (*with Honors*, 1997) where he served on the *North Carolina Law Review* staff for two years. Prior to attending law school, he was employed by the Nantahala Outdoor Center in North Carolina, first as a whitewater rafting guide and canoeing instructor and later as a Vice President and then its Chief Financial Officer. He also served on NOC's Board of Directors.

Tom first became interested in real estate practice as a child. His father was a land surveyor, and Tom's experiences traveling around North Carolina with his father instilled in him a deep love of the outdoors and a career interest in land and the unique issues surrounding property.

CREDENTIALS

EDUCATION

- ▶ J.D., University of North Carolina School of Law, 1997
 - ▶ With Honors
 - ▶ Law Review: *North Carolina Law Review*, Staff Member, 1995-1997
- ▶ B.A., University of North Carolina Asheville, 1989
 - ▶ Honors: *summa cum laude*

COURT ADMISSIONS

- ▶ North Carolina

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND MEMBERSHIPS

- ▶ Susan G. Komen North Carolina Triangle to Coast, Board Member, 2019-2020

AWARDS/RECOGNITION

- ▶ *"Lawyer of the Year," The Best Lawyers in America®*, Real Estate Litigation, Raleigh (2021)
- ▶ *The Best Lawyers in America®*, Real Estate Litigation (2018-2022)

UPDATES

NEWS POSTS

- ▶ [Ellis & Winters Named to 2022 "Best Lawyers in America" List](#)
- ▶ [Ellis & Winters Named to 2021 "Best Lawyers in America" List](#)
- ▶ [Three "Lawyer of the Year" Recipients and 17 Partners Recognized in The Best Lawyers in America for 2020](#)
- ▶ [Ellis & Winters Participates in "Walk MS: Asheboro 2019"](#)
- ▶ [Eighteen Ellis & Winters Attorneys Named to 2019 Best Lawyers® in America List](#)