

**THE 22nd ANNUAL
JUSTICE ROBERT BENHAM AWARDS FOR
COMMUNITY SERVICE**

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

S. WADE MALONE

PARTNER

NELSON MULLINS

ATLANTA, GEORGIA



S. Wade Malone is a partner in commercial litigation at Nelson Mullins and leads the Atlanta office business litigation team. Malone's litigation practice includes representation of both plaintiffs and defendants in litigation in both state and federal courts throughout the United States, including business, healthcare, intellectual property, antitrust, restrictive covenant, cybersecurity, and construction litigation. In addition to his litigation practice, Malone is also a certified mediator.

Throughout his career, Malone has selflessly devoted countless volunteer hours, boundless energy, and extraordinary passion to the Atlanta legal community and community at large. "In both words and deeds, Malone represents the very best the legal profession has to offer[.]" said one of Malone's endorsers. For example, in 1993, Malone and others partnered with the Atlanta Bar Association to create the Summer Law Internship Program (SLIP). Now 30 years later, this innovative program has provided over 850 paid

internships to Atlanta area high school students, provided rigorous legal education, and connected interns with lifelong mentors. During the internship, the students receive training not just about the law but about life skills - public speaking, finances, writing a thank you note, being on time. Forty-five former Atlanta Bar Association Summer Law Interns have gone to law school. Seventeen former Interns are presently in law school.

Over the first twenty-nine years that the Internship Program has been in existence, Malone has served as a co-chair of the program - even in 2003 through 2004, when he also served as President of the Atlanta Bar Association. In 2016, Malone also helped launch the Highest Heights Forever Initiative to provide former Atlanta Bar Association Summer Law Interns with funds for LSAT and bar exam prep courses to support their pursuit of becoming attorneys.

Malone's nominator, Judge Susan Edlein, State Court of Fulton County, wrote: "Wade's dedication to our community is exemplified in his volunteer work for almost thirty years leading the Atlanta Bar Association's Summer Law Internship Program (SLIP). SLIP was founded in 1993 and offers paid summer internships to Atlanta area high school students who are interested in learning more about the legal profession. SLIP was designed to achieve three goals: (1) to provide valuable work experience; (2) to further students' understanding of the law; and (3) to promote mentor relationships with the Atlanta legal community. . . . After hosting interns for several years, I thought I understood the program, but it wasn't until my oldest child interned that I got a true idea about the work that Wade and others put into SLIP. SLIP is not just an internship program. It is a crash-course into adulthood Wade is involved with every aspect of the program."

Another of Malone's endorsers, Judge Cynthia Adams, Superior Court of Douglas County said: "I first met Wade in the summer of 1993. I was just a high school student being interviewed for the Atlanta Bar Association's inaugural Summer Law Internship Program (SLIP). I have to admit that I thought Wade was just another person fulfilling some legal obligation that summer.

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I never would have or could have imagined that close to thirty years later, Wade would still be very present and active in my life. . . . Wade has never wavered in his support for me, and the *hundreds* of students that he has met through the Summer Law Internship Program. . . . Wade can number among his former intern's countless lawyers, a District Attorney, and this Judge. Somehow, he has done all this while remaining a doting husband and father, and a distinguished attorney at his firm."

Nekia Hackworth Jones, a second endorser and now one of the co-chairs of SLIP, also shared Malone's impact on her life. She wrote: "I was fortunate to have met Wade in the fall of 1991, when I was a 14-year-old freshman and he was a mock trial coach at D.M. Therrell High School located in southwest Atlanta. At that time, I was consumed by my dream of becoming a lawyer, but I did not completely understand what it would take to realize that dream. And, my aspirations were always tempered by the realities of my beloved community, filled with hard-working people fighting to rise above the ever-growing scourges of crime and poverty. I remember vividly how Wade would spend days, nights, and weekends with me and my teammates to help us painstakingly dissect the law and facts of each mock trial case. I still marvel at how he would masterfully transform our lively teenage debates about high school current events into opening statements, direct examinations, and closing arguments. He harnessed our energy and pushed us outside of our comfort zones, showing care and instilling confidence every step of the way." Hackworth continued, "I can truly say that every major professional milestone in my life has been the direct result of Wade's encouragement and guidance, even when I did not think it was possible for someone like me: attending Harvard Law School; becoming a federal prosecutor; working as a partner in a major law firm; and now serving as the Atlanta Regional Director for the U.S. Securities & Exchange Commission. Wade sees young people not just for who they are, but who they can become. . . . I am a better attorney, public servant, and citizen because of him."

In 2017, Malone himself wrote remarks about another of his former 1993 SLIP interns, Darius Pattillo, when Pattillo was sworn in as the Henry County District Attorney. Malone recalled staying in touch with Pattillo throughout Pattillo's college and law school days. Malone also said that he and Pattillo practiced law together for the first six months of Pattillo's career before Pattillo became a prosecutor in the Dekalb County DA's office. Finally, Malone shared that in the summer of 2015, Malone's oldest daughter Maryellen interned with Pattillo as part of SLIP. Malone continued, "I mentored Darius when he was in high school and Darius is now a mentor to my daughter as well as all of my children. [My wife] Kelly and I are so very grateful for that."

Hackworth Jones summarized Malone's community service impact as follows: "Wade is a giant among giants in Atlanta and his imprint on this community - especially on the city's young people - will be felt for generations to come."

Malone grew up in Birmingham Alabama. He received his B.A. in Government from Georgetown University, *cum laude* in 1983 where he also played baseball. He was graduated from the George Washington University Law School, JD, with honors in 1986, where he was a member and an editor of the George Washington Journal of International Law and Economics. Malone served as a Law Clerk for Judge John L. Coffey of the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, Milwaukee, Wisconsin (1986-1987). Malone and his wife Kelly, a lawyer, are the proud parents of three grown children Maryellen, Kellyann, and Sam. The Malones are long-time active members of Northside United Methodist Church.