

Firm News | September 8, 2021

Troutman Pepper Joins ‘Carolinas Social Impact Initiative’ to Support Inclusivity and Economic Mobility

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CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Troutman Pepper has joined forces with 23 fellow leading law firms to create the Carolinas Social Impact Initiative (CSII). The purpose of the initiative is to foster a more inclusive community and reduce systemic barriers to social and economic mobility in the Carolinas. Its first program, the [Charlotte Legal Initiative to Mobilize Businesses \(CLIMB\)](#), launched this summer to provide volunteer legal services to low-income entrepreneurs and small businesses in the Charlotte area.

CSII is focused on four areas: supporting minority-owned businesses and entrepreneurs; advancing educational opportunities; supporting family stability and social justice; and improving access to social capital and career opportunities.

“The events of last year put into perspective how much work needs to be done to support minority-owned small businesses,” said Walter Fisher, managing partner of the firm’s Charlotte office. “Our neighbors in the Carolinas deserve access to resources that allow them to thrive. The Troutman Pepper team is proud to help them succeed, and we’re thrilled to offer our services and time to take local businesses to new heights for a better tomorrow.”

CLIMB and Troutman Pepper’s programming will include volunteer and pro bono business law services to low-income entrepreneurs and small businesses in the Charlotte area, with a focus on small businesses whose ownership consists primarily of people of color, women, members of the LGBTQ+ community, veterans, or people with disabilities.

During CLIMB’s pilot phase, CSII’s volunteer lawyers will coordinate the program’s launch with its coalition of lawyers. In the coming months, a broad range of coalition lawyers – as well as lawyers from other firms and legal employers – are expected to join, motivated to serve those in the community who cannot afford access to the legal system. In the future, CSII will also work to expand its efforts beyond Charlotte to provide aid to the entire Carolinas region.

CSII member firms include Alexander Ricks; Alston & Bird; Bradley; Cadwalader, Wickersham and Taft; Hamilton Stephens Steel + Martin; Hedrick Gardner; Holland & Knight; Hunton Andrews Kurth; James McElroy & Diehl; Johnston, Allison & Hord; Katten Muchin Rosenman; King & Spalding; K&L Gates; Mayer Brown; McGuireWoods; Moore & Van Allen; Nelson Mullins; Offit Kurman; Parker Poe; Robinson Bradshaw; Shumaker; Troutman Pepper; Winston & Strawn; and Womble Bond Dickinson.

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