

# 2023 Appellate Training: New and Emerging Legal Issues

## About the Speakers

**Ryan Boyce** is the Director of the AOC and has been since February 2023. He has previously served as NCAOC Deputy Director since January 2021. He previously led NCAOC's governmental affairs under two former NCAOC directors. Deputy Director Boyce has held several other leadership roles in state government including general counsel at the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and deputy general counsel at the North Carolina Department of Transportation. Prior to attending law school, he spent three years as a staffer in the United States House of Representatives. He earned a Bachelor of Arts from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, a Juris Doctor from the Charleston School of Law, and is currently pursuing an LLM in international legal practice.

**Sara DePasquale** is the Albert and Gladys Hall Coates Term Professor for Teaching Excellence (2023-2025) at the UNC School of Government. She is a NC Board Certified Child Welfare Law Specialist who teaches, advises, and writes for judicial officials, social services and parent attorneys, and other professionals. Her publication, *Abuse, Neglect, Dependency, and Termination of Parental Rights Proceedings in North Carolina* is an extensive practice manual relied upon by professionals in the court system who are involved in these proceedings. Prior to joining the School of Government, Sara practiced law at Pine Tree Legal Assistance in Maine, specializing in issues related to children, housing, and public benefits. She earned her J.D., magna cum laude, from the University at Buffalo School of Law with a dual degree of a Master of Social Work from the University at Buffalo School of Social Work. She graduated with outstanding academic performance from Binghamton University.

**Joseph L. Hyde** is an expert in the areas of criminal law and procedure. His teaching and research support North Carolina's prosecutors. He also advises on issues related to evidence and appellate procedure. He is the lead contact for *NC PRO*, the School's online resource for prosecutors, and contributes to the North Carolina Criminal Law Blog. Hyde joined the School of Government in 2022. He completed state and federal clerkships for the Hon. James A. Wynn, Jr., on the North Carolina Court of Appeals and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. He then worked for more than a decade at the North Carolina Department of Justice, Criminal Division, Appellate and Postconviction Section. Most recently, Hyde served as special deputy attorney general, representing the state in criminal appeals and post-conviction litigation. Hyde earned a bachelor's degree from Saint John's College and a J.D. with honors from the UNC School of Law.

**Leslie Packer** is a founding partner of Ellis & Winters. She focuses her practice on civil litigation with an emphasis on products liability, including drugs and medical devices, medical malpractice, and high-end commercial litigation. For over three decades, Leslie has helped clients navigate disputes including as part of national trial teams in various high-profile and high-stakes healthcare litigation matters. She is a fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers and the International Academy of Trial Lawyers.

**Dr. Nancy Tuten** founded Get It Write in 1991. Since then, she has taught hundreds of seminars on writing-related issues to professionals in the workforce, including employees of state and local governments, judges and staff members of state and federal court systems, bankers, and attorneys. She served as a tenured professor of English at Columbia College, where she was dean of the Division of Communication, Languages, and Literature for eight years and director of the writing-across-the-curriculum program for fifteen years. She has published two scholarly books: *Critical Essays on Galway Kinnell* (G. K. Hall) and

*The Robert Frost Encyclopedia* (Greenwood 2001). Other published works include articles in peer-reviewed journals on such writers as Alice Walker, Theodore Roethke, Walt Whitman, and Robert Frost, and Galway Kinnell. Her undergraduate degree is from Newberry College (1982, *magna cum laude*), and she earned both the MA (1985) and PhD (1988) from the University of South Carolina, where she served as associate director for the freshman composition program.

**Dixie Wells** is a senior partner and member of the Management Committee at Ellis & Winters. She earned both bachelor's and master's degrees in engineering and worked as an engineer before beginning her legal practice. She represents clients in lawsuits that involve engineering issues and also represents higher education clients. She regularly handles cases throughout the country in both state and federal courts. She is a former President of the Chief Justice Joseph Branch Inn of Court.

**Fred Wood** is the Director of IT for the North Carolina Appellate Courts. He received his BS in Computer Science from North Carolina State University. Prior to working for the Appellate Courts, he was the Director of Software Maintenance for an international software company. Fred served as an Officer in the United States Marine Corps.