



## NEWS RELEASES

### Barnes & Thornburg Racial And Social Justice Foundation Awards \$50,000 Grant To North Carolina Center On Actual Innocence

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**RALEIGH** – The Barnes & Thornburg Racial and Social Justice Foundation, which was founded last year, has awarded a \$50,000 grant to the North Carolina Center on Actual Innocence (NCCAI), whose mission is to identify, investigate and advance credible claims of innocence, as well as to obtain justice for people imprisoned for crimes they did not commit, for the victims of those crimes, and for the actual perpetrators.

The grant is one of six being awarded this year by the foundation, which is funded by Barnes & Thornburg’s lawyers and staff, who together raised \$300,000 this year.

“We are grateful for the opportunity to support an organization like the NCCAI, whose work has such a direct and measurable impact on peoples’ lives and the social justice movement in North Carolina and beyond,” said Allen Baum, managing partner of Barnes & Thornburg’s Raleigh office. “NCCAI has helped exonerate innocent people from underprivileged backgrounds, who are often incarcerated due to systemic issues within the criminal justice system. With their history of leading successful criminal justice reform, we are proud and honored to support their ongoing efforts.”

The NCCAI aims also to educate policymakers, the public, and legal and law enforcement communities about the factors that contribute to wrongful conviction, as well as emerging solutions which can increase the reliability of convictions. Promoting such systematic changes to our criminal justice system helps prevent the true perpetrators from evading capture and

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victimizing others, saves people from years of suffering due to wrongful imprisonment, increases public confidence in the system, and decreases cost to taxpayers.

“Over 600 inmates submit innocence claims to the Center each year,” said Christine Mumma, executive director of the NCCAI. “Racial and ethnic minorities make up over two-thirds of applicants, and all applicants are indigent and unrepresented. With this generous grant from Barnes & Thornburg, we can make strides toward establishing a racially just legal process.”

## **Barnes & Thornburg’s Racial and Social Justice Foundation**

The Racial and Social Justice Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization, was established in 2020 and provided \$200,000 to nonprofits in four of the firm’s local communities across the country. The foundation’s mission is to promote, advocate, and effect racial and social justice in our local communities and nationally.

“We are pleased to continue our efforts with the Racial and Social Justice Foundation to support the North Carolina Center on Actual Innocence and five additional community organizations,” said Robert T. Grand, managing partner of Barnes & Thornburg and foundation board member. “We remain steadfast in our dedication to advocate for organizations support and promote equality, advancement, and justice.”

To choose grantees, the foundation employed a rigorous scoring system to vet charitable organizations against specific criteria that align with its mission and goals.

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