

Corporate, Banking & Securities Law Seminar

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

by order of presentation

Benjamin Barnhill

Nelson Mullins

Columbia, SC

(Course Planner)

Ben Barnhill's practice focuses on corporate, securities, mergers and acquisitions, bank regulatory, and executive compensation matters, with an emphasis on community banks. He represents bank and nonbank financial institutions and their affiliated companies during the organizational, capital raising, and business combination processes. Ben advises these entities on SEC registration, deregistration, and public reporting obligations. He also has significant experience advising financial institutions as well as other companies on matters involving the interlocking spheres of executive compensation and corporate governance. Ben serves as primary outside counsel for many of his financial institution clients.

Gary Brown

Nelson Mullins

Nashville, TN

Gary M. Brown is a partner with Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough LLP, where he concentrates his practice in securities, representation of public companies and corporate governance. Prior to joining Nelson Mullins in 2018, he had served for seven years as the Chief Executive Officer of a financial services firm that specialized in the life settlement market and which, during his tenure, acquired and managed life settlement portfolios with over \$4 billion (USD) in face amount.

In his forty plus years of private law practice, Gary has been recognized in both *Best Lawyers in America* and *Chambers – America's Leading Business Lawyers*. In addition, he is an adjunct professor at the Vanderbilt University Law School where he teaches courses in corporate and securities law. He also served as general counsel to the Ethics and Compliance Officer Association (now known as the Ethics and Compliance Initiative), then the world's largest group of ethics and compliance professionals.

Gary is a frequent instructor at securities programs for the Practising Law Institute and for PLI's related organization, the SEC Institute ("SECI"), co-chairing one of PLI's national securities programs, *Understanding the Securities Laws* and instructing at the SECI's *SEC Reporting and Practice Skills Workshop for Lawyers*, *Form 20-F In-Depth Workshop* and numerous additional SECI briefings and workshops.

During 2002, Gary served as Special Counsel (Minority) to the United States Senate's Governmental Affairs Committee (and also worked with the Committee's Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations ("PSI")) in its investigation into the causes of the collapse of Enron Corp. During 2010, he was retained by PSI to assist in its investigation, "*Wall Street and the Financial Crisis*," and related televised hearings. While on those assignments, he provided advice on aspects of both the Sarbanes Oxley Act of 2002 and the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010 as those pieces of legislation were being debated in the Senate.

Gary has authored numerous publications on securities and compliance issues, including PLI's *Securities Law and Practice Deskbook*, which is updated semi-annually, and PLI's *Master the 8-K*, *Master the 10-K and 10-Q*, and *Master the Proxy Statement*. His other publications include: *PLI's Guide to the SEC's New Executive Compensation Disclosure Rules* (Practising Law Institute 2007); *The Implications of the U.S. Sarbanes-Oxley Act*, (Japanese-German Center-Berlin/ Max Planck Institute For Foreign Private and Private International Law – September 2004, The Oxford Press).

Jeffrey Kelly

Nelson Mullins

Raleigh, NC

Jeff is a technology attorney who guides companies and its executives through complex, high-stakes challenges at the intersection of litigation, regulation, and innovation. With a practice concentrated on artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, FinTech, and digital assets, Jeff combines deep technical fluency with extensive experience in government investigations, complex corporate and securities challenges, and proactive regulatory strategy. He regularly works with interdisciplinary teams to defend and advance business objectives when innovation and emerging technology outpace legal clarity.

Jeff's approach is informed by his ongoing work with leading academic and research institutions, including his role as a Fellow at Duke University School of Law's Center on Law and Technology, and his contributions to AI governance and risk management frameworks through the Responsible AI in Legal Services (RAILS) Initiative. This allows him to provide clients with not only pragmatic legal counsel but also sophisticated insights into the core technologies shaping their industries.

In addition to his client work, Jeff is an active proponent of using technology to improve access to legal services and pro bono, serving as the Chair of Legal Aid of North Carolina's Board of Directors. Jeff helped launch Legal Aid of North Carolina's Innovation Lab, the first of its kind in the nation, and also Chairs the Innovation Lab's Advisory Board. He works closely with non-profits on AI implementation, governance, and ethics issues.

Ginny Waller
Waller Consulting, LLC
Springfield, VA

Ginny Waller is a licensed South Carolina attorney and the Founder & Principal Advisor of Waller Consulting, LLC, a boutique firm based in northern Virginia specializing in **leadership transitions, strategic planning, and governance for nonprofit organizations**. Drawing on more than twenty years of experience as both a lawyer and executive leader, she helps boards and executive teams navigate moments of change with clarity, confidence, and ethical integrity.

In addition to her advisory work, Ginny **regularly serves as an interim CEO** for organizations across the Southeast, helping stabilize leadership, strengthen operations, and position nonprofits for long-term success. Through her firm's signature frameworks—**UpShift™ for leadership transitions** and **PivotPoint Strategy™ for strategic planning**—she equips boards and executives to act decisively, align ethically, and deliver results that last.

After earning her Juris Doctor from the University of South Carolina School of Law, Ginny served as a law clerk for the Honorable Steven H. John in the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit and the South Carolina Court of Appeals, and later practiced construction litigation with Ellis, Lawhorne & Sims, P.A. Her legal training and public-interest focus led her to nonprofit leadership, where she served nine years as Executive Director of Sexual Trauma Services of the Midlands, guiding the organization through transformative growth and statewide advocacy efforts.

Ginny has been an active member of the South Carolina Bar since 2003 and has served in numerous leadership capacities within the Bar's Young Lawyers Division, earning the **Young Lawyer of the Year Award**, the **President's Award**, and multiple **ABA Star of the Quarter** recognitions. Her contributions to the legal and nonprofit sectors have been recognized with the **SC Association of Nonprofit Organizations' Award for Leadership** and the **Association of Fundraising Professionals – Midlands Chapter's Fundraising Professional of the Year**.

Ginny is an active member of the **South Carolina Women Lawyers Association, Together SC**, the **Center for Nonprofit Advancement (DC)**, the **North Carolina Center for Nonprofits**, and the **Interim Executive Network (DC)**. Ginny also brings extensive **board governance experience**, having served as **Chair of the South Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault**, **Chair of the University of South Carolina Women's and Gender Studies Partnership Council**, and **Associate Member of the Board of Directors for End Violence Against Women International**.