

Best Lawyers® Names Bailey, Stakely, Wells, and Wilson Lawyers of the Year

Rushton Stakely is pleased to announce that shareholders, **Dennis R. Bailey**, **Frank J. Stakely**, **Helen Crump Wells**, and **Benjamin C. Wilson** have been selected as “Lawyers of the Year” in the 2024 Edition of *The Best Lawyers in America®*, a guide that is highly respected in the legal community. Lawyers are selected based on extensive reviews by their peers, and only one lawyer in a specific practice field and location is selected annually for this publication.

Mr. Bailey is being recognized as a Lawyer of the Year for the sixth time, with this year’s recognition honoring him for his work in Product Liability Litigation in Montgomery, Alabama. Mr. Bailey began practicing law with the firm in 1980 and has been a shareholder since 1983. Building upon a strong background of product liability and insurance defense, Mr. Bailey’s practice has evolved into handling a variety of complex litigation. He has managed and argued complex litigation for corporate manufacturing, insurance, and financial services clients as pro hac vice counsel in federal or state cases in Arizona, Arkansas, Tennessee, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, and California. He has also represented clients in construction arbitration proceedings and has served as an arbitrator. Additionally, Mr. Bailey has extensive experience in media law, particularly in matters involving First Amendment rights and open government.

Mr. Stakely has been recognized repeatedly, with this year’s recognition marking his fifth year as a Lawyer of the Year. He is currently being honored for his work in Personal Injury Litigation— Defendants in Montgomery, Alabama. Mr. Stakely

joined the firm in 1987 and attained shareholder status in 1991. He is a member of the litigation practice department, and he has over twenty years' experience defending a broad range of civil cases, with emphasis on professional liability, healthcare, products liability, and insurance defense. He has extensive experience defending physicians, hospitals, nurses, and other healthcare professionals in medical malpractice cases throughout the state. He also handles other complex litigation involving personal injury and first-party bad faith claims.

Mrs. Wells is being recognized as a Lawyer of the Year for the fourth time, with this year's recognition honoring her for her work in Trusts and Estates. Ms. Wells began practicing law with the firm in 1988 and has been a shareholder since 1992.

Mrs. Wells has a wide range of experience in corporate mergers and other transactions, securities issuance and disclosure, bank regulatory matters, corporate governance, and estate planning and trust and estate administration. Mrs. Wells' practice includes corporate, partnership, and personal financing and real estate transactions, taxation, entity formations, corporate transactions including purchases, mergers and reorganizations, and corporate buy-sell agreements, and other business succession planning. Her probate and estate planning practice has included innovative tax and personal planning for complex estates involving closely held businesses, generation-skipping tax problems, minimization of estate and gift taxes by various techniques, securing IRS private letter rulings, and numerous other issues.

Mr. Wilson is being recognized as a Lawyer of the Year in Litigation and Health Care. Mr. Wilson has been a shareholder since 2004. He focuses his practice on civil litigation and trial work, with an emphasis on health care and professional liability defense, drug and medical device litigation, product liability, and employment law. Mr. Wilson has significant

trial and appellate experience, having defended a variety of individuals and entities including hospitals, physicians, and dentists in jury trials throughout the state. Mr. Wilson has also been actively involved in the defense of medical devices and pharmaceutical products, both in local and nationwide (multi-district or consolidated) litigation. In addition, he regularly represents a variety of clients in various types of employment litigation including claims of discrimination based on race, gender, or age, retaliatory discharge, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Family & Medical Leave Act, and wage and hour matters.

For over 130 years, Rushton Stakely has provided the highest levels of legal service throughout the United States. Founded in 1890, the firm is now composed of over thirty experienced lawyers practicing in a broad spectrum of legal fields. From the courtroom to the boardroom, our lawyers will advocate for you.