

SMITH ANDERSON

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Smith Anderson Lobbyist Tops State Rankings

RALEIGH – The Smith Anderson law firm has North Carolina’s top lobbyist and one of its highest-rated Government Affairs teams, according to a new ranking of the state’s best lobbyists.

Smith Anderson partner Dana Simpson ranked first among 798 registered lobbyists in the biennial survey by the independent, nonpartisan N.C. Center for Public Policy Research. At 38, Simpson is the youngest lobbyist ever to claim the top spot.

“This ranking, although certainly gratifying, is not an individual achievement,” Simpson said. “I am blessed to be part of an incredible team of professionals at Smith Anderson and to work with great clients who are well-respected by state policymakers. We strive to help our clients provide relevant, accurate and timely information to legislators so that they can make well-informed policy decisions.”

Smith Anderson partner Dave Horne, the veteran lobbyist who anchors the firm’s Government Affairs practice, was again ranked in the top 20 in the center’s anonymous survey of state legislators, capitol press corps reporters, and fellow lobbyists. Horne has ranked among the state’s top 25 lobbyists since 1995, often in the top 10.

“Working hard to understand our clients’ businesses, their perspectives and the benefits they bring to North Carolina enables us to advocate effectively for them,” Horne said. “Earning and maintaining the trust and confidence of lawmakers on both sides of the political aisle is essential to serving our clients well, which guides everything we do.”

Horne and Simpson lead Smith Anderson’s Government Affairs team, which includes two non-lawyer lobbyists: Matthew Eisley, a former *Raleigh News & Observer* editor and columnist who also provides media relations counsel to the firm’s clients; and Kara Weishaar, a former U.S. Senate policy staffer who also manages client associations.

“We congratulate our colleagues Dana Simpson and Dave Horne on their well-deserved honor,” said Carl N. Patterson Jr., the managing partner at Smith, Anderson, Blount, Dorsett, Mitchell & Jernigan, L.L.P. “Dana and Dave exemplify the skill, experience, and professionalism we endeavor to provide to our clients every day. We are grateful for the confidence our clients have placed in our multifaceted Government Affairs team.”

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Smith Anderson's Government Affairs practice also has received consecutive first-tier designations in the national "Best Law Firm" ranking, produced jointly by *U.S. News* and *Best Lawyers*. Smith Anderson received first-tier rankings in 22 categories in the 2011 "Best Law Firm" ranking, the most of any law firm in the Triangle.

Smith Anderson is the largest law firm headquartered in the Research Triangle, and one of the largest in North Carolina. The downtown Raleigh firm, which celebrates its 100th anniversary this year, provides a full range of legal services. It is dedicated to the principles of professionalism, excellence, and service to its clients and the community.