

Law Firm Highlights

Robinson, Bradshaw & Hinson, P.A.

VAULT

101 N. Tryon St., Suite 1900
Charlotte, NC 28246
Phone: (704)377-2536
www.rbh.com

No. of attorneys
117

No. of offices
2

Summer associate offers
9 out of 10 (2003)

Managing Shareholder
Robert G. Griffin

Major Departments & Practices

Bankruptcy • Corporate, Banking & Finance • Civil & Commercial Litigation • Employee Benefits • Employment & Labor Law • Intellectual Property • M&A • Public Finance • Real Estate • Securities • Tax, Trusts & Estates

Uppers

- Short partnership track (6-7 years)
- No billable hours requirements
- Substantive work for junior associates

Notable Perks

- Free associate and dependents health care benefits
- Free parking
- Annual firm retreat

Base Salary

- 1st year: \$100,000
- Summer associate: \$1,900/week

Employment Contact

Ms. Susan K. Floyd
Recruiting Administrator
Phone: (704) 377-8141
Fax: (704) 378-4000
E-mail: sfloyd@rbh.com

THE SCOOP

Founded in 1960, Robinson Bradshaw & Hinson is a nearly 120-lawyer firm based in Charlotte, with a satellite office in Rock Hill, S.C. The bedrock of RBH's practice is its corporate and securities group, but the firm also has prominent banking, real estate development, commercial litigation and public finance departments.

In the corporate area, RBH counseled Goodrich Corporation on the registration of \$2.4 billion of delayed-offering securities, and on the subsequent sale of \$1 billion of common stock and investment grade debt. Meanwhile, attorneys in the mergers and acquisitions group recently advised United Dominion Industries, Ltd., on its \$900 million stock sale to SPX Corporation. On the corporate litigation side, the 2001 First Union/Wachovia/SunTrust case stands out. RBH helped fend off legal challenges from Atlanta's SunTrust Banks, which attempted to derail the proposed \$14 billion merger of First Union Corporation and Wachovia Corporation.

Outside of the high-powered business arena, RBH has an admirable record of public service. For the past two decades, the firm has served as lead counsel in Hyatt v. Heckler (now Hyatt v. Barnhart), a class action suit through which thousands of disabled citizens of North Carolina have challenged the state's denial of their Social Security benefits. The case went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court and has resulted in new eligibility hearings for over 80,000 disabled persons. The potential recovery could be nearly \$500 million for a single year alone. Having dedicated more than 4,500 hours and almost half a million dollars in legal fees to this cause, RBH became the first law firm in the country to be honored by the American Bar Association with the Publico award for pro bono service.

GETTING HIRED

When Robinson Bradshaw hires new associates, it does so with the expectation that every one of those individuals will go on to become a partner. Accordingly, the firm is extremely competitive and places much emphasis on a candidate's grades. "If you're not in the top 15 percent of your class, you will have a hard time getting a callback here," says one third-year associate. To some degree, an applicant's law school matters, although a senior associate reports that "a law student with excellent grades (top 5 percent) at

UNC-Chapel Hill has a better chance than a student from Harvard with middle of the class grades." If you can manage to get past the academic requirement, be prepared for an "intense" callback that will last a full day.

OUR SURVEY SAYS

Is someone putting Prozac in the water at Robinson Bradshaw? The associates seem just a little too happy: "I love it here. I never thought I would be this happy in a law firm." "I turn down the headhunters without calling them back." "I couldn't imagine working at another large firm." "No job is perfect, but working at RBH is pretty darn close. The work is interesting, the lawyers are exceptionally bright and kindhearted, plus Charlotte is a vibrant and welcoming community."

If there's one factor that is most likely behind these ecstatic reports, it's this: the firm has no billable hours requirements. No quotas, no targets, no minimums. In fact, one litigator shrugs, "I don't know if anyone knows exactly how many hours I bill." A midlevel says, "We don't keep track of billable hours, and it would be taboo to do so." Taboo? To keep track of hours at a law firm? No wonder the associates are so euphoric!

Adding to this utopian experience is the lack of a formal hierarchy. "With few exceptions, partners and associates have the same types of offices," says one corporate attorney. Partners are also more than willing to mentor associates: "if you ask, people will spend as much time as you want getting you up the learning curve." Apparently, partners will even take on work themselves rather than burden a busy associate: "If a partner can't find an associate who has time to help with a project, he/she will often wind up staying late to do it him/herself rather than dropping it on the desk of an associate who is already maxed out."

If there has to be a catch, then this is it: RBH generally does not give bonuses, with the exception of a few years when it rewarded associates based on the firm's performance. However, associates do receive highly competitive salaries for the Charlotte market; and their benefits package includes an eye-opening free health care for associates and their dependants. And, really, with the lack of a billable hours requirement, who needs a bonus to be happy?