

## CRIMINAL

### RUSSELL BABB

#### THARRINGTON SMITH

Hometown: Wilson

Undergrad: UNC Chapel Hill

Law school: UNC Chapel Hill School of Law, 1999

Practiced Law: 25 Years

## ZEALOUS ADVOCATE



**FIRST JOB:** Mowing lawns for five families in my neighborhood when I was in the seventh grade. I would spend most Saturdays doing yard work and would make \$50 a week.

**WORKING SMARTER:** I used to get up before dawn to start my work day. During COVID, I quit sacrificing sleep for work whenever possible. Regular sleep has made me more effective and a balanced lifestyle has made me happier.

**FAVORITE NORTH CAROLINA PLACE:** The High Country – Boone/Blowing Rock/Banner Elk

**MISSION ACCOMPLISHED:** Scuba diving at the Great Barrier Reef in Australia

**STILL ON BUCKET LIST:** Wildlife safari in Africa

**STRESS RELIEVER:** Zoning out watching Netflix; putting on noise-cancelling headphones to listen to music or a podcast

**WHY I BECAME A LAWYER:** Followed in my dad's footsteps as a civil litigator for seven years and I did not enjoy my job. One day I accepted a case for a young man accused of selling marijuana. I threw myself into that client's case and I loved every minute of it. I was able to help the client achieve a good result and I realized I had made a difference in his life. Helping people manage a crisis or get a second chance after making a bad choice is the most fulfilling part of my job.

**ALTERNATIVE CAREER CHOICE:** Football coach or NFL agent.

**YOUR EDGE:** Each of my partners is a phenomenal resource when I have questions about one of my cases. Sometimes 15 minutes in a colleague's office is the X-factor that leads to a positive outcome for my client. I have also had amazing mentors throughout my career, like Wade Smith. Wade is North Carolina's greatest criminal lawyer, so to have had the privilege to learn from him has been a true gift.

**2025 MILESTONES:** I plan to travel to the Grand Canyon and several great national parks out West.

**FAVORITE PASSIONS:** UNC football and basketball. If the Heels are playing, I'm watching.

**LAW SCHOOL IN 2 OR 3 YEARS:** The sooner someone can get out of law school the better.

#### ABOUT THARRINGTON SMITH

**FOUNDED:** 1964

**OFFICES:** Raleigh

**MANAGING PARTNERS:** Russell Babb and Evan Horwitz

**HOW MANY ATTORNEYS, STAFF:** 36 attorneys, 31 staff

**KEY SPECIALTIES:** Criminal defense, education law, family law and civil litigation.