IN A CLASS ALL BY YOURSELF:
CLASS-OF-ONE
EQUAL PROTECTION CLAIMS
In 1992, a few thoughtful Knoxville lawyers along with the Knoxville Bar Association leadership shared a vision that would eventually become the Knoxville Bar Foundation. The idea was to create a vehicle that could help the KBA respond to and address some of the worthwhile opportunities for service projects and assistance throughout our community that were related to the legal system, but simply could not be pursued by the KBA due to the lack of financial resources. Those combined leaders realized that if they created a foundation as a way to support such projects and opportunities for service, it would provide a unique avenue for charitable gifts, particularly from the members of the Knoxville legal community. Support grew through those early years, and by 2001 the KBF decided to create a Fellows Program similar to several successful examples at other bar foundations around the country. The annual Fellows recognition allows the Foundation to raise money for community services and projects and, equally important, provides a method for the Foundation to publicly recognize and honor attorneys who have distinguished themselves in the practice of law and in service to the Knoxville community. Significantly, those chosen do not campaign for the honor, nor can they nominate themselves, but they are chosen through peer review by existing Fellows. Each “Class” is generally less than one percent of the active bar association at any one time, and I am proud to say has consistently represented quality practitioners in our community with the highest ethical and professional standards both in front of and on the bench. They are selected in the spring and honored at an annual dinner, which this year was held on June 4th at Cherokee Country Club. The highlight of the evening was the presentation of the new Fellows, individually introduced by other members of the Foundation. This year’s class includes a very distinguished and well-known group of attorneys, and as I heard each of the introductions, I was struck by the tremendous and varied amount of volunteer service this group of men and women provide on a regular basis to our community. Collectively, they provide a great testimonial to the positive impact that our profession as a group can bring to our community. The 2013 Knoxville Bar Foundation Fellows are: Heather G. Anderson; Charles E. Atchley Jr.; Ursula Bailey; David A. Draper; Michael W. Ewell; Charles M. Finn; Bruce D. Fox; Monica J. Franklin; Celeste H. Herbert; Richard W. Krieg; T. Kenan Smith; Jack M. Tallent, II; and Mark K. Williams.

Another important milestone was marked by the announcement of this year’s annual grants. Since the beginning of the Foundation and particularly since the Fellows recognition program was begun, the Bar Foundation has been able to provide annual financial support to many worthy projects and activities that meet the stated goals of the Foundation including: (1) improve the administration of justice; (2) enhance the public’s understanding of our legal system and build confidence in that system; (3) support open access to the legal system by all; and (4) serve the legal community in some unique way. In 2013, the Bar Foundation received twenty (20) formal grant requests (the most ever), which totaled over $75,000.00. Each of these represented important community work and creative projects throughout our area. The Foundation’s Board of Directors reviewed all of the applications carefully and after considering the various requests were pleased to award ten (10) grants totaling almost $30,000.00 in financial support! This year’s recipients included CASA of East Tennessee, Inc.; Catholic Charities of East Tennessee, Inc.; Community Mediation Center; Knox County Governmental Library; Knox County Juvenile Court; the Archives Committee of the KBA; the Knoxville Bar Association for the Community Law School and Law Talk Series; the Knoxville/Knox County Community Action Committee; Legal Aid of East Tennessee; and the YWCA of Knoxville in support of their victim advocacy program. With this year’s grants, the Bar Foundation has now provided just under $75,000.00 for local law-related projects and programs, demonstrating that the good work started by a shared vision back in 1992 continues to grow and blossom throughout East Tennessee.

The Board of Directors of the Foundation is presently comprised of Tom Hale; John Harber, Reggie Keaton, Morris Kizer, Denise Moretz, Harry Ogden, Judge Deborah Stevens, Charles Swanson, and me. If you are interested in making a contribution to the Foundation or learning more about the good work it carries out, you may contact the writer or any other Board member at your convenience. We look forward to another year of making a difference in our community.

Knoxville Bar Foundation Fellows Class of 2013

Back Row
Mark K. Williams, Young, Williams & Kirk, PC
Charles E. Atchley Jr., U.S. Attorney’s Office
T. Kenan Smith, Hodges, Doughty & Carson, PLLC
Celeste H. Herbert, Reeves, Herbert & Anderson, PA.
Ursula Bailey, Law Office of Ursula Bailey
Charles M. Finn, Kramer Raylon LLP
Richard W. Krieg, Lewis, King, Krieg & Waldrop, PC.

Front Row
Michael W. Ewell, Frantz, McConnell & Seymour, LLP
Heather G. Anderson, Reeves, Herbert & Anderson, PA.
Monica J. Franklin, Elder Law Practice of Monica Franklin, LLC
Bruce D. Fox, Fox & Farley
David A. Draper, Lewis, King, Krieg & Waldrop, PC.
Jack M. Tallent II, Kennerly, Montgomery & Finley, PC.