

HALL BOOTH SMITH, P.C.



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Partner

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[BIOGRAPHY](#) | [EXPERIENCE](#) | [CREDENTIALS](#) | [MEMBERSHIPS](#) | [RECOGNITION](#) | [PRESENTATIONS](#) | [IN THE PRESS](#)

Biography

John Sheftall, a Partner in Hall Booth Smith's Columbus offices, concentrates his practice in fiduciary law including estate planning, estate administration, and fiduciary litigation. He is a Fellow of the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel, serves as a Director of SunTrust Bank in Columbus, and is a former Trustee of the St. Francis Hospital Foundation.

John was admitted to the Georgia State Bar in 1983. He was born in Macon, Georgia, and received his Bachelor of Arts, *magna cum laude*, from the University of Georgia in 1980. He went on to earn both his Juris Doctor and Master of Arts from the University of Virginia.

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Prior to joining HBS, John practiced law in Columbus with Hatcher, Stubbs, Land, Hollis and Rothschild, LLP for over 21 years. Before that, he practiced law in Atlanta where he was active in both the Fiduciary Section of the State Bar and the Atlanta Estate Planning Council. He currently chairs both the Wills, Trusts, & Estate Administration and the Fiduciary Litigation practice groups for

Services

[Corporate & Partnership](#)

[Fiduciary Litigation](#)

[Wills, Trusts, & Estate Administration](#)

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HBS.

John is passionate about local history, historic preservation, neighborhood revitalization, and community planning in Columbus. He has served on a number of local and regional non-profit boards, including the Georgia Historical Society in Savannah, the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation in Atlanta, and the Georgia Legal History Foundation.

He is Past President of Historic Columbus Foundation, Past Chairman of Historic Linwood Foundation, and Past President of MidTown, Inc., an organization responsible for the revitalization of older neighborhoods in Columbus. He currently serves as a Director of the Historic Chattahoochee Commission.

John is active in the Rotary Club of Columbus and a member of Trinity Episcopal Church, where he has served at the parish level as a Vestry member and Senior Warden, as well as at the diocesan level as a delegate and task force member. He has lectured widely at various fiduciary law seminars throughout Georgia, and speaks regularly before historical groups and organizations.

Experience

Corporate & Partnership

John's corporate practice includes representation of many Columbus-area and Georgia businesses. He is also involved in the banking and healthcare community, serving as a Director of SunTrust Bank in Columbus.

Fiduciary Litigation

John concentrates his practice in fiduciary law including estate planning, estate administration, and fiduciary litigation. He has been actively involved in the Fiduciary Section of the State Bar of Georgia and the Atlanta Estate Planning Council. He has lectured frequently at fiduciary law seminars throughout Georgia.

Credentials

Admitted

State Courts:

- Georgia, 1983

Education

- J.D., University of Virginia, 1983
- M.A., Legal History, University of Virginia, 1983
- B.A., History, University of Georgia, 1980

Memberships

- Atlanta Estate Planning Council
- Columbus Estate Planning Council
- Georgia Historical Society: Vice President, Curator (former)
- Georgia Legal History Foundation: Trustee

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- Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation: Director
- Historic Chattahoochee Commission: Director
- Historic Columbus Foundation: Director, President (former)
- Historic Linwood Foundation: Chairman
- Mercer University Press: Trustee
- MidTown, Inc.: Director, President (former)
- Port Columbus Civil War Naval Center: Member, Director (former)
- Rotary Club of Columbus
- Springer Opera House: Member, Director (former)
- St. Francis Hospital Foundation: Trustee (former)
- State Bar of Georgia, Fiduciary Law Section, Legislation

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Committee: Chair (former)

- SunTrust Bank, Columbus: Board of Directors Member
- Trinity Episcopal Church: Congregant, Vestry Member (former), Senior Warden (former)

Recognition

- [*The Best Lawyers in America*®](#), Best Lawyers®, 2024-2025
 - Awarded in: Litigation - Trusts and Estates, Trusts and Estates
- [AV Preeminent® Peer Review Rated™](#), Martindale-Hubbell
- [Georgia Super Lawyer](#), Super Lawyers®, 2005-2022
- [Lawyer of the Year, Litigation - Trusts and Estates, Columbus, GA](#); Best Lawyers®; 2015, 2017, 2019

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- [Lawyer of the Year, Trusts and Estates, Columbus, GA](#); Best Lawyers®; 2014
- Fellow, American College of Trust and Estate Counsel

Presentations

- **Postmortem Planning with Disclaimers**
60th Annual Estate Planning Institute; Athens, Georgia; 2015
- **When Transfers of Property Involve Death and Taxes: A Probate Primer for Real Estate Practitioners**
Residential Real Estate Conference; Atlanta, Georgia; 2013
- **Postmortem Planning with Disclaimers**
Georgia Federal Tax Conference; Atlanta, Georgia; 2011
- **Statutory Modifications: How and How Hard**
56th Annual Estate Planning Institute; Athens, Georgia; 2011

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- **When to Hold Them, When to Fold Them: The Charms and Challenges of a Fiduciary Litigation Practice**
Fiduciary Law Institute, St. Simons, Georgia, 2008

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- **Negotiating the Probate Court: Procedures and Pitfalls in a Fiduciary Practice**
Fiduciary Law Institute, St. Simons, Georgia, 2006
- **Program Chair**
46th Annual Estate Planning Institute, Athens, Georgia, 2001
- **Re-Examining the Bottom Line: Commissions, Fees and Compensation for Fiduciaries and Their Attorneys**
Fiduciary Law Institute, St. Simons, Georgia, 1999
- **Multi-Generational Estate Planning**
Columbus State University, 4th Annual Retirement and Estate Planning Seminar, Columbus, Georgia, 1998
- **Practical Uses of Charitable Remainder Trusts**
Columbus State University, Creative (But Practical) Techniques for Effective Retirement and Estate Planning, Columbus, Georgia, 1997
- **Estate Planning Options Involving Retirement Funds**
Columbus State University, Retirement Planning to Maximize Benefits for the Retiree and Other Family Members, Columbus, Georgia, 1996
- **Use of Wills, Trusts and Other Transfer Techniques**
Columbus College, Planning for Retirement and the Transfer of Wealth to the Next Generation, Columbus, Georgia, 1995
- **Special Issues in Trust Drafting: Retained Powers and Removal Powers**
40th Annual Estate Planning Institute, Athens, Georgia, 1995
- **Planning for Disability**
Basic Fiduciary Practice, Atlanta, Georgia, 1992-1993
- **Georgia's New Rule Against Perpetuities**
Fiduciary Law Institute, St. Simons, Georgia, 1990
- **Probate and Estate Administration**
Bridge the Gap, Athens, Georgia, 1989 & 1991
- **The Marital Deduction: Drafting and Funding with Individuals in Mind and an Assessment of the Unlimited Marital Deduction Enacted in 1981**
32nd Estate Planning Institute, Athens, Georgia, 1987

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In the Press

58 HBS Attorneys Recognized as The Best Lawyers in America® Award Recipients

August 16, 2024

Hall Booth Smith, P.C. is pleased to announce that 58 lawyers have been included in the 2025 edition of The Best Lawyers in America®

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55 Hall Booth Smith Lawyers Recognized as 2024 Best Lawyers® Award Recipients

August 21, 2023

We're pleased to announce

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that 55 lawyers have been included in the 2024 edition of The Best Lawyers in America®.

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[Hall Booth Smith Attorneys Honored by The Best Lawyers In America 2023](#)

August 18, 2022

47 lawyers from the firm have been honored in the 2023 edition of The Best Lawyers in America.

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[Hall Booth Attorneys Selected as Super Lawyers in the 2022 Georgia Super Lawyers](#)

HALL BOOTH SMITH, P.C.

Magazine

February 14, 2022

In the 2022 edition of the Georgia Super Lawyers magazine, the law firm of Hall Booth Smith (HBS) will once again be recognized for its outstanding legal work as six of its attorneys are on the list of Super Lawyers: John E. Hall, Jr., C. Michael Johnson, Thomas Mazziotti, Rush S. Smith, Jr. of the

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Hall Booth Smith Attorneys Honored by The Best Lawyers In America® 2022

August 19, 2021

We're excited to announce that 25 HBS lawyers have been recognized in the 2022 edition of The Best Lawyers in America®.

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Six Hall Booth Attorneys Selected as Super Lawyers in the 2021 Georgia Super Lawyers Magazine

February 16, 2021

In the 2021 edition of the Georgia Super Lawyers magazine, the law firm of Hall Booth Smith (HBS) will once again be recognized for its outstanding legal work as eight of its attorneys are on the list of Super Lawyers: John E. Hall, Jr., C. Michael Johnson, Thomas Mazziotti, Rush S. Smith, Jr. of the

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Hall Booth Smith Attorneys Honored By The Best Lawyers In

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America© 2021

August 20, 2020

Hall Booth Smith, P.C. (HBS) is pleased to announce 24 lawyers from the firm were honored in the 2021 edition of The Best Lawyers in America© . This award is based on an evaluation process that includes a collection of client and lawyer evaluations and peer reviews from attorneys in the same field. These HBS

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HBS Attorneys Recognized as 2020 Georgia Super Lawyers

February 17, 2020

In the 2020 edition of the Georgia Super Lawyers magazine, the law firm of Hall Booth Smith (HBS) will once again be recognized for its outstanding legal work as eight of its attorneys are on the list of Super Lawyers: John E. Hall, Jr., Michael Hannan, C. Michael Johnson, Thomas Mazziotti, Rush S. Smith, Jr.

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Hall Booth Smith Attorneys Honored By The Best Lawyers In America© 2020

August 15, 2019

Hall Booth Smith, P.C. (HBS) is pleased to announce 24 lawyers from the firm were honored in the 2020 edition of The Best Lawyers in America© . This award is based on an evaluation process that includes a collection of client and lawyer evaluations and peer reviews from attorneys in the same field. These HBS

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HBS Attorneys Recognized as 2019 Georgia Super Lawyers

February 18, 2019

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In the 2019 edition of the Georgia Super Lawyers magazine, the law firm of Hall Booth Smith (HBS) will once again be recognized for its outstanding legal work as seven of its attorneys are on the list of Super Lawyers: John E. Hall, Jr., Thomas Mazziotti, Rush S. Smith, Jr. and Terrance Sullivan of the

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Hall Booth Smith Attorneys Honored by The Best Lawyers in America© 2019

August 15, 2018

Hall Booth Smith, P.C. (HBS) is pleased to announce 24 lawyers from the firm were honored in the 2019 edition of The Best Lawyers in America© . This award is based on an evaluation process that includes a collection of client and lawyer evaluations and peer reviews from attorneys in the same field. These HBS

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Hall Booth Smith Attorneys Honored by The Best Lawyers in America©

August 21, 2017

Hall Booth Smith, P.C. (HBS) is pleased to announce 21 lawyers from the firm were honored in the 2018 edition of The Best Lawyers in America© . This award is based on an evaluation process that includes a collection of client and lawyer evaluations and peer reviews from attorneys in the same field. These HBS attorneys and

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HBS Attorneys Recognized in 2017 Georgia Super Lawyers

February 21, 2017

In the 2017 edition of the

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Georgia Super Lawyers magazine, the law firm of Hall Booth Smith (HBS) will once again be recognized for its outstanding legal work as seven of its attorneys are on the list of Super Lawyers: Phillip E. Friduss, John E. Hall, Jr., and Rush S. Smith, Jr. of the Atlanta office; James B. Durham and N. Daniel

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John Hall and John Sheftall named “Lawyer of the Year” by Best Lawyers® 2017

September 7, 2016

Congratulations to Partners John E. Hall, Jr. and John M. Sheftall for their special recognition in the 2017 edition of The Best Lawyers in America® as a “Lawyer of the Year.” John Hall was named as a Best Lawyers® 2017 Atlanta, GA – Medical Malpractice-Defendants “Lawyer of the Year.” John Sheftall was named as a Best

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Lawyers® 2017 Columbus,
GA Litigation – Trusts and

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HBS Attorneys Recognized in 2016 Georgia Super Lawyers

February 22, 2016

In the 2016 edition of the Georgia Super Lawyers magazine, the law firm of Hall Booth Smith (HBS) will once again be recognized for its outstanding legal work as nine of its attorneys are on the list of Super Lawyers: Alex H. Booth, Phillip E. Friduss, John E. Hall, Jr., and Rush S. Smith, Jr. of the Atlanta office; James B. Durham and N.

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HBS Columbus office expands with the addition of 10 attorneys from

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Hatcher Stubbs

January 4, 2016

Columbus, GA — Hall Booth Smith, PC (HBS) is pleased to announce expansion of the HBS Columbus office with the addition of 10 attorneys from the law firm of Hatcher Stubbs, Columbus, GA. This expansion will result in the total of 16 attorneys in the HBS Columbus office and over 150 attorneys firmwide in 11

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HBS Columbus office expands with attorneys from Hatcher Stubbs

October 2, 2015

Columbus, GA — Hall Booth Smith, PC (HBS) is pleased to announce expansion of the HBS Columbus office with the addition of 10 attorneys from the law firm of Hatcher Stubbs, Columbus, GA. This expansion will result in the total of 15 attorneys in the

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HBS Columbus office and 155 attorneys firmwide in 11 offices.

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