

Chief Justice Frye Diversity Fellowship

At Brooks Pierce, we are dedicated to fostering diverse and inclusive environments within our Firm, the communities in which we practice, and the legal profession as a whole. Diversity of life experiences and perspectives enriches these communities and provides a broader perspective for appreciating and solving problems—the core of the lawyers’ charge. We are committed to increasing access to careers in the legal profession. We are proud to announce the **2024 Chief Justice Henry E. Frye – 1L Brooks Pierce Diversity Summer Fellowship**, honoring our colleague, a groundbreaking jurist and leader in the North Carolina bar.

Award

The Frye Fellowship includes a **salaried Summer Associate position** in the 2024 Summer Program for a 1L student (10 weeks), resident in any of the Firm’s three offices (Raleigh, Greensboro, Wilmington, NC). The Fellow will also be awarded a **\$10,000 scholarship** following successful completion of the Firm’s 2024 Summer Program. The Fellow will also be awarded a \$5,000 scholarship following successful completion of the Firm’s 2025 Summer Program and a \$25,000 stipend upon joining the Firm as a first-year associate. Please note that the Frye Fellowship cannot be paired with any other fellowship summer position (e.g., firm, company, or bar program).

Like all 1L candidates for a summer position with the Firm, the Frye Fellowship applicants will be considered based upon a variety of factors, including academic excellence, professional accomplishment, intellectual curiosity, independence, self-reliance, entrepreneurial and innovative spirit, resilience and ability to overcome adversity, dedication to community service, and commitment to North Carolina. Further, Frye Fellowship applicants will be considered based upon the degree to which their becoming a lawyer and joining Brooks Pierce as a Frye Fellow would further the legacy of Chief Justice Henry E. Frye. Applicants are encouraged to highlight the ways that they meet these criteria in their application materials.

Application Process

Please submit your application via this link.

Application deadline is January 12, 2024.

Chief Justice Henry E. Frye

Chief Justice Henry E. Frye has blazed many trails in his distinguished career. His journey is remarkable, from the small town of Ellerbe, North Carolina, to the state’s highest court as the first Black chief justice. One turning point: On his wedding date in 1956, Justice Frye visited the clerk’s

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office in Ellerbe to register to vote. He was denied registration for failure to pass a “literacy test”—although he had graduated with highest honors from NC A&T University, had just been admitted to UNC Law School, and was a veteran of the U.S. Air Force at the rank of captain. Justice Frye went on to graduate with honors from UNC Law in 1959, the first Black person to enter UNC as a 1L. In 1963, he joined the U.S. Attorney’s Office in the Middle District of North Carolina as one of the first Black federal prosecutors in the South. Justice Frye won election to the North Carolina General Assembly in 1968—the first Black person to do so since 1899. After serving in the NC House and the Senate, he was appointed to the North Carolina Supreme Court in 1983. Justice Frye was the first Black jurist to sit on the state’s highest bench. In 1999, he became the court’s first Black chief justice. Justice Frye’s “firsts” encompass business as well: he established and led the first Black-owned bank in Greensboro. After seventeen years on the bench, Justice Frye joined Brooks Pierce in 2001. Now retired from private practice at 85, he remains actively involved in vital community efforts, including a nonpartisan redistricting initiative by a committee of retired judges. He continues to advise and inspire each of us at Brooks Pierce. We hope that the Frye Diversity Fellowship will inspire a new generation of law students to pursue excellence and dare to be first.