

# Q & A

## Q & A with Christina May Bolin



A partner with Christian & Small, LLP, Christina May Bolin leads the firm's Mobile/Baldwin County office – defending individuals, businesses, and insurers against lawsuits and liability claims and assisting clients in the development of strategic solutions to legal disputes and litigation risks. Since 2001, she has defended property and casualty insurers in direct actions involving large property losses, catastrophic casualty claims, complex insurance coverage questions, fraud and bad faith. She is licensed to practice in Alabama, Mississippi, and New York, and has also assisted in the assessment and handling of matters in Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Texas, and Tennessee – representing clients in hundreds of mediations, arbitrations, and trials.

A 1997 graduate of Binghamton University, Bolin earned her juris doctor degree from Hofstra University School of Law in 2000.



Christina is pictured presenting a special achievement award to Janet Brown.

**Q: Before becoming an attorney, what was your first job?**

**A:** I was hired as a runner in a law firm the summer after my sophomore year of high school. When they realized I could type, I was immediately promoted to secretary and worked there during school breaks up until I started law school.

**Q: What motivated you to pursue a legal career?**

**A:** My mother was a legal secretary and sometimes she would take me to work. She worked for a lawyer named Al Julian who was a prolific trial attorney in New York in the 1970s and 1980s. I had to type up a “term paper” in the 6th grade and I went to work with her so I could use the typewriter. I had been assigned the topic “The Language of Law & Contracts” and was understandably disgruntled and less than excited. He noticed me in the office plucking away and sat down and helped me write my paper. I wanted to be a lawyer ever since.

**Q: Who was your chief mentor and how did he or she influence your career?**

**A:** Helen Alford was my mentor. I decided early on that I wanted to be Helen Alford when I grew up. She had a quiet confidence that managed to be both commanding and unassuming at the same time. I have tried to exemplify that in my career.

**Q: What's the best piece of advice you've ever received?**

**A:** “Bring them with you.” Helen Alford was the first female partner in her firm. She never shied away from identifying people who worked hard and giving them the opportunity to do what she did. She would introduce associates to her clients and tell them that they could trust you. She was open about her methods and what made her successful. In every organization in which I have held a leadership position, I have

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always tried to identify at least one person to bring with me. I try to pay it forward in that way.

### **Q: What is one thing you would like to learn to do?**

**A:** I would love to be conversationally fluent in Spanish. I took French and Latin in high school and could pull together enough French to ask for directions. If pressed, I may be able to translate “the farmer loves the girl” into Latin, but the rest of my knowledge is limited to legal terms of art.

### **Q: What is your proudest career achievement?**

**A:** I was elected president of the Windstorm Insurance Network in 2022. I have been a member of that organization since 2007 and was humbled to be afforded the opportunity to lead it.

### **Q: What other career path might you have chosen?**

**A:** I might have become a college professor. I love academia and one of my favorite things to do as an attorney is speak to and help educate others.

### **Q: What do you do to give back to your community?**

**A:** I was on the board of the Spanish Fort Sports Association for around 6 years. It’s a volunteer organization that runs our city’s youth sports program. Youth sports in Alabama are taken very seriously and we worked to implement a scholarship system to ensure that all the children who wanted to play could and had the equipment that they needed. Now, my husband is a sports photographer and he provides free pictures for high school athletes to use on their social media. I help him with that.



Christina was in a festive mood during an evening event at the annual WIND Conference for the Windstorm Insurance Network.



Red was in fashion during the annual Parents’ Weekend at the University of Alabama, where Christina and her husband Steve joined their two sons, Daniel and Carter, for the fall get-together. Son Daniel is a freshman at the Tuscaloosa school.

### **Q: What is your most treasured material possession?**

**A:** My guilty pleasure is handbags. I love them, especially vintage/classics. I couldn’t pick just one. That would be like asking me which is my favorite child.

### **Q: What is your happiest childhood memory?**

**A:** My family used to vacation in Lake George, N.Y. I grew up in Queens, and for one week a year, we got to live on a lake. It was extraordinary.

### **Q: What is your favorite movie and book?**

**A:** Movie: Any of the Harry Potter movies. (I devoured those books when they came out and it is one of the few instances where I feel like the movies did the books justice.)

Book: Stephen King’s “The Stand.” (I know the lawyerly answer is “To Kill a Mockingbird,” but everyone says that.)



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**Q: What is the most awe-inspiring place you have visited?**

**A:** My answer is not terribly exotic, but I went to college in the Susquehanna Valley in upstate New York. The surrounding landscape in the fall is absolutely breathtaking. You never get used to it.

**Q: What are your favorite leisure time pursuits?**

**A:** I love to read and anything to do with football. I was born into a family of New York Jets' fans, so I have learned to become an optimist. There's always next year!

**Q: What is your favorite famous or inspirational quote?**

**A:** "The best things in life are free. The second-best things are, very, very expensive." – *Coco Chanel*

**Q: Who is on your guest list for the ideal dinner party?**

**A:** I'm a pretty simple woman. I'm just happy if my whole family can sit down to dinner at the same time in the same place. However, if Billy Joel wandered in, I would certainly set a place for him.

**Q: What are the top three items on your bucket list?**

**A:** See the Northern Lights. Travel Europe with no itinerary. See Elton John in concert.



Christina May Bolin was at her eye-catching best for Mardi Gras festivities.