

# THE ATLANTA LAWYER

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## *THE ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION ISSUE*

ADVICE FROM  
MEDIATORS,  
JUDGES, AND  
ADVOCATES



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**ON THE COVER:** This issue's ADR contributors include Gregory J. Parent, Hon. Randy Rich, David Root, Joyce B. Klemmer, Andrew B. Flake, and Caitlin Livingston

# The Atlanta Bar Wellness Committee: Changing of the Guard

**T**he Atlanta Bar Wellness Committee is gearing up for another year of wellness-centered events for our members. From hiking, to yoga, to mindful breathing, we try to incorporate different techniques and activities that help and support our members to live their best lives. I have been the Chair of the Wellness Committee for five (5) years now and it has been an amazing experience. I have met amazing people and tried some new things – with varying degrees of success! It was all in fun and all in furtherance of the Committee’s goal: to help lawyers balance the stress and hectic nature of our work with taking care of ourselves and taking time for ourselves. This year, I am stepping down as Chair and **Ashley M. Bowcott** (Berman Fink Van Horn PC) will be filling the seat. Ashley has been an invaluable asset to the Committee. As I step down as Chair, I am excited about the energy, diligence, thoughtfulness, and creative thinking that Ashley will bring to the position. I am looking forward to continuing to be a member of this wonderful Committee and seeing what new and exciting things are in store with Ashley at the helm!



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**I** am thrilled to be taking over as Chair of the Wellness Committee of the Atlanta Bar Association for the upcoming year. As a young lawyer, I got involved in the wellness committee during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic: a time when wellness should have been prioritized, but often fell by the wayside, especially for attorneys. It is an important but often overlooked aspect of any career, especially in the legal field. I have enjoyed the sense of community, both through virtual events and

our in-person opportunities, such as The Legal Runaround 5k and our wellness hikes. I see such an opportunity for this committee to connect all Atlanta Bar members, including law students, newer attorneys, and those who have been in the practice for many years.

When we hosted our inaugural wellness week this summer, discussed more below, it was one of the busiest weeks of my career. Every day that we had a wellness event, I wondered how I could possibly fulfill my work obligations and make it to the special events we had planned around town. I considered skipping out on certain events to get a couple more hours of work done. It is at those times when we need to prioritize our health—however that may look for each of us—so we are better positioned to show up in our profession. As Chair of this committee, I look forward to offering programming and a sense of community that stresses this importance to everyone.

## Wellness Week

The Wellness Committee hosted its first Wellness Week July 10-14, 2023. The week aimed to connect Atlanta Bar Association members and focus on various events that promote mind and body wellness. We kicked off the week with a barre class at Barre3 Druid Hills. Barre is a workout with components of ballet, yoga, and Pilates. It is a full body strength training workout, but also focuses on mental wellbeing as each class begins with setting an intention and ends with breathwork and gratitude. We had a great turnout of seasoned barre-goers and newcomers alike, and our instructor Allie did a great job pushing us all while meeting everyone at their specific ability levels. It was a high-powered way to start the week.

The next day, we headed to Odyssey Jiu Jitsu for a primer on self-defense. Our instructor Ian taught us some basics such as falls before we broke into groups to practice physical techniques, including breaking grips and getting out of chokeholds. We even ended the class practicing how to flip attackers over our shoulders. Although it would be impossible to teach all skills necessary to defend oneself in an hour, it was an instructive class and contained a multitude of practical tips to keep us safe.

We closed out wellness week with strategic self-care and yin yoga hosted by Anana Parris. The class opened with a brain dump where we quietly journaled all of our thoughts to get them out of the way for the practice. We then turned to different areas of needs, including physical, social, emotional, and financial, and shared the

areas where we were seeking help. We also asked for specific things that would help fulfill us in each category. It was a very honest and vulnerable session to have lawyers discussing other parts of our lives that impact our practice, and Anana guided us through the discussion. We closed out with yin yoga, which consisted of three poses held for long periods of time. This class forced attendees to reconsider their views on what a “workout” means and left everyone feeling rejuvenated and excited to take more steps toward self-care in their daily lives.

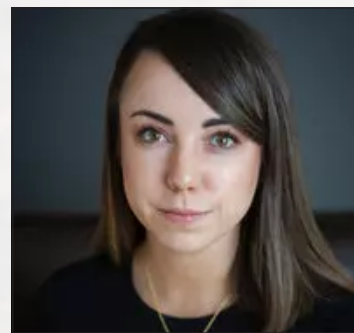
Wellness week was an amazing series of events, which highlighted not only a variety of wellness activities, but locally owned businesses and an array of neighborhoods in Atlanta. We look forward to hosting another wellness week and expanding its offerings in years to come.

### The Year Ahead

In the coming year, I look forward to making this committee a staple in the Atlanta Bar Association community. I think most of us acknowledge the importance of wellness in the abstract, but often do not consider what that looks like for us or prioritize it in our daily lives, especially as work and other obligations demand our time. Maybe for you it is a high intensity workout with music blasting. Maybe it is a hike in the woods with others in the profession, where you can connect not only as lawyers, but as individuals. Or maybe it is a guided meditation or journaling session where the focus is not breaking a sweat but working on mental strength. Whatever

wellness looks like to you, we hope to offer some of that through the wellness committee.

In addition to preparing for another wellness week in the coming year, I hope to work with local wellness studios and business owners throughout the year to highlight different options that may appeal to our members, and to kick off our regular wellness committee hikes in memory of our previous hike leader, Hemanth Digumarthi. Whatever wellness means to you, I want to be sure we offer something that appeals to you, so feel free to reach out with ideas—I am all ears!



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Wellness Committee Members at Barre3  
Druid Hills with Instructor Alie.

Strategic Self Care and Yin Yoga Class  
with Founder Anana Parris.

