Brad Crone, President Campaign Connections

Brad Crone, 57, established Campaign Connections, a Raleigh-based political consulting firm in 1991. Since then he has worked in more than 400 local, county, legislative and state races in North Carolina. Over the past 27 years, he has a winning percentage above 80 percent. He has worked for political and corporate clients on a range of issues from healthcare, banking, infrastructure and agriculture.

Longleaf Pine Politics, a statewide blog, recently named Mr. Crone as one of the top 50 most influential people in North Carolina politics. Campaigns & Elections magazine named Mr. Crone to the top 500 leaders in politics across nation - 10 people named in each state.

Mr. Crone doesn't apologize for being a centrist-moderate consultant. He has built a long career working with the business community to navigate the state's political currents under Democrat and Republican Legislatures.

Prior to his political consulting career, he was a daily newspaper publisher for The Thomasville Times, and was the state's first desktop newspaper publisher in 1986 when he started The Clayton Star. Mr. Crone is a frequent panelist and moderator for UNC TV's NC SPIN. He is a graduate of Clayton High School and NC State University.