

ArtServe Michigan Seeks Attorneys for Newly Launched Program Supporting Creative Industries

November 28, 2012

ArtServe Michigan, the leading statewide arts and cultural advocacy organization in Michigan, has announced the launch of its new statewide initiative Lawyers for the Creative Economy (LCE). The program is recruiting attorneys from across the state, including Detroit, Grand Rapids and Ann Arbor.

The LCE program was launched to ensure valuable resources for understanding such legal areas as copyright, trademark, patent, licensing and contracts are available to all levels of the creative industry through knowledgeable legal professionals, workshops and online.

Attorneys who are willing to provide free or low-fee intellectual property advice and related support are paired with professionals and organizations seeking affordable legal services. Those served by LCE would include practicing artists; creative practitioners and independent entrepreneurs; entrepreneurial and start up businesses; and/or non-profit organizations in arts and culture, design, architecture, film/video, software, games and electronic publishing.

"Not only is Clark Hill's involvement with LCE good for the community by increasing access to quality legal service for creative professionals, but it also enriches our practice because of the meaningful exchanges between attorneys and artists the program facilitates," said Joseph L. Voss, attorney at Clark Hill and LCE Advisory Council member. "It's a perfect match for our Entertainment Industry Team, but attorneys across the firm will find opportunities to engage with the arts through LCE, and we are a proud supporter of its efforts throughout Michigan."

An information session will be held at the office of Miller Canfield at 150 W. Jefferson, 25th floor, in Detroit from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 5. During the event, attorneys will receive detailed information about participation in LCE and how to join. Attendees also will have the opportunity to meet other attorneys who have already committed to the program. Live entertainment will be provided by local Detroit Jazz/World Music stars Sin Hielo.

"Michigan is undergoing a creative renaissance. The intersection of the arts, technology and entrepreneurial energies will ultimately be a critical driver of the local economy and the area's quality of life. Many of the individuals involved in these areas need legal counsel and guidance they can't yet afford," said **John Willems, attorney at Miller Canfield** and LCE Advisory Council member. "I can't think of anything more exciting and rewarding as a lawyer than assisting the creative sector and helping to shape the future cultural and financial landscape."

"Attorney participation is critical to the success of this initiative and building Michigan's reputation as an innovative place to live, learn and work," said Jennifer Goulet, president and CEO for ArtServe.

Recent statistics support the importance of successful creatives to the state. ArtServe's 2012 Creative State Michigan report showed that 211 nonprofit arts and cultural organizations contributed nearly half a billion dollars in expenditures alone to Michigan's economy in 2009. Of those expenditures, \$152 million went to salaries for more than 15,000 jobs, and from 2006 to 2010, the number of arts-related jobs increased by 4 percent in Michigan, while arts-related businesses increased by 43 percent.

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“Though participating attorneys would start out with pro bono or low-fee services for creative clients, as these artists and organizations grow, attorneys have the very real opportunity to benefit from the relationship they’ve established early in the creative process to help them gain momentum,” said Goulet.

LCE also will provide professional development seminars across the state for artists and other creative practitioners to help them develop essential knowledge about creativity-related areas of law. Attorneys participating in the program may have the opportunity to help lead those seminar discussions.

Associate Attorney Chanille Carswell of Brooks Kushman, Managing Partner Lawrence Jordan or Jaffe Raitt Law Firm and Attorney Matt Bower of Safford & Baker will lead a two-hour seminar on Dec. 6, 2012 familiarizing creative practitioners with the basic issues of intellectual property, including licensing, contracts, branding and negotiation.

Participating attorneys are asked to designate a number of legal service hours, number of clients or number of matters they are willing to commit to on a bi-annual basis. Attorneys must be licensed to practice in the State of Michigan and be covered by malpractice insurance. Attorneys retain the right to refuse or decline any legal matter referred through the LCE initiative, but if the matter is accepted, the attorney is responsible for apprising the client of any and all charges or fees and tracking billable hours devoted to the client. ArtServe Michigan facilitates intake of all clients seeking legal assistance and assigning them to volunteer attorneys.

Attorneys interested in the LCE should contact Marcia Goffney, LCE Project Consultant at lce@artservemichigan.org or 248-912-0760, ext. 5 or Cezanne Charles, Director of Creative Industries at cezanne@artservemichigan.org or 248-912-0760, ext. 7.

The program was developed by ArtServe Michigan with support from the Arts, Communications, Entertainment and Sports (ACES) section of the State Bar of Michigan, several major Michigan law firms and the National Endowment for the Arts, among others. Seminars are supported by the Emily Hall Tremain Foundation and the General Motors Foundation.

ArtServe Michigan is a statewide nonprofit advocacy organization dedicated to cultivating the creative potential of Michigan’s arts and cultural sector and creative industries to enhance the public health and well-being of Michigan, its people and communities. ArtServe advocates for arts, culture, arts education and the power of the creative economy in Michigan; provides leadership and professional development for artists, creative practitioners, and arts and cultural organizations; and connects arts and cultural leaders and supporters through strategic communications. Contact ArtServe Michigan at 248-912-0760 or visit ArtServeMichigan.org.