

Miller Canfield to Provide Free Legal Help to Entrepreneurs during Detroit Startup Week

May 12, 2017

Miller Canfield is pleased to announce that it will offer free legal help to new and future business owners, through its participation in the third annual Small Business Legal Academy (SBLA).

SBLA is this year partnering with Detroit Startup Week, May 22-26, 2017. Detroit Startup Week, hosted by Techstars and powered by Chase for Business, celebrates Detroit's entrepreneur community. Startup businesses are invited to more than 100 free events that are designed to support their growth and build a strong business community in the city.

The SBLA is the creation of the Association of Pro Bono Counsel (APBCo), which launched the first academy in New York City at the Apollo Theater in Harlem in 2013, pulling together dozens of member firms and legal and financial services organizations. Since then, there have been more SBLAs in New York, Houston and Detroit, with more planned in other cities. SBLA has provided hundreds of low-income startups, mom-and-pop businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs legal guidance they could not otherwise afford.

Miller Canfield attorneys Thomas Linn and Wendy Richards serve on Detroit Startup Week's volunteer advisory board, and helped facilitate its partnership with SBLA, which the firm sponsors and contributes countless hours to help organize. The academy will be a kick-off event for Startup Week.

On Saturday, May 20, SBLA will host a single-stage, multi-panel presentation from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Wayne State University's Bernath Auditorium. The presentation is open to the public and free to attend. Each panel will consist of a 20-30 minute presentation followed by audience questions and answers. The panel will consist of attorneys who will talk to entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs about topics such as intellectual property, employment law, real property, and organizational basics and funding. Registration is recommended, but not required.

On Monday, May 22, at 2 p.m., the SBLA will present "Why and How You Must Secure Your Business from a Cyber Attack," a program that explores the risks businesses face in securing their information and safeguarding against cybercrime. Discussion will include the devastating impact of a data breach, which can be expensive and potentially fatal to the goodwill and reputation of a business, and best practices to build and maintain an appropriate cybersecurity program to limit risk. The presentation will feature Miller Canfield cyber and data security lawyer Colin Battersby, and will take place at the Masonic Temple, 500 Temple St., Detroit.

Additionally, SBLA will host two free legal clinics during the week of May 22. The clinics will consist of 30-60 minute meetings between teams of two lawyers and Detroit entrepreneurs. The business owners will pre-register and identify the areas of law on which they have questions. SBLA will match the business owners' needs with the right legal team to answer their questions.

The first clinic will take place Wednesday, May 24, 9 a.m.-noon at the Ford Resource and Engagement Center in Southwest Detroit. The second will be 1-4 p.m., Thursday, May 25, at the Masonic Temple in Detroit (the location for Chase Base Camp during Startup Week). Clinics are sponsored by nonprofit TechTown, which offers a full suite of entrepreneurial services for both tech and neighborhood businesses.

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For more information about Detroit Startup Week and Small Business Legal Academy, please visit Detroit.StartupWeek.co.