

Miller Canfield Adopts ‘Mansfield Rule’ to Boost Law Firm Leadership Diversity

June 9, 2017

Miller Canfield announced today that it is partnering with Diversity Lab and 30 of the country’s leading law firms to pilot the Mansfield Rule. The announcement was made by Miller Canfield CEO Michael McGee.

Named after Arabella Mansfield, the first woman admitted to the practice of law in the United States, the Mansfield Rule measures whether law firms have affirmatively considered women and attorneys of color — at least 30 percent of the candidate pool — for leadership and governance roles, equity partner promotions, and lateral positions. The Mansfield Rule was one of the winning ideas from the 2016 Women in Law Hackathon hosted by Diversity Lab in collaboration with Bloomberg Law and Stanford Law School.

Miller Canfield, headquartered in Detroit, is the only Michigan-based firm to adopt the rule.

The Mansfield Rule was inspired by the NFL’s Rooney Rule, which was created by the late Dan Rooney in 2003 and is now supported by his son, Art Rooney, who recently became chairman of the Pittsburgh Steelers. The Rooney Rule requires every NFL team to interview at least one minority candidate for head coach vacancies. In the years following its implementation, the number of minorities hired to fill head-coach roles doubled. New research, which controlled for other factors that may have contributed to this positive outcome, shows that a diverse candidate is about 20 percent more likely to fill an NFL head coaching vacancy during the Rooney era than before the rule was introduced.

“Miller Canfield has long been recognized as a leader in diversity and inclusion, and the adoption of this rule ensures that we continue the work to be among the most inclusive law firms in the United States,” McGee said. “The Rooney Rule proved that when minority candidates are considered for top positions in an organization, we see meaningful change and progress as a result.”

Along with Miller Canfield, other law firms piloting the rule include:

- Akerman
- Arnold & Porter Kaye Scholer
- Blank Rome
- Cooley
- Dentons
- DLA Piper
- Faegre Baker Daniels
- Fasken Martineau
- Fenwick & West
- Fish & Richardson
- Holland & Hart

Continued

- Ingersoll & Rooney
- Jenner & Block
- Morgan, Lewis & Bockius
- Morrison & Foerster
- Munger, Tolles & Olson
- O'Melveny & Myers
- Orrick
- Paul Hastings
- Seyfarth Shaw
- White & Case
- Wilmer Hale
- Winston & Strawn

Law firms that successfully pilot the Mansfield Rule over the next year will be designated "Mansfield Certified." To date, more than 45 corporate legal departments have signed on to support this effort, including companies such as CBS Corp., CSX, Facebook PayPal, PNC Financial Services Group, Target, TCF Bank and Walmart.