

## Miller Canfield Wins Prestigious Detroit Community Development Award

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October 23, 2017

Miller Canfield is pleased to announce that it has been selected to receive the Distinguished Pro Bono Service Provider Award at the 2017 Detroit Community Development Awards Celebration in recognition of the firm's significant pro bono work that positively impacted community economic development in Detroit.

"We are fortunate to contribute to pro bono initiatives at the level we do. Giving back to the community and helping organizations and people who may not otherwise be able to afford legal representation are important elements of our firm's culture," said Miller Canfield CEO Michael McGee.

The award focuses on the work the firm's pro bono team provided in areas that helped small businesses and economic development in Detroit.

"Our attorneys generously give thousands of hours of service every year to pro bono clients, making a real and positive difference in the communities we serve," said Miller Canfield Pro Bono Counsel Wendy Richards. "This award recognizes their efforts, and the firm is very proud of them."

Pro bono initiatives that were included in the nomination for the award include:

- **Small Business Legal Academy (SBLA).** Miller Canfield has had a leading role in presenting SBLA, partnering with Detroit Entrepreneur Week prior to 2017 and this year in a partnership with Detroit Startup Week. Volunteer attorneys organized and recruited presenters on legal topics of interest to entrepreneurs and coordinated one-on-one meetings with individual business owners. Hundreds of business owners have benefitted from these efforts. In a similar vein, volunteers have been legal presenters to almost all the Goldman Sachs *10,000 Small Business* Miller Canfield attorneys who have participated in these initiatives include: Brian Schwartz, Wendy Richards, Thomas Linn, Jeffrey Aronoff and Michelle Crockett.
- **Osborn Business Association (OBA).** Miller Canfield attorneys have provided the legal counseling to cohorts of aspiring businesses assembled by the OBA in northeast Detroit, offering, free workshops on key topics facing small businesses, assistance with organizing LLCs, and other services for dozens of participants. Attorneys involved in these efforts include Donovan McCarty, Melanie Shield, Jacob Hogg, Charles Oxender, Thomas Linn, Brittany Davis and Shaquari Everson.
- **Michigan Community Resources (MCR).** Miller Canfield attorneys Dorothy Heebner and Donovan McCarty have taken the lead in the preparation of a Community Land Trust Manual, which is available for free from MCR and provides guidance to Michigan non-profits in the use of this powerful development tool. Additionally, McCarty prepared several reports on economic development tools available to Michigan non-profits. At the request of MCR, the firm has also provided legal representation over the past few years to dozens of Detroit community non-profits for a broad range of legal issues, including entity formation, article and bylaw amendment, employment, contract, real estate, tax and financing.

The 2017 Detroit Community Development Awards Celebration is presented by MASCO Corporation Foundation and led by Detroit Local Initiatives Support Corporation, Community Development Advocates of Detroit, and Michigan Community Resources.

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