

Michael McGee Named Michigan Lawyers Weekly Lawyer of the Year

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Michigan Lawyers Weekly has named **Michael McGee** its 2023 Lawyer of the Year. The announcement was made at the publication's annual Leaders in the Law luncheon.

McGee served as Miller Canfield's CEO from 2013 to 2021, making him the second-longest serving CEO in the firm's 171-year history. During his tenure as CEO, he steered the firm through a period of growth, transformative change and impact.

"We are tremendously proud of our colleague and friend, Mike McGee. His unwavering commitment to excellence in the practice of law, his inspirational leadership and impactful contributions to the profession and society at large make him a true leader in the law," said Miller Canfield CEO **Megan Norris**, who succeeded McGee in 2021. "Mike's vision, compassion, and commitment have not only reshaped our firm but have also left an indelible mark on the legal profession and the broader community."

During McGee's tenure as CEO, the firm expanded its global presence and capabilities, opening offices in strategic locations such as Qatar, Ohio, and California, and reopening the office in Washington, D.C. Notably, McGee's foresight led to the creation of the firm's automated and connected vehicles practice, positioning the firm as pioneers in this emerging field.

Additionally, McGee's commitment to improving social justice, not only within our firm but in the community at large, was a driving principle during his service as CEO. Under his leadership, the firm strengthened its commitment to pro bono service when Miller Canfield appointed **Wendy Richards** as pro bono counsel in November 2016. In the summer of 2017, the firm embarked on one of its largest and most complex pro bono matters ever, the highly publicized *Hamama v. Adducci* litigation, which prevented hundreds of Iraqi nationals living in the U.S. from removal without due process in immigration courts, sparing them potential harm and even death if they were sent back to Iraq. McGee considers this among the firm's most important undertakings in the past decade.

Among McGee's proudest achievements as CEO is the firm's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. Miller Canfield has a history of being forward-thinking in diversity matters, and the commitment was reenergized in 2016 when the firm was among the 54 major firms in the U.S. to take part in the Women in Law Hackathon, an innovative program to advance the careers of women in the legal profession.

Out of the Hackathon, the Mansfield Rule was born, requiring participating law firms to demonstrate that 30% of candidates considered for advancement and lateral hiring are members of traditionally underrepresented groups, including women, people of color, members of the LGBTQ+ community and attorneys with disabilities. Miller Canfield was one of 27 firms in the country, and the only firm in Michigan, to achieve Mansfield Plus certification during the program's first year, a designation Miller Canfield has continued to hold for five years in a row.

Under McGee's leadership, the firm didn't just pledge to establish diversity metrics; it demonstrated an unwavering commitment to realizing them. This commitment was solidified by the appointment of DEI director Michelle Crockett to the post of deputy executive officer in 2020—a testament to McGee's dedication to breaking barriers, promoting genuine inclusivity and going beyond rhetoric to redefine power dynamics.

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Michigan Lawyers Weekly's annual Leaders in the Law recognitions honor the contributions of attorneys who are committed to excellence in the practice of law and who have demonstrated leadership in the profession and their communities. Those recognized as Leaders in the Law vote to select the Lawyer of the Year.