

Miller Canfield Honors Matthew Allen with 2026 Seryak Award for Outstanding Pro Bono Service

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Miller Canfield has named Matthew P. Allen the recipient of the firm's 2026 Seryak Award, an internal honor recognizing outstanding pro bono service and commitment to ensuring access to justice.

Established in 2015, the Seryak Award honors the legacy of Richard J. Seryak, a leading employment lawyer and litigator at Miller Canfield for nearly 40 years. Seryak was deeply committed to helping individuals without resources access the legal assistance they needed and set a lasting standard for professional excellence, client service, and dedication to pro bono and community engagement.

Allen's pro bono work reflects that legacy in both impact and leadership. Recently, he helped lead a federal civil rights trial on behalf of a Michigan Department of Corrections prisoner alleging assault and battery under Michigan law and excessive force under the Eighth Amendment.

"Matt represents the very best of Miller Canfield: outstanding advocacy, deep professionalism, and a strong sense of responsibility to the communities and systems we serve," said Miller Canfield CEO Michael Palizzi. "His work advances access to justice, strengthens our profession, and builds skills and confidence across our teams. We're proud to recognize him with the Seryak Award."

In addition to individual representation, Allen has also played a key role in supporting the broader legal community. As an officer of the Eastern District of Michigan Chapter of the Federal Bar Association, he led negotiations related to an organizational separation from the national FBA, a multi-year effort designed to preserve and strengthen programming and resources relied on by the federal bench and bar for decades.

"The longer I practice law, the more stewardship I feel for our system of justice, the people who rely on it, and the people who make it function," Allen said. "Pro bono work allows us to put that stewardship into action, whether we're helping individuals who would otherwise go without legal representation or supporting the institutions that protect access to justice."

Allen is also active in civic and professional leadership at the national, state, and local levels. He serves in leadership roles with the American Bar Association, State Bar of Michigan, Oakland County Bar Association, Oakland County Bar Foundation, Detroit Bar Association, and the Eastern District of Michigan Bar Association. He also serves on the board of Leadership Oakland, a leadership incubator for Southeast Michigan professionals across sectors.