

Miller Canfield Scholarship Helps Provide Free Classes for Elected Officials at UM-Dearborn's Institute for Local Government

October 30, 2009

The Institute for Local Government at the University of Michigan-Dearborn will be able to provide broader educational programs to civic leaders thanks to a \$1,000 gift from Miller Canfield, the international law firm based in Detroit.

"These scholarships will enable more elected officials whose budgets are so strapped to take advantage of our learning opportunities at no cost to them," according to Dale Thomson, assistant professor of political science and director of UM-Dearborn's Institute for Local Government (IFLG).

Miller Canfield, known for its public finance work in the Midwest and representing many Michigan governments, has been a longtime supporter of the IFLG. Some of the firm's public finance lawyers sit on the IFLG advisory board and continue to lead classes and workshops.

"Michigan governments at all levels are facing unprecedented economic hurdles, so it's more important than ever to collaborate with peers and discuss challenges and opportunities," said Michael P. McGee, a Miller Canfield public finance lawyer and IFLG advisory board member and instructor. "Miller Canfield is pleased to continue to support and help grow this invaluable program with these scholarships."

The IFLG was founded in 2004 to help develop stronger civic leadership in the region. The IFLG offers a range of programs for school board members, mayors, city council members and village and township trustees to help them enhance their knowledge in government finance, policy-making, leadership and other subjects critical to effective leadership from elected officials. Classes and workshops typically range in cost from \$50-\$80 per session and tackle a wide range of topics including municipal/school district collaboration, campaign financings, fundamentals of planning and zoning, and being a young government leader.

"Miller Canfield has always been a strong supporter of ours, providing a significant amount of pro bono work and time in the class room and board room," Thomson said. "We've always been grateful for the work they've done, and this recent gift of scholarships is a show of their support for stronger civic leadership in the region."

The 2009-2010 schedule is as follows:

- Fundamentals of Local Government: Thursday, December 3, 2009
- Essentials of Public Service: Thursday, December 10, 2009
- Fundamentals of Planning & Zoning: Thursday, January 14, 2010
- Fundamentals of Finance: Thursday, January 21, 2010
- Understanding Your Budget: Thursday, February 4, 2010
- Ethics (tentative Wednesday, January 13 or 20, 2010)
- Labor Contracts/Act 312 (tentative Thursday, February 25, 2010)

Elected officials interested in the scholarship opportunity should contact Susan Rowe, IFLG Program Coordinator, at 313.593.5140.