

# Legal People

**Hill, Kessler, Kilian, Smith, & Lynn** is pleased to announce attorney **Raf Welch** has joined the firm's Michigan office.

Welch practices health care law with a focus on general corporate matters and contracting. Welch's experience includes defense of catastrophic medical malpractice claims, defense of controversial health care professionals from 42 U.S.C. 1395f (Debarred Individuals) claims, the defense of licensed health care professionals and professional organizations before the State of Michigan's Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs and audit defense before private insurers as well as state and federal regulatory and compliance agencies.



Raf Welch

He received his Bachelor of Arts in Economics from Western Michigan University and his law degree from Western Michigan University School of Law.

Welch is admitted to practice in Michigan and is a member of the American Health Lawyers Association, the Health Law Section of the State Bar of Michigan, and the Oakland County Bar Association.

Brooks Kushman attorney **Jonathan D. Nikkila** and **Rachel A. Smith** have been appointed as Michigan Intellectual Property Law Association (MPLA) officers for the 2016-2017 term. Nikkila will serve as president and Smith will serve as second vice-president.



Jonathan D. Nikkila

As president, Nikkila will be responsible for acting as the official representative of the association. In his role he will provide leadership and strategic vision to the organization to aid in its growth and importance, offer guidance to the organization's standing committees and preside over all meetings of the membership, as well as the Board.



Rachel A. Smith

As second vice president, Smith will plan the annual Judge's golf outing of more than 170 attendees which entails organizing invitations and selecting a char-

of the organization's succession planning model.

Together as MPLA leaders, Smith and Nikkila will oversee programs that promote the organization's mission and core values such as law school outreach programs and lectures, community outreach, coordinating networking events, organizing CLE credit luncheons and other on-going educational opportunities for members.

Brooks Kushman also announces that it has been listed as a gold-standard patent firm in Intellectual Asset Management's (IAM) annual Patent 1000 guide for the third consecutive year. Of six Michigan firms listed in the directory, Brooks Kushman is the only firm listed as a gold-standard patent firm.

In addition to the firm's recognition, President **Mark A. Cantor** and Shareholders **William G. Abbott**, **John E. Neman**, **Suzette G. Shah**, and **Frank Angileri** were also recognized as patent leaders in Michigan. Cantor and Angileri are both recognized for their intellectual property litigation experience, while Abbott, Neman and Shah are each recognized for their expertise in patent prosecution. Neman, Shah and Angileri's practices also include post-grant proceedings before the U.S. Patent Trial and Appeal Board.

"We are proud to be listed as Michigan's only gold standard firm for the third consecutive year," said Cantor. "This honor is a direct reflection of our incredible team of patent prosecution and IP litigation attorneys and the exceptional work of our staff."

**David M. Nalviger** joins **Hongman, Miller, Schwartz, and Cohn LLP** as a partner in its Intellectual Property Department's Patent Practice Group. He will be located in the firm's Bloomfield Hills office. He is one of six IP attorneys to join the firm this year and one of 75 since January 2013. Hongman has been committed to strengthening its IP practice and now counts nearly 90 professionals in its IP team.



David M. Nalviger

Nalviger has been a patent attorney for nearly eight years focusing on the preparation and prosecution of applications, and preparation of patentability and infringement opinions. He has represented large automotive clients, aerospace electronic systems manufacturers and leading software corporations. Before becoming an attorney, Nalviger worked as an electrical engineer for a major aerospace company in its laser product development group. He is admitted to practice in Ohio and before the United States Patent and Trademark Office. His application to practice in Michigan is currently pending. Nalviger joins Hongman from the Troy office of Cantor Colburn LLP.

He earned a law degree from Case Western Reserve University School of Law and a B.S. in electrical engineering from Purdue University.

The Third Circuit Court and the Detroit Metropolitan Bar Association presented Law Day 2016 Detroit on May 13. Approximately 300 high school students from 17 Detroit schools participated in the event, which educates young men and women about the opportunities available in the legal profession and court system. The judge spent time with judges and attorney mentors, and participated in group exercises and oral arguments.

**Daniel Rizzo**, of located in the firm's Troy office, served as volunteer.

Secret Wandle is also a longtime supporter of the Carter & Clinton Foundation of America's (CFCFA) Michigan Chapter which presented its 9th Annual Spring into Style Fashion Event at the Townsend Hotel in Birmingham on May 5. The occasion was attended by more than 350 guests. Fashion items from select Somerset and Birmingham fashion boutiques were on display, presented by RGA Model Management. A silent auction and an intimate raffle were featured. Proceeds provide funding for CFCFA's mission to support research, raise awareness, and provide education and support to CBD patients.

Secret Wandle Senior Partner and Co-Managing Partner **Shark Morley's** daughter, **Laura Zaidman**, attended the fashion and served on the Benefits Committee. Morley's son-in-law, **Chris Zaidman**, of **Ernst & Young**, serves as a member of the organization's Board of Directors.

Secret Wandle is a law firm specializing in defense litigation and counsel for insurance, municipal, and commercial clients headquartered in Troy with additional offices in Grand Rapids and Lansing.

**Farmington Hills-based Young & Associates** has hired **Clara Rhodenblatter** and **Laura Ellis Bantick** to join its professional legal staff. Young & Associates founder **Rodger D. Young** made the announcement.

Rhodenblatter and Bantick will represent both plaintiffs and defendants in actions across the country, assuming day-to-day responsibilities for a variety of multi-million dollar cases focused on complex business litigation in areas ranging from automotive and contract to complex contract and intellectual property.



Clara Rhodenblatter

Prior to joining Young & Associates, Rhodenblatter was a law clerk for North Carolina Court of Appeals Judge **Chris Dillon**. He graduated from the University of North Carolina Law School at Chapel Hill.

Bantick comes to the Young & Associates team from her position as a litigation attorney for the national law firm **Sedwick LLP** in San Francisco where she represented corporate clients in commercial cases and served as a member of the lead team for California's largest public utility company in a \$1 billion complex tort litigation matter.



Laura Ellis Bantick

She attended the London School of Economics, ultimately received her B.A. in Economics from Colby College, and graduated from the University of Michigan Law School.

work in the firm's Tax Practice Group.

The announcement was made by the firm's President and CEO, **Steven D. Salen**.

Kaplan works with businesses and their owners to solve difficult tax issues ranging from tax compliance to tax planning and litigation. He also works with corporations, partnerships and limited liability companies in structuring business reorganizations, combinations, and separations.



Evan H. Kaplan

Kaplan's previous experience working at the Internal Revenue Service provided him with a unique perspective on how to tackle challenging tax problems facing businesses and their owners in today's economic climate. He not only understands the intricacies of the Code and Regulations, but also has personal experience working on the inside with IRS counsel, revenue agents, officers, and appeals officers.

Kaplan received his law degrees from Northwestern University Law School and Michigan State University College of Law, and his Bachelor of Arts degree at the University of Michigan.

A member of the State Bar of Michigan, Kaplan served as the Tax Section chair of its Practice and Procedure Committee in 2013. He is also a member of the Oakland County Bar Association, Detroit Metropolitan Bar Association, American Bar Association (Tax Section), Chicago Bar Association, Illinois Bar Association, and the Detroit Economic Club (Young Leaders). Kaplan is also admitted to practice law in Illinois.

Kaplan was awarded the Bronze Star Award from the Department of Treasury and has been named as a Michigan Super Lawyer® Rising Star since 2014.

**Collins, Eibers, Farrell PC** is pleased to announce that attorney **Ardena N. Brekken** has joined the firm's Professional Liability practice group. While Brekken's focus will be on the defense of professional liability claims, her experience spans several areas including civil and business litigation, employment law, family law, and municipal law. Brekken has litigated for individuals and businesses to correct and/or prevent disputes, non-compete and other employment agreements, discrimination and other employment claims defense, lawsuits and business management, garnishment, and landlord/tenant disputes.

Brekken graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Nevada in 2008, and received her law degree from Hamline University School of Law in 2012. She had been practicing law in the state of Minnesota until she recently moved to Michi-

gan. While residing in Minnesota, Brekken volunteered his time at the Reddy-Norris Family Pathway, a group that assists in representing individuals in family law cases who cannot afford private representation. His contributions were recognized by the Minnesota State Bar Association when they named him a "North Star Lawyer," a distinction given to attorneys who provide over fifty hours of pro-bono work. Brekken was also active in the local community as a volunteer in the Friends Make a Difference Mentoring Program, where he worked with at-risk middle school and high school students.



Ardena N. Brekken

Brekken is licensed with the State Bar of Michigan, the Minnesota State Courts, and the U.S. District Court, District of Minnesota. Brekken is a member of the Oakland County Bar Association.

The law firm of **Erman, Tricker, Zerkow, & Freedman PC** in Southfield is pleased to announce that **Deanne A. Rablanoff** and **David M. Eisenberg** have become shareholders of the firm.

Rablanoff's practice focuses on bankruptcy and reorganization related matters, commercial litigation and post-judgment collections.



Deanne A. Rablanoff

Eisenberg's practice concentrates on business-related insolvency, workout, commercial litigation and collection matters.



David M. Eisenberg

To submit an announcement for the next Legal People section, e-mail: [editor@legalnews.com](mailto:editor@legalnews.com)



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