

RICHARD C. MILLS

Senior Counsel

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PRACTICE AREAS

Estate Planning Services
Business and Wealth Succession Planning
Probate Administration and Litigation
Tax-Exempt Organizations

EDUCATION

The University of Detroit Mercy School of Law (J.D., 2005)
The University of Detroit Mercy (M.B.A., 2005)
Aquinas College (B.S.B.A., 2001)

ATTORNEY

Richard Mills is an experienced attorney who specializes in estate planning, trust and estate administration, and charitable giving. For more than 15 years, Rick has helped families, businesses, and charitable foundations establish legally and financially secure futures.

Rick is passionate about advising philanthropists and supporting his community. He has served on the boards of several foundations, museums, and charitable organizations. Rick actively participates in developing Michigan's trust laws and regularly shares his knowledge through speeches and publications, including articles for national publications such as Thomson Reuters' "Estate Planning" and the American Bar Association's "Probate & Property." He frequently presents at Michigan's annual Probate and Estate Planning Institute, national conferences, and continuing education programs for attorneys, speaking on trust law, private foundations, and charitable tax planning.

As a leader of the Probate and Estate Planning Section of the State Bar of Michigan, Rick helped draft Michigan's trust decanting, self-settled asset protection trust, and divided and directed trusteeship legislation. As an American Bar Association leader, he's helped draft comments to the U.S. Treasury Department on proposed regulations related to donor-advised funds and met with its Office of Tax Policy to discuss important issues on behalf of charitable planning attorneys and their clients.

Rick co-edits the book "Drafting the Michigan Trust," published by the Institute for Continuing Legal Education and the University of Michigan, and authored the chapter on charitable trusts. Currently, he is writing the latest edition of "Charitable Gift Planning: A Practical Guide for the Estate Planner," originally written by David Ray, Jr. and published by the American Bar Association.

Rick has served as an expert witness on estate planning ethics and successfully argued a key case cited on the Doctrine of Election - *McConnell v Demyanovich* - before the Michigan Court of Appeals. The court ruled that a trust beneficiary who elects to accept a trust distribution is later foreclosed from challenging the trust's validity.

ADMITTED

U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, 2013

U.S. District Court for the Western District of Michigan, 2006

State Bar of Michigan, 2005

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Bar Foundation, Fellow

American Bar Association, Member, Real Property, Trust and Estate Law Section, Chair of the Charitable Planning and Organizations Group

Institute for Continuing Legal Education, Contributor and Member of the Probate and Estate Planning Advisory Board

Jackson Area Estate Planning Council, Past President

Jackson Community Foundation, Incoming Board Chair

Jackson County Bar Association, Past President

State Bar of Michigan, Probate and Estate Planning Council Officer and Associate Editor of the Michigan Probate and Estate Planning Journal

State Bar of Michigan Bar Foundation, Fellow

Washtenaw County Bar Association, Past Co-Chair of the Estate, Probate, and Trust Section

Washtenaw Estate Planning Council, Member

COMMUNITY AFFILIATIONS

Alpha Sigma Nu National Jesuit Honor Society, Member

Catholic Lawyers Guild of the Diocese of Lansing, Member

Clark Lake Yacht Club, Member

Delta Theta Phi Law Fraternity, Detroit Metropolitan Alumni Senate, Member

Jackson Catholic Schools, Board Member

St. John the Evangelist Parish, Jackson, Lector and Knights of Columbus Member

Rick earned his bachelor's degree in accounting and business from Aquinas College, then his master's in business degree and Juris Doctor from The University of Detroit Mercy. He is pursuing the chartered advisor in philanthropy (CAP) designation issued by the American College of Financial Services.

Rick enjoys engaging in sophisticated legal and tax analysis. More importantly, he appreciates how his practice allows him to serve as a trusted family counselor and connect personally with his clients. Every client is unique, and he believes that estate planning discussions should always begin with: what do you want to accomplish? He is honored to help his clients realize their philanthropic dreams and is passionate about working alongside them to make their vision a reality.

Rick and his family live in Jackson, MI, and his children are sixth-generation Jacksonians. He enjoys boating, tennis, travel, and Lumen Christi Titan and Michigan football. Despite the many disappointments, Rick is also a die-hard Detroit Tigers fan.

NOTEWORTHY

Selected to the 2019 - 2023 Michigan Super Lawyers list for Probate and Estate Planning

Selected to the 2013-2018 Michigan Rising Stars list for Probate and Estate Planning

2015 American Bar Association Excellence in Writing Award for the article "Doing Good, While Doing Right by Your Clients: A Guide to Ethical Considerations for Estate Planning Attorneys Serving on Charitable Boards," published in "Probate & Property"