

# Firm History

Founded in 1878, the main office of the law firm known today as Dickinson Wright PLLC has always been located within a three-block radius of its original location in the heart of Detroit. Its founders were Henry Munroe Campbell and Henry Russel, both native Detroiters and graduates of the University of Michigan Law School. "H.M.," as Campbell was affectionately called, was the son of a long-serving justice of the Michigan Supreme Court and was admitted to the bar in 1877. Russel was an assistant attorney for the Michigan Central Railroad Company. The young men began their partnership in the general practice of law from an office in the Campau Building, which once stood on Griswold.

In the early days, Russel devoted much of his time to his railroad caseload, while H.M. was responsible for the development and operation of the fledgling organization. Before long, the pair was joined in the Firm by Charles H. Campbell, H.M.'s brother and a fellow alumnus of the University of Michigan, who took over most of the clerical work and the legal matters involved with the conveyancing of real estate.

The Firm flourished from its earliest days. One of its first significant transactions was the acquisition, drainage and sale of marshlands along the Detroit and Rouge rivers on behalf of the Michigan Central Railroad Company. These lands were later sold at great profit to numerous large corporations and launched the Firm's very successful trust business.

It is no coincidence that the success of the Firm closely paralleled the growth of the city of Detroit, especially in the years from 1900-1930. It was during this period that the city experienced explosive growth due to the evolution and popularity of the automobile as a viable means of transportation as well as the proliferation of manufacturers of ancillary products and services. Growth in other business sectors, such as general manufacturing, mercantile business, real estate development, banking and trust business, further contributed to the Firm's growth.

Internally, the Firm was evolving rapidly as well. By 1900, the three partners were supported by four associates, a real estate manager, a bookkeeper, and a stenographer

and had relocated their office to the old Union Trust Building. One of those associates, Harry C. Bulkley, became a partner of the Firm in 1901, and in 1906, the Firm name was changed to Russel, Campbell & Bulkley. Over the years, the name changed numerous times to reflect both the contributions of new partners and the departure of the old. The Firm adopted its current name, Dickinson Wright PLLC, when it established itself as a professional limited liability company in January 1998.

Since its inception, the Firm has been instrumental in a number of events of historical significance. Members of the Firm were involved in the drafting of the state of Michigan's two constitutions in the twentieth century: first in 1908, when Henry Campbell served as a delegate from Wayne County to the constitutional convention; and again in 1963, when William B. Cudlip and Richard C. VanDusen were elected as delegates. Mr. Cudlip served as chairman of the same committee on which Campbell served at the 1908 convention. Mr. VanDusen served on the 1963 convention's committee on rules.

The Firm's Chairman, Dennis W. Archer, was elected Mayor of the City of Detroit in 1993, and was the first African American to serve as the President of the American Bar Association.

The Firm has been prominent in financial matters as well, including the effort to organize a new national bank in Detroit after President Franklin D. Roosevelt closed all banks nationwide in 1933. During World War II, the organization assisted the National Bank of Detroit in developing loans to war industries that were guaranteed in whole or in part by the United States.

On the legislative front, the Firm has drafted several significant statutes, including the Michigan Financial Institutions Act of 1937, which was the predecessor of the 1969 banking code; and the Intangibles Tax Act, which established a uniform taxation plan. The Industrial Facilities Tax Act of 1974, which allowed tax abatements for corporations, was initially prepared by the Firm, as was the Community Property Tax Act of 1948, which

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permitted federal joint income tax returns for married people in non-community property states like Michigan.

The Firm has enjoyed numerous long-term relationships with nationally known companies. The law Firm has been associated with Chrysler Corporation since its organization in the 1920s, and lent its expertise in the process leading to the loan guarantee authorized by the United States Congress that permitted financial restructuring of the carmaker in the 1980s. Its association with both Ford Motor Company and Kmart Corporation spans recent decades. But perhaps the strongest testimony to the Firm's commitment to its clients is its association with Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, which dates back to the turn of the last century.

Another noteworthy association was with the once prosperous McLouth Steel Corporation, for whom the Firm handled a number of important pieces of litigation. One such case involved an alleged patent infringement suit brought when McLouth installed a system in its plant that allowed the conversion of pig iron into steel,

producing a much better grade of steel at a much lower cost. A patent on the process held by another developer was pending, and the developer sued. The U.S. Court of Appeals eventually ruled in favor of McLouth, thus making a valuable process for the production of better and more inexpensive steel available to the entire U.S. steel industry.

Today, Dickinson Wright employs more than 260 attorneys, 25 legal assistants, and 200 support staff members in offices located in Detroit, Bloomfield Hills, Lansing, Grand Rapids, Ann Arbor, Washington, D.C., Toronto and Nashville. It has expertise in more than 40 areas of legal practice and has a worldwide presence due to its virtual office concept and innovative technology systems.

Dickinson Wright's founders would no doubt marvel at this practice diversity as well as at the diversity of its workforce and the technology the Firm now uses as it moves beyond its 125th anniversary.

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# Firm Profile

Dickinson Wright was founded in Detroit in 1878 by two young lawyers, Henry M. Campbell and Henry Russel, and has since grown to be one of the most respected law firms in its region. With more than 260 attorneys and offices in Detroit, Bloomfield Hills, Lansing, Grand Rapids, Ann Arbor, Washington, D.C., Toronto and Nashville, the firm provides comprehensive legal services to a broad range of clients, from very large corporations to small businesses, new ventures, individuals and governmental units.

The breadth of the firm's capabilities is reflected in the list of more than 40 practice areas in which its attorneys specialize. This exceptional level of expertise is matched by the firm's nearly 130 years of commitment to the service of each client. Dickinson Wright attorneys have represented many companies on the firm's client list for more than three-quarters of a century and, in a few instances, even longer.

Forty-five Dickinson Wright attorneys are listed in The Best Lawyers in America 2009, a publication that is compiled by professional research company Woodward/White Inc. Best Lawyers is widely regarded as the preeminent referral guide to the legal profession in the United States. The list, which represents 80 specialties in all 50 states and Washington D.C., is compiled through a peer-review survey in which thousands of the top lawyers in the U.S. confidentially evaluate their professional peers.

Fifty-four Dickinson Wright attorneys are listed in 2008 Michigan Super Lawyers, which names the state's top lawyers as chosen by their peers and through the independent research of Law & Politics. Six Dickinson Wright attorneys were named to Super Lawyers "Rising Stars" list, which names the state's top young attorneys.

In 2008, Chambers USA, publisher of the world's leading guides to the legal profession, named Dickinson Wright's Banking & Finance, Real Estate, General Commercial Litigation, Labor & Employment, and Corporate/M&A practices "Top Ranked" practices in Michigan. Twelve attorneys practicing in these areas also were named "Leaders in their Fields." London-based publisher Chambers & Partners conducts research into the strengths and reputations of U.S. law firms by state, through in-depth interviews with peer and competing-firm attorneys, in-house counsel and significant purchasers of legal services.

Additionally, Dickinson Wright was selected for inclusion on a list of "Go-To Law Firms" in a 2008 survey of Leading Financial Services Companies. As a "Go-To Law Firm," Dickinson Wright is recognized as one of the law firms that Leading Financial Services Companies rely upon. ALM, the leading integrated media company serving legal, real estate, financial and business professionals, gathered data on Leading Financial Services companies' primary law firms first by surveys sent to General Counsel and through research in various resources, including public records, key publications and well-respected commercial databases.

Dickinson Wright's Chairman, Mr. Dennis W. Archer, was named to Lawdragon Magazine's "100 Managing Partners You Need to Know" list, and he was named one of the nation's 50 Most Influential Minority Attorneys by The National Law Journal.

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# Diversity Commitment

At Dickinson Wright, diversity is an initiative as well as an achievement. In support of diversity, the firm has adopted a Diversity Mission Statement, and its commitment to a diverse workplace is a reflection of the value it places on offering clients a variety of perspectives and differing mindsets in approaching complex legal issues. Dickinson Wright is, and has been for decades, a pioneer in all aspects of diversity both within the firm and in the communities in which it does business. The firm is dedicated to the active recruitment, retention, development and promotion of minority attorneys who reflect the clients and communities that it serves.

Dickinson Wright prides itself on the significant number of minority and women attorneys at all levels within the firm, as well as a diverse staff. Women and minority lawyers hold significant leadership roles in the firm's management. For example, Bernadette M. Dennehy is on the Management Team and is responsible for Marketing and Finance. Kathleen A. Lang is one of five Practice Area Managers. W. Anthony Jenkins is a member of the Benefits Committee. Kester K. So is on the Opinion Committee and, along with W. Anthony Jenkins, Co-Chairs the firm's Diversity Committee. Ms. Lang, Mr. Jenkins and Mr. So have each been elected by the firm's members to the Governing Board.

In addition to participating in the executive management of the firm, many minority and women members are actively involved in prominent leadership roles in the legal and civic communities. Dennis W. Archer is the immediate past President of the American Bar Association, past president of the National Bar Association and serves on a number of corporate boards. W. Anthony Jenkins is a member of the American Bar Association Presidential Appointments Committee, current Treasurer of the State Bar of Michigan, a member of the State Bar of Michigan Board of Commissioners, and past President of the Detroit Metropolitan Bar Association. Kathleen A. Lang is a Litigation Advisory Board Member and frequent faculty member for the Michigan Institute for Continuing Legal Education. Maurice G. Jenkins was Chief Labor Counsel, General Motors Corporation, and is a Member of the Labor and Employment Sections of the State Bar of Michigan and American Bar Association. Kester K. So is a member and past Chairperson of the Public Corporation

Law Section Council of the State Bar of Michigan and was appointed by the Governor to serve on the Council on Labor and Economic Growth. Patrick J. Miles, Jr. is Chairman of the Aquinas College Board of Trustees and is a member of the boards of Spectrum Health Hospitals, Metropolitan Grand Rapids YMCA, DeVos Children's Hospital Foundation and Hope Network.

Dickinson Wright's leadership in diversity has received national recognition. The firm was named one of the Top 100 Law Firms for Diversity in the 2007 edition of *Multicultural Law* magazine. The Spring 2004 issue of *Minority Law Journal* ranked Dickinson Wright among the top five firms in the country based on percentage of African-American attorneys. In 2002, Dickinson Wright was named by its long-time client, DuPont, as one of a select number of firms to receive DuPont's 2001 Challenge Award, which was based on a stringent set of criteria, including "outstanding commitment to diversity in the legal profession, cost-effectiveness in the delivery of legal services and savings to DuPont, contributions in the area of technology, sustained support of the DuPont Legal Model and leadership in organizing the DuPont Minority Counsel Conference in Detroit." DuPont also recognized the firm with this distinction in 1999.

Diversity and the variety of perspectives it fosters are highly valued in every aspect of Dickinson Wright's environment and culture.

## Promoting and Supporting Diversity

Dickinson Wright supports and promotes diversity through a number of proactive initiatives:

### Strategic Plan

The top item on the strategic agenda of the firm's Chairman, Dennis W. Archer, is to inculcate the importance of a diverse workplace within the firm and to promote the advantages of having a variety of perspectives available to provide unique points of view on client matters. Mr. Archer's mandate is to significantly increase the number of minorities and women at the firm by seeking to hire

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aggressively qualified candidates and to expand our recruiting efforts to encompass traditionally minority-oriented colleges and law firms.

## Diversity Mission Statement

The firm has adopted a Diversity Mission Statement, which states as follows:

Diversity and varying perspectives are highly valued in every aspect of Dickinson Wright's work environment and culture. Dickinson Wright strives to be an organization that includes people of diverse backgrounds in all facets of the Firm and fully utilizes their talents to provide legal services of the highest quality. The Firm is dedicated to the active recruitment, retention, development and promotion of minority attorneys who reflect the clients and communities they serve. Through its Diversity Committee, the Firm's leadership recommends and implements strategies and practices consistent with its commitment to diversity.

### *The Firm resolves to achieve its mission by:*

- Recruiting law students of the highest caliber;
- Aggressively seeking to increase the number of minority attorneys at the Firm through recruitment, retention and promotion;
- Providing a discussion forum for topics that present unique challenges to minority attorneys in the practice of law;
- Facilitating the support and mentoring of minority attorneys;
- Arranging social, professional development and networking opportunities for minority attorneys on a frequent basis;
- Managing and monitoring the allocation and quality of work assignments provided to minority attorneys to maximize access/exposure to a wide variety of the Firm's clients and to the partners and the leadership of the Firm; and
- Ensuring that minority attorneys are represented in leadership positions and other significant decisionmaking roles within the Firm.

## Interviewing and Recruiting

Consistent with the firm's Strategic Plan and Diversity Mission Statement, Dickinson Wright conducts on-campus interviews and recruits at law schools with high

percentages of minority students. Dickinson Wright attorneys participate in minority law student job fairs (e.g., BLSA Midwest Job Fair and Cook County Minority Job Fair) and career panels. The firm reaches out to minority student organization leadership at various law schools with a letter from its chairman, Dennis W. Archer, asking their members to consider Dickinson Wright.

## Wolverine Bar Association and Floyd Skinner Bar Association Summer Clerkship

Dickinson Wright has long participated in the Summer Clerkship program sponsored by the Wolverine Bar Association (the minority bar association serving Michigan). Each year, the firm recruits one outstanding person of color from the WBA, in addition to the minority recruits from other law schools, to work at the firm as a Summer Associate. This experience provides a practical educational experience for first-year minority law students, links majority firms with the untapped pool of qualified minority law students, and increases racial, ethnic and cultural diversity in the legal profession. In Grand Rapids, Dickinson Wright participates in the Floyd Skinner Bar Association summer program, which is the functional equivalent of the Wolverine Bar Program on the west side of the State.

## Federal Bar Summer Clerkship

Dickinson Wright is a sponsor of the Summer Federal Judicial Extern Program for Minority Law Students sponsored by the WBA and the Judges of the District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan. The program is designed to expand judicial clerking opportunities for minority law students. Students work directly with federal judges and their clerks in preparing bench memoranda on pending cases, and view first-hand pre-trial and settlement conferences, motion hearings and trials. The Extern Program provides extraordinary experiences for law school participants and serves as a conduit for enhancing minority representation in the judiciary.

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## Summer High School Internship Program

The firm participates in the Detroit Summer High School Internship Program sponsored by the City of Detroit Finance Department. The Internship Program allows 30 minority high school students to gain workplace experience at participating law firms, accounting firms and investment banking firms, and to participate in weekly education classes focused on finance and accounting. Each student is assigned to one firm where the student receives supervised assignments four (4) days of the week, and all students attend a lecture/workshop one day of the week conducted by volunteer professionals. The workshops are designed to reinforce the workplace experience through a combination of group games, lectures and field trips. The Internship Program provides an excellent exposure to the workplace for high school students, and links the firm with potential law school minority students.

## Mentor Program

Each new Dickinson Wright associate and lateral hire is assigned a junior and senior mentor based on both area of specialty and race and/or gender. The mentors are tasked with assisting new hires to adjust to the firm and its culture and to serve as a liaison between the new hire and the firm.

## Training and Development

All associates participate in training sessions that provide ongoing legal training as well as opportunities to interact with all of their peers. In addition to standard legal-related issues, these sessions include important topics such as sexual harassment and respecting cultural and ethnic and gender diversity.

## Alternative Work Arrangements

In an effort to provide flexibility for its attorneys who have primary childcare responsibility, Dickinson Wright began providing for part-time and other alternative work arrangements long before most private law firms began to adopt such programs. The use of such flexible programs has led to the successful retention of those attorneys, primarily women, who have chosen to pursue an active practice while raising children.

## Women's Network

The women attorneys within the firm participate, on a volunteer basis, in the Dickinson Wright Women's Network. This network arranges social, professional development and networking meetings on a quarterly basis. The meetings generally are based around a timely topic or topical issue and provide a forum for interaction among the firm's female attorneys and their female clients. The network is not exclusive to women, but is designed primarily to address topics and issues that present unique challenges to women in the practice of law. The Women's Network recently established the Dickinson Wright Women's Network Scholarship. An amount of \$2,500 will be awarded annually for the next five years to an outstanding woman law student attending one of Michigan's five accredited law schools, providing a tangible contribution to the education and future of the high-potential women.

## Discussion Groups and Diversity Retreats

Dickinson Wright regularly hosts panel discussions and small seminars on the topic of diversity. The firm also recently conducted a Diversity Retreat where its minority members and associates and the Management Team met with selected clients to identify issues related to the recruitment, retention and advancement of minority attorneys and to identify client expectations and how to achieve them.

## Diversity Committee

The firm's Diversity Committee membership includes associate and member attorneys of color; a member of the Management Team; two members of the firm Governing Board; the Chair of the Recruitment Committee; a representative of the firm's Practice Area Directors; and the firm's Director of Legal Recruitment. These members are accountable not only as a committee, but individually, to fashion programs and policies to attain diversity goals firm-wide. The Diversity Committee reports its progress to the Management Team on a quarterly basis, and addresses whether it has achieved its goals as reviewed by the Management Team.

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