

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT | FIRM PROFILE

A MODERN FIRM WITH A LONG HISTORY

MILLER,
MILLER
& CANBY



MILLER, MILLER & CANBY HAS DEEP COMMUNITY ROOTS. Founded in 1946, Montgomery County's oldest law firm began when Lee C. Miller, the third woman admitted to the Montgomery County Bar Association, joined her husband, solo attorney and decorated WWII veteran Jim Miller, Sr., to open Miller & Miller in Rockville. The firm settled into a 19th century Colonial Revival house located just a block away from the county courthouses and government buildings, where the firm remains to this day. The Millers were joined in 1956 by their son Jim Miller, Jr., who was later appointed an associate judge of the U.S. District Court in Baltimore, and in 1961 by William (Bill) M. Canby, the firm's final namesake and a founder of the Montgomery County Bar Foundation.



Photo courtesy of Travis Marshall Photography.

◀ Left to right: Robert E. Gough, Michael G. Campbell, Diane E. Feuerherd, Donna E. McBride, Jody S. Kline, Joseph P. Suntum.

The firm’s primary areas of practice developed alongside the evolution and development of Montgomery County, and historically focused on land use and real estate (zoning, eminent domain, ad valorem tax appeals, sale and lease transactions, and financing), business and planning needs (business and tax, as well as trusts, estate planning & administration), and the trial and appellate litigation that flow from these practice areas.

The MSBA recently spoke to Diane E. Feuerherd, Principal Attorney, to learn more about the firm,

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the firm’s founding, future and influence in the community.

➔ How have you expanded the firm and your practice over the past few years?

The firm has expanded its reach to serve clients throughout Maryland and the D.C. Metropolitan area. The firm’s connection to real estate remains as strong as ever, and the core litigation practice has expanded to include personal injury, disputes involving business matters, eminent domain, and estate litigation, from the inception of a case all the way to the final appeal. Miller, Miller & Canby is steered by a shared goal, which is to develop and foster trusted, lasting relationships for generations with their clients, which include families, small businesses, municipalities, and nationwide corporations.

➔ Who is your target client?
Anyone, or any business, involved in a dispute, or in need of help with any and every issue arising from real property (land use and zoning, development, sale, acquisition and financing), including the creation and management of ownership entities, as well as the succession and estate planning of the owners.

➔ What sets Miller, Miller & Canby apart from other firms?
Size, outlook, and work product. The firm intentionally maintains a moderate number of attorneys, each of

whom is expected to immediately dive in, connect with clients and the legal community, and build a practice that is based on relationships, trust and effective and efficient results. Mentorship, commitment to lifelong learning, and contributing to the Bar are essential ingredients for individual and firm growth. The firm’s deep roots are a proud tradition that it continues to carry forward. Many of its attorneys have led local, state, and national organizations, including the MSBA, the Bar Association of Montgomery County, and the Montgomery County Inns of Court.

➔ How do your lawyers keep up with emerging and evolving legal issues, and why do you think this is important?

Active Bar involvement and consistent and rigorous CLE are expected of all attorneys. The firm meets regularly to discuss case issues, new developments, and legal rulings, and to share learning experiences and insight from each other’s practice.

➔ In your opinion, what are some of the ways the legal profession changed over the past few years?
The profession, along with most others, has become much more reliant and dependent on technology and specialization of practice areas. The legal profession was a decade or more behind the medical profession in the concentration of specialty areas of practice, but it has fully caught up. Every client wants the “best lawyer” to handle their specific type of case, which is why the firm has maintained its focus on all matters touching real estate and the related businesses and litigation.
In a post-COVID environment, lawyers are expected to maintain a mobile, secure, and technologically savvy practice, with flexibility and creativity to react in real time to challenges as they arise and to changes in legal standards and technology as they occur. Zoom hearings and meetings are now the norm. The legal profession will have to stay on the cusp of technological advances but also be considerate of how those changes are impacting our work and our relationships with clients and

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colleagues. Attorneys have to be more proactive, to reach out to others, to socialize, learn, grow and stay connected. That is why we believe active Bar involvement is so important.

➔ How well have your attorneys adapted to this changing environment?
This firm is adapting, thanks in part to investing time and resources over the past several years towards a wide range of technology, including cloud-based document management systems. This allowed us to transition to remote working and to continue to interact with the courts, administrative agencies, and our clients without interruption. We have been dedicated to introducing evidence presentation software in the courtroom and our written work product, to organize our arguments, present demonstrative and other documents persuasively, and untangle complex issues and cases. These technological developments, the increased efficiency of access to information, and the ability to connect and communicate with clients, are part of our continued professional advancement and learning to which there should be no end.

➔ What does community involvement look like now for the firm and where would you expect it to be in the years ahead?
All of the firm’s attorneys are personally involved in their respective communities through neighborhood organizations, as well as professional business associations in and outside the Bar. As a firm, they also contribute financially to different causes, including an annual full scholarship for a local high school student to attend Montgomery College, a long-time client.

➔ What would be your greatest hope and expectation for the firm and its progress and development over the next four years?
The firm’s goal over the next four years is to build on its strong foundation, grow its relationship with clients and others in the community, and continue to develop the next generation of attorneys, to be not only successful advocates, but also leaders within the Bar and their communities. That growth is how Miller, Miller & Canby became and will remain at the forefront of the legal profession within the County and Maryland.



◀ Diane E. Feuerherd, Principal Attorney

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