

IN THE NEWS

Butzel grows with addition of Grand Rapids-based attorneys; expands law firm's footprint with new west Michigan office

Firm News

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Additions bolster Butzel's litigation expertise and the Firm intends to add additional attorneys and services soon

DETROIT, Mich. – **Butzel**, one of Michigan's leading law firms, is growing, adding a Grand Rapids office that includes three established local attorneys who will join Butzel on January 1, 2023, according to **Paul M. Mersino**, Butzel's next President and CEO, effective in March 2023 at the firm's Annual Meeting.

According to Mersino, the addition of **Lee T. Silver**, **Michael L. Gutierrez** and **J. Terrance Dillion**, currently with Silver & Van Essen P.C., will augment Butzel's litigation practice, with the intent to grow the new location into a full-service office with the addition of more attorneys.

"We are focused on growing as a firm and adding a Grand Rapids office is part of that initiative," said Mersino. "We already have clients who conduct business in west Michigan, and this will allow us to better serve them while also broadening our client base. This an excellent time for Butzel to expand in the region, and we are doing so with some of the most respected and talented lawyers in Michigan. We could not be more excited by this expansion."

Justin G. Klimko, the firm's current President and CEO, added, "We are thrilled to welcome Lee, Mike and Terry to Butzel's ranks. They bring to us an established and highly respected presence in west Michigan. Grand Rapids is an important city and market and presents great opportunities to our firm, especially with such outstanding colleagues."

Lee T. Silver, co-founder, Silver & Van Essen P.C., said, "We are extremely excited to begin this next chapter of our practice by joining forces with Butzel. Becoming the Grand Rapids office of

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Shareholder

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President & CEO

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an excellent firm like Butzel will offer immediate benefits to our clients. This move will allow us to continue providing the same quality representation, personal service, and cost-effective solutions that our clients have been accustomed to receiving from us for decades, while also giving us a deeper bench, additional resources, and access to the multi-disciplinary expertise that Butzel provides.”

About Lee T. Silver

Lee Silver is an experienced trial lawyer who has a long record of obtaining outstanding results for his clients. He has successfully handled complex commercial litigation cases of virtually every type over the past 38 years in state and federal courts throughout Michigan and well over a dozen other states.

His representative clients range from Fortune 500 companies, financial institutions, manufacturers, and a variety of closely-held companies of all sizes to individual business owners, shareholders, executives, professionals, and other individuals. Silver is widely recognized for his success in the courtroom and has received several honors for his work as a trial lawyer based on peer review, including being named by “*Michigan Super Lawyers*” as one of the top 100 attorneys in the State of Michigan in 2021 and 2022 and being named by “*Best Lawyers in America*” as the 2023 Lawyer of the Year for Bet-the-Company Litigation in Grand Rapids. Silver has won a number of high-profile cases in his career and is frequently retained by companies and individuals to represent them in a variety of high stakes, complex commercial disputes.

In addition to a very busy litigation practice, Silver also has an active mediation/alternative dispute resolution practice. He is one of only three Mediators in Michigan to be selected as a Fellow of the American College of Civil Trial Mediators and also has been selected as a member of the American Arbitration Association’s prestigious Master Mediator Panel, which is comprised of AAA’s top Mediator’s as rated by attorneys that handle large complex disputes.

Silver also has been selected as a member of the National Academy of Distinguished Neutrals, was named by “*Best Lawyers In America*” as the 2021 Lawyer of the Year for Mediation in Grand Rapids, has been on the approved list of mediators for the United States District Court for the Western District of Michigan since 2003, and is regularly selected to serve as an Arbitrator for the American Arbitration Association, as well as in private arbitrations. His extensive experience as a mediator and arbitrator is borne out by the fact that he has successfully mediated over 900 cases and has served as an arbitrator in nearly 100 cases.

About Michael L. Gutierrez

Michael Gutierrez joins Butzel as one of the Managing Shareholders of its new Grand Rapids office.

Licensed in Michigan and Illinois, Gutierrez handles complex litigation matters and disputes for businesses and individuals throughout Michigan and nationally. He regularly represents manufacturers in supply chain litigation involving stop-shipment situations, requests for injunctive relief, volume and pricing disputes, and related “terms and conditions” negotiations and litigation.

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Gutierrez also advises business owners and officers in litigation arising out of equity interest valuation and corporate governance disputes, including claims of shareholder and member oppression, breaches of fiduciary duties, errors and omissions of company officers and directors, and breaches of restrictive covenants.

In addition to a busy commercial litigation practice, Mr. Gutierrez also represents businesses and individuals in administrative proceedings, internal investigations, and the defense of claims arising out of the False Claims Act, federal banking regulations, federal labor regulations, as well as state regulatory and antifraud statutes.

Gutierrez has been recognized by *Super Lawyers* as a Rising Star in Business Litigation.

About J. Terrance Dillon

Terry Dillon is a former Assistant U.S. Attorney specializing in white collar criminal defense, internal investigations, and commercial litigation. He is no stranger to the courtroom. After graduating from law school, he served as an Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Michigan, handling numerous criminal prosecutions involving tax evasion and fraud by government contractors.

In white-collar criminal matters, Dillon represents both individuals and companies accused of tax evasion, health care fraud and fraud against government agencies.

Dillon also pursues and defends the interests of family businesses, closely-held companies, public corporations, and individuals in minority shareholder oppression, breach of contract, business torts, and other commercial disputes.

He is an advocate who can present complex concepts and intricate facts in ways that resonate with juries.