

Secrest Wardle Partner Renee T. Townsend Has Been Named to List of *Michigan Lawyers Weekly's* 2017 "Up & Coming Lawyers"



Renee T. Townsend (pictured left), a Partner at Secrest Wardle's Troy location, has been named to the list of *Michigan Lawyers Weekly's* Class of 2017 "Up & Coming Lawyers." The 30 members of the Class were chosen by a committee who based their selections on the lawyers establishing a name for themselves, going above and beyond, and displaying the ambition, drive, determination, and accomplishments that set them apart from their peers, within their first 10 years of practice. The 2017 Class of "Up & Coming Lawyers" will be recognized at an awards luncheon on December 7, 2017, at the Detroit Marriott in Troy. Secrest Wardle congratulates all of the members of the Class of 2017 "Up & Coming Lawyers"!

Ms. Townsend is a member of Secrest Wardle's Motor Vehicle Litigation, Premises Liability, Insurance Coverage, and General Negligence practice groups. She is the youngest woman ever to be named Partner at Secrest Wardle. Ms. Townsend has recently taken on several roles within Secrest Wardle that have required her to hone her managerial skills, including supervising a team of support staff, paralegals, and associates to manage her caseload. She has been successful in recruiting a diverse group of qualified law clerks through her role as a hiring partner tasked with conducting on-campus interviews at the law schools in and around the Detroit area. Ms. Townsend has also eagerly taken on the role of mentoring young female attorneys at the Firm to guide them toward success from the very beginning of her career at Secrest Wardle.

Ms. Townsend is tenacious and fiercely dedicated when it comes to representing her clients. She is similarly dedicated to keeping clients and colleagues apprised of updates and changes in the law. As an example, when a recent Michigan Supreme Court decision came down that was game-changing for the auto law community in Michigan, Ms. Townsend authored an article regarding the breaking news for distribution the very evening the opinion was published. Immediately following publication of the article, she prepared and served as a presenter for a webinar the firm provided on the subject. Her significant dedication to the practice of the law, her clients, and her colleagues is well-recognized.

Ms. Townsend's unique background has made her a strong advocate regarding issues of diversity and inclusion in the workplace and society. Ms. Townsend has volunteered her time for various nonprofit organizations servicing minority communities, including the Chaldean American Ladies of Charity, Chaldean Bar Association, Stonewall Bar Association (LGBTQ+), Equality Michigan (LGBTQ+), and Affirmations Community Center (LGBTQ+). She has also been involved with the Risk Insurance Management Society (RIMS) in its partnership with Boys and Girls Clubs of Southeastern Michigan. Ms. Townsend is also passionate about educating her colleagues and clients about the issues facing the LGBTQ+ community. By way of example, as a member of Secrest Wardle's Motor Vehicle Litigation Practice Group, Ms. Townsend developed a webinar and newsletter to distribute to clients regarding how the gay marriage ruling had an impact on legal and insurance issues such as resident relative disputes, privileges in testimony, and wrongful death actions for surviving spouses.

Ms. Townsend earned her Bachelor of Science degree from Eastern Michigan University in 2007, with a concentration in Legal Studies. She received her Juris Doctor, *cum laude*, from the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law in 2010. Ms. Townsend has been named to the Michigan Rising Stars List by *Michigan Super Lawyers* from 2013 through 2017. She has also been selected as one of the Top Women Attorneys in Michigan by *Hour Detroit* from 2014 to 2017. Additionally, Ms. Townsend has consistently received an AV Preeminent® Peer Review Rating by Martindale-Hubbell since 2015.

Michigan Lawyers Weekly was founded in 1986 and reports on the latest legal news from across Michigan. The publication provides digests of the most current opinions from state and federal courts in Michigan as well as reporting changes to court rules, verdict & settlement reports, attorney and judicial discipline matters and all other news vital to attorneys in the state.

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



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