



MANTESE HONIGMAN, PC

ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS

www.manteselaw.com

Metro Detroit Office

1361 E. Big Beaver Rd.
Troy, MI 48063
Ph. 248-457-9200

West Michigan Office

125 Ottawa Ave. NW, Ste. 268
Grand Rapids, MI 49503
Ph. 616-358-4150

New York Office

250 East 54th, #25A
New York, NY 10022
Ph. 212-401-4008

Missouri Office

518 S. Hanley Rd.
Clayton, MO 63105
Ph. 314-656-6927

Gerard V. Mantese****

David M. Honigman

Ian Williamson

Theresamarie Mantese

Douglas L. Toering

Terry Milne Osgood

Kathryn R. Eisenstein

Emily S. Fields

Michael S. Butterfield***

Patrick L. Klida

Brian P. Markham

Kristen Y. James*

Paul J. Tahan**

Nasrin Oveys

Kenneth Chadwell, of Counsel in MI

Kenneth Kingma, of Counsel in MI, MO

February 27, 2025

Attention: Ms. Carrie Sharlow
Representative Assembly Awards
State Bar of Michigan
Michael Franck Building
306 Townsend Street
Lansing, MI 48933-2012
repassembly@michbar.org

RE: 2025 Michael Franck Award
Nominee: Janet K. Welch, Esq.

Dear Carrie:

I submit this nomination of Janet K. Welch for the 2025 Michael Franck Award, as she is certainly a lawyer "who has made an outstanding contribution to the improvement of the profession."

By way of background, Janet is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Albion College. After college, she became a Fulbright Scholar at the University of Zagreb in the former Yugoslavia. She then graduated from the Kennedy School of Government's Senior Executive Program at Harvard University.

Janet's had an extensive career in state government, starting as a legislative analyst for the Michigan House of Representatives. In 1980, she was chosen to create a non-partisan legislative analysis office for the Michigan Senate, where she served as its director for 5 years. She graduated from the University of Michigan Law School, *cum laude*, in 1989.

All attorneys admitted to practice in MI unless otherwise noted

*Admitted to practice in IN only

**Admitted to practice in IL & MO only

***Admitted to practice in MI & MO

****Admitted to practice in MI, MO, NY & FL

Business Litigation Business Transactions Shareholder Litigation Health Care Law Real Estate Intellectual Property Litigation

After law school, Janet clerked for Michigan Supreme Court Justice Robert P. Griffin. She then accepted a position as executive analyst in the Office of the Chief Justice of the Michigan Supreme Court. Her work included analysis of legislative issues affecting the judiciary. She served as reporter of the Commission on the Courts in the 21st Century and as staff to the Michigan Justice Project.

In 1997, Janet became counsel to the Michigan Supreme Court, where she remained until her appointment as general counsel to the Michigan Bar in 2000. In 1998, the Council of State Governments named her a Toll Fellow for outstanding achievement and service to state government.

Janet was named executive director of the State Bar of Michigan in 2007, becoming the first woman in Michigan's history to head the 38,000-member state bar. As executive director, her duties included overseeing day-to-day operations; helping to direct policy of the Bar; implementing policies set by the Board of Commissioners and Representative Assembly; and directing the efforts of the state bar staff. Janet earned a reputation as a master problem solver, crusader for access to justice, national expert on integrated bars, and international thought leader on innovation in the legal profession during her service to the State Bar. She became a frequent keynote speaker and panelist on national and international stages.

Janet's excellent contributions as executive director included her work in bringing the Judicial Crossroads Task Force to life. The Flint-Genesee County Legal News wrote that this Task Force "did in-depth analyses of access to justice, business impact, court resources and structure, and technology, and ... created a report filled with concrete, practical, and innovative recommendations for the future of Michigan's justice system."

Discussion of Janet Welch would not be complete without including the awards and honors she has received throughout her career. The recognitions bestowed upon Janet include:

~Hudson Award, State Bar of Michigan, 2022

~Founders Award, Michigan State Bar Foundation, 2021

~Fastcase 50 Award, Fastcase, 2017

~Woman Lawyer of the Year, Michigan Lawyers Weekly, 2011

~Distinguished Alumni Award, Albion College, 2008

~Toll Fellow, Council of State Governments, 1998.



**MANTESE
HONIGMAN**

ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS

SBM Awards

February 27, 2025

Page 3

Finally, Janet has contributed her time to charitable and community organizations, where she has served in leadership positions. She currently serves on the Board of the League of Women Voters of Leelanau County. Just last year, the Board of Directors of the Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society elected Janet as the organization's secretary. She has been a member of the Historical Society for more than 30 years.

For these and other reasons, I enthusiastically nominate Janet K. Welch for the State Bar of Michigan's Michael Franck Award.

Respectfully yours,

MANTESE HONIGMAN, PC

Gerard V. Mantese