

# Michael P. O'Neil

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## Summary

Seasoned attorney with 34 years of experience in legal matters ranging from commercial litigation to distressed mergers & acquisitions to corporate governance best practices. NACD Governance Fellow®. Decades of counseling boards of directors and senior management in distressed situations.

Executive leadership accomplishments in business and philanthropy. Instrumental in the growth of my current law firm from \$20 million to \$383 million in revenue over the last 20 years, and shepherding the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra for seven difficult years.

Qualities of integrity, creativity, credibility and a passion for progress in strategic governance and risk management evident in all efforts and outcomes. In 2017, my knowledge and creative application of a novel state law remedy salvaged \$2 million in net income for the Symphony.

## Board Experience

**Director, Indiana Symphony Society, Inc. (Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra)**

January 1, 2014- Present  
Indianapolis, IN

**Active Committee service:** Chair, Governance Committee; Member, Executive Committee.

**Prior Committee service:** Finance; Audit.

## DUTIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Governance Committee Chair:

- Assist the CEO and Board Chair in identifying and recruiting other Board Members.
- Review and edit bylaws regularly.
- Prepare detailed Glossary of terms and expressions for Board and employees.
- Conduct ongoing and in-depth reviews of all directors' performance.
- Prepare and revise job descriptions for Board Chair, CEO and directors.
- Investigate and adopt best practices recommended by NACD, League of American Orchestras and other resources.

### Director:

- Review, critique and ultimately approve annual budget, audit reports and material business decisions meeting all legal and fiduciary responsibilities for Indiana's largest fine arts organization, with \$27 million annual revenues.
- Partner with the CEO and other leading Board members to ensure that Board resolutions are implemented.
- Assist in implementing Symphony's commitments to a diverse board, staff and symphonic productions that reflect the communities served.
- Current service on two special ad-hoc committees to (1) hire new Music Director (Conductor) and (2) conduct contract negotiations with musicians' union.

## Trustee, Hamblen Township Fire Protection District

January 1, 2014- Present  
Nashville, IN

### DUTIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Provide fire safety and education services.
- Contract with volunteer fire fighting company.
- Exercise taxing and borrowing authority for capital equipment purchases.
- Implement best practices and discipline to this civic board. Inherited a practice of borrowing against future tax revenues, but during my sixteen year tenure, we negated that practice and instead developed a healthy six figure surplus and "rainy day" fund.

## Director, Brown County Public Defender Board

July 1, 2018- Present  
Nashville, IN

### DUTIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Supervise and contract with private attorneys serving as public defenders.
- Interact and coordinate with County Council and Court to assure respect and teamwork for the common good of those we serve.
- Accepted request from local Judge to reinvigorate this dormant Board two years ago. By implementing basic "blocking and tackling" practices, with my leadership, the County is now eligible for quarterly reimbursements from the State, equal to 40% of all public defender salaries.

## Prior Boards:

Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee, Inc. ("kitchen cabinet" for Mayor); 2014-19.

Brown County (IN) YMCA; 2004-07.

Pathfinders International, Inc., Chicago (education and support for overseas pastors and leaders); 1995-2002.

Irving Park YMCA, Chicago; 1992-96.

Faith Tabernacle (non-denominational Christian church), Chicago; 1989-93.

Christopher House, Inc. (after school programs for at-risk youth) Chicago; 1988-92.

## Legal Career:

### Taft Stettinius Hollister LLP

Indianapolis and Chicago Offices

Partner, June 1999-current;

Practice Group Chair, 2015-present

Firm growth from 40 lawyers in 1999 to more than 600 in 2020. 2019 revenues: \$373 million. My practice is a rich mix of: providing guidance to management and boards of directors in distressed situations; business sales and other transactions; and litigation in state and federal courts. As a result, I am well versed in: finance; contracts; governance; employment; intellectual property; litigation; and real estate. Also, as a result of my decades of personal experience serving on non-profit boards of directors, I am entirely conversant with their legal issues such as: governance best practices; local government finance; criminal law; fundraising; employment; and tax-exempt activities.

## Freeborn & Peters LLP

Chicago, IL

Partner, 1994-99; associate, 1992-94

After working on larger bankruptcy and restructuring cases in Winston's national practice, I spent much of the next seven years honing my litigation skills. I assumed first-chair responsibilities and participated in numerous bench trials and evidentiary hearings, resulting in admission to the "Trial Bar" for the U.S. District Court, Northern District of Illinois.

## Winston & Strawn, LLP

Chicago, IL

Associate, 1988-92

Worked with legendary mentors in national restructuring and bankruptcy practice, both in the courtroom and at the drafting table.

## U.S. Securities & Exchange Commission

Chicago, IL

Staff Attorney, 1986-87

Represented the Commission in federal courts, primarily involving the interplay of federal securities laws and bankruptcy law.

## Law Licenses:

- Illinois, 1986
- Arizona, 1987
- Indiana, 1999

## Court Admissions:

- Illinois federal and state courts
- Indiana federal and state courts
- U.S. Court of Appeals for 7th Circuit
- U.S. Supreme Court

## Education:

J.D. Commercial Law University of Michigan Law School  
Ann Arbor, MI  
1983-86

Bachelor of Arts – Marquette University  
Political Science Milwaukee, WI  
1979-83

## Affiliations:

- National Association of Corporate Directors
- Private Directors Association
- Federalist Society
- Turnaround Management Association
- American Bankruptcy Institute
- Association for Corporate Growth
- Commercial Finance Association
- Commercial Finance Association
- Various State and Local Bars

## Personal:

Active in and committed to a myriad of community and environmental support and services including: roadside clean up, community foundations, weekend food for school children in need, reading and tutoring. Enjoy and actively support the arts, echoing the sentiment: "Art, freedom and creativity will change society faster than politics." Married 31 years; father of two adult children. Devotee of long-distance hiking since 2017, having enjoyed Wainwright's (U.K.) Coast to Coast, Austria's Lechweg and am looking forward to Ireland's Wicklow Way in 2021.