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MCCA Announces 2024 Paula L. Ettelbrick Award Honoree

Today, the MCCA (the Minority Corporate Counsel Association) is proud to announce Wesley D. Bizzell as the recipient of the 2024 Paula L. Ettelbrick Award.

The Paula L. Ettelbrick Award is presented to an individual or an organization that has accomplished unparalleled achievements in advancing LGBTQ+ attorneys. The award is named for the late Paula L. Ettelbrick whose quarter-century of work of organizations like the Lambda Legal Defense, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, and the International Lesbian and Gay Human Rights Commission, assisted thousands of individuals. Her career as an educator and mentor at institutions like New York University, Columbia University, and the University of Michigan, helped transform the national discussion regarding equality.

This year's honoree, Wesley D. Bizzell, serves as the Senior Assistant General Counsel, External Affairs, and Managing Director of Political Law and Ethics Compliance Programs for Altria. In this role, he provides counsel on matters relating to the political, legislative, lobbying, and corporate responsibility activities for the Altria family of companies. With over two decades of experience, Wesley has established himself as a leading authority on political compliance law and is a frequent speaker on these topics.

Throughout his career, Wesley has demonstrated a significant commitment to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion within the legal profession and has been a leading advocate for LGBTQ+ equality within both the corporate and legal communities. As a founder and the current chair of Altria's LGBTQ+ employee resource group, Mosaic, he has promoted LGBTQ+ visibility and allyship through programmatic and policy changes, educational trainings, and external advocacy engagements. He has driven conversation and change benefitting Altria's LGBTQ+ employees on many fronts, including successfully advocating for and leading the adoption of self-identification and pronoun usage and expanding adoption and surrogacy benefits for same-sex families.

Externally, he has served as a commissioner on the ABA's Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity Commission, and he currently serves on the ABA's Council for Diversity in the Educational Pipeline and on the advisory council for the Matthew Shepard Foundation. He has held multiple leadership



positions within the National LGBTQ+ Bar Association, including serving as President from 2019 to 2021 and currently is the Inaugural Chair of its Corporate Counsel Division. He also has been an instrumental figure in the passage of LGBTQ+ equality legislation in multiple states, often testifying in support of such bills and organizing advocacy coalitions to help ensure enactment.

Wesley's unwavering commitment to the LGBTQ+ movement not only uplifts those within the community, but also inspires others to join in the fight for justice. By challenging norms and confronting adversity head-on, Wesley paves the way for a more inclusive and compassionate world, reminding us all that progress is possible when we stand in solidarity. MCCA is honored to recognize Wesley for his tremendous achievements and the impact he has made throughout his career.

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The Minority Corporate Counsel Association (MCCA) is the preeminent voice on diversity, equity, and inclusion from the counsel's office to the C-suite and across corporate America. For over 27 years, MCCA has championed diversity in the legal profession and beyond by publishing research, providing professional development opportunities, convening thought leaders, and offering advisory services. Today, MCCA empowers members with the tools needed to know, do, and lead better – and to transform their company, industry, and corporate America for the better