



40 Under 40

Gerard Mantese

If a city's hope is in the people who populate it, then the Detroit area has reason to be hopeful.

When *Crain's* asked readers for admirable business executives under the age of 40, we were bombarded. Nominations for well over 200 executives were received, most of whom were amply qualified to be profiled in our second annual 40 Under 40 feature.

In making our selection, we looked for initiative, drive, scope of achievement, potential and community involvement. We also looked for a good mix of people — entrepreneurs and lawyers, retailers and manufacturers.

The result is the profiles that begin here and continue through Page 26. We hope you'll be as impressed as we were. **CDS**

LEGAL EAGLE GERARD MANTESE, 33

Senior partner, Honigman Miller Schwartz and Cohn

Biggest achievement: Trying to improve area housing through Habitat for Humanity.

Current goal: "To use the organization and talent and creativity that I bring to bear in counseling my business clients, and use those same skills in reaching out to the community and make that community a better place to live."

Gerard Mantese always hoped that through practicing law he would have a broad impact on society, as well as give corporations sound and thorough legal advice.

He does both — volunteering his legal skills to causes as well as serving for 10 years at Honigman Miller, where he specializes in business litigation.

The St. Louis University School of Law and University of Missouri-St. Louis graduate handles a wide variety of business matters, including breach-of-contract cases, health care, and, at one time, immigration law.

He has published articles on home-health care, citizenship, homeowners' rights and the problem of sexual assault, but has gained local recognition for his involvement in forming a western

Wayne County legal advocacy program that provides free legal services to low-income battered women.

Some 50 attorneys donate their time to represent domestic violence victims through FLAP, or the First Step Legal Advocacy Program.

The State Bar of Michigan recently certified First Step as a pro bono association, meaning that attorneys "can donate their time to the organization and know that it has been checked out and that there is a real legitimate need for legal help," Mantese said.

Building community-enhancing coalitions and providing guidance to young people — such as through a religion class that Mantese teaches — are leadership roles that Mantese values.

"I think we need to inspire our children. I really think we need to go into the schools and give them a sense of mission. I think we need to tell them our ideals, and lay the pathwork for continued growth and a feeling of hope and courage for the future."

— Amy Bodwin