

Michigan lawyer opens St. Louis office in childhood home

By: Catherine Martin May 6, 2016

On a recent Friday evening in The Hill neighborhood in St. Louis a small crowd enjoyed refreshments and wine while they celebrated the opening of a new law firm.

The gathering was more than just a grand opening, however, it was a homecoming, quite literally, for attorney Gerard V. Mantese who has opened a St. Louis office of his Troy, Michigan-based firm in his childhood home.

Mantese said his father called him in September to tell him that the home on Marconi Avenue was for sale, and he moved quickly to make an offer.

"I wanted to reconnect with my roots," Mantese said.

Renovations started in November to turn the house into a law office. At the kickoff, Mantese proudly showed off the new office, while fondly recalling the use of each room in the building's other life as home to Mantese's family, which included six children.

The bedroom he shared with his five siblings is now an office for one of the two of counsel there. His parents' former bedroom is the other. The kitchen is now the conference room and a receptionist's desk, sporting some Cardinal paraphernalia, greets visitors as they enter the front door.

As Mantese showed off the house, he reconnected with old acquaintances at the celebration, which welcomed neighbors, family, friends and other attorneys.

Bob Radice and Mantese have known each other since grade school — they also both went to Saint Louis University School of Law. Radice will serve as of counsel for the Mantese law firm, along with Jack Horas, whom Radice has known for 30 years.

"I wanted to work with Gerard and I love The Hill," Radice said when asked why he wanted to be a part of the new office. "It was the perfect storm."

"I think it's a terrific opportunity because Gerard has done extremely good work," Horas added.

The two will also maintain their separate partnership practice.

Mantese will still be based at Mantese Honigman, in Michigan, which currently has 10 attorneys. He ended up in Michigan, he explained, because a firm "made him an offer he couldn't refuse" and he later left to start his own firm.

The St. Louis office will allow him to visit home more and he said he may occasionally practice there — he's licensed in Michigan and Missouri.

For now, he was just happy to spend some time in his old neighborhood.

"It's such a trip for me to be here," he said.



Gerard Mantese stands in front of his new law office in The Hill neighborhood in St. Louis. The building was the Michigan attorney's childhood home, and also served as a storefront for his father's electrical shop. Photo by Allyssa Dudley

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