October 30, 2017

Dear Recent Law Graduate:

**RE:** APPLICATION for University of Detroit Mercy School of Law Solo and Small Firm Attorney Incubator Program. Applications due December 1, 2017.

**INVITATION** to free Solo and Small Firm Workshop, “How to Start Your Own Law Firm in an Attorney Incubator Program,” Thursday, November 9, 2017, 4:00-5:30 p.m.

As a recent Detroit Mercy Law graduate, you are eligible to apply for the 2018 Detroit Mercy Law Solo and Small Firm Attorney Incubator Program (“Program”). Attached is the Application for the Program which is to be submitted to me at simkinrg@udmercy.edu no later than 5:00 p.m. on December 1, 2017.

Established at Detroit Mercy Law in October 2014, the Program provides a supportive environment for two or three recently admitted attorneys (“Participants”) to start or continue their own law practice. Participants will be provided workspace and other valuable support in exchange for 100 hours of pro bono service and a commitment to serve low to moderate income individuals. Participants must commit to the Program Period, January 8, 2018 - December 14, 2018.

If you are committed to starting your own Michigan based solo or small firm practice in an incubator setting, this Program is for you. If your ultimate goal is to seek traditional legal employment with a law firm or other organization, you should not apply.

**Services Provided to Participants.**

The Program is for entrepreneurial-minded lawyers who seek to accelerate the successful development of their practice in an “incubator” environment. Each Participant will establish an entity, develop a business plan and budget, execute marketing strategies, create referral networks, and receive training, mentoring and more.

Participants will identify at least 1-2 areas of legal practice, such as immigration law, veterans law, criminal law, family law, etc. Each Participant will be paired with at least one mentor in their chosen practice areas. Additionally, Participants will be provided the following free resources:

- **Office Space.** Work space in the George J. Asher Law Clinic Center, or Detroit Mercy Law School that will include a desk, chair, and computer with internet access. Participants will have limited access to conference rooms and limited administrative support services available. Participants will be responsible to use their cell phone in their practice.
Mentoring. Mentors will be selected from Detroit Mercy Law alumni, members of appropriate practice sections of the State Bar of Michigan, and members of practice-specific organizations. The Clinical Program Coordinator will provide law practice management mentoring to Participant.

Business Development. Business development will include training and mentoring of Participant to create a marketing plan, and develop a business plan and budget.

State Bar of Michigan (SBM). SBM will provide the following resources to Participants:
(1) free access to the State Bar of Michigan’s hard copy library;
(2) access to the practice management helpline and website for guidance;
(3) free access to relevant digital seminars and podcasts;
(4) free admission to relevant live practice management seminars.

LexisNexis Research Services. Access to LexisNexis research services will be provided free of charge in the Law School library.

ICLE. ICLE may provide program discounts for Incubator Program Participants in addition to existing discounts for new lawyers.

Detroit Mercy Law Library. Access to law library resources including borrowing privileges, reference services/staff, and remote access to the online catalog.

Networking. Participants will be provided with information about networking opportunities, including events at Detroit Mercy Law, and workshops through the Solo & Small Firm Program, which Participants are required to attend.

Pro bono work. Pro bono opportunities will be identified for participants.

Participant Requirements.

Participant must have a motivated entrepreneurial spirit and be open to collaboration and learning from varied sources.

Participant must be willing to devote at least 100 hours to pro bono work over the Program Period.

Participant must be willing to represent individuals of low to modest incomes on a pro-bono or sliding scale fee basis.

Participant must be a State Bar of Michigan member in good standing and carry professional liability insurance in an appropriate amount at all times during the Program Period.

If selected, Participant must sign a Participant Agreement, a copy is attached.
Application Process.

1. Application materials consist of a completed application form, current resume and any other materials you would like considered (additional materials not to exceed 25 pages). Submit application materials by December 1, 2017 at 5:00 p.m. EST, to Rebecca Nowak, Clinical Program Coordinator at simkinrg@udmercy.edu.

2. Participant interviews will be conducted the week of December 4, 2017.

3. Participants selected for the Program will be notified by December 11, 2017. Those selected must confirm participation via email to simkinrg@udmercy.edu no later than December 15, 2018.

**Invitation to Free Workshop**

“How to Start Your Own Law Firm in an Incubator Setting”
When: Thursday, November 9, 2017, 4:00-5:30 p.m.
Where: Room 352 at Detroit Mercy Law School
To register to attend, email simkinrg@udmercy.edu by November 7, 2017

In addition to learning about starting your firm in an incubator setting, you will also gain knowledge of general law practice management tips to help you succeed in any size or type of private practice. Please join us for a lively discussion led by Samia Abbas Yager, May 2015 graduate, current Program Participant, and owner of Signature Legal Services, PLC.

Please let me know if you have any questions about the Program Application or Free Workshop via email or telephone at (313) 596-9409. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Rebecca Simkins Nowak, Esq.
Clinical Program Coordinator
University of Detroit Mercy School of Law  
Solo and Small Firm Attorney Incubator Program ("Program")  
2018 Application

I. **General Information**

First Name ___________________________ Last Name ___________________________

Address _____________________________________________

City ___________________________ State _______ Zip Code _____________

Phone No. ___________________________ E-mail Address __________________________

1. Are you authorized to work in the United States?  Yes  No

2. Year of UDM Law Degree ______

3. Are you available to enter the Incubator Program and begin practice on January 8, 2018?  
   Yes___  No___

4. Are you available to commit to the Incubator Program until December 14, 2018?  
   Yes___  No___

5. Did you successfully complete the LFP Small Firm Practice course?  
   Yes___  No___

6. Have you ever been self-employed in any capacity?  
   Yes___  No___
   
   If yes, what type of business? ___________________________________________

7. If you have already started a law practice, when did you begin? In what area(s) of the law are you practicing?  
   ___________________________________________

8. Do you speak any languages other than English?  
   ___________________________________________
II. **Bar Information**

Date of MI State Bar Exam ________________ Date of MPRE Exam ____________

Date of Admission to MI Bar __________ MI Bar Practice No. _______________

III. **Education**

**Undergraduate Education**

College/University ______________________ Dates of Attendance ______________

Concentration/Major ___________________ Type of Degree _____ Year Received __

**Post-Graduate Education (non-law school)**

College/University ______________________ Dates of Attendance ______________

Concentration/Major ___________________ Type of Degree _____ Year Received __

IV. **Work Experience, Awards/Honors and Additional Training**

Submit a current resume.

V. **Why Solo & Small Firm Practice?**

A. Why do you want to be a solo or small firm practitioner? (Answer in 500 words or less)

B. Why are you a good candidate for the Program? (Answer in 500 words or less)

VI. **Business Plan**

Please provide the information below with your application. This will be the framework for your Business Plan. If you are accepted into the Program, you will receive support and guidance to help formulate a more detailed and formal Business Plan.

- **Firm concept.** What is the concept for your solo or small law firm practice?

- **Background.** Provide a summary of your background, which will be used as a marketing tool. Include your education, work experience, awards, special training, volunteer and community activities, professional characteristics and philosophy, and any other information you would like potential clients to know. (No more than 300 words).
• **Intended Area(s) of Practice.** Identify at least 1-2 legal practice areas that you would like to concentrate on?

• **Marketing Plan.** Besides marketing to family and friends, what ideas do you have to market your practice to potential clients and other legal professionals?

• **Budget.** Provide a realistic budget of the start-up and operating costs, including but not limited to malpractice insurance, health insurance, cell phone, mileage for court and client travel, postage, bar dues, business cards, and marketing materials.

• **Start Up Costs.** Are you able to finance the above start-up and operating costs if selected to be a Participant?
  - Yes
  - No

VII. **Application Check-List**

- Completed and executed Application (Parts I – V)
- Current Resume
- Other materials you would like considered (not to exceed 25 pages)

**Deadlines and Notification Date.** Applications will be accepted until **December 1, 2018 at 5:00 p.m. EST** for the Program Period of **January 8, 2018** until **December 14, 2017**.

VII. **Application Disclaimer and Acknowledgement**

By signing this Application, I certify that all of the information I have provided is truthful, complete and accurate. I understand that falsification of any information in the Application, resume or other submitted materials is grounds for rejecting my application to participate in the Program, and is grounds for immediate termination of my participation in the Program if I am selected.

I authorize Rebecca Simkins Nowak, University of Detroit Mercy School of Law Clinical Program Coordinator to obtain information about my prior employment and education for purposes of considering me for the Program.

Date: ____________________________

Signature

Printed Name:
2018 DETROIT MERCY LAW
Solo and Small Firm Incubator Program ("Program")
Participant Agreement

This Agreement is entered into between ____________________________ ("Participant") and the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law ("Detroit Mercy Law") for the period of January 8, 2018 through the termination date of December 14, 2018 ("Program Period"). In exchange for participation in the Detroit Mercy Law Solo and Small Firm Incubator Attorney Program ("Program"), Participant understands and agrees to the following specific terms:

1. **Bar Membership.** Participant is required to be a member of the Michigan Bar in good standing upon entering and throughout the Program. If Participant is the subject of any disciplinary action, Participant is required to notify Detroit Mercy Law Clinical Program Coordinator ("Coordinator") who is responsible for managing the Program.

2. **Time Commitment.** Participant commits to the Incubator Program for the Program Period. Participant agrees to attend all Program events, which includes 2-3 hour sessions of the Detroit Mercy Law Center for Solo & Small Firm Practice workshops to be held in 2018. Participants will be required to submit regular progress reports with data and information about pro bono hours, new client progress, fees collected, and similar such information to the Clinical Program Coordinator.

3. **Legal Entity.** Participant is required to establish a legal business entity in consultation with a licensed attorney or CPA and to do this no later than the end of the first day of the Program Period. Assistance will be provided with this process on the first day of the program.

4. **Professional Malpractice Insurance.** Participant is required to maintain professional liability insurance at all times and to provide proof to Coordinator upon entering the program.

5. **Telephone.** Participant will be required to have a cell phone to use as their business telephone number.

6. **Start-up and Operating Costs.** Participant is responsible for all start-up and operating costs during the Program Period. By signing this Agreement, Participant certifies that he or she is financially able to cover these costs.

7. **Required Detroit Mercy Law Course Audit.** Participant is required to audit LFP Small Firm Practice course (unless successfully completed during law school) during the Program Period.

8. **Business and Practice Plan.** Participant is required to develop a formal business plan, create a marketing strategy, construct a basic website and provide proof to Coordinator by March 12, 2018. Support and guidance for these projects will be provided.

9. **Client Focus/Pro bono Obligation.** Participant is required to develop a law practice that incorporates service to low and moderate income individuals. Participant is also required to perform 100 hours of pro bono service over the Program Period. Pro bono services may commence immediately upon entering Program. Coordinator will identify pro bono opportunities for Participant to pursue.
10. **Facilities & Equipment Use.** Participant will have a desk, chair, computer with internet access, limited conference room usage, limited support staff services, and the use of copy and printing equipment in the George Asher Clinical Building or the law school. Participant will use Detroit Mercy Law equipment for business purposes only. Detroit Mercy Law reserves the right to charge Participant reasonable charges for copying and printing.

11. **Office Hours.** Participant’s office hours must be consistent with Detroit Mercy Law’s building operation hours and holiday schedule. Additionally, the Law School campus is closed on the following dates that fall during the Program Period:

   January 15, 2018    Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
   April 14, 2018     Good Friday
   May 28, 2018        Memorial Day
   July 4, 2018       Independence Day
   September 3, 2018  Labor Day
   November 22-23, 2018 Thanksgiving and day after

Participant is required to work in the office at least 2 full days per week but is strongly encouraged to be in the office as much as possible during the 5-day work week.

12. **Mentors.** The Coordinator will provide law practice management support and mentor connections to Participant.

13. **Parking.** Participants will have access to low cost student parking. For parking availability, rates and further details please contact the Student Service Center at (313) 596-0224.

14. **Termination of Agreement.** Detroit Mercy Law may terminate this Agreement at any time if it determines that Participant is not abiding by its terms. Detroit Mercy Law will provide advance written notice if any concerns arise and give the Participant a reasonable time and opportunity to resolve the concerns.

This document and the application materials submitted by Participant constitutes the entire Agreement.

(Signature)

(Printed Name)

Date: _____________________________, 2017