2023 ACC Top 10 30-Somethings: Philip Milley

Interviews and Profiles



The ACC Top 10 30-Somethings awards recognize in-house counsel between the ages of 30 and 39 for their innovation, approach to challenges, well-rounded perspectives, contributions to the in-house community, and pro bono and volunteer work.



Philip Milley, director legal and compliance at the Mastercard Foundation, leads a diverse team of nine legal professionals across Canada, Ghana, and Kenya. The organization is one of the world's

top philanthropic foundations and focuses on financial inclusion and education to improve the lives of those living in poverty, primarily in Africa.

The Mastercard Foundation is Canada’s largest philanthropic foundation with assets of C$35 billion. It was established in 2006 by Mastercard as a separate and independent organization from the company with a board of directors and management that determine its policies, programs, and funding decisions. Philip’s leadership has enabled innovative processes and tools including the design and implementation of the Foundation's bold US$1.5 billion Saving Lives and Livelihoods initiative in partnership with the Africa CDC, the health of the African Union. This crucial initiative focused on addressing the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic by ensuring the purchase of COVID-19 vaccines for at least 65 million people, supporting the delivery to millions more across the African continent, and building long-term health security by instilling vaccine manufacturing expertise and workforce development.


ACC
Association of Corporate Counsel
30 somethings
2023 AWARD
Presented to
Philip Milley
In recognition of your dedicated service and valuable contributions to the in-house legal profession

Milley receives his 2023 Top 10 30-Somethings award.

Milley highlights the foundation's focus on making a tangible impact — in 2020 alone, over 60,000 community healthcare workers were trained, 800,000 students were connected to e-learning support, 1.4 million COVID-19 test kits were delivered, almost 2 million COVID-19 PPE products were produced, and thousands of micro-small-and-medium-sized enterprises were supported.

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The organization aims to improve the lives of individuals and communities, and it measures success by the positive outcomes achieved. “For us, success is not just about dollars, but about making a difference in people’s lives and in their communities,” Philip explains. “We’re trying to enable 30 million young Africans find dignified work by 2030.”

Reflecting on his transition from private practice to an in-house role, he stresses the need for adaptability and a proactive approach to meet the diverse demands of clients. Unlike specialized roles, being an in-house counsel requires a graceful “generalism,” including being a protector and a business partner. “I’m never going to be an expert in everything. But I need to be an expert in how to learn from other people,” Philip shares. He stresses the importance of active engagement with various stakeholders within the organization, such as finance and communication teams, to better understand their needs and navigate complex business problems effectively. “We focus on principles and values like humility, listening, and doing the right thing,” he emphasizes.

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Philip is not just a frequent speaker and program chair at Continuing Professional Development events, but also a dedicated member of various executive roles within the Canadian legal community. His roles have included chair, vice-chair, secretary, and member-at-large of Ontario Bar Association Charity and Not-for-Profit Section from 2016-2022, and member-at-large of Canadian Bar Association Charity and Not-for-Profit Law Section since 2018. Additionally, he has lectured, pro bono, at the University of Western Ontario’s Charity and Not-for-Profit Law course.

Moreover, his contribution extends beyond professional organizations. He has also volunteered for various social causes. Notably, Philip has served as a director for the Christian Legal Fellowship from 2014 to 2018 and the Schizophrenia Society of Newfoundland and Labrador from 2015 to 2016. These roles underline his dedication to volunteerism and bringing his legal expertise to benefit communities.

Philip's achievements are a testament to the importance of the role of in-house counsel within the organization. His emphasis on active listening, adaptability, and ethical principles serves as a guide for aspiring legal professionals in the nonprofit sector. By embracing diverse perspectives, staying aligned with organizational values, and navigating compliance challenges, he illustrates how in-house counsel can contribute significantly to achieving impactful and sustainable change in the world of

philanthropy.

Philip Milley's acceptance speech for ACC's 2023 Top 10 30-Somethings.

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