

Jennifer M. Oertel

Member

Ann Arbor

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Jennifer Oertel provides strategic business advice and practical legal guidance to a broad range of tax-exempt organizations. She has an extensive business law background in securities, private equity, mergers & acquisitions, and corporate governance, which she leverages to further the business interests of her tax-exempt clients and the investors who support them.

Jennifer's clients include impact funds, individual impact investors, social enterprises, family and corporate foundations, community foundations, public charities, national and statewide membership organizations including philanthropic serving organizations, and chambers of commerce.

A recognized authority on tax-exempt organizations law, Jennifer is the Co-Chair of the Nonprofit Corporations Committee of the Business Law Section of the State Bar of Michigan. The Nonprofit Corporations Committee reviews and updates the state law which governs nonprofit corporations and reviews legislation regulating the solicitation of charitable contributions.

She is a frequent author and speaker on impact investing and philanthropy and has served on the boards of directors of several philanthropic organizations. Jennifer frequently judges social enterprise business plan competitions and has served as a judge for many nonprofit business plan competitions and for the *Crain's Detroit Business* "Best Managed Nonprofits" awards. Jennifer is a fellow with the Council of Michigan Foundations, serving as an expert in Residence for Impact Investing. She also authors a blog, "Impact Investing: From A to Z," for the Council of Michigan Foundations.

practices & industries

Exempt Organizations and Impact Investing
High Net Worth

education

J.D., Northeastern University School of Law
B.A., Michigan State University Honors College
Certificate in Nonprofit Management, Georgetown University

admissions

Michigan
New Jersey

Jennifer is proficient in Spanish. She has a degree in Social Work from Michigan State University and worked in social work and evaluation before becoming an attorney.

HONORS, AWARDS, AND RECOGNITION

- *Crain's Detroit Business* "Notable Women in Law" 2021
- *The Best Lawyers in America 2025-2026*, Nonprofit/Charities Law
- *Michigan Super Lawyers* 2012, 2016-2025, Nonprofit Organizations
- *Michigan Super Lawyers 2023, 2025* Top 50 Women Attorneys
- *Michigan Rising Stars* 2011, Nonprofit Organizations
- *DBusiness Magazine* "Top Lawyers" 2015-2026, Nonprofit/Charities Law
- *Who's Who in Impact Investing*, 2018
- *Michigan Lawyers Weekly* "Leaders in the Law," 2015
- Volunteer of the Year, Michigan Community Resources, 2011

CIVIC, CULTURAL, AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

- Exponent Philanthropy, Member, Board of Directors (2022-present)
- Legal Financial Network, Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan (2022-present)
- Invest for Better, Advisory Board (2021-present)
- Kind Capital, Advisory Board (2019-present)
- Case Foundation (Washington DC), Member, Impact Investing Advisory Committee
- Council of Michigan Foundations, Member, Impact Investing Committee
- Social Enterprise Alliance—Detroit Chapter, Founding Vice Chair (2013-2015)
- Michigan Youth Opportunity initiative of Wayne County, Board Member (2013-2015)
- Downtown Boxing Gym Youth Program (DBG Detroit), Advisory Board Member
- The Johnson Center for Philanthropy, Grand Valley State University, Member, "Let's get Social" Impact Investing Advisory Committee (2018-2020)
- University of Michigan Ross School of Business, Judge, Social Business Plan Competition (2016)
- Livingston County United Way, Member, Community Investment Committee (2012-2015)
- Child Safe of Michigan, Director and Member, Executive Committee (2011-2014)

- Judge of several social enterprise challenges (Great Lakes Entrepreneurs Quest, Michigan Women’s Foundation, Michigan Corps)

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- State Bar of Michigan, Member of the Business Law and Taxation Sections
 - Co-Chair, Nonprofit Corporations Committee, Business Law Section
- Business Bar Association, Member, Nonprofit Organizations Subcommittee
- Boston Bar Association, Former Member, Task Force on Professional Challenges
- Council of Michigan Foundations
 - Outside General Counsel
 - Member, Impact Investing Committee
 - Expert in Residence for Impact investing
- Council on Federations, Legal Reviewer for National Standards for Accreditation of Community Foundations
- *Crain’s Detroit Business* Best Managed Nonprofits competition, Judge (2014-2016)
- Inforum, Advisory Board for Women in Philanthropy Industry Group
- National Tax Exempt Council, Chair of the State Regulatory Roundtable

CERTIFICATIONS

- Certification in Nonprofit Management, Georgetown University

PUBLICATIONS (REPRESENTATIVE)

- "US and Cross-Border Corporate Philanthropy Structures," GGI Insider (March 2026)
- "Reflections on ESG Backlash and the Role of Philanthropy," Council of Michigan Foundations (March 2024)
- "Mobilizing the Entirety of Your Resources for Impact," Council of Michigan Foundations (January 2024)
- "Disaster Relief Philanthropy," *Michigan Business Law Journal*, Summer 2020
- "Further Evidence that Sustainable Investing Doesn’t Sacrifice Financial Returns," Council of Michigan Foundations blog post (April 2020)
- Co-Author (with Celeste E. Arduino), "CARES Act Provisions that Apply to Tax-Exempt Organizations," Bodman COVID-19 Response Team Update, March 2020

- Co-Author (with Celeste E. Arduino), "[Qualified Disaster Relief Payments](#)," Bodman COVID-19 Response Team Update (March 2020)
- Co-Author, "Comparison of Impact Investing Laws in the United States and Israel," Mission Throttle (February 2020)
- "Tax Reform: Fact, Fiction and Where We Now Stand," *Michigan Business Law Journal* (2018)
- "Tax Benefits and Charitable Giving," *Small Business Association of Michigan Magazine* (October 2014)
- "Get 'SMART': Measure Your Impact," *Nonprofit World* (June 2014)
- "Proving that they are Doing Good: What Attorneys and Other Advisers Need to Know about Program Assessment," *Wayne Law Review* (June 2014)
- "Is the L3C Right for your Enterprise," *Michigan Corps Bulletin* (April 2014)
- "Avoiding Pitfalls in Nonprofit Practice: Do THIS—Not THAT," *Michigan Business Law Journal* (June 2012)

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS (REPRESENTATIVE)

- Midwest Webinar Series (co-sponsored by Council of Michigan Foundations), "Increasing Your Payout to Increase Your Impact" (February 2025)
- Philanthropy Southeast, "Impact Investing 201" (February 2025)
- Council of Michigan Foundations, "Legal and Operational Insights" (October 2025)
- Council of Michigan Foundations, "Hot Topics in Corporate Philanthropy" (2023)
- Midwest Foundation Webinar Series, "Self-dealing and Conflicts of Interest" (2023)
- Michigan Impact Investing Hub Annual Convening, "Advanced Session on Impact Investing" (2023)
- Co-Presenter (with Assistant AG Brien Heckman), Council of Michigan Foundations Annual Conference, "Demystifying the Role of the AG's Office" (2022)
- Co-Presenter (with Celeste E. Arduino), "Forming a Nonprofit," ICLE On Demand Webcast (May 2020)
- Midwest Family Foundations Series, "Top 10 Tips for Navigating Red Flags while Leading a Private Foundation" (May 2020)
- Council of Michigan Foundations, "Legal Issues in Community Foundation Finance," (May 2020)
- Mission Investors Exchange Regional Gathering, "Exploring the Power of Impact Investing in Our COVID-19 Response," (May 2020)

- San Diego Grantmakers Impact Investing Committee, “How Impact Investing is Being Used Toward Racial Justice and Ameliorating the Effects of COVID-19” (May 2020)
- Co-Presenter (with Celeste E. Arduino), Institute of Continuing Legal Education Webinar Series, “Forming a Nonprofit Organization” (2020)
- Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation, “An Advisors Guide to Impact Investing” (2020)
- Co-Presenter (with Cris Doby, Erb Foundation and Heidi Reijm, Hudson Weber Foundation), Council of Michigan Foundations Annual Conference, “What’s the DEAL with Impact Investing?” (2019)
- Mission Investors Exchange Annual Conference, “The Lawyer is In” (2018)
- Impact Investing Legal Working Group Annual Conference, “Impact Investing as a Legal Practice Focus” (2018)
- Muskegon Area Community Foundation Annual Donor Assembly, “Using Impact Investing to Achieve Mission” (2018)
- Philanthropy Network Greater Philadelphia, “Understanding the Landscape of Impact Investing in Greater Philadelphia,” (2019)
- Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy, “Introduction to Philanthropy” (2017)
- National Conference for Community Foundations, Mission Investors Exchange, “Impact Investing” (2015)
- Co-Presenter, National Foundation Symposium hosted by O’Connor Davies LLP, New York, “Impact Investing” (2014)
- Council of Michigan Foundations Annual Conference, “Legal Pitfalls in Private Foundations: You Don’t Know What You Don’t Know” (2014)
- Co-Presenter, Association of Fundraising Professionals Development Day, “Nonprofit Mergers, Consolidations and Collaborations,” (2014)

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- Adjunct Faculty Member, Indiana University Lilly Family School for Philanthropy (Impact Investing)
 - Curriculum Advisory Committee Member

PRO BONO

- State Bar of Michigan 2025 A Lawyer Helps Pro Bono Honor Roll