

# DEVONA WRIGHT COTTRELL

Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53224

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## PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

- Results-oriented in-house counsel with over 14 years of experience as a trusted business partner advising clients on transactional matters.
  - Skilled attorney with expertise in municipal finance, real estate, contract analysis, employment, litigation issues and trademark matters.
  - Effective leader, mentor and team builder with demonstrated success in building strong partnerships and working passionately to develop best practices, identify strategic solutions and resolve legal issues efficiently and effectively.
  - Proven ability to identify and leverage strengths of team members and develop strong relationships at all organizational levels.
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## CAREER PROGRESSION

ROBERT W. BAIRD & CO. INCORPORATED – Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Associate General Counsel and Senior Vice President (2007-Present)

PRISM Co-Chair – Baird's Multicultural Associate Resource Group (2009-Present); Business Diversity Council (Member, 2011-Present); Baird Mentoring Circles (Mentor, 2010-Present); Baird's Formal Mentoring Program (Mentee, 2008-2009).

- Lead Attorney for Public Finance Business advising internal clients with respect to municipal finance transactions, compliance procedures and best practices. Developed form agreements and letters to facilitate ease of recurring municipal finance transactions.
- Lead Attorney supporting Facilities department with the negotiation and drafting of complex commercial real estate leasing transactions and related matters in the United States, Europe and Asia. Baird has 100+ branch offices in the United States, Europe and Asia.
- Provide legal guidance, strategy and support to the Marketing team for the development and maintenance of Baird trademarks in new and existing markets.
- Serve as advocate and facilitator of firm-wide employment best practices to recruit and retain talent while increasing creativity, efficiency and innovation.
- PRISM Co-Chair/Diversity Council Member. Strategize and assist in executing cultural and diversity initiatives firm-wide to provide associates with support, resources and opportunities for professional growth and development.
- Implementation of company-wide Associate Resource Group business plan and budget. Develop and execute key initiatives.
  - Series 7 Study Group – designed to increase material retention and exam success rate
  - Professional Development Series to foster associate engagement and exposure to career opportunities within the company.
  - Quarterly informational and professional development meetings with guest speakers and an annual meeting Town Hall meeting featuring members of senior management.
- Assisted with the recruitment and transition of financial advisors by providing legal advice and support regarding offer letters, promissory notes, non-compete agreements and other documentation.
- Served as conduit to litigation team on employment and recruitment matters.
- Represented and counseled internal clients with respect to Information Technology and Institutional Trading agreements.

- Drafted and negotiated vendor, travel and non-disclosure agreements.

GREATER NEW BIRTH CHURCH, INC. - Milwaukee, Wisconsin.  
Of Counsel (2002-Present); General Counsel (2001-2002).

- Provide legal guidance and support to church executive leadership team regarding corporate, employment and real estate matters.
- Prepare and review legal agreements and provide consultation.
- Draft real estate leases and notices and provide guidance on the negotiation strategy for real estate leases.

GONZALEZ SAGGIO & HARLAN LLP – Milwaukee, Wisconsin.  
Partner and Co-Head of Transactional Department (2002-2007).

- Practice focused on sale and development of commercial real estate and construction transactions, municipal finance, commercial lending, business transactions, licensing, advertising, marketing and general corporate and non-profit law.
- Drafted and negotiated large-scale, complex contracts for private and public developers and contractors.
- Provided oversight, training and development of junior attorneys and staff.

COOK & FRANKE, S.C. – Milwaukee, Wisconsin.  
Associate Attorney (1999-2001); Summer Associate (1998).

- Responsible for a wide variety of transactional matters, including matters involving general corporate and business law, tax, estate planning and intellectual property.
- Advised clients regarding business planning, estate and succession planning and reviewed and drafted agreements regarding succession planning and various estate planning options.
- Conducted research and analysis of the law for commercial litigation department. Opportunity to second-chair a trial involving professional malpractice.

### EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE (UWM) - Milwaukee, Wisconsin; M.B.A (2006).  
Executive M.B.A. Program

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN LAW SCHOOL - Madison, Wisconsin; Juris Doctor (1999).  
Advanced Opportunity Fellow (full scholarship); Business and Tax Law Association (Vice-President 1998-1999); Legal Aid Clinic Volunteer (1998-1999); VITA – Income Tax Assistance Volunteer (1998-1999); Contracts and Property LEO Tutor (1998); Black Law Students Association (Member, 1996-1999).

JACKSON STATE UNIVERSITY – Jackson, Mississippi; Bachelor of Science (1996) (*Summa cum laude*).  
Major: Political Science (Pre-Law); Minor: Business Administration.  
Nu Sigma Chapter of Pi Sigma Alpha Honor Society – Political Science Honor Society (President 1995-1996); Alpha Chi Honor Society (1994-1996); Phi Beta Kappa and Phi Kappa Phi National Honor Societies (1993-1996); Who's Who Among Colleges and Universities (1993-1996); Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. – Delta Pi Chapter (1995-1996).

### LICENSES

State Bar of Wisconsin (1999-Present); United States District Court, Eastern District of Wisconsin 1999; United States District Court, Western District of Wisconsin, 2000; Series 7 & 66 securities licensed.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS AND CIVIC ACTIVITIES

GIRL SCOUTS OF WISCONSIN SOUTHEAST  
Board Member (2014-Present).

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE FOUNDATION  
Board Member (2013-Present).

MILWAUKEE COLLEGIATE ACADEMY  
Secretary (2014-Present); Audit Committee Chair (2011-Present); Board Member (2009-Present).

SISTERS WITH STOCKS INVESTMENT CLUB (SWSIC)  
President (2009-Present).

WISCONSIN WOMEN'S BUSINESS INITIATIVE CORPORATION (WWBIC)  
Loan Committee (2009-Present).

GNB COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
Board Member (2008-Present).

CORPORATE COUNSEL WOMEN OF COLOR (CCWC)  
Member (2007-Present).

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE BOARD OF VISITORS  
Member (2006-2013).

MILWAUKEE FORUM  
Member (2006-2012); Alumni (2012-Present).

STATE BAR OF WISCONSIN  
Member (1999-Present); Diversity Outreach Committee (2000-2010).

AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION  
Member (1999-Present).

HONORS AND AWARDS

2014 THE MILWAUKEE BUSINESS JOURNAL FORTY UNDER 40 AWARD.

2009 SUPER LAWYERS MAGAZINE – WISCONSIN RISING STAR.

2007 WISCONSIN LAW JOURNAL – LEADER IN THE LAW AWARD.

2007 WOMEN IN REAL ESTATE AWARD NOMINEE.

2006 MILWAUKEE TIMES – BLACK EXCELLENCE AWARD.