

Benesch Partner Marisa Darden Named Mentor of the Year by Engage! Cleveland

SEPTEMBER 2, 2026

Benesch is proud to share that [Marisa Darden](#), chair of the firm's [White Collar, Government Investigations & Regulatory Compliance Practice Group](#), has been named Mentor of the Year in the Large Company category by Engage! Cleveland as part of its [Generation NEXT Awards program](#).

The Generation NEXT Awards recognize companies, organizations and individuals that are helping attract, engage and retain emerging talent in the Cleveland region. Honorees are celebrated for their contributions to making Cleveland a premier place to live, work and build a career.

"Marisa's commitment to mentoring and developing the next generation of talent is evident in everything she does," said Benesch Managing Partner [Gregg Eisenberg](#). "She is an exceptional leader, advocate and role model whose investment in others has made a lasting impact on our firm, our clients and the broader Cleveland community."

Since joining Benesch in 2023, Marisa has made investing in others a hallmark of her leadership, helping grow the firm's White Collar, Government Investigations & Regulatory Compliance Practice while creating meaningful opportunities for attorneys at every stage of their professional journey. She is intentional about fostering an environment where attorneys feel supported, valued and challenged, gaining hands-on experience with sophisticated investigations, regulatory matters and complex litigation.

Marisa's dedication to helping others succeed extends well beyond the firm. She serves on the board of College Now, helping students navigate higher education and explore future opportunities, and is actively involved with The Links, Incorporated, which supports the cultural and economic advancement of persons of African ancestry and professional women of African descent. Within the legal profession, Marisa contributes to the growth of emerging lawyers through leadership roles with the Federal Bar Association's Northern District of Ohio Chapter and board service with the William K. Thomas Inn of Court and the Duke Law Alumni Association. Whether guiding students, advising junior attorneys or supporting professionals seeking to advance their goals, she is known for generously sharing her time, experience and perspective to help others thrive.

In addition to her leadership and community involvement, Marisa advises companies, executives, boards and individuals facing high-stakes civil, criminal and regulatory matters. A former state and federal prosecutor, she counsels clients in investigations and prosecutions involving financial crime, public corruption, corporate misconduct, regulated industries and high-profile issues at the intersection of business, sports, entertainment and the law. Marisa has successfully tried more than 15 complex criminal cases to verdict and has argued before the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals.

The Generation NEXT Awards will be held on September 23, 2026. See the full list of honorees [here](#).