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**MLUI Welcomes New Members to Board**

*Bill Milliken Jr., Jennifer Blakeslee bring experience in economic development, local food*

**T**he Michigan Land Use Institute recently welcomed two new members to its Board of Directors: **Bill Milliken Jr.** and **Jennifer Blakeslee**.

Milliken brings with him extensive experience in economic development as a longtime Realtor in Ann Arbor. Milliken Realty, which he formed in 1996, was named Best of Michigan Business by Corp Magazine in Detroit in 2008. He also serves on the board of directors of New Detroit and the Washtenaw Community College Foundation.

Milliken previously served as president of the Commercial Board of Realtors, as a director of Republic Bancorp, and as board chair of the Ann Arbor Chamber of Commerce.

“I think the work the Institute is doing is important and timely,” Milliken said. “The region already distinguishes itself with its smart growth, alternative forms of transportation and good economic indicators. I look forward to being able to join MLUI in building on these attributes.”

Blakeslee is chef and co-owner of the popular Cook’s House restaurant in Traverse City. She honed her culinary skills for years at restaurants across the country before returning to northwest Michigan to open the celebrated restaurant, which sources local foods whenever possible. She brings to MLUI her expertise in the local food movement, farm to school efforts, and the needs of the Traverse City community.

“At the Cook’s House, I’ve seen the benefits of MLUI’s local food work first hand,” Blakeslee said. “Their efforts to promote local food and agriculture has had tangible benefits for farmers, schools, restaurants, and the entire regional economy. I’m thrilled to be a part of that work.”

The diversity of MLUI’s Board, as reflected by the addition of Milliken and Blakeslee, underscores the institute’s broad efforts to build strong, resilient communities, said **Board Chair Craig Sharp**.

“The board embodies the breadth of that approach,” he said. “Bill and Jennifer’s experience in growing successful businesses and their support for our mission will be a huge asset.”