



Michael A. Caplin | President

Michael Caplin is an attorney specializing in social entrepreneurship and nonprofit management. As chief executive of Turtle Island Group, he provides strategic counsel to nonprofit and philanthropic organizations.

- Mr. Caplin graduated from Swarthmore College with a B.A. in English Literature. He received a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Virginia School of Law and is a member of that University's Honorary Raven Society, ODK and TILKA. He received a Masters of Law degree from Georgetown University Law School [E. Barrett Prettyman Fellow] and an Executive Certificate in Non-Profit Management from the Georgetown University Public Policy Institute.
- Michael Caplin was founding Executive Director and President of the Tysons Partnership, an association of business, civic and government leaders working together to launch a new American city. From 2012-2017, Mr. Caplin fortified Partnership operations and coordinated compliance and place-making efforts among developers, city planners, business and local residents who, over the next 35 years, will together transform Tysons, VA from a 1970s office park into a dynamic new downtown for Fairfax County, Virginia. His efforts were honored with the naming of the street "Michael Caplin Way" in Tysons.
- Mr. Caplin previously served as founding Director of East Coast Operations for Childhelp USA, a \$20 million national nonprofit dedicated to the prevention and treatment of child abuse. In that capacity, he spearheaded the construction and launch of a residential treatment facility for abused children; the launch of two free outpatient treatment clinics for children; and the launch of abuse prevention training programs that educated thousands of children and child care professionals. The Virginia law he wrote and successfully lobbied requires professionals working with children to learn how to recognize the signs and symptoms of abuse and how to intervene. For his work on behalf of children in crisis he received the Northern Virginia Leadership Award, the Governor's Commendation for Outstanding Service to the Commonwealth and a Certificate of Excellence from the Virginia Department of Social Services.
- Prior to Childhelp, Mr. Caplin was a Program Director at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. where he received awards for entrepreneurial management of his division of the Resident Associates Program. He brought to the Smithsonian a rich array of scientists, scholars, artists, writers and celebrities from around the world and set records for attendance and revenue.
- Michael Caplin began his professional career as a criminal trial lawyer. He served as a Public Defender, representing indigent clients before the District of Columbia Superior Court, while at the same time teaching criminal litigation at Georgetown University Law School where he was an E. Barrett Prettyman Fellow. He later served as a Special Trial Attorney in the Criminal Section of the Tax Division of the U.S. Department of Justice in Washington, D.C., prosecuting complex criminal cases in Federal courts across the country. His work at DOJ was recognized with the Attorney General's Letter of Commendation.
- Mr. Caplin shifted his practice from criminal law to performing arts and entertainment law. As counselor and manager, he negotiated contracts and produced recordings, music videos and concert tours for jazz and pop artists, classical musicians, dancers, and variety artists. His awards included an Emmy and a Gold Record for the #1 pop hit "Friends and Lovers." During this same period, Mr. Caplin served as the Founding Executive Director of the Lincoln Theatre in Washington, D.C., securing landmark status for that historic black vaudeville house, crafting a strategic plan and convening the Board of Trustees that would renovate and launch a revitalized performing arts center. He was recruited from the Lincoln Theatre by the Smithsonian Institution.
- He is a member of the Bar Associations and admitted to practice law in New York, Virginia and the District of Columbia, as well as the U.S. federal courts.
- Michael Caplin served on the U.S. Presidential Scholars Commission 2009-2016, by appointment of President Barack Obama.
- He serves on the Board of Friends of the National Zoo.