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Chair's Message

Message from IP Section Chair Clark Wilson



This bar year we are focusing on getting back to a pre-pandemic normal. Our committees are planning several in-person CLE events covering a wide range of relevant topics. The IP section stamped its return to the Mid-Year Meeting of the State Bar, with a seminar that was interesting to both IP and non-IP attorneys alike. Our Executive Board members are even planning an event to be held at the Annual Bar Meeting in Savannah on a topic which is certain to draw great interest from members along the Coastal Empire. We encourage our section members to watch out for notices about upcoming programs and join us live, just like we used to way back in 2019.

We are also planning several social events throughout the year, with the goal of driving IP Section membership growth and also participation in our committees and programs. Being active in the committees and programming has greatly impacted me personally, so I encourage our Section members to take ownership of what the State Bar of Georgia can offer to our IP legal community.

The Section is also in the planning stages of organizing the return of the formerly-annual IP Institute. This terrific event from years past was an annual favorite before the pandemic and we are evaluating options for its return, both in location and timing. Please stay tuned for more news to come.

Finally, the IP Section's website (GeorgiaIP.org) is in the process of being revamped and updated to make it more user-friendly and more relevant. We have engaged an outside vendor to help with the management, and are hopeful that the result will provide a model that will last for years to come.

Communications

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Vacant

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Daniel Hong, Co-Chair

Kevin Dawson, Co-Chair

Trade Secret

Michael Cicero, Co-Chair

Neal Weinrich, Co-Chair

Committee Leadership

Year-end Presentation on Copyright Considerations for Tech Startups Given at State Bar Headquarters

On December 7, the Copyright Committee hosted a CLE entitled “Tech Startup IP Protection Considerations: To be or not be?” The panel was moderated by Alcide L. Honoré, Honoré Law, LLC & CEO of Billseye, Inc., and featured Anders Fernstrom, an IP attorney with Cooley LLP, and Antoine Woods Jr., Founder and General Partner of Vertical 404, an Atlanta based seed stage venture capital firm.

The panelists discussed critical legal and business issues for the formation of tech startups, including how a startup’s IP strategy could be a key differentiator on the path to commercialization, how IP ownership plays a role in the decision to invest, and specific copyright and IP protection strategies relevant to the startup space. Consideration was given to risk assessment for foundational IP (including involvement of and contracting with third party developers; involvement of and claims by universities; and international IP considerations).

A networking reception followed the presentation.



Moderator Alcide Honoré and Panelists Antoine Woods Jr. and Anders Fernstrom at “Tech Startup IP Protection Considerations: To be or not be?” CLE hosted by the Copyright Committee on December 7, 2022.



From left to right Copyright Committee Co-Chair Rachel Geist; Moderator Alcide Honoré; Panelist Antoine Woods Jr.; Panelist Anders Fernstrom; and Copyright Committee Co-Chair Liz Wheeler.

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Trademark, Trade Secrets Presentations Delivered at 2023 State Bar of Georgia Midyear Meeting

At the 2023 State Bar of Georgia Midyear Meeting held on January 12, the leaders of the Trademark Committee and of the Trade Secrets Committee delivered a live CLE comprising two 30-minute presentations, promoted together under the title “Trademarks and Trade Secrets Aren’t Just Federal: A Review of Georgia State Laws and Cases.” The CLE had 24 attendees.

Daniel Hong and Kevin Dawson, the Trademark Committee Chair and Vice Chair, respectively, began the CLE session with their presentation titled “State or Federal? Practical considerations for new trademark filings.” Kevin reviewed basic trademark law concepts, and Daniel discussed the mechanics and benefits of registering a trademark in Georgia.

Mike Cicero and Neal Weinrich, the Trade Secrets Committee Chair and Vice Chair, respectively, then delivered their presentation titled “How to Prepare a Trade Secrets Complaint that Will Survive a Dismissal Motion.” Mike reviewed fundamental trade secret misappropriation concepts, and Neal discussed pleading standards governing trade secret misappropriation complaints, including tracing a dismissal motion analysis undertaken by U.S. District Judge Michael L. Brown in a September 2022 decision.

The audience remained engaged throughout the presentations, asking several questions, with some attendees meeting with the presenters afterward. The presenters appreciated this interpersonal interaction.



Kevin Dawson (L) and Daniel Hong (R), Trademark Committee Chair and Vice Chair, gave a trademark presentation at the Midyear Meeting.



Mike Cicero, Trade Secrets Committee Chair, delivered a trade secrets presentation at the Midyear Meeting.



Neal Weinrich, Trade Secrets Committee Vice Chair, discussed trade secret misappropriation at the Mid-Year Meeting.

For questions about upcoming events or submissions to the IP Section Newsletter, please contact IP Section Communications Chair, Rachel Young Fields at rfields@huntermaclean.com.