


# Network Spotlight: Intellectual Property

## Intellectual Property





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**Tell us about your background and your company's business.**

After graduating from college, I thought I "might" like to go to law school and become an attorney. Naturally, I met a lot of attorneys growing up in Washington, DC. It didn't hurt that my mother worked for the US Department of Justice. However, before taking the law school plunge, I decided to work in a law firm, and I ended up working for an Intellectual Property (IP) boutique. At the time, I had no idea what IP was. Working in the IP boutique, I was asked to help build a trademark practice, and I soon learned that my passion for advertising and marketing and my interest in government and law could nicely fit together in the world of IP law. After spending many years in DC law firms focusing my practice on trademark counseling and litigation, I ventured in-house. Today, I serve as in-house IP counsel to Pearson Education, one of the world's largest education companies whose mission is to help people make progress in their lives through learning.

In my "spare" time, I enjoy keeping active, and I'm an avid DC sports fan. I am also a big believer in giving back and am most proud of the Pearson/National Federation of the Blind (NFB) Legal Mentoring Program I've had the privilege to participate in. My NFB mentee is starting law school this

fall, and I can’t help but wonder if he might become an IP attorney.

**What interested you in the in-house practice of law, and how did you come to be in your current position?**

I’ve always been interested in the intersection between law and business, and I’ve been particularly intrigued about the making of brands. I spent many years in private practice, honing my legal skills, and represented many large companies with big brands. After being on the “outside” for a while, I knew I wanted to be a closer partner, and I wanted to be more directly involved in decisions around brands.

**What is the single greatest challenge that your law department is facing today, and how are you dealing with it?**

Operating in a global marketplace and representing a company whose interests are primarily rooted in technology and IP, there is a constant need to keep on top of changes and legislative developments around the world (e.g., Brexit, copyright reform, and GDPR) and the legal implications they have, particularly on IP. ACC and my colleagues on the Intellectual Property Network (IPN) are great resources who I turn to on a regular basis to keep me aware of such developments.

**In October 2017, you were elected as chair of the Intellectual Property Network. How did you initially get involved?**

Several years ago when I first became an in-house attorney, my general counsel encouraged me to become involved with ACC. As an IP attorney, I began attending the IPN’s monthly meetings, and I saw what a great resource the network was. I knew that I wanted to become more involved and there was an opening to become the lead for the “What’s Hot for Trademarks” segment. I volunteered. I took a turn at leading “What’s Hot for Copyright” next and then ventured a little deeper and became the Annual Meeting program organizer… secretary… vice-chair, and here I am today — chair of the IPN.



**What are some of the ways that the Intellectual Property Network provides value to its members?**

I'm very proud of the IPN and the dedication of its members and sponsor over the years. We've been fortunate to have an amazing IPN sponsor, Kilpatrick Townsend, who has been an incredible partner to us as we create valuable content and programming on all things an in-house IP attorney would want and need to know.

The IPN can be very valuable to its members in so many ways. With the support of our sponsor, we create and publish a wealth of IP-related content and resource material that helps to keep our membership current on legal developments and practical tips. In addition, each month we broadcast a Legal Quick Hit on an important and relevant aspect of IP law, as well as a segment called "What's Hot" that focuses on a noteworthy and "hot" IP topic and the implications it may have on our membership's in-house practice. Our membership itself is an incredibly valuable asset and a great source for networking and referrals as well as benchmarking one's own practice.

**What substantive practice issues does your network address?**

We cover everything related to intellectual property, patents, trademarks, copyright, trade secret, domain names, etc. We work to keep a good balance of content and resources across all areas of IP.

**How has the Intellectual Property Network helped you in your career?**

Apart from the great IP content and resources that keep me up to date in my in-house practice, I’m a firm believer that relationships are indispensable to any legal career. The importance of networking and relationship building cannot be overstated. I have found that ACC’s Intellectual Property Network has been one of the most instrumental sources of networking and relationship building and one of the best investments I have made in my in-house legal career.

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