My Take: Our Influence, Stronger Than Ever

Community

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This has been a year of dynamic change and tremendous growth for our association. We’ve opened an office in Brussels, expanded our ACC In-house Counsel Certification program to include courses in Australia, Amsterdam, and for the first time, the United States, and we’ve expanded our product offerings on a new platform. We’ve also embarked on exciting partnerships, grown our global membership, and secured more CLO seats at the table.

In my first letter as ACC board chair, I spoke of the opportunity to continue building the global in-house counsel bar, as well as lending my voice to topics influencing our profession including diversity and inclusion, sustainability, ethics, compliance, and innovation. I am pleased to say that we have achieved what we set out to do.

ACC continues to support diversity and inclusion efforts, advocate for embracing innovation in the legal field, and promote an ethical culture in companies. Our work is evident in the wide array of educational programming, industry-leading research, and resources — like this issue of the Docket, which includes articles on managing vendor risks, boosting business and employee morale, and navigating global uncertainty. But I’m most proud of the strides we’ve made in sustainability.

According to the 2019 CLO Survey, 44.5 percent of the CLOs surveyed reported that their organizations have a corporate sustainability plan, and 93 percent “lead, influence, or contribute” to the company’s efforts in this area. I believe that the topic of sustainability allows in-house lawyers the opportunity to use our legal knowledge, while leveraging our traditional role as trusted advisor to the

business in new and unconventional ways. To that end, ACC recently began an exciting partnership with an organization supported by His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales.

ACC and The Prince's Accounting for Sustainability Project (A4S), a nonprofit he founded in 2004, announced their collaboration during the ACC Global GC Summit this past May. The two organizations are working to advance the role of the general counsel in encouraging corporate initiatives that drive sustainability missions forward. I'm truly delighted about this collaboration, and I hope you are too. Learn more at ACC.com/governance — and view a video message from Prince Charles.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your chair this past year; it has been an honor and personally rewarding experience. I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge ACC's dedicated staff for all that they do for us as members and in elevating the in-house bar. Today, ACC represents 45,000-plus members, employed by over 10,000 organizations, in 85 countries. And our network is a vast one with more than 60 chapters and 20 practice area networks.

I close with a warm welcome to our new ACC Board Chair Anneliese Reinhold, general counsel and senior vice president of regulatory affairs at Emirates Integrated Telecommunications Company (du).

Anneliese brings many years of wisdom and experience to the role. I have no doubt that she will be a strong and effective leader in furthering the mission of our global in-house bar, and I look forward to supporting her efforts.

Simon Fish

Executive Vice President and General Counsel

BMO Financial Group