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Days of Innovation, Seasons of Change

Career Development



The end of the year is fast approaching, and it is November, the beginning of a new season — and the start of my time as chair of this illustrious institution.

As ACC chair, I look forward to continuing in the great tradition of those who came before me, especially Immediate Past Chair Sabine Chalmers. Sabine helped lead this organization to one of its strongest years yet: We can boast a global membership of over 40,000, a robust research division, a revived and thriving foundation, and more.

As I step into this role, I will focus on helping ACC reach its strategic goals, which include expanding membership and opportunities in Asia and Africa, as well as increased partnerships with national in-house bar associations.

The employability and mobility of junior and senior level in-house counsel is essential to many, as it is to this association. Therefore, I also aim to reinforce the many benefits of ACC membership — working with ACC leaders to continue to enhance and increase the resources and educational events that we provide across the globe. In fact, I have learned first-hand how ACC resources can boost one's professional efficiency. Without these resources, I wouldn't have gained necessary FCPA knowledge at critical times for my then employer (more than 10 years ago!).

Business professionals, no matter the industry, have had to adapt to a constantly changing and increasingly connected world. With the unprecedented pace of technological advances impacting all industry sectors, one thing is certain: Change is constant, thus continuing education is essential. But while we revel in technological advances that put the internet at our fingertips, there have been consequences. With increased access, our organizations are vulnerable to cyber attacks, and the challenges surrounding artificial intelligence and blockchain technology are just beginning to unveil

themselves. We must look ahead.

One area where ACC has been forward looking and led the conversation involves value — as in getting value for your outside legal spend. The traditional billable hour is more and more challenged, and more disruptions are in the works with the emergence of legal start-ups and alternative services providers. These shifts have jeopardized the old business model of law firms, and the ACC Value Challenge has contributed greatly to this change. Learn more at <http://advocacy.acc.com/acc-value-challenge>.

The 4th of November marks a landmark moment for mankind and enterprises with the coming into force of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Speaking of resources that add value, this environmentally focused issue of the Docket features a timely cover story on climate change risk and sustainability. The authors point out new enforcement trends, which give environmental officials around the world authority to issue civil and criminal subpoenas to ensure company compliance with climate risk disclosure. This is especially relevant as in-house counsel face growing expectations from stakeholders for increased transparency and ethical standards, particularly in the areas of environmental issues, health and safety, and human rights. Corporate counsel need more and more to guide executive management on reputational risks and take a clear stand against “lawful but awful” transactions. Again, ACC is working to keep you ahead of the curve.

My mandate as ACC Europe president gave me exceptional insight into the challenges faced by the European Union, and my time in Asia and the Middle East opened my eyes to different ways of life, mindsets, values, legal systems, business practices, corporate governance and compliance standards, and more. Through it all I have learned one thing: Understanding and respecting others’ differences makes you a better person and a greater professional. I hope to apply these principles to my role as chair, and I look forward to working with ACC leadership, staff, and our wonderful membership to make ACC even better.

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