

The Patent Lawyer

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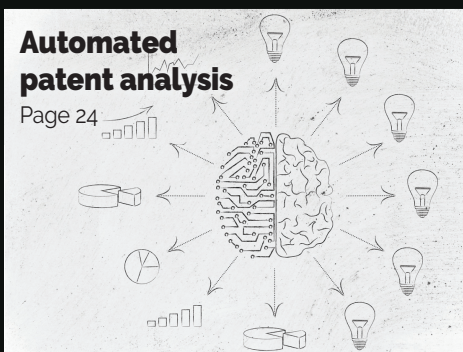
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Augmenting your IP portfolio is virtually the only way to compete in AR/VR



Finnegan, Henderson, Farabow, Garrett & Dunner, LLP experts Christopher Howes, Zachery Olah, Forrest Jones, and Karthik Kumar, discuss the developments in the augmented and virtual reality sphere with advice for protecting innovation.



Women in IP Leadership

Celebrating achievements and continuing
the empowerment of women



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We give special thanks to Anaqua for their dedication and support in continuing
the empowerment of women in IP by facilitating this opportunity.

This segment is dedicated to women working in the IP industry, providing a platform to share real accounts from rising women around the globe. In these interviews we will be discussing experiences, celebrating milestones and achievements, and putting forward ideas for advancing equality and diversity.

By providing a platform to share personal experiences we aim to continue the empowerment of women in the world of IP.

This segment is sponsored by Anaqua, who, like *The Patent Lawyer*, are passionate to continue the empowerment of women. Anaqua's sponsorship enables us to remove the boundaries and offer this opportunity to all women in the sector. We give special thanks to Anaqua for supporting this project and creating the opportunity for women to share their experiences, allowing us to learn from each other, to take inspiration, and for continuing the liberation of women in IP.



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It is our privilege to support this issue's Women in IP segment for *The Patent Lawyer Magazine*. We look forward to reading and learning more from other women in the industry and value their perspectives. At Anaqua, we expect and encourage different viewpoints and experiences to enable our team to see the world more clearly and embrace the opportunities around us. Diversity and inclusion foster an enriched, innovative, collaborative, and supportive work environment – a key component to a successful future.

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Nancy Hegarty, Vice President of Marketing, Anaqua

If you would like the opportunity to share your experiences with *Women in IP Leadership*, would like to nominate an individual to be involved, or would like to learn more about sponsorship, please contact our Editor.

Kristyn Huffman: Paralegal, The Dow Chemical Company

An interview: inspirations, experiences, and ideas for equality

Kristyn is currently a Paralegal in Intellectual Property Law at The Dow Chemical Company. She primarily works on patent preparation and prosecution. Kristyn also works on numerous non-routine technology agreements such as consulting and license agreements relating to her designated businesses.

Kristyn started working in Intellectual Property Law for Dow as a college co-op in 2008. After her co-op time expired, she was asked to return and started working as a contractor in March 2009, during which time Kristyn was able to obtain her Associates of Science degree from Brazosport Community College in Office Administration and Management. A couple years later in 2011, Kristyn was offered a full-time job with Dow as an office professional. She became part of Dow's education program and in December 2016, obtained her Bachelor of Science in Legal Studies degree from the University of Houston – Clear Lake. Shortly after obtaining her degree Kristyn was promoted to a Paralegal. All the while becoming a wife and mother.

What inspired your career?

I come from a hard working family. My parents encouraged me to work at a young age. If I didn't get involved in extracurricular activities in school, I had to get a job. I remember wanting to go out with my friends and my dad told me no. He told me I couldn't go out on the river until I had a job. I came home with a job that day. My parents still tell that story. It's an ongoing joke that they think I threw out all my job applications out the window of my car. Ever since then, at 17, I have held a steady job.

My parents have always told me to work hard for what you want in life. I had the resources and support so I had nothing holding me back. I remember my family saying that a job is a job. There wasn't a job that was too big or too small. I was told to go to work, get the job done, and come home. My parents both worked at a young age. I remember my mom telling me she worked at 16 in retail. My mom also took some business courses in college because she knew she wanted to work in an office. My mom is still working at Brazosport Community College today, while my dad is retired. My dad started working



Kristyn Huffman

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at a young age as well, but when I was little he worked for Phillips 66 (now Conoco-Phillips). He retired from Conoco-Phillips after 35+ years. My parents inspire me EVERY DAY.

Another big inspiration for my career was my grandma and grandpa. My grandma would take my dad and some of his brothers to go pick cotton in fields when he was little. He told me he remembers her pulling him along the rows of cotton on her sack as she picked. My grandpa was such a hard worker. My grandpa would take my dad to work when he was little too, but working with my grandpa in construction is what stood out the most to my dad. My dad says he could never take breaks. He had to prove he was a hard worker. I see myself in my grandparents a lot. All of my dad's checks went to my grandparents to help with bills and putting food on the table.

How have you found the pathway to your current position? And can you offer advice from your experience?

I worked really hard to get my current position as a Paralegal. I worked my way up from a college co-op to a Paralegal. It took me nearly 10 years to get there, but I was determined. When I started my legal studies degree, I worked full-time and went to school at night. I only took two classes a semester so you can imagine how long it took me to obtain my degree. I had a great support system, especially when I became pregnant with my daughter. I ended up registering for fall classes. I registered for the most difficult classes and found out I was pregnant (after I had already paid for school). There was no turning back. The next spring, I still registered for classes knowing I could give birth at any time. I was due at the end of April and I knew I could try to get one class in. I was almost done with the semester when my daughter decided to come a couple weeks early. I had to tell my professor that I had my baby and she left a quiz open so I could take it the next day!

Once my daughter was born, I knew I had to keep going. I had to prove to myself that it was possible to continue. My husband took care of our daughter while I went to school at night. There were many tears (from all of us, ha!), but I felt accomplished. Once my leaders promoted

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**The more
 we are
 accepting of
 others, the
 better world
 we will be
 living in.**
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me, I knew all the time away from home was worth it.

If I had any advice from my experience, it would be to not give up. You can either keep coming up with excuses, or just get the job done. One of my best friends has two children and told me I was her inspiration. I told her it's so worth it to finish. You feel so accomplished, and I know my whole family is proud of me.

What challenges have you faced? And how have you overcome them?

I think the biggest challenge that I have faced is myself. I can get pretty anxious when it comes to being my own cheerleader. The way I have been able to overcome this challenge is by talking to my leader. My leader encourages me to speak up and become more visible within my department. I am very much an introvert. I care about what others think and I hate being in trouble. I am a perfectionist. The quality of work is important to me. When I get flustered in day to day work, I have to remind myself to relax. My leader is also a woman so sometimes I feel like I can tell her anything (maybe too much, ha!). I feel like she has helped me gain confidence in myself and I am doing so well. For being one of the newest paralegals in my group, I often get questions from senior paralegals which makes me feel good.

What would you consider to be your greatest achievement in your career so far?

I think one of my biggest achievements in my career has to be getting acknowledgment from people outside of my department. I was watching a virtual meeting one day and they mentioned my name! I had been helping out with trying to get some COVID-19 relief agreements out in a timely manner and got the praise. Sometimes it can be a little hard to get the recognition outside of my department. When I think of how my job works, I feel like I am in the background. No one really sees what I do. Most people see the finished product and not how that finished product got there. I felt like I had accomplished a lot that day.

What are your future career aspirations? And how will you work to achieve them?

This is a hard question. One of my bosses once told me that there was a learning curve for Intellectual Property. That learning curve was five-seven years. At the time, I thought she was being hard on me. I know now that she was absolutely right. 13 years in the same department and I learn something new every day. In the future, I would love to become an expert in license agreements. I work in a business where I do a lot of license agreements and they are

challenging to me. Just when I feel like I have all of the needed knowledge to complete them, something new pops up. My parents have always told me that everyone has room to grow. To achieve this, I will continue to ask the hard questions. There is another woman in our department that is an expert in license agreements. I am in awe of her knowledge. I look up to her in so many ways.

What changes would you like to see in the IP industry regarding equality and diversity in the next five years?

I feel like the best way to see change is to acknowledge that change is needed. Working for the company I work for has really opened my eyes. We work with people all around the world. Not one person is the same as the other, but our work brings us together. We have Employee Resource Groups (ERG) that have really helped me grow as a person. I have joined three so far which include my heritage (Hispanic and Latin Network), an ally (Global African Affinity Network), and Women's Inclusion Network. I would like to continue to see the development across the world. The more we are accepting of others, the better world we will be living in.

How do you think the empowerment of women can be continued and expanded in the IP sector?

One of the main things I have learned by being in an ERG is that we cannot do things alone. It is important to find allies and mentors. Networking is important. I read a book in our ERG group called *The Memo: What Women of Color Need to Know to Secure a Seat at the Table* by Minda Hart. The chapter that stands out the most is Chapter two: Building Your Squad. We spend so much time at work. We talk to so many people around the world. Use networking to your advantage.

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Ai-Leen Lim: CEO and Principal Counsel, AWA Asia

An interview: inspirations, experiences, and ideas for gender equality.

Ai-Leen Lim leads AWA's Asia practice as CEO and Principal Counsel, managing its headquarters in Hong Kong and its wholly owned Chinese IP consultancy in Beijing. She is admitted as an advocate and solicitor in Singapore and is qualified to practice in Hong Kong and the United Kingdom. For more than 23 years, she has advised clients on IP portfolio management in China, in Hong Kong and internationally, with a special focus on China market entry, brand management and IP strategy. Ai-Leen has been consistently recognized for her work through rankings and awards from leading industry publications including Chambers and Partners, The Legal 500, World Trademark Review and Managing IP. Most recently she was listed as a WTR Global Leader 2020 by World Trademark Review.

What would you consider to be your greatest achievement in your career so far?

We partner with Great Place to Work® - an organisation that completes a detailed evaluation of AWA Asia's management, organisational

“I would like to dedicate more of my time to acting as a mentor.”

practices and carries out a comprehensive examination of the employees' experience of trust and pride in the workplace. Over the past three years, we have achieved exceptional results in the trust index. I am really proud of the fact we have created a workplace where colleagues feel they can thrive and have the ability to do so, regardless of gender and background.

What are your future career aspirations? And how will you work to achieve them?

I would like to dedicate more of my time to acting as a mentor, inspiring younger generations from diverse backgrounds and helping them to catapult within the IP industry. I would like to do what I can to help them rise to their fullest potential, both within themselves and professionally. Mentoring is so important not only for the mentee, but also for the mentor – providing differing perspectives and approaches.

What changes would you like to see in the IP industry regarding equality and diversity in the next five years?

I would like to see a shift towards the Scandinavian/Nordic model of joint parental leave. I have witnessed firsthand how this plays out as an effective equalizer, ensuring men and women have access to the same opportunity in terms of time-off. It also forces the same impact on career regardless of sex. If this model were to be replicated on a larger scale in the legal and IP industry, it would definitely help to promote gender equality.

How do you think the empowerment of women can be continued and expanded in the IP sector?

I think seeing women in senior leadership roles provides empowerment through inspiration and real-life examples of what is possible. So definitely greater representation of women in senior leadership roles. I also strongly believe that unconscious bias in the workplace remains a barrier to career advancement/progression. IP firms that engage in mitigation through recognition, transparency and accountability can help to lessen and ultimately remove this workplace bias.



I would not
go back to
any other
patent
management
software.

NINA HILL
CORPORATE IP ADMINISTRATOR
EMERSON ELECTRIC CO.



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