

UPCOMING MEMBER EVENTS

- 09/13/22**
Luncheon
Fisher Phillips, LLP
Maggiano's
- 9/22/22**
Networking Event
Fish & Richardson, PC
Three Alliance Center
- 10/6/22**
Networking Event
Polsinelli
Location TBD
- 10/11/22**
Luncheon
Morris Manning & Martin
Maggiano's
- 10/13/22**
CLE Jamboree
King & Spalding, LLP
Various Locations
- 10/23-26/22**
ACC ANNUAL MEETING
Las Vegas, NV (Hybrid)
- 11/8/22**
Luncheon
Womble Bond Dickinson (US), LLP
Maggiano's
- 11/17/22**
Women's Initiative Signature Event
Ogletree, Deakins, Nash,
Smoak & Stewart, P.C.
Taylor English Duma, LLP
Fisher Phillips, LLP
Legility + Consilio
SimpleLegal
Cox Communications
- 12/13/22**
Luncheon
Willenken, LLP
Maggiano's

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PHYSICS, INERTIA AND ACC GEORGIA:



*Kathryn Hutton
ACC Georgia President*

Sir Isaac Newton's first law of motion is that an object at rest will remain at rest unless compelled to change its state by the action of an external force. In other words, things cannot start, stop or change direction all by themselves, and require some force from the outside to cause a change. The property of massive bodies to resist changes in their state of motion is inertia.

As an English major, I'm having a field day with the parallels to the human condition. After spending a day at my desk on what seems like a never-ending stream of conference calls, I feel like I need a crane to get my massive body out of my chair and take a walk. To put on pants and get in the car to go out feels like a Herculean task.

I'm sure many of you are familiar with this experience. Given my own experience with battling inertia, I can certainly empathize with others' struggles to get in motion.

But you may be surprised to learn the impact that our common inertia has on ACC Georgia. We are seeing cancellations as high as 25% of ACC Georgia members who register for events but do not attend. ACC Georgia fully expects a certain number of cancellations (we're human; we know that life happens) but the spike in cancellations has grabbed our attention.

What's going on?

It's not a matter of enough time (at least not in every instance). Not enough time is the loyal soldier of excuses – always there and always ready. For example, parents of school-age children are finding the time to drive their kids to school during the state-wide shortage of bus drivers. And heaven knows we always find time to meet with our bosses!

It's not a matter of appreciation. We all clearly recognize the generosity of our sponsors who fund and donate their time to prepare and present high quality CLEs and networking events.

It's not a matter of enough interest. If we sign up for an event, the topic clearly piqued our interest or we wouldn't have registered in the first place.

So if it's not time, appreciation or interest, what's stopping us from attending?

I think there are two problems: 1) we talk ourselves out of making self-care and our mental health a priority and then 2) inertia finishes the job – we stay home.

According to a May 2021 study by the American Psychiatric Association about the negative mental health impact of working from home, nearly two-thirds of people working from home feel isolated or lonely; 17% of people feel lonely all the time. Broken down by age group, over 70% of 30 to 44-year-olds and almost half of 45 to 64-year-olds reported feeling isolated or lonely working at home.

Humans are social animals: We crave feeling supported, valued and connected. The mental health benefits of socializing are well documented. Meeting these needs is probably one of the main reasons that we join an organization like ACC Georgia and sign up for events.

You know that, even though you're tired, you'll have a good time if you go to an event, but somehow, even when we know we'll end up having a good time, we allow inertia to stop us. So clearly the reward of having an enjoyable time is not enough.

My own experience is that I give short-shrift to activities that are solely for my benefit and my enjoyment, as if those activities are indulgences that can be sacrificed in order to finish one more work project or handle one more family errand. But even though I've "accomplished" so much and sacrificed my time for the benefit of others, I feel exhausted and irritable.

So how do we prioritize our mental health and combat inertia?

Trick yourself.

Continued on page 3...

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

LaChandra Pye

Corporate Senior Counsel & Government Contracts, ABB Inc.



Q. Why did you want to become an attorney?

As a child, I was always inquisitive—I was always asking, “Why?”

As a lawyer, I analyze issues to find solutions. As in-house counsel, understanding why a business stakeholder wants something helps me get to a solution that aligns with the business’ goals. The proposed solution may not be exactly what the stakeholder originally had in mind, but I strive to capture the essence of what they are asking for and hopefully a better result in the long run.

Q. What do you like about working at ABB Inc.?

I enjoy working for a leading global technology company that energizes the transformation of society and industry to achieve a more productive, substantiable future. ABB offers innovative products, solutions, and services, and pushes the boundaries of technology by connecting software to our electrification, process automation, motion, and robotics and discreet automation portfolio. Last year, we launched the world’s fastest electric car charger.



I have the pleasure of working with an amazingly talented team of global attorneys and report to a regional general counsel who is an exceptional leader. Also, I enjoy the variety of legal work, including advising stakeholders on corporate and regulatory matters, commercial and government contracts, supporting corporate secretary functions and providing general legal advice. Every day is different, and I like that.

Q. What makes a successful leader?

Stephen Covey, author of *The 7 Habits of Highly Successful People*, defines leadership as “communicating to people their worth and potential so clearly that they are inspired to see it in themselves.” Covey goes on to state that successful leaders inspire trust, clarify purpose, align systems and unleash talent. I wholeheartedly agree with that definition, and would add that successful leaders have emotional intelligence, leadership intelligence, relational intelligence and spiritual intelligence.

Q. What is your best advice for outside lawyers?

My advice to outside counsel is to listen to the client and get to know the business. Having a good understanding of the client’s business— operations, values, goals, culture, the moving parts— is key to providing comprehensive legal advice.

Q. What are your favorite words of wisdom?

“I am not called to make a difference. I am called to make my difference.” - Dr. Dharius Daniels, thought leader, coach and emotional intelligence specialist. The quote sums up how I want to align my life with my own personal mission, which in my case is to motivate and provide professionals with resources to optimize their potential and be their best selves.

Q. What keeps you busy outside of work?

Outside of work I enjoy volunteering with non-profit and civic organizations. I am Vice-President of Association of Corporate Counsel – Georgia’s Community Outreach Committee, Vice-Chair of the Atlanta Dogwood Festival, the 3rd oldest fine arts festival in the country and oldest in Atlanta, and served as the Treasurer of the National Bar Association’s Government Procurement Law Section. I’m passionate about diversity, so outside of work I organize town hall forums on pressing diversity issues and speak on various panels highlighting the importance of diversity and equality in corporations.

Q. What is the last book you read?

The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry: How to Stay Emotionally Healthy and Spiritually Alive in the Chaos of the Modern World, by John Mark Comer.

It’s about how to slow down and live a simpler life to become happier. One of the practices I’ve taken from it is to slow down when walking. You wouldn’t think that it’d make a difference, but it does.

Q. How do you go about building your personal brand?

In building my personal brand, I connect with and learn from individuals in the legal and business industry whose personal brand I admire, maintain a strong work ethic, produce quality work, build relationships and continually engage in professional and personal development. I also consult with experienced advisors and mentors.

I’m the CEO of LaChandra Pye, so I ask myself, “How do I want to be viewed holistically?”

Q. What’s your favorite legal TV show?

Law and Order, and a strong second is Suits.

Both shows are very different from my legal work. I’m a transactional in-house lawyer, so watching characters in criminal or civil litigation is interesting.

Also, I like the fashion in Suits.

Q. What would you like to share about your family?

I’m a first-generation lawyer, but I definitely will not be the last. My family’s support and encouragement are huge contributing factors to my success. They always encouraged me to pursue my dreams, and for that, I’m thankful.



Join Your ACC Georgia Colleagues on LinkedIn

Without a doubt, one of the most popular benefits of being an ACC Georgia member is the professional networking. There’s an easy way you can show your online network that you’re a member – follow the ACC Georgia LinkedIn page. We’ve launched a new group to allow in-house counsel to network with colleagues and stay up to date on chapter news.

Log in to LinkedIn and type “Association of Corporate Counsel Georgia Chapter” in the search bar to find our page.

By following our page, you’ll stay up to date on the latest member events, CLE luncheons and more happening. We look forward to connecting with you online!

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Hillary Gardner

Senior Corporate Counsel and Chief Compliance Officer, Credigy Solutions Inc.



Q. How did you grow up and what prompted you to become an attorney?

I grew up in the Catskills in New York, where my father worked as a solo practitioner and county attorney. Throughout my childhood, I saw how he was able to help clients through stressful times and develop relationships with all those with whom he worked. As I learned more about what lawyers do, I was attracted to the role of an advisor, someone who provides clients guidance and clarity about the law.

Q. Tell us about your legal job in a tropical paradise.

After graduating from law school, I worked at a big law firm in New York. I reconnected with a friend who spent a year doing a judicial clerkship in Palau. While I didn't know where Palau was (I would later find out it is between Guam and the Philippines), I knew I wanted to go. My husband Brian (who is also a lawyer) and I began to research Palau and its legal system, and we found fantastic jobs with the country's government.



I worked for the Palau Attorney General, serving as the sole legal counsel to the nation's Financial Institutions Commission, Financial Intelligence Unit and Environmental Quality Protection Board. Much of my work was in the nature of an in-house counsel. I

analyzed and maintained policy and regulatory compliance for the country, which, as a voting member of the UN, must comply with international agreements and UN Conventions, including the Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering, the Financial Action Task Force, and the Palermo Convention.

Q. Tell us about your personal brand.

I love to meet new people and help my friends and colleagues however I can—from researching a novel legal issue to making a connection that helps someone land a new job. I'm told by friends and work colleagues that I seem to have boundless energy and I always show up to provide whatever assistance I can.

Q. What do you like about working at Credigy?

Credigy is a specialty finance company that invests in loans and other performing assets. Everyone works at the top of their intelligence, which I find exhilarating. We're looking for more lawyers for our team, so please let me know if you're an M&A or finance attorney looking for a new role.

Q. What is your biggest legal challenge?

Credigy works with various asset classes in an evolving regulatory environment.

It is a great challenge to keep up with the financial regulators' ever-changing rules and the accompanying patchwork of regulations across states and countries.

Q. What makes a successful leader?

A good example is Joe Fowler, Credigy's General Counsel, who works collaboratively with his team and business partners to come up with the right answer, instead of just dictating what he thinks we should do. His coaching style builds trust and empowers others to take ownership over their work.

Q. What is your best advice for outside counsel?

It's important that our outside counsel take the time to understand our company's business and our overarching goals rather than attempting to answer one specific legal question.

Q. What are you most proud of?

I'm particularly proud of my work on behalf of patients who have amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS, also called Lou Gehrig's Disease) and their families. ALS is a personal issue because my aunt, Sally Panfel, lived with the disease after spending her life as a caretaker for her children and family. Organizing caregivers for her made my family realize how hard it is for others to care for their loved ones with ALS. Many caretakers have to leave their jobs to provide the necessary care for their loved ones. My aunt and uncle created the Sally Panfel In-Home Care and Respite Program to help ALS patients and their families fund outside caregivers.

I've also lobbied at the state and national levels for ALS causes. One of the highlights of my advocacy was seeing a law passed that allowed ALS patients to waive the two-year waiting period to receive Social Security disability benefits. Many ALS patients need help immediately and may not live to see benefits in two years.

In September, I'm hosting a fundraiser benefitting the Panfel Program at the Dunwoody Nature Center from 4 to 6 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 18. It's for families, and we'll be providing yoga, dinner and drinks for a suggested donation of \$100/family. For more information, go to web.alsa.org/goto/FamilyYogaForALSPanfelProgram.

Q. What has been the most challenging aspect of the pandemic?

The initial uncertainty about how Credigy would be able to function combined with the corresponding questions about the global economy was very hard. Fortunately, at Credigy we quickly discovered we could work well remotely through Zoom, email and Teams—even onboarding new people was successful. The company has thrived through these challenges.

Q. What was the last book you read?

I recently read "The Whiteness of Wealth: How the Tax System Impoverishes Black Americans—and How We Can Fix It" It's by one of my former Emory Law professors, Dorothy Brown. She has a gift for making tax law accessible and is one of my favorite professors.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

(Cont Page 1)

Trick yourself into practicing self-care by telling yourself that you need to attend ACC Georgia events to be present for others. Using others as the "force from the outside to cause a change." Take one for the team! Tell yourself that you're going as part of your job (you do need CLEs to practice law!), to honor the sponsors and to contribute to the ACC Georgia organization!

Need more mental firepower? ACC Georgia is re-instituting its mentorship program. You can serve as a mentor to an attorney who is new to in-house practice. Once you're there, I feel confident that you'll be well taken care of! Our kick-off event will be after work on Tuesday, November 1st at Mill Kitchen and Bar in Roswell. Your presence and participation are important and make our organization great.

So the next time you click "yes" to an event invitation, please block travel time around the calendar event so you have a plan to fit the event into your schedule. You will be honoring the professional commitment you made, respecting the time and money of our sponsors, preserving ACC Georgia's reputation — and most of all — we'd love to see you!

Kathryn Hutton
ACC Georgia President

ACC SPONSOR ARTICLE

WHERE'S WALDO? BEST PRACTICES IN SECURING THE APPROPRIATE CONSENTS TO FIND OUT

By Leslie Spasser, Atlanta Office Managing Partner at Polsinelli
Brennan Carmody, Associate Attorney at Polsinelli



Leslie Spasser



Brennan Carmody

Today's technological and competitive environment renders the collection and use of employee, customer and third-party data imperative for the operation and growth of most businesses. At the same time, the evolving patchwork of local, state and national laws and regulations challenges even the most vigilant businesses to maintain compliance. Among the most significant challenges is understanding what authorizations are required from individuals whose data is being collected and managing its collection and use to avoid mistakes. Below, we discuss four contexts in which obtaining proper authorizations to collect data plays a critical role in the ability of a business to use such data to advance its objectives.

Location Data: Location data refers to the physical location of a person, whether through GPS tracking or other sources (e.g., cellphone data). Not all location data is subject to the same level of regulatory scrutiny; but "precise" geolocation data is considered sensitive by the California Privacy Rights Act (CPRA) and Virginia's Consumer Data Protection Act (CDPA). Over the past several years,

regulators have imposed multi-million dollar fines on companies that have not obtained necessary consents or used location data beyond the scope of the initial consent. A common thread in many cases has been the failure to obtain necessary permissions from individuals to (a) collect geolocation data at all or (b) use geolocation data for specific purposes. Best practices require businesses to (i) obtain affirmative authorization to collect location data after advising individuals how, why and when such data will be used, and (ii) clearly advise individuals on how to revoke the authorization.

Biometrics: Biometrics are measurements that identify an individual through physical or other tangible attributes. Fingerprints and facial recognition are common examples, but voiceprints, retinal scans and DNA can constitute biometric data. Currently, the U.S. has not promulgated laws governing the collection and use of biometric information at the federal level; however, three states (Illinois, Texas and Washington) have enacted biometric-specific laws, and similar bills are pending in other states. The Illinois Biometric Information Privacy Act (BIPA) has generated the most activity, in part, because it includes a private right of action, enabling individuals to sue companies for BIPA violations. BIPA requires businesses to



maintain a written retention and destruction policy, prohibits the sale or further disclosure of biometric data and requires "adequate" safeguards for the data and written, informed consent prior to the collection of biometrics – even for employee timekeeping purposes. Companies that fail to comply with any one of those requirements risk finding themselves on the

wrong end of private BIPA litigation, including class action lawsuits, which has already resulted in multi-hundred-million dollar settlements. In contrast, the Washington and Texas laws include exemptions for employee timekeeping purposes and do not provide for private rights of action. Nevertheless, best practices require businesses to obtain informed written consents for biometric collection from employees as well as other individuals.

Repurposing: Repurposing occurs when data is collected for one purpose and then used for a different purpose (e.g., where a social media service that initially obtained authorization to display photographs on its site uses the same photographs to train facial recognition software). Given the evolution of technology and business strategies, the initial consent from individuals is unlikely to cover all future uses of data, many of which may not be contemplated at the time of initial collection. However, it is important to renew consent when information collected for one purpose is used for another. For instance, the FTC recently fined Twitter \$150 million for repurposing nonpublic user contact information, which was collected for account security purposes, to serve targeted advertisements. Additionally, a photo storage service was required to delete both the misused data and its products developed using the same.

Opt-outs and Deletion Requests: The CCPA and other current and proposed state laws require compliance with opt-out and deletion requests to allow individuals control over the use and collection of their own data. In addition to providing mechanisms for the submission of opt-outs or deletion requests, businesses must have in place appropriate policies and technical capabilities to honor such requests. For opt-outs, this means tracking individual selections and limiting what is collected accordingly. This may require deprecating or denying services if an individual opts out of providing any data that is essential. To satisfy deletion requests, businesses must map, track and index their data in such a way that it is locatable with respect to specific individuals and capable of being persistently deleted upon request.

Conclusion: Data analysis provides many benefits and insights for businesses. However, the kaleidoscopic overlay of applicable laws and regulations makes compliance difficult. Understanding and implementing appropriate procedures to secure the necessary permissions plays a vital role in a business' ability to enjoy the benefits of the data it collects in a responsible and legally compliant manner.

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Want to get involved in the in-house counsel community? Joining an ACC Georgia committee is the best way to start. For more information, go to <https://www.acc.com/chapters-networks/chapters/georgia/chapter-committees>.

ESG Enforcement Risks: From “Greenwashing” to “Woke-washing”

By Adwoa Gharthey-Tagoe Seymour, Vice President of Litigation at Albertsons Companies, Inc.



Adwoa Gharthey-Tagoe Seymour

Driven by its mission to protect investors and maintain fair and orderly markets the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) is making good on its promise to focus on environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues, as evidenced by the agency’s recent actions against a publicly-traded Brazilian mining company and a financial institution for alleged fraudulent disclosures in their public filings.

The SEC has authority to bring such actions through its broad powers to enforce, among other things, the Securities Act of 1933, the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the Investment Advisers Act of 1940 and the Investment Company Act of 1940. The power to enforce these acts, arguably, gives the SEC broad discretion to focus on ESG issues, and considerable authority to punish entities that do not meet their ESG-related obligations.

In March 2021, the SEC announced a new task force focused solely on ESG issues and identifying material misstatements in issuers’ disclosures relating to ESG. The agency noted that it planned to use sophisticated data analysis to mine and assess registrants’ climate related and other ESG disclosures.

The recent actions signal the SEC’s move toward an aggressive ESG regulatory environment. It alleges the mining company ignored red flags about safety violations while publicizing its commitments to increased safety and environmental standards. For the investment firm, the SEC levied US\$1.5 million in fines for ESG-related misstatements related to certain investment portfolios.

Coupled with the agency’s stated interest in greenwashing claims and approval of NASDAQ diversity rules that will inevitably lead to so-called “woke-washing” claims, publicly-traded companies should prepare for an uptick in both enforcement actions and private litigation.

“Greenwashing”

Greenwashing refers to a company’s misrepresentation of its environmental practices. Claims regarding the accuracy of a company’s climate or environmentally friendly products or operations have previously been brought under various state consumer protection statutes. Many state consumer protection laws follow a “reasonable consumer standard,” and companies have successfully defended greenwashing claims because the challenged statements were purely aspirational.

Conversely, some state consumer protection laws follow a “consumer influence” standard, finding that publicly available statements that can influence the consumers’ decision-making process in purchasing goods can be actionable. Companies have experienced less success in defending against claims under this standard, with courts allowing claims to proceed if statements can be tested as accurate or inaccurate, such as whether companies monitor their suppliers for child labor practices and other stakeholder issues, as reflected in public documents.

Save the Date!

The Women’s Initiative 2022 Signature Event will focus on a panel discussion regarding ESG efforts and the role that in-house counsel have with respect to the development of both ESG goals and ESG reporting. Our panelists will include ESG experts in the Atlanta area, who are leading their respective employers’ efforts to meet ESG requirements and expectations. This event will be held on November 17, beginning at 5:30 p.m., at the Cox Enterprises headquarters.

Private litigation can also be a precursor to regulatory action. For example, the SEC’s enforcement action against the Brazilian mining company mirrors and expands on similar allegations brought by an investor putative class against the company nearly two years before.

“Woke-washing”

Woke-washing refers to an overstatement or misrepresentation of a company’s policies and practices regarding social issues related to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), social justice and labor practices, among others. Courts have generally found allegations related to boardroom and workforce diversity in recent shareholder derivative actions deficient at the pleadings stage, holding that allegations about commitments to a “diverse workforce” and “an inclusive working environment” are not actionable and do not form an essential link to loss-generating corporate action. With the SEC’s recent approval of the NASDAQ listing rules regarding board diversity and disclosure, however, would-be plaintiffs will be armed with more publicly-available data, enabling them to assert more specific allegations about corporate DEI practices and policies (or the lack thereof) in future lawsuits.

While NASDAQ has clarified that its rules requiring certain companies to have at least one female director and one director from an underrepresented group are disclosure-based, NASDAQ has reserved the option to de-list companies for compliance failures, with some requirements taking effect as early as Aug. 8, 2022. The SEC has found these boardroom DEI statistics significant because they are “currently not widely available on a consistent and comparable basis” but contribute to the “maintenance of fair and orderly markets.”

Framing these rules as “disclosures” versus “mandates” is critical in staving off legal challenges, as demonstrated by recent California court rulings, *Crest et al. v. Padilla*, C.A. No. 19STCV27561 Cal. Super. Ct. (Crest I) and *Crest et al. v. Padilla* (Crest II), C.A. No. 20STCV37513 Cal. Super. Ct., that struck down state laws requiring public company boards to diversify with women and underrepresented groups.

Mitigating risk

Many public companies are vigilant in verifying their financial disclosures. It is now equally important that companies apply a similar standard to their ESG disclosures. This applies to “formal” disclosures in SEC filings and informal statements on social media, in press releases and CSR reports, and other public statements in which companies address ESG issues, as these statements will undoubtedly serve as the predicate for investor lawsuits or regulatory actions.

Public companies should stay watchful for books and records demands from shareholders relating to ESG, as plaintiffs could use information sought in these demands to bolster allegations in derivative suits against the company and its directors.

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Thought Leader Level

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ACC GA EVENT PHOTOS



Women's Initiative Topgolf Event



Deep Dive Event - Ashoo Sharma, Keyaan Williams, Chief Justice Harold Melton



Deep Dive Event - Catherine McClellan, Veronica Davis, Keyaan Williams, Tom Schroeder, M. Yusuf Mohamed, Chief Justice Harold Melton



Monthly Luncheon - Jeff Handler, Alison Danaceau, Ashoo Sharma, Leslie Spasser, Brennan Carmody



Deep Dive Event - Keyaan Williams



Women's Initiative Topgolf Event - Rayne Towns, LaChandra Pye, Kenya Thacker Pierre



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