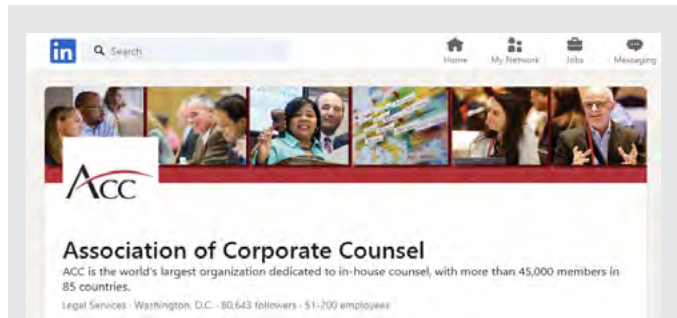


UPCOMING MEMBER EVENTS

12/7/23
ACC Georgia Holiday Party

12/12/23
ACC Monthly Lunch - December 2023
Talem IP



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. We look forward to connecting with you online!

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Anne Kamosso
ACC Georgia President

As 2024 approaches, I am honored and excited to begin my term as president of our ACC Georgia chapter. The board and I will be building on the momentum fueled by Kathryn Hutton and her board over the past two years, and we thank them for their excellent stewardship of our organization.

We want to create opportunities for our more than 1,100 ACC Georgia members to help each other. These goals include:

- Sharing our collective wisdom on in-house legal issues.
- Expanding shared interest groups.
- Extending our reach beyond Atlanta.
- Increasing our diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) and community service efforts.
- Fully integrating law firms into planning the events they sponsor.

Our members have developed hard-won knowledge of solutions to corporate law challenges across a wide variety of businesses. We plan to expand peer-to-peer exchanges to take full advantage of these experiences, as real case studies demonstrate how companies manage working with particular laws and regulations in ways hypotheticals don't. These discussions can normalize what each of us sees in our day-to-day practices.

Our sponsors will support these and other events, and we encourage attorneys from these sponsor firms who have expert knowledge to join a discussion or panel. But we will strive to hear directly from and engage our ACC members at our events.

Last year, ACC Georgia launched shared interest groups around intellectual property and privacy, and we plan to start several more. Think of these as akin to ACC national's networks. These groups don't have charters, aren't required to keep minutes and are organized around a topic or practice area. Each group can be a place to exchange "war stories" and best practices and learn about trends in the law. Any member is welcome to join any group or any of their events at any time. Groups will meet at least quarterly and sometimes may hold joint meetings or events with other groups.

Having joined ACC Georgia while I worked in Columbus, I am familiar with the engagement challenges for members outside of Atlanta. That's why we are planning for ACC Georgia itself to sponsor events in other areas of the state — Macon, Savannah, etc. — during my term. To get to more nooks and crannies of the metropolitan Atlanta area, I'm also challenging each 2024 board member to host at least two small networking breakfasts, lunches or dinners near his or her home or workplace by the end of each calendar year.

On the DEI front, we want to build on the success of our Women's Initiative and expand our reach to showcase potential sponsors who are members of groups such as National Association of Minority and Women Owned Law Firms (NAMWOLF). Moreover, we'd like to diversify the speakers at our events.

Relatedly, we hope to set up more opportunities for members to participate in public service projects, such as working at food banks and shelters. These events tie us to our communities and pay off in good feelings from helping others.

One of our group's greatest assets is the experience and knowledge our members bring to the table. One of the most memorable things I heard at the ACC national conference in October was a statement that the person sitting next to you at each event is an expert in something — maybe even the legal subject being discussed. It's therefore vital that we share our expertise.

In that regard, we will need volunteers to partner with our sponsors to lead shared interest groups and provide ideas for creative, engaging and fun events. Get active — share your expertise and your enthusiasm for whatever it is you love about your in-house practice. Please let us know how you are interested in helping make this the best chapter in the country by emailing georgia@accglobal.com.

I look forward to the coming year and thank you for your consideration and participation!

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Veronica Davis

Assistant General Counsel – Southwire Co. LLC



Q. How did you grow up, and why did you want to go to law school and become an attorney?

I am from the great city of Chicago, and I grew up on the south side of the city. I studied economics at the University of Illinois and knew I wanted to pursue a career where I could put those studies to use. Law school seemed like a natural fit, and Northwestern University School of Law was a great legal training ground.

Q. What attracted you to the type of law you practice?

I worked in private practice after law school as a litigation associate. I decided then that I wanted to work in-house after working with a few in-house counsel on litigation matters. Thankfully, I've had the opportunity to do several different types of jobs in-house, including litigation, state regulatory and transactional work. By rotating through different jobs, I was able to discover that I love doing transactional/commercial contract work.

Q. How'd you get involved in ACC Georgia?

I've been a member of ACC Georgia for a number of years. I decided to join to build relationships with other local in-house counsel. Before joining ACC, I found it difficult to meet other in-house attorneys, but getting involved with ACC resolved that issue. A couple of years ago I decided to join the ACC Board, and it has been a wonderful experience.

Q. What keeps you up at night?

I have a teenager at home, so worrying about him making good decisions and doing everything he needs to do keeps me up at night sometimes.

Q. What is your best advice for outside lawyers?

I believe that the better you know our business, the more valuable you are to us as outside counsel. So spending time learning your client's business well can pay big dividends.

Q. What are your favorite words of wisdom?

"Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." It is a great leadership mantra and part of my personal code of ethics. I try to live by these words.

Q. Who is a mentor or a personal hero?

My parents are my personal heroes. They were both born in the South during segregation, migrated north to Chicago and established successful lives despite facing many systemic obstacles.

Q. What is your last book read?

I read *Demon Copperhead* by Barbara Kingsolver on vacation this year. It's an amazing novel about a boy growing up in rural America and dealing with poverty and the opioid crisis. I also recommend *The Warmth of Other Suns* by Isabel Wilkerson whenever I'm asked for a book recommendation. It's a beautiful book that's a historical study of the Great Migration in America.

Q. What is your favorite television show?

I am a huge fan of the original *Law & Order* franchise. I still watch episodes all the time.

Q. What is your favorite travel destination or place you hope to visit?

I love to travel and experience the world, but every year my family returns to Seagrove Beach, Florida, where we always have a great time.

Q. What would you be if you weren't a lawyer?

A teacher. I truly admire the work teachers do, and I love kids.

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MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Kevin Isom

Vice President Counsel – ADP



Q. How did you grow up, and why did you want to go to law school and become an attorney?

I grew up in Memphis, Tennessee, where people still see Elvis. With a bachelor's degree in French from Vanderbilt, I had a choice of pursuing a doctorate in French or going to law school. I couldn't see myself writing essays on French literature for the rest of my life, so I came to Emory for law school to do something where I could have a greater effect — though on what, I didn't quite know yet.

Q. What attracted you to the type of law you practice?

I started my in-house career negotiating complex client agreements and moved into leading high-performing contracts teams. Then I took an opportunity to move laterally (always take those — up is not the only direction) and became, in ADP-speak, a business unit lawyer. Think of it as general counsel (little “g” and little “c”) for a business or suite of businesses. It required a whole new skill set for success. I serve on senior leadership teams for my businesses and really love that I can affect the course and success of the business. It's exactly what I was looking for when I went to Emory.

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

It's important to raise your hand. “Yes, I'd like to work on that bigger deal.” “Yes, I'd like to support that business that I know nothing about and learn about completely new areas of law.” “Yes, I'd like to serve as executive sponsor of the Pride LGBTQ+ Allies associate group Atlanta chapter.” It's also important to know your business — down to the nitty gritty — so that you can effectively support it and provide practical direction. As I learned from a mentor, I like to respond to inquiries with, “Yes, that is interesting — let's talk about it more.” We may get to “no,” but I'd rather come up with a pragmatic solution to allow the business to grow while remaining in compliance with relevant laws.

Q. What makes a successful leader?

Take time to think. You can't help a business unless you understand it and think about the challenges it faces. Conduct Google searches, go to seminars and learn constantly so that you can always be armed with ideas and creative approaches (and you'll shock the heck out of your business leaders in a good way by showing your creativity). Value the human side of your associates. They are people who need to be heard and encouraged to grow. Yes, I may cry when they move on to a new role and I have to replace them, but I absolutely encourage them to do so. Last, live your values. Diversity is one of mine, and when I led a project to hire lawyers in India to handle contract amendments for us, I learned that something like 80% of our lawyer applicants there were men. I managed to recommend for hire the most qualified lawyers — and 50% of them were women.

Q. What is your best advice for outside lawyers?

I start my input to my business leaders (and for that matter, to my superiors on the legal team) with the words “Here's what I would do” They don't need to hear just options and risks; they need to hear the better options and why they are better.

Q. What keeps you busy outside of work?

My children — and their club soccer — are my primary focus, plus travel. Pre-pandemic, we would take the kiddos to Europe, rent a car and tour. I now hear comments from my 11-year-old such as, “When can we go back to France?” In addition, I have served on the board of directors of my neighborhood homeowners association for six years and counting. With 387 homes and as many viewpoints, it has been a learning experience in diplomacy, and I have questioned my sanity each time I have run for re-election.

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

I have never allowed anything to alter the course of what I wanted to do and be. Back in the dark ages when I finished law school, law firms were not the diversity-welcoming places they are now. I found my way in-house into a work experience that aligned with my values. My husband and I have been together for 22 years, married for 15 and have two children — ages 13 and 11, both born via gestational surrogacy (a legal lecture in and of itself). The corporate culture at ADP that I have experienced related to my family makeup has been nothing but positive and affirming.

Q. What would you be if you weren't a lawyer?

I would be accepting my Academy Awards for best acting and best screenplay right now.

Executive Director Update



On Nov. 9, we held an event as part of the ACC Georgia Women's Initiative. It had everything you want in an event: a great panel of speakers, strong attendance, valuable takeaways, and the opportunity to see old friends and make new ones. The entire night

I was thinking, “This is what ACC Georgia is about.”

As I assume the role as the new executive director of the ACC Georgia chapter, I am making a pledge to the members to work hard in 2024 to create events that are more accessible, more valuable and more fun. We'll soon roll out a new framework for how our events are structured and a new system for how you will be notified of events. In advance of these changes, please make sure your organization has added georgia@accglobal.com and g.frost@accglobal.com to your allowlist.

As we work to structure events that are more geographically diverse and subject-matter focused, we ask that if you have never attended an ACC Georgia event or haven't been to one in a few years, commit to becoming more active. If our members show up and are engaged, our sponsors will provide better programming and experiences. It's a win-win.

I'm honored to work with this great organization and excited about where we can take ACC Georgia in 2024 and beyond.

Geoff Frost
Executive Director, ACC Georgia Chapter
g.frost@accglobal.com
404-642-0344

SPONSOR ARTICLE

Why Hiring Litigators Who Know Your Judge's Tendencies is Critical

By Vincent Russo

One piece of advice that we have likely all received is “know your audience.” Litigators spend a lot of time thinking about judges — knowing what your judge wants, what your judge likes and what your judge expects are all key. So we spend countless hours assessing past decisions, analyzing past appearances, speaking with other lawyers about their experiences and even getting to know the judge personally. With lawsuits being filed all over the country, it is more important than ever to be familiar with the judge to assess case strategy, the likelihood of success in any given lawsuit and the types of arguments that will be most persuasive in litigation.

In a recent case of mine involving a mergers and acquisition dispute, the plaintiffs' counsel took an extremely aggressive approach to the litigation—filing emergency motions, pressing for early discovery and filing summary judgment motions months before the close of discovery.

The plaintiffs believed they had a slam dunk case. What they apparently did not know was the judge's tendencies.

My team was familiar with the judge and knew from his background that he was well-versed in disputes involving complex business contracts. We also knew that he would not abandon longstanding rules of contract interpretation beneficial to our position. And finally, we knew that the judge had a very busy court calendar with criminal trials and other civil cases. As such, when we went into an early summary judgment hearing, we were prepared to walk the judge through the contract terms, the law and why the plaintiffs could not get the relief they sought — and we did it using opposing counsel's PowerPoint slides.

Our legal arguments established credibility with the judge and were persuasive. Just as important, knowing the judge faced a heavy caseload, our legal position showed the judge how to avoid putting more work on his plate — and get a win for our client. Not only did the judge deny the plaintiffs' various motions, but he also ordered a forensic accounting of the plaintiffs' pre-merger financials, which devastated their case.

There are also many examples of opposing counsel not knowing the judge's tendencies and getting slapped by the judge as a result. For out-of-state litigants, it is equally important to consider local counsel's familiarity with the judge and the role that local counsel will play in the litigation. How “local” does litigation counsel need to be? Some of us are fortunate to know judges all across the state, so it may not matter if your litigation counsel is from the same small town where your case is pending. But there are certainly times when out-of-state litigants lose credibility with judges by selecting litigation counsel who are not local or familiar with the judge, and it can make getting favorable rulings difficult. Out-of-state litigants should also consider litigation counsel who understand the business climate where the litigation is pending. This goes hand-in-hand with knowing the judge.

While most corporate counsel are not going to appear in front of judges very often, it is still important to know your judge. The primary reason is to ensure you're hiring outside counsel who is familiar with the judge. When searching for counsel in a major litigation matter, one of the first questions corporate counsel should ask is whether the lawyer has appeared before the judge in the case. If the answer is no, you should probably look for another lawyer.

If the answer is yes, you should ask for additional information to make sure the lawyer you're hiring has a strong understanding of the nuances each judge brings to a case. You also want to make sure the lawyer you're speaking with has never done anything to get sideways of the judge.

A lot of historical information about judges and the lawyers who have appeared before them is available through case tracking platforms. But nothing can replace the understanding of lawyers who have real experience with the judge and who can help navigate this critical aspect of your case.

Vincent Russo is an attorney at Robbins Alloy Belinfante Littlefield LLC, an Atlanta litigation boutique. He has served as general counsel for the Georgia Secretary of State's office and co-chair of the Georgia governor's Judicial Nominating Commission.

Artificial Intelligence Tops Discussion at Annual ACC Braves Game Event

Generative artificial intelligence impacts everyone's lives, and lawyers must keep up with AI developments, a Nelson Mullins lawyer told 50 ACC Georgia members gathered at Truist Park for the group's annual event combining continuing legal education and an Atlanta Braves game.

Jason Epstein, a partner from Nashville who co-heads the firm's technology and procurement practice, said companies feel pressure to use AI in their operations. “There's real FOMO [fear of missing out] coming from the C-suites,” said Epstein.

This dynamic means engineers and others may move so fast that they bypass consulting with legal teams while they roll out multiple AI products. This increases the risks of legal trouble such as trademark or trade secret disputes, among others, Epstein said.

Terms and conditions for AI use are often put together without lawyers' review or full understanding, Epstein added.

Nelson Mullins sponsored the Aug. 23 event at which Epstein was joined by firm colleagues Daniel Lumm and Mallory Acheson, along with Andrew Murphy, who manages RSM's Acceleration Center for Innovation.

The panel discussed the use of AI by both companies and lawyers themselves. One panelist noted how a lawyer reported saving 10 to 15 hours by drafting a document in 30 minutes with the help of an AI service. The lawyer didn't risk violating attorney-client privilege because they used fake names in the prompts for the AI service — then replaced them with real names in the actual document.

Another panelist reported how generative AI content ranged widely in quality, with work at the bottom end including repetitive, nonsubstantive language and “word salads”.

Therefore, panelists insisted that using AI is “not in lieu of practicing law.”

“You still need a human in the loop,” said Epstein.

He presented a list of common legal issues accompanying AI use, including concerns around data/privacy, confidential or proprietary information, intellectual property, acceptable use policies and restrictions and ethics/governance.

Panelists urged transactional lawyers working on AI projects to consult attorneys with specific experience in those issues. Privacy, for example, presents challenges of consent to have information used to train the AI granted by people using AI. In other situations, bias, discrimination, defamation and misinformation can be baked in and then included in an AI product.

After the education session, attendees went to the Below the Chop clubhouse behind right field to enjoy drinks, dinner and the Braves' 7-0 victory over the New York Mets.

EVENT PHOTOS



CLE luncheon sponsored by McDermott Will & Emery.



ACC PBPA CLE Challenge.



Women's Initiative Signature Event, Anna Halsey, Kimberly Lerman, Jennifer Blakely, Terri Stewart.



Women's Initiative Signature Event, Anna Halsey, Rachel Spears, Kristi Weathers, Kimberly Lerman, Teri McClure.



McDermott Will & Emery attorney Frances Parker Forte and Kaeley Brown from Snap Inc.



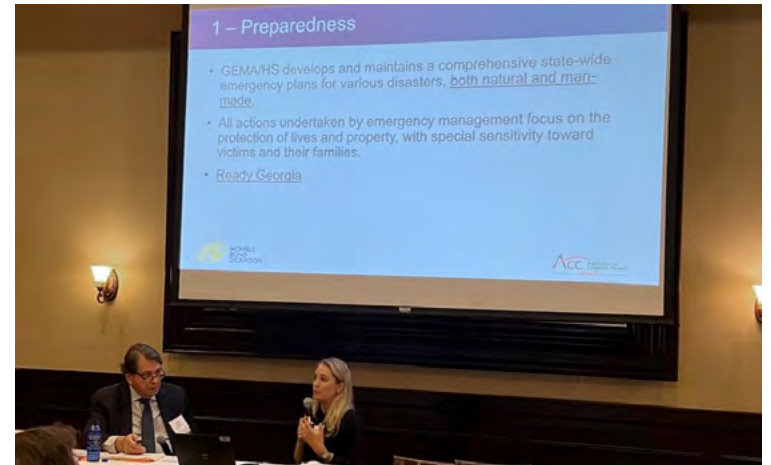
Check Presentation Event, Kathryn Hutton, Anne Kamosso and Rachel Spears.



CLE luncheon sponsored by Fisher Phillips.



Womble Bond Dickinson Partner Joe Whitley and Anna Burton from the Georgia Emergency Management Agency.



CLE luncheon sponsored by Womble Bond Dickinson.

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