

**Intellectual Property Law Section of the Montana State Bar**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**2023-2024**

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**Membership, Officers & Council Members**

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|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Chair:                | Sarah J. Rhoades                                                                |
| Chair Elect:          | Lisa Griffith                                                                   |
| Immediate Past Chair: | Shane Coleman                                                                   |
| Treasurer:            | Judd Jensen                                                                     |
| Secretary:            | Dash DeJarnatt                                                                  |
| Council Members:      | David Cleveland, Martin Rogers, Toni Tease,<br>Quinton King, and Mariah Johnson |

The current membership roster lists 49 members, 3 of whom are Student Members and 2 of whom are Associate Members. New Officers and Council Members will be elected and seated at the Annual Meeting on 9/11/2024.

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**Meetings**

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1. December 5, 2023 – Council Meeting via Zoom
2. February 14, 2024 – Council Meeting via Zoom
3. April 17, 2024 – Council Meeting via Zoom
4. June 5, 2024 – Council Meeting via Zoom
5. August 14, 2024 – Council Meeting via Zoom
6. September 11, 2024 – Annual Member Meeting/Election of Officers (in person and Zoom).

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**Primary Initiatives**

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1. ***IP Day in Montana:*** The Section collaborated with the Blewett School of Law to host the fifth installment of its annual event, *IP Day in Montana*. On March 8, 2024, keynote speaker, Dean Jacob Rooksby from Gonzaga presented topics from his book [\*The Branding of the American Mind: How Universities Capture, Manage, and Monetize Intellectual Property and Why It Matters\*](#). USPTO Rocky Mountain Regional Director, Molly Kocialski presented for the fifth straight time. Panels and speakers touching on various themes of IP in Higher Education engaged in lively discussions with the attendees comprised of students, faculty, community members, and attorneys. The event was free to the public and offered a pay-option that provided 36 bar members access to 5.75 hours of CLE credit and 1 ethics credit. Approximately another 25 attendees of the public and many students attended throughout the day. Event planning is underway to host the 2025 *IP Day in Montana* on March 28, 2025 at the law school in Missoula with programming inspired by the Keynote Speaker, Jorge L. Contreras' book: [\*The Genome Defense - Inside the Epic Legal Battle to Determine Who Owns Your DNA\*](#).
2. **Law School Graduation Award:** In 2021, the Section passed a resolution and began an

annual graduation award of \$500 to the Alexander Blewett III School of Law at the University of Montana. The Section worked with the law school to establish factors in order to reward students that demonstrate commitment to, and enthusiasm for, the area of intellectual property law. For the 2024 graduating class, the award, presented to the recipients at graduation, was shared equally by 3 students, Amanda Spear, John Gardner, and Elise Keenum. Ms. Spear and Ms. Keenum attended the June 5, 2024 Council meeting to share their career plans and express their gratitude to the Section.

3. **Montana Secretary of State Collaboration:** In May 2024, five members of the IPL Section met with 5 representatives from the Montana SOS including Chief Deputy Angela Nunn, Attorney Clay Leland, Business Services Director Kellee English, and Business Services Supervisor Melissa Lutgen. All of the participants advanced a positive, lengthy, and candid discussion about ideas to improve the Montana Trademark Registration System. In August 2024, the Section provided on-site trademark training to Business Services Director English, Supervisor Lutgen, and trademark review personnel. With this information, the SOS may implement changes to the Montana trademark system to better align with the law and serve Montanans. In the future, the Section plans to collaborate with the SOS to host a public-facing Trademark Application training.
4. **CLE:** Friday, September 13<sup>th</sup> during the SBM Annual Meeting, IPL Section members will present *Hot Topics* Lightning Round presentations on the topics of:
  - i. *FTC Ban on Covenants Not to Compete and Steps to Compliance* - Bob Griffin, Crowley Fleck, PLLP
  - ii. *Responding to Copyright Troll Demand Letters* - Shane Coleman, Billstein, Monson & Small PLLC
  - iii. *Scam Business Name and Trademark Solicitations* - Sarah Rhoades, Rhoades Intellectual Property Law, PLLC
  - iv. *Beneficial Ownership Information Reporting Requirements 101* - Dash DeJarnatt, Browning, Kaleczyc, Berry & Hoven, P.C.
5. **Legislative Initiative:** The Section has discussed revisiting past legislation initiatives that would update the state trademark laws during the 2025 Legislative Session.

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**Income & Expenses (as of August 31, 2024)**

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Section Beginning Balance – FYE 24 = \$3,836  
Section Income = \$1,290  
Expenditures = IP Day in Montana \$500; Law Student Award \$500  
Section Ending Balance – FYE25 = \$5,096

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**Other Matters**

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**USPTO Patent Judging:** Two of our Section members, Toni Tease and Sarah Rhoades served as judges during the Regional stage of the [National Patent Application Drafting Competition](#) hosted by the USPTO.

## SBM Microsite:

\* The Section collaborated to create a list of recurring, regional conventions, meetings, and seminars which list is shared with members within the About Us/Sections and Committees/Intellectual Property Law Section:

### Regional Intellectual Property Conferences:

- **Rocky Mountain Intellectual Property & Technology Law Institute**  
Next event: May 30 - 31, 2024  
Location: Westminster, Colorado  
Details and Registration:  
<https://cle.cobar.org/Seminars/Event-Info/sessionaltcd/IP053024L>
- **IP CLE Conference**  
Next event: January 8 - 11, 2025  
Location: Vail, Colorado  
Details and Registration:  
<https://web.cvent.com/event/b4882b6c-feb6-4ee7-86bd-3b1c5d0c3ecf/summary?Refid=cle.com%20registration>
- **PATSKI IP Conference**  
Next event: TBD  
Location: TBD  
Details and Registration:  
<https://www.patski.com/>
- **IP SUMMIT**  
Next event: TBD  
Location: Salt Lake City, Utah  
Details and Registration:  
<https://ip.utahbar.org/ip-summit.html>

\* The Section looks forward to collaborating with the State Bar to recommence archiving the Section's organizational documents, Agendas, Bylaws, and Minutes when the functionality may return to the SBM Microsite. The current catalog was last updated in December 2021:

| Intellectual Property Law                                                                                       |  |  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|
|  Agendas                     |  |  |
|  General Section Information |  |  |
|  Minutes                     |  |  |

|                                                                                     | Name                        | Created                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
|  | Agendas                     | 12/8/2021<br>3:54:24 PM |
|  | General Section Information | 12/8/2021<br>3:55:19 PM |
|  | Minutes                     | 12/8/2021<br>3:56:13 PM |

Respectfully submitted this 9<sup>th</sup> day of September 2024.



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