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Member Spotlight: Kelly McCarthy

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Kelly McCarthy is a partner at the law firm Sideman & Bancroft LLP in San Francisco, California, USA. Her daily duties include handling a wide range of intellectual property matters, with a focus on trademark prosecution and enforcement.

"I really enjoy working with clients to devise a filing strategy appropriate for their specific needs, budget and expected growth," Kelly says. "On the flip side, when clients' already well-established brands become threatened by infringers, counterfeiters and the like, I enjoy working with counsel all over the world to devise a game plan to protect the client."

"Trademarks found me," is the way Kelly describes her first involvement in the industry. This happy discovery occurred when she was a first-year associate in Silicon Valley, "right as the dot-com bubble burst." "As luck would have it, a large client had just transferred a huge trademark portfolio to our firm, and the partner in charge was looking for a grunt to help with it." Kelly ducked the layoff scythe by making herself indispensable. Today, "eight years and one firm move later, that client is still with me."

Kelly became involved in INTA because a partner at her former firm told her, "If you are going to be a trademark attorney, you'd better join INTA or no one in the trademark bar will take you seriously. Plus they have great parties." Those words were true. Kelly has enjoyed not only the parties but also serving on the Academic Subcommittee of the Membership Services Committee. One of her favorite activities is the student project team, which she currently co-chairs. "It's a great group, and we plan events for the student members of INTA, including

panels on Careers in Trademark Law and receptions and events at the Annual Meeting.”

When she is not working on trademarks, Kelly spends her spare time at the local humane society. “I am very involved in animal rescue work, and I teach family dog-training classes three hours a week.” Those activities are, she feels, therapeutic. “The worst day at the office can be made much better when it ends with playing with puppies and teaching people how to establish a lifelong relationship with their dog.” In addition, Kelly works with “problem dogs” that have suffered trauma or abuse or that have behavior issues; her reward comes when one of these dogs is adopted by a loving family.

Something INTA Bulletin readers may not know about Kelly is that she is expecting a baby boy in August. “This will be quite an adventure, but I am sure it will be just like training a puppy, right? OK, maybe not.”

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