

District Court Judicial Panel: The Changing Landscape and the Opportunities It Presents

JUNE 12, 2020

The Federal Circuit Bar Association, Berkeley Center for Law & Technology, Berkeley Judicial Institute, ChIPs, and CLI hosted a panel discussion on the changing judicial landscape, and the opportunities it presents for junior lawyers and associates.

Federal District Court judges Alan D Albright (WDTX), Barbara Lynn (NDTX), and Jon S.Tigar (NDCA) provided insights about their career paths, and the evolution of their practices over time. They also highlighted changes that have taken place over the last several months as a result of COVID-19.

The discussion delved into the past, present, and future roles of junior lawyers. This included conversations with the judges about their experiences in that role, opportunities currently present for junior lawyers in their courtrooms, and future advice for the bar about how to enhance their legal practice.

Topics of discussion included:

- How the judges' experiences as junior lawyers informed their current practices.
- Recent, pressing changes to the judges' practices, how they are conducting hearings amid the effects of COVID, and their opinions on the pandemic's long-term effects.
- New and proposed opportunities for junior lawyers in court, including anecdotes about the implementation of those changes. What do judges do to encourage new opportunities, and what kind of requests are they seeking from litigants?
- The effects of today's trending landscape of hearings, and the creation of additional opportunities for junior lawyers.
- Advice for the bar (including junior lawyers). With the "barriers to entry" for hearings being regulated or opened by judges, what kind of opportunities should/can junior lawyers seek during these times?

PANELISTS

JUDGE ALAN D ALBRIGHT

Judge Alan Albright is the federal district judge for the Western District of Texas, Waco Division. Judge Albright was nominated by President Trump and was sworn in on September 18, 2018. Under Judge Albright, the Western District of Texas has become a hotbed for patent litigation, seeing more new cases since Albright took office than the previous four years combined.

JUDGE BARBARA LYNN

Chief District Judge Barbara M. G. Lynn was appointed to the Northern District of Texas by former President Bill Clinton in 2000. Judge Lynn served as the 1998-99 Chair of the American Bar Association's 60,000-member Section of Litigation, and received SMU Law School's Distinguished Alumni Award for private practice in 1999. She was the first recipient of the Louise Raggio award given by the Dallas Women Lawyers Association for her contributions to the profession.

JUDGE JON S. TIGAR

Judge Jon S. Tigar was appointed as a federal district judge for the Northern District of California by former President Barack Obama in 2012. His docket includes a substantial number of patent, class action, and constitutional law cases. Before that, he served for 11 years as a trial judge on the Alameda County Superior Court in Oakland, California. Prior to that, he was an associate and then a partner at a law firm and a trial attorney with the San Francisco Public Defender's Office. Judge Tigar currently serves as an Adviser to the American Law Institute's Restatement (Third) of Torts: Liability for Economic Loss and will serve in the same capacity on the forthcoming Restatement (Third) of Torts: Defamation and Privacy. He has also served as the Judicial Representative to the American Bar Association's Section of Antitrust Law.

Prefatory and closing comments will be provided by:

ELENA DIMUZIO

Elena is a co-chair of ChIPs Next Gen, and Director of Litigation and Regulatory at Dropbox.

KATHI VIDAL

Kathi is managing partner of Winston & Strawn's Silicon Valley office and one of the leading patent litigators and Federal Circuit advocates in the country. Kathi sits on the ChIPs Advisory Board, founded the ChIPs Next Gen effort (nextgenlawyers.com), and advises tribunals on Next Gen issues and orders.

The Panel will be moderated by:

DAWANNA L. MCCRAY

DaWanna is a litigation associate in Winston & Strawn's Chicago office. Before joining the firm, DaWanna clerked for the Southern District of Indiana for Judge Tanya Walton Pratt. DaWanna graduated *magna cum laude* from the University of Illinois College of Law, where she served as a notes editor for *The Elder Law Journal*, a Trial Team member, and a student-attorney in the Civil Litigation Clinic and the Family Advocacy Clinic where she was provisionally admitted to represent clients in state court pursuant to Illinois Supreme Court Rule 711.

Read Winston's [WacoWatch blog post](#) for a summary of the event.

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