



THINK FORWARD

Five More Attorneys Join Brinks Gilson & Lione, Firm Opens Tampa Office

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CHICAGO—Five attorneys with experience in patent and trademark litigation are joining Brinks Gilson & Lione from Feldman Gale P.A., including Alejandro J. Fernandez, former managing partner of Feldman’s Tampa office, and Gregory L. Hillyer, former managing partner of Feldman’s Washington DC office. Both are joining Brinks as partners. Attorneys Joseph R. Sozzani, Stephen J. Leahu, and Evi T. Katsantonis are joining Brinks as associates.

Brinks Gilson & Lione, one of the largest intellectual property law firms in the United States, also is opening a new office in Tampa, Fla., the firm’s seventh. The office expands Brinks’ geographic reach to Florida for the first time in the firm’s almost 100-year history.

The Tampa office provides Brinks with an opportunity to tap into a growing IP market. Of the 94 federal district courts across the U.S., Florida’s Middle District ranks among the more attractive in the country for patent infringement cases, recognized in terms of the likelihood of getting to trial, the speed of getting to trial, trial win rates, and damages awarded.

“The volume of patent work for our clients nationwide continues to increase at Brinks,” said Brinks president James R. Sobieraj. “Having highly qualified, experienced counsel licensed to practice in one of the nation’s growing venues for patent litigation is a logical move as we continue to grow.”

Added Sobieraj, “Brinks is proactively hiring experienced IP lawyers to maintain the high standard of quality for which we are known. Our recent growth signals the appeal of a firm like Brinks—an IP boutique with wide-ranging experience in complex patent practice across industry, and a deep bench of attorneys, research scientists, and patent agents.”

Alejandro Fernandez is the former managing partner of the Tampa office of Feldman Gale, P.A., where he also chaired its trademark practice group. Fernandez’s practice focuses on patent, trademark, trade dress, and copyright litigation in areas including pharmaceuticals, medical supplies, telecommunications, and energy. From 2000 to 2005, he was a summer associate, law clerk, and associate at Brinks. Fernandez earned his J.D. and Franklin Pierce Intellectual Property Law Certificate from the University of New Hampshire School of Law, and holds a B.S. in biology with a minor in chemistry from Palm Beach Atlantic University. He will manage Brinks’ new Tampa office.

Gregory Hillyer is joining Brinks’ office in Washington DC. Hillyer’s litigation and prosecution experience spans all aspects of intellectual property and covers a wide range technical areas, including pharmaceuticals, biotechnology, electronics, telecommunications, and business methods. Hillyer earned his J.D. with honors at Temple University Beasley School of Law. He holds an M.S. in organic chemistry from the University of Pittsburgh and a B.S. in chemistry from State University of New York. He is an adjunct professor at the American University Washington College of Law.

Joseph Sozzani’s practice spans litigation, licensing, and counseling, including IP-related advice in connection with transactions. He represents clients in various fields including banking, digital storage, e-

commerce, electronics, manufacturing, lighting, IT, lasers, medical devices, mobile telecommunications, payment systems, pharmaceuticals, plastics, power electronics, software, and silicon chips. He has particular experience litigating business method patents, as well as in corporate matters, licensing, contract negotiation and drafting, commercial litigation, franchising, commercial real estate leasing, financing, and acquisitions and dispositions. Before joining Feldman Gale, Sozzani worked as a patent and intellectual property litigation attorney at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom, LLP, then as corporate counsel for a leading commercial real estate investment firm. He is joining Brinks in Tampa.

Stephen Leahu is a registered patent attorney whose practice focuses on litigation, prosecution, and transactional matters in all areas of intellectual property law, including patents, copyrights, trademarks, domain names, unfair competition, and trade secrets. He has represented clients in intellectual property litigation in various state and federal courts and before the International Trade Commission. Leahu has handled hundreds of applications for clients seeking patents and registration for trademarks and copyrights. He is joining Brinks in Tampa.

Evi Katsantonis focuses her practice on trademark, trade dress, copyright, unfair competition, false advertising, and patent claims in federal and state courts and before the International Trade Commission. Katsantonis prosecutes, enforces, and manages trademark portfolios, addresses infringements, conducts opposition and cancellation proceedings before the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office's Trademark Trial and Appeal Board, institutes domain name arbitration proceedings before the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers, and conducts trademark searches. Katsantonis earned her J.D. from American University Washington College of Law, and graduated *cum laude* from Villanova University with a B.A. in political science. She is joining Brinks in Washington DC.

"The backgrounds of these five lawyers, including their patent and trademark litigation experience, make them a fantastic fit for Brinks," said Sobieraj. "I'm delighted to welcome Alex back to Brinks, and warmly welcome Greg, Joe, Stephen, and Evi to our firm."

Fernandez, Hillyer, Sozzani, Leahu, and Katsantonis are the latest in a recent wave of attorney hires at Brinks, which includes this week's announcement that Susan Frohling, former Chief Trademark Counsel at Northfield, Ill.-based Kraft Foods (now Kraft Heinz Co.) is joining the firm in Chicago.

Frohling is the second attorney to move to Brinks from Kraft Foods in recent months; in January 2016, research scientist and patent attorney Dr. Rathna Koka joined the firm.

The Tampa office bolsters Brinks presence in the southeastern U.S. In September 2015, Brinks doubled the size of its office in Research Triangle Park, N.C. with the addition of four attorneys and a patent agent from Winston-Salem, N.C.-based Womble Carlyle Sandridge & Rice LLP.

Brinks Gilson & Lione

The attorneys, scientific advisors and patent agents at Brinks Gilson & Lione focus their practice in the field of intellectual property. Brinks is one of the largest intellectual property law firms in the U.S. Clients around the world use Brinks to help them protect and enforce their intellectual property rights. Brinks lawyers provide counseling in all aspects of patent, trademark, unfair competition, trade secret and copyright law. More information is at www.brinksgilson.com.