

Covington Adds Two Former PTAB Judges To Patent Group

By Kelcee Griffis

Law360, New York (March 30, 2017, 2:32 PM EDT) -- Covington & Burling LLP has added two former Patent Trial and Appeal Board judges to its patent office trials practice group, the firm announced Thursday, bolstering its offerings with inside knowledge of America Invents Act trial proceedings.

Scott Kamholz and Peter Chen joined the firm in early February and late March, respectively. They are the only two former PTAB judges in private practice who oversaw AIA trial proceedings from start to finish, the firm said.

"We are thrilled to add Peter and Scott to our team as we expect the demand for Patent Office trials to continue to grow in the coming years," said Andrea Reister, chair of the firm's Patent Office trials practice, in a statement. "Their experience in the high-tech and life science sectors will benefit our clients tremendously."

Chen oversaw about 200 inter partes review and covered business method patent proceedings during his time with the board, and Kamholz oversaw about 120 proceedings, the firm said.

Chen, who joins Covington as a partner, came directly from his post at PTAB. He previously spent about seven years at Latham & Watkins LLP as a partner counseling Silicon Valley technology companies.

"Sitting on the administrative law bench made me realize how much I also enjoy being an advocate and representing clients. That was what led me to consider rejoining private practice," said Chen, who served as a lead judge with PTAB.

Kamholz, who joins as of counsel, left the PTAB in 2015 and practiced at Foley Hoag LLP in Washington, D.C., for about two years before setting his sights on Covington, he said.

Kamholz said his time at the PTAB gave him valuable insights into how the patent appeal process works, but ultimately, he said, he wanted to rejoin private practice.



Peter Chen



Scott Kamholz

"I loved my time at the board. It was an endless stream of fascinating cases, working with a set of colleagues that provide a concentration of patent talent that I have never found the like of," he said. "But my passion is for advocacy, so when I felt the time was right, I returned to private practice."

Kamholz said he became acquainted with attorneys from Covington's patent practice group while performing mock judging work.

"I was just floored by the skill and preparation of every member of the team," he said. "As I got to know the team better, I found an unusually good fit."

Kamholz earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Miami, his law degree from Boston College Law School, his medical doctorate degree from the University of Miami School of Medicine and his physiology and biophysics doctorate degree from the University of Miami.

Chen earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from Stanford University and his law degree from the University of California, Davis School of Law.

--Editing by Sara Ziegler.