



Knobbe Martens Names Harnik Shukla and Bryan McWhorter Co-Chairs of Artificial Intelligence Practice

New co-chairs will guide strategy and focus of firm's longstanding work at the intersection of AI and intellectual property

IRVINE, CA, UNITED STATES, August 4, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Leading intellectual property law firm Knobbe Martens is pleased to announce that partners Harnik Shukla and Bryan McWhorter have been named co-chairs of its [Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) practice](#). Mr. Shukla and Mr. McWhorter bring strong technical backgrounds and years of experience advising on an array of issues surrounding AI and related technologies.

"For decades, lawyers across our firm have guided clients through business-critical issues at the intersection of AI and intellectual property," said Steven Nataupsky, Managing Partner at Knobbe Martens. "By unifying this work under a single AI practice structure, we will be in an even stronger position to help our clients protect and advance their cutting-edge innovations and achieve their goals. With a combination of deep technical experience and a reputation for providing practical, business-focused advice, Harnik and Bryan are ideally suited to lead this practice forward."

Knobbe Martens has long been at the forefront of AI, counseling clients on the intellectual property aspects of artificial intelligence, machine learning, and large language models since these technologies first emerged. Comprised of lawyers who hold advanced degrees in electrical engineering, computer science, and related fields, Knobbe Martens' dedicated AI practice provides comprehensive counsel to clients on patent strategy and prosecution, trade secrets, data rights, trademark and copyright protection, open-source licensing, regulatory compliance, and litigation.

Mr. Shukla, based in the firm's Orange County office, builds strategic patent portfolios for clients developing AI and machine learning, sensor, and signal processing technologies, with significant work in the medical device sector. Over the course of his career he has guided IP strategies for investments and acquisitions valued in excess of \$10 billion, and has a track record of representing leading-edge clients across technology-focused industries. Mr. Shukla's work has been recognized in multiple leading legal and IP guides.

Commenting on his appointment, Mr. Shukla said, "My first AI project was more than 20 years

ago, developing a handwriting recognition program and coding a neural network algorithm from scratch. Fast forward to now, AI is rapidly changing how our clients build their products, and how we can help them create a moat around their innovations. I look forward to working with Bryan and our entire AI team to continue supporting our clients in all facets of this work, from patent strategy and trade secrets to data rights that increasingly drive valuation.”

Mr. McWhorter, resident in the firm’s Seattle office, counsels clients in software, telecommunications, cloud computing, and machine learning on patent procurement, portfolio strategy and dispute resolution. He advises on appeals and other special proceedings before the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, as well as clearance, infringement, and licensing counseling. Mr. McWhorter is a frequent author and sought-after speaker on generative AI’s impact on patent practice and business operations.

Speaking on his new role, Mr. McWhorter said, “Clients building and deploying AI face a number of critical issues, including patent eligibility, inventorship questions, open-source and licensing exposure, and a risk and regulatory landscape that is constantly changing. Our team has unmatched technical skills coupled with the procurement and litigation experience to help clients protect what they build and use AI with confidence in their businesses. I’m honored to co-lead this group with Harnik.”

[About Knobbe Martens’ Artificial Intelligence Practice](#)

Knobbe Martens advises companies at every stage of the AI lifecycle, from foundational research and model development through commercial deployment and enforcement. The firm’s lawyers bring technical credentials in machine learning, neural networks, large language models (LLMs), and generative AI, and counsel clients on patent strategy and prosecution, trade secrets, data rights, inventorship, open-source licensing, litigation, and the fast-moving AI regulatory environment. The team serves clients across industries including medical devices, pharmaceuticals, consumer products, financial services, autonomous vehicles, telecommunications, manufacturing, and software. Learn more about the practice here.

About Knobbe Martens

Knobbe Martens protects the ideas that drive innovation and propel our world forward. As a leading intellectual property and technology law firm, clients worldwide rely on us to safeguard their products, brands, and technologies through strategic counsel and high-impact litigation. With offices across the U.S., our lawyers and technology specialists collaborate to deliver tailored solutions for clients ranging from multinational corporations to start-ups and emerging companies at every stage. Discover more at www.knobbe.com.

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