It Takes **Skill** to Recognize **Ingenuity**

Meet IP Attaché Alumnus Michael L.

www.uspto.gov/ipattache

From Queens to "the Mecca," to Mexico City, and beyond, Michael has traveled the world as he pursued his education and advanced in his profession. He hails from Queens, New York, and his interests led him to study political science and economics at Howard University ("the Mecca"), where he was introduced to several intellectual property–fueled creative industries. Michael's experience as a D.J. further strengthened his interests in understanding the role intellectual property (IP) plays in protecting music, film, and art. He followed his curiosity to the Catholic University Columbus Law School and the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law where he earned a J.D. and an LL.M., respectively.

Upon graduation, Michael wanted to work on IP issues and make a difference in the field at the same time. Those admirable pursuits lead him to government service, where he started his career at the U.S. Copyright Office as a copyright examiner. Michael soon sought out opportunities at America's Innovation Agency, and came to work at the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) as a Trademark Examining Attorney. He was motivated to make a positive impact on issues benefitting U.S. citizens and interests, take advantage of unique career opportunities afforded by government service (such as the USPTO's IP Attaché Program), and to work with the best and brightest minds in the IP space. He spent two years on detail at the White House Office of the Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator, where he was a senior advisor responsible for coordinating IP enforcement policy across U.S. government agencies.

This experience prepared him for his next challenge, with the IP Attaché Program, where he was the first IP attaché posted in Mexico City, Mexico. In addition to helping U.S. rights holders protect their IP, Michael enjoyed the diverse cultures and cuisines of the countries he covered, including Mexico, Jamaica, the Dominican Republic, and Panama.

While an IP attaché, Michael developed skills that enabled him to transition to his current role as vice president of intellectual property protection and security at the Entertainment Software Association (ESA). In this role, Michael leads a team of IP and cybersecurity professionals who execute ESA's global IP enforcement program, including investigating and mitigating physical and online threats to IP, both domestically and internationally. Michael is responsible for coordinating and aligning ESA's membership on priority IP enforcement issues and developing and executing effective strategies. He spends a great deal of time building relationships in order to share successes and challenges with IP enforcement on ESA's platforms. Outreach and effective communication are key to maximizing IP enforcement, and Michael honed these skills while working as an IP attaché. Michael views the IP attaché role as one of the crown jewels of U.S. federal government jobs.

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