

# SIPLA EXECUTIVE BOARD ELECTIONS

## President

### **Akkad Moussa**

My name is Akkad Moussa, and I am running for SIPLA President! It would truly be an honor to work with the Executive Board next year to ensure that SIPLA continues to flourish as a student organization by hosting the many social and professional events that it has this past year.

As this year's Vice President, I understand the hard work and intense planning that goes into making SIPLA so successful. As President I look forward to furthering SIPLA's achievements to maximize all of our members' opportunities. I will continue the hard work of this year's team in integrating SIPLA with law firms, corporations, and nonprofits engaged in the practice of all types of IP. As VP I worked with the SBA, Senate, and faculty to build relationships and further SIPLA's mission. As President, I will continue to work with these groups and others to better-connect our members with employers nationwide.

## Vice President

### **Eliza Strong**

SIPLA has been an integral part of my 1L experience, and I want to be of the most use possible to the organization going forward as a 2L. I am organized, hardworking and follow through on my obligations, and have worked hard at all of the EOPs this semester to make connections with the firms that participate and help the events run smoothly. I have leadership experience with running organizations and delegating tasks to other students through various positions I held in college, including Editor of a monthly magazine at Duke as well as layout editor for Duke's daily newspaper, The Chronicle. SIPLA has been a high priority for me in terms of how I delegate my time commitments, and I would make it even more so if chosen as Vice President. I have also developed a good relationship with Akkad and would feel comfortable looking to him for guidance on how to follow in his footsteps, because I think he has done a phenomenal job both with managing our group of 1L Representatives and creating an atmosphere within the organization that feels both welcoming and professionally valuable. I hope to have the opportunity to further the goals that Adam and Akkad set for us this past semester of using SIPLA as an organization both for professional and student development, and am qualified to fill the VP post.

## **Steven Dirks**

I would like to be considered for the vice president position on the SIPLA board because I would like to be as involved with the SIPLA organization as possible. I am committed to helping improve the SIPLA organization because I believe it is a uniquely effective organization, actually accomplishing its goal of providing assistance to students in every aspect of their education and career planning. Many other student organizations attempt this goal but fall short due to lack of leadership, participation, and support. SIPLA succeeds where these other organizations fall short, and I would like to help that trend continue.

I believe I have proven my dedication to the organization through my continual efforts help any time something needs to be done. I have attended every event, arriving early to help set up and staying late to help break everything down. In addition, I have worked hard to get to know as many people within the organization as possible and encouraged many of my classmates to attend events and get more information about IP law.

I am enthusiastic about assisting and improving SIPLA because I have witnessed firsthand how much the organization and its leaders care about its members and how that support translates to better students, better job applicants, and better lawyers. From personal experience, I have felt more comfortable, confident, and mentally sane, because of the efforts of the SIPLA members who are always quick to help anytime I need it. This is a critically important legacy and I want to be a part of its continuation.

## **Sohrab Hajarjian**

I am writing this letter to express my interest in being considered as a candidate for the Vice President position for SIPLA's executive board. I have been a very active member of SIPLA throughout my first two semesters, and believe that my dedication to SIPLA as well as the greater GW IP community renders me an ideal candidate for this position. Furthermore, my experience of being the Cornell University Club Soccer team's coach as a Senior taught me how to be an effective leader, which will be an essential skill I will bring to the SIPLA organization to help it grow and be successful.

As a Senior in college, I was the coach of the Cornell Club Soccer Team. I had been a member of the team since my Freshman year, but when I got injured the summer before my Senior season, I was chosen to be the coach due to my seniority, knowledge of the game, and demonstrated dedication to the team for the past three years. I accepted the position, though I knew it would be difficult and trying. For the next two months, I was in charge of running practice, deliberating team tactics, and deciding who gets to play during games. I faced many challenges, ranging from having to make difficult decisions regarding who gets to play to having to react to the opposition's style of play during games and making changes that would help us win games.

My main approach to this position of leadership was to be disciplined and extremely

open and clear in my communication. I believed that if I showed up to practice early and had the drills set before the team got there and further allowed the players that were making the most effort during practice to get playing time, the overall spirit and coherency of the team would improve drastically. Furthermore, I went into each game with a precise game-plan (which I discussed with other Seniors on the team), but also with several back-up plans for various scenarios. Additionally, I tried to make myself as clear as possible to all the members of the team our strategy and how I believed we could achieve our goals.

Eventually, our team's hard work and my planning paid off. We had the best season our team had had in six years, and I believe it was the season that planted the roots for the team's going to the Northeast Regional tournament the year later, and going on to winning the Northeast Regional tournament and ranking 7th in the nation amongst club teams two years later. Through this experience I learned to be disciplined and to plan ahead. Additionally, I learned how to effectively communicate to people and manage events like practice and games. Because of this experience in leadership, I believe I have gained several key leadership skills, and can utilize those skills as SIPLA's Vice President to help the organization grow and prosper in the future.

## **Treasurer**

### **Steven Dirks**

I would like to be considered for the treasurer position on the SIPLA board because I want to be as involved with the SIPLA organization as possible. I am committed to helping improve the SIPLA organization because I believe it is a uniquely effective organization, actually accomplishing its goal of providing assistance to students in every aspect of their education and career planning. Many other student organizations attempt this goal but fall short due to lack of leadership, participation, and support. SIPLA succeeds where these other organizations fall short, and I would like to help that trend continue.

My organizational skills and attention to detail make me an ideal candidate for the treasurer position in particular. Without organization, I feel as though I lose control of my life. Therefore, I work diligently to keep everything organized, including deadlines and tasks. In no other context are these organizational skills more important than when it comes to money. I learned this the hard way my sophomore year of college when I was managing my own money for the first time. I was not careful enough and overdrafted several times and had to take small loans from my parents. After that year, I became increasingly more diligent about monitoring my money. Now, I monitor my finances using several tools, including Mint and excel sheets. I use the Mint service to monitor my individual purchases, which are automatically sorted into one of several categories that I set up in order to perform higher level analysis. With those tools in place, I can monitor my spending all together and within specific categories to identify sources of savings. I also maintain a stock portfolio in which I make independent trades. Keeping track of many different stocks, each with their own transactions can be very difficult.

Therefore, in order to keep myself organized, I have an excel sheet in which I track every purchase, sale, and dividend, as well as quarterly and end of year summaries that track the realized and unrealized gains as compared to several related indexes and tax liabilities. In addition to these tools, my fiancé is an accountant and her financial organizational skills continually rub off on me.

As treasurer for SIPLA, I would work diligently to ensure that the organization has enough funding to run our events as well as monitor our spending to identify areas where we can save money so that we can organize more events with the same amount of money.

### **Sohrab Hajarian**

I am writing this letter to express my interest in being considered as a candidate for the Treasurer position for SIPLA's executive board. I have been a very active member of SIPLA throughout my first two semesters, and believe that my dedication to SIPLA as well as the greater GW IP community renders me an ideal candidate for this position. Furthermore, my background in economics and accounting as well as my experience with budgeting several engineering projects have given me the skills necessary to be a successful Treasurer for SIPLA.

During the course of my undergraduate studies at Cornell University, I developed an interest in economics and finance to an extent that I decided to minor in Applied Economics and Management (AEM). This interest was firmly rooted in my belief that no matter what I went on to do career-wise, a solid understanding and foundation in economics and financial management would be relevant and applicable to my life in the future. Thus in 2014 I graduated a mechanical engineering major and an AEM minor. Amongst the required classes I had to take was accounting, which I believe is an integral part of any business or organization that deals with money.

Additionally, I was able to practice and demonstrate my financial management skills through several engineering projects I was involved in as an undergraduate. As a member of the SonicMEMS laboratory and the KAUST Center for Energy and Sustainability at Cornell, I was involved in conducting research on ultrasonic MEMS motors and also on concentrated solar energy harvesting. In addition to being involved in design and testing, I was given a role in acquiring funding for and budgeting these projects. I had to calculate the budget for design, testing, and prototyping of various parts and to further communicate my calculations to funders in an effective manner.

Thus, through my studies of financial management as well as experience in budgeting engineering projects, I believe I have gained the necessary skills to be a capable Treasurer for SIPLA. SIPLA partakes in various activities that require budgeting, and I can add my relative skills and experience in accounting to the executive board to ensure SIPLA's success in the future.

## Regulatory Chair

### **Eliza Strong**

If not selected as Vice President, I am also very interested in serving as Regulatory Chair for SIPLA. My professional work experience as an intern in Drinker, Biddle & Reath's summer associate recruitment department gave me familiarity with working and complying with national (ABA) and internal regulations, ensuring documents were filed properly and on time, and other related skills. I also worked as an intern in the Human Resources Department, which gave me a similar understanding of regulations compliance and communication skills. As a paralegal, I routinely had to make filing deadlines, ensure court documents met local rules, and communicate with clerks and other firms. These experiences would help me be an effective Regulatory Chair, and I would be excited to follow in my mentor's footsteps to fill this position.

### **Gianna Cresto**

This past semester has taught me some incredible things. All the typical law school, doctrinal material aside, it has shown me how to approach the practice of law. SIPLA has been instrumental in showing me not only how to interact with firms and network effectively, but how to approach being a lawyer. The people in this group are truly some of the brightest at GW, but they are also some of the most encouraging and supportive.

I would like nothing more than to continue to be a part of an organization that truly takes people under its wing, and helps them develop the tools to succeed. I've come to see, to an even greater extent, how important it is to be able to engage with other people and have meaningful interactions. It is not just the EOP events—it has been the leadership team in place, and the way they run the show. This team has led by example, and I hope to have the opportunity to be a part of that during my remaining time at GW Law.

In terms of experience, as a 1L I have not had any additional “experience” by way of job or internship since starting as the 1L representative for the Marshall inn. However, I have gained a number of other skills through my current role with SIPLA. I've been active in promoting the events, and by active I mean more than just the occasional inn-wide announcement. I have come to find that speaking with people one on one can garner just about as many attendees as addressing the entire class. Again, this speaks to the power of personal interaction, and the importance of making people feel as though they can approach you and ask you questions. Throughout the semester, I have answered dozens of questions from fellow Marshallites about SIPLA and other IP related matters—not that I am any great authority just yet.

As regulatory chair, I believe I could help make sure SIPLA stays organized and efficient in the way it conducts events and promotes IP on campus. Please consider me for this position. I know I would be a valuable board member and contributor in the effort to making sure SIPLA remains the number one student group on campus.

### **Kevin Zhang**

I am interested in being your Regulatory Chair for the upcoming year because I want to give back to the group that has helped me so much during my 1L year. A big part of my SIPLA experience has been the EOPs every few weeks -- being the first member of my family to enter law school, EOPs have been a great chance to meet experienced lawyers in the field of patent law and expand my network. After hearing about how the most recent EOP on diversity was an idea implemented this year, I'm excited to expand and improve on EOPs next year!

I believe I am qualified for this organizational role because of my previous experience in organizing weekly and quarterly events for my college Christian group and my previous experience as a stage manager. Both involved communicating with multiple moving parties, anticipating problems and resolving those that arose during the events or performances, which I believe will be helpful skills to run successful EOPs!

### **Mentoring Chair**

#### **Siddhi Shah**

I think I will make a good mentoring chair as I am currently working for a law firm where my primary practice include preparing and prosecuting patent applications, and assisting in researching and analyzing patent invalidity and infringement matters. I have experience in a wide array of technologies including aircraft flight control systems, aircraft engines, wireless technologies, cloud computing, computer security, web technologies, image processing, mobile computing, healthcare IT, and medical devices. I joined Bookoff McAndrews after working as a student associate for Rothwell Figg. Previously, I worked for Honeywell Aerospace and Boeing for seven years as a senior engineer and a team lead, constructing designs and implementations of components and interfaces for flight systems for commercial and military aircrafts.

#### **Eliza Strong**

If not selected for VP or Regulatory Chair, I would also be excited to serve as Mentoring Chair for SIPLA next year. I have benefitted greatly this past semester from the tips and help that SIPLA members have provided me, and consider the upperclassmen's mentorship efforts to be crucial to the enjoyment and success of my law school experience thus far. As Mentoring Chair, I would aim to continue to foster the welcoming atmosphere of this organization and support the younger members while continuing to learn from the 3Ls' experiences.

#### **Divesh Patel**

I am interested in the position of mentoring chair because it is the most hands on way to help the incoming 1L's with their transition into law school. I think the first few months of 1L year are the most daunting and confusing, and having a mentor really helps relieve some of that stress. My mentor was very thorough and helpful, so I want to be able to do the same in pairing up people I think will work well together and also being a source

for all of the 1L's if they need any help. I am very committed to SIPLA, and appreciate the events that are put on for us, so I would like the opportunity to give back.

I was the president and executive of two student organizations during college, so I planned a lot of social events to ease in the new members. I not only have this experience planning and organizing events but also exposure to working closely with board members and coordinating events through the school. This position would also likely be my only commitment in addition to school, so I will be very flexible and open to taking on work from other board members.

### **Kevin Zhang**

I am interested in being your Mentoring Chair for the upcoming year because I want to support 1Ls in the way that was supported during my 1L year. My mentor this year really encouraged me to participate in SIPLA events, advice that I am extremely grateful for. He also met with me whenever I needed another perspective, willingly and quickly responded to my barrage of questions over winter break, preemptively sent me e-mails of advice and encouragement and has been a role model. I believe it is the Mentoring Chair's responsibility for helping foster this kind of rapport and goodwill between mentors and mentees, and I am motivated to do so.

Mentorship has played a big role in my life, whether I was being mentored and mentoring in my church and college Christian group, or mentoring high school freshmen as they enter the new experience of high school. It would be a great honor to bring what I have learned to improve SIPLA's flourishing mentoring program!