

DENVER BUSINESS JOURNAL



KARAM J. SAAB

KILPATRICK TOWNSEND & STOCKTON
PARTNER AND PATENT ATTORNEY

Age: 37

Alma Mater: University of Colorado — Colorado Law

Birthplace: Lowell, Massachusetts

What is the driving force beyond your work that motivates you? In other words, what is the “Play” component of your life?

My family is currently growing at an exponential rate — my wife and I are expecting twin boys early this spring, who will join our 2-year-old daughter. Enjoying their early childhood (and reliving mine) is a prime motivator over the next few years. I’m already looking forward to introducing them to the activities my wife and I love, especially skiing.

As the kids get a bit older, I’m excited to explore the world with them. Travel has been a passion of mine since high school. In the last five years, my wife and I have traveled to New Zealand, Iceland, Costa Rica and to Hawaii twice. I’ve also had the chance to visit Africa a couple times (and even mix in a bit of pro-bono legal work on one of the trips).

Was there a moment that you realized this would be your life’s work? Tell us about it. I knew I was in the right career when I was as excited as my clients over their latest research and product ideas. When my clients come to me wanting to patent their ideas, they come with unique goals on where they want their businesses headed. My job is to not only help my clients get their

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technology patented quickly, but also help determine which aspects of their technology are going to be most valuable ten years from now in view of the competitive landscape.

It's challenging and rewarding to align our patent strategy with the client's short-term and long-term business goals while keeping an eye toward where the client's competitors are headed.

What is it about Denver's professional community that sets it apart from other cities? It's the perfect size. Denver is large enough to have a vibrant tech community that is attacking problems with new and exciting solutions, but remains small enough that you always expect to run into business contacts, classmates and friends whenever you attend a professional event. Whenever I attend an event, I can always expect to run into old colleagues and meet new ones.

What's your favorite way to unwind? Playing outdoors recharges me. I love a lot of the usual Colorado suspects, including skiing, road and mountain biking, running and climbing any peak that looks interesting. Biking the Copper Triangle (Copper Mountain to Leadville to Minturn to Vail and back to Copper) has been a personal favorite for years.

What's your guilty pleasure? Freshly-ground French press coffee. Seven days a week.

Your legal work touches on some of the most-exciting areas of tech, from IoT to blockchain and autonomous driving. Tell us about what we should expect in the next five years. The amount of research going into autonomous driving technology is exciting. While the technology is still in its infancy, wide-scale adoption is coming. In the long-run, safety on our roads is going to increase dramatically, decrease traffic jams and provide everyone with more leisure time. But we will also see the job landscape for tens of thousands of Americans that are dependent on driving vehicles evaporate. The impact on innovation and the political landscape will be immense.

Mentoring seems to be a big focus of yours. Did/do you have a mentor? How did that inform the work that you do now? It's the responsibility of senior leaders in all businesses to mentor the next generation. At my firm, that means passing on legal know-how, providing strategic career planning, coaching on how to nurture and develop client relationships, and lead by example with a strong day-to-day work ethic. I make a point to work with my firm's junior attorneys by getting them involved in high-value work. Working on exciting projects and cutting edge technology while early in their careers will help them get excited for what their careers could look like a decade down the road.

You spend a lot of time doing pro-bono work, with a focus on immigrants as well as adoption. Tell us why that work is important to you, and what the Denver business community can do to better serve those populations. While patents are important for protecting a business's technological edge, their effect on our local community is limited. Representing clients in adoptions and immigration hearings have a much greater personal effect: Depending on the outcome, the course of lives and families are altered. Being able to help a child into a permanent, loving family is a great feeling and has a direct impact on our greater-Denver community.

What's next in your career? I plan to continue to expand my practice representing both startups emerging from the Colorado tech scene and established companies that have been outputting sustained innovation for years. With the courts making significant rulings affecting what is patentable every year, I will continue to evolve in how I advise my clients to protect their most important technology.