

Katherine Franco | Partner
Intellectual Property & Technology

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Katherine Franco is a registered patent attorney who concentrates her practice in the protection of innovation related to software and electronics.

She primarily focuses on patent preparation and prosecution, licensing and acquisition of intellectual property rights, opinion work, and client counseling. Her emphasis lies in applying her computer science and engineering background to technical disciplines related to software and electronics, such as image processing systems, security software and systems, computer hardware, network systems, artificial intelligence, machine learning, virtual and augmented reality applications, media applications, cloud-based systems, and data center technology, to name a few.

She has significant experience supporting clients in the development and management of strong intellectual property portfolios to fit a variety of business needs. Katherine is skilled at assisting high-tech companies to protect emerging technologies. She is also skilled at guiding companies entering the software space through the software protection process.

Katherine has served as an adjunct professor at the University of Houston Law Center, where she developed the curriculum for and taught “Advanced Topics in Software Protection,” providing students a holistic view of the protection of software through all aspects of intellectual property.

She authored “Protecting Free and Open Source Software: Solutions in the Digital Millennium Copyright Act,” 12 COLUM. SCI. & TECH. L. REV. 160 (2011), and co-authored “Patent Enforcement at the International Trade Commission: Is It Worth It?” in *Renewable Energy World* (2011).

During law school, Katherine served as a judicial intern to the Honorable Arthur J. Gajarsa at the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit. While attending the University of Houston Law Center, she served in leadership positions in the Intellectual Property Student Organization (“IPSO”) and the Hispanic Law Student Association (“HLSA”), and she frequently returns to speak to the student groups regarding her experiences. Prior to practicing law, she supported technology licensing and technology transfer at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Rice University.

Admissions

- Texas
- U.S. District Court - Southern District of Texas
- U.S. Patent and Trademark Office

Memberships

- Houston Intellectual Property Law Association

Education

- Massachusetts Institute of Technology, BS
- University of Houston Law Center, JD

Recognitions

- 2017, “Woman to Watch,” *Houston Business Journal's* Women Who Mean Business Awards
- 2017, Finalist, “Diversity Role Model,” *Houston Business Journal's* Diversity in Business Awards

Professional Activities

Katherine is a member of the MIT Club of South Texas, in which she previously served as a liaison between the MIT Club of South Texas and the MIT Enterprise Forum. She also serves as an Educational Counselor for MIT. Katherine also actively participates in pro bono work for voter protection and voting rights. Katherine is an active member of the Houston Intellectual Property Law Association, ChIPs Network, and the Hispanic Bar Association of Houston.