

Taft IP Litigators Join Saul Ewing's DC Practice

By **Jack Rodgers**

Law360 (May 5, 2026, 3:10 PM EDT) -- Saul Ewing LLP has hired two Taft Stettinius & Hollister LLP lawyers, who have more than four decades of combined experience as patent, trademark, trade secret and copyright litigators in courts across the country, the firm announced Tuesday.

Brian Seal and Tom Southard have joined Saul Ewing as partners in Washington, D.C., where they'll continue representing publicly traded companies, startups and individuals. In 2021, the **duo joined Taft** from Butzel Long PC, alongside Shaun Gregory, who moved as an of counsel.

Southard and Seal have worked together on patent cases at several firms for more than a decade and started their working relationship after joining RatnerPrestia in 2011 and 2012, respectively. They joined Butzel Long in 2017.

Southard has helped litigate semiconductor manufacturing matters, and those that include a range of technologies, like LED lighting, medical devices, electronic gaming and more.

In 2022, Southard was part of the Taft team that represented ALSI Holdings LLC, a holding company that took over Appalachian Lighting Systems Inc., in a patent infringement suit against a General Electric Co. **spin off**.

Seal works with computing, telecommunications and electronics clients, working with infringement and claim construction matters. Seal **represented** Motorola early in his career.

In an email to Law360 Pulse on Tuesday, Seal said Southard and his complementary strengths, and willingness "to roll up our sleeves and do whatever needs to be done on a case at any moment," is part of why their partnership has been successful, he said.

"We look forward to using Saul's patent litigation expertise and coast-to-coast reach to grow our practice, particularly in the funded litigation space," Seal said.

Southard said in an email the duo will continue working on funded patent litigation matters, "which is one of Saul Ewing's strengths."

"Brian and I are a highly collaborative team. We align our efforts to achieve the best possible outcomes for our clients, and we are excited to continue this partnership at Saul Ewing, which has a deep bench of experienced patent litigators," he said.

Jason McElroy, the firm's Washington, D.C., managing partner, said in a statement that the firm was thrilled to have Seal and Southard join the team.

"They bring a powerful combination of trial experience, technical depth, and business-minded strategy to our IP litigation team," McElroy said. "Their track record in high-stakes cases and their experience with litigation funding will be a tremendous asset to our clients."

Seal earned his law degree from the University of Alabama School of Law in 2000 and started his legal career after a clerkship with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit. He worked at Howrey LLP for more than 7 ½ years and spent another 3 ½ years at Highbury Chapman LLC before joining RatnerPrestia, his LinkedIn profile says.

Southard, a graduate of Catholic University of America's Columbus School of Law, started his career

with Oliff PLC and after four years there joined Stevens Davis Miller & Mosher LLP, his LinkedIn profile says.

In 2007, he joined McKenna Long & Aldridge LLP and in 2010, Shulman Rogers, before moving to RatnerPrestia.

Domingos Silva, chair of the firm's intellectual property practice, said in a statement Seal and Southard will deepen the firm's strong bench of attorneys who litigate intellectual property matters.

"Our clients rely on our IP litigation team to handle matters that threaten their intellectual property and brands in state and federal courts, before the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and Appeal Board and other governmental tribunals, and by way of mediation and private resolution," Silva said.

--Editing by Alyssa Miller.

Update: This article has been updated with an additional comment from Southard.