

# CHINWE OHANELE

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## PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Chinwe is a legal expert, entrepreneur, educator, professor, and speaker with over 15 years of expertise in business and intellectual property law, education, and strategic consulting. She has proven herself as an educator, developing several curricula that spark curiosity and enthusiasm in students. Prioritizing the synthesis of knowledge into practical “know-how” over rote memorization of legal information, Chinwe is skilled at translating complex legal theory into terms and frameworks accessible to all. Her work has influenced policy and shaped curricula, reaching over tens of thousands of learners annually. Passionate about empowering diverse communities, she leverages her lived experience as an immigrant and woman of color alongside her professional background to mentor and develop young legal professionals. As a thought leader, she is particularly interested in the intersection of intellectual property, cultural expression, and sustainable economic development, especially in the Global South as well as underserved communities residing in the West.

## WORK EXPERIENCE

### Owner

*The Ohanele Law Firm – CA*

**Jan 2021 – Present**

- Grew, led and managed a team of two attorneys and five interns, facilitated ongoing training, education, and review of work product, including overseeing the submission of trademark applications, office action responses, and overall file strategizing to ensure quality legal representation of clients, as well as people strategies, measuring performance, learning & development, coaching and more
- Developed law firm reputation such that 70% of annual revenue resulted from existing or referred clients.
- Developed international intellectual property strategies for market entry, securing legal protections across multiple jurisdictions.
- Advised business owners, C-level professionals, and top management on intellectual property strategies that unlocked new revenue streams, contributing to a 30% average growth in client earnings.
- Facilitated U.S. market entry for foreign businesses, streamlining corporate legal processes and ensuring regulatory compliance.

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**Sr. Program Manager**

*Michelson Institute for Intellectual Property, Michelson 20MM Foundation – CA*

**Apr 2022 – Present**

- Championed the passage of SR106 through strategic lobbying with the Michelson Center for Public Policy, officially establishing October as IP Awareness Month in California.
  - Launched the highly competitive inaugural legal fellowship program to advance intellectual property research on technology transfer infrastructure within the Historically Black Colleges and Universities research and development ecosystem.
  - Authored comprehensive reports to advance intellectual property education, driving measurable program improvements and engaging key educational stakeholders.
  - Represented the organization at national and international conferences, delivering thought leadership on intellectual property, economic development, and inclusivity.
  - Managed high-volume stakeholder relationships, fostering collaboration across academia, industry, and policy sectors to advance integration of intellectual property education in adjacent courses such as entrepreneurship, business, engineering, and the creative arts.
  - Advocated for systemic change by designing programs promoting equitable education access for diverse communities.
  - Directed strategic program development within higher education, building partnerships with 2-year and 4-year institutions, and achieving a 17% increase in outreach and engagement.
  - Led and scaled education-focused programs at the Michelson Institute for Intellectual Property, reaching over 7,500 learners annually and enhancing accessibility and relevance for diverse audiences.
  - Spearheaded the development of technology-driven educational resources and evaluated 50+ intellectual property materials, increasing program scalability and outreach.
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## **Adjunct Professor**

*University of Southern California, Gould School of Law – CA*

**Jan 2022 – Present**

- Designed and delivered a dynamic syllabus for the "Contract Drafting Analysis and Negotiations" course, receiving high student satisfaction scores.
  - Developed a 4-week interactive course experience compelling students to translate in-class lecture into practical knowledge, culminating in a final drafted agreement that coalesced learning from the entire semester.
  - Guided LLM and Masters of Law students through complex legal principles, fostering practical application of course concepts.
  - Created and graded innovative assignments to measure proficiency in negotiation and drafting techniques.
  - Facilitated engaging lectures, enhancing student understanding of contract law and its real-world applications.
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## **Attorney**

*Pearlman Borska & Wax – CA*

**Jan 2019 – Feb 2020**

- Designed and implemented litigation strategies that achieved favorable client outcomes, including six-figure settlements.
  - Monitored evolving legal precedents to provide cutting-edge advice and advocacy.
  - Negotiated high-stakes settlements, minimizing client liability while preserving business integrity.
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## **Consultant**

*Biaya Consulting – CA*  
**Jan 2018 – Sept 2020**

- Led a multinational team of 20 individuals across two continents to design convention identity, communications strategy, canvas potential partnerships, and aligned stakeholders, facilitated logistics, site design, and execution to launch UNICON Africa comic-book convention in Lagos, Nigeria
  - Lead project manager for UNICON Africa, culminating over 700 attendees at the inaugural event and 1000 attendees in the second installation of the event
  - Hosted UNICON Business Summit of 100+ filmmakers, studios, comic book publishing houses, Banks, government officials, and various creative industry stakeholders discussing how Animation, Comics, and Video games present a unique economic development opportunity for the young and creative population in Nigeria, resulting in the inclusion of the Animation sector's inclusion in the U.S.- Nigeria Commercial and Investment Directorate for economic collaboration
  - Facilitated intellectual property workshops for creative entrepreneurs and Nigerian entertainment stakeholders in accordance with global standards
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## **Attorney**

*Bradford & Barthel LLP – CA*  
**Oct 2017 – Oct 2018**

- Secured a multi-million-dollar litigation win by leading strategic depositions and dismantling opposing expert testimony.
  - Delivered expert counsel on the legality of business operations, reducing risk and ensuring compliance.
  - Pioneered a strategic approach to case management, minimizing client exposure and liability.
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## **Associate**

*African Technology Foundation – CA*  
**Dec 2016 – Oct 2017**

- Consulted on technology and creative industry-standard policies and practices in the Nigerian and United States markets.
- Analyzed intellectual property risks for tech startups entering the African market, enhancing their operational readiness.
- Reviewed and redlined content license agreement for content catalog publisher looking to package local African films and television shows for set-top box product launch

- Reviewed, researched, and redlined Errors and Omissions policy for a Nigerian law firm advising their Nigerian client as they developed an Errors and Omissions product for the Nigerian entertainment market, resulting in a product aligned with international standards, thereby de-risking the purchase and distribution of localized content for international markets
  - Analyzed and advised on intellectual property implications of tech start-up products and potential impact on the African distribution market
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## **Attorney**

*Yrulegui & Roberts – CA*

**Apr 2016 – Oct 2017**

- Negotiated and successfully settled liens following the resolution of the case in chief for 70% less than the claimants' demand
  - Filed two successful Petitions for Removal on interlocutory decisions
  - Researched and drafted a successful petition for removal on the Jamie Simmons v. Just Wiggin' It claims
  - Presented workshop on new legal precedent and impact on day-to-day operations to client claims team of 30+ people
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## **Board Member**

*Entrepreneurship Funders Network*

**Jul 2024 – Present**

- Contributed strategic insights to foster innovation in entrepreneurship ecosystems.
  - Collaborated with cross-functional teams to identify funding opportunities for foundation members.
  - Led legal risk assessment programming to assist foundations and family offices providing diversity, equity, and inclusion funding to entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship ecosystem non-profits.
  - Advocated for initiatives that enhanced access to entrepreneurial resources globally.
  - Supported the development of education programs aimed at empowering emerging entrepreneurs.
  - Regularly serve as Head of Committee or Co-Chair to the Legal Action Committee, providing leadership and oversight to strategic initiatives in the wake of the federal dismantling of DEI infrastructure.
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## **Board Member**

*Pro Bono Advisory Council*

**Aug 2023 – Present**

- Overseeing initiatives supporting access to pro bono legal services for underserved communities.
- Providing insight into policy, programmatic efforts, and operations.
- Developing strategic partnerships to amplify the council's impact.
- Actively serve as Head of Committee or Co-Chair, leading critical decision-making processes and

steering program direction and operations.

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## **SKILLS**

### Core Skills:

- Higher Education & Curriculum Design
- Educational Program Development
- Contract Drafting & Negotiation
- Legal Research & Analysis
- Intellectual Property (IP) Strategy
- Policy Advocacy & Legislative Affairs
- Business Law & Corporate Governance
- Entrepreneurial Guidance & Advisory
- IP Clearance & Registration
- Market Entry Strategy (International IP Law)

### Leadership & Strategic Skills:

- Cross-functional Collaboration
- Stakeholder Relationship Management
- Public Speaking & Presentations
- Mentorship & Coaching
- Client Relations & Business Development
- Legal Risk Management
- Process Improvement & Efficiency

### Technology & Tools:

- Legal Technology & Research Tools
- Project Management Software (e.g., Asana, Trello, Monday.com, ClickUp)
- Case Management Software (Clio, Practice Panther, Lawcus)
- Data Analysis & Reporting
- Communication Tools

### Additional Skills:

- Program Management
- Cultural Competence & Diversity Advocacy
- Negotiation & Conflict Resolution
- International Business Law & Compliance

## **LANGUAGES**

- Igbo – Native or bilingual proficiency
- English – Native or bilingual proficiency

## EDUCATION

### **Loyola Law School, Los Angeles**

*Doctor of Law (JD), Arts, Entertainment, and Media Management*

**2010 – 2013**

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### **University of the Pacific**

*Bachelor of Science, Economics and Philosophy*

**2006 – 2010**

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### **State Bar Memberships**

- Member, California Bar Association, 2015
  - Member, New Jersey Bar Association, 2014
  - Member, New York Bar Association; 2014
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### **Board Memberships**

- Board Member, ProBono Advisory Council
  - Board Member, United States Intellectual Property Alliance
  - Board Member, California Intellectual Property Alliance
  - Board Member, Entrepreneurship Funders Network
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## Publications

### **Informally Published Work**

- The Content Biz (selected publications)
  - "Rags to Riches: The Making of a World-Class Film Industry"
  - "Mining Digital Gold: How Past Frameworks Control Present-Day Value"
  - "Hallyu: How South Korea Became the Coolest Country in the World"

### **Michelson Institute for Intellectual Property**

- "HBCU Futures' Collaborative Report: A HBCU Program Impact Report"
- "Unlocking Potential: An Ecosystem Approach to Diversifying the Innovation Economy"
- "The Power of Intellectual Property Education for All" (in progress)

## Work Accepted for Publication ("In press" or "Forthcoming")

- Ohanele, Chinwe, Ekpe, Daphne, *Enhancing Access to Intellectual Property (IP) in the Digital Era: A Pathway to Sustainable Development*, Journal of IP Professionals Vol 1 (2025)

## Work in Progress

- Ohanele, Chinwe, *I am that I am: Intellectual Property and Nigerian Cultural Identity* (working title)
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## Speaking Engagements

- **2024:** Moderator, From Ideas to Inventions, highlighting achievements of middle school and high school inventors and the impact of IP education, MichelsonIP Webinar
- **2024:** Workshop Presenter, The Business of Creation: How equipping educators with IP education takes entrepreneurship to the next level, NACCE Annual Conference
- **2024:** Moderator, Risk Assessment for Foundations Serving Diverse Populations, Entrepreneurship Funders Network Annual Conference
- **2024:** Panelist, Global IP Alliance on Global IP Education Efforts
- **2023:** Co-Facilitator, IP Masterclass, and IP Roundtable at Creative Africa Nexus, Cairo Egypt
- **2023:** Moderator, IP Preconference Sessions for the Creative Africa Nexus
- **2022:** Co-Facilitator, IP Masterclass and IP Roundtable at Creative Africa Nexus, Ivory Coast
- **2022:** Speaker, Clio Con – Building a Purpose-Driven Law Firm
- **2022:** Panelist, American Bar Association Intellectual Property Section: A Review of the Impact of the Copyright Act of 1980
- **2020:** Moderator, Realities of Creative Entrepreneurship in Nigeria at Afro-Culture Convention Business Summit, Lagos, Nigeria
- **2019:** Workshop Presenter, The Impact Conference at Arizona State University
- **2019:** Panelist, UOP Diversity Symposium: The Diversity Gap in Media and Entertainment
- **2018:** Workshop Presenter, American Business Council in Nigeria – Intellectual Property Potential of the Nigerian Creative Sector