LEGALLY Black × INSTITUTE FOR Intellectual Property & Social Justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT
LegallyBlack: Brittany Joseph
communications@legallyblackip.com
IIPSJ: Victoria Fisher
victoria.fisher@iipsj.org

LegallyBlack® Expands National Reach With First Regional Chapter and New Partnership With the Institute for Intellectual Property & Social Justice

The launch of LegallyBlack's DMV Chapter, backed by one of the leading voices in IP and social justice, will bring intellectual property education to more students in underserved communities.

(WASHINGTON, D.C. - November 6, 2026) LegallyBlack®, a nonprofit dedicated to expanding access to intellectual property (IP) education for underrepresented students, today announced its growth into a national organization with a regional chapter model. It is launching its first regional chapter, serving Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Virginia (DMV), and has formed a new partnership with the Institute for Intellectual Property and Social Justice (IIPSJ). The DMV Chapter will deliver IP education workshops to local schools and youth organizations. The IIPSJ partnership adds more than two decades of scholarship, policy leadership, and institutional reach to LegallyBlack's programming as it grows nationwide.

The expansion targets a long-standing gap. Black Americans make up more than 13% of the U.S. population but only about 5% of the nation's lawyers. Since 1950, fewer than 6% of all patent attorneys and agents registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office have been racially diverse. Many young creators, entrepreneurs, and innovators in these communities grow up without learning how to protect their work, and few see a path into the legal careers that safeguard it. LegallyBlack's workshops give students that foundation early, teaching them to recognize, protect, and profit from what they create, and showing them careers in IP law and business ownership.

Co-founders Valérie Cambronne and Kiara Ortiz, both attorneys, started LegallyBlack in 2020 after watching others profit from creativity in their own communities, the same communities that help define culture in this country and beyond. Since then, the organization has educated more than 1,000 students. During its 2025-26 programming year alone, LegallyBlack hosted 16 workshops reaching more than 300 students across seven states: Washington, D.C., Maryland, Virginia, Illinois, Massachusetts, California, and Florida.

The new chapter gives LegallyBlack a local base for that work, and the IIPSJ partnership gives it national depth. IIPSJ was founded in 2002 at Howard University School of Law and is accredited as a non-governmental organization with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). Together, the two organizations will focus on:

- **IP education** for K-12 students, college students, and community audiences
- **Policy and convenings**, including conferences, roundtables, and publications
- **Pathways** into IP-driven business ownership and the legal profession

> ***"Every student deserves to understand the importance of intellectual property protection," said Valérie Cambronne, Co-Founder and Executive Director of LegallyBlack®. "As technology advances and careers in influencing, digital creation and gig work become increasingly popular and lucrative, we must equip our kids with the tools to protect and profit from their innovation. We're proud to partner with Professor Mtima and the Institute as we bring this education to more students across the country."***

> ***"Partnering with LegallyBlack strengthens IIPSJ's work to educate and empower the public to participate in the IP ecosystem," said Lateef Mtima, Founder and Director of the Institute for Intellectual Property and Social Justice. "By building a framework for K-12 and community-centered IP education in underserved communities, attorneys Cambronne and Ortiz are ensuring the promise of the IP system: to harvest the talent of every American toward the benefit of every citizen, community, and geographic region of our nation."***

ABOUT LEGALLYBLACK®

LegallyBlack® is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 2020 to connect underrepresented communities with intellectual property resources through education, workshops, and advocacy. Through free workshops, IP Creation Labs™, and accessible programming for students from fifth grade through college, LegallyBlack® educates and empowers communities on the value of intellectual property law. Learn more at *legallyblackip.com.*

ABOUT THE INSTITUTE FOR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

The Institute for Intellectual Property and Social Justice (IIPSJ) is a nonprofit organization established to promote social justice in the field of intellectual property law and practice. Advocating for socially equitable access, inclusion, and empowerment throughout the IP ecosystem, IIPSJ's work includes scholarship, advocacy in IP law and policy, initiatives to increase the diversity of the IP bar, and programs that promote awareness of IP protection among historically underserved groups.
Learn more at *iipsj.org.*