



INSTITUTE FOR  
**Intellectual Property  
& Social Justice**

# Power to the Creator

Take Creative Control - Empowering Creators to Advance Their Creative Rights



## ABOUT US

The Institute for Intellectual Property and Social Justice (IP Justice) works to address the social justice implications of intellectual property law and policy both domestically and globally. Our work includes the scholarly examination of the disparate impact of intellectual property law on marginalized communities and programming to empower creators of color to share, protect, and monetize their work.

## SUMMARY

[Take Creative Control](#) (TCC) is our creator-informed and creator-focused, outreach and education-based strategy to build a multicultural community of creator advocates. TCC is a community of entrepreneurs, creatives, innovators, attorneys and policy experts working to empower creators of color by providing knowledge of and access to intellectual property expertise. TCC establishes authentic connections with creators and empowers them to protect their ideas and work.

The centerpiece of our work is our quarterly TCC *Creative Clinic*, which serves as the hub for our organizing efforts.<sup>1</sup> Between *Creative Clinics*, we strengthen our federal advocacy impact, drawing from our growing creator community to inform our positions and approach. Since our inception in August of 2017, we have convened over 2,500 creators at 7 Creative Clinics in 5 states. We have provided education through panels on topics including intellectual property, platform integrity, and business development. We have provided free, one on one legal counseling services to nearly 300 creators in partnership with law firms, legal non-profits and academic institutions.<sup>2</sup>

## OUR MISSION

The mission of the Institute for IP Justice is to pursue the social justice promise of intellectual property systems by promoting core principles of access, inclusion, and empowerment. We view intellectual property rights through a social justice lens to pinpoint areas where full participation of disadvantaged, excluded, and marginalized groups may need redressing. In the field of intellectual property, social justice addresses the ability to enjoy substantive equality in the beneficial impact of intellectual property created by others.

The Internet age has brought new emphasis to the ownership of ideas.<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately, the work of creators of color has been left vulnerable to exploitation, misappropriation or censorship. Historically, this community has been left out of conversations about intellectual property policy and unaware of their rights and duties as progenitors of intellectual property.<sup>4</sup> To address this disparity, IP Justice works to advance the inclusion of everyone in the full benefits of society by empowering creators of color to participate fully in the economic, social, and cultural life of our country through intellectual property protection, education, and inclusive policy reform.

## OUR METHODOLOGY

The inception of Take Creative Control was powered by the importance of ensuring that creators of color are able to share, control, and monetize their creative works. We work toward this goal and

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QvTCnhzNIWg&t=30s>

<sup>2</sup> Sterne, Kessler, Goldstein, & Fox; Loeb & Loeb, Holland & Knight, Hunton Williams, Hogan Lovells, George Mason Law School and Howard University School of Law

<sup>3</sup>

<https://www.recreatecoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/ReCreate-New-Creative-Economy-Study-Report-508.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.law.nyu.edu/sites/default/files/upload\\_documents/Brauneis%20and%20Oliar.pdf](https://www.law.nyu.edu/sites/default/files/upload_documents/Brauneis%20and%20Oliar.pdf)

achieve progress on three fronts: direct grassroots organizing and outreach, inclusive policy advocacy, and collaboration with the private bar in social justice lawyering.

**Listening Sessions** - As part of programming in each city, we conduct community driven listening sessions with both creators and intellectual property academics to understand the challenges facing emerging/independent artists, entrepreneurs and innovators. These listening sessions inform our policy positions as they shed light on how challenges to exercising intellectual property rights present themselves in each city while also highlighting larger systemic issues.

**One On One Legal Sessions** - We partner with local firms to bring in a team of intellectual property attorneys to conduct 30 minute legal sessions with anyone that is interested. They are an opportunity to have informal discussions about current and future projects and ideas.

**Panel Discussions** - Informed by our listening sessions, we work with thought leaders in the creator and legal communities to develop panels that are responsive to the needs of the community.

**Community Building** - The emerging/independent creator typically works independently, our events foster community building and organizing to demonstrate the strength of the collective voice within the creator community.

## OUR IMPACT

The TCC model is creator-informed and creator-focused. Our approach is driven by our commitment to serving creators striving to access intellectual property rights from the margins - creators that have been excluded due to race, gender, socio-economic status, geography, and/or sexual identity. We partner with leaders from the creative, entrepreneurial, policy and legal communities from the inception of each event and create an experience that is both authentic, informative and inspiring.



**Jouelzy** is a YouTuber and creative entrepreneur. She started Smart Brown Girl<sup>5</sup> to cultivate an international community of women of color through reading and dialogue. We worked with Jouelzy on a number of trademark and copyright issues she was navigating. This was the foundation of a relationship that has led to creative collaborations ranging from her advocating for a more inclusive IP system, participating in panels, and YouTube posts on understanding intellectual property.<sup>6</sup>

**Glen Henry** is a creator of the successful YouTube channel Beleaf in Fatherhood.<sup>7</sup> Glen, a stay-at-home father of three and husband, documents his experience as an African-American father in America, a role that is widely subject to stereotyping and skepticism. As Glenn began growing his channel to include puppets and content specific to young children, this new endeavour was riddled with IP issues that Glenn had yet to consider. Through our pro bono networks, we secured representation from a firm that helped Glenn successfully navigate the growth of his business. When we returned to Los



<sup>5</sup> <https://www.smartbrowngirl.com/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SFuyAGM4zT0>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC91hwYeQmsqOPsKKGwzrt6uw/featured>

Angeles for our Creative Clinic, Glenn was a partner in proposing topics, promoting our event to the creative community, and a panelist.



**Dionna Dorsey** is the founder of District of Clothing - a celebrated clothing with roots in Washington DC. Her items are designed to empower, encourage, inspire action and conversation, and embolden self-love. As the popularity of District of Clothing grew, she needed assistance navigating infringement on her brand and partnerships with larger brands. We worked with Dionna to successfully register her trademark and navigate brand partnerships. She has served as a panelist for our Creative Clinic in DC and advisor for a number of our events.

## LOOKING AHEAD

We are inspired by and committed to the work of Take Creative Control and also to scaling our approach. To that end, we are aggressively working to secure support to develop a toolkit that creators can use to deploy TCC affiliate events and are convening an IIP SJ Advisory Council to bring key leaders formally in our community. In addition, we will be expanding our programming to include more focused discussion targeting particular creative and entrepreneurial endeavors. Our TCC 2020 cities include Los Angeles, Washington DC, New York City, Miami, and Seattle.