WHY SHOULD I ATTEND THE ANNUAL MEETING?
The Forum on Franchising is the preeminent Forum for the study and discussion of the legal aspects of franchising. Membership in the Forum provides its members with an unparalleled opportunity to gain in-depth subject matter knowledge while networking with peers and clients in a collegial environment that builds long-lasting personal and professional relationships. The Annual Meeting is a great place to begin.

THE ANNUAL MEETING OFFERS:
• Several half-day intensive programs, including the Forum’s signature program, the Fundamentals of Franchising® the finest course available on the basics of franchise law.
• Twenty-five individual workshops on current legal and business topics in franchising, presented by the most experienced franchise practitioners in the industry, follow the intensives. These are at basic, intermediate and advanced levels and are designed to appeal to our broad-based membership, including in-house and outside counsel, transactional lawyers and litigators, franchisee lawyers, small firm or solo practitioners and paraprofessionals.
• The Forum’s Annual Franchise and Distribution Law Developments plenary is a survey of the key cases and decisions in franchise law over the last year accompanied by a monograph detailing each case.

At the Annual Meeting’s social and networking events, our members meet and fully engage with their colleagues. These include events for Forum members on Thursday evening. In addition, there are breakfasts, receptions and focused meetings for the constituencies of our Young Lawyer, Corporate Counsel, LADR and the International Divisions. Our Diversity Caucus hosts an annual diversity lunch to promote diversity within the Forum, and our Women’s Caucus organizes a community service event to give back to the local community at the Annual Meeting.

If you are a long-term member of the Forum, the “why” you should continue to attend the Annual Meeting is evident. There is no finer educational program on franchise law in the United States, nor a better opportunity to network with your colleagues and friends.

CAN I STILL BE INVOLVED IN THE FORUM ON FRANCHISING WITHOUT ATTENDING THE ANNUAL MEETING?
The Annual Meeting is just one offering of the Forum. In addition to our Annual Meeting, we produce regional programming for Forum members, including our “on-the-road” series, full-day seminars in the Fundamentals of Franchising and the Fundamentals of Franchise Litigation. We also produce a series of webinars on a variety of franchise topics each year for Forum membership. You can read and contribute to the Forum’s Franchise Law Journal, The Franchise Lawyer or the myriad of publications produced by the Forum’s Publication Committee and/or interact with Forum members on: LinkedIn (http://bit.ly/franchisinglinkedin); Facebook (http://bit.ly/franchisingfacebook); and Twitter (@ABA Forum on Franchising).

WHAT CAN THE FORUM OFFER INTERNATIONAL LAWYERS?
The Forum produces a number of programs for international members including workshops and intensives at the Annual Meeting as well as webinars with an international focus. In addition, the Forum produces publications of interest to international members including International Franchise Sales Laws and the Fundamentals of International Franchising. Furthermore, the International Division also holds its annual networking breakfast at the Annual meeting and produces dinners and other social events of interest to Forum members.
What if I am not a lawyer?
The Forum welcomes associate members. In addition to benefiting from the Forum’s programming for para-professionals, franchise administrators and paralegals hold their annual networking breakfast at the Annual Meeting. The Forum also produces publications of interest to paraprofessionals, including the Franchise Law Compliance Manual.

What special groups are there?
We have three divisions and two caucuses.

- The International Division promotes the study of topics relating to franchising and distribution outside the United States or special issues related to non-US franchisors entering the US.

- LADR, or the Litigation and Dispute Resolution Division serves the Forum’s membership though traditional and non-traditional approaches to resolving legal disputes in the franchisor/franchisee relationship.

- The Corporate Counsel Division serves the needs of in-house counsel by educating fellow Forum on franchise members on issues from the perspective of in-house counsel and providing a forum to address the unique needs of in-house counsel.

- The Women’s Caucus serves the Forum by promoting opportunities for the Forum’s female members to participate in Forum life and develop mentoring opportunities for professional development.

- The Diversity Caucus seeks to increase the participation of minority members in Forum activities and to develop diverse writers and speakers for the Forum.

How do I get published?
Anyone, regardless of length of membership or years of practice, is encouraged to submit articles for publication. Our regular publications include The Franchise Lawyer and the Franchise Law Journal. Contact information for the Editors-in-Chief of those publications is available below. Either can answer any questions you might have and provide information about recommended article length and style. They can also provide feedback about proposed article topics and may even be able to give you a list of possible article topics or match you with a co-author. In addition, as a Forum member, you will receive these publications free of charge.

How do I become a speaker at the Annual Meeting?
Speaking at the Forum requires co-authoring a substantive paper that will be provided to all attendees. Writing skills, and not just oral presentation skills, are therefore very important. Writing for The Franchise Lawyer, the Franchise Law Journal, or another Forum publication is therefore required before being invited to speak. The Forum also considers substantive participation on committees and the caucuses in determining who speaks. No firm may have more than two members speaking at the Annual Meeting, and the Forum typically does not allow a speaker to speak in back to back Meetings.

Are there speaking opportunities other than at the Annual Meeting?
Absolutely. The Forum sponsors regular webinars, “roadshows,” and other presentations outside the Annual Meeting, all of which feature Forum members as speakers.
WHAT IS THE GOVERNING COMMITTEE AND HOW DO I GET ON IT?

The Governing Committee, led by the Forum Chair, is the Forum’s leadership. Among many other things, the Governing Committee plans the Annual Meetings and other programming, oversees publications, budgeting, technology, member communications, and long-term planning, and develops membership and diversity initiatives. It is comprised of fourteen members: the Forum Chair, the Immediate Past Chair, and 12 elected Members-at-Large. Governing Committee members are elected by the Forum membership. Individuals elected generally have spent significant amounts of time and energy on Forum initiatives, including speaking, writing, and other activities beneficial to the Forum over many years.

The members of the 2016-2017 Governing Committee are listed on the right hand side of page 2.

WHOM DO I CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION?

THE FRANCHISE LAW JOURNAL
Editor-in-Chief, Gary R. Batenhorst, gbatenhorst@clinewilliams.com
This scholarly publication is published four times each year. Each issue features an editorial, articles on franchise law issues, and a review and analysis of recent court decisions of interest to franchise lawyers. The Journal is headed by an editor-in-chief and assisted by six associate editors and six topics and articles editors. Editors are chosen from those who have written for the Journal. Articles may be co-authored.

THE FRANCHISE LAWYER
Editor, Heather Carlson-Perkins, heather.perkins@faegrebd.com
A quarterly newsletter that features four to six relatively short articles as well as a column written by the Chair of the Forum. Articles are less formal than those in the Journal, do not include footnotes, and often express the author’s own viewpoint. The Franchise Lawyer has a three person editorial staff and an editor in chief. It is a particularly good place to get a start writing for the Forum.

INTERNATIONAL DIVISION
Tao Xu, tao.xu@dlapiper.com
This Division was formed to develop and provide expertise in programming and publications on international law topics. The Division has a six member steering committee and is headed by a Director.

CORPORATE COUNSEL DIVISION
Vanessa Szajnoga, vanessa.szajnoga@libtax.com
Membership and participation in activities hosted by this Division are limited to corporate counsel. The Division is run by a six member steering committee and a Director.

LITIGATION AND ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION DIVISION
Ben Reed, breed@plavekoch.com
This Division serves the Forum’s members by producing and staffing intensive programs, workshops, and authoring articles in Forum publications. The Division has a six member steering committee and a Director.

SOLO AND SMALL FIRM NETWORK
Peter Lagarias, pcl@franchiselawadvocates.com
The SSFN is comprised of Forum members who are solo practitioners or partners, associates or of counsel in a firm of 10 or fewer attorneys or who are in a company law department of 10 or fewer attorneys.

FRANCHISE ADMINISTRATORS & PARALEGALS GROUP
Julie Lusthaus, jl@edglawfirm.com
This group is comprised of franchise administrators and paralegals from law firms and in house settings and provides networking and focused educational opportunities.
MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE
Will K. Woods, will.woods@bakermckenzie.com
This Committee provides the Governing Committee with advice and ideas on membership issues, including growth initiatives, identification of and outreach to members of underrepresented groups of lawyers involved in franchise and distribution law, and any other issues on which the Governing Committee seeks its advice and counsel. The Committee has three members and is headed by the Forum’s Membership Officer.

PROGRAM COMMITTEE
Dawn Newton, dnewton@donahue.com
The Program Committee is responsible for developing, coordinating production of, and presenting Forum teleconferences, webcasts, and similar programs. The Committee consists of four or five members and is headed by the Forum’s Program Officer.

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE
David Oppenheim, oppenheimd@gtlaw.com
The Publications Committee is responsible for developing, preparing, and publishing books on topics of interest to franchise and distribution lawyers. Each member is assigned a specific task, usually acting as liaison for a particular book. The Committee has eight to ten members and is headed by the Forum’s Publications Officer.

TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE
Beata Krakus, bk@greensfelder.com
This Committee explores and implements ways in which technology can support and facilitate the Forum’s goals and initiatives. It is responsible for overseeing and developing the content of the Forum’s website and Listserv. The Committee has three members and is headed by the Forum’s Technology Officer.

MARKETING COMMITTEE
William K. Whitner, kwhitner@paulhastings.com
The Marketing Committee is responsible for promoting the Forum and its programs, publications, and events and for communicating key information to Forum members and non-members. The Committee is comprised of four members, including the Forum’s Marketing Officer.

DIVERSITY CAUCUS
Natalma (Tami) McKnew, tami.mcknew@smithmoorelaw.com
This Caucus’ goal is to increase diverse members’ involvement in Forum activities and place them on the pathways to leadership. The Caucus has a six member steering committee and is headed by the Forum’s Diversity Officer.

WOMEN’S CAUCUS
Bethany Appleby, appleby_b@subway.com
This Caucus’ goal is to increase women members’ involvement in Forum activities and place them on the pathways to leadership. The Caucus has a six member steering committee and is headed by the Forum’s Women Caucus Officer.

YLD COMMITTEE
Lulu Chiu Gomez, lgomez@swlaw.com
This Committee’s goal is to increase young lawyers’ involvement in Forum activities and place them on the pathways to leadership. The Committee has a six member steering committee and is headed by the YLD Liaison, who is appointed by the ABA.