THE TWENTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL FALL LECTURE
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HOUSTON INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW ASSOCIATION

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS
COVID-19

ANATOMY OF AN IP MOVEMENT:
The Open COVID Pledge

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VIRTUAL EVENT

Lecture - 6:00 P.M.
One Hour of CLE Credit

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Jorge L. Contreras, Professor of Law at the University of Utah S.J. Quinney College of Law, teaches in the areas of intellectual property law, property law, and genetics and the law.


**Anatomy of an IP Movement: The Open COVID Pledge**

Early in the COVID-19 pandemic, ten scientists, engineers and lawyers in the U.S. and UK created a legal platform for sharing patent and copyright rights in response to the pandemic. Their goal was to help overcome bottlenecks in the development, manufacture and distribution of COVID-critical technologies. The resulting Open COVID Pledge (opencovidpledge.org) went live in April, 2020, and has attracted pledges from a number of large technology companies including Intel, IBM, Microsoft, Amazon, Uber, AT&T and Facebook as well as two national laboratories and several small companies. The organizers estimated that within a few months, more than 250,000 patents and other IP rights were pledged to the cause. Yet notably absent from this effort were any biotechnology or pharmaceutical firms or major universities conducting biomedical research. This lecture will describe the genesis, design and implementation of the Open COVID Pledge, placing it within the larger context of intellectually property rights sharing movements in the software, environmental and health areas. This includes assessing the successes and potential shortcomings of the Open COVID Pledge given its role in the broader fight against COVID-19 and its potential as a model for sharing IPR in response to future crises.