



National Intellectual Property Rights Coordination Center

Stakeholder Update

from the IPR Center's

Outreach and Training Section



WASHINGTON – A partnership created at the National Intellectual Property Rights Coordination Center (IPR Center) to combat forced labor in global commerce has earned a place among the top recipients of Homeland Security Investigations' (HSI) 2019 Executive Associate Director Awards.

Liberty Shared, a non-governmental organization with global coverage founded in Hong Kong, partnered with HSI's Global Trade Investigations Division a year ago, and since that time has worked closely with HSI on eliminating forced labor worldwide.

The awards, announced by HSI Acting Executive Associate Director Alysa Erichs, named Liberty Shared in the category of "Exemplary Partnership," and recognized HSI for making it possible.

"The men and women of HSI continue to achieve outstanding success around the world despite the challenges of this unprecedented pandemic," said Erichs. "I'm immensely proud to announce these winners, and to recognize them for their exemplary work."

Typically, the awards are presented at a special awards ceremony, however, in order to comply with pandemic-related health and safety standards, they were released for individual presentation. IPR Center Director Steve Francis welcomed Duncan Jepson, Liberty Shared's founder and managing director, and presented him with the award.

"This recognition acknowledges Liberty Shared for becoming the first non-governmental organization to publicly announce a partnership with HSI to help develop viable criminal investigations targeting corporations and corporate officials that are violating laws prohibiting the importation of goods produced using forced labor," said Francis. "It also points to the tremendous progress we are making to increase awareness and discussion of HSI's authorities and potential enforcement actions in the trade community."

Director Francis was joined by members of the IPR Center's senior leadership team, including Kenneth J.F. Kennedy, senior policy advisor for HSI's forced labor programs.

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