

Barnes & Thornburg Lands Nixon Peabody Entertainment Trio

By **Madison Arnold**

Law360 (May 7, 2026, 4:18 PM EDT) -- Three entertainment attorneys from Nixon Peabody LLP have moved their practice to Barnes & Thornburg LLP in Los Angeles and Nashville, Tennessee, the firm announced Thursday.

Partners Christina S. Chang and Carron Joan Mitchell joined the firm's Los Angeles office, while partner Farrah Usmani was added to the Nashville shop. The trio deepen Barnes & Thornburg's ability to serve artists, creators and entertainment companies in music, traditional and digital media, and consumer brands.

"What really drew us to Barnes was just this existing infrastructure with a very, very deep-seated bench of true entertainment, sports, media, everything that we touch on and then some. The firm has these deep institutional relationships, these clients, and we bring to the table a different perspective, a different caliber of clients, primarily creator and all things talent. We've seen really all aspects of these deals," Chang said in an interview with Law360 Pulse on Thursday.

She added "There isn't anything else like this on the market, and as soon as we knew it was available, it was something that we pursued, and we can't be happier."

The team works at the intersection of career strategy, rights ownership and dealmaking in an increasingly complex entertainment industry, Barnes & Thornburg said. The trio have experience advising cross-platform creators, talent and emerging businesses operating in the content marketplace.

They collectively represent talent and entertainment companies such as Tim Burton, Childish Gambino, Vince Staples, Brent Faiyaz, Camila Coelho, Pussy Riot, Rainbow Kitten Surprise, Cuco, Freedom Forum, Gen.G Esports and ReelShort.

"It is unique to find a small, very tight-knit group who are young with real experience, great success, acumen, and that serve our purposes threefold," said Jason Karlov, chair of Barnes & Thornburg's entertainment, media and sports practice, in an interview with Law360 Pulse on Thursday.

Chang credits much of the trio's success with their long-standing, pre-existing relationships and friendships.



Christina S. Chang



Carron Joan Mitchell



Farrah Usmani

"When you bring that together, and when we built this at our prior firm, it was women-led. We're all first gen immigrants. We did this. We really didn't have a handout. We really had to make our way in this world and force ourselves in that room, have the conversations, and I think there was this cohesiveness that is so unique with us," Chang said, adding "We're gonna build [the practice] just brick by brick, and one day at a time. It's nice to think that we can continue that."

Chang has helped clients navigate disruption in the entertainment industry, from financing and production to distribution and complex corporate and commercial matters, the firm said.

She works in the creator economy, where she advises multi-hyphenate digital creators, emerging media companies, brands, sports teams, advertising agencies, nonprofits and entrepreneurs on brand development, intellectual property ownership, content monetization and complex commercial partnerships.

"From the creator side, [we're] really seeing these creators, helping them transform and scale into different verticals, different industries. [We get to] be a part of that innovation, and be a part of building that portfolio out — protecting it, helping them scale it, just in unprecedented ways. And you see in different formats, mediums, how we distribute, how we commercialize and how we protect. It really is an ecosystem that's tightly bound. But the boundaries are endless on how you can expand with them," Chang said.

Mitchell's practice spans entertainment, sports, media, intellectual property and corporate matters, with particular focus on the music industry. She represents recording artists, music producers, songwriters, actors, athletes, content creators, and entrepreneurs.

She also regularly advises emerging entertainment platforms and companies, including businesses in the growing short-form verticals and micro-drama content space.

"I was a musician and songwriter myself, and I just have always had a real passion for the creative industries and talent and seeing them grow from every stage of their career. To watch someone that has ambition and a dream of having the world hear their art and being able to navigate that for them and help them realize that, it's just been amazing to be a part of," Mitchell said.

She added "I've had clients that have gone from starting off [by] releasing small songs on the internet and to winning Grammys, and to be able to watch that and be able to advocate for them across that journey has just been like the most rewarding thing for me."

In her practice, Usmani represents performing artists, songwriters, producers, promoters, venues and festivals. She's handled recording, publishing, distribution and asset purchase agreements, as well as executive employment and new business formation.

Additionally, she speaks regularly at major conferences including SXSW and the Americana Music Festival.

"I really enjoy supporting artists who are building something culturally impactful," Usmani said in an interview Thursday with Law360 Pulse, adding, "There's just a very tangible aspect to watching our clients succeed. And I also just really enjoy being around creative people. I've always been inspired by creative personalities, creative souls, and being able to, as a non-creative person, still be able to offer

value to them, and use this as a means of being included in the creative process in some small way."

Barnes & Thornburg's entertainment, media and sports practice currently represents artists, rights holders, brands and companies such as Paramount, Bob Dylan, John Fogerty, Illenium, the Grateful Dead catalog, the NFL and the NBA, the firm said.

The team is made up of nearly 50 attorneys across Los Angeles, Nashville, New York, Atlanta and Chicago.

The three-attorney addition follows Barnes & Thornburg's recent expansion with a 12-lawyer insurance recovery group from Lowenstein Sandler and a 39-lawyer public finance and infrastructure group from Ballard Spahr, bringing the total lawyers welcomed to the firm in 2026 to more than 85.

"We've grown from a statewide law firm to a national law firm without doing mergers. Our whole strategy has been strategic growth over the last 18 years. And so where this fits fantastic for us is we have what we think is an outstanding entertainment practice. It's been something we've been developing since 2011 when I met Jason [Karlov] for the first time. We really believe in it, and part of our strategic growth is, you know, finding opportunities where we can bring in laterals like Carron and Christina and Farrah to make us even better, and where we think they can do even more on our platform and with our group," said Andrew J. Detherage, managing partner, in a Thursday interview with Law360 Pulse.

Barnes & Thornburg maintains 26 offices across the United States that are home to more than 850 lawyers.

--Editing by Rich Mills.