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In The News

Scott A. Meyers, Reginald E. Mesamour, and Steven A. Paletz Speak With The American Lawyer on Akerman's AI Creditable Hours Program

November 19, 2026

Akerman Chairman and CEO Scott A. Meyers, Litigation Practice Group Associate Reginald E. Mesamour, and Real Estate Practice Group Associate Steven A. Paletz were featured in The American Lawyer, a Law.com publication, in "AI Creditable Hours Programs Let Lawyers Experiment With Tech on Billable Time." The three shared insight into Akerman's AI Creditable Hours Program and what it reflects about the firm's commitment to preparing its lawyers to lead in an AI-driven legal landscape.

The article examines a growing trend among firms of offering associates creditable hours for AI training and experimentation. Akerman's program offers an uncapped number of creditable hours, giving associates the time to develop research playbooks, build workflow guides, lead training sessions, and stress-test AI tools on substantive legal questions.

Scott spoke to the program's ambitions, emphasizing that Akerman's approach is designed to push lawyers well beyond surface-level familiarity with AI tools.

"The idea of this goes beyond just traditional spending time hanging out with a CoCounsel or Harvey or Copilot," Scott told The American Lawyer.

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“This has to do with a deeper dive, trying to understand how AI works as part of the overall platform, not just how to use it as a tool, but what types of workflows can it improve? What things are we doing that we could do better with AI and to help build the overall structure.”

He also spoke to the tangible value the program has delivered for the firm.

“I think associates are always grateful to have an opportunity to have more control over their billable, creditable hours, so they can exercise control over their own career,” Scott said. “And I know that the projects have been genuinely valuable to the firm. So, the output, the work product has been incredibly useful as well.”

Reggie, who helped develop an AI legal research playbook and a guide for using AI to produce first drafts applicable across practice areas, noted that associates are encouraged by the strong support firm leadership, and Scott in particular, has shown for their journey to deepen their understanding of AI. He also described his own decision to get involved as a matter of responsibility as much as opportunity.

“For me, when the program came up, it just seemed like it was almost my duty in a sense to get involved. And honestly, I probably would have gotten involved regardless of whether or not the hours are going to be creditable,” Reggie said.

Steven, who has participated in the program to develop AI training sessions for both associates and partners, spoke to what the opportunity has meant to him as someone who has been deeply engaged with AI since before it became a firmwide priority.

“This whole program is a wonderful bonus,” Steven said. “I’m lucky enough to have been an early adopter of AI and identified as a leader in this space, but also it’s great to be able to do something that I enjoy.”

He also noted that a central theme of his trainings is treating AI as an assistive tool rather than a substitute for professional judgment.

“I always start my trainings with, ‘Remember, this is not a replacement for your own judgment, it’s a tool to help you the same way that we use Lexis or Westlaw back in the day,’” Steven said. “These are tools, you don’t take them and assume everything is 100% correct. At the end of the day, this helps you be a more efficient, better lawyer and deliver a better, clearer product, but it’s not a replacement for your own judgment.”

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