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On October 15, Blockbuster Inc. named Eric H. Peterson as its new executive vice president, secretary, and general counsel. Peterson, who formerly served as TXU Corporation's executive vice president and general counsel and DTE Energy's general counsel, graduated from Southern Methodist University with a bachelor's degree and a law degree. According to Blockbuster Chairman and CEO Jim Keyes, "Eric is an accomplished and skilled legal professional with an extensive background in highly competitive, fast-moving industries. In addition to his considerable legal expertise, he is a seasoned business executive who will contribute significantly to our efforts to transform Blockbuster into the most convenient source for media entertainment."

## **Peabody Energy hires Kenneth L. Wagner as its new GC**

On October 15, Peabody Energy, "the world's largest private-sector coal company," announced its new vice president and assistant general counsel: Kenneth L. Wagner. Wagner, who recently served as associate general counsel for Bank of America, brings with him 25 years of corporate legal experience. His educational background includes a Master of Laws in Securities Regulation from Georgetown University as well as a J.D. and B.A. in Journalism from the University of Kansas.

## **Cash Technologies hires Brian D. Walters, Esq., as its new GC**

Cash Technologies Inc., a company that develops and markets innovative data processing solutions in the healthcare and financial services industries," hired Brian D. Walters, Esq., as its new vice president and general counsel on October 17. Walters, who represented Fortune 500 companies, businesses, and individuals at law firm Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher, LLP, graduated with a J.D. from the UCLA School of Law and a master's degree and B.A. from George Washington University. "Brian's background, energy, and skill makes him well suited to the task of handling the legal affairs of Cash Tech and its subsidiaries, expanding the capabilities of management while reducing the company's legal costs," said Cash Technologies Chief Executive Officer Bruce Korman.

### **Brown-Forman hires new GC**

Starting October 30, Matthew E. Hamel will become Brown-Forman's new general counsel; he will replace Michael B. Crutcher, who retired from the position in August. Hamel, who received a J.D. from the University of Chicago Law School and a B.A. in Economics and Political Science from Yale University, "has more than 21 years of international legal and corporate management experience in technology, consumer goods, and media firms," said Brown-Forman's chief executive officer, Paul Varga. "His broad experience makes him an excellent choice to lead the group that attends to Brown-Forman's legal affairs across the globe." Brown-Forman produces and markets products such as Jack Daniel's, Southern Comfort, Finlandia Vodka, Tequila Herradura, and Korbel Champagne.