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Paniewski focuses on strategic commercial transactions, intellectual property deals, investments, mergers and acquisitions for technology companies such as Google LLC, RingCentral Inc. and Gauss Surgical.

This past year has included two significant transactions in the self-driving vehicle technology business. Paniewski advised Lyft Inc. on intellectual property and commercial matters related to Woven Planet Holdings' acquisition of Lyft's self-driving division for \$550 million. Woven Planet is a subsidiary of Toyota Motor Corp. The deal is set to close in the third quarter of 2021.

He also advised Aurora Innovation on intellectual property and commercial matters related to its acquisition of Uber Technology Inc.'s self-driving unit, Advanced Technologies Group, and conversely, Uber's \$400 million investment in Aurora. That deal closed in the first quarter of this year.

These newly formed partnerships get two of the biggest rideshare companies out of developing their own self-driving cars without exiting the autonomous vehicle marketplace entirely.

"I think that it led to a further consolidation of who the main players in the industry are," Paniewski said. "For both of those transac-

tions, there's a desire to have a mutually beneficial relationship going forward."

Paniewski is also a founding member of Wilson Sonsini's electronic gaming group. Created by associates about two years ago, it is an entrepreneurial endeavor to explore the legal nuances of the industry.

Wilson Sonsini has worked with digital gaming clients including design firms, game publishers, component manufacturers and online gaming providers.

Paniewski said he still plays video games, even indulging his toddler in some friendly Mario Kart rivalry.

Paniewski joined Wilson Sonsini as an associate almost nine years ago and ascended to partner in February 2019. He speaks English, Spanish, Portuguese and French, thanks to his education, Miami upbringing and Brazilian heritage.

As coronavirus restrictions loosen, Paniewski said he hopes he and his colleagues will again attend big technology industry conferences. He has a "genuine interest and enthusiasm" in the groundbreaking technology his clients do.

"It's what gets me up in the morning," Paniewski said.

— Jennifer McEntee

WILSON SONSINI



CHRISTOPHER A. PANIEWSKI

WILSON SONSINI
GOODRICH & ROSATI PC
PALO ALTO

TECHNOLOGY
TRANSACTIONS

AGE: 38