

# Intellectual Property Section Serves Members and Encourages Interest in Intellectual Property Law

by Stephen W. Palan

The Intellectual Property Section of the Virginia State Bar was formed in 1970 in recognition of Virginia's significance to the field of intellectual property law. The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) had recently relocated from Washington, D.C., to Arlington, and many intellectual property attorneys followed. Since that time, intellectual property has become increasingly significant to the overall U.S. economy, and intellectual property issues are now frequently before the United States Supreme Court and Congress. Thus, it is now particularly important to keep section members up-to-date on the latest developments in intellectual property law.

Our section strives to achieve many of the same goals set by its founders by providing low-cost and high-quality continuing legal education to our members through three annual programs: the Fall CLE Weekend Seminar; the Spring CLE Ethics Seminar; and the CLE program at the Virginia State Bar's Annual Convention. Our twenty-third annual Fall CLE Weekend Seminar featured Robert Stoll, the Commissioner of Patents, speaking on the America Invents Act, a live hearing of the Trademark Trial and Appeals Board, and a panel discussion with Judge Liam O'Grady and Magistrate Judge T. Rawles Jones Jr. of the Eastern District. These presentations provided our section members with invaluable insider practice tips and insights so our members could more effectively represent their clients before the USPTO and Federal District Courts.

Our Spring Ethics Seminar speaker is William R. Covey, Deputy General Counsel for Enrollment and Discipline at the USPTO. Our Annual Convention CLE features a panel discussion with the two lead attorneys that represented DuPont in obtaining a \$920 million judgment in a trade secrets case.

The Intellectual Property Section also continued its annual Intellectual Property Law Student Writing Competition, now in its eighth year. The brainchild of former section chair Lee N. Kump, the writing competition seeks to promote academic debate and the dissemination of ideas and scholarly writing in the field of intellectual property. Open to students at any Virginia law school or residents of Virginia who are students at a law school outside the state, the competition awards a cash prize and publication to the top article on an issue concerning intellectual property law or practice. The Honorable Richard Linn of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit has generously honored our section with his support for the writing competition by serving as the final judge each year since the contest's inception. Judge Linn was a founding member and past chair of the section board of governors, and the section has appreciated his continued involvement.

The articles in this issue of *Virginia Lawyer* reflect the diverse practices of our section membership, including patents, trademarks, trade secrets, and Federal District Court practice.



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