



News Release

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USPTO Selects Thomas Jefferson School of Law for Patent & Trademark Law School Clinic Certification Pilot Programs *Unique Opportunity for Students to Serve Small Businesses*

San Diego -- Just two weeks after the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) announced in mid-July that Thomas Jefferson School of Law (TJSL) will be the only California law school to participate in its Patent Law School Clinic Certification Pilot Program, there is more good news for TJSL and its expanding intellectual property (IP) program. The USPTO has announced that TJSL is one of nine additional law schools selected to join the Trademark Law School Clinic Certification Program this fall, which will allow TJSL students to practice trademark law as well as patent law before the USPTO under the guidance of a faculty supervisor.

Professor Steve Semeraro, who submitted the applications for TJSL's participation in both USPTO pilot programs, is thrilled with this latest news. "This is a great thing for TJSL," he said, "and confirmation of the excellent IP program that we have built."

The applications were reviewed by a Selection Committee comprised of USPTO professionals, who chose schools that appeared to have the greatest potential for success. The committee identified attributes among the selected law schools such as "strong IP curriculum supporting students' hands-on learning; a commitment to networking in the community; comprehensive *pro bono* services; and excellent case management systems."

The trademark pilot program supervisor at TJSL will be Professor Jeff Slattery, who had a thriving art and entertainment law practice following graduation from law school and, earlier this year, launched TJSL's Art and Entertainment Law Project, a clinical program within the school's Small Business Law Center (SBLC), that gives students an opportunity to provide *pro bono* legal services to individuals, organizations and small businesses involved with the arts. The trademark and patent clinics also will be under the umbrella of the SBLC.

"Participating in the trademark pilot program helps TJSL better serve the needs of our community," says Professor Slattery. "Numerous local business owners and non-profit directors have already approached the TJSL Small Business Law Center about applying to register their trademark rights, firmly establishing that need."

“As part of the pilot program, TJS� students will work with clients to prepare and file applications without charging for our legal services, making trademark registration more accessible. After filing, our students will interact directly with examining attorneys in the United States Patent and Trademark Office on each application. In this way, clients will see their immediate needs met, while our students build important skills they can bring to the greater community upon becoming attorneys themselves.”

A special feature of the trademark and patent law pilot programs is that the USPTO will expedite the application review process for those filed by students. This will greatly benefit the TJS� clinics’ clients as the normal application review process can take years.

“The USPTO patent pilot program provides a small number of law schools the unique opportunity to teach students the hands-on practice of patent law and provides valuable patent services to the solo-inventor, non-profit and small business communities,” said San Diego IP attorney Ross Franks, who will be the supervising faculty attorney for the patent pilot program at TJS�. “It is an honor that TJS� was selected to be a part of the patent pilot program. I believe the program will help prepare students for making an immediate impact in their post-graduation patent jobs. I am excited to be a part of the patent program and for the TJS� students who will get to participate.”

“This level of experience is equal to what students would receive as licensed patent or trademark agents or junior attorneys practicing patent and trademark law,” said Professor Julie Cromer Young, the director of TJS�’s Center for Law and Intellectual Property. “It is a rare opportunity for the students to cement the knowledge gained in the classroom with skills gained from real interactions, as opposed to simulations. “

For more information about the IP program and Small Business Law Center at Thomas Jefferson School of Law and the USPTO pilot programs, visit:

<https://www.tjsl.edu/academics/jd-programs/academic-specialties/intellectual-property-law>

<https://www.tjsl.edu/clinics/sblc>

http://www.uspto.gov/ip/boards/oed/practitioner/agents/law_school_pilot.jsp

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