

Sterne Kessler and USPTO Celebrate Second Anniversary of the PTAB's Legal Experience and Advancement Program (LEAP)

Washington, D.C. (August 12, 2022) – Sterne, Kessler, Goldstein & Fox joins the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) in celebrating the second anniversary of the Patent Trial and Appeal Board's (PTAB) [Legal Experience and Advancement Program \(LEAP\)](#). Launched in May 2020, the program provides training and oral advocacy opportunities for the next generation of practitioners to gain experience in PTAB proceedings. Sterne Kessler proudly holds the top position for LEAP requests during the program's first two years, as recognized on the [USPTO's website](#). In fact, since the program's inception, Sterne Kessler has participated in 15 LEAP proceedings, inclusive of ex parte appeals.

The USPTO hosted a virtual [event](#) on August 11 to celebrate LEAP's second anniversary and recognize 135 LEAP practitioners and their sponsors. Speakers included Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and USPTO Director Kathi Vidal and PTAB Chief Judge Scott Boalick, among others.

To commemorate LEAP's second anniversary, the USPTO's website now features [testimonials](#) from both participants and sponsors, including Associate and LEAP participant [Alexander R. Covington](#) and Director and LEAP sponsor [Jon E. Wright](#). "Not only did LEAP help me develop my oral advocacy skills, it provided additional perspective about the PTAB and the ex parte appeals process that I have carried through to other areas of my practice," Covington shares. From the sponsor perspective, Wright calls LEAP a "confidence-inspiring process" and states that "By encouraging and publicly promoting LEAP, and by providing extra time and the ability for more experienced counsel to step in (if necessary), the Board has not only mitigated some of the risk that clients may feel with inexperienced counsel, but it has actually incentivized clients to give a shot to LEAP practitioners."

In addition, [Law360 covered](#) the anniversary and included quotes from Associate and recent LEAP participant [David W. Haars](#), who offered insight on his experience arguing before the PTAB judges and the importance of his internal preparation.

Read more about LEAP, including practitioner and sponsor recognition, on the USPTO's website [here](#). Read more about Sterne Kessler's support of and participation in LEAP [here](#).

About Sterne, Kessler, Goldstein & Fox

Based in Washington, D.C. and renowned for more than four decades for dedication to the protection, transfer, and enforcement of intellectual property rights, Sterne, Kessler, Goldstein & Fox is one of the most highly regarded intellectual property specialty law firms in the world. Its team of attorneys, registered patent agents, students, and technical specialists include some of the country's most respected practitioners of IP law tackling innovations across a broad spectrum of industries. The firm's practitioners hold over 50 masters and over 60 doctorate degrees in science or engineering and represent Fortune 500 companies, entrepreneurs, start-ups, inventors, venture capital firms, and universities in a client service driven environment that is welcoming, inclusive, and intellectually stimulating. Visit the firm online at sternekessler.com.

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