

## INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY HOT LIST | A SPECIAL REPORT

We recognize 15 law firms that set the bar in intellectual property law in 2015, scoring big wins for clients. They range from major firms with 1,000 or more lawyers to smaller shops with an IP focus. This year's group includes firms that went before the U.S. Supreme Court—and won—in key trademark and patent cases that impacted industries including technology and banking. Others took home big wins in matters involving music, sports and, yes, Spider-Man. These are their superhero stories.



MICHELLE RHYU

### Cooley

Facing a \$500 million patent infringement lawsuit, Qualcomm Technologies Inc. turned to Cooley. The firm has represented the tech company for nearly two decades.

ParkerVision Inc. accused Qualcomm of using a patented system to convert electromagnetic signals from high-frequency to low-frequency. A federal jury in Florida had ruled against Qualcomm and awarded ParkerVision nearly \$173 million in damages.

Cooley partner Timothy Teter argued the case in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit. In July, the three-judge panel reversed the verdict. One of ParkerVision's experts had admitted that Qualcomm's signal conversion process differed from ParkerVision's system, the court noted.

Teter is part of a younger generation of partners at Cooley. Partner Michelle Rhyu, who has a doctorate in biochemistry and

biophysics, said that the firm has "a vibrant and exciting new group of litigators."

Rhyu represented biofuels company Gevo Inc. in an infringement suit filed by Butamax, a joint venture of BP PLC and E.I. du Pont de Nemours and Co. The lawsuit came just as Gevo was going public, Rhyu said, and the company would not survive an injunction.

"That was really the big challenge, to try to keep the business interests in sight and to try to do it in a way that fit with the company's business objectives on a day to day basis," Rhyu said.

Gevo won a noninfringement ruling in the trial court, but that was reversed by the Federal Circuit. Gevo petitioned the U.S. Supreme Court, which in January 2015 vacated the decision and sent the case back to the Federal Circuit, in light of a new decision clarifying the standard for reviewing lower court decisions on patent claims. Gevo and Butamax later reached cross-licensing and settlement agreements that allowed both companies to "think about the science," Rhyu said.

—ZOE TILLMAN

#### FIRM FACTS:

- Year founded: 1920
- Headquarters: Palo Alto
- Total attorneys: 908
- IP partners: 53
- IP associates: 83

# Cooley