

TOP INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ATTORNEYS in California for 2016

When we're listening to pre-1972 music on rotation in our smartphones or reaching for a ketchup bottle at lunch, intellectual property doesn't come to mind. But these are just a few examples of the work behind the California attorneys we chose on our list for their efforts protecting the intellectual property belonging to companies of all sizes across the country and around the world.

As technology makes vast improvements year after year across the industry spectrum, intellectual property attorneys — litigators and patent prosecutors — are rolling up their sleeves to stay ahead of the game. In California, established Silicon Valley and booming Silicon Beach have created global hubs for such innovation to take place in on-demand services, social media, health care, consumer technology and other various fields. But the fight to protect patents, copyrights and trademarks can start on a local court level and move to the appellate courts, while also heading to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, the U.S. International Trade Commission and the U.S. Supreme Court.

Intellectual property attorneys face many hurdles as they try to protect the branding of companies for consumers and a range of venues for those who want to protect their innovations. The attorneys in this issue took those challenges head-on and pushed technological progress forward.

—The Editors

Nan Wu

FIRM

Cooley LLP

CITY

San Francisco

SPECIALTY

Patent prosecution, portfolio management



Wu's education in medicine has propelled her into the world of medical company patent protection.

She holds a medical degree from Beijing Medical University and a Ph.D. in molecular biology, cell biology and biochemistry from Brown University, and was a research fellow at Harvard Medical School.

Wu advises medical device company Abaxis Inc. in its patent protection strategies. Her work includes filing and obtaining patents in the United States and internationally.

She implements out-licensing strategies to strengthen the company's patent status. This has translated into millions of dollars of royalty revenue for Abaxis.

A major facet of Wu's work involves managing patent portfolios.

"We'll build the portfolio to represent their business story," she said. This portfolio shows competitors how her clients are protecting their patent-controlled assets.

Wu is also the primary patent portfolio

architect for clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company Ultragenyx Pharmaceutical Inc. in Novato, which went public in 2014 and had another offering last year.

She conducted patent due diligence review for various patent portfolios licensed by the company.

Wu manages and focuses these portfolios to obtain strategic patent coverage for products Ultragenyx is interested in and to support their business objectives.

When Wu advises venture capitalists on intellectual property issues and portfolio assessment, she tells them that risk analysis is key.

"The legal world is full of uncertainty," Wu said. "That's why they need good attorneys to analyze risk. There's always risk; it's how to manage that. It's teamwork between business team and legal team."

— Renee Flannery