UNITED STATES
PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE



Patent Trial and Appeal Board Boardside Chat: The mechanics of admission to practice before the Board

Kimberly Weinreich, Attorney, Office of Enrollment and Discipline Steven J. Fulk, Supervisory Patent Attorney, Patent Trial and Appeal Board (PTAB)

June 17, 2021



Question/comment submission

- To send in questions or comments during the webinar, please email:
 - PTABBoardsideChat@uspto.gov



Topics

- Admission to practice before the USPTO
 - Current requirements for patent bar
 - Proposed administrative updates and comments received from the public
- Pro hac vice admission before the PTAB



Kimberly Weinreich, Attorney, Office of Enrollment and Discipline

Admission to practice before the USPTO in patent matters

Requirements for registration

• 37 C.F.R. § 11.7:

- (a) No individual will be registered to practice before the Office unless he or she has:
 - (1) Applied to the USPTO Director in writing by completing an application for registration form supplied by the OED Director and furnishing all requested information and material; and
 - (2) Established to the satisfaction of the OED Director that he or she:
 - (i) Possesses good moral character and reputation;
 - (ii) Possesses the legal, scientific, and technical qualifications necessary for him or her to render applicants valuable service; and
 - (iii) Is competent to advise and assist patent applicants in the presentation and prosecution of their applications before the Office



First page of application:

- Name, address, phone,
 EMAIL, citizenship
- Whether waiver applies
- Previously applied for admission, passed examination or registered to practice
- Bar membership

11.6	DATENT	AND TRADEMARK OFFICE		OMP No 0531-	0012 Approved through 04/30/2021 FORM PTO-158			
0.5.	PAIENI		CATION F	OR REGISTRATION TO PI				
BEFORE THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE								
1A. U	EGAL NAM	TE Last Name First	Name	Middle Name	FOR USPTO USE ONLY			
□м	. 🗆 Ms.							
18. NAME SHOWN ON VALID GOVERNMENT ID Same as above								
1C. ADDRESS		Employer, corporation, law firm, U.S. Government agency. Indicate if student or unemployed.			1			
(street, bldg., suite, etc.) This								
address will be used for official								
correspondence.				☐ REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION REQUEST ATTACHED				
					negoes a mane			
1D. C	пү	•	1E. STATE	1F. COUNTRY	1G. ZIP CODE			
1H. P	HONE NU	MBER (daytime)	11. E-MAIL (pri	mary)	1J. E-MAIL (secondary)			
			3. DATE OF BIRTH (month, day, year)					
2. CITIZENSHIP (country)		(country)	S. DATE OF BII	KIH (month, day, year)	4. PLACE OF BIRTH (City, State, Country)			
FOR	FOR 5. VISA CLASSIFICATION		6. PERMANENT RESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES		7. ALIEN REGISTRATION NUMBER			
ALIE			☐ YES Atta	ach copy of both sides of manent residence documentation				
ONLY NO permanent residence documentation You are required to update the foregoing information promptly upon any change. Check all the following that apply. Applicants should carefully								
review the General Requirements Bulletin for detailed instructions on completing this application.								
8A.		ON FEE: (PLEASE REFER TO THE GENERAL REQUIREMENTS BULLETIN AND 37 CFR § 11.7)						
	OR E	osed is the non-refundable \$110.00 application fee set forth in 37 CFR § 1.21(a)(1)(i).						
	□ E	nclosed is the \$1,680.00 fee set f	osed is the \$1,680.00 fee set forth in 37 CFR § 1.21(a)(10).					
88.		RATION EXAMINATION FEE:	TON EXAMINATION FEE:					
			utilize a commercial test administration service. Enclosed is the Government registration examination fee of \$210.00 for test inistration by a commercial entity. 37 CFR § 1.21(a)(1)(ii)(A). See the General Requirements Bulletin for information about fees					
			instration by a commercial entity. 37 CFR 9.1.21(3)(1)(ii)(A). See the General Requirements bulletin for information about fees may be charged by the commercial test administration service.					
9.	WAIVE	OF EXAMINATION: I AM A FORMER USPTO EMPLOYEE AND SATISFY THE REQUIREMENTS OF:						
			R § 11.7(d)(2).	☐ 37 CFR § 11.7(d)(3).	Enclosed is the application fee under 8A, above.			
10.		USLY PASSED EXAMINATION:						
		passed an examination on ata sheet.	//_	Enclosed is the required fee o	f \$210.00 (37 CFR § 1.21(a)(2)) and a completed			
11.	PREVIO	USLY APPLIED FOR ADMISSION:	LY APPLIED FOR ADMISSION:					
	0 1	☐ I previously applied for admission to the registration examination or requested the Office of Enrollment and Discipline to evaluate my						
					with the registration exam fee under 8B.			
12.		USLY REGISTERED TO PRACTICE:	_''_	Name on Application, if di	merent			
	Registration No.				,			
13.	3. BAR MEMBERSHIP:							
					of the United States. A list of all said courts and			
	corresponding bar membership number(s) follows:							

Second page of application:

- Moral character questions
 - arrests and charges
 - previously disciplined regarding:
 - license
 - education
 - job
 - military discharge
 - delinquent on debt
- Education (scientific and technical qualifications)

Page 2 of 3	OMB No. 0651-0012	Approved for use through 04/30/2021 FORM PTO-158					
BACKGROUND INFORMATION: Candor and truthfulness are significant elements of fitness relevant to practice before the United States Patent and Trademark Office. You should, therefore, provide the Office of Enrollment and Discipline with all available information, however unfowrable, even if its relevance is indouble, with regret to the question assessed TSS. provide a detailed statements string forth all relevant facts and dates along with verified copies of relevant documents. Your responses must be updated, an excessary, prior to your registration. Any documents, verifiers of the providers of provider providers of providers of the prior application need not be resultmitted unless your response to a question must be changed. Failure to disclose the requested information may result in denial of registration or in disciplinary proceedings, should you become registered. See 37 OFR 95 117-(2)(10), 1119, and 11801.							
charges ever been proffered against you in conn	Have you ever been disciplined, reprimanded, suspended, expelled, or agreed to surrender a license or have any charges ever been profilered against you in connection with your practice before any Federal or State court, municipal bureau, commission, office, or agency of any kind or character?						
of any Federal or State law, or any country	Have you ever been arrested, charged, or held by Federal, State, or other law enforcement authorities for any violation of any Federal or State law, or any country or municipal law, regulation, or ordinance? (Do not include any misdemeanor before your 16th birthday or traffic violations for which the fine was \$1000 or less.)						
educational institution, or have you resigned or	Have you ever been disciplined, reprimanded, suspended, expelled, or asked to resign or withdraw from any educational institution, or have you resigned or withdrawn from any such institution in time to avoid a request to resign or in time to avoid discipline, reprimand, suspension, or expulsion for conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, misrepresentation, or desceit?						
	Have you ever been disciplined, reprimanded, or suspended in any job for conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, misrepresentation, deceit, or for any violation of Federal or State laws or regulations?						
	Have you ever been fired or discharged from any job, or have you been asked to resign or quit for conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, misrepresentation, deceit, or any violation of Federal or State laws or regulations?						
considered as involving dishonesty, fraud, misre	Have you ever resigned or quit a job when you were under investigation or inquiry for conduct which could have been considered as involving dishonesty, fraud, misrepresentation, deech; or violation of Federal or State laws or regulation, or after receiving notice or been advised of possible investigation, inquiry, or disciplinary action for such conduct?						
	Have you ever been discharged from military service under conditions "other than honorable," or by reason of the sentence of a Court Martial or being dropped from the rolls?						
overpayment of benefits, and other debts to the	Are you delinquent on any State or Federal debt? (Include delinquencies arising from Federal or State taxes, loans, overpayment of benefits, and other debts to the U.S. Government and defaults on Federally guaranteed or insured loans such as student and home mortgage loans.)						
 EDUCATION: List all degrees conferred. Attach any required documentation as discussed in the General Requirements Bulletin. If you applied previously for an exam, please see the General Requirements Bulletin section titled "REAPPLYING TO TAKE THE EXAMINATION" for what you must submit. 							
Degree Received as indicated on Transcript College	Date Received	Major Subject as indicated on Transcript					
Upon the basis of the foregoing information and any attached documents, I hereby apply for registration to practice in patent matters before the United States Patent and Trademark Office. I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true, and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under I BU S.C. 1001.							
23. SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT	DATE						
MAIL COMPLETED APPLICATION TO: MAIL STOP OF D. INITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARY OFFICE P. O. BOY 1450 ALEVANDRIA VA 22312-1450							

History of requirements

- July 31, 1790 first U.S. patent signed by George Washington; Patent Board/Office located in State Department in NYC
- Topliff v. Topliff, 145 U.S. 156, 171 (1892) The Supreme Court noted over 125 years ago that "[t]he specification and claim of a patent, particularly if the invention be at all complicated, constitute one of the most difficult legal instruments to draw with accuracy..."
- July 1899 Patent Office Rule 17 required registration of attorneys and patent agents practicing in patent matters before the Office. Attorneys were <u>not</u> required to demonstrate possession of scientific and technical qualifications



History of requirements (cont'd)

- 1912-1915 The Commissioner of Patents proposed to Congress the creation of a patent bar with a "higher standard of qualifications for registry" and stated "[f]undamentally, knowledge of the invention is more important than knowledge of the rules..."
- The Patent Act of 1922 expressly authorized the Commissioner of Patents to prescribe regulations for the recognition of attorneys and agents (now 35 USC § 2(b)(2)(D)).
- 1922-1933 Rule 17 revised to require all practitioners possess scientific and technical qualifications
- 1933 Registration examination instituted



The General Requirements Bulletin (GRB)

- Sets forth guidance for complying with 37 CFR § 11.7
- Sets forth three categories which may be used to demonstrate possession of the required technical and scientific training
- If an applicant does not qualify under any of the categories, the USPTO will conduct an independent review for compliance with the scientific and technical training requirement

GRB

Category A: bachelor's degree in a recognized technical subject

Biology
Biochemistry
Botany
Computer Science*
Electronics Technology
Food Technology
General Chemistry
Marine Technology
Microbiology
Molecular Biology
Organic Chemistry

Pharmacology
Physics
Textile Technology
Aeronautical Engineering
Agricultural Engineering
Biomedical Engineering
Ceramic Engineering
Chemical Engineering
Civil Engineering
Computer Engineering
Electrical Engineering

Electrochemical Engineering
Engineering Physics
General Engineering
Geological Engineering
Industrial Engineering
Mechanical Engineering
Metallurgical Engineering
Mining Engineering
Nuclear Engineering
Petroleum Engineering

*Acceptable Computer Science degrees must be accredited by the Computer Science Accreditation Commission (CSAC) of the Computing Sciences Accreditation Board (CSAB), or by the Computing Accreditation Commission (CAC) of the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET), on or before the date the degree was awarded. Computer science degrees that are accredited may be found on the Internet (http://www.abet.org).



GRB

- <u>Category B</u>: bachelor's degree in another subject:
 - must show equivalence to Category A by fulfilling requirements of Options 1-4, other training or other education
 - Option 1: 24 semester hours in physics
 - Option 2: 32 semester hours (8 chemistry or physics; 24 biology, botany, microbiology, or molecular biology)
 - Option 3: 30 semester hours in chemistry
 - Option 4: 40 semester hours (<u>8 chemistry or physics</u>; 32 chemistry, physics, biology, botany, microbiology, molecular biology, or engineering)

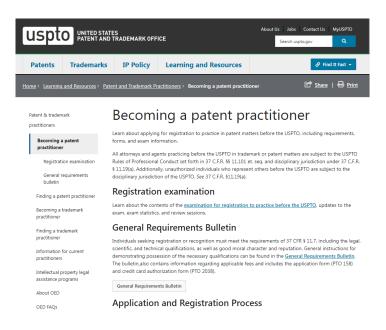
GRB

- <u>Category C</u>: practical engineering or scientific experience
 - Take and pass the Fundamentals of Engineering Test administered by a State Board of Engineering Examiners



Becoming a patent practitioner webpage

 www.uspto.gov/learning-and-resources/patent-and-trademarkpractitioners/becoming-patent-practitioner





Request for comments-proposed administrative updates to the GRB

86 FR 15467

- Administrative Updates to the General Requirements Bulletin for Admission to the Examination for Registration To Practice in Patent Cases Before the United States Patent and Trademark Office
- <u>Proposal 1</u>: expand the list of Category A degrees to expressly include the following degrees that are routinely accepted:
 - aerospace engineering, bioengineering, biological science, biophysics, electronics engineering, genetic engineering, genetics, marine engineering, materials engineering, materials science, neuroscience, ocean engineering, and textile engineering



86 FR 15467

<u>Proposal 2</u>: Accept master's or doctoral degrees in a Category A subject

Proposal 3:

- revising Category B, Option 4 by changing "8 semester hours in chemistry or 8 semester hours of physics ... obtained in two sequential courses, each containing a lab" to "eight semester hours in a combination of chemistry, physics, and/or biology, with at least one course including a lab."
- revising Category B, Option 2, which already requires training in biology, would be revised to require at least "eight semester hours in a combination of chemistry and physics, with at least one course including a lab."



86 FR 15467

- Comments were due by May 24, 2021
- We received about 32 comments. Some were signed by multiple individuals and/or entities
 - 32 individuals, 7 organizations, 1 law firm, 20 universities,
 2 corporations
 - overall, the comments were supportive of the proposals



86 FR 15467

Next steps:

- Review and analyze comments
 - Consider additional suggested degrees for Category A
 - Master's degree requirements
- Based on proposals and comments, decide whether to adopt each of the proposals
- If the decision is to adopt any of the proposals, revise the GRB and implement updates for enrollment team



Question/comment submission

- To send in questions or comments during the webinar, please email:
 - PTABBoardsideChat@uspto.gov



Fast-track pilot programs



Fast-Track Appeals Pilot Program

- Pilot program to expedite ex parte appeals before the PTAB
- Appellant can request appeal be expedited out of turn by filing a petition and a fee
- Learn more about the Fast-Track Appeals Pilot Program at: www.uspto.gov/patents/ptab/fasttrack-appeals-pilot-program

Fast-Track Pilot Program for Appeals Related to COVID-19

- Pilot program to expedite ex parte appeals related to COVID-19 before the PTAB
- Appellant can request appeal be expedited out of turn by filing a petition WITHOUT a fee
- Learn more about the Fast-Track Pilot Program for Appeals Related to COVID-19 at: www.uspto.gov/patents/patent-trial-and-appeal-board/covid-fast-track-appeals-pilot-program



Steven J. Fulk, Supervisory Patent Attorney, PTAB

Appearing *pro hac vice* at the PTAB: best practices for being admitted

Admission pro hac vice at the PTAB

- Pro hac vice (PHV) motions allow nonregistered attorneys to represent parties during trial proceedings
- FY2021 first half statistics
 - Nearly 700 trial petitions filed
 - Over 450 PHV motions in ~300 trial proceedings
 - Over 160 PHV attorneys admitted



Agenda

- Process for filing PHV motion
 - Authorization and timing
 - Documents needed
 - Fees
- Requirements for admission
 - Content of documents
 - Examples of denied motions





Trial practice before the PTAB

- 37 C.F.R. § 42.10 Counsel¹
 - (a) If a party is represented by counsel, the party must designate a lead counsel and at least one back-up counsel . . .
 - (c) The Board may recognize counsel pro hac vice during a proceeding upon a showing of good cause, subject to the condition that lead counsel be a registered practitioner and to any other conditions as the Board may impose

¹ 37 C.F.R., Part 42, available at https://ecfr.federalregister.gov/

Filing a PHV motion – authorization

 Authorization to file PHV motion given in Notice of Filing Date Accorded to Petition

The parties are advised that under 37 C.F.R. § 42.10(c), recognition of counsel *pro hac vice* requires a showing of good cause. The parties are authorized to file motions for *pro hac vice* admission under 37 C.F.R. § 42.10(c). Such motions shall be filed in accordance with the "Order -- Authorizing Motion *for Pro Hac Vice* Admission" in Case IPR2013-00639, Paper 7, a copy of which is available on the Board Web site

² Unified Patents, Inc. v. Parallel Iron, LLC, IPR2013-00639, Paper 7 (PTAB Oct. 15, 2013), available at https://www.uspto.gov/patents/ptab/decisions/representative-orders-decisions-notices

Filing a PHV motion – timing



- Unified Patents specifies time for filing PHV motion – no sooner than 21 days after service of the petition
- Opposition to PHV motion due within one week of motion filing date
- Notify Board if a deposition is occurring shortly after PHV motion is filed³



³ Contact trials staff at <u>Trials@uspto.gov</u> or 571-272-7822

Filing a PHV motion – documents

- Motion showing good cause
- Affidavit or declaration attesting to *Unified Patents* criteria filed as an <u>exhibit</u> per § 42.63
- Power of attorney per § 42.10(b)
- Mandatory notices per § 42.8



Filing a PHV motion – fees

- Non-registered practitioner fee of \$250, per attorney and per trial⁴
- Once motion is granted, the counsel is admitted for the entire duration of a proceeding

⁴ "Setting and Adjusting Patent Fees During Fiscal Year 2020," 85 Fed. Reg. 46,932 at 46,947, available at https://www.federalregister.gov/
Current USPTO fee schedule available at https://www.uspto.gov/learning-and-resources/fees-and-payment; 37 C.F.R. § 42.15 - Fees



Requirements for admission PHV

- § 42.10(c) Showing of good cause and "any other conditions" as the Board may impose
- Unified Patents
 - Motion containing a statement of facts showing there is good cause for admission
 - +0000
 - Affidavit or declaration attesting to eight criteria, or explanation of circumstances



PHV motion requirements

- Statement of facts showing "good cause"
 - Counsel is an experienced litigation attorney
 - Has an established familiarity with the subject matter at issue in the proceeding
- Example Motion denied

 Attorney stated *general* technical expertise, but did not attest to any familiarity with the *specific* subject matter at issue in the proceeding, e.g., the patent, prior art, etc.

- § 42.2 *Affidavit* means affidavit or declaration under § 1.68 . . . [or] a declaration under 28 U.S.C. § 1746
 - Affidavit, § 1.66 oath and official seal
 - Declaration, § 1.68 willful false statements punishable by fine/imprisonment
 - Declaration, 28 U.S.C. § 1746 under penalty of perjury

• Examples - Motions denied 🔼



- Affidavit with no official seal, no statement regarding penalties
- Declaration without either § 1.68 or 28 U.S.C. § 1746 statements and signature



Unified Patents criteria (i-iv)

- i. Membership in good standing of the Bar of at least one State or the District of Columbia;
- ii. No suspensions or disbarments from practice before any court or administrative body;
- iii. No application for admission to practice before any court or administrative body ever denied;
- iv. No sanctions or contempt citations imposed by any court or administrative body;

• Examples - Motions denied 🔼



- Bar membership had lapsed for failure to pay dues
- Failure to disclose prior sanction imposed by state bar



Affidavit or declaration requirements

- Unified Patents criteria (v and vi)
 - v. The individual seeking to appear has read and will comply with the Office Patent Trial Practice Guide and the Board's Rules of Practice for Trials set forth in part 42 of 37 C.F.R.;
 - vi. The individual will be subject to the USPTO Rules of Professional Conduct set forth in 37 C.F.R. §§ 11.101 et. seq. and disciplinary jurisdiction under 37 C.F.R. § 11.19(a);



Affidavit or declaration requirements

- Unified Patents criteria (vii and viii)
 - vii. All other proceedings before the Office for which the individual has applied to appear *pro hac vice* in the last three (3) years; and
 - viii. Familiarity with the subject matter at issue in the proceeding
- Example Motion denied
 - Failure to list all appearances in last 3 years

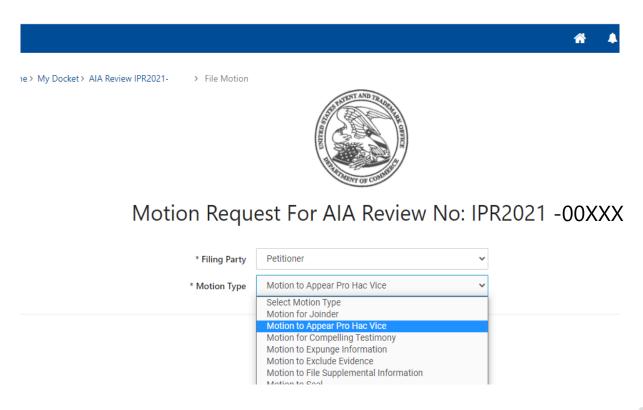


Pro hac vice – best practices checklist

File PH	V motion as paper
	Filed by registered counsel of record
	Includes "good cause" statement – litigation experience and specific familiarity with subject matter/record (§ 42.10(c); <i>Unified Patents</i> Order)
File affidavit or declaration as exhibit	
	Properly executed/signed per § 42.2
	Includes statements attesting to items i-viii of <i>Unified Patents</i> Order, or explanation of circumstances
Pay proper fee	
	\$250 per attorney, per proceeding
	E2E system links to PTO Financial Manager website – <u>return to E2E after payment and submit documents</u>
Update	e power of attorney (§ 42.10(b)) and mandatory notices (§ 42.8)

Contact Trials Staff with any questions: <u>trials@uspto.gov</u> or 571-272-7822

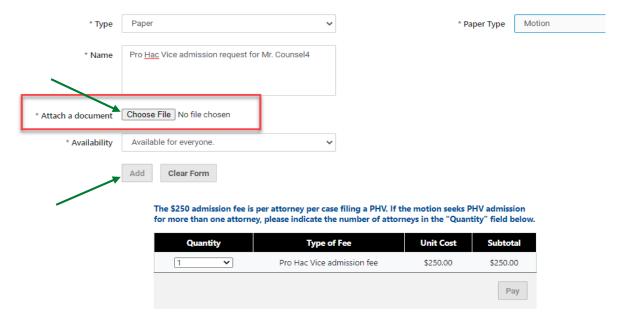
Filing a PHV motion – E2E system⁵



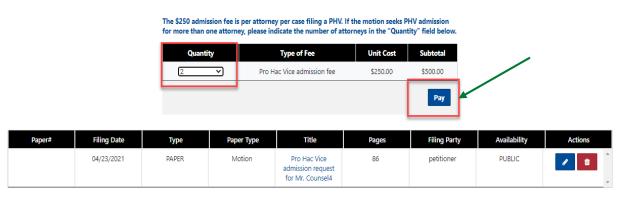
⁵ https://ptab.uspto.gov

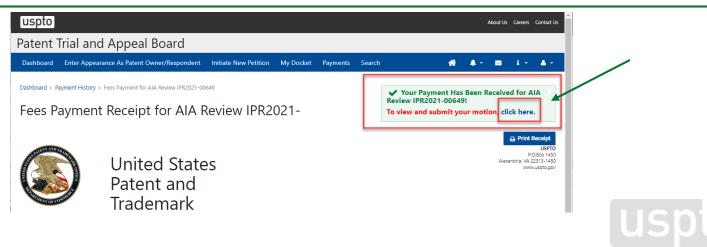


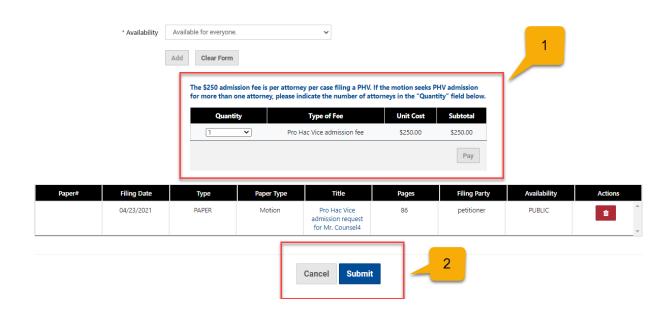
Motion Documents













Question/comment submission

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LEAP

- Legal Experience and Advancement Program (LEAP)
- Designed to:
 - Aid in development of the next generation of patent practitioners
 - Encourage a diverse group of advocates to develop their skills before the Board
- To qualify, a patent agent or attorney must have:
 - Three or fewer substantive oral arguments in any federal tribunal, including PTAB, and
 - Seven or fewer years of experience as a licensed attorney or agent

Next Boardside Chat

- July 15, 2021, at 12-1 p.m. ET
- Topic: RCE versus Appeal
- Register for and learn about upcoming Boardside Chats and access past Boardside Chats at: www.uspto.gov/patents/ptab/ptab-boardside-chats



