THE CENTER FOR INNOVATION POLICY AT DUKE LAW, founded in 2014, is a forum for independent analysis and balanced discussion of policies for promoting technological innovation and its contributions to economic growth. The Center brings together technology and business leaders, government officials, legal professionals, and academic experts to identify improvements in federal policies focused on information, communications, and intellectual property. It places emphasis on evidence-based policymaking and anticipation of issues extending beyond the current Congressional session. The Center works from Duke’s Durham, NC, campus and the University’s office and conference facilities in Washington, DC.

Through its conferences, research, roundtable discussions and other activities the Center:

- Elevates topics and brings them to the attention of highly placed decision makers;
- Leverages Duke’s convening power to:
  - Attract opinion leaders influential in the field in question;
  - Bring together advocates with opposing positions for constructive dialogue;
  - Create high-value networking opportunities;
- Leverages the research and expertise of Duke faculty and scholars at peer institutions; and
- Connects industry, government, and NGOs with Duke graduate and undergraduate students, the next generation thought leaders.

In 2016, the Center attracted high-level participants to conferences on patent quality, copyright reform, and entrepreneurship education. In addition, faculty and staff undertook original research for presentation at Center events and/or for publication. In all of its work the Center adheres to a set of restrictive guidelines ensuring its objectivity and independence from stakeholders with financial interests in the issues it addresses.
CONFERENCES
Patent Quality, Silicon Valley, CA (September 2016)

The Center also received grants from the National Science Foundation and the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation.

Four of the world’s leading technology companies – AT&T, Intel, Microsoft, and Qualcomm Incorporated – provided ongoing support and advice on program meetings via membership on the Center’s Advisory Board. Center members were selected to obtain a range of perspectives and expertise with the Center’s emphasis on evidence-based policymaking and focus on issues beyond the current election cycle. The Center also received funds from the National Science Foundation and the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation to fund activities in 2016 and 2017. The Duke University-wide Innovation and Entrepreneurship Initiative and the Office of the Vice Provost for Research also partially support the Center’s operation.

Participants included high-level executives from Walt Disney, Microsoft, and Google, technologists, legal academics, and experts from various public policy organizations.

This conference was timely in 2016, in the lead up to the introduction of new patent laws in the United States. The Senate Judiciary Committee held a 40-hour hearing on the America Invents Act, which included testimony from industry leaders and academics on the effects and implementation of the new law. The Center provided a platform for discussing the impact of the Act on innovation and the economy, as well as the role of patents in promoting innovation.

The Center also sought to be transparent in its operations. It provided authors with rights to the data they produced for the Center, with the exception of specific data that could be used to draw conclusions on individual patent applications. The Center also published select empirical data sets that demonstrated the results of its research in peer-reviewed journals and conference proceedings.

In addition to its conferences and workshops, the Center also hosted a series of public lectures and panel discussions on topics related to innovation policy. These events were open to the public and were designed to engage a diverse audience, including policymakers, industry leaders, and academic experts. The Center also sought to engage with a wide range of stakeholders, including government officials, industry leaders, and academic researchers.

The Center also provided resources to researchers and policymakers, including a database of patent data and a series of white papers and reports on key issues in innovation policy. The Center also provided funding opportunities for researchers and policymakers to conduct their own research on innovation policy.

In summary, the Center for the Study of Innovation Policy is a dynamic and engaged institution that is working to advance the field of innovation policy and to promote informed decision-making on issues related to innovation and the economy. The Center is a valuable resource for researchers, policymakers, and industry leaders who are interested in understanding the role of patents and innovation in promoting economic growth and social well-being.

Assistant Director

Bill Brown
Affairs for Qualcomm Incorporated

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For the first time in 2016 the Center began to provide support to high school students to conduct empirical research on patent law topics. Duke Law student Lisa Hoagland, along with her advisor Prof. Roberta Romano, developed a project to study the impact of the America Invents Act on the life of small businesses. The project used patent data to examine the effectiveness of the new law on small businesses and to identify areas for further improvement.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

RESEARCH

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The Center’s Executive Director, Stuart M. Banner, published a paper in the Journal of the Patent and Trademark Office Society on the impact of the America Invents Act on the Office’s operations. The paper examined the effect of the new law on the Office’s workload and the efficiency of its operations. The Center’s Director, Arti Rai, also published a paper in the American Bar Association Journal on the impact of the America Invents Act on the litigation landscape. The paper examined the effect of the new law on the number of patent lawsuits filed and the overall litigation landscape.

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