



Heather L. Flanagan, Ph.D.

Principal

Austin

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Overview

Heather Flanagan integrates her legal and scientific knowledge to help clients identify, protect, and maximize the value of their intellectual property assets. Her focus on the specific needs and objectives of each client fosters a unique synergy with companies from start-ups to established entities, and her academic background provides a nuanced understanding of challenges faced by academic and research institutions.

Her command of science and technology provides a foundation for Heather's ability to partner with businesses that advance innovation. Her personal interest in green chemistry and sustainability, alternative energy sources, rechargeable batteries, efficient lighting, and plant-based foods drives her dedication to provide unparalleled service to companies at the forefront of these industries.

Heather cultivates relationships based on trust and prioritizes mentoring and team building, with an emphasis on IP training and outreach, STEM education, women in law, and pro bono service. She is the office managing principal of the firm's Austin office, the managing group leader for the firm's Intellectual Property Group, and an enthusiastic leader in the Fish Patent Lab, a well-honed, practical training program designed to steep interested clients and new legal staff in the firm's collective patent prosecution wisdom.

Prior to joining Fish, Heather practiced at a local patent boutique and was director of intellectual property and grants at a start-up that licensed medical device technology from a major research institution.

Recognitions & awards

Rising Star

Super Lawyers 2022-2024

Women Worth Watching in STEM

Profiles in Diversity Journal 2021

Susan P. Burton Award

Volunteer Legal Services of Central Texas 2019

Pro Bono Award

Honorable Lee Yeakel Intellectual Property Inn of Court, The 2016-2017

Professional associations

American Inns of Court
American Intellectual Property Law Association
Austin Intellectual Property Law Association
Central Texas Local Section Chair, American Chemical Society, 2020-2021
Central Texas Council Member, Girlstart
Co-chair, UTCLE Advanced Patent Law Institute, 2019
Pathfinder Program, Leadership Council on Legal Diversity, 2017
Pathfinder Program Facilitator, Leadership Council on Legal Diversity, 2018-2019
National Association of Women Lawyers
The Honorable Lee Yeakel IP Inn of Court

News

Media Coverage | February 10, 2025

From Patent Agent to Office Managing Principal: Heather Flanagan's Story of Career Advancement at Fish & Richardson
Law360

News | January 13, 2025

Fish & Richardson Appoints Heather Flanagan, Ph.D., to Lead Austin Office

News | June 23, 2021

Four Fish & Richardson Principals Named 2021 "Women Worth Watching in STEM" by *Profiles in Diversity Journal*

News | January 11, 2018

Fish & Richardson Elevates 19 Attorneys to Principal

Events

July 20, 2022

National Association of Women Lawyers (NAWL) 2022 Annual Meeting

October 29, 2019

Girlstart Game Changers Annual Luncheon

October 24, 2019

Volunteer Legal Services' Covington Pro Bono Service Awards

May 20, 2019

Austin IPLA 20th Annual Judges' Dinner

November 1, 2018

UT Law 23rd Annual Advanced Patent Law Institute

January 17, 2018

Fish & ACC Austin Happy Hour

June 22, 2017

Fish Recognized at Volunteer Legal Services of Central Texas' Covington Pro Bono Service Awards

March 10, 2017

SXSW 2017: Startup Village

January 11, 2017

Fish & ACC Austin Happy Hour

October 13, 2016

ACC Austin: Patent Valuation - Methods and Madness

Additional insights

Publications

- Client Alert: Written Description as Applied to Continuation Applications (May 2010)

Speaking Engagements

- American Chemical Society Central Texas Local Section, Science at the Spa
- Austin IPLA: Ethics in Patent Prosecution, The Long Arm of the OED
- IDS Best Practices: Has anything changed since *Thereseense?* (January 2018)
- Ethics in Patent Prosecution (January 2017)
- ACC Austin: Patent Valuation – Methods and Madness (October 2016)
- Women in Bio (WIB): Network with Purpose (June 2016)
- SXSW ECO 2016, Startup Coach
- SXSW Interactive 2016 – Startup Village – Pub Quiz: It's Too Soon to Worry About IP, Right?
- SXSW ECO 2015 – Startup Coach
- Dow v. Nova: Take Two (October 2015)
- SXSW Interactive 2014, Intellectual Property IQ
- SXSW ECO 2013 – Breakout Session Leader
- SXSW V2V 2013 – Mentor
- USPTO Texas Regional Independent Inventors Conference 2012 – “Ask the Expert”
- § 112, ¶ 6 in the Life Sciences: Prosecution Hurdles (May 2012)
- From Redneck Sofas to Machine Guns: Written Description Requirement Redux (October 2011)

Media mentions

- "[Not so secret agents: firms eye patent drafting efficiencies](#)," *Managing IP* (November 3, 2023)
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Services

Patent

Patent Prosecution

Strategic Patent Counseling & Opinions

Patent Portfolio Management

Industries

Energy & Chemicals

Petrochemical

Cleantech

Life Sciences

Medical Devices

Academic Research & Medical Centers

Admissions

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office

Texas

Education

J.D., University of Texas Law School
M.B.A., Decision and Information Sciences, University of Florida
Ph.D., Physical Chemistry, Harvard University
B.S., Chemistry, University of Georgia