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Areas of Practice

- Copyright
- Intellectual Property
- IP Due Diligence
- IP Licensing
- IP Litigation
- Patent
- Patent Counseling,
Clearance, & Prosecution
- Patent Litigation
- Patent: Business Methods
- Patent: Materials Science
- Patent: Mechanical
- Patent: Medical Devices
- Patent: Nanotechnologies

Education

- Duke Law School, J.D.,
1999
- Duke University, Ph.D.,
1996
- Duke University, M.S.,
1993
- Duke University, B.S.E.,
1992

Bar & Court Admissions

- District of Columbia
- Virginia

Seth A. Watkins

Seth A. Watkins is of counsel in the Washington office of Steptoe & Johnson LLP, where he practices in the Intellectual Property group. His areas of concentration include intellectual property litigation, prosecution, strategic counseling, due diligence, and agreement negotiation.

Dr. Watkins counsels clients in obtaining, protecting, licensing, and enforcing intellectual property, with a particular focus on patents. He is particularly experienced in the mechanical, biomedical, and materials arts. His client counseling has included strategic advice, opinions, and technology licensing, especially with regard to patent, copyright, and trade secret aspects of inventions. Prior to joining Steptoe, Dr. Watkins practiced law at one of the largest intellectual property firms in the United States.

Dr. Watkins has litigated a variety of intellectual property disputes at the district court and appellate levels and in the International Trade Commission including patent infringement actions covering such topics as crop, ornamental, and turfgrass technology, hard disk drives, printed circuit boards, LEDs, WiFi and other wireless technologies, telephony technologies, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) / Internet telephony, metal cutting technology, wastewater treatment, hybrid electric vehicle batteries, and food technology. In addition, he has argued before the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences.

To support his technological patent practice, Dr. Watkins relies upon his advanced educational background. He completed a Ph.D. in the Department of Mechanical Engineering and Materials Science at Duke University and focused his research on the mechanical behavior and materials science of ceramic materials including high temperature superconductors. Additionally, his Master's studies concentrated on the thermomechanical behavior of silver/ceramic composites for use in electrical applications. Dr. Watkins' research has involved analytical techniques such as x-ray diffraction, neutron diffraction, and Auger electron spectroscopy. His materials science background spans metals to semiconductors to ceramics to polymers, from thin films to structural steel. As an undergraduate, Dr. Watkins completed a double major in Public Policy Studies with particular emphasis in science and defense policy.

Dr. Watkins also has litigated the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) concerning executive privilege, having argued at the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit and submitted briefing to the Supreme Court.

Dr. Watkins has served on the mechanical engineering faculty at Duke. He previously taught courses in dynamic/control systems and advanced mechanical systems design. He has also conducted classes on intellectual property, entrepreneurship, marketing, and energy technology and the environment. Dr. Watkins continues to serve as an Adjunct Assistant Professor. In addition, he is a member of the Board of Visitors of the Pratt School of Engineering at Duke.

US Patent and Trademark
Office

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Dr. Watkins also has been appointed as a Lecturer at The Columbus School of Law at The Catholic University of America, where he has taught the Introduction to Intellectual Property Law class (2007), the Advanced Patent Law class (2008), Directed Research (2009), and the Patent Law class (2010).

Select Seminars & Events

Maximizing Your Assets: Building Managing and Defending Your Intellectual Property Portfolio, April 3, 2008

Seth Watkins on Teleconference Panel, April 27, 2006

Patent Law Reform Teleconference, November 17, 2005, (*A Steptoe-Sponsored Event*)

Patent Reform Teleconference, June 28, 2005, (*A Steptoe-Sponsored Event*)

Selected Publications

Litigating the Business Method Patent: Pitfalls for Unwary Defendants
2006, *The Intellectual Property Strategist* Vol 12 No 12

Implications of Patent Reform
Who Wins, Who Loses? Executive Summary and Update from 6/28/05
Teleconference
July 29, 2005

Lunar Ice: Adsorbed Water on Subsurface Polar Dust
2002, with F. H. Cocks, P. A. Klenk, W. N. Simmons, J. C. Cocks, E. E. Cocks, and J. C. Sussingham, *Icarus* 160

Forty Years of Development of Active Systems for Radiation Protection of
Spacecraft
1999, with J. C. Sussingham and F. H. Cocks, *The Journal of the Astronautical Sciences* 47(3-4)

X-ray and Neutron Diffraction of Yttrium-Barium-Copper-Oxide: Modeling
Diffraction Intensity Variations Produced by Surface Leaching
1999, with F. H. Cocks, *Journal of Materials Research* 14(7)

Applications for Deployed High Temperature Superconducting Coils in
Spacecraft Engineering: A Review and Analysis
1997, with J. C. Cocks, F. H. Cocks, and C. Sussingham, *Journal of the British Interplanetary Society* 50(12)

Seth A. Watkins

X-ray and Neutron Diffraction Study of Electromigration Effects in High Temperature Superconductor Materials
September 1996, Ph.D. Dissertation, Duke University

Professional Affiliations

Adjunct/Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering and Materials Science, Duke University, 1997-present

American Association for the Advancement of Science

American Astronautical Society

American Ceramic Society

American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics

American Society of Mechanical Engineers

ASM

Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers

Materials Research Society

Society of Photo-Optical Instrumentation Engineers