

LEANNE M. RAKERS

PRINCIPAL / ST. LOUIS METRO OFFICE

Leanne is a forward-thinking intellectual property attorney known for her creative approach to patent strategy and her dedication to mentoring the next generation of legal professionals. As the Practice Group Leader of the firm's Chemical & Life Science practice group, she combines deep technical expertise with sharp legal insight to help clients navigate complex IP challenges.

Clients around the world value Leanne's ability to identify patentable technologies and craft innovative, "outside-the-box" patent applications—especially in today's evolving legal landscape, where patent eligibility is increasingly scrutinized. She delivers strategic counsel, practical solutions, and high-quality work with efficiency and precision. Beyond patent prosecution, her practice spans IP portfolio management, freedom-to-operate analyses, due diligence assessments, and FDA regulatory matters, including patent-drug FDA advising, Patent Term Extension applications, and Orange Book evaluations.

With a rare technical blend spanning chemistry, biotechnology, and life sciences, Leanne represents a diverse client base, from multinational corporations to startups in pharmaceuticals, biotechnology, biofuels, semiconductors, medical diagnostics, cosmetics, and food science. She has successfully protected innovations involving small molecule chemistry, biologics, pharmaceutical, cosmetic, and food formulations, therapeutic methods, organometallic chemistry, and recombinant DNA technologies. Her tenacity in securing patents has led to multiple victories on appeal before the USPTO.

A natural leader and mentor, Leanne is deeply committed to fostering growth within the legal profession. She previously served as Chair of the firm's Diversity & Inclusion Committee, where she championed initiatives to empower diverse attorneys and expand opportunities in IP law. Known for her exceptional ability to teach and inspire, she dedicates time to helping colleagues and clients succeed, reinforcing her reputation as both a trusted advisor and a dynamic leader in the field.

PRACTICE AREAS

Patents



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INDUSTRIES

AgriFood Tech; Biologics & Biosimilars; Chemistry & Materials Science; Pharmaceutical & Biotechnology

NEWS/EVENTS

PRESENTATIONS

- Conducted a variety of lectures on patent prosecution sponsored by the Swedish Patent Office in Stockholm, Sweden, on topics including the legislatively-enacted AIA and judicially imposed Supreme Court mandates
- Conducted a variety of seminars in Osaka, Japan in 2013 and 2014 on post-grant AIA strategies and chemical/biotech patent prosecution strategies
- Speaker at the 2014 Corporate Patent Seminar in Chicago, IL on recent USPTO patent office tools

IN THE NEWS

- “Patent Eligibility of Diagnostic Method Claims Following Proposed PERA Act of 2023,” Bloomberg Law
- 20 March 2024 USPTO Alert: USPTO ensures robust and reliable patents through examiner training on searching for prior art in FDA and NIH databases
- “Treatment of Antibody Claims in the U.S. After Amgen v. Sanofi” – IP Strategist
- Attorneys Discuss the Harness IP Diversity & Inclusion Fellowship with Michigan Lawyers Weekly
- “Is it in the public’s interest to have two similar cholesterol drugs on the market?” *STAT*, January 6, 2017
- “Changing the Profession, One Lawyer at a Time,” *Law Practice Today*, March 14, 2016

EVENTS

- Leanne Rakers to Present on the Basics of IP Law for Entrepreneurs
- St. Louis Patent Attorneys to Present at Petfood Forum
- Harness IP Principals to Present on “IP for a Competitive Advantage” at the AgChem Summit

PUBLICATIONS

ARTICLES

- “Patent Eligibility of Diagnostic Method Claims Following Proposed PERA Act of 2023,” Bloomberg Law
- “Treatment of Antibody Claims in the U.S. After Amgen v. Sanofi” – IP Strategist
- Harness IP Attorneys Pen New Article about the Impact of USPTO Guidance Revisions on Biosimilars
- Leanne Rakers Pens Article on Protecting IP for Cosmetics Start-ups
- Leanne Rakers Shares Four IP Strategies for Cosmetics Innovators

BLOGS

- U.S. Chemical & Life Science Patents Quarterly Newsletter
- 20 March 2024 USPTO Alert: USPTO ensures robust and reliable patents through examiner training on searching for prior art in FDA and NIH databases
- 25 September 2024 USPTO Coding Error Alert: Check your Patent Term Adjustment (PTA)!
- 1 October 2024 USPTO Alert: Extension and Termination of the After Final Consideration Pilot Program 2.0
- USPTO Guidelines on Enablement Requirement published 10 January 2024
- WIPO Standard ST.26 Tips as of 16 August 2022

BACKGROUND

Prior to practicing law, Leanne studied cell cycle inhibitors and suppressors of cytokine signaling at Pennsylvania State University and GlaxoSmithKline Pharmaceuticals. She subsequently focused on recombinant protein expression at Sigma-Aldrich Corporation, and is a co-inventor of U.S. Patent No. 6,902,914 (Recombinant DNA Processes Using A dNTP Mixture Containing Modified Nucleotides).

An invited speaker in the U.S. and abroad, Leanne educates both clients and colleagues on the nuances of patent prosecution and enforcement strategies. Her passion for the America Invents Act (AIA) has spawned many presentations across the U.S., Europe and Japan.

AWARDS & DISTINCTIONS

- *St. Louis Business Journal* 40 Under 40 Class of 2016
- *Missouri Lawyers Weekly* “Up and Coming Lawyer,” 2013

MEMBERSHIPS

- Chemical & Life Science Practice Group Leader
- Harness IP Diversity & Inclusion Committee, Former Chair
- Intellectual Property Owners Association, Pharmaceutical & Biotechnology Issues Committee, Women in IP Committee
- American Intellectual Property Law Association

EDUCATION

J.D., Washington University in St. Louis, 2005

B.S., Microbiology, *cum laude*, Pennsylvania State University, 2000

BAR & COURT ADMISSIONS

Missouri

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit

U.S. Supreme Court

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office