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Rising Star: Haynes And Boone's Purvi Patel

By Erin Fuchs

Law360, New York (March 30, 2010) -- As Haynes and Boone LLP's first-ever trademark specialist, Purvi Patel has expanded a fledgling practice and scored Fortune 10 clients such as Exxon Mobil Corp. and AT&T Inc., earning her place among Law360's 10 intellectual property attorneys under 40 to watch.

Jeff Becker, who heads Haynes and Boone's trademark practice, said the firm's IP group focused mostly on patents before bringing Patel into its Dallas office about a decade ago to work exclusively on trademarks.

Haynes and Boone now has a dozen attorneys who, like the 35-year-old Patel, work only on trademark law. "She showed us how to have a satisfying trademark practice," Becker said. "Her enthusiasm for the practice is infectious."



Patel was a recent Emory University School of Law graduate when she joined Haynes and Boone, having spent about a year cutting her teeth on trademark law at Dallas-based Strasburger & Price LLP.

Since joining Haynes and Boone in 1999, Patel has scored big-league clients from an array of industries, including celebrity chefs, wrestling associations and telecommunications companies. At one point, she represented four of the Fortune 10 companies.

haynesboone
Setting precedent.

“One day I could be doing a domain name dispute. The next day I'm... dealing with an infringer in Asia or dealing with seizures at Customs,” she said. “It's a really diverse practice.”

Patel's accomplishments include never having lost any of the dozens of domain name disputes that were arbitrated as part of the Uniform Domain-Name Dispute-Resolution Policy.

She was also the youngest-ever associate to make partner four years ago when she was only 31.

Most recently, Patel distinguished herself by stepping into a client's shoes: She filled in for the in-house trademark counsel at Amazon.com Inc. for three months while the counsel was on maternity leave.

The young trademark lawyer spent three days a week in Seattle working for Amazon and two in Dallas, which Becker described as a testament to her high energy level.

“It was great that my client trusted me to stand in her stead because she's amazing,” said Patel, referring to Amazon's in-house trademark attorney.

The experience made her “even more of a client-centric” lawyer, Patel said. Both she and Becker stressed her commitment to meeting her clients' needs, particularly her creativity with regard to alternative fee arrangements.

Patel tries to understand her clients' needs and financial constraints and has even taken the time to identify 30 or 40 actions for a client and assign a flat fee for each specific service, according to Becker.

“Every time they ask her to do something, they already know the cost upfront,” Becker said. “She listens and she talks to them and she figures out what will work for that client.”

The approach appears to be working: Patel said the cash she brings to the firm exceeds the amount of money brought in by a large part of the partnership.

Patel, who loves art and studied French as an Emory undergraduate, said that she was drawn to the creative and international aspects of IP law. “I have jewelry designers as clients and marketing people as clients,” she said. “It's interesting to see their thought processes and help them protect what they're creating.”

The young attorney is a child of the 1980s who watched the TV show “L.A. Law” and still adores Madonna; she has considered the fact that one day she could help protect the Material Girl's trademarks. “I really lucked out,” she said. “I found my spot in the world.”