



# PATENT PATHWAYS

## MENTOR EXPECTATIONS

*The purpose of this document is to outline expectations of mentors for the Patent Pathways program.*

### **Introduction:**

The goal of the Patent Pathways program (the program) is to increase the number of African American / Black women engineers and scientists who are registered to practice before the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO). The program provides participants with a thorough introduction to the field of Patent Law, specifically patent preparation and prosecution.

The program is approximately 9 months long (from Summer of 2022 until late Spring of 2023) and is designed to help participants not only successfully enter the patent field (as a registered member of the patent bar), but also receive the tools, mentor network, and knowledge necessary to be successful in the patent field. Overall, the mentors should expect to be a resource that is available to the participants throughout the program, whether through scheduled check-ins or ad hoc meetings/phone calls (if available). Duties and availability of mentors will vary depending on needs of the participants during the various phases of the program. These are indicated on a relative scale below in connection with each phase.

### **Mentorship structure:**

Mentors of the program will work in teams to provide resources to the participants. For example, each participant will be assigned at least two mentors (ideally one mentor from a partner law firm to provide outside counsel insight/perspective and one mentor from a partner company to provide in-house counsel insight/perspective). Furthermore, this arrangement will allow for some mentor flexibility to fulfill other obligations while leaving the other mentor available to assist participants. Mentors that are paired with a participant (co-mentors) are expected to work together to ensure that the participant has access to at least one of them according to the expectations below.

### **Prior to program launch:**

During this time period, mentors will have relatively low obligations for mentoring. Mentors are expected to gain an understanding of the program and attend a virtual mentor orientation that will be scheduled prior to program launch. Any mentors that are unable to attend are expected to reach out to the program leadership team to receive details of the program that were covered during the orientation. One or more virtual network sessions may be scheduled ahead of the orientation for mentors, where attendees will receive updates on the status of the program and have opportunities to ask questions and/or provide feedback, but attendance is optional.

### **During the program:**

The following is a breakdown of expectations of the mentors during the 3 phases of the program:

- **PHASE 1: Introduction to the Patent Field and the Patent Pathways Program.**
  - **Time period:** 3 weeks during June and/or July.
  - **Mentor Duties/Availability:** Light/Low.
  - This phase serves as an orientation for the participants. During this phase, the participants will participate in 2 weekly sessions to introduce the participants to the

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various career pathways within the patent field. Also, the participants will be introduced to the program, each other, instructors, partner law firms and companies, and their mentors.

- Mentor introductions to participants are scheduled for the last module of Phase 1, and attendance by all mentors is expected.
- Mentors will be provided with links to the other phase 1 sessions and can optionally attend the other sessions to be available for Q&A sessions and/or interactions with instructions and/or panelists.

## ▪ **PHASE 2: Patent Bar Examination and Job Placement**

- **Time Period:** 12 weeks from June-September 2022.
- **Mentor Duties/Availability:** Moderate/Low.
- During this phase, participants will focus on preparation for the patent bar. The participants will have access to a patent bar preparation course, so mentors are not expected to guide preparation for the patent bar. Mentors will be expected to be available every other week and/or monthly to get to know the participant and ensure that the participant is staying on track to take and pass the patent bar.
- Ideally, during this phase, participants will be placed at jobs with one of the partner law firms or partner companies. At this point, mentor arrangements (or rearrangements) may be made to pair any mentors from partner law firms with participants placed at their respective partner law firms.
- To keep participants engaged with the program while participating in the patent bar preparation course, this phase will include biweekly, 1 hour sessions in a virtual fireside/informal chat format to provide contextual information about the patent field, professional & career development, life skills training, etc.
  - Mentors are encouraged to attend and/or volunteer to participate/lead these chats.

## ▪ **PHASE 3 (Optional): Skills Training**

- This phase is optional for the participants and/or partner law firms, and is set up to teach participants substantive, hands-on patent prosecution and patent drafting skills.
- Mentors of participants that participate in phase 3 are expected to be available to mentor the participants through the term of their participation in the skills training.
- Mentors are expected to review assignments and/or work performed by the participants and/or provide comments and feedback to the participants.
- Mentors will receive schedules for individual sections of the skills training phase and be invited to join/participate in the lessons taught during the skills training, though attendance/participation in the lessons is optional.

### ○ **Drafting Practice and Skills Training:**

#### ▪ **Harrity Academy – Patent Application Preparation I**

- **Time Period:** 7 weeks – October-November 2022
- **Mentor Duties/Availability:** Moderate/Medium

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- Participants are eligible to attend the Harrity Academy Patent Drafting Course.
- Mentor attendance during lessons is optional.
- Mentors are expected to be available to provide assistance with weekly/biweekly assignments.
- **Patent Pathways – Patent Application Preparation II**
  - **Time Period:** 6 weeks – January-February 2023
  - **Mentor Duties/Availability:** Moderate/High
  - This portion of the skills training will be similar to the Harrity Academy training and will dive deeper into certain aspects of drafting a patent application.
  - Mentors will be responsible for reviewing assignments, providing feedback, and coaching participants regarding skills development.
- **Prosecution Practice and Skills Training:**
  - **Harrity Academy – Patent Prosecution I**
    - **Time Period:** 8 weeks – March-May 2023
    - **Mentor Duties/Availability:** Moderate/High
    - Participants are eligible to attend the Harrity Academy Patent Prosecution Course.
    - Mentor attendance during lessons is optional.
    - Mentors are expected to be available to provide assistance with weekly/biweekly assignments.
  - **Patent Pathways – Patent Prosecution II**
    - **Time Period:** 6 weeks – January-February 2023
    - **Mentor Duties/Availability:** Moderate/High
    - This portion of the skills training will be similar to the Harrity Academy training and will dive deeper into certain aspects of patent prosecution.
    - Mentors are expected to bear more of the responsibility with respect to prosecution assignment review, feedback, and skills training.

**Mentor replacement/substitution:** Circumstances may arise that prevent a mentor from fulfilling expectations for an extended period of time. In such circumstances, the mentor is expected to notify the program leadership team so we can identify a replacement to ensure that the participant has continued access to a mentor.

## Patent Pathways during the holidays:

The program is paused during the first week of July 2022 in observance of the Independence Day federal holiday and from December 2022 through the first week of January 2023 so participants and mentors can focus on family and friends during the holiday season.

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