

# LES Chapter Takes Chicago By Storm

## With PDS 100: Commercializing Technology Through The Power Of IP Licensing

### LES Chapters and LESI Societies Invited to Follow Suit and Host Course Locally

By Lydia Steck

It was a full house on February 6th at the Sears Tower as LES Chicago became the first chapter to host PDS 100: Commercializing Technology through the Power of IP Licensing.

“We were thrilled for the opportunity to run the ‘pilot’ of this course, and the tremendous response we’ve had proves that there is a real market for chapters and societies that are considering running it locally,” said Chicago Chapter Education Chair, Jim Vlazny, who taught PDS 100 along with Himanshu Vyas, IP Counsel for William Wrigley, Jr., Company and Pamela Cox, whose firm Marshall, Gerstein & Borun LLP hosted the course in their Chicago offices.

The capacity crowd of 60 attendees was an even mix of lawyers, business professionals, and students hailing from four states in the Midwest region.

“The energy and excitement level in the room was fueled by the dynamic interaction between students and more seasoned professionals who are involved in entrepreneurial projects,” said Pamela Cox. “The exchange of ideas and sharing of personal business experiences created a fertile and valuable learning environment for everyone involved.”

“I have a PhD and am working on my MBA,” said Northwestern student Sunil Metkar.

“I’m looking at business development and licensing positions going forward and this has been a very helpful offering. I would definitely recommend the class. The faculty was great. They had a lot of experience.”

The course was not only marketed to professionals new to the field, but, for the first time, to entrepreneurially-minded students at a special student rate of \$35. For this reduced rate, students received world-class instruction, breakfast, lunch, a professional networking reception and a one-year student membership to LES (USA & Canada).

In just one day, attendees were exposed to course instruction that began with basic IP concepts, progressed through IP management strategies, commercialization, royalties, valuation and finished with a lively participant-driven mock IP licensing negotiation.

“I’m interested in business development as a profession, and this course provided very valuable tools,” said Northwestern MBA student Lauri Olivier. “I found the



deal development portion and the hands-on negotiation exercise provided truly valuable ‘take aways’ that I can readily apply,” she said. “Now I would like to learn more, so I’m going to look into attending the LES PDS 200 and 300 level classes.”

The PDS 100 Course is also an excellent stepping stone for students who would like to enter the upcoming 2009 LES Foundation International Graduate Student Business Plan Competition.

“The cross-promotion of PDS 100 with the LES Foundation’s Competition is a natural and a win-win for LES. It allows us to raise awareness about IP licensing as a career and to showcase the resources and professional muscle LES has to offer,” said Jim Vlazny.

PDS 100 has been sublicensed by LES (USA & Canada) from LES South Africa and is available for chapters and LESI societies interested in hosting it locally.

The Chicago instructors learned many lessons that they are eager to share with chapters and societies considering running the class. “Students add a lot to the program,” said Himanshu Vyas. “I would advise making sure schools know about the program and bringing in as many as you can,” he said.



Himanshu Vyas (left), Ada Nielsen and Pam Cox (far right) instructors and organizers.



Full house at pilot PDS 100 in Chicago.



Instructors Himanshu Vyas (center) and James Vlazny (back) confer with students.

“PDS 100 is the first in a continuum of LES PDS courses that are available for professionals looking to master the ins and outs of IP licensing and best practices in the field,” said Mike Lee, Vice President for Education.

“I found that the new entrepreneurs were really able to contribute a lot because they had experience and insight from previous careers, as well as from the companies they are now running,” added Pamela Cox. “They brought some fresh aspects to the table but were also looking for more depth in other aspects of IP law and valuation. With today’s economy, we’re likely to see more people doing second careers in technology development.”

If this story has you wondering how your chapter can replicate Chicago’s success, you will be glad to know that there are many resources available to assist with a quick and easy launch of PDS 100. In fact, the LES Office has developed materials that can be easily customized for your course. Contact Curtis Gore ([cgore@les.org](mailto:cgore@les.org)) for information on how to get started. ■



Students prepare for mock licensing negotiation.

# Hot Start For Hot Topics

Webinar Series

**LES EDUCATION**

By Bob Goldman, Education Trustee for New Offerings

LES (USA & Canada) Seasonal and Annual Meetings provide members with the opportunity to network and stay abreast of the latest issues, trends and best practices that affect licensing professionals. Wouldn’t it be great if you could get the same high-quality information when a hot issue arises and the next LES meeting is months away, all from the comfort of your own office?



Bob Goldman

The new LES Hot Topics Webinar Series is designed to do just that! The Hot Topics Webinar Series provides LES members (and non-members) with high-quality, timely and important information and perspectives that have an impact on licensing. Using a telephone and computer with an Internet browser, you and your colleagues at a single site can participate in a Hot Topics Webinar just as if you were attending a workshop or plenary session at an LES meeting, including the ability to ask questions of the presenter(s).

On February 10, 2009, 78 LES members and non-members at 50 different sites participated in the inaugural LES Hot Topics Webinar entitled, “The Impact of Bilski on Innovation and Business.” This 90-minute Webinar addressed the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit’s recent Bilski decision which changed the threshold for patenting process inventions, requiring that method inventions pass the “machine-or-transformation” test, and what impact this decision might have on business, innovation and licensing.

Attendees were fortunate to hear from a panel of world-class experts and stakeholders in the Bilski matter, consisting of: Professor John Duffy from George Washington University School of Law (argued for *amicus curiae* Regulatory Datacorp, Inc.); Wayne Sobon, Associate General Counsel and Director of Intellectual Property at Accenture (was on the brief for *amicus curiae* Accenture); and Donald Steinberg from Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr (was on the brief for Bank of America). The moderator for the Webinar was Russell Levine from Kirkland and Ellis.

After learning about the procedural history and opinion of the case, and the positions taken by the panelists before the Court, attendees were treated to a spirited discussion of the impact of this case on business method and software patents, innovation, and what the future may hold as the USPTO reacts to Bilski and the Supreme Court determines whether it will hear the case. The panel also addressed several questions asked by attendees during the Webinar.

A recording of the Bilski Webinar is available on the LES Web site for viewing by those who could not attend the live Webinar. If you have a suggestion for a future Hot Topic Webinar, please let us know by emailing your suggestion to [education@les.org](mailto:education@les.org). ■