

For Immediate Release

FERNANDEZ & ASSOCIATES LAUNCHES BIOTECH PRACTICE

Team Members Bring Strong and Diverse Background to Practice

MENLO PARK, Calif. – The Silicon Valley intellectual property firm Fernandez & Associates, LLP. is pleased to announce the launch of their Biotech Practice Group. www.iploft.com

With its focus on counseling early-stage biotech companies – and the venture investors that support them – Fernandez & Associates specializes in developing and enforcing defensive and offensive U.S. and international patent strategies for growing firms. The firm’s team-based approach also involves both legal and technical expertise.

“Members of our team have Ph.D.’s and other advanced degrees in cellular biology, biochemistry, molecular biology, chemistry and physics and have worked within the biotechnology industry,” says Dennis S. Fernandez, Fernandez and Associates managing partner. “The firm’s lawyers understand both the technology and business of life sciences companies. Our combined technical, legal and business expertise enables us to promote strategic intellectual property objectives for our clients.”

The new Biotech Practice Group will specialize in all aspects of biotechnology patent procurement and licensing covering biology, biochemistry, chemistry and pharmacology. The group’s expertise includes medical devices, diagnostic devices, drug delivery systems, drug manufacture processes, drugs, life sciences research tools, laboratory instrumentation, bioinformatics, genomics technologies, stem cell technologies, gene therapy, transgenic animals, cosmetics, agriculture, genetically modified foods, food chemistry and processing, pollution control and waste-water management.

The firm currently provides counsel on biotech matters to such clients as Cepheid, Filgen, GenMatrix, Medoptix, Pharsight, Stanford University, UCLA, and Arkagen.

** Members of the Biotech Practice Group include:

Nusrat Khaleeli earned a Ph.D. in Chemistry in 2000 and M.A. in Chemistry from John Hopkins University in 1995. After earning her Ph.D., Nusrat participated in Maxygen-Codexis, Inc. research group as staff scientist in their Assay Implementation and Screening Group. She has also served as Research Scientist for Essential Genes Program; Discovery Biology at Essential Therapeutics, Inc. Ms. Khaleeli holds a patent in the area of pharmaceuticals and natural products. She published several articles in biotechnology field. Author: Origin of the beta-lactam carbons of clavulanic acid from an unusual TPP-mediated reaction, *Science* 2000, 287, 818-819.

Mircea Achiriloaie is a registered patent attorney focusing on biotechnology patent prosecution and licensing. He is registered with U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and published numerous articles in biotechnology area. Mr. Achiriloaie received a Ph.D. in Cell Regulation from University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas in 1999 and a J.D. from University of Texas School of Law at Austin, Texas in 2002. He was a Patent Agent for Rae-Venter Law Group, P.C. and Law Clerk at Blakely, Sokoloff, Taylor & Zaffman LLP, prosecuting biotechnology patent applications, coordinating foreign prosecution of PCT applications, analyzing patent infringement and drafting opinion letters.

Mary Chow is involved in providing IP strategic advice for mid-size companies and start-ups, assisting clients in setting up patent portfolio and in-house IP policies, reviewing and drafting patent applications in technological areas such as biotechnology, ecommerce, ASP software, bioinformatics, and internet applications. She also works closely with venture capitalist firms in evaluating new business plans and technology. She served as In-house Legal Counsel. Mrs. Chow received her J.D./M.B.A from Santa Clara University School of Law in 1999 with emphasis in Patent law, Corporate and International Law. She is fluent in Mandarin and Cantonese.

Laurie Rose de Leon received her B.A. in Molecular and Cell Biology, with an emphasis in Cell and Developmental Biology, from University of California, Berkeley in 2002. Prior to joining Fernandez & Associates Intellectual Property Biotech Team, she worked as biological laboratory technician at U.S.D.A. Western Regional Research Center, Albany, where she applied her extensive laboratory skills. Laurie also served as volunteer criminologist assistant for San Francisco Police Department Crime Laboratory where she is currently designing and implementing an important validation experiment that will approve and authenticate a particular test kit which should result in a standardized protocol for use in the laboratory.

Doris Chen graduated from Santa Clara University School of Law and received a High Tech Certificate in May 2003. At SCU, she was Symposium Editor for Volume 19 of the Computer & High Tech Law Journal. She is also a certified patent agent (#52724). She received her B.S. in Physiological Sciences and a Musicology minor from UCLA. Prior to law school, Doris worked in the biotech industry at Roche Biosciences and then at Dynavax Technologies.

###