

TOP INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAWYERS

Catherine M. Polizzi

FIRM Morrison & Foerster LLP	CITY Palo Alto	SPECIALTY Patent counseling and prosecution
--	--------------------------	---

Polizzi’s work for cutting-edge pharmaceutical and technology firms runs the gamut from helping tiny fledgling operations to some of the largest biotechnology companies in the country.

Because she holds advanced degrees in molecular biology and biochemistry, her work often centers on determining how a company’s intellectual property should factor in during a merger or acquisition.

Polizzi has also been instrumental in developing arguments and case strategies in winning cases, including a 2017 victory for Genentech Inc. in front of the U.S. Patent Trial and Appeal Board.

After Arch Development Corp. sued Genentech for infringing patents related to the chemotherapy drug Tarceva, Polizzi and her team won the case when the board determined that all of the patented claims were obvious in light of the prior art. *Arch Development Corp. et al. v. Genentech, Inc.*, 15-CV06597 (N.D. Ill., filed July 28, 2015).

“My role was to head the dense and complex analysis around those asserted



claims and the backdrop of them and what the weaknesses were in a very complicated, nuanced area,” Polizzi said.

She added that one of the challenges she and the team faced was taking

dense and complex scientific information and presenting it in light of the prior art while distilling it into an effective theme for the court.

Polizzi’s work with Genentech last year also included the approval and patenting of Actemra, the first drug to specifically treat giant cell arteritis. Polizzi worked on patent prosecution and strategy as well as the patent-term extension submission while looking at potential future litigation.

“My role was to provide and lead the guidance towards getting a meaningful issued patent that covers the product and also build a zone of IP protection around the product,” Polizzi said.

In 2017, Polizzi also spearheaded the IP due diligence process that was a central factor in the valuation for the \$9 billion acquisition of Juno Therapeutics by Celgene Corp.

“The IP itself is very deeply tied to the protection of the technology which in turn plays a major role in the acquisition consideration,” Polizzi said.

— Chase DiFelicianantonio