

PTAB Launches the Legal Experience and Advancement Program (LEAP) for the Next Generation of Patent Practitioners

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On April 28, 2020, the USPTO announced the LEAP program to provide opportunities for new practitioners to obtain oral argument experience before the Board. The program provides up to 15 additional minutes of oral argument time to any party when a qualifying new practitioner will be arguing. Practitioners who qualify for this program are attorneys or patent agents with three or fewer substantive oral arguments in any federal tribunal and seven or fewer years of experience as a licensed attorney. The argument may be split with a more experienced counsel, provided that the new practitioner is given a “meaningful and substantive opportunity to argue,” such as by arguing claim construction or a motion to exclude. In addition, the more experienced practitioner may clarify any statements on the record.

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