



Press Release  
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For Immediate Release:

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## **2011 Marks a Year of Growth for Top-Ranked Boutique IP Firm Cantor Colburn**

Twenty-one new patent professionals have joined Cantor Colburn LLP in the past year, signaling a period of growth for the firm. The new hires- one Partner, five Counsel, 14 Associates and one Technical Advisor- include former in-house counsels from Lockheed Martin and BASF. They are spread across the firm's five offices in Hartford, Washington, D.C., Atlanta, Houston, and Detroit.

"This is a talented group of patent professionals that understands how to protect our clients' intellectual property," said Philmore H. Colburn II, Co-Managing Partner. "This team is the right fit for our firm and our clients."

Another sign of client demand at Cantor Colburn are recent rankings, placing the firm 9<sup>th</sup> in the country for issued U.S. Patent and 20<sup>th</sup> for registered U.S. Trademarks (*Intellectual Property Today*).

"We're seeing an upswing in our clients' IP activity in the past year or two," said Michael A. Cantor, Co-Managing Partner. "We are honored when our clients ask us to take on more of their work."

Below are the attorneys listed by their offices, and following that are brief biographies.

### **Hartford**

The Hartford office adds five Counsel, Brian W. Stegman, previously Vice President and Associate General Counsel-Intellectual Property at BASF Corporation, Christine Wilkes Beninati, previously with Halloran & Sage, Bill Habelt, previously with Marjama Muldoon, Guy Levi, Ph.D., previously with McAndrews, Held & Malloy, and William A. Simons, previously with Wiggin & Dana.

Two of the new Associates were previously in-house counsel: Linda M. Stephens-Stramiello with Biolitec, Inc. and Nitin Virmalwar with the City University of New York. The other new Associates are lateral hires: Octavio T. DaCosta, previously with Ward & Olivo, LLP, Kurt R. Denniston, previously with Simpson & Simpson, PLLC, Toby D. Hain, Ph.D., previously with H.C. Park and Associates, and Jamie E. Platkin, previously with McCarter & English, LLP. Technical Advisor Jessica Zimberlin Eastman, Ph.D., was previously National Research Council Fellow at the National Institute of Standards and Technology in Gaithersburg, Maryland.

### **Detroit**

The Detroit office adds Partner David P. Wood, previously the Chief Intellectual Property Counsel for Lockheed Martin's Space Systems Company. Ava Billimoria,



previously with Rader, Fishman and Grauer, Michael J. Kyle, previously with North Star Intellectual Property Law, and Paul A. Rodriguez, previously with Price Heneveld LLP, join the firm as Associates.

### **Houston**

The Houston office adds Associate Paige Thomson, who was previously in-house counsel at NewMarket Corporation, a petroleum additive company.

### **Washington, D.C.**

The Washington, D.C. office adds three Associates, Adam C. Ellsworth, previously with Stanzione & Kim LLP, Jenae C. Gureff, previously with Roylance, Abrams, Berdo & Goodman LLP, and Usha M. Parker, previously with Baker Hostetler.

### **Atlanta**

The Atlanta office adds new Associate Jeffrey L. Waters, previously with Jones Day.

### **About the Attorneys**

[David P. Wood](#) is a Partner in the Detroit office. Mr. Wood focuses his practice on aerospace and automotive technologies, with emphasis on controls and mechatronic systems. Mr. Wood brings more than fifteen years of legal experience in corporate and law firm settings providing a full range of IP legal services from patent procurement, enforcement, and assertions to opinions and transactions. Most recently, Mr. Wood served as Chief Intellectual Property Counsel for Lockheed Martin's Space Systems Company, and he previously served as Lead IP Counsel and Division Counsel for Delphi's Packard Electric Division and as Director of Licensing and Intellectual Property for Honeywell's Aerospace Engines and Systems Division. Prior to becoming an attorney, Mr. Wood spent ten years as an engineer, designing and analyzing gas turbine engines and related systems for General Electric and Honeywell. Mr. Wood received a JD, cum laude, from Northern Kentucky University and a B.S. in Aerospace Engineering from the University of Illinois. He is admitted in Michigan, Colorado, Ohio and Arizona and is registered to practice before the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO).

[Christine Wilkes Beninati](#) is Counsel in the Hartford office. She has been professionally involved in intellectual property law matters for more than fifteen years. She has experience in a full range of intellectual property law matters, with a particular emphasis on domestic and international patent prosecution, strategic patent portfolio development and management, opinions and client counseling. Her legal experience has centered around a wide range of technologies such as the metallurgical, chemical and mechanical arts. Ms. Beninati also has experience in conducting due diligence investigations and providing other litigation support. Prior to joining the Connecticut IP boutique of Harrington & Smith, where she was a Non-equity Partner/Patent Attorney, Christine was an Associate at Kenyon & Kenyon in New York. Christine also has in-house experience having begun her career at United Technologies Corporation working at both the Research Center and Pratt & Whitney. Ms. Beninati earned a B.Ch.E. in

Chemical Engineering from Villanova University and a JD and Master of Intellectual Property Law degree from Franklin Pierce Law Center. Ms. Beninati is admitted in Connecticut, New York and Pennsylvania, and is registered to practice before the USPTO.

[Bill Habelt](#) is Counsel in the Hartford office. He concentrates his practice on the preparation and prosecution of patent applications in various mechanical technologies, including heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration technologies, fire suppression, aerospace and automotive technologies. Before joining the firm, Mr. Habelt was Counsel at Marjama Muldoon Blasiak & Sullivan in Syracuse, New York. Mr. Habelt began his career in intellectual property at Combustion Engineering in Windsor, Connecticut, and later joined United Technologies Corporation where, as Intellectual Property Counsel, he managed the intellectual property law departments of UT Automotive in Dearborn, Michigan, and Carrier Corporation in Syracuse, New York. Mr. Habelt received his JD from the University of Connecticut School of Law, his B.S. in Aerospace Engineering from Iowa State University, and his M.S. in Aeronautics and Astronautics from Purdue University. He is admitted in Connecticut, Michigan and New York, and is registered to practice before the USPTO.

[Guy Levi, Ph.D.](#) is Counsel in the Hartford office. He concentrates his practice on food science and polymer physics. He has 16 years' experience in R&D for the chemical processing industry, in food pharmaceuticals, and home and personal care. Before joining the firm, Mr. Levi was with McAndrews, Held & Malloy, an IP boutique law firm in Chicago. Mr. Levi has a B.S. in food chemistry and a Ph.D. in chemistry, both from Rutgers University, a Master's degree in Technology Management from Stevens Institute of Technology and a JD from Seton Hall University School of Law. He is admitted to the New York and New Jersey bars, and is registered to practice before the USPTO.

[William A. Simons](#) is Counsel in the Hartford office. He concentrates his practice on a wide variety of chemical areas, including water treatment, photochemistry, polymer chemistry, rocket fuels such as hydrazine, and electronic chemicals. Mr. Simons used to be a patent examiner in the food arts at the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO). He has more than thirty years' experience in the patent field, both in-house and in law firms. His JD is from Georgetown Law Center, his MBA is from the University of New Haven, and his B.S. in Chemical Engineering is from Michigan State University. He is admitted in California and Connecticut and is registered to practice before the USPTO.

[Brian W. Stegman](#) is Counsel in the Hartford office. He concentrates his practice on advising chemical, pharmaceutical and biotechnology clients regarding preparation and prosecution of patent applications, due diligence, negotiation of intellectual property transactions and preparation of opinions. Before joining the firm, Mr. Stegman was Vice President and Associate General Counsel - Intellectual Property at BASF Corporation where he managed the intellectual property law department. He received his JD from



Georgetown Law Center and his B.S. in Biology is from Adelphi University. He is admitted in Connecticut, New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania and is registered to practice before the USPTO.

[Ava Billimoria](#) is an Associate in the Detroit office. He concentrates her practice on mechanical and electrical engineering, namely manufacturing processes; automotive technologies; engine management systems; transmissions and transmission control systems; medical devices; gas turbines; power systems; materials and material science; software; vehicle electronics; antenna technologies; and trademarks. She has prepared patentability opinions; represented clients in all aspects of patent prosecution; and has been engaged in supporting numerous litigation matters. Prior to joining the firm, Ms. Billimoria was an associate at a leading IP law firm in the Detroit area. Prior to that, Ms. Billimoria was employed as an automotive engineer at Mitsubishi Heavy Industries and Nissan Technical Center where she worked on HVAC and engine cooling systems. She received her JD from Wayne State University Law School where she was an Articles Editor for the Journal of Law and Society and received the Ida and Benjamin Alpert Scholarship for high academic achievement. She received a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from Kettering University (formerly GMI Engineering and Management Institute) and her M.S. in Electrical Engineering from the University of Michigan. Ms. Billimoria is admitted in Michigan and is registered to practice before the USPTO.

[Octavio T. DaCosta](#) is an Associate in the Hartford office. He concentrates his practice on mechanical and electrical engineering, automotive technology, aerospace and aeronautics, energy, internet and e-commerce, semiconductor devices and processing methods, and telecommunications. Before joining Cantor Colburn, he was an Associate at Ward & Olivo, LLP where he represented clients in all aspects of patent preparation and prosecution including medical devices, internet and e-commerce, pneumatic tube delivery systems for healthcare, telecommunications, and business method patents for the financial services industry. He has prepared patentability opinions, represented clients in patent due diligence, and has engaged in supporting litigation matters. Prior to that, Mr. DaCosta was an associate with John Chupa and Associates in Michigan. Prior to that, Mr. DaCosta was employed as a radio frequency (RF) product development engineer at Freescale Semiconductor (formerly Motorola Semiconductor) where he worked on RF power amplifiers and RF assemblies. He holds a JD, cum laude, from Thomas M. Cooley Law School, an M.B.A. from Arizona State University, and a B.S. in Electrical Engineering from The University of Virginia. He is admitted in Connecticut and Michigan and is registered to practice before the USPTO.

[Kurt R. Denniston](#) is an Associate in the Hartford office. He concentrates his practice on mechanical, electro-mechanical, and hydraulic systems, although he also has experience in the electronic and computer software arts. Prior to joining the firm, Mr. Denniston was a patent attorney at a law firm in Buffalo, NY, where his docket consisted largely of patent work related to automobile torque converters, dampers, and

transmissions. He received his JD and a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering with a minor in mathematics from the State University of New York at Buffalo. He is admitted to the New York and is registered to practice before the USPTO.

[Adam C. Ellsworth](#) is an Associate in the Washington, D.C. office. Mr. Ellsworth's practice covers a wide range of electrical and mechanical technology areas, including circuit design, telecommunications systems, imaging systems, weapons systems, networks, and software-implemented methods. Before joining Cantor Colburn, Mr. Ellsworth was an associate at two Washington, D.C. law firms where he represented clients in all aspects of patent prosecution and litigation, including drafting new applications, conducting interviews with patent examiners, preparing and filing appeal briefs, and preparing memoranda, briefs, and jury instructions for litigation. He has also assisted clients with opinions. His JD is from Pepperdine University School of Law, cum laude, and his B.S. degree in Electronics Engineering Technology is from Brigham Young University. He is licensed to practice law in Virginia and Washington, D.C. and is registered to practice before the USPTO.

[Jenae C. Gureff](#) is an Associate in the Alexandria office. Ms. Gureff focuses her practice on the preparation and prosecution of patent applications relating to medical devices and mechanical technologies, serving both foreign and domestic companies. Prior to joining the firm, Ms. Gureff was an associate at an intellectual property law firm in Washington, DC, where she concentrated her practice on preparing and prosecuting utility and design patent applications in the mechanical arts. She received both her JD and Master's Degree in Intellectual Property from Franklin Pierce Law Center, currently known as the University of New Hampshire School of Law. She received a B.S. in Biomedical Engineering from Tulane University. She is admitted to the Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and District of Columbia bars and is registered to practice before the USPTO. Also, Ms. Gureff is an active member of the American Intellectual Property Law Association, where she serves on the Professional Programs Committee.

[Toby D. Hain, Ph.D.](#) is an Associate in the Hartford office. He concentrates his practice on chemistry, materials science, physics, and medical devices. Mr. Hain has 15 years of technical experience that includes research, development, and teaching positions at various universities, The Aerospace Corporation, and Sandia National Laboratory. Before entering private practice, he was as a patent examiner at the USPTO, examining chemical patent applications. He earned a JD from the University of Pennsylvania Law School, Ph.D. in Chemistry from the University of Utah, and B.S. in Chemistry from Angelo State University. He is admitted in New Jersey and to the Creek Nation and is registered to practice before the USPTO.

[Michael J. Kyle](#) is an Associate in the Detroit office. He concentrates his practice on the preparation and prosecution of patent applications in various mechanical and electrical technologies. Before joining the firm, Mr. Kyle was an associate with an intellectual property firm in Washington D.C., where his practice was focused on electrical technologies including telecommunications, semiconductors, optical media



and optical drives. Mr. Kyle's practice also included the preparation and prosecution of design patent applications. While attending law school, he was a law clerk with a Virginia firm where his practice included the prosecution of patent applications in various mechanical arts including automotive technologies, flooring, food packaging, seals and medical devices. Mr. Kyle began his career in intellectual property at the PTO, where he served as a Patent Examiner for more than five years. His JD is from the Catholic University of America – Columbus School of Law and his B.S. in Mechanical Engineering is from the University of Michigan. He is admitted in Illinois and is registered to practice before the USPTO.

[Usha M. Parker](#) is an Associate in the Washington, D.C. office. Ms. Parker's practice includes all aspects of patent prosecution of electrical and some mechanical technologies. Prior experience includes prosecution of communication systems, schemes, and infrastructure, semiconductor devices and processing systems, refrigerant recovery systems, vehicle diagnostic tools, medical (scanning) devices, workflow, CAD, software, recording media, elevator control systems, metering systems, and business methods. Prior to attending law school, Ms. Parker worked as an electrical engineer for fourteen years at Motorola and at a Navy lab in areas including radar systems, missile fuses, and satellite and cellular telephony. During her tenure at the Navy lab, Ms. Parker earned a M.Sc. in Electrical Engineering with an emphasis on satellite communications. Prior to joining the firm, she was an associate with two Washington, D.C. firms where she learned the fundamentals of patent prosecution through responses to Office Actions, pre-Appeal Brief Requests for Review, Appeal Briefs, and personal interviews with Examiners at the USPTO. Ms. Parker is admitted to the Commonwealth of Virginia and the U.S. district court for the Eastern District of Virginia and is registered to practice before the USPTO.

[Jamie E. Platkin](#) is an Associate in the Hartford office. She concentrates her practice on domestic and foreign trademark protection, the prosecution of trademark applications before the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, counseling clients on trademark risk mitigation and enforcement, negotiating and preparing IP agreements, handling domain name and counterfeiting disputes, and litigation of IP cases in federal court and before the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board. Before joining the firm, Ms. Platkin was an associate attorney with McCarter & English, and before that she was an associate with the Burlington, Vermont office of a large regional general practice firm. While there, she specialized in trademark and copyright prosecution and enforcement, domain name disputes, and intellectual property transactions and litigation. She began her career as an attorney in the Concord, New Hampshire office of a general practice firm where she also handled trademark and copyright issues and practiced in the areas of insurance defense, commercial litigation, criminal defense, and employment and construction law. Ms. Platkin's JD is from the University of New Hampshire School of Law and her BA in is Political Science from Tufts University. She is admitted to practice in Massachusetts, Vermont, U.S. District Court, District of Vermont, New Hampshire and the U.S. District Court, District of New Hampshire.

[Paul A. Rodriguez](#) is an Associate in the Detroit office. Mr. Rodriguez's practice covers a wide range of mechanical technology areas, including automotive, refrigeration, and office furniture. Before joining Cantor Colburn, Mr. Rodriguez was an associate at a Grand Rapids, Michigan law firm where he represented clients in all aspects of patent prosecution and litigation, including drafting new applications, conducting interviews with patent examiners, preparing and filing appeal briefs, and preparing memoranda and briefs for litigation. He has also assisted clients by meeting with in-house counsel regarding patent portfolios and by providing freedom-to-practice and non-infringement opinions. His JD is from DePaul University College of Law and his B.S. in Mechanical Engineering is from University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. Mr. Rodriguez is licensed to practice law in Michigan, as well as before various federal District Courts, and is registered to practice before the USPTO.

[Linda M. Stephens Stramiello](#) is an Associate in the Hartford office. She has eighteen years of technical experience in the pharmaceutical industry that spans the drug development timeline from research to regulatory, as applied to both medicines and medical devices. She spent more than ten years in early drug development as an organic chemist, working in exploratory medicinal chemistry and seven years managing and authoring investigational and new drug applications submitted to global regulatory authorities, both while working at Pfizer Inc. Prior to joining Cantor Colburn, Ms. Stephens Stramiello worked for two years prosecuting patents as in-house counsel for a Massachusetts biotechnology company with a global patent portfolio in such scientific disciplines as medical devices, fiber optics and photodynamic therapy. Ms. Stephens Stramiello received a JD from the University of Connecticut School of Law and a B.A. in Chemistry and Government from Wesleyan University. She is admitted in Connecticut and is registered to practice before the USPTO.

[Paige Thomson](#) is an Associate in the Houston office. She concentrates her practice on global patent strategy, patent preparation and prosecution, freedom-to-practice, patent litigation support, competitor patent mapping and IP agreements. She has worked with a wide range of chemical technologies, including battery, paint and petroleum additives involving polymer, dispersant, friction modifier, viscosity index improver, antioxidant, antiwear, nanoparticle, thin-film, titanium and other metal-based chemistries involving polymer, dispersant, friction modifier, viscosity index improver, antioxidant, antiwear, nanoparticle, thin-film, titanium and other metal-based chemistries. Prior to joining Cantor Colburn, Ms. Thomson was in-house counsel for NewMarket Corporation, an international petroleum additive company, where she represented one of the company's largest product lines in all aspects of IP practice and provided tailored IP counseling aligned with the company's business objectives. Prior to that, she worked as an Associate Attorney at a boutique IP firm, where she gained considerable experience in both IP protection and litigation. Ms. Thomson's JD and Certificate in Intellectual Property are from Chicago-Kent College of Law, and her B.S. in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology is from the University of Arizona. As an undergraduate, she gained more than three years of graduate-level laboratory research experience under Dr. Margaret Kidwell, the first woman in Arizona to be

elected into the National Academy of Sciences. She is admitted to practice in Illinois and Virginia and is registered to practice before the USPTO.

[Nitin Virmalwar](#) is an Associate in the Hartford office. His practice covers a wide range of chemical and biochemical technology areas, including polymer chemistry, material science, petrochemicals, renewable energy and food technology. Mr. Virmalwar has extensive international experience; he has studied and worked in Asia and in Europe. Prior to joining Cantor Colburn, he was in-house counsel for City University of New York. He has also worked as an IP consultant for a UK based venture capital firm and lead patent department at an IP law firm in Singapore. Mr. Virmalwar has an M.S. in Chemical Engineering from Massachusetts Institute of Technology and National University of Singapore and a master degree in Intellectual Property Laws from Franklin Pierce Law Center. He is admitted to practice in California.

[Jeffrey L. Waters](#) is an Associate in the Atlanta office. He has been practicing law for eight years. He concentrates his practice on mechanical and electrical engineering; some examples of these technologies include GPS, Internet and e-commerce, semiconductor devices and processing methods, and telecommunications. He holds both an Electrical Engineering Degree and Industrial Engineering Degree from Georgia Tech and a JD from Franklin Pierce Law Center. He is admitted in Georgia, the Eastern District of Texas and the USPTO.

[Jessica Zimmerlin Eastman, Ph.D.](#) is a Technical Advisor in the Hartford office. Ms. Eastman concentrates her practice on polymer and material science, namely on matters of polymer chemistry, chemical engineering, biotechnology, and nanotechnology. Prior to joining the firm, Ms. Eastman was a National Research Council Fellow at the National Institute of Standards and Technology in Gaithersburg, Maryland, where she worked on Cell/Material interactions. She received a Ph.D. and M.S. from the University of Massachusetts in Polymer Science and Engineering, where she focused her thesis work on studying the mechanical properties of both synthetic and natural hydrogel systems. She received a B.S. in Chemical Engineering and a B.A. in German from the University of Connecticut.

### **About Cantor Colburn LLP**

Cantor Colburn is one of the largest full service intellectual property law firms in the country, with growing offices in Hartford, Washington, D.C., Atlanta, Houston, and Detroit. In recent rankings, Cantor Colburn is 9th in the country for issued U.S. Patents and 20th for registered U.S. Trademarks. As well, the firm has extensive practice in other intellectual property areas, such as validity and infringement opinions, reexaminations, interferences, licensing, due diligence regarding acquisitions and divestitures, and technology transfer agreements. Cantor Colburn's litigation team has extensive and diverse experience in intellectual property, commercial and business litigation cases, and has represented plaintiffs, defendants, intellectual property owners, as well as accused infringers, in litigation. The firm's clients are among the leading





Cantor Colburn LLP

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companies in the country and around the world, including Fortune 100 companies, privately held companies, select high-tech start-ups, and universities. For more information, go to [www.cantorcolburn.com](http://www.cantorcolburn.com).

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