By Sharon Callahan

A Brand New Way of Doing Business

The Cambridge, MA offices of Lowrie, Lando & Anastasi, LLP, one of the fastest growing intellectual property law firms in the country, offer sweeping views of the city of Boston, historic Cambridge and its famed Charles River. Peter Lando '91, co-founder and partner, is busy sweeping away the traditional system of billable hours, as it is practiced by most law firms today, and quietly building a new breed of law firm with a brand new way of doing business.

Celebrating its third anniversary this past June, LL&A has proven its innovative formula works. LL&A opened in 2003 with only three attorneys and minimal staff and today has 25 attorneys and more than 50 total employees. As Lando and his firm's marketing materials testify, LL&A looks at "a bigger picture"—what will most benefit their employees and what will most benefit their clients.

"LL&A challenges the traditional billing model which most law firms require," says Lando. "Instead, we focus on the client relationship and the quality of our work while encouraging a more balanced professional and personal life."

The establishment of LL&A in 2003 ran counter to recent trends in the legal profession. Lando and his co-founding partners, Matt Lowrie and John Anastasi, believe that "in more traditional times law firms emphasized client service and legal professionalism, and business took a second seat."

The three also recognize that most law firms have departed from those standards, devoting far more effort to growing per-partner profits, finding new ways to bill clients more, and driving attorneys to work longer hours to the point where they return less value to their clients.

"We share a vision that a successful law firm could and can be built with a different approach toward the practice of law – one that is truly committed to work-life balance, with an emphasis on high quality work and excellent client support," says Lando.

Building a New Breed of Law Firm

The decision to create a firm such as LL&A was partly influenced by a 1999 Boston Bar Association report, "Facing the Grail: Confronting the Cost of Work-Family Imbalance." The report concluded that an attorney's inability to balance family time with work time—a situation created by law firms with competitive long-hour structures—adversely affected the quality of service clients received. The report's findings served as a guidepost in planning LL&A's approach.

"We require 1,600 hours per year versus that standard requirement of 1,800 to 2,000 plus billable hours; we also provide a 50% bonus to attorneys for every hour billed over the 1,600 hour mark as an acknowledgement of the added effort," explains Lando.

"More importantly," Lando notes, "the more reasonable minimum hours requirement relieves many of the pressures typically associated with law firm life and allows for the discovery of the best ways to meet our clients' needs. The better balance keeps attorneys fresh, engaged and more responsive to their clients."

"Another important advantage of LL&A's innovative approach is passing along to clients the cost savings we achieve by efficiently organizing our infrastructure, carefully reducing overhead costs, and sticking to what we do best," explains Lando. "Our billing rates are consistently 10-20% below large firm rates in the Boston area. We do not charge for routine disbursements which is common practice in other law firms."

LL&A's practice mix has been fairly consistent since the firm opened, with about 40% of the practice comprised of patent procurement and related counseling—primarily for multinational corporations, midsized companies and start-ups—30% with patent litigation in matters across the country, and the balance a mix of trademark, copyright, transactions and client counseling.

LOWRIE, LANDO & ANASTASI, LLP
Devoted to Intellectual Property Law



Peter Lando ’91

Among the firm's roster of satisfied clients are Saint-Gobain Corporation, USFilter Corporation, Color Kinetics, PerkinElmer Life and Analytical Sciences, Abiomed Inc., and the London Stock Exchange.

Pierce Law alumnus and client Thomas G. Field III '99, intellectual property counsel at Saint-Gobain, says, "LL&A understands that businesses need cost effective, focused legal counsel and provides us with great support. Their judgment and counsel are invaluable."

Gary Ganzi, vice president of intellectual property for USFilter adds, "The relationship between USFilter and Peter Lando, and now LL&A, is long-standing. Peter and his team consistently provide us the best product because they are able to combine expert legal advice with in-depth understanding of our technology and our business."

Lando says his practice "involves various areas of intellectual property counseling, licensing and business transactions, patent prosecution and product clearance, trademark adoption, clearance and enforcement, copyright and trade secrets and due diligence investigations."

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IP Counsel, Saint-Gobain

Prior to founding LL&A, Lando was a shareholder in a Boston intellectual property law firm for six years where he chaired the Chemical Practice Group, sat on the Executive Committee, chaired the Marketing Committee, and was a member of the Mechanical, Trademark, IP Transactions and Opinion Practice Groups. Lando, who holds a BS in chemical engineering from Drexel University and an MBA from Rutgers, has extensive experience in the chemical process industries, including water and wastewater treatment, polymers, small particle technology, specialty metals and ceramics, and mechanical/industrial design.

He worked for BASF Chemicals Corporation for four years in process engineering, marketing, business planning and research and development. While attending Pierce Law, Lando became a patent agent and later worked for Cabot Corporation where he was trained and mentored by Harry Gwinnell, now vice president and chief intellectual property counsel at Cargill, Inc.

"I am not surprised with the great success of the firm," says Gwinnell. "The whole culture and atmosphere of the firm are a direct reflection of Peter's personality."

Pierce Law Alumni Join LL&A

In his efforts to build a new breed of law firm, Lando has brought several Pierce Law alumni into the firm. Keith F. Noe '91 joined the firm in 2004 and was recently named partner. Nicole Palmer '05 is now a first-year associate, and recent graduates Thomas J. McGinnis '06 and Sandra Szela Congdon '06 will join the firm this fall.

Keith F. Noe '91



Noe's practice area involves all areas of intellectual property and related corporate transactional matters. Noe, who holds a BS in mechanical engineering from Worcester Polytechnic Institute, has experience in a variety of technologies, including materials and equipment used in the fabrication of printed circuit boards, mechanical and electro-mechanical devices, sophisticated networks, and functional and decorative chemistries. He counsels a wide spectrum of clients including Speedline Technologies and Cookson Electronics.

"I wanted to join a firm where the focus is to provide the highest quality service to my clients, thereby providing the greatest value to my clients," says Noe. "I've known Peter since 1988, our first year at Pierce Law, and also had a close working relationship with another partner Tom Sullivan, so joining LL&A was a natural fit for me."

Prior to joining LL&A, he served for six years as vice president of intellectual property for Cookson Electronics and as assistant general counsel for GTECH Corporation, where he held primary responsibility for managing all aspects of each corporation's intellectual property. He also handled various patent and trademark prosecution matters at the St. Louis intellectual property firm of Senniger, Powers, Leavitt & Roedel.

Nicole Palmer '05



Palmer, LL&A's first summer associate in 2004, became an associate in 2005. She earned a BS in chemical engineering from MIT where she conducted research involving drug delivery techniques, pharmacokinetics, cell growth systems and surface modification for biomedical devices. At LL&A, Palmer focuses on assisting clients in the chemical, biotechnology, mechanical and medical device practice areas, as well as assisting on patent litigation.

"It was clear to me that LL&A would be committed to

my long-term professional growth and realization of my goals," says Palmer who turned down an offer to join a large international firm. "The opportunity for early involvement in all aspects of intellectual property practice was important to me, and the firm has consistently provided me with that broad exposure. The firm is service oriented and remains true to its founding philosophy. The atmosphere at LL&A also fosters strong mentoring relationships which are critical to successfully developing young associates to their full potential."

Thomas J. McGinnis '06



A recent graduate of Pierce Law, McGinnis worked for nearly a decade in the software and petroleum industries prior to attending law school.

"My experience ranged from hands-on software development with a variety of technologies to complete business and technical management of software consulting and development shops," says McGinnis who earned a BS in computer science from the University of Kentucky and MSM (MBA) from the Georgia Institute of Technology.

At Radiant Systems, Inc. in Alpharetta, GA, McGinnis held a series of leadership positions in product development through which he developed a detailed understanding of the information technology used to deliver point of sale and enterprise solutions to retail clients.

"The technological variety of my background helps me to see through specific implementations of an invention and to distill software and business process claims that are consummate with the true breadth of the invention," says McGinnis.

"Pierce Law enabled me to acquire a broad and deep foundation of knowledge for my legal practice at LL&A," says McGinnis. "The substantive law classes such a Trademarks, Copyrights, and Patents teach legal theory—but with a view towards developing the skills required to excel in the actual practice of law. Professors Field, Richey, Jorda and Hurn also present the substantive areas of the law in a manner that reveals their interrelationships and helps students to develop a more robust, integrated understanding of the law as a 'seamless web,'" adds McGinnis.

Sandra Szela Congdon '06



Congdon, who served as a summer associate at LL&A in 2005, will specialize in chemical, biotech, and medical device practices.

"Because of my previous engineering experiences, and as a laboratory researcher in graduate school, I know first-hand how important each scientific discovery is, and the impact it has on society," comments Congdon. "As a patent attorney at LL&A, this experience will enable me to do what is best for my clients, in ensuring that their inventions are effectively protected."

While at Tufts University, Congdon, who holds BS and MS degrees in chemical engineering, designed, produced and analyzed genetically engineered spider silk proteins with solubility triggers to use as scaffolds for tissue repair.

"This was a challenging project that really helped me understand the intricacies and depth of scientific research. I have much respect for what scientists do as they work day after day for years towards a greater good," says Congdon.

Congdon also worked as a senior engineer at TIAX LLC and Arthur D. Little where she managed projects varying from a laboratory effort for a client interested in entering the drug delivery market to developing novel adhesive polymers for internal wounds. While at Pierce Law, Congdon externed for Boston Scientific, performing landscaping reviews of medical device technology and researching, reviewing and compiling hundreds of patents. Prior to graduation, she externed at Biogen Idec, working with in-house counsel.

"The experience of working with in-house counsel will be invaluable to me in years to come as I work as outside counsel," says Congdon.

Looking to the Future

"We have been very fortunate with the way things have unfolded over the past three years," says Lando. "We are succeeding by any measure because we are committed to a shared vision. We are enthusiastic about the firm and its future."

By the end of 2006, LL&A will occupy nearly 25,000 square feet, with an option to further expand in the adjoining space, and plans to hire additional attorneys.

"We are delighted to recruit such terrific talent, and I am personally thrilled that many of our newest hires are Pierce Law graduates," says Lando.

"While counterintuitive to establishing a thriving, profitable law firm with reduced minimum billable hours and billing rates, LL&A appears to have done just that, with a more balanced approach," says Lando. "We have achieved success beyond our greatest expectations."