By Sharon Callahan

Meet the Vice Dean of Tsinghua University School of Law

Bing Wang LLM '



View of campus from Tsinghua University School of Law

In 1985 at age 39, Bing Wang LLM '01 became China's first patent agent.

"I returned to China from Ottawa, Canada to take the patent agent exam. "I had studied international law and intellectual property law, including patent, trademark, and copyright law, at the Law School of the University of Ottawa," says Wang.

"On my first day of work, April 1, 1985, China's patent laws became effectively enforced, and on the evening of the same day, a lot of Chinese applicants went to the Patent Office of China since everyone wanted to became a first patent applicant in China patent history," Wang explains. Wang and his colleagues of Tsinghua University went there earliest, and the next morning, Tsinghua University became the special applicant who filed the first patent application, as well as 141 applications for its inventions filed that first day."

Wang's career path to becoming China's first patent agent and vice dean of Tsinghua University's School of Law began while he was in high school in An Hui Province. Wang studied Russian in high school and passed the uniform examination for entrance to all the universities in China.

"In 1964, I enrolled for the fall semester at Tsinghua University, one of the best schools in China, often referred to as the MIT of China," says Wang.

To enhance his future job opportunities, Wang studied two foreign languages. He passed the qualification examination for Russian language and enrolled in classes in English. But in June of 1976, the Cultural Revolution began and English classes were no longer offered.

"In 1978, when the Cultural Revolution ended and Chinese radio stations began broadcasting in English, I listened every morning from 6:30 until 7:00 to improve my language skills," says Wang.

Wang earned a degree in chemical engineering from Tsinghua University in 1970. In July 1985, he went to Ottawa, Canada to study intellectual property law as a visiting scholar, one of the first Chinese scholars in Canada. He worked briefly at the law firm of Gowling and Henderson and took several law classes at the Law School of the University of Ottawa.

In 1989, his studies and skills earned Wang an appointment as deputy director at the University's Science and Technology Office where he was responsible for international

technology transfer and international collaboration in research and development.

"Intellectual property issues really started in China in the 1990s," says Wang. "When I became the deputy director in 1989, I dealt directly with the University's intellectual property. I took part in the negotiation and establishment of the Tsinghua-GM Automobile Institute with GM's lawyers. One of the key points of negotiation was how to deal with the intellectual property produced in the Institute."

"I negotiated with Microsoft's lawyers on dealing with the computer software license given to Microsoft by Tsinghua University. I also took part in the negotiation of a joint program of small satellites with British partners. One of the tough issues again, was how to deal with intellectual property relating to the joint program," says Wang.

Today, Wang is a full professor and serves a vice dean of the law school, a post he has held since 2001, after attending Pierce Law.

"Founded in 1929, Tsinghua University School of Law was one of China's premiere law schools before it was moved out of Tsinghua University to Peking University in 1952," according to Wang. "It was reconstructed in 1995 and currently has an enrollment of 1,367 students in various undergraduate and graduate programs, and 49 faculty members." Wang teaches classes in intellectual property law and management.

At age 55, Wang was one of three Chinese scholars to enroll in Pierce Law's Master of Laws program in 2001.

"I studied very hard and gained a lot of knowledge about intellectual property and improved my skills in English," says Wang. "I made a lot of new friends at Pierce Law, not only Americans, but also people from other countries around the world."

"After earning my LLM at Pierce Law, I asked Professor William Hennessey if it would be possible to create a cooperative program and bring Pierce Law's program to the Tsinghua," explains Wang. "Together we designed a program that was later approved by American Bar Association."

In 2002, Pierce Law and Tsinghua launched the first cooperative Intellectual Property Summer Institute in Beijing with 27 American students.

"This program is very useful for American students," says Wang. "We have a full compliment of courses in Chinese intellectual property law taught by Pierce Law and Tsinghua faculty," says Wang. "I teach Introduction to Chinese Intellectual Property Law and Institutions and Professor Jie Chang teaches Introduction to the Chinese Law and Legal System. Both are very important for students who will be working in intellectual property law in China. With economic globalization and development, more and more fields intellectual property law are becoming of national importance."

"With the fast pace of economic development in China, intellectual property will become increasingly important. In the future, the enforcement of intellectual property law, the protection of the rights of the intellectual property owner will become the major issue in China. For this, last year China issued the judicial interpretation on the criminal of intellectual property which is an important development in the protection of intellectual property," explains Wang.

"Because of this, it is easy to attract students, not only American but also Chinese," comments Wang. "In 2004, we designed a special program for our Chinese students. This program features nine intellectual property courses on Chinese intellectual property law, discussion and analysis of Chinese cases of intellectual property, intellectual property licensing, science and technology law, international intellectual property treaties, American and European intellectual property law and their practice, network intellectual property law and patent claims drafting. The program is available to all law students."

"Each year approximately 30 Master degree candidates are involved in intellectual property law," says Wang. "Both men and women can now earn similar salaries. This is fairly new in China."

"In China, most high technology comes from foreigners," according to Wang. "The 2008 Olympics will bring many intellectual property issues to China. They will provide an excellent opportunity for discussion of current and future intellectual property concerns."

"In order to promote the creation of intellectual property in the future, China will have to strengthen the education of intellectual property law, including the training of high quality specialists in intellectual property. As one of the best law schools, Tsinghua will do much more in this field," explains Wang.

"The Tsinghua-Pierce Law program is not only important to American students, but also to Chinese intellectual property education. Intellectual property education is not only domestic but also international. As a potential lawyer, or professor or officer, to be involved in intellectual property, one should know not only domestic law and practice, but also the law and practice of other countries and relevant international treaties," explains Wang.

In addition to his responsibilities as vice dean, Wang writes extensively on collaborative research and development and commercialization of Chinese technology.

Wang resides with his wife, Ying Wang, in downtown Beijing. His daughter, Jingling Wang, age 31, is an engineer at Tsinghua University.