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THE FEDERAL CIRCUIT: THE NATIONAL APPELLATE COURT CELEBRATION AND INTROSPECTIVE SYMPOSIUM

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The Federal Circuit: The National Appellate Court Celebration and Introspective Symposium

The Federal Circuit Bar Association held a symposium on the development of the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit on March 18, 2009. The Federal Circuit has grown from the merger of two courts—the Court of Customs and Patent Appeals and the Court of Claims—to a tribunal shouldering great oversight responsibility for the most complex and important litigation topics in the federal system. This is due to the increasingly national and international focus on the economic significance of intellectual property, the growth of government contracting as a means of implementing government programs, and the importance of international trade. The event was an unprecedented gathering of the Federal Circuit's past, present, and future leadership, and included Federal Circuit judges, a United States Senator, former Solicitors General, and distinguished scholars. The event focused on the development of the Federal Circuit during its first twenty-seven years and how our legal system can benefit from these shared experiences.

The George Washington Law Review is honored to be publishing works by participants that reflect the depth of the conversation developed during the symposium. The following papers discuss patent law reform, the gradual shift of power over the development of patent law from the judiciary to the executive branch, lessons that may be learned from the D.C. Circuit's experience as a semi-specialized court, the potential for a greater number of specialized federal appellate courts, and the evolving treatment of government contract law. In conjunction with this Issue, the *Federal Circuit Bar Journal* is also publishing commentary from the symposium, which may be found at 19 FED. CIR. B.J. 327 (2010). The *Law Review* would like to give a special thanks to the Federal Circuit Bar Association for its co-sponsorship of the event, to Senator Orrin Hatch for his participation and insightful comments, and to Deans Frederick Lawrence and John Whealan for their ongoing support of the *Law Review*.

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