

For Immediate Release

Inventor of Eco-Friendly Antifreeze Fights for Ownership Rights
To His Own Patents, According to New Case Study
Published on IPAdvocate.org

*Story of Dr. Galen Suppes Extends IP Advocate's Library of Resources Aimed at
Educating Academic Researchers About the Process of Commercialization*

ATLANTA (July 8, 2009) – IP Advocate today announced that it has published a new case study on its website – www.IPAdvocate.org – presenting the story of an academic researcher honored by the EPA who is now battling his university for the ownership rights to discoveries made prior to his faculty appointment.

IP Advocate is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping academic researchers preserve their rights in their work. The new case study is one of many featured at this online community for academic researchers and students.

Dr. Galen J. Suppes, a professor in the Chemical Engineering Department of the University of Missouri (MU), received the EPA's highest honor in 2006 – The Presidential Green Chemistry Challenge [Award](#) – for his discovery of an eco-friendly use for glycerin, a co-product of biodiesel production. His process converts the excess glycerin into a “green” antifreeze.

The Suppes case is the latest in a series of examples of universities litigating with faculty researchers over intellectual property rights. IP Advocate's website features similar accounts involving Dr. David Townsend, co-inventor the PET/CT scanner; Petr Táborský, who made a discovery in wastewater treatment while he was a graduate student; Dr. Stephen Badylak, a pioneer in tissue re-growth; and IP Advocate founder, Dr. Renee Kaswan, inventor of Optimune® and Restasis®, which treat dry eye in animals and humans. The website also features compelling examples of positive results

when universities stand by their inventors, such as the success of Emory University and its faculty researchers, Drs. Liotta, Schinazi and Choi, who co-developed two of the major drugs in the HIV/AIDS arsenal: 3TC and FTC.

Turning on an Asset

A frequent contributor to professional journals and oft-cited author, Dr. Suppes had been regularly recognized by the University of Missouri (MU) as an asset. His research has resulted in numerous awards and patents, but the University of Missouri accused its professor of not giving the college its due. For more details, see the case study here: <http://www.ipadvocate.org/studies/suppes/>.

The University of Missouri has claimed ownership over patents for research conducted and completed before Suppes was employed by the school. The patents in question were based on provisional patent applications filed before he began working at MU. The university is also challenging Suppes' efforts to pursue patents and licensing for his innovations that the school has abandon or ignored.

The federal case filed against Dr. Suppes was dismissed, citing lack of jurisdiction. However, the same day that case was set aside, attorneys for the university filed in the Boone County court system. Dr. Suppes is fighting the charges against him, and is filing a counter-suit against the university in the county court.

Dr. Suppes said he has been the victim of "incredible neglect" by the MU tech transfer program, which he said is "totally broken and basically beyond repair." The university's president, Gary Forsee, told the [*St. Louis Business Journal*](#) in March: "Our university has not done a great job in putting the processes and systems and resources in place to do that [commercialization]. We are trying to cobble together some incremental funding so we can do tech transfer."

"This story raises the fundamental questions of whether a university has the right to force a professor to assign all their inventions to the institution, and what recourse an inventor has if the university isn't a good steward of that intellectual property," said Dr. Kaswan, founder of IP Advocate, former research professor at the

University of Georgia and inventor of the billion-dollar drug Restasis®. “The Bayh-Dole Act gives universities the right to claim patent assignment of *some* employee inventions. But it’s not a bulldozer – it does not give universities the right to seize the intellectual property of an individual inventor.”

“It’s important to tell the stories of researchers like Suppes, alongside positive stories of universities and inventors working collaboratively,” said Rhaz Zeisler, IP Advocate executive director. “Our online community is motivated to publicize both the best and worst in technology transfer practices at our universities today. We’ve built an extensive library of resources for academic researchers, so they can avoid the frustrations and potential litigation that Dr. Suppes and many others have endured.”

About IP Advocate

IP Advocate (www.IPAdvocate.org) is a non-profit organization that educates and empowers faculty researchers on patent rights and the process of commercialization – helping inventors protect their rights during the complex process of getting their invention from the lab to the people who need it. IP Advocate is a rich resource of information and best practices related to the commercialization of intellectual property. The organization was founded by Dr. Renee Kaswan, inventor of the billion-dollar drug Restasis® and a former research professor at the University of Georgia; and is led by executive director Rhaz Zeisler, a recognized international interactive media brand strategist, and former Walt Disney producer and IBM creative executive. IP Advocate is a 501(c)(3) organization, based in Atlanta.

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