Prior to becoming a patent agent*, Kerisha Bowen had spent a majority of her life in an academic setting. After earning a Ph.D. in organic chemistry from Temple University, she became a post-doctoral fellow at the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine and taught at Penn State's Brandywine campus and Rowan University.

After a few years of teaching and research, Bowen realized she needed a new vision for her career path. “I wasn’t satisfied with my career choice,” she explained. “I looked for other career paths that were available to me with my training in organic chemistry and found patent law to be a viable option.”

As a member of the inaugural Master of Science in Patent Law (MSPL) class, Bowen worked with Brandon Ashfeld, assistant professor of chemistry and biochemistry, to draft a patent application for small molecules that could be used as precursors for brain cancer chemotherapeutics. She also worked with William Schneider, professor of chemical and biomolecular engineering, to write a patent application for a refrigeration cooling system that utilizes ionic liquids as a refrigerant.

Bowen graduated in May and now works for Dentons, LLP in Washington, D.C. where she executes patent applications for the firm’s clients in Europe. She credits the MSPL program for teaching her much of what would be expected of her as a patent agent.

“What I liked best about the MSPL program is that the curriculum was practically centered. The assignments we did were directly related to the work I perform now as a patent agent,” she said. “When I started at Dentons, I was just given cases to work on pretty much by myself because my coworkers were too busy with cases of their own. I don’t think I would have known where to start had I not completed the MSPL program.”

*Kerisha has passed the USPTO’s Examination for Registration to Practice in Patent Cases which allows her to use the title “Patent Agent.” Kerisha was eligible to take this examination before she enrolled in the MSPL. Kerisha’s experience may not be representative for all MSPL students.

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