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Symposium Discusses Intellectual Property Issues

FORT WORTH, Texas – Scholars from across the country gathered on Friday, Oct. 24, at Texas Wesleyan University School of Law for the Intellectual Property and Indigenous Peoples Symposium, an event that focused on intellectual property concepts as they relate to issues of art and indigenous peoples.

Hosted by the *Texas Wesleyan Law Review*, the symposium examined intellectual property concepts – copyrights, trademark rights, patent rights, and trade secrets – as applied to the cultural heritage, art, and artifacts of indigenous peoples. The presenters were selected based on previously submitted papers. Those accepted will have their papers published in the *Texas Wesleyan Law Review*.

3L Zach Burt, law review symposium editor, said he was thrilled with the positive response the symposium garnered, and was happy that the event provided a forum for the discussion of an issue that is so relevant in today's society.

“The submissions we received really show that intellectual property issues, specifically in relation to indigenous peoples and communities, are a prominent and exciting topic right now,” Burt said. “The response from attendees and presenters has been wonderful, and one presenter said he felt privileged to have learned so much in one day.”

Presenters discussed a variety of issues relating to intellectual property rights, including who owns the rights of control of native land; understanding when to define knowledge as “property”; what kind of rights affect the control of indigenous works of art; what standards an item must meet to be given a trademark; and the concerns about the protection of knowledge and culture of small groups of indigenous peoples in countries such as Russia, Turkey, and Iraq.

Presenters included Danielle Conway-Jones, of the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, William S. Richardson School of Law; Daniel Green, a fellow with Liberty Fund, Inc.; John Cross, of the University of Brandeis School of Law; Jay Erstling of the William Mitchell College of Law; Megan Carpenter of Texas Wesleyan University School of Law; Susan Bruning, an adjunct professor with Texas Wesleyan University School of Law; Michael Newcity of Duke University; Hannibal Travis of Villanova University School of Law; and Doris Long, of the John Marshall Law School.

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