**PROTECTING MY IDEA, MY INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**

**DISCLAIMER**

January 2021

**If you believe you have an idea that you believe is “new and useful”, not having obviously existed before, you need to understand the importance of how to protect your intellectual property *BEFORE SHOWING IT IN PUBLIC*!** The following information is offered in good faith. However, patent law revisions are possible.

* Patents, trademarks, and copyrights are the most common forms of IPP.
* Once you publicly display or discuss your idea, you cannot take for granted your idea is safe from being claimed by another person or business.
  + The **FIRST TO FILE** for IPP is recognized as the owner of the IPP!
  + No longer is the **FIRST TO INVENT** protected from someone else claiming the IPP if you do not obtain IPP.
  + Patent protection options
    - Provisional Application - temporary protection for one year
    - Non-Provisional Patent Application - twenty years of protection
* It is recommended to keep your idea publicly secret if you strongly believe your idea could have significant impact and value.
* IPP can be expensive.
  + Patent counsel is wise to consult for protection. A patent attorney’s first responsibility is to evaluate whether or not your invention is new. Writing the patent and patent claims follows. A free consultation is possible to learn what services and costs may apply.
  + It is not realistic for patent counsel to tell you if you have a great idea or not!
  + Invention Scams encourage you to ‘take the bait’ by telling you the idea is great!
  + A professional patent search helps to reveal existing, similar inventions. It is challenging to find all related inventions.
  + The real test of originality and patent strength will be ruled by a judge not the Patent Office when you have to defend your IPP from infringement!
* Nondisclosure agreements can used to you share your idea with anyone. This is helpful if you are providing important details. You can talk in general terms about your invention without sharing any unique details.

Additional information can be found at [www.USPTO.GOV](http://www.USPTO.GOV). and many internet sources. Caution is advised before you make any payment for services outside of the USPTO or a registered Patent Attorney.

Patent law may be revised in the future. It is wise to verify any of the information offered here.

**If you are questioning whether or not to enter the Invention fair, this is YOUR decision. There are risks and rewards.**