

## D.C.'S RISING STARS

Washington, D.C., is a magnet for the top graduates from the top law schools in some of the most sophisticated practices in the nation, including appellate and antitrust. So for the NLJ's 2017 Rising Stars list, how did we go about reviewing a large pool of smart, young nominees? Very carefully. We looked for key elements including success on the highest stages, diversity of practice groups and law firms. We also looked closely at recommendations. We are proud to present our 2017 Rising Stars. This year, we share their keys to success in their own words, edited for clarity and length. —*Lisa Helem, managing editor*

A SPECIAL REPORT



### KEVIN WHEELER, 34

PRACTICE: INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

TITLE: PARTNER

■ **WHAT WAS THE MOST VALUABLE LESSON YOU LEARNED IN YOUR FIRST YEAR OF PRACTICE?** You have to want it. IP litigation is a challenging practice full of talented lawyers. Many times, what determines the outcome of the case is simply who wants it more and hence who is willing to give more of themselves to their client's cause.

■ **DESCRIBE YOUR BIGGEST WIN OR ACCOMPLISHMENT IN PRACTICE.** Leading and winning on behalf of client Hyosung—an International Trade Commission trial that was part of a large, high-stakes competitor patent dispute that implicates a significant portion of the multibillion-dollar ATM industry in the U.S. It was a resounding victory for Hyosung.

■ **WHO DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE YOUR GREATEST LAWYER MENTOR?** I have had the good fortune of having many great lawyer mentors. One who stands out is the late Bob Hillman, the architect of modern-day Fish. He encouraged me to embrace the business side of our practice. His words have immeasurably impacted my young career.

■ **PLEASE SHARE A KEY TO YOUR SUCCESS.** Be genuine and straightforward. Whether I am in a new client pitch or in front of a judge, credibility is paramount.