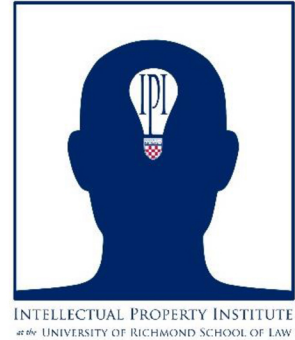




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Suit Filed to Protect “Evil Twin Debate” Trademark

April 1, 2022

Richmond, Virginia—The Intellectual Property Institute (IPI) at the University of Richmond School of Law announced that it has filed a lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia against the Center for Law & Intellectual Property (CLIP) at Texas A&M University School of Law. The lawsuit seeks to prevent CLIP from continuing to violate the IPI’s rights in its well-known “Evil Twin Debate” trademark.

Founded in 2004, the IPI is a dynamic and respected center for the study of contemporary intellectual property issues. The Evil Twin Debate is its marquee national event, which it has hosted every year since 2007. “The debate has been a prominent part of our public programming for more than a decade,” stated IPI executive director Christa Pechora Poirot. “Its distinctive format brings together pairs of experts who disagree on an important topic but who can air their disagreements in a friendly exchange—serious in substance but lighthearted in tone. It’s very important to our brand.”

Late last year, the IPI became aware that CLIP was using the tagline “Shaping Debate” to promote its own intellectual property center. Despite a friendly request to choose a term other than “Debate,” CLIP persisted in its use. “It’s still [right there](#) in their marketing materials,” noted Poirot. “It’s right at the top.”

According to Poirot, “Like any trademark owner, we take our brand seriously—and we have an obligation to our students, faculty, alumni, and donors to police it to the maximum extent of the law. We simply cannot afford to see our trademark rights violated by another school.” The lawsuit states claims for trademark infringement and dilution by tarnishment.

For more information, please contact Christa Pechora Poirot at ipi@richmond.edu.