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IP Litigator in First Chair at Own Firm

By Emma Dewald
Daily Journal Staff Writer

LOS ANGELES — After 13 years at Quinn Emanuel Urquhart Oliver & Hedges, intellectual property litigator Adrian M. Pruetz is striking out to start her own boutique litigation firm.

Pruetz opened the Pruetz Law Group Wednesday in Manhattan Beach with her daughter, Erica Pruetz.

At Quinn Emanuel, Pruetz worked on high-profile intellectual property matters, including representation of Mattel for more than 10 years.

“When you start thinking about women who first-chair patent cases, there aren’t very many of them,” said Daralyn Durie, a partner and patent litigator of San Francisco’s Keker & Van Nest. She added that Pruetz is “a fantastic lawyer,”

Carole E. Handler, vice-chair of the IP litigation practice group at Foley & Lardner, described the move as “very gutsy.” But she thinks Pruetz will do well.

“She’s not afraid to be a very bold litigator and that’s the kind of person who does well when they go it alone,” Handler said.

Pruetz said she will continue to work on matters from her time at Quinn Emanuel. But, she said, she will be partnering with the firm on those cases.

“I would never take work out of Quinn,” Pruetz said.

Quinn Emanuel name partner John B. Quinn said, “Adrian’s departure is a big loss for us.”

“She has made an enormous contribution to our firm,” he said. “Fortunately we will remain friends and colleagues, as we will continue to work together on cases in the future.”



HUGH WILLIAMS / Daily Journal

Adrian Pruetz has left Quinn Emanuel after 13 years to run the Pruetz Law Group with her daughter, Erica Pruetz, also a former Quinn Emanuel lawyer.

One of the things that drew Pruetz to the idea of starting a firm, she said, was the opportunity to move out of exclusively intellectual property work.

The mother and daughter also want to represent a broader range of clients, she said. “We do have a lower rate structure,” Pruetz said.

The pair joked about being law partners since Erica started law school, but it wasn’t until last summer that serious consideration of the endeavor began.

And though some people might worry about working with their mother, they have already given it a trial run.

Erica Pruetz joined Quinn Emanuel in 2003 after graduating law school. She

has since worked on several cases with her mother. “We’ve found that we work together very, very well,” the daughter said.

When Erica was two, her mother started law school, with Erica attending a Montessori school across the street.

“She’s really been a part of this from the beginning,” Adrian Pruetz said. “She used to do little compositions, some of which we saved, about becoming a lawyer.”

The new firm is already busy. Pruetz said they made two appearances in court as the Pruetz Law Group on Wednesday alone. They also have, Pruetz said, some “very tight deadlines” in an appeal in the Federal Circuit.