

BCLT SPURS TRANS-PACIFIC TECH-LAW LINK

As investors from Asia play a growing role in Bay Area tech startups, the demand for expertise in intellectual property, patent, and consumer privacy law is soaring—on both sides of the Pacific. To serve those needs, Berkeley Law has unveiled new initiatives while bolstering overseas partnerships.

In addition to launching *Startup@BerkeleyLaw* (see page 38), the school hosted two fall conferences featuring top legal minds from the United States and Asia. One explored key issues in Korean law, the other best practices for innovation and creativity in the United States and China.

“We’re bringing technology and finance issues together,” says professor Robert Merges, co-director of the Berkeley Center for Law & Technology (BCLT). “We’re looking for early-stage companies funded by overseas sources—Chinese venture funds, for example—to expose students to these kinds of deals before they’ve even graduated.”

BCLT is fortifying longstanding partnerships with institutions like South Korea’s Seoul National University and



INTERNATIONAL CONNECTION: Professor Robert Merges greets Supreme Court of Korea Justice Kwon Soon-il, a former visiting scholar at Berkeley Law, during his week-long trip to South Korea last fall.

Renmin University in Beijing, China’s top intellectual property school. Merges also hopes to launch a privacy law program with Peking University, and to collaborate with Beijing’s Tsinghua University on culture-gap issues between Asian and U.S. investors and entrepreneurs.

To help fuel Berkeley Law’s trans-Pacific programs, Merges spent two weeks in Asia last June and a week in South Korea in September, giving lectures and meeting with top tech lawyers and academics, judges, government officials, alumni, and international students. “There’s great demand in Asia for contact with elite U.S. universities and tremendous respect for higher education,” Merges says. “It’s a very real force that we encounter.” —*Ben Peterson*