

Rising Star: Covington's Nicholas Evoy

By **Dani Kass**

Law360 (August 17, 2026, 4:03 PM EDT) -- Covington & Burling LLP partner Nicholas Evoy helped AbbVie Inc. fend off generic versions of a blockbuster immunosuppressant and litigated a key U.S. Supreme Court case over America Invents Act challenges, earning him a spot among the intellectual property law practitioners under age 40 honored by Law360 as Rising Stars.

Why he became a patent attorney:

Evoy describes his entrance into patent law as "serendipitous." He had studied biomedical engineering at Johns Hopkins University as an undergraduate, and afterward became a patent examiner focused on diagnostic testing and medical imaging arts. During that time, he started attending George Washington University Law School at night, leading him to patent law.

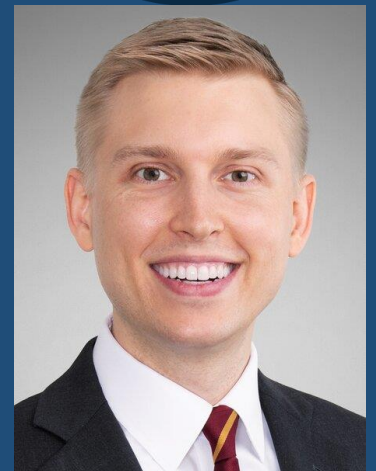
"It was great because it gave me the ability to marry my day job as an examiner with a legal education that I was receiving at night, and that just made patent law very concrete for me," he said. "Then over time, I found myself drawn to litigation, just because of my advocacy instincts. IP litigation really sits at the intersection of technology, law and business, which just for me makes it very interesting and evergreen and enjoyable."

His biggest case:

In November 2023, Covington client AbbVie accused five generic-drug companies of infringing 136 patent claims across 34 patents directed to the blockbuster immunosuppressant Rinvoq. By the litigation's end in September 2025, AbbVie had fended off all generic competition until 2037.

"Just the scale and breadth of the case were remarkable," Evoy said. "There were five generic defendants. There were several dozen patents across a wide range of subject matter. And all of these issues were in play. The case breadth just presented all of these technical and strategic challenges because we had to coordinate multiple patent families, multiple

2026



Nicholas Evoy
Covington

Age: 38

Home base: Washington, D.C.

Position: Partner

Law school: George Washington University Law School

First job after law school: Associate at Ropes & Gray

expert disciplines and a very complex factual record."

His most interesting recent case:

Evoy represented Daiichi Sankyo Co. Ltd. and AstraZeneca PLC as they overcame a \$41.8 million infringement verdict. Seagen Inc. had sued Daiichi claiming its Enhertu breast cancer treatment infringes a patent covering Seagen's own cancer treatment, Adcetris. AstraZeneca, which partners with Daiichi on Enhertu, intervened in the suit.

An Eastern District of Texas jury had sided with Seagen in 2022, finding Daiichi should pay nearly \$42 million in damages for willful patent infringement, and that the patent wasn't invalid.

The Federal Circuit disagreed in December, deeming the patent invalid for not meeting written description and enablement requirements.

"That resulted in the vacatur of the damages award in full," Evoy said. "That was just a spectacular result in terms of the magnitude of relief that we were able to get."

His proudest moment:

In June 2019, the Supreme Court held that the government can't challenge patents under the America Invents Act. Evoy, then an associate, was on Covington's team representing patent owner Return Mail Inc. as it fought the U.S. Postal Service's right to pursue a covered business method review at the Patent Trial and Appeal Board.

"When the Supreme Court granted cert, it had to be one of the most exhilarating moments of my career," he said.

How he thinks the industry will change in the next decade:

Evoy said the use of artificial intelligence is top of mind, and will continue to be so moving forward.

"At Covington we are embracing AI, but there's always reason to be cautious about overreliance and blind trust in these technologies," he said. "The touchstone, the North Star for all of this, is making sure AI is being used, and used responsibly and judiciously. I just think it's going to have a tremendous impact on all phases of IP."

--As told to Dani Kass. Editing by Linda Voorhis.

Law360's Rising Stars are attorneys under 40 whose legal accomplishments belie their age. A team of Law360 editors selected the 2026 Rising Stars winners after reviewing more than 1,100 submissions. Attorneys had to be under 40 as of April 30, 2026, to be eligible for this year's award.