

St. Louis native interested in mentoring young minority attorneys

O'Fallon High grad Veo Peoples remains committed to St. Louis

By Joia Williamson
For the St. Louis American

The law firm Brown and James LLC's principal attorney Veo J. Peoples has been in law for 35 years. Peoples has learned the ins and outs in his time and is interested in helping other minority associates.

"I'd like to be able to help prevent mistakes that others made," Peoples said.

Peoples came to Brown & James from St. Louis-based Haverstock, Garrett & Roberts LLP in October 2009 and brought experience in patent, trademark, copyright and technology licensing law. Peoples has an extensive background in chemical patent and trademark law and represented Dow Chemical, Westinghouse, Bristol Meyers Squibb, Monsanto, Anheuser-Busch and Boeing.

When Peoples first began in the legal industry, there were not a lot of African-American lawyers in law firms. But now, Peoples sees much more diversity in several area law firms, though a few firms still are not very diverse. "The progress has been good," Peoples said.

Peoples stressed that joining organizations and being active in the community can lead to a successful career as a lawyer. Peoples gives advice to minority lawyers stressing key things that are important.

"Your reputation as a lawyer is going to go with you. Be involved in the community, put time in," Peoples said.

"It's hard work, gotta get

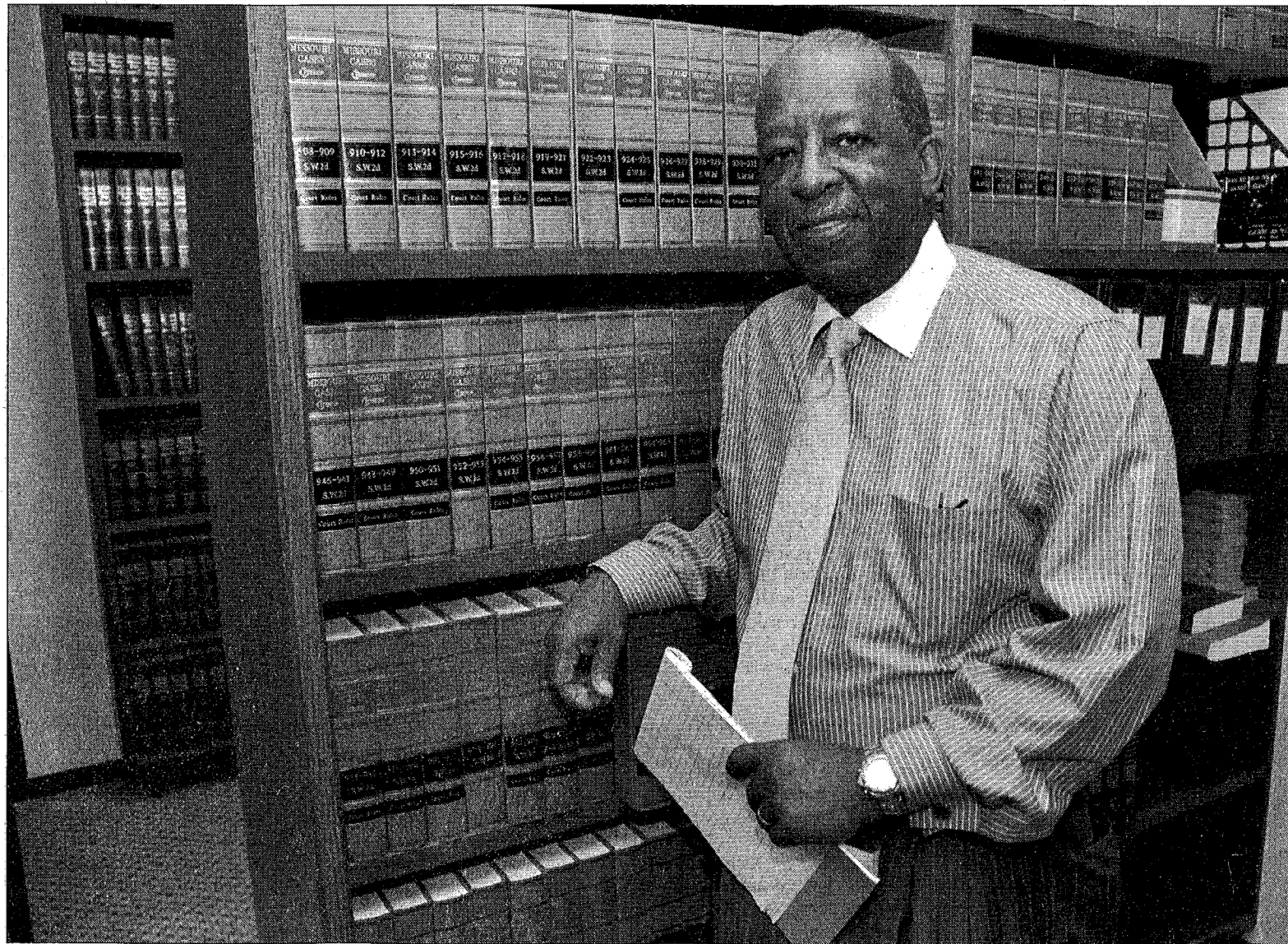


Photo by Wiley Price

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some experience. Learn your craft and you do have to have a mentor or mentors," Peoples said.

"I didn't have the good for-

tune of having a mentor, I hope young lawyers don't have to be put in those situations now," Peoples said.

"Veo's extensive experience

in the intellectual property field makes him a valuable addition to Brown & James," said managing principal, Mike Ward. "His contributions to

our expanding intellectual property and technology practice group will be a great asset to our clients. He will also play an important role in our

firm's commitment to diversity by serving as a mentor to the firm's minority principals. We

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are honored to have a lawyer with his accomplishments and commitment to public service."

Peoples is an active public servant, Peoples served on the board of

directors of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis from 1994 to 1999, and also as co-general counsel for the St. Louis Regional Convention and Sports Complex Authority.

Peoples also served as co-general counsel for the St. Louis Regional Convention and Sports Complex Authority, and participated in municipal bond issuances to the City of

St. Louis and the State of Missouri. Peoples represented various governmental bodies in finance issues, construction matters, governmental affairs and municipal law. Peoples' professional affiliations include the American Bar Association, Mound City Bar Association, Missouri Bar Association and the National Bar Association.

Peoples is a St. Louis native, who graduated first in his class from O'Fallon Tech, now known as Gateway Tech, in 1966. He holds a B.S. in chemical engineering from Missouri University of Science & Technology and a J.D. from Saint Louis University. He is member of the Missouri Bar, United States District Court for the Eastern District of

Missouri, United States Patent Bar and the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit. Peoples is also a member of the firm's construction law and governmental affairs/municipal law practice groups.

Brown & James is a Midwest regional law firm with more than 100 lawyers specializing in a wide range of

corporate litigation practice areas. With five Midwest offices in St. Louis, Kansas City, Mo., Springfield, Mo., Belleville, Ill., and Little Rock, Ark., Brown & James represents an extensive variety of corporate clients regionally and nationwide.