



Mr. Azam Khan  
Deputy Chief of Staff  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Mail Stop Office of Undersecretary and Director  
PO Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

RE: PTO-C-2011-0066; Nationwide Workforce Program

Dear Mr. Khan:

WEST: Advancing Women in the Business of Science and Technology, located in Cambridge, Massachusetts encourages the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) to establish a satellite office in the Massachusetts area.

Launched in 2000, WEST provides a forum for women in science and technology industries to network and share information about career advancement and skill development. Uniquely tied to this highly educated, influential community, the WEST leadership has long provided a supportive environment for mid-career women in these vital sectors, allowing them a unique opportunity to acquire the skills necessary to become business leaders in their fields.

WEST offers a rich and thriving community that provides support, guidance, and professional development for professionals in science, engineering and technology industries. Members can leverage a broad array of workshops and panels that include advice regarding career advancement, alternate careers options, professional skill building, and exposure to entrepreneurial thinking. Calibrated to arm our members with the skills they need in today's competitive, face-paced work environment, the WEST organization works tirelessly to bring the most up-to-date information to the group. Through education, mentorship, and engaged networking, we strive to serve our diverse community so our members can achieve their full potential.

WEST encourages women to develop entrepreneurial management thinking, educated risk taking, creative problem solving, and inspirational, supportive leadership for their teams/organizations/businesses. WEST members work at biotechnology, pharmaceutical, and IT companies as well as in organizations that support and collaborate with these industries such as professional service firms, financial institutions, and non-profit groups.

WEST is an example of the culture of science and engineering education that is prominent in New England. Moreover, I can attest to the science and engineering talent that can be found in Massachusetts, and would gladly work with the USPTO in placing enthusiastic and committed scientists and engineers in patent examiner positions.

In conclusion, WEST would welcome a regional office of the USPTO into the local science and engineering community, as would our extensive network of educational and business supporters.

Respectfully submitted,

Ilene Fischer  
WEST Executive Director